

# Date set for 405 carpool lane opening

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The major component of the 405 Project finally has an opening date. Photo/Westside Today

After five years of construction and epic freeway closures that drew international attention, the [405 Project](#) is nearly ready for its biggest milestone: opening of the 10-mile northbound carpool lane that's at the heart of the \$1 billion-plus endeavor.

Officials have set a date for the lane's grand opening—Friday, May 23, just in time for Memorial Day weekend traffic.

The lane opening doesn't spell the end of the project altogether; numerous smaller tasks, such as landscaping, remain. But it marks a major moment of relief for construction-weary residents and motorists who have endured years of disruptions through the Sepulveda Pass.

"People in this part of town have put up with a lot, and it's finally time for the public to begin experiencing one of the major benefits of this project," said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who represents the area and popularized a name, [Carmageddon](#), for the weekend-long closure heard 'round the world—[twice](#).

The 405 Freeway through the Sepulveda Pass, linking the San Fernando Valley and the Westside, is one of the nation's busiest traffic hotspots, and the carpool lane is the central element in the project to improve it.

The new northbound lane will close a gap in the 405's high-occupancy vehicle network and create the nation's longest continuous carpool lane. For the first time, it will be possible for a carpooler to drive seamlessly from the Orange County border to the 101 Freeway. A 2.4-mile stretch of the new lane on the 405 was [opened with little](#)

[fanfare](#) late last month, and is serving as a general purpose lane available to all motorists until the full carpool lane is inaugurated.

The carpool lane is not the only benefit to come out of the massive project, a joint undertaking by [Metro](#) and [Caltrans](#).

Workers also have rebuilt three major bridges across the freeway and constructed safer, wider new flyover ramps at Wilshire Boulevard, along with soundwalls and other improvements.

Taken as a whole, the project is expected to improve capacity and safety, and to help relieve worsening congestion on the perennially challenging freeway in the years ahead—although no one's claiming it will actually reduce the onslaught of traffic.

“Because of the project’s location and the constraints associated with development in the area, the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Improvements Project will not have a large influence on future traffic,” according to a [project fact sheet](#). However, improvements to the roadway are expected to help mitigate congestion as 405 traffic through the Sepulveda Pass increases from an estimated 300,000 vehicles a day now to 430,000 in 2030.

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