



CORRIDOR BRIEFING

INTERSTATE 95



CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

WEST  Prepared by: Western Connecticut Council of Governments



What is CMP

The **Congestion Management Process (CMP)** is a federal requirement that evaluates the performance of the transportation system in the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) region.

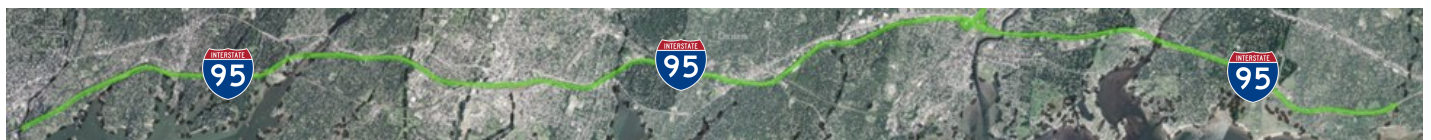
Traffic congestion, slow speeds, and delays are a common complaint and have been recognized as a drain on the region's economy. Improving mobility within the region, particularly along congested corridors, can enhance economic opportunities.

The purpose of the 2015 CMP Report is to analyze, evaluate, and mitigate congestion within the trans-

The CMP serves as a tool for evaluating deficiencies within the system and the effectiveness of transportation improvement projects over time.

portation system. The results can inform and help in the development of priorities for the Long Range Transportation Plan. These efforts are conducted in coordination with the State of Connecticut and the Federal Highway Administration; the report is intended for planning purposes only.

Interstate 95 Corridor



Interstate 95 is one of the most heavily travelled highways in Connecticut and is a critical freight corridor within the local and national transportation network. Within the WestCOG region, I-95 spans 22.4 miles between Greenwich and Westport.

Known for its congestion and slow speeds, conditions on I-95 are expected to worsen as traffic volumes increase. In 2014 the average daily traffic (ADT) along the entire I-95 corridor was 134,000 vehicles. Travel demand models forecast ADT in excess

of 180,000 vehicles per day on I-95 in the Darien and Norwalk areas.

2015 Quick Facts:

- Congestion has **worsened** since 2014
- Average southbound speed in 2014 was 53.5 mph and decreased to **48.8 mph** in 2015
- In the afternoon peak period, the average vehicle speed near Exit 8 is **14 mph**
- Ranked **#65** among the nationally most congested corridors

Results

The CMP data reflects unweighted, midweek speeds averaged over a 24 hour period. Since 2014, the average northbound speed has decreased from 52.8 mph to 50.6 mph indicating congestion on the corridor has grown. Southbound speeds also decreased from 53.5 mph to 48.8 mph.

Southbound Traffic:

Congestion for southbound vehicles is spread throughout the day but is at its worst during the morning rush hour. During this period, the average speed for the entire I-95 corridor is only 27.4 mph.

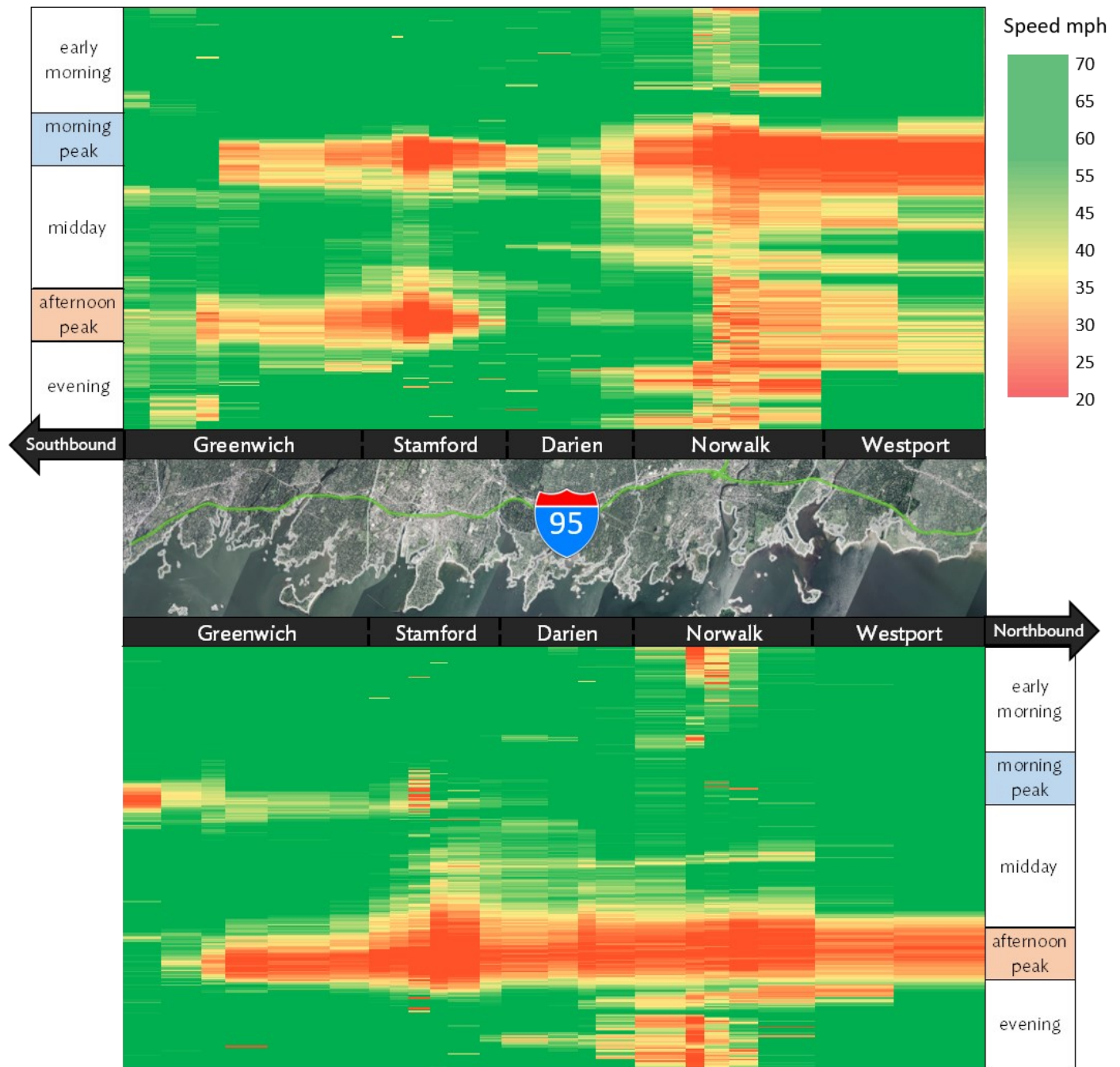


Figure 1. Average travel speeds for southbound and northbound traffic. Time periods: Early Morning (midnight to 6:00am); Morning Peak (6:00 -9:00am); Midday (9:00am-4:00pm); Afternoon Peak (4:00-7:00pm); Evening (7:00pm-midnight). Source: *National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.*

The segment of I-95 between Westport and Norwalk experiences a longer period of congestion with the lowest speeds during the morning peak. Congestion appears to lessen through Darien but increases again in Stamford and Greenwich.

Compared to the entire corridor, the Norwalk area experiences the most prolonged congestion. Although the morning peak period is the worst, the average speed in this area remains low throughout the remainder of the day.

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The average vehicle speed during the morning peak period near Exit 16 is 22.8 mph.
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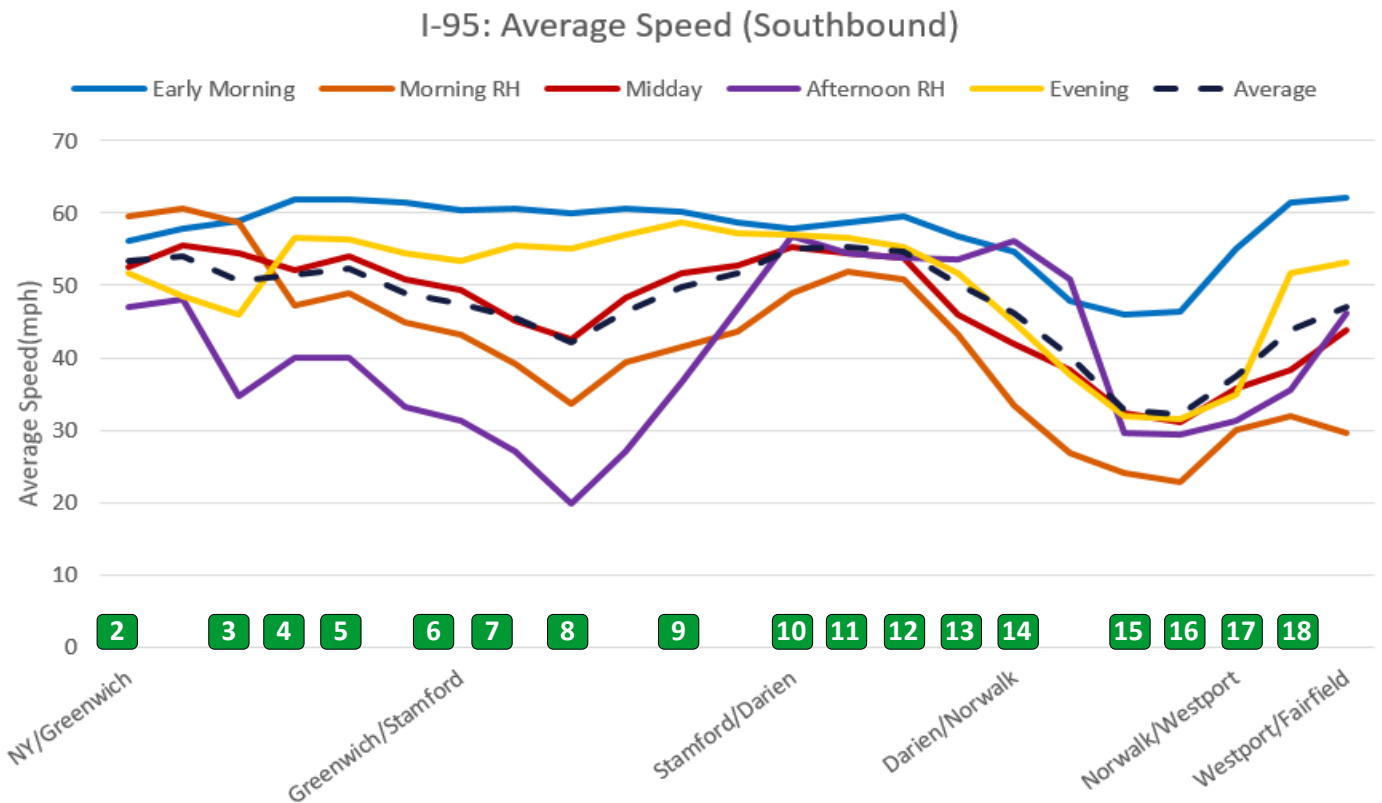
During the afternoon peak period, southbound traffic on I-95 experiences heavy congestion south of Darien with vehicle speeds similar to morning peak. The pocket of southbound congestion in

Stamford during the afternoon does not correlate with northbound traffic during the morning peak. This may suggest southbound vehicle trips on I-95 in this area are for purposes other than work-to-home commute trips.

Northbound Traffic:

Congestion for northbound vehicles is heaviest in the afternoon with an average speed of 41.5 mph. Unlike the traffic patterns for southbound traffic, congestion for northbound vehicles during the afternoon peak period is steady on the entire I-95 corridor between Westport and Greenwich.

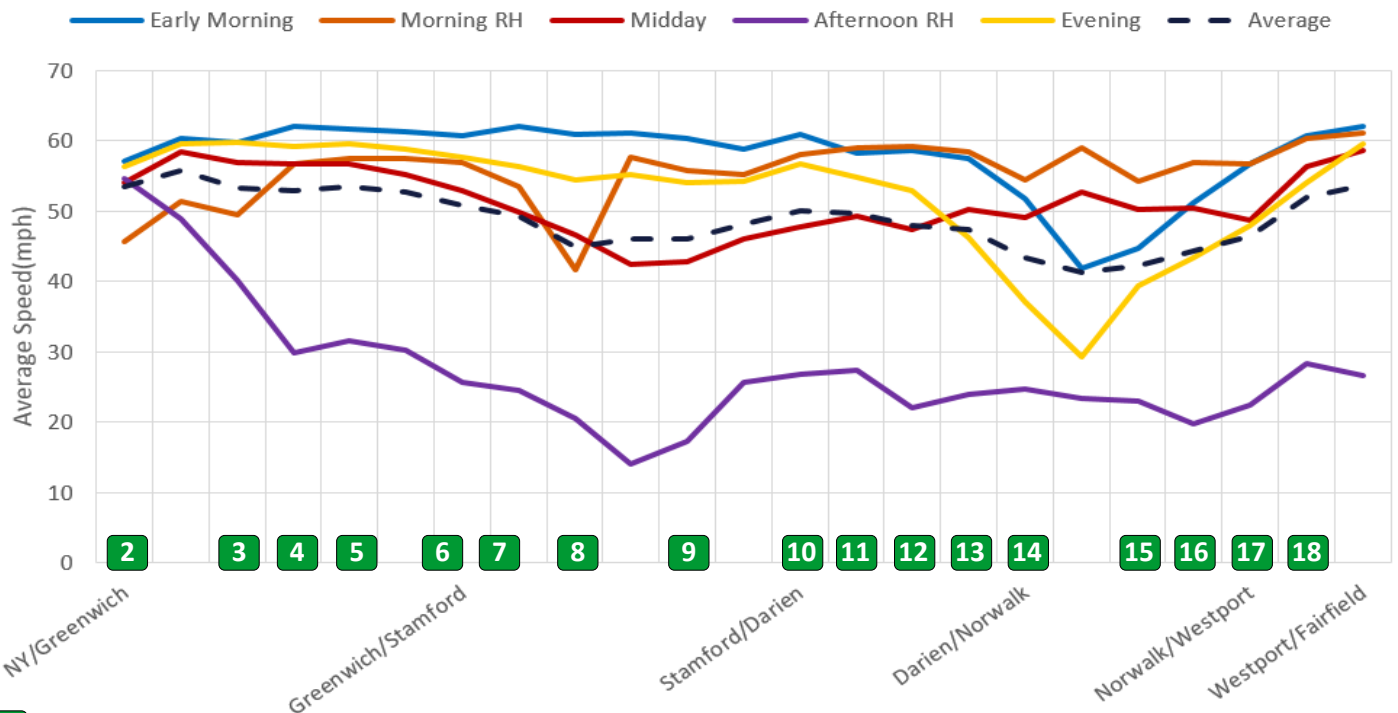
In the morning peak hours, I-95 experiences a short segment of congestion between the New York state border into Greenwich. Vehicles traveling northbound during this time average 30 mph. Northbound vehicle speeds significantly drop in the downtown Stamford area, but quickly increase east



I-95 Exit Number

Figure 2. Average travel speeds for southbound during each time period. Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.

I-95: Average Speed (Northbound)



I-95 Exit Number

Figure 3. Average travel speeds for northbound during each time period. Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.

of downtown. This may suggest that northbound vehicle trips in the morning peak period are commuters to downtown Stamford.

In the afternoon peak, the average northbound speed between Stamford and Westport is always below 30 mph.

In Norwalk, the average speed for northbound vehicles does not exceed 40 mph. Similar to traffic patterns for southbound traffic, congestion in Norwalk continues throughout the afternoon rush hour and into the evening period.

Construction:

While the CMP data does not evaluate short term congestion related to an isolated incident, such as a vehicle crash, it does reflect speed changes caused by long-term factors, such as construction projects.

Construction projects on I-95 adversely impact traffic conditions throughout the year. Major activities in 2015 included construction in Darien and Norwalk which required nighttime ramp closures in October between exits 10 and 15. This may account for some of the lower speeds recorded in the same area during the early morning and evening periods.

WestCOG Transportation and GIS Departments

The Transportation and GIS departments at WestCOG provide technical assistance to support efforts to mitigate congestion in the region.

For more information on how WestCOG can offer assistance, please contact Francis Pickering, Executive Director, at fpickering@westcog.org.

WestCOG Technical Support:

- System wide analyses
- Grant support
- Concept designs & engineering services
- Site level corridor analyses & visualizations
- GIS Services