



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Transition to New Road Alignment to Begin September 8 as Improvements at the Grand Canyon Visitor Center and Mather Point Continue

Grand Canyon, Ariz. –As the first phase of improvements called for in Grand Canyon National Park’s South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan (SRVT) nears completion, the transition to the new South Entrance Road alignment will begin on Tuesday, September 8.

During the transition, there will be no vehicular access to Mather Point, and only commercial vehicles and shuttle buses will have access to the plaza at the Grand Canyon Visitor Center (Visitor Center). All pedestrian access to Mather Point via the paved Rim Trail and the 0.2 mile walking path from the Visitor Center will still be open.

The transition should be completed no later than Friday, September 11. Once the transition is complete all vehicular access to Mather Point and the Visitor Center will be via the new South Entrance Road alignment south and west of the Visitor Center.

During this transition, visitors coming to the South Rim by way of Highway 64 through Tusayan, Arizona are encouraged to take advantage of the free park-and-ride shuttle between Tusayan and the Visitor Center. The Visitor Center acts as a hub for shuttle service in the park; and visitors will be able to access major trail heads, hotels and services located in the Grand Canyon Village, as well as the shuttle interchange for the Hermit Road viewpoints, from the Visitor Center shuttle stop.

Visitors who choose to drive their vehicles into Grand Canyon Village during this transition should expect parking to be limited and are advised to park at their hotel or campground or in one of the park’s designated parking lots upon arrival, then utilize the park’s free shuttle system to get around and to gain access to canyon viewpoints.

All vehicles, private and commercial, entering Grand Canyon Village during this transition will be diverted from the South Entrance Road onto Center Road. **Drivers should watch for signs**

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and flaggers indicating this detour and should use extreme caution on Center Road as it travels through a school zone.

Beginning September 8, commercial tour vehicles will be able to park in the new commercial tour bus lot located west of the Grand Canyon Visitor Center. During this brief transition period, the commercial bus lot will be accessed via the Yavapai Lodge road.

All of the park's free shuttle buses are fully accessible; and the mobility impaired are encouraged to park in lot E near the Backcountry Information Center where pavement conditions and available handicapped parking provide the best access to the park's free shuttle service. During the transition, the Visitor Center will continue to be fully accessible to the mobility impaired via the Village Route shuttle.

Once the transition to the new South Entrance Road alignment has been completed:

- parking at Mather Point will be re-opened with access from the west end of the parking lot only;
- the park's free shuttle system will continue to serve the Visitor Center from the shuttle stop on the west end of the Visitor Center plaza;
- commercial tour vehicles will continue to park in the new commercial tour bus lot west of the Visitor Center and will access this parking lot via the new road alignment.

Construction on the Phase I improvements will continue once the transition to the new South Entrance Road alignment is completed. The remaining improvements include:

- the completion of three visitor parking lots that will provide convenient Visitor Center parking for up to 600 vehicles; and
- irrigation, rehabilitation and revegetation of disturbed areas.

Construction on these improvements is expected to be completed by December 2009.

Up to date information on this project will be posted on the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/cvip09.htm. For more on the transition and associated road and parking closures, please contact Public Affairs Specialist Shannan Marcak at 928-638-7958. For more on the improvements being made at Mather Point and the Grand Canyon Visitor Center, please contact Project Manager Vicky Stinson at 928-774-3026.

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