



## Construction

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### WSDOT hopes you'll try a bike, bus, train or vacation in August

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Gridlock, here we come.

The Washington State Department of Transportation will close several lanes of northbound Interstate 5 south of downtown Seattle starting a week from today.

More than a mile of freeway lanes between Spokane Street and the Interstate 90 interchange will be closed for up to 19 consecutive days this month so WSDOT can resurface the roadway and replace worn-out expansion joints. Some freeway ramps will also be closed.

The \$15.5 million project was awarded to Concrete Barrier Inc. and is being funded mostly by the 2005 gas tax hike.

Traffic engineers say 65,000 vehicles — or half the number that travels every day on northbound I-5 — will have to get off the freeway during this time in order to keep traffic moving.

They are predicting thousands of cars will spill onto Seattle streets, and they're recommending that you not be driving one of them.

So if you can't go on vacation or work at home, here are some alternatives:

- **Take the water taxi.** If you live in West Seattle, you can get to Pier 55 in 12 minutes by taking the Elliott Bay water taxi from the Seacrest dock. As of next week, the water taxi will be equipped to take 250 passengers rather than 149, the present load limit. It will also make one extra roundtrip per day. West Seattle residents can take a bus shuttle to the Seacrest dock from Alki Point, the Admiral District and the West Seattle Junction. It costs \$3 to ride the water taxi.

For more information, see [http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/oto/water\\_taxi.html](http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/oto/water_taxi.html).

- **Take Sounder.** If you live in South King County or Pierce County, you can ride the Sounder commuter train. Beginning Monday, Aug. 13, Sound Transit is adding an extra run between Puyallup and downtown Seattle. Some free parking will be available for all Sounder commuters at the Tacoma Dome's Lot A, the Kent Park and Ride, and in Sumner at the Red Apple parking lot and the high school. Sound Transit expects these lots to fill up fast, however.

For more information on Sound Transit train and bus service changes in August, visit [www.soundtransit.org/i5construction](http://www.soundtransit.org/i5construction).

- **Take Metro.** Many north-bound buses will be standing-room only during the morning commute, and King County Metro anticipates service and schedules will be disrupted at times.

“We are encouraging our passengers to be patient, flexible and have a back-up plan for their daily trips,” said Metro spokesperson Linda Thielke.

Twenty-two Metro buses will be rerouted off I-5, many of them to Airport Way South.

People riding Metro from South Seattle will find free parking at the General Services Administration parking lot on East Marginal Way South between South Hudson Street and South Alaska Street. Three Metro bus routes to downtown Seattle stop here.

To find out about Metro bus service changes during construction, visit <http://transit.metrokc.gov/up/rr/reroutes.html#construction>.

- **Bike.** Ride your bicycle, but use caution, because there will be a lot of extra cars on the streets. WSDOT warns bicyclists to wear helmets, ride predictably and make sure cars can see them.

If you must drive downtown or in South Seattle during the construction, you may notice that you get further without having to stop for a red light. The Seattle Department of Transportation is adjusting traffic signals so green lights last longer on Airport Way South, First Avenue South, Fourth Avenue South, Rainier Avenue South and Beacon Avenue South

During construction, one northbound lane on Airport Way South will be restricted to buses, vanpools and trucks.

If you're traveling on I-5 through downtown Seattle, you will be able to stay on the freeway during the construction but prepare for delays. Only one to three lanes will be open, the lanes will be two feet narrower than usual and the speed limit will be reduced to 45 mph.

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