

Not quite ‘Sepulvedageddon’

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A favorite surface street alternative to the jammed 405 will be partly out of commission for six weeks.

It's long been a faithful alternate route for masses of motorists seeking to avoid the construction-plagued 405 Freeway, but now Sepulveda Boulevard is getting its own turn in the hot seat.

From Friday, March 14 through April 28, a half-mile stretch of the roadway from [Montana Avenue to Church Lane](#) will be completely closed during the weekends and every weeknight. It will have a single lane open in each direction during the work week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Workers will be completely reconstructing and paving this section of the roadway. A week later, they'll launch a similar effort on a .6 mile stretch of Sepulveda from [Mountaingate Drive to Skirball Center Drive](#), beginning March 21 and running through April 21.

Although there's been plenty of work on Sepulveda as the massive [405 Project](#) has unfolded—most notably for utility relocation—the upcoming rebuilding and resurfacing work represents the most extensive series of closures yet to hit the boulevard, which has received heavy use as an alternate route for years, even before freeway construction started in 2009.

“Sepulveda is the only primary alternative for the 405 in the corridor. It has always been popular,” said Edward Yu, who directs the city of Los Angeles’ [Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control Center](#) (ATSAC). Since the freeway project began, Sepulveda and other local roadways have felt the impact, he said.

“Sepulveda does carry a significant amount of traffic,” he said, noting that some 30,000 vehicles each day pass through the area of the upcoming closures.

Motorists will need to navigate the situation differently from the way they approached the extended freeway closures

of **Jamzilla** or the two **Carmageddons**.

“The impacts from Jamzilla and Carmageddon lasted only a weekend, while the work on Sepulveda may have impacts for up to six weeks,” Yu said. “This has different repercussions.”

Drivers might need to change their commuting patterns, leaving later or arriving earlier than usual. And they definitely should drive more carefully on the 405; distracted driving and the resulting fender-benders will be even more challenging with two sections of Sepulveda under construction.

“Sepulveda is going to work well as long as the 405 Freeway is flowing,” Yu said.

Even as they urge the public to be aware of the construction and plan accordingly, project officials have decided that the Sepulveda work does not rise to the level of getting its own nickname.

Dubbing it “Sepulvedageddon,” for instance, might suggest that the work is on the same level of the major, multi-hour closures of the freeway itself, said Metro spokesman Dave Sotero. In fact, he said, the Sepulveda work is “more complicated than a Carmageddon operation,” with staggered hours of full closures and lane reductions over a long period of time.

Metro is not doing any Carmageddon-style advertising, either. But that doesn’t mean that officials are treating the closures lightly. The city Department of Transportation will be doing its part to keep things moving through the area with additional traffic control officers, more signage and close monitoring by the traffic control center so that officials can adjust the timing of traffic signals if needed.

Still, “it’s going to take longer to get through this area,” Sotero said. “They anticipate traffic backing up as far as Wilshire.”

And if that happens, well, you can always ditch the trusted alternate route and hop on the freeway.

“This time,” Sotero said, “the 405’s coming to the rescue of Sepulveda Boulevard.”



Reconstruction and paving will smooth a patchwork of surfaces on Sepulveda. Photo/Metro

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