**That's all the time we have for questions. Doug, Murthy, any final thoughts?**

Doug:  We're working very closely with the Unified Command.  Moving traffic is very hard any time.  Coming together as Angelenos for unplanned emergencies is something that we've very well in the past.  Now that we have time to plan for it, let's make sure we do the same.  Rent a good movie, walk to a local restaurant, bike to a local store and spend quality time with your family!

Murthy:  Metro, Caltrans, City of LA, County of LA and other jurisdictions recognize this is going to be very challenging.  We understand that and are planning for all contingencies.  We will open by 5am on Monday morning.  We thank you for planning ahead, avoiding the impacted area or staying home.  Together we will celebrate a successful reopening on July 18th!

**will the more heavily traveled ramps, like Santa Monica Blvd - close latest and open earliest?**

Doug:  Not necessarily.  They will be closed and opened in a logical order either north to south or south to north.  All will be open by 6am Monday and none will be closed before 7pm on Friday.

**Will electronic message signs give a specific route to LAX from I-5/CA-14?**

Doug:  They will not.  Traffic is too dynamic.  If we provide a specific route, it will be crowded immediately.  We do not provide specific routes.  Instead, we provide them options.  For those of you who have those devices, we are working with Tom Tom, Magellan and Garmin to provide real time traffic information and closures on them.  Another great option is to call 511 for real time traffic conditions.

**I had a question, here at Saint John’s Hospital we have a lot of emergency on-call staff that are called in 24/7. With that said, will there be any type of consideration given to hospital staff that are being called in when the 405 closure goes into effect? Any information would be extremely helpful or if you had contact information on who I can check with, that would be just as helpful. Thank you!!!**

Murthy \*Doug:  The Unified Command will be available to address any emergency requests.  They have the largest air fleet and are ready to respond.  If there is a critical care surgeon with a critical need they have the ability to respond.  Your hospital may also want to have pre-staged medical personnel to respond during this weekend.

**I am most concerned about getting to and from work on Friday evening and monday morning, what is the absolute earliest and latest that the ramps will close and open?**

Murthy:  The ramps will close as early as 7pm on Friday and open by 6am on Monday.

**What is the possibility that the freeway will not open as planned on Monday morning?**

Doug:  It is an exceedingly low possibility.  Our construction guys have full control of the contractor and timing of the work. This has been planned very closely and we are confident we will open by 5am on Monday.

**Is it true that the southbound 405 freeway will be closed at Burbank Blvd, so the 101 ramps will not be available?**

Doug:  No, it isn't true.  The SB 405 will be open all the way to the 101 interchange.

**Were any other bridge demolition methods evaluated to avoid freeway closures?**

Murthy:  Yes.  This is the most appropriate for this location and type of bridge.  Many options were looked at, all required freeway closures.  Safety is of paramount support and this was the best option.

**Hello, my name is Jack, from Woodland Hills, my mother would like to know if she may have access to Sepulveda Blvd in the closed area at 4:00 a.m. on the 17th of July? She is due at the LAX. If no, any alternative suggestions would be greatly appreciated.**

Doug:  Yes, she can use Sepulveda Bl and may experience delays.  Another option is for her to get to the Van Nurys Flyaway.  Feel free to visit www.lawa.org/405 for ground transportation options.  She might also want to check real time traffic by calling 511.

**How will motorists on the Eastside be affected. will trips along the 110 to downtown be affected by spillover traffic?**

Doug:  Yes, spillover traffic will be felt region-wide.  We are encouraging people through greater LA area to shop locally, get to know your neighborhood.  Like during the Northridge earthquake and the I-5 tunnel fire, we need to come together as a region and do our part.

**Will bicycles be allowed on Mulholland Drive during construction, or will they be forced to use the tiny pedestrian path on the north side of the bridge?**

Murthy:  During the demolition weekend, Mulholland Bridge will be closed.  However, during reconstruction, it will be open to traffic.

**This is Ginger again, I have a few more questions. A Caltrans employee stated that all other construction projects near the 405/Sep Pass will be halted the weekend of July 16-17, can you confirm that? Also, what else can we expect with this construction project? I heard from a Caltrans employee an animal crossing is going to be built, is that correct?**

Doug:  Yes, Caltrans has contacted their other contracts and are canceling other work.  This is true for the 405 and other major routes being used to divert traffic.  Yes, there is an animal crossing over the Skirball Bridge as was covered in the environmental document.

**I work for a hospice agency. We service patients both in the valley and los angeles area. Will our staff be able to get to our paitnets in an emergent situation?**

Doug:  Facilities such as yours should have a contingency plan to get your staff where they need to be during this weekend.  If there is an emergency, please call 911.  There will be additional resources ready to respond and pre-staged resources are being made available through the closure area.

**With the closure only a couple weeks away why does it seem like there are still a lot of things that haven't been determined yet?**

Doug:  The plan is in place.  All major decisions have been made.  The only thing that we need to be prepared for is to move resources around because in a City the size of LA traffic is fluid and we need to be in a position to respond to those changes.  Traffic changes radically from day to day and weekend to weekend.  For 31 years in this field, I can attest to the fact that traffic changes and we must be prepared.

Murthy:  Citizens of this area have adjusted to traffic conditions in LA.  This will be a little different.  So, planning ahead, avoiding the impacted area or staying home will be a good option.

**Why can't you leave one lane open in each direction?**

Murthy: Because the potential for falling debris landing on the freeway below creates dangerous conditions for motorists. That's why we're lining the freeway with several feet of dirt -- to cushion the falling debris, so that the freeway below isn't damaged.

**Thank you for making this live chat available, I am just getting on now as I've had some child care issues so forgive me if you've already answered some of my questions. This is Ginger Chan from KTLA, I understand law enforcement wants to keep streets like Sepulveda Blvd open to residents only, for their access. I'd like to know if there will be barricades or officers checking ID?**

Doug & Murthy:  Hi Ginger.  Sepulveda Blvd will be open for local access.  There will be traffic control officers in the area to monitor real time traffic conditions.  However, they will not be checking ID's.  That would be contrary to the goal of moving traffic expeditiously.

**What will be the traffic restrictions on the Mulholland Bridge once the work starts and how long will the traffic restrictions be in effect?**

Murthy: The traffic will be trimmed back to 2 lanes (1 in each direction) and will stay that way for the duration of reconstruction.

**I'd like to encourage offering free rides on the 761. As someone else mentioned it is a rapid transit line that connects the Valley to the Westside. Metro should use the 405 closure as an opportunity to introduce Angelenos to transportation alternatives! Thanks for the chat.**

Doug:  Our Board has directed us to take a look at a number of bus lines, 761 is one of them.  As staff continue to evaluate which lines will be free, they will be posted on our website.  Please check back often at www.metro.net/405.

**We live on Roscomare Road, a mountain road just east of the 405. We have already seen an increase in traffic with work on the Sunset bridge. We have seen massive traffic jams with accidents on the 405. Will there by any traffic control on streets such as Roscomare Road so that we are not trapped in our neighborhood?**

**Doug:  Through the Unified Command we are working very closely with LA Dept of Transp.  The traffic control will be very dynamic and we'll be monitoring.  If necessary, we'll be prepared to reposition resources.**

**How did San Francisco survive when the Bay Bridge was closed down a few years ago?**

Doug: The bridge was closed for about 6 days in 2009 after several pieces of an emergency repair snapped and crashed into the upper deck. Luckily no one was hurt. They also had several long-weekend planned closures because they were building new pieces and adding. They did it over three days over long weekends. They prepared in exactly the same way we're doing here … notifying everyone and using the same techniques we're following. Somehow everyone coped with the closure. My understanding is that BART had near record ridership and the ferries were pretty full. Everyone made the best of it.

**Why not just demolish the WHOLE bridge? Why wait a year?**

Murthy:  The bridge  connects the east and west and need to have the ability to keep traffic moving.  Doing 1/2 at a time allows us to demolish and reconstruct one side at a time while maintaining traffic open to traffic on the other half.  It also allows emergency responders to get from one side of the bridge to the other.

**Why did you choose to close the 405 just when tens of thousands of people would want to head to the beach in the middle of July -- and what are such folks supposed to do if they still want to get to the beach without going crazy?**

Doug:  We are communicating early so that people who want to go to the beach can plan ahead or go a different weekend.  This first closure is during the summer.  And although there is a bit more traffic during the summer, these trips are also discretionary and there is flexibility in these trips.  We also coordinated with the local schools along the Mulholland Corridor and to reduce the congestion it was well timed to schedule during summer vacation.

**I work at UCLA on the weekends and live in the Valley. How am I supposed to get there?**

Doug: Try to change your work schedule. Do you have friends who live near UCLA? Maybe you could join them for the weekend. Metro is making the Metro Orange Line to the Red, Purple Line free for the weekend to help travelers avoid the 405. Buses will be running but service delays are expected. It all depends upon how many people decide they absolutely must be out and about that weekend. We're hoping most people will decide to stay home or close to home.

**I understand that 5 feet of dirt will be laid down on the freeway to protect against damage caused by falling concrete. What happens if you discover damage after the dirt has been removed?**

Murthy:  Yes, we will cover the fwy with 5-6 feet of dirt so the fwy is not damages.  However, should there be damages, we have standby trucks with concrete & asphalt to make repairs prior to opening.  This is our standard practice.

**When will the next freeway closure to demolish the north side of the Mulholland Bridge happen?**

Murthy: In about a year.

**Some of the Metro routes are already running above capacity before this closure, how much excess capacity can we expect? Extra buses or Metro cars.**

Doug:  On weekends there is a reduction in the amount of traffic we see generally on our system.  However, with the free rides we're offering on the additional trains and buses, we anticipate higher volumes.  However, best option will be to stay home.

Murthy:  SF Valley Citizens Adv Council have requested that certain bus routes be increased.  We are exploring that with our Bus Operations.

**Who's warning the tourists and trucks driving in from the north that the freeway will be closed?**

Doug: Caltrans has posted dozens of electronic freeway signs throughout California to alert travelers planning on heading our way. We have contacted the trucking industry directly and have established trucking alternate routes. We've contacted media all over the state and nationally. And since a lot of people use GPS devices, we're working with Magellan, Tom Tom and Garmin to let their users know of the closure. The goal is to get the word out to as many people as possible, although there will of course be people who are surprised. The hope is that there won't be too many.

**Will there be additional police and fire patrol through the canyons that people will use as alternates? Will there be additional signage reminding people not to throw cigarette butts out their windows in these HIGH-FIRE DANGER zones?**

**Yes, both police and fire will be prepositioned within the closure area to address traffic issues and emergency response issues.**

**Wouldn't it be better to invest in public transportation instead of making such huge investments with the economy having seen better days?**

Doug:  Really in LA we're looking at a balanced transportation system.  Metro is making heavy investments in the transit system as well as selected highway projects.  We move people in many different ways.  We need all different tools in our tool kit.

Murthy:  Not one technology moves all people.  Metro is aiming to move all people.  We look at ways to add capacity and making the system work smarter.

**If something gets delayed and the freeway won't open as planned - how soon would you have that information and when would it be communicated to employers?**

Doug:  The media will be broadcasting the status of the opening throughout the weekend.  However, we have no reason to believe that we won't be open by 5am.  We will.

In many cases with all construction projects, things tend to fall behind schedule. Is there any chance that this closure would need to be extended? Have you already considered time to "pad" within that 53 hours?

Murthy:  We have analyzed the demolition process many times and have contingency plans.  We are working with Caltrans very closely and have every reason to believe that we will be open by 5am on Monday morning.

**In your 30 years with Caltrans, have you ever seen a freeway closure as daunting as this one?**

Doug: Yes. Following the Northridge earthquake, when I was with Caltrans, I worked on the I-10, Newhall Pass Interchange, the State Route 14 and I-5 closures. Among the most daunting was the I-5 tunnel fire closure in 2007. A truck speeding in heavy rain lost control and went sideways on a connector road creating a chain reaction that involved 15 big rigs and cars, resulting in a fire inside a tunnel underneath the I-5 and shutting down the I-5 for a very long, very intense weekend. Traffic was backed up for hours. All of these were challenges, both from an engineering and a traffic standpoint. But with the public's cooperation we get through them. And that's what we need to have happen with the 405 closure.

**Will there be closures of certain 101 freeway exits nearing the 101/405 to prevent congestion in the local communities. For example, will the Haskell Ave exit of the 101 be closed given many commuters may attempt to take this exit as the 405 will be closed?**

Doug:  Yes, Haskell off ramps will be closed.

**What is the latest you will know if any complications have arisen such that the 405 will not reopen on schedule Monday morning? Or will it be a moment by moment decision as Sunday night / early Monday morning progresses? For example, will you know by 11pm Sunday night that the freeway will definitely reopen per schedule?**

Murthy:  We have broken the work elements into timed segments and have an approach to monitoring these segments.  We have no reason to believe it will not reopen on Monday by 5am for safe commuting.

**Can a list of ramp closures and scheduled times be provided in advance (or, if it has, can you point us to it)?**

Doug & Murthy:  There is a list of ramp closures on the website.  Take a look at the detour maps.  The ramps will begin closing as early at 7pm to set up for a complete closure by midnight.  www.metro.net/405

**My wedding is July 16th in Malibu off the PCH. We've hired a shuttle bus for our guest but is there anything you can do/or suggest we do to ensure our bus gets there on time? Aside from the obvious "leave early"? Thanks!**

Doug:  Really, the best option will be to plan ahead and leave early.  Your drivers may consider calling 511 to get real time traffic and also visit metro.net/405 for alternate freeway maps.

Murthy:  You may also want to follow the project on our Twitter account, Facebook or Nixle.  That will be another great source of information.

**Why isn't the 761 free? The subway doesn’t connect the Valley to the Westside but the 761 does.**

Doug: Stay tuned. Metro is considering that possibility. If it happens, it will be announced on The Source on metro.net and on metro.net/405.

Considering usual weekend volume, what times do you anticipate the worst congestion on Saturday and Sunday? Thx, C Hughes

Doug:  Worst conditions may be between 10am and 2pm and again around 6pm until around 8pm.  We'd expect normal weekend conditions, but the amount of delay will be higher due to traffic diversion.

Murthy:  We strongly recommend that those who do not need to be on the freeways, stay off the freeway.  We all have to do our part.  We should avoid unnecessary travel trips unless absolutely needed.

**Are there any detours to help minimize delays for buses from the Valley to the Westside? Or are you closing down bus service the weekend of the 405 closure?**

Doug: All normally scheduled lines will be running and only one line will be detouring. Instead of running on the 405, Metro Rapid 761 will run via Sepulveda Blvd. through the pass. Metro is also adding service on Lines 2, 150, 534, 704, 720, 733 and 761. But passengers should expect extended travel time when using services in West LA and the southern SFV/405 area.

**Will the rush hours highway rescue vehicles patrol the highways that weekend?**

Doug:  Yes.  In fact, we are putting additional resources out that weekend that will superceed normal weekday scheduled service.

**What businesses will be closing over the July 16-17 weekend?**

Murthy: We don't know every closure but we do know that the Skirball Cultural Center, the Getty Center and Bel-Air Presbyterian Church are all closing for the weekend so as to be good neighbors and not to contribute to the congestion.

**What is being doing to mitigate the traffic impacts through the local cities impacted by the closure? Will there be traffic directors / timed traffic lights?**

Murthy & Doug:  We are working with LAPD and LA Dept of Trans, both will be monitoring traffic conditions on the street and evaluating signalization.  The best mitigation is for people to avoid the area and stay home - meet your neighbors!

**I'm flying in to LAX from Chicago to see friends on July 16th and just found out about the freeway closure. Will I be able to get to Pasadena without trouble?**

Doug: No. The LAX website ([www.lawa.org/405](http://www.lawa.org/405)) is advising arriving passengers to take shared-ride transit to their destinations, rather than having friends pick them up at the airport. The LAX website has links to more than a half dozen public transit options. By picking up the free shuttle to the Metro Green Line, to the Blue Line, to the Red/Purple Line, to the Gold Line to Pasadena you can really experience the greater share of our transit system in one trip and impress your friends. Buy the Day Pass. It will be cheaper for you.

**How are you handling any Medical Emergecies that might arise over the weekend... For example: I live in the Antelope Valley and my Families Hospital is UCLA**

Doug:  If there is an emergency and you are in AV, you would be better off seeking emergency assistance locally.  You'll want to get to the closest available hospital.  If you make a scheduled appointment, you will want to plan ahead.

**Once the bridge is removed, what will the new bridge look like and how long will it take to construct?**

Murthy:  The new bridge will look exactly the same at the same locations.  It will be longer and wider.  It will take us about 11 months to reconstruct the side we are demolishing on the weekend of July 16th.  A year later approximately, we will demolish and reconstruct the other side.

**What happens to the Monday morning commute if the work isn't finished?**

Murthy: We plan to open the freeway by 5 a.m. Monday, July 18. The contractor, Metro and Caltrans fully understand the public's concerns about making sure the work is safely completed by early Monday morning. The team has worked up a schedule and contingency plans that will meet this deadline and we will be monitoring this every step of the way.

**1. Will the signal lights for the alternative routes be synchronized or timed to minimize the anticipated delays along the 405 corridor (e.g. Sepulveda, Veteran, Bundy, etc) and major east/west bound arteries (e.g. Sunset, Ventura Blvd)? 2. What is the anticipated affect of the closure on 10 FWY and 101 FWY’s 3. What if anything is being done to minimize the affected delays on the 10 and 101 fwy’s? 4. How far east and west do you think the impact will be felt?**

Murthy:  LA Dept of Transportation will be monitoring all the signalized intersections to ensure the swift movement of traffic.

Doug:  We anticipate a lot of additional traffic on both freeways.  We encourage people to stay home, shop locally, bbq.  The entire LA area will be impacted and heavily congested if people do not take the advice of not traveling that weekend.  Explore your community!

Doug:  We're getting the information out, using freeway service patrols, deploying traffic assets available to us to minimize delays.  The best option for you as an individual is to avoid all routes.

Doug:  From the Ocean to the Downtown LA and Pasadena.

**Is it possible to take the train to the orange county fair that weekend? I live in simi valley and have tickets to see Dylan Friday night at 8pm. I would like to take public transportation. Thank you.**

Murthy: We're not sure about the connections but you're thinking creatively and that's great. Make sure you check the Metrolink website for times (metrolinktrains.com). And if that doesn’t work for you, try Amtrak. Also check the County Fair website to make sure they have a shuttle running between the Santa Ana Station and the Fair. It's a great time to try it. Metrolink is going to supplement its current weekend schedule by offering seven round-trips on the Ventura County Line and nine additional trips on the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line during the closure weekend. Metrolink will also offer its $10 Weekend Pass, which will enable passengers to ride any Metrolink train, as many times as they would like between Friday night at 7 p.m. and Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. for one low rate.

**My international flight arrives @ 2:30 pm Sat. July 16th and I live in Westwood. What mode of transportation would you recommend and what route? Will the Westwood Flywaway be running?**

Murthy & Doug:  We are partnering and coordinating with LA World Airports on real time traffic.  Your best option is to visit www.lawa.org/405 for ground transportation options.  They will have detour and closure information.

**It’s easy to understand the impact the closing will have on the 405, 10, 101, and PCH. Can you share your predictions for the potential impact upon freeways that are not directly connected to the area involved – e.g. the 110, 105 and 5? Thank you. Hamilton Cloud, office of Congresswoman Maxine Waters**

Doug: In general, all the freeway routes in Los Angeles will experience much higher volume and on some selected routes a great deal more congestion during this weekend. The routes close to central business district (5, 10, 60, 101, 110 and 210) will experience the most congestion since these are the closest routes to the project area. The idea of staying home and shopping locally isn't just for the Westside and San Fernando Valley. It's really going to take all of us Angelinos working together (downtown, South Bay, San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities area) by staying home and shopping locally to keep our region moving. Some of us can't stay home but most of us can. We should.

**Will ON-Ramps to I-405 approaching the closure be closed to avoid adding to the inevitable congestion on I-405?**

Doug & Murthy:  The ramp closures will begin at 7pm on the 15th to allow for a gradual closure.  The connectors will close at the time of the full closure.  However, there will be sufficient signage in advance of closure alerting drivers.

**How far behind is the project overall? What is new projected deadline for completion? Why isn't public kept better updated on changes? For example, Sunset Bridge is definitely behind posted schedule.**

Murthy:  The project is not currently behind schedule.  We are working out the elements of the project, particularly those that require coordination with other entities.  The project is on schedule.

**I understand there will be free Metro services during this time. Does that mean free Metro Rail and Bus service?**

Murthy:  We are working which lines will provide service.  We will be providing free rail and some bus service.  Please visit www.metro.net/405 for a complete list.  thank you.

**Dear Gentleperson, I live in the San Fernando Valley (Tarzana). My plane gets be back into LAX at about 1:00am on Monday morning July 18. The freeway will reopen at 5:00am. I plan on taking the Van Nuys Flyaway back to the Valley shortly after 1:am. Will the Flyaway bus still be operating? Will it be allowed to use Sepulveda or any other route for that matter? Thank you.**

Doug:  Yes, you may want to check the LAX website for scheduling.  Visit www.lawa.org/405.  Thank you.

Will the closure affect the LAX traffic coming from Long Beach? James Lee

Doug:  Potentially not.  We're a little more concerned about detour traffic from the north who will try to take the 405.  From Long Beach to LAX, you should be okay.  We will be monitoring traffic control and relaying message on changeable message signs and with the media.  When traveling check early and learn about real time traffic conditions.

**I would like to know what the Flyaway is going to do about the closure of the 405 freeway on July 16th. Will there be service and how. Thank you.**

Doug: The Van Nuys Flyaway will be running its regular schedule but detouring through downtown Los Angeles. Travelers are being cautioned on the Flyaway website to begin their trip to the airport at least 1-2 hours earlier than normal. If you absolutely have to go to the airport on that weekend, another option is public transit (Metro or Metrolink) to Union Station in downtown L.A. and catch the LAX Flyaway there. You can also use the Metro Green Line and the shuttle. Go to the LAX website for developing details: [www.lawa.org/405](http://www.lawa.org/405) Or call the Flyaway for updates 1-866-435-9529.

**Will there be adequate traffic control on Sepulveda and other access roads to the Westside?**

Murthy and Doug:  Yes.  We are working with LADOT and the Unified Command.  There will be traffic control officers out there.  Sepulveda will be open to local access and recommend that anyone who does not live in the mountain roads stay away from the area.

**At what time and date will the 405 be closed, and at what time and date do you expect it to be reopened?**

Murthy:  The closure will begin the evening of the 15th with a gradual closure of the ramps starting as early as 7pm and lanes being taken one at a time starting at 10pm for a full closure at midnight, July 16th.

Doug:  We will reopen Monday morning by 5am, July 18th.

Good afternoon, Doug and Krishniah. Thanks for hosting today's live chat. Let's start out with the question everyone seems to be asking: Why does the freeway have to be closed for two solid days in both directions, when it wasn't for the Sunset and Skirball bridge demolitions.

Doug and Murthy: Since the Sunset and Skirball bridges had center columns, we could demolish the bridge in two segments by closing the freeway in one direction only. Here on the Mulholland Bridge, we have a single span bridge with no center column. Therefore, we have to demolish the half of the bridge as one span. We will do half now and the other half after reconstructing the demolish half. Safety takes top priority. The bottom line: It's impossible to safely conduct a demolition operation over live traffic.