

State Highway 45 Greenhurst Road to Bowmont Road

Priority 24

Background

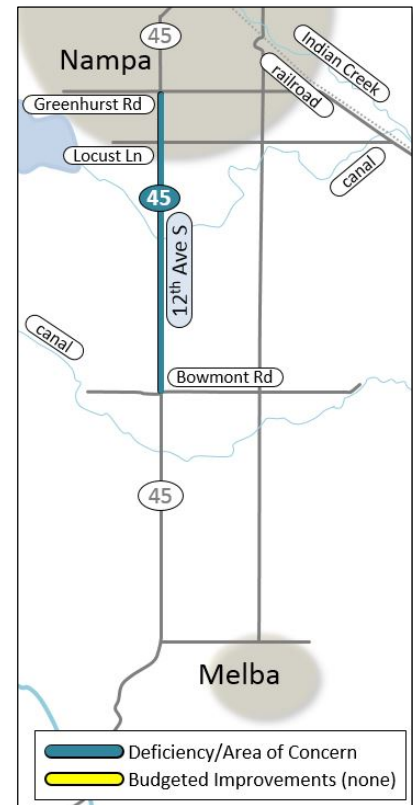
State Highway 45 is an important route for traffic through the region, as well as for local traffic in Nampa. The highway is nearly 18 miles long, connecting downtown Nampa to important activity centers in south Nampa and to communities farther south in Canyon and Owyhee Counties.

It serves a variety of travel and freight needs, including farm-to-market transport, recreational access to the Owyhee Mountains and other points of interest, and commuting into Nampa and other parts of the region.

State Highway 45 is also known as 12th Avenue within Nampa.

The Corridor at a Glance

- Four travel lanes from downtown Nampa past Greenhurst Road (about three miles), and two travel lanes for most of the remaining miles
 - Third travel lane about one-half mile long (north of Locust Lane)
- Bus Routes #51 and #54 (secondary service) in Canyon County provide fixed-route services along portions of 12th Avenue
- No bike lanes
- Short section of the Wilson Pathway runs parallel to the highway at Greenhurst Road
- Sidewalks along both sides of roadway from downtown Nampa past Greenhurst Road
 - Sidewalk on one side for about one-half mile (north of Locust Lane)
- Points of interest (north to south)
 - Wilson Pathway and Wilson Drain crossing
 - South Middle School adjacent to highway
 - Retail and other commercial areas along road in Nampa
 - Dispersed subdivisions and light industrial properties
 - Prime, irrigated farmland
 - Multiple irrigation canal crossings in suburban and rural areas, including New York Canal, which feeds into Lake Lowell
 - Community of Bowmont





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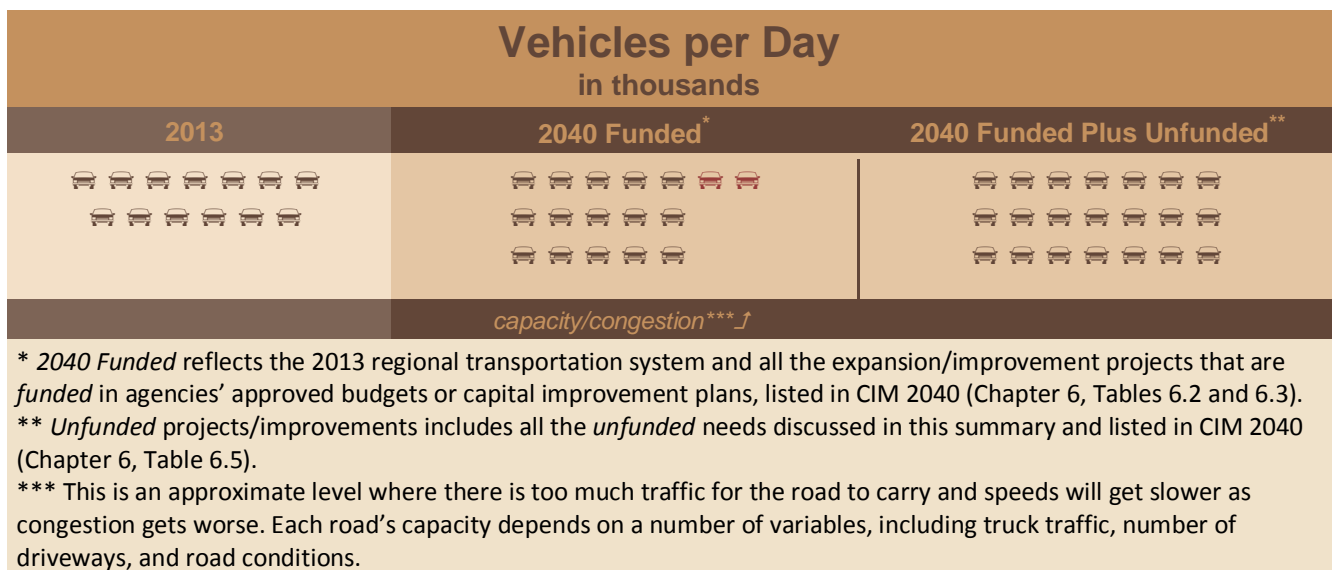
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Problem

By 2040, traffic along the entire State Highway 45 corridor is expected to increase—from 4,000 to 13,000 vehicles a day in 2013 to 17,000 in 2040.

This is similar to current levels of traffic on 10th Avenue in Caldwell. If funds are available to widen State Highway 45 and improve the other corridors as proposed, it could accommodate approximately 33,000 vehicles a day.

Current and Future ¹	2013	2040
Population	7,630	9,109
Households	2,686	3,525
Employment	1,994	2,724



The 2040 traffic levels will surpass the limit that a two-lane highway can accommodate efficiently. Safety is also a concern on this roadway, as the heavy traffic volume includes a large proportion of trucks carrying farm products, freight, and solid waste. The combination of traffic congestion and a higher proportion of trucks can pose a threat to the safety of all highway users.

When a road, transit line, bikeway or other part of the transportation system is improved, it can accommodate more traffic and, therefore, attracts more users. Even with more traffic, traveling conditions will be better with the improvements.

Other Considerations

Roadway Users

Most of the analysis to identify the increased traffic issue is based on cars, the main mode of transportation on streets and highways. Pedestrians, as well as vehicles such as bicycles, freight trucks, farm equipment, and buses, may also share the road.

¹ Population, housing, and employment in the corridor are based on neighborhoods and other developments near the road.



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Environmental Issues

Changes to a corridor can impact the surrounding environment as well as the people who live nearby. Before major road projects are built, their potential effects are analyzed to make sure they meet environmental regulations as well as provide for “environmental justice,” ensuring all people can be involved and are treated fairly.²

There are a few sensitive issues to consider in this corridor:

- South Middle School is adjacent to the highway, as is Nampa High School (just north of this segment).
- There is a small area with low-income and minority population concentrations on the northern end of the corridor, within the City of Nampa.

Budgeted Projects

Roadway: Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) has funding to complete the following projects:

- Rebuild State Highway 45 from Deer Flat Road to I-84 in the City of Nampa. The project is currently under design. Construction is expected in 2017 at a total cost of more than \$6.5 million. This is a maintenance project only; no lanes will be added.
- Refurbish the Walters Ferry Bridge on State Highway 45 that crosses the Snake River. The project is currently in the design stage. Work is expected to occur in 2017 at a total cost of more than \$6.6 million.

Unfunded Future Needs

Roadway: State Highway 45 is an important link between Owyhee County, Melba, Nampa, and I-84. Widening this part of the highway would improve safety and provide a five-lane highway (four travel lanes with a center turning lane) from Bowmont Road to downtown Nampa and I-84. In January 2014 the estimated cost to widen State Highway 45 to four travel lanes was \$64.2 million.

Bus Service/Park and Ride: The regional transit services plan, *valleyconnect*, calls for the following in the near- to medium term:

- Bus Route #72: A rural transit route along State Highway 45 that will connect the City of Melba with downtown Nampa, where users can connect to the urban fixed route system. Rural routes serve frequent stops at 60-minute frequencies all day.
- park-and-ride lot expansion/improvements at the Nampa downtown transit center and in Melba

Operations, Management and Technology Projects: The regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) plan³ does not call for improvements or installations on this segment of State Highway 45, but ITS installations, including fiber-optic communications and closed-circuit cameras, are proposed for other portions of the highway.

Updated July 2014

² See federal environmental justice definitions at www.epa.gov/region07/ej/definitions.htm.

³ *Final Report: Treasure Valley Transportation System: Operations, Management, and ITS*, is online at www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cms-intro.htm.