

REVERSIBLE TRAFFIC LANES

Description

Reversible traffic lanes add capacity to a road and decrease congestion by borrowing capacity from the other (off-peak) direction. Reversing lanes reduces congestion during morning and evening commutes, when there is an incident blocking a lane of traffic, or when construction or maintenance is being done on the road.

Roads can be adjusted to become a one-way street or have one middle lane operate in the peak direction. These adjustments, indicated by changeable message signs and/or arrows, occur at specified times of the day or when volume exceeds certain limits.

Target Market

- Congested work zone areas or during incidents
- Roads with highly directional congestion
- Bridges, tunnels, and toll booth areas difficult to widen
- Surrounding or leading to/from special event centers

Reversible lanes work well in corridors where traffic flow is heavily imbalanced for a short period of time, and there are few other solution options.

How Will This Help?

- Reduce congestion by temporarily “borrowing” capacity from the other direction.
- Increase safety in work zones.
- Postpone the need to add capacity through conventional lane additions.

Success Story

Arlington, Texas, installed reversible lanes to mediate congestion around two professional sports stadiums

- FM 157/Collins Street
- SH 180/Division Street
- Road to Six Flags Street

Implementation Issues

Proper communication and public participation are crucial to ensuring the strategy’s success. Local agencies should identify the best locations for implementation and ensure the public and agencies understand the concept and operation. The endpoint treatment requires particular care and attention—common treatments extend across an intersection, requiring complex signals and inefficient timing strategies. If poorly executed, these

intersections may become expensive and confusing. Locating a safe mid-block left turn across the favored travel direction can also be difficult. Impacted businesses may complain of denial to traffic, and there is an increased potential for crashes depending on left turn demand, mid-block geometric conditions, and a large grouping of vehicles in the favored traffic direction.



Cost:	●●●○○
Time:	Short
Impact:	Corridor
Who:	City/State
Hurdles:	Public Awareness/ Operation