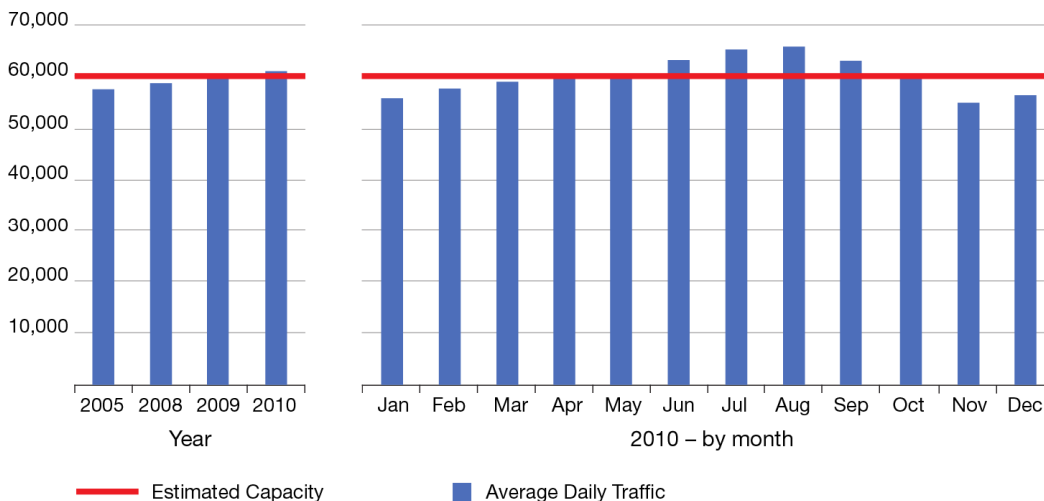


I-5 Joint Base Lewis-McChord Transportation

Background

Over the last decade, the population in Thurston and Pierce counties has grown exponentially. Numerous large-scale businesses have also moved into the area, and expanding operations at Joint Base Lewis-McChord have all contributed to increased traffic volumes on Interstate 5.

Average Daily Traffic 2010 (DuPont)



Already operating near capacity, I-5, particularly between SR 510 and SR 512, now is routinely experiencing traffic volumes that exceed highway capacity. The traffic congestion became even more evident in the fall of 2010, post Labor Day, when many troops returned from overseas missions and WSDOT recorded a significant increase in commute traffic volumes. With no reasonable alternatives to driving the I-5 corridor, the resultant traffic congestion became the focus of frustrated motorists and media.

Strategies

WSDOT and long-time partner JBLM went to work. Forming the Traffic Circulation Committee, they pulled together leaders from JBLM, FHWA, WSDOT, Washington State Patrol and local municipalities to strategize solutions and take action. Using WSDOT's *Moving Washington* guidelines, they strove to provide a coordinated approach to congestion relief by identifying and assigning short-term and long-term decisions, milestones, resources, and action plans. Results of their efforts are listed below.

Short-term actions designed to provide immediate congestion relief:

1. Improved traffic operations at five primary I-5 interchanges used by base personnel
 - Modified lanes at Center Drive interchange
 - Retimed signals at Berkeley and DuPont – Steilacoom interchanges
 - Added signs at northbound DuPont
 - Increased WSDOT's Incident Response presence and services for disabled vehicles
2. JBLM enhanced gate operations and encouraged alternatives
 - Launched new marketing strategy for Rideshare/Vanpool participants
 - Added additional personnel to the Lewis Main gate to expedite incoming traffic flow
 - Opened 32nd Street Gate (Lewis North) for ingress during morning commute
3. WSP modified weigh station operations
 - Changed operation hours of northbound I-5 weigh station between JBLM and Lacey, to avoid peak commute times
4. Combined effort to open Mounts Road gate to JBLM
 - Received expedited approvals and permits from city and county public works departments
 - WSDOT crews made roadway improvements inside the gate
 - JBLM added gate personnel
 - Pierce County added new signs



Interim actions designed to improve ongoing traffic operations:

1. WSDOT enhanced reports of real-time traffic conditions between Nisqually and Martin Way using CCTV live camera feeds
2. WSDOT is extending CCTV coverage and “smart highway” hardware between Nisqually and JBLM. This includes installing:
 - Fiber optic cable from Thorne Lane to Mounts Road;
 - Adding northbound I-5 ramp meters at Mounts Road, Nisqually and Marvin Road interchanges;
 - Installing seven additional CCTV cameras at Pendleton, DuPont and Main gates (2), Mounts Road Weigh Station, Mounts Road on-ramp and Marvin Road on-ramp;
 - The project is scheduled to begin this summer and be complete by fall 2011.

Long-term solutions designed to address long-term operations along I-5:

1. Using the Lakewood and OEA studies, agencies will work toward the next phase of efficiencies and solutions
2. Continue working with congressional and state legislative delegates to seek funding for improvements
3. Center Drive interchange improvements
4. Corridor Interchange Justification Report and Environmental Process
 - Confirms the solutions
 - Establishes cost estimates
 - Completes environmental process
 - Positions WSDOT and JBLM for design and construction funding opportunities
 - \$6 million needed for IJR
5. Traffic Circulation Committee to continue to meet regularly

