

FLY ME TO THE MOON

Artemis II brings humanity back beyond Earth orbit

NASA is entering the final stretch toward its next human spaceflight mission, Artemis II. In the coming days, the agency plans to roll its Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and Orion spacecraft from the Vehicle Assembly Building to Launch Pad 39B at Kennedy Space Center – the first time the fully-stacked vehicle will make the journey.

Rollout to the Pad

NASA targeted no earlier than Saturday, Jan. 17, for the rollout. The four-mile trip aboard the crawler-transporter is expected to take up to 12 hours. While teams are working around the clock, the date may shift depending on technical readiness or weather conditions.

Engineers have recently addressed several technical items typical of complex, first-of-their-kind systems, including replacing and testing a flight termination system cable, repairing a valve tied to Orion's hatch pressurization, and resolving ground equipment issues related to supplying breathable air. All work is focused on ensuring crew safety ahead of launch.

Once at the pad, teams will begin weeks of preparation, connecting power, data, and propellant systems and powering up the integrated rocket and spacecraft together for the first time. The Artemis II crew—Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen—will also conduct a final walkdown at the launch pad.

Wet Dress Rehearsal in Late January

By the end of January, NASA plans to conduct a wet dress rehearsal, a full countdown test that includes loading more than 700,000 gallons of super-cold liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen into the rocket. This rehearsal allows teams to practice fueling, countdown holds, and safely draining propellants, all without astronauts onboard. NASA may repeat the wet dress rehearsal if needed and could roll the vehicle back to the Vehicle Assembly Building for additional work before launch.

Launch Windows Open in February

Following a successful rehearsal, NASA will hold a flight readiness review to determine when Artemis II is cleared to fly. While the launch window opens as early as Friday, Feb. 6, the final date will depend on system readiness, weather, and range availability.

Current launch opportunities include:

Feb. 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11

March 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11

April 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6

These dates fall within carefully calculated periods driven by orbital mechanics, power and thermal limits on Orion, and the need for a safe free-return path around the Moon.

A Historic Step Forward

Artemis II will be a roughly 10-day mission, carrying astronauts beyond Earth orbit for the first time in more than 50 years. The test flight will validate Orion's life support systems and pave the way for future crewed landings on the Moon—key steps toward a sustained lunar presence and, eventually, human missions to Mars.

As preparations continue on Florida's Space Coast, NASA officials emphasize that readiness—not the calendar—will determine when Artemis II lifts off.

Local Impacts



Here in Titusville, tens of thousands of spectators—and potentially more—are expected to line local shorelines, bridges, and public viewing areas for this historic launch, bringing a significant increase in visitors to the city.

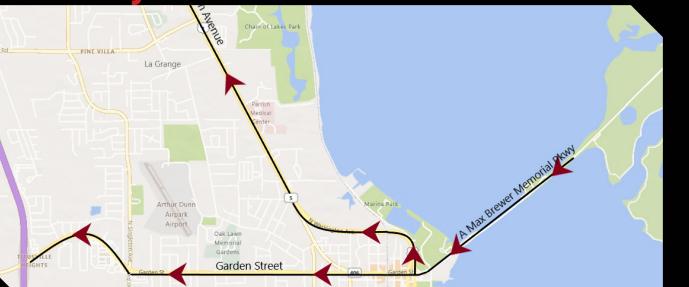
"With a large manned rocket launch approaching, we expect a significant increase in visitors to our area, which means heavier vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic throughout the city," said Titusville Police Commander

Tyler Wright. "We ask residents and visitors alike to plan ahead, be patient, and remain aware of their surroundings. The Titusville Police Department will have additional personnel on duty to help manage traffic and ensure public safety so everyone can enjoy the launch safely."

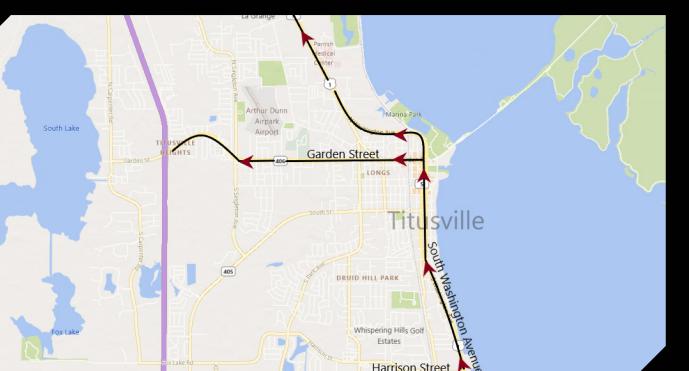
To support safe viewing and an orderly departure following the launch, a multi-agency traffic and exit plan has been developed. While these measures are designed to improve safety and traffic flow, significant vehicle and pedestrian delays should be expected before and especially after launch.

Immediately following liftoff, all lanes of the A. Max Brewer Bridge will be closed to vehicle traffic for approximately one hour to allow pedestrians to cross safely. Depending on conditions, the bridge may also close to motor vehicle traffic prior to launch, and residents and visitors are encouraged to monitor real-time updates on the City's and Titusville Police Department's social media channels for the latest information.

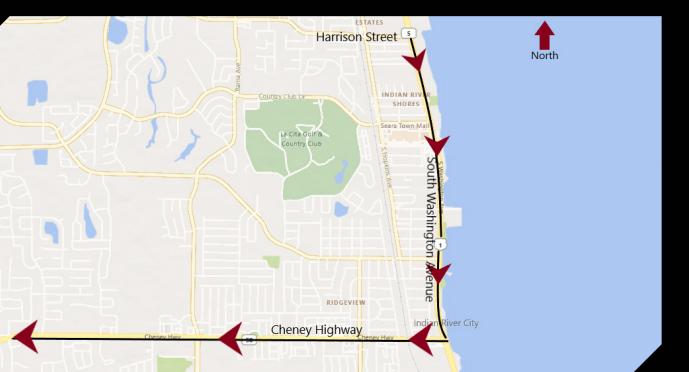
Launch Day Traffic



Motorists on State Road 406 (Garden Street) and on the A. Max Brewer Bridge and surrounding areas will proceed north on US1 or west on Garden St.



All motorists north of Harrison Street will proceed northbound on US1.



All vehicles south of Harrison will proceed southbound on US1.



NASA's SLS (Space Launch System) rocket is seen inside High Bay 3 of the Vehicle Assembly Building. (Photo: NASA/Joe Kowsky)