

Washington State Department of Transportation – NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Temporary closure of two popular I-5 and SR 16 ramps in Tacoma begins in April

Changes will require drivers to plan extra time for daily commutes

TACOMA – A new stage of construction on the [I-5/SR 16 Realignment and Connections HOV project](#) this spring will bring temporary ramp closures and traffic switches for Tacoma commuters.

As early as April 6, Washington State Department of Transportation contractor Skanska will close the South Sprague Avenue ramp to southbound Interstate 5 through the end of May. Crews will also close the eastbound ramp to South 38th Street for approximately one week. The closures allow crews to rebuild the southbound collector/distributor lane that runs between eastbound State Route 16 and southbound I-5, and the South 38th Street ramps.

South Sprague Avenue ramp closure and SR 16 HOV lane shift

In order to rebuild the connecting ramps between eastbound SR 16 and southbound I-5, crews will shift eastbound SR 16 drivers headed to southbound I-5 onto [newly-built SR 16 HOV lanes](#). The work also requires closing the South Sprague Avenue on-ramp to southbound I-5. During the approximate two month closure, South Sprague Avenue drivers will use the following [detour](#):

- South Sprague Avenue to southbound I-5 drivers will detour to westbound SR 16, exit at South Union Avenue and merge on to eastbound SR 16, where drivers will merge into the left lanes and continue to southbound I-5.

This ramp closure, detour and the traffic shift for eastbound SR 16 travelers will remain in place until work on the eastbound SR 16 to southbound I-5 collector/distributor lanes is complete.

Southbound I-5/South 38th Street east interchange

For seven days, crews will [close the eastbound South 38th Street ramp to traffic](#) so it can be modified for a future phase of construction. Currently this ramp allows drivers from southbound I-5 and State Route 16 to exit to eastbound South 38th Street towards Tacoma's South End and Eastside neighborhoods.

During the closure, travelers intending to exit at eastbound South 38th Street will be detoured as follows:

- Eastbound SR 16 drivers will follow southbound I-5 and exit to South 56th Street, merge onto northbound I-5 and use exit #132 to South 38th Street.
- Southbound I-5 drivers will exit to South 56th Street, merge back onto northbound I-5 and take exit #132 to South 38th Street.

Southbound I-5 drivers coming from Fife who normally use the eastbound South 38th Street exit can avoid detouring to South 56th Street by taking the exit to SR 7 to reach South 38th Street.

During this seven-day closure, the southbound I-5 exit 132A to westbound South 38th Street will remain open, but as an exit only.

Once the eastbound South 38th Street ramp reopens, southbound I-5 and eastbound SR 16 drivers exiting to South 38th Street may turn right or left at the top of the ramp. Traffic will be controlled by a temporary traffic signal. This gives drivers full access to South 38th Street while crews rebuild the westbound ramp.

The South 38th Street on-ramp to southbound I-5 will remain open during construction.

Poor weather conditions could delay the timing of the closures.

Visit the Tacomatraffic.com web page for updated HOV construction information. Real-time traveler information is available from the [WSDOT app](#) and by following the [WSDOT regional Twitter feed](#).

Hyperlinks within the release:

- I-5/SR16 HOV Structure and Connections: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/SR16Realignment/default.htm
- Newly-built SR 16 HOV lanes: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot/44064281185/in/album-72157683414067255/
- Detour: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/SR16Realignment/Map.htm
- Close the eastbound South 38th Street ramp to traffic: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot/46742201514/
- Tacomatraffic.com: www.wsdot.wa.gov/construction/pugetsound/tacoma.htm
- WSDOT app: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Inform/mobile.htm
- WSDOT regional Twitter feed: twitter.com/wsdot_tacoma

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