

Expanding Travel Options: Faster, Smarter and More Affordable

A 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

WASHINGTON STATE COMMUTE TRIP REDUCTION BOARD



Expanding Travel Options: Faster, Smarter and More Affordable was developed by the Washington State Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Board, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and community stakeholders statewide.

This plan is designed to strengthen the position of demand management in transportation decision-making and investment strategies to better serve people, communities and Washington state.

This plan is designed to advance Practical Solutions to build a system that works for everyone.

Practical Solutions is WSDOT's approach to identifying the right investment in the right location at the right time.

This plan expands travel options more efficiently and affordably by facilitating the integration of Practical Solutions and multimodal strategies into the culture and practices of the state's transportation planners and providers.

This plan supports WSDOT's emphasis on cost-effective planning, design, operation, and maintenance of a fully integrated transportation system. The plan also prioritizes community-driven, public/private, low-cost mobility solutions. Finally, it reinforces Washington state as a national leader in high-performance, integrated, multimodal transportation.

This plan makes use of the existing transportation demand management program and builds on its history of performance.

Transportation demand management (TDM) helps people use the transportation system more efficiently through education, land use and planning, incentives, products, and programs that remove barriers to non-drive-alone modes such as transit, carpool, and vanpool.

For nearly three decades the statewide CTR program – the state's foundational TDM program – has delivered cost-effective performance on the state's transportation system by encouraging people to use multimodal commute options to and from work. In addition to improving the movement of people, goods, and services, locally designed CTR programs connect communities, support socioeconomic mobility, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Drawing on TDM strategies, this plan recommends practical, strategic initiatives to prioritize smarter, faster, and more affordable transportation options. TDM offers solutions that make effective use of transportation infrastructure and services. It shifts the conversation from a construction-first focus to one that starts with making the best use of what we already have in our neighborhoods, communities, and state.

This plan supports and builds on the strong foundation provided by the CTR program, which provides the policy-making, financial, and engagement framework crucial to expanding TDM efforts statewide. With this foundation, this plan also establishes the groundwork to change the way people think about all of their travel trips, whether they are work-related or personal.

Expanding Travel Options: Faster, Smarter and More Affordable is a culmination of significant outreach and engagement.

From spring 2017 to spring 2018, the CTR Board and WSDOT conducted dozens of workshops, interviews and conversations around the state with hundreds of local TDM implementers, transportation service providers, employers, community groups, policymakers, and others.

Together with its statewide partners, the CTR Board identified the best opportunities to adapt to an ever-changing world and make better use of the transportation systems we already have. This plan was developed to identify how we could get there.

EXPANDING TRAVEL OPTIONS: FASTER, SMARTER AND MORE AFFORDABLE

1. INCREASE THE USE OF HIGH-EFFICIENCY TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR COMMUTES.

- A. Streamline program administration
- B. Provide more flexibility
- C. Produce more useful transportation behavior data

2. EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.

- A. Thoroughly integrate TDM into state transportation projects and programs
- B. Expand TDM funding
- C. Encourage TDM at the local level

3. INCREASE POLICY MAKERS' SUPPORT FOR TDM.

- A. Collaborate with policy makers
- B. Enlist and support ambassadors

In an ever-changing world, this plan takes advantage of the opportunities.

What worked for us in the past does not fully provide for the transportation needs of people and their communities today.

Aging infrastructure and equipment

Much of our transportation infrastructure is decades old and needs significant rehabilitation. Deferred investments in preservation and maintenance pose an increasing near-term threat to each of us and the commutes, communities, freight movement, and economies we rely upon.

This plan prioritizes sustainable investments in transportation solutions to ensure safety and the efficient movement of people, goods, and services.

Insufficient government funding for highway construction projects

The gas tax provides significant funding for highway construction projects. However, with people driving less, purchasing more fuel-efficient and electric vehicles, and most of the gas tax revenue paying off old transportation projects, the gas tax alone will not meet our current or future needs.

We cannot build our way out of congestion. This plan provides a framework for affordable investments to meet both today's and tomorrow's mobility challenges.

Population and demographic shifts

Washington is experiencing a population boom, with more than two million new residents expected to move to the state by 2040. Washington must also address the challenges of a record-setting aging population, increasing ethnic diversity, and rising income inequality.

This plan prepares us to provide better transportation options to this growing and changing population.



Affordable housing needs

Many people with low incomes are pushed from cities to suburbs to find affordable housing. In these locations, transit service is often limited and expensive to provide.

This plan supports transportation planning and land-use practices that better connect communities and people to opportunity.

Ever-evolving technology

New technologies empower transportation innovation and transform people's travel experience. Telework continues to expand as a common business practice, and app-based ride-hailing services provide critical options for first/last mile transit connections.

This plan encourages the application of these and future technologies for improved transportation system performance.

Air Quality

The effects of climate change continue to intensify, and the transportation sector is the state's largest contributor to GHG emissions.

This plan supports community investments in multimodal solutions that reduce GHGs.

These significant, converging forces have brought us and our transportation systems to a tipping point. *Expanding Travel Options: Safer, Smarter and More Affordable* provides a framework to navigate this shift.



GOAL 1: INCREASE THE USE OF HIGH- EFFICIENCY TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR COMMUTES

OUTCOME

The Statewide CTR Program – the foundation for TDM-- continues to offer opportunities to improve system performance. However, the existing program model does not work for everyone.

Local jurisdictions need the ability to define their own success. By using a mix of employer- and community-based approaches when necessary, they can achieve the trip reduction goals needed to allow their city to flourish and to keep Washington state's economy growing.

To improve the Statewide CTR Program, state and local partners will:

A. Streamline program administration

Shift state and local program resources from administrative requirements to implementation functions that more directly affect travel behavioral change.

B. Provide more flexibility

Shift state program rules and guidance to allow local implementers to focus their limited resources on the most promising travel markets in their community (e.g. some large businesses, small businesses, non-commute trips, corridors, centers, outbound commuting, low-income and minority populations, shift workers, and students).

C. Produce more useful transportation behavior data

Use high-quality data to enhance state and local decision-making and performance.



ACTIONS

Work with local implementers to:

- a. Identify and pursue opportunities for streamlining and create efficiencies in the Statewide CTR Program. Pursue opportunities to improve methods and processes.
When necessary, modify program administrative, measurement and policy requirements. Change policy, and Washington Administrative Code (WAC).
- b. Identify and pursue opportunities for flexibility in the Statewide CTR Program. Examine opportunities identified through high-performing state TDM programs – past and present – including local CTR pilots, Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers, Trip Reduction Performance Program, construction traffic mitigation, etc.
If necessary, modify program administrative, measurement and policy requirements. Change policy and WAC.
- c. Identify and pursue opportunities to improve the quality and efficiency of data collection, analysis and use.

KEY INDICATORS

- Increased Statewide CTR Program participation and performance (e.g., mode shift, energy conservation, air quality, and GHG reductions).
- Increased local and state program resources focused on behavior change. Reduced resources focused on administrative requirements.
- Increased number of employers who use commute benefits to recruit and retain employees.
- Increased use of transportation behavior data and analysis to inform CTR programming, resulting in greater performance.



GOAL 2: EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

OUTCOME

To increase the availability and use of transportation options, state and local partners will:

A. Thoroughly integrate transportation demand management into state transportation projects and programs

Pursue opportunities to use TDM to improve project and program performance on a widespread basis. Further integrate TDM into planning, land use, project development, investment, design, construction, operations and performance measurement for state projects and systems.

B. Expand transportation demand management funding

Pursue expanded funding for TDM from public and private sources and at all levels of government.

C. Encourage transportation demand management at the local level

Incentivize the use of transportation demand management at the local level. Engage public, private and non-profit organizations.

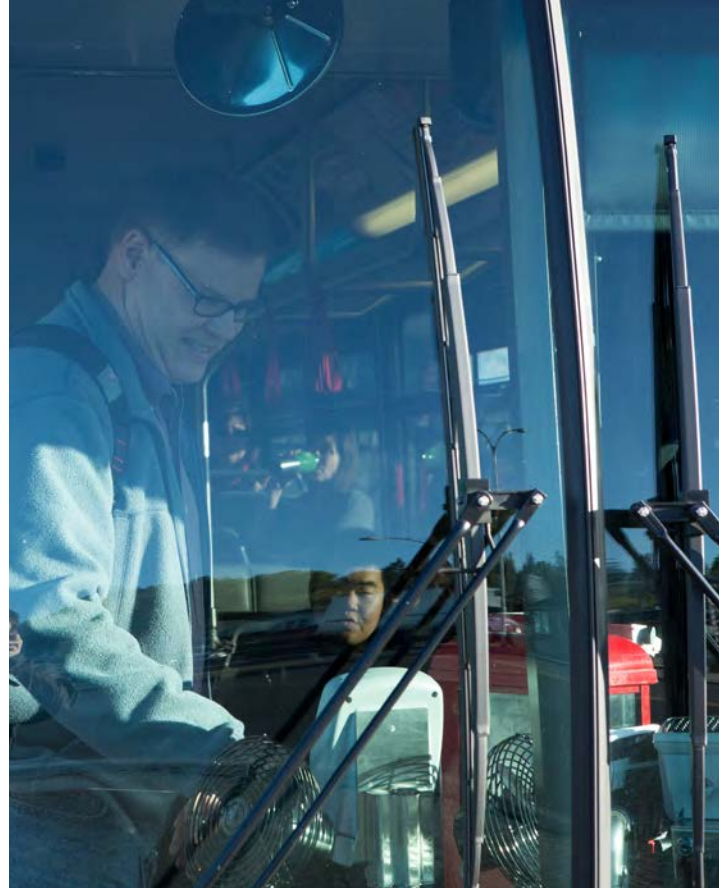


ACTIONS

- a. Work to operationalize TDM within WSDOT's Practical Solutions approach, supporting policy, planning, training, technical assistance and funding.
- b. Pursue expanded funding for TDM through a variety of approaches, including facilitating the integration of Practical Solutions, making the Commute Trip Innovation Grant program permanent, and increasing available grant funds.
- c. Strategically strengthen existing partnerships. Establish new partnerships with advocacy and community groups, whose missions are rooted in public health, social equity, land use planning, transit oriented development and active transportation.
- d. Identify and support innovation and the proliferation of best practices.
- e. Provide better tools, data, methods and technical assistance to help local communities better integrate TDM into community plans and services.

KEY INDICATORS

- Deepened application of TDM approaches in a broader range of policies and plans at the state, regional and local level.
- Increased policy and project opportunities to connect TDM with public health, sustainability and social equity.
- Increased number of state and local transportation plans and projects that rely upon mode shift to deliver transportation performance.
- Enhanced use of data to support TDM integration into projects.



GOAL 3: INCREASE POLICY MAKERS' SUPPORT FOR TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME

A. Collaborate with policy makers

Implement an ongoing, two-way conversation with state and local policy makers about TDM and its value, successes and opportunities in their community.

B. Enlist and support ambassadors

Identify and provide support to help people serve as effective ambassadors for TDM. Include state, regional and local elected officials, CTR Board members, local CTR and TDM implementers, and others.



ACTIONS

- a. Cultivate relationships, educate, and support existing and potential TDM ambassadors in state, regional and local government.
- b. Develop and deploy effective messaging and communications strategies (e.g., personal testimonials, infographics and one-pagers) that convey TDM's benefits for individuals, businesses and communities.
- c. Integrate a speaker series (e.g., elected officials, legislative caucus and committee staff, and other influencers) into monthly CTR Board meetings and other TDM forums.
- d. Using the CTR Board, implementers and other partners, develop and implement effective state and local education and outreach campaigns. These campaigns will support maintaining funding levels for the Statewide CTR program, as well as expanding funding for other TDM strategies.

KEY INDICATORS

- Increased number of funded TDM initiatives (e.g., ORCA, vanpool, centers, Regional Mobility Grants, integrated scoping pilots, trip reduction innovation grants, etc.).
- Continued and increased financial support for the Statewide CTR program.
- Increased policy and decision maker awareness of the economic, health and social value that CTR and other demand management programs deliver to the state, regions and local communities.

NEXT STEPS

WSDOT and the CTR Board will immediately begin working with partners to implement the strategies and actions in this plan.

In their work with partners, WSDOT and the CTR Board will prioritize flexibility and efficiency opportunities in the Statewide CTR program to enhance its performance. They will also identify strategies to transform from a CTR-focused board to a TDM board in order to more effectively advance Practical Solutions. Finally, they will engage policy makers to increase support for TDM throughout Washington state.

ABOUT THE COMMUTE TRIP REDUCTION BOARD

The CTR Board provides policy guidance to the CTR program.

The board:

- Develops, reviews and approves local, regional and state CTR plans.
- Allocates program funding.
- Ensures statewide consistency among county and local ordinances.

The board consists of 16 members that represent Washington citizens, businesses, state agencies, transit agencies and local jurisdictions. Board members are appointed by the Secretary of Transportation. Each member besides a state government representatives serves a staggered, four-year term.

MORE INFORMATION

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