

Roadway Interconnection of Panamericana Norte and Longitudinal Sur via Av. Gral Velásquez, 1989

Summary:

This study examined an old project to connect the Panamericana Norte (North Pan-American Highway) and Camino Longitudinal Sur along Avenida General Velásquez. The work group took the first four weeks to study and analyze the project objectives and concluded that the main objective was not to construct an interconnection that would compete with the current north-south route for vehicles crossing Santiago, but rather to improve entry and exit routes to the western part of Santiago. The most notable aspects of this assessment were in the methodology and fieldwork.

Regarding the former (methodology), while the traditional project assessment methodology was applied – comparing the costs and benefits of scenarios with and without the project – the rigor with which this methodology was applied was notable. Much time and effort was spent on the option of optimizing the current scenario in order to obtain the baseline – or “without project” – scenario and, thus, avoid assigning unwarranted benefits to the projects being studied. The definition of projects, the redirection of traffic flows, and the sectioning of the roadways were addressed in exact methodological sequence, albeit at the cost of sacrificing clarity in the presentation. This point is especially worth noting, as it will no doubt be useful for future road studies.

Regarding the second aspect – fieldwork – baseline information collected included the measurement of speed by vehicle type and time period, the study of each intersection

with traffic lights, and the counting of vehicles at different points, along with an origin/destination survey conducted at the northern and southern borders of Santiago, in order to determine the routes of vehicles in western Santiago and establish the demand pertinent to each project.