

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.

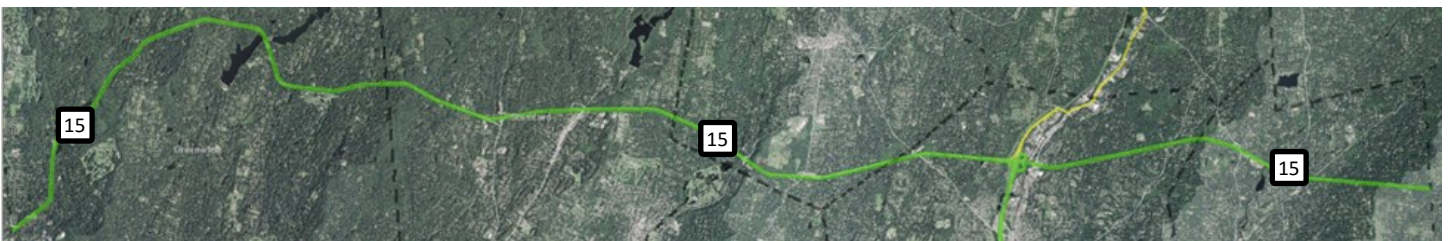
Traffic congestion, slow speeds, and delays are a common complaint and have been recognized as a drain on the region's economy. Improving mobility within the region, particularly along congested corridors, can enhance economic opportunities.

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.

CT-15 (Merritt Parkway) Corridor



CT-15 (Merritt Parkway) is a historic, landscaped parkway that serves as a critical corridor for passenger vehicle travel and daily commuting. Due to low bridge clearances, commercial vehicles are prohibited from using this route.

Within the region, CT-15 spans 23.5 miles between Greenwich and Westport. Running parallel to Interstate 95, CT-15 provides a north-south connection through Connecticut.

2015 Quick Facts:

- Average northbound speed in 2014 was 56.4 mph and decreased to **50.9 mph** in 2015
- Average southbound speed in 2014 was 57.3 mph and decreased to **52.0 mph** in 2015
- During the afternoon peak, vehicles travelling northbound through Norwalk average **15.7 mph**
- Vehicles travelling through Westport during the morning rush hour period average **21.9 mph**

Results

The CMP data reflects unweighted, midweek speeds averaged over a 24 hour period. Since 2014, the average southbound speed on CT-15 decreased from 57.3 mph to 52.0 mph; average northbound speeds also decreased from 56.4 mph to 50.9 mph. This indicates congestion has grown on the corridor. The most notable change in congestion since 2014 is for eastbound traffic in the greater Danbury area during the afternoon and evening periods.

Southbound Traffic:

The most notable congestion for southbound vehicles occurs during the morning rush hour. During this period, the average speed for the entire southbound corridor is 44.2 mph. Most of this congestion is concentrated between Westport and Stamford. Average speeds gradually increase for vehicles travelling south of downtown Stamford into Greenwich.

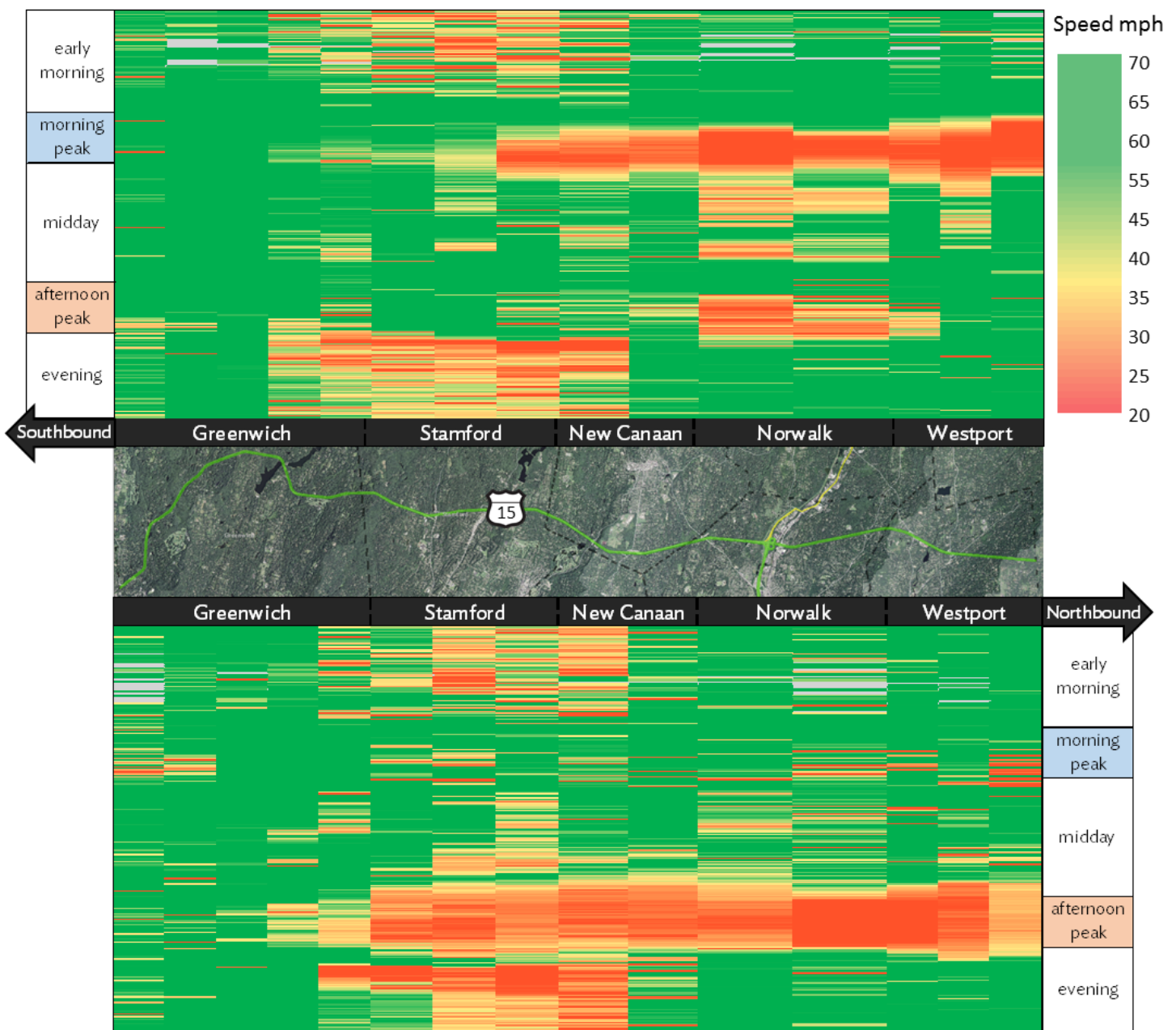


Figure 1. Average travel speeds for northbound and southbound traffic. Time periods: Early Morning (midnight to 6:00am); Morning Peak (6:00-9:00am); Midday (9:00am-4:00pm); Afternoon Peak (4:00-7:00pm); Evening (7:00pm-midnight). Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.

In 2015, during the morning rush hour period, vehicles travelling south in Westport average 21.9 mph near the border with Fairfield. Conversely, vehicles continuing southbound through Greenwich experienced little to no congestion. Through this area, the southbound average speed was 63.4 mph. This is faster than the 55 mph posted speed limit.

Some southbound segments of the corridor experience average speeds as low as 10.6 mph in the morning peak.

A major change from 2014 is the growth of congestion through Westport and Norwalk during the day. In 2014, congestion in this area was distinctly concentrated during the morning peak only. In 2015, slow speeds have continued into the midday and afternoon peak periods.

Congestion noted during the evening and early morning periods between New Canaan and Greenwich may be attributed to construction activity.

Northbound Traffic:

Average vehicle speeds for northbound traffic tend to be a little slower than southbound speeds. The average speed for northbound traffic is 50.9 mph over a 24 hour period. Similar to southbound traffic, northbound vehicles travelling through Greenwich do not experience congestion. The average speed over the entire day is 56.2 mph, which is slightly higher than the posted speed limit.

Congestion for northbound vehicles is most noticeable during the afternoon peak between Stamford and Westport. During this time, the average vehicle speed is 34.7 mph for the entire corridor. Similar to the southbound congestion pattern, vehicles on CT-

CT-15: Average Speed (Southbound)

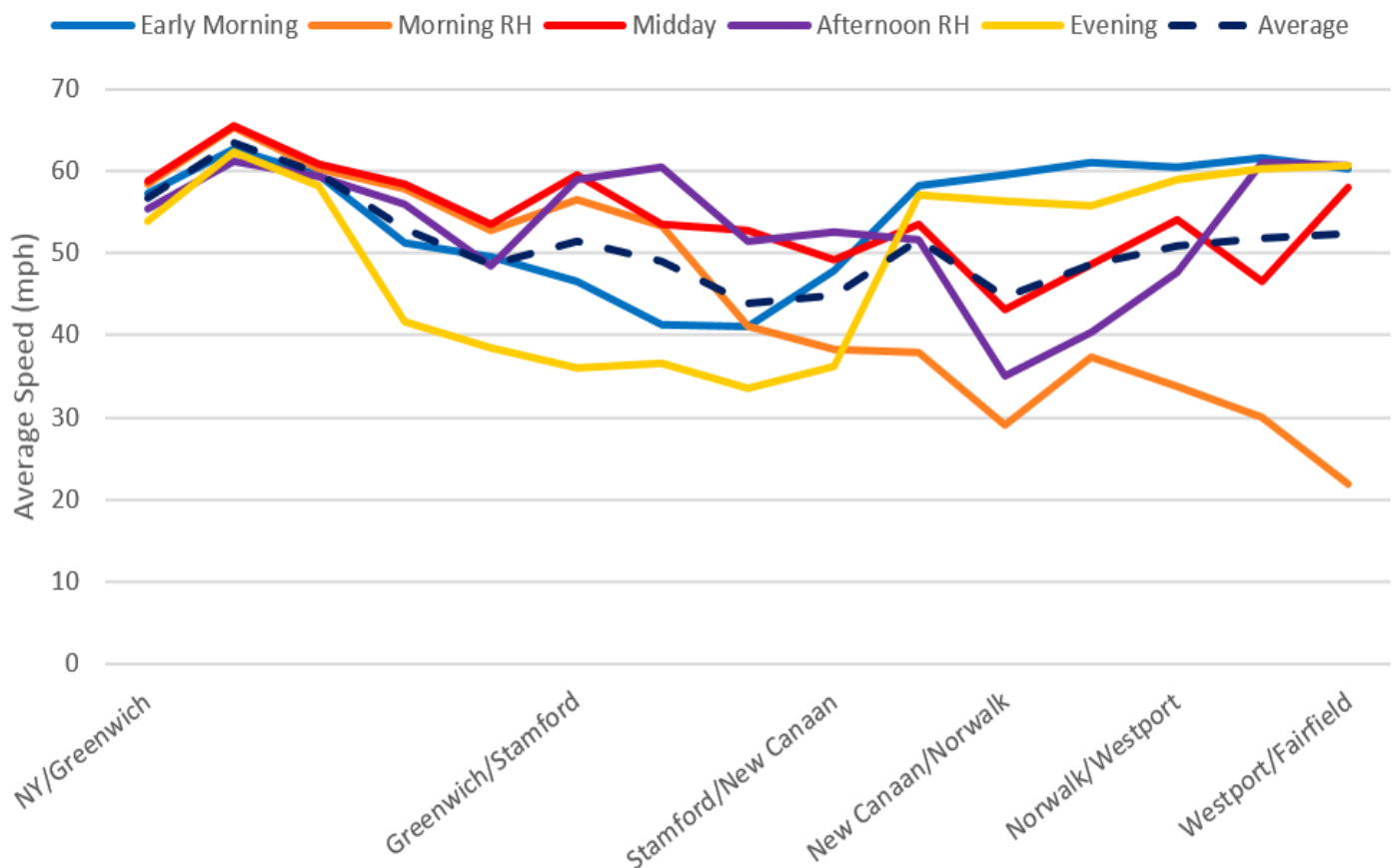


Figure 2. Average travel speeds for southbound during each time period. Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.

CT-15: Average Speed (Northbound)

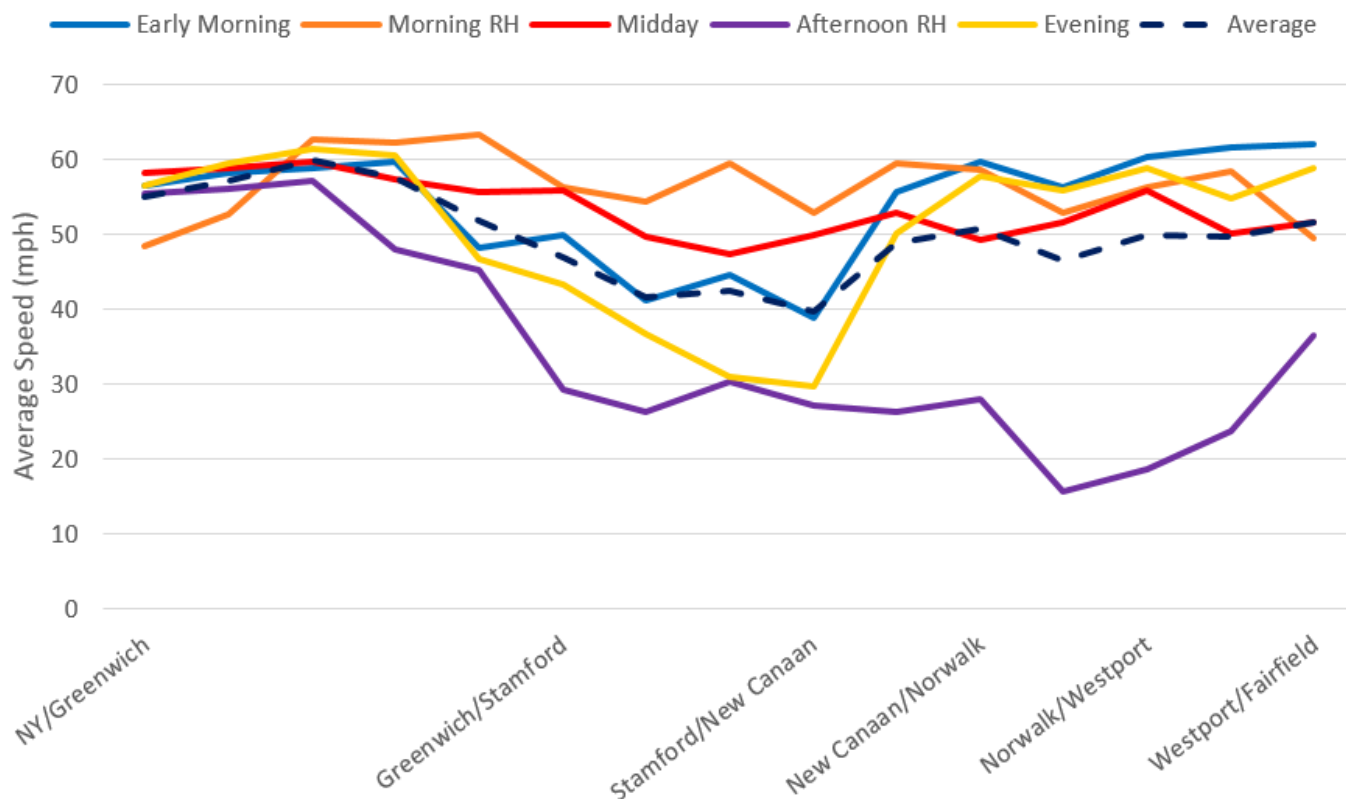


Figure 3. Average travel speeds for northbound during each time period. Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set; 2015.

15 at the Greenwich/Stamford border through New Canaan also experience slower speeds which may be related to evening construction activity.

In afternoon rush hour, vehicles traveling northbound through Norwalk experience congestion with speeds below 20 mph.

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 activities on CT-15 adversely impact traffic conditions throughout the year.

Major activities in 2015 included a resurfacing and bridge rehabilitation project in the Stamford and New Canaan areas. This resulted in congestion during the evening and early morning 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.

Cover photo: Christian Abraham

WestCOG Technical Support:

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