

# Shuttle Endeavour to embark on two-day road trip

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Officials and media arrive for a news conference inside a hanger built as the temporary home for the Endeavour Space Shuttle at the California Science Center in Los Angeles on Wednesday Aug. 8, 2012. California Science Center officials say the space shuttle Endeavour is tentatively scheduled to arrive at LAX on Sept. 20, 2012 and will remain at the airport until Oct. 13, 2012 when it will be transported through city streets to science center in Exposition Park. It is scheduled to open to the public on Oct. 30. (AP Photo/Richard Vogel)

(AP) — Space shuttle Endeavour once zoomed through the cosmos at

17,500 mph (28,160 kph). But its final journey will be a crawl through the streets of Los Angeles at 2 mph (3 kph).

The giant spaceship will creep to its new home at the California Science Center in October, officials said Wednesday. Hundreds of trees, power lines and street lights will be pulled down to make way.

"You're never going to see a space shuttle going down the street again," said science center President Jeffrey N. Rudolph.

The earthbound trip will take the 170,000-pound (77,100-kilogram) orbiter 12 miles (20 kilometers) from the LAX airport through Inglewood and into the city of Los Angeles where the museum just south of downtown will place it on display.

The shuttle is as fragile as it is gigantic. Its tail is 58 feet (18 meters) tall. And it has a 78-foot (24-meter) wingspan. But its heat-resistant nose tiles can be cracked by a fingernail, according to NASA officials.

It will cost about \$25 million to prepare and move the shuttle without damaging it, Rudolph said.

The two-day road trip will start Oct. 12. Four self-propelled, wheeled vehicles linked by computer will roll it through the streets as a controller walks along guiding them with a joystick.



Workers at the California Science Center in Los Angeles, clean windows in front of the temporary home for the Endeavour Space Shuttle prior to a news conference on Wednesday Aug. 8, 2012. Science Center officials say the space shuttle Endeavour is tentatively scheduled to arrive at LAX on Sept. 20, 2012 and will remain at the airport until Oct. 13, 2012 when it will be transported through city streets to science center in Exposition Park. It is scheduled to open to the public on Oct. 30, 2012. (AP Photo/Richard Vogel)

Endeavour's return to California will mark a homecoming. It was assembled in Palmdale, northeast of Los Angeles. And its first mission ended at Edwards Air Force Base in the Mojave Desert.

Endeavour completed its 25th mission last year. It was delivered to NASA in 1991 and was the final shuttle built, replacing Challenger, which was destroyed on launch in 1986.

The ship will be placed atop a Boeing 747 at the Kennedy Space Center

in Florida for a piggyback ride to Los Angeles, arriving on Sept. 20 if weather permits, officials said.

The jetliner is expected to ceremoniously fly around Southern California landmarks, but the route is still under discussion and details were not confirmed, Rudolph said.



Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa talks at a news conference inside the temporary home of the Endeavour Space Shuttle at the California Science Center in Los Angeles on Wednesday Aug. 8, 2012. California Science Center officials say the space shuttle Endeavour is tentatively scheduled to arrive at LAX on Sept. 20, 2012 and will remain at the airport until Oct. 13, 2012 when it will be transported through city streets to science center in Exposition Park. It is scheduled to open to the public on Oct. 30. (AP Photo/Richard Vogel)

Before it lands, authorities will have to remove and reposition high-

voltage transmission lines, along with signs, traffic signals, more than 200 streetlights and about 300 trees in order to accommodate the shuttle's land transportation.

Two trees will be replanted for each tree taken down, officials said.

Endeavour will stop at Inglewood City Hall early Oct. 13 for an official launch ceremony and celebration.

Inglewood Mayor James T. Butts said space exploration "represents the opportunity to gain answers and insight beyond this pale existence we have as we pay our mortgages and go to work and hate our bosses."

The science center estimated the cost at about \$200 million to build a special climate-controlled exhibition gallery for the shuttle, which will go on display Oct. 30.

Most of the money and work was donated.

"It will be a testament to what humanity can achieve with science and technology," said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

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