



Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project

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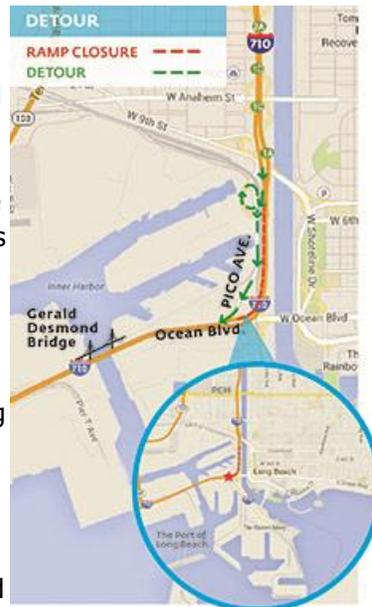
710 Freeway/Westbound Ocean Blvd. Connector at Port of Long Beach to Close Saturday, May 10

Motorists Advised to Consider Alternate Routes; Officials Take Steps to Ensure Safety, Reduce Traffic Impacts along Detour Route

May 6, 2014

When the southbound I-710 (Long Beach) Freeway connector to westbound Ocean Boulevard closes for 30 months starting Saturday, May 10, multiple measures will be in place to enforce safe driving along the detour route, as well as urge motorists to consider alternate routes.

Officials today reminded commuters and truck drivers headed to the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, as well as all Southern California motorists, about the long-term closure and detour that are needed in order to demolish and rebuild the connector ramp as part of the Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project.



“We have spent the past several months preparing for this closure and have made key improvements to ensure a smooth flow of traffic along the detour route,” said John Pope, Port of Long Beach Community Relations Manager. “However, we recognize that closing this connector may cause some impacts, and we encourage motorists to use alternate routes if they have the option.”

About half of the vehicles currently using this connector ramp are traveling to the Port of Los Angeles, officials said. When the connector closes, southbound I-710 traffic heading to Terminal Island will be diverted briefly onto southbound Pico Avenue, then to an on-ramp that joins westbound Ocean Boulevard to cross the Gerald Desmond Bridge. Trucks and other vehicles whose destination is beyond the Port of Long Beach are being asked to consider using the I-110 (Harbor) Freeway, SR-47 or other alternate routes to avoid the surface street detour.

To accommodate traffic along the quarter-mile detour, the Port of Long Beach made several improvements in advance of the closure, including:

- Widening the Pico Avenue off-ramp from the southbound I-710 Freeway to install two “free” right-turn lanes of traffic onto southbound Pico Avenue. (Free right turn lanes at signalized intersections can accommodate more vehicles and improve the level of service.)
- Widening and restriping Pico Avenue to create a third southbound lane.
- Installing a traffic signal at the intersection of Pico Avenue and Pier D Street to replace a four-way stop and improve traffic flow.

The Port of Long Beach has partnered with Caltrans, California Highway Patrol, Long Beach Police Department and other organizations to put measures in place to keep traffic moving. As a precaution, the Port has scheduled extra coverage from CHP, Long Beach Police and Harbor Patrol to make sure vehicles are entering the detour route at safe speeds and proceeding safely through the construction zone. Heavy-duty tow trucks will be on standby to quickly remove broken-down trucks and clear accident scenes.

Demolishing the ramp will require a future, short-term closure of southbound Harbor Scenic Drive, which passes under the connector. Southbound Harbor Scenic Drive is the primary route from the I-710 Freeway to Piers F-J, the Queen Mary, the cruise terminal and south waterfront hotels. Southbound Harbor Scenic Drive is scheduled to close at 5 p.m. Friday, May 23, and reopen by 6 a.m. Tuesday, May 27. To access these areas during the Memorial Day weekend, the detour route is the southbound I-710 Freeway onto southbound Pico Avenue to Harbor Plaza West. However, Long Beach visitors heading via the southbound I-710 to the Queen Mary, cruise terminal, and hotels are encouraged to use the

“Downtown Long Beach” exit and Shoreline Drive.

Demolition of the I-710 Freeway/Ocean Boulevard connector ramp is required to lay the foundations of the new bridge replacing the existing Gerald Desmond Bridge, and to build a new southbound I-710 Freeway connector ramp. The new bridge will be constructed just north of the existing structure.

The public is encouraged to sign up at www.newgdbridge.com for weekly traffic alerts and download the “LB Bridge” mobile app from the App Store, Google Play or the Windows Store. The alerts and app inform motorists about construction-related detours and provide project updates.

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