For Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we have devices for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. For more information, please contact OEO’s Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.

Improving transportation through a vital corridor

The Interstate 5 corridor through Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) is a strategic stretch of highway that moves goods, people, and the US military. Traffic congestion has steadily increased through the corridor, reflecting steady population growth and economic development in the region. Currently, motorists traveling through the corridor routinely experience daily congestion.

I-5, Mounts Rd to Center Dr. – Auxiliary Lane Extension

Initial construction in 2017 will widen northbound I-5 between Mounts Road and Center Drive. An added lane will be operated as an auxiliary lane until later stages are completed. This work has independent utility, meaning it provides benefits to the traveling public independent of the other project elements.

This map of the project area highlights proposed improvements through the corridor. Changes proposed in the North End and South End areas are moving through the environmental process, and they include three interchanges and eight miles of I-5.

In 2013 and 2014, a multi-agency group analyzed options to improve transportation through the corridor. This document explains the option chosen to advance through environmental review, which includes the following elements (see map below):

- Rebuild interchanges using roundabouts at Thorne Lane and Berkshire Street.
- Add one lane in each direction from DuPont-Steilacoom Rd to Thorne Lane.
- Build a new local connector road between Gravelly Lake Drive and Thorne Lane.
- Build a bicycle/pedestrian path along the I-5 corridor.
- Interchange improvements at Steilacoom-DuPont Rd (Exit 119) are still being defined.

In July 2015, the Washington State Legislature included $495 million to fund the I-5 - Mounts Road to Thorne Lane Interchange - Corridor Improvements project, as part of the Connecting Washington transportation revenue package. The project is funded through a 10-year period, from 2015-2025.

The delivery schedule shown above divides the work into three segments. Design and construction of the northbound I-5 auxiliary lane between Mounts Road and Steilacoom-DuPont Road will occur through fall 2017. Design and construction for the North End segment (from 2018 to 2021), and construction for the North End segment (from 2020 to 2023). Improvements to the Steilacoom-DuPont Rd. interchange are still being defined.

MORE INFORMATION

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http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/J5/JBLMimprovements/default.htm
http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/J5/MountsRdtThomeLn/default.htm

The South End stage would build improvements between Steilacoom-DuPont Rd and Mounts Rd., from 2020 to 2023. Improvements to the Steilacoom-DuPont Rd. interchange are still being defined.
**PROJECT GOALS**

1. Maximize use of existing facilities and strategically add new improvements or Transportation Demand Management strategies to enhance efficiency while reducing the impact of “local” traffic on the freeway.
2. Achieve measurable improvement over baseline operations for transportation reliability, person throughput and freight movement in 2020 (opening year) and 2040. Baseline for the 2020 evaluation will be 2014. Baseline for the 2040 evaluation will be the 2040 no action condition.
3. Improve attractiveness of HOV travel through the corridor (including vanpools, carpools, transit and other high occupancy vehicle modes).
4. Maximize stewardship of limited public resources by identifying solutions that reduce travel demand in peak periods and/or relieve congestion, can be constructed in phases, and are cost effective.
5. Avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

**Highway Configuration**
The above graphic shows how the proposal for the I-5 improvements would compare with the existing highway. The top graphic represents the current layout of the highway and road line. The lower graphic represents the proposed widened I-5 layout that would accommodate one added lane in each direction. The lanes will be designed to operate as general purpose lanes when completed and converted to high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) when connection to the Interstate 5 HOV system that currently terminates in Tacoma is available.

**Gravelly-Thorne Connector**
What is not shown in the above cross-section graphic is a proposed new city street parallel to, but separate from, I-5, that would connect Gravelly Lake Drive and Thorne Lane. This local road would include one vehicle lane going southbound from Gravelly Lake Drive to Thorne Lane. A path for pedestrians and bicycles would also be included. About 30 feet of additional right of way will be necessary for this roadway.

For northbound motor vehicle traffic from Thorne Lane to Gravelly Lake Drive, a new auxiliary lane will be added along northbound I-5 between these interchanges. Right of way must be acquired from various property owners before the proposed Gravelly-Thorne Connector can be built.

**INTERCHANGE PROPOSALS**

WSDOT proposes to rebuild the I-5 interchanges at Thorne Lane and Berkeley Street. Both interchanges have existing overpasses that are too narrow to accommodate more lanes on I-5. Improvements between the Mounts Road and DuPont-Steilacoom Road interchanges are still in development.

Below are design-visualizations of how the interchanges would look after being rebuilt. The yellow areas show the existing overpasses and road network that would be demolished.

The proposed new design at all locations is a “dogbone” interchange, so named because of its shape. A dogbone interchange uses two partial roundabouts instead of signals to manage traffic. Motorists yield to traffic already circling the roundabouts and then continue. Dogbone interchanges reduce driver delays, reduce traffic conflicts and the potential for collisions, and reduce maintenance costs.

**Thorne Lane Interchange**
At Thorne Lane, the new interchange would be built slightly south of its existing location. Moving the interchange south would allow WSDOT to build the new interchange before demolishing the old one, reducing impacts to traffic.

It would span the railroad, and a new road segment would be built east of I-5 to connect the interchange to Murray Road. A new roundabout west of I-5 would connect Thorne Lane to Union Avenue.

**Berkeley Street Interchange**
The proposed Berkeley Street interchange would be built just south of the existing overpass. It would span the railroad tracks, Militia Drive (the freight entrance to Camp Murray), and would join the local roadway network near Washington Avenue in Tillicum.

**DuPont Area Interchanges**
In October 2015, a new proposal involving possible re-location of the DuPont Gate to JBLM was brought forward for consideration. WSDOT is working with stakeholders to define a reconfiguration of the Steilacoom-DuPont Rd. (Exit 119) interchange that meets the needs of all stakeholders. Public input will be sought as part of developing a new alternative for this area. Also, a full range of environmental studies will be conducted to determine what impacts would result if a selected alternative were built. Construction of improvements in this portion of the corridor is not intended to begin until 2020.