

Segment 1A (Heritage Road to Interstate 805)

What is Segment 1A?

Segment 1A is the final segment of construction from Heritage Road to Interstate 805 (I-805) along East Palomar Street. Work on this segment began earlier this month and is scheduled to be complete in December 2018. Construction activities include reconfiguring the roadway, clearing landscape, replanting new shrubs and trees, and adding numerous safety features to make the corridor a more pedestrian-friendly environment. In addition, several non-signalized intersections will be upgraded with state-of-the-art traffic signals and improved pedestrian crossing zones.

Why was East Palomar Street selected as the preferred route for mass transit in Chula Vista and not Olympic Parkway or Telegraph Canyon Road?

For more than 30 years, a freeway interchange at I-805 and East Palomar Street has been part of Chula Vista's General Plan. It was determined in the 1990s that a traditional freeway interchange was not feasible at this location due to the proximity of nearby interchanges. However, because it was planned as a mass transit corridor, Caltrans informed the City of Chula Vista that instead the interchange could be planned as a "Direct Access Ramp" which would allow buses, carpools, vanpools, motorcycles and permitted EV vehicles direct access to the I-805 carpool lanes. Additionally, the SANDAG countywide 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) showed that mass transit would be feasible in this corridor due to the adjacent land uses in Otay Ranch, and the overall travel patterns for South County. The RTP has shown the rapid bus system route, including the East Palomar Street segment through Chula Vista, since the MOBILITY 2030 plan was approved in 2003.

How will the *Rapid* buses access the freeway?

The South Bay *Rapid* route was designed to seamlessly connect with the East Palomar Street Direct Access Ramp (DAR), Transit Station and Park & Ride, which was completed in early 2017. These new facilities will provide *Rapid* buses with access to the carpool (HOV) lanes, as well as a convenient location for transit users to connect to other services. Additionally, carpools, vanpools, motorcycles, and solo drivers in permitted clean-air vehicles can also access the HOV lanes via the DAR.

Will this project create a safety hazard or unsafe condition for parents and children walking to Hedenkamp Elementary School?

No, in fact the project will enhance the safety of pedestrians by maintaining or increasing the width of the sidewalks throughout most of the project. The sidewalk width may be slightly reduced along the north side of East Palomar Street from Brashear Place to Paseo Ladera. In this area, the existing sidewalk is 10 feet wide and the new width will range from 8-10 feet to accommodate infrastructure components including fire hydrants and utility boxes. Landscaped buffer zones with trees and shrubs near sidewalks will be replanted upon completion of work on this segment.

How will pedestrians cross the street with six lanes of traffic?

The project will modify the existing traffic signal at Hedenkamp Elementary School and improve the crosswalk zone and pedestrian visibility. Once a pedestrian crossing signal phase is initiated directing pedestrians to cross the street, the traffic signal technology will end the *Rapid* buses' priority, and provide pedestrians with a full crossing phase allowing them to cross the street uninterrupted. The existing driveway to the school will not be modified.

Will there be new traffic signals installed along East Palomar Street?

Yes, 12 new traffic signals will be constructed along the route at the following locations:

- Town Center Drive
- Magdalena Avenue
- View Park Way
- Vista Sonrisa Avenue
- Santa Delphina Avenue
- Santa Flora Road
- Santa Alicia Avenue
- Santa Maria Drive/Santa Sierra Drive
- Santa Carina Road/Santa Olivia Road
- Medical Center Court
- Sunbow Plaza Shopping Center
- Oleander Avenue

How many *Rapid* vehicles will travel by Hedenkamp Elementary School?

During peak hours (6-9 a.m. and 3-6 p.m.), eight buses will be traveling on East Palomar Street, four in each direction. During off peak hours and on weekends, four buses per hour will be traveling on East Palomar Street, two in each direction. *Rapid* vehicles will adhere to posted speed signs of 35 MPH, and 25 MPH in designated school zones.

What will happen to the bike lanes along East Palomar Street?

The width of the current bike lanes will be reduced from 7-8 feet to 5 feet. The City of Chula Vista will continue to evaluate special event parking near the Hedenkamp Elementary School on a case-by-case basis.

How will drivers on East Palomar Street be affected by *Rapid* transit and the new traffic signals?

With full signalization of the corridor, drivers can save significant amounts of time in their daily commutes and local trips. The addition of traffic signals at intersections that are currently controlled by stop signs, along with Traffic Signal Priority (TSP), will allow drivers along East Palomar Street to benefit whether or not a *Rapid* vehicle is progressing through the guideway.

How will *Rapid* transit service and the guideway impact emergency access vehicles access?

Emergency vehicles that use this route to the hospital will have emergency vehicle pre-emption at all intersections and will be able to use the guideway, resulting in fewer travel delays to Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center.

Will you reduce the number of general purpose lanes on East Palomar Street?

No. The project will maintain the current road configuration of two eastbound and two westbound general purpose lanes, with a slight reduction in lane widths from 12 feet to 11 feet, which has been shown¹ to encourage drivers to slow down. A two-lane dedicated *Rapid* transit guideway will be added in the median of the roadway.

Does the project's final design incorporate accessibility improvements to East Palomar Street?

Yes. The project widens sidewalks, maintains the 10-foot shared use path along the south side of East Palomar Street, constructs new pedestrian ramps, and installs the latest ADA-compliant programmable *Polara Navigator Accessible Pedestrian Signal Systems* with audible "remaining pedestrian time" count-down.

How will construction impact current MTS bus routes?

Current San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus routes will remain in service during construction in and around the work area. MTS bus stops located along East Palomar Street may be temporarily taken out of service or relocated during construction. Once construction is completed, some local MTS buses will use *Rapid* stations and the dedicated transit guideway, while continuing to use their designated stops on East Palomar Street.

Traducción al español disponible a solicitud.

References:

1- National Association of City Transportation Officials. *Urban Street Design Guide*. New York, NY 10017. nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/street-design-elements/lane-width. October 2013