

Summary:

Johnson Creek work reduces Foster Road traffic congestion

A month after the new Interstate 205 interchange at Johnson Creek Boulevard opened, traffic counts show it is handling some 4,500 vehicles a day more than estimated for its early stages.

The new \$1.57 million interchange has also helped reduce traffic loads on the Foster Road interchange to the north and Sunnyside Road interchange to the south.

However, highway officials acknowledge that Christmas holiday shopping makes it difficult to evaluate traffic counts at the Sunnyside interchange.

"Motorists are still in the process of becoming aware of the new interchange, and our traffic counts should be more significant in early 1991," said Tom Schwab, transportation analysis manager for the Oregon Highway Division.

Schwab noted that initial traffic counts affecting the new interchange have been taken just as holiday shopping traffic on I-205 increased heavily.

He said such shopping traffic would not necessarily affect the new interchange as much as it would the Sunnyside Road interchange 1.5 miles to the south. The Sunnyside interchange carries vehicles directly into the **Clackamas Town Center** or **Clackamas Promenade**, two of the area's largest shopping malls.

Schwab said the new Johnson Creek Boulevard interchange handled 16,500 vehicles daily just before Thanksgiving, some 4,500 over the division's original 12,000 estimate.

At the same time, he added, the previous daily traffic count of 45,850 vehicles for the Foster Road interchange decreased to 41,250. This amounts to nearly a 10 percent decrease, about what the Highway Division expected.

The previous 50,800 vehicular daily count for the Sunnyside Road interchange, however, has declined only slightly to 48,000, Schwab said.

Highway Division officials had predicted at least a 20 percent daily reduction in Sunnyside Road interchange traffic once the new interchange opened. The present reduction is somewhat less than 5 percent.

"We're more than satisfied with the early reductions at Foster Road, but at this point, the reduction for Sunnyside Road is not as strong as we hoped for," Schwab said.

However, he emphasized that heavy southbound holiday shopping traffic on I-205 from Portland and Vancouver, Wash., was keeping constant pressure on the Sunnyside Road interchange.

Schwab said northbound traffic on I-205 from Oregon City and Gladstone was bypassing Sunnyside Road and using the Johnson Creek interchange. A great deal of northbound I-205 traffic, he added, was also using the 82nd Avenue exit ramp off I-205 at the Milwaukie interchange.

"Motorists know now they can traverse north on 82nd Avenue and re-enter I-205 at Johnson Creek Boulevard, avoiding any traffic tie-ups at Sunnyside Road," Schwab said.

He said division officials expected traffic would drop off sharply at the Sunnyside interchange immediately after Christmas, easing traffic congestion considerably in that area.

"By January, we should get a more exact count of daily traffic use at the Sunnyside interchange in relationship to the new interchange north of it," he said.

CITATION (AGLC STYLE)

