

Superstition in Tempe is closed for weekend

The short and simple of it: Avoid U.S. 60 (the Superstition Freeway) in Tempe this weekend.

Starting at 9 p.m. today, the Arizona Department of Transportation is shutting the freeway between Mill Avenue and Rural Road, mainly because a new pedestrian bridge is being installed over U.S. 60 at College Avenue. The freeway will reopen at 5 a.m. Monday.

If you want to bypass the mess by using freeways, try Loop 101 or Arizona 143 (Hohokam Expressway) for north-south travel or Loop 202 for east-west driving.

Traffic can still access eastbound U.S. 60 from eastbound Interstate 10, but the ramp will be cut to two lanes. The ramp from westbound I-10 to eastbound U.S. 60 will be closed.

"We're trying to discourage people from going that way, east on U.S. 60 from I-10," ADOT's Matt Burdick said.

However, ADOT decided against closing U.S. 60 completely through Tempe, fearing it would overload both I-10 and Loop 101 at their interchanges with the Superstition Freeway.

Other ramp closures include: the ramps from Loop 101 to westbound U.S. 60, the westbound U.S. 60 on-ramps at McClintock Drive and

BUMPER TO BUMPER



BOB PETRIE

The Arizona Republic

Dobson Road and the eastbound on-ramp at Priest Drive.

About 170,000 vehicles use U.S. 60 through Tempe daily.

Other weekend closures and restrictions:

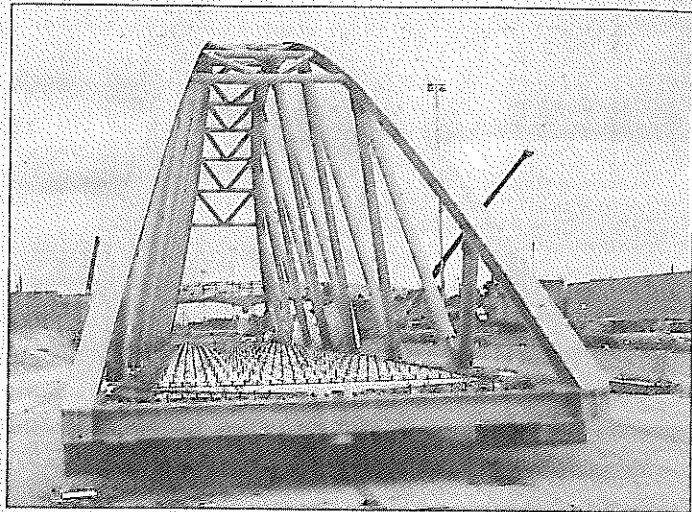
■ In west Phoenix from 7 p.m. today until early Monday, 59th Avenue will be closed from Van Buren Street to Buckeye Road for sewer work. Use 51st or 67th avenues.

■ In Tucson from 8 p.m. today until 5 a.m. Monday, westbound I-10 will be restricted to two lanes from Ruthrauff to Ina roads for bridge joint repairs. Use the I-10 frontage road as an alternate.

■ In Phoenix from 10 p.m. Saturday until 4 a.m. Sunday, the eastbound I-10 ramp into Sky Harbor International Airport will be closed.

Use the airport entrance at 24th Street and Buckeye Road.

Reach Petrie at bumper@arizonarepublic.com or at (602) 444-7941.



Mike Ryneanson/The Arizona Republic

A new pedestrian bridge sits ready for installation across U.S. 60 at College Avenue in Tempe this weekend.

Prefab footbridge ready for freeway

By Bob Petrie
The Arizona Republic

Say hello to a sleek new steel bridge in Tempe and so long to an old friend that has carried bicyclists and pedestrians over the Superstition Freeway for three decades.

The freeway will be shut down this weekend so that a giant crane can lift the twin bow-truss bridge into place, just east of the existing concrete span with twisting concrete ramps at College Avenue.

The work requires a full shutdown of U.S. 60 in both directions between Mill Avenue and Rural Road from 9 p.m. Friday until 5 a.m. Monday.

Local detours will be Southern Avenue and Baseline Road. Through traffic can avoid the closure by using Loop 202 and Loop 101.

There will be two more full closures on U.S. 60, one next weekend and one in mid-May, as workers finish the new bridge and then tear the old

one down.

The new \$1.5 million pedestrian overpass, desert rose in color, is 200 feet long and 12 feet wide. Its design was inspired by the railroad bridge across Tempe Town Lake.

"It's a nice-looking bridge, very simple," says Matt Burdick, spokesman for the Arizona Department of Transportation.

The public can watch from the old span as workers run the 500-ton crane to put the bridge into place, starting at about 6:30 a.m. Saturday. The new bridge was crafted by Schuff Steel of Phoenix.

But Mike Etherington of Tempe, who makes two trips over the freeway at College Avenue each week, liked the character of the old bridge, with its curly-Q ramp approaches.

"I'm interested to see the new one but sad to see the old one torn down," he said.

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