

## I-96 RAMP METERING

Ramp meters are traffic lights placed on freeway on ramps to control the flow of traffic entering the freeway. They help keep freeway traffic moving smoothly and support safer merging, especially when the freeway is busy.

### When Ramp Meters Are Off:

At the beginning of the entrance ramp there are yellow diamond signs (Figure 1). If the flashing lights above the yellow signs are off, the ramp meter is not active and the traffic lights at the end of the entrance ramp will flash yellow. Motorists can merge onto the freeway as normal, no stopping required.

### When Ramp Meters Are On:

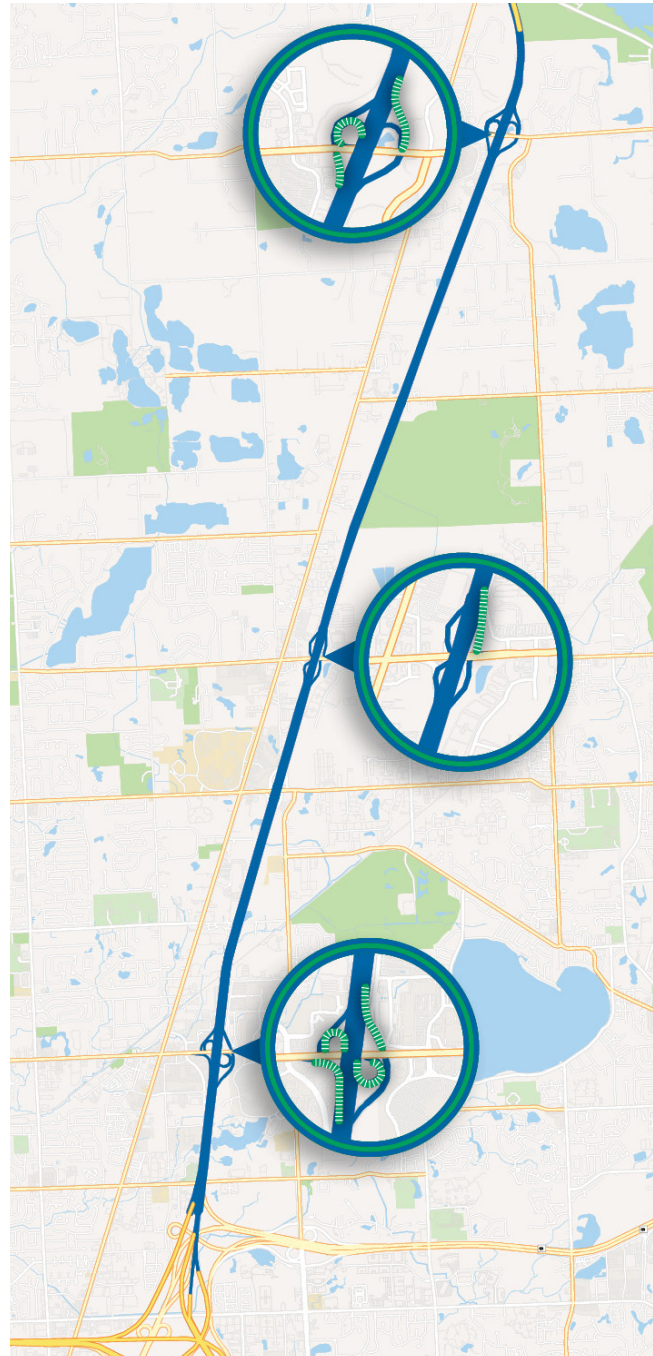
The ramp meter is active when the lights above the yellow diamond signs near the beginning of the entrance ramp are flashing. When you see the ramp meters are active:

- Form two lanes:** Motorists approaching the traffic light on the on ramp should form two lanes within the single striped ramp.
- Stop at the white line:** There's a thick white line called the stop bar near the traffic lights. Drivers must stop at this line when their light is red and wait until it turns green.
- Wait for a green light:** Each lane has its own traffic light. The traffic lights alternate turning green, letting one car proceed at a time. Motorists shall only proceed forward when the traffic light for their lane is green. (Running a red light is against the law!)
- Merge onto the freeway:** Once the light turns green, motorists can proceed and merge on to the freeway.



Figure 1

## Flex Route and Ramp Meter Locations



Michigan Department of Transportation  
**I-96 IMPROVEMENTS:**  
 Flex Route and Ramp Metering

**OAKLAND COUNTY**  
 Between Kent Lake Road and I-275



## I-96 FLEX ROUTE

### What is a Flex Lane?

The I-96 Flex Route located between Kent Lake Road and the I-275/I-696/M-5 interchange aids in reducing traffic congestion during busy travel times. This innovative lane control system uses overhead signs and electronic message boards to indicate when the left shoulder, known as the Flex Lane, can be used as an extra travel lane.

Staff at Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Transportation Operations Centers (TOC) monitor traffic conditions through sensors and video feeds 24/7 to understand travel conditions. When traffic is light, the Flex Lane acts as a shoulder, marked by a red "X" on the sign above it, meaning driving in it is illegal. However, during morning and afternoon rush hours or unexpected delays, the Flex Lane may open, shown by a green arrow, providing extra capacity without the need for costly permanent expansions.

When the Flex Lane opens and the green arrow appears, the larger message boards over the right shoulder will provide extra guidance based on traffic conditions. For example, if congestion builds, signs may post reduced speed advisories ahead of slowdowns and motorists should adjust their speeds accordingly. During incidents such as a crash, lane control signs will show which lanes are open, merging or blocked. Motorists should follow the indications as directed and always move over to give first responders space to work safely. The graphics to the right provide more detail on these scenarios.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit the MDOT Flex Route website:  
[www.Michigan.gov/FlexRoutes](http://www.Michigan.gov/FlexRoutes)

**MDOT**  
**Southeast Michigan Transportation**  
**Operations Center (SEMTOC)**  
1060 West Fort St.  
Detroit, MI 48226

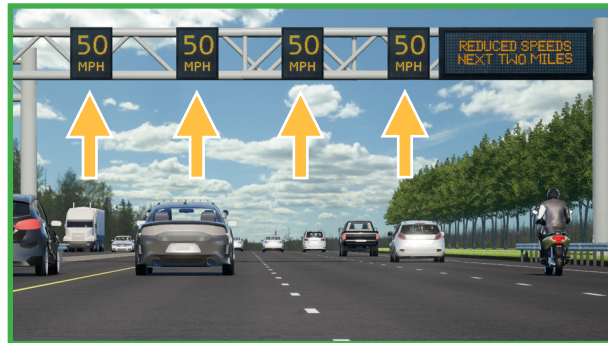
### How to Drive a Flex Route



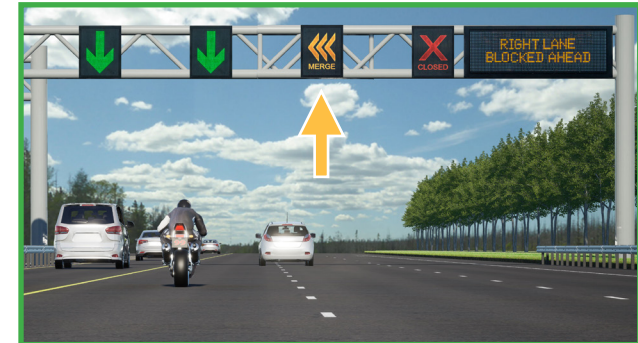
**Green Arrow:** Shoulder is open to relieve congestion and improve travel during designated times.



**Red X:** Flex Lane is closed to motorists during designated time frames when traffic is light.



**Reduced Speed Advisories:** Traffic is continuously monitored for traffic slowdowns. Reduced speed advisories are posted to gradually slow traffic in advance of stopped traffic or lane closures.



**Merge Arrows:** Yellow chevron/merge arrows notify motorists to move over and to avoid incidents. These lane control signs provide motorists with advance warning for crashes or blocked lanes ahead.



**Electronic message boards:** Provide real-time traffic information, alerts, and safety messages to help supplement the lane control system.



It's the *Move Over* law