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Turnstiles, similar to those shown in the inset photo, will be installed at both entrances to the Headquarters tower and will be operational July 24.



Photos by Bill Heard

Major Security Upgrades Planned for Metro Headquarters

- Parking structure entrance to be closed; P-1 to be restricted
- Turnstiles will control access to Headquarters tower
- [Security measures in brief](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 7, 2006) Major security upgrades aimed at controlling access to the Metro Headquarters building and the Union Station Gateway parking structure are in the works and will be in operation later this month.

Beginning Monday, July 31, most areas on the north side of the parking garage P-1 level will be open only to authorized Metro vehicles. Workers already are constructing six-foot-high, sliding iron entry and exit gates with parking card readers at the main parking garage entrance off Vignes Street to restrict vehicle access.

Concrete bollards will be bolted into the garage floor to prevent vehicles from driving around the gates. The bollards will be placed about four feet apart to accommodate pedestrians and wheelchairs.

During the weekend of July 22-23, two pairs of stainless steel turnstiles will be installed on the third-floor mezzanine. Located at the entrances to the main Headquarters tower flanking the security desk,

the turnstiles will have optical sensors that can read the chips embedded in Metro ID badges.

The turnstiles, almost four feet high with 36-inch wide, ADA-compliant entrances, will be equipped with hinged bars that drop to admit an authorized person. Programmed for a "throughput" of 30 people per minute, the turnstiles will be operational July 24.



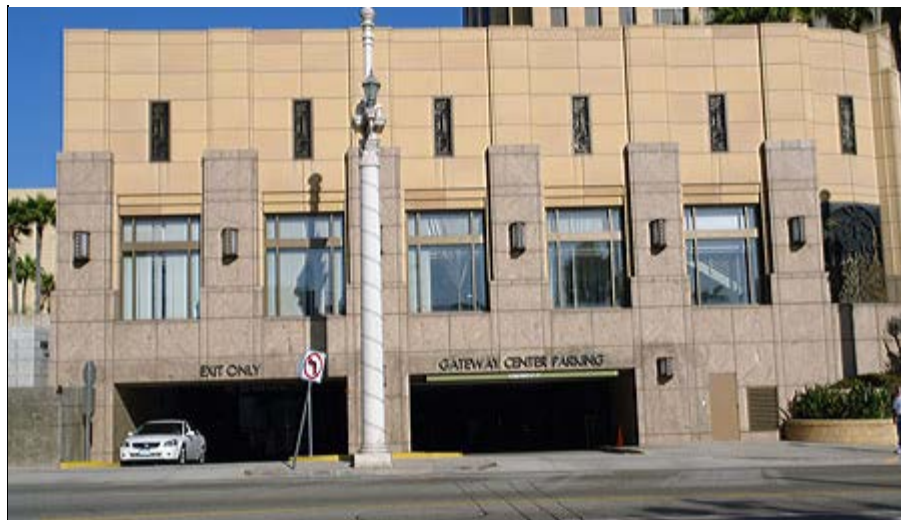
Six-foot steel vehicle gates with card readers are being installed in the south parking structure entrance.

Must carry ID badges

Beginning, Monday, July 24, employees will be required to carry their ID badges at all times in order to pass through the optical turnstiles. Metro Security officers will issue special badges with chips to visitors, including Metro retirees and dependents. Those badges will be marked with the visitor's destination floor. An employee who forgets to carry a badge will be issued a visitor's card.

Additional security cameras will be installed on the third floor to provide real-time video of anyone who attempts to bypass the turnstiles. Other cameras will be added throughout the building and parking structure to augment security.

"We're doing this because we're 'hardening' the facility against any potential terrorist act," says Brian Soto, director of General Services. "These security improvements will keep them away from the area of the main building."



The north entrance to the parking structure will be closed as of July 17.

Driving into the parking structure after the new security measures are in place will be much different. The north entrance off Vignes Street will be closed to all entering or exiting traffic beginning July 17. The north ramp between P-1 and P-2 also will be closed to traffic on July 31.

The parking entrance on Cesar Chavez Avenue will remain open for Metro employee vehicle entry and exit, with an access card, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Visitors may enter the parking garage through that portal on the same schedule, but can use it as an exit only between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays.

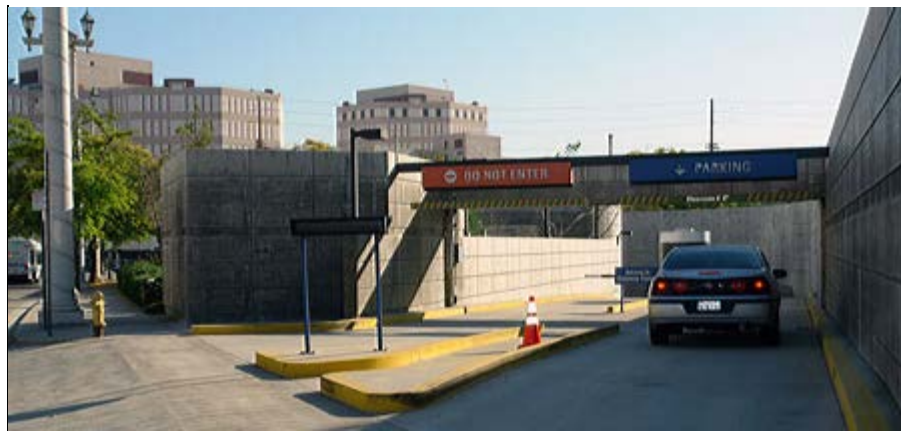


The south entry to the Gateway parking structure will become the main vehicle entrance.

South entrance stays open

The south parking structure entrance off Vignes Street will remain open, but only authorized Metro vehicles and vehicles driven by parents of children at the Child Care Center may turn right into the restricted area.

All other vehicles using the south entrance must turn left to park on P-1 or to use ramps down to parking on P-2 and P-3. P-4, which currently is used by law enforcement and FlyAway patrons, also will be accessible from the south entrance.



The "helical ramp" on Vignes Street will become a major parking garage entrance.

Finally, the "helical ramp," located on Vignes across from the Headquarters Building can be used to enter or exit the parking structure from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., weekdays. Visitors can exit from the helical ramp between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. After that time, they must exit from the south entrance. The helical ramp will be closed on weekends.

Soto reminds drivers exiting from the south entrance that they can only turn left. It is illegal to either go straight ahead onto Ramirez Street by Denny's or to turn right to enter the northbound 101 Freeway.



The exit from the south parking portal allows left turns only onto Vignes Street.

Metro has retained a traffic consultant to study the Vignes/Ramirez intersection to determine whether changes could be made to provide more options.

While he realizes that the security enhancements will take some getting used to, Soto says, "It will be a plus for us in increasing the security of the Headquarters Building. Over time, once employees learn the new procedure, I think they'll be happy with it."



The north ramp from P-1 to P-2 will be closed July 31.

Security Measures in Brief
<Turnstiles at third-floor entrances to Headquarters tower beginning July 24 <South entrance to parking garage to be main vehicle entrance <New entry gates and restricted parking on P-1 <North garage entrance to close July 17 <Ramp from P-1 to P-2 to close July 31 <New visitor hours for Cesar Chavez garage entrance <New hours for the "helical ramp" on Vignes Street <More security cameras