

TRIP REDUCTION ORDINANCES

Description

Trip reduction ordinances encompass various types of regulations that encourage or require the implementation of some congestion mitigation technique. These rules take one of three forms:

- Developer requirements or restrictions.
- Employee trip reduction programs.
- Transportation management associations and districts (similar to home owners associations).

Rules and regulations have changed for some new developments in an effort to curb congestion on major roads. Local officials can limit land usage to prevent the overflow of traffic that negatively affects the surrounding communities. Also, developers may be required to provide sufficient public transit facilities before additional construction is allowed. The local government sets requirements regarding the facility type or specifies performance measures that the developer must meet to promote and maintain reduction ordinances.

Businesses are a large contributor to congestion (with commuters traveling to and from work at the same time) making them prime candidates for trip reduction ordinances. The programs promote ridesharing, transit, and alternate mode usage to reduce congestion during weekday peak hours.

Transportation associations and other groups help encourage the use of trip reduction ordinances by promoting the benefits or encouraging/enforcing various programs. These groups contribute concentrated services to local governments and agencies to help promote certain commuting options.

Ideally, all trip reduction ordinances aim to encourage different travel choices, rather than control driving behavior, by offering multiple trip reduction options, offering incentives, or



City of Yuma, AZ

Cost:	●○○○○○
Time:	Short
Impact:	Region
Who:	City
Hurdles:	Regulatory

setting goals. Cities may provide incentives for developers to meet as an inexpensive way to meet congestion mitigation requirements. Businesses may pass along these benefits for employees that enroll in a reduction program.

Target Market

Large Metropolitan Areas with Surrounding Suburbs

Developing and encouraging programs, such as ridesharing, reduces the number of vehicles on the road in peak hours while still moving a large number of people.

Corporations with Many Employees

Larger businesses may urge carpools, vanpools, or alternate modes of transportation as a way to encourage employees to reduce single-occupant vehicle use and parking needs.

Large Activity Centers

Activity centers (i.e., stadiums, amusement parks, convention centers) often draw a large number of people/employees to an area at the same time. An increase in transit options or carpool techniques allows people to travel to these attractions in larger groups using fewer vehicles.

How Will This Help?

- Implementing certain ordinances reduces the number of trips and miles driven by encouraging carpooling or vanpooling. Sharing vehicles reduces trip occurrence and vehicle travel because more people use the same car to travel, helping to lower the current level of congestion.
- Trip reduction programs are implemented at relatively low cost compared to other congestion mitigation strategies. Primarily, the costs of ordinance programs encompass materials used for promotion and program administration once it is in place. There is not a direct need for new infrastructure, greatly limiting the money required to start these programs.
- Encouraging or requiring people to use their cars less increases the use of alternative modes like transit, bicycling, or carpooling. Commuters are more apt to use alternate forms of transportation if provided reasons to do so. Trip reduction ordinances urge people to consider the bus or carpooling, decreasing road congestion by reducing the number of vehicles.

Implementation Examples

Washington: Washington State adopted a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law in 1991 and the CTR Efficiency Act in 2006. CTR targets employers with 100 plus full-time employees in congestion regions to take part in the program. The Washington Department of Transportation provides technical program support while the businesses are responsible for managing their trip reduction program and meeting regional goals. Since 2007, the program has reduced 154 million statewide vehicle miles. While in 2009, CTR program employers reduced the number of

morning commutes by 30,000 and traffic delays by 8 percent in the Central Puget Sound Region.

Arizona: Maricopa County, Arizona, began their Trip Reduction Program (TRP) in the late 1980s. The program requires employers and schools with 50 plus employees or students to participate in the program. They are asked to reach a 60 percent single occupant vehicle rate. Maricopa County TRP provides technical support while each business or school must produce annual trip reduction records created by employee surveys. In 2011, 2,993 employers participated in the TRP.

Application Techniques and Principles

The activity centers and major suburbs of metropolitan regions are the common areas to apply trip reduction ordinances. Strategies reduce the number of vehicle trips to larger businesses and other areas that draw crowds of people. The businesses and local governments should set goals, objectives, policies, and procedures when instituting a trip reduction ordinance for employees or urban zones. Businesses typically designate an employee to oversee the program; surveys allow businesses to identify ways to increase the overall effectiveness of the ordinance.

New residential and office developments may adopt trip reduction strategies to promote reduction in single-occupant vehicle trips. For example, a development may include ridesharing or transit facilities, limited parking spaces, and other techniques.

Successful trip reduction techniques incorporate adequate enforcement. Some plans are only voluntary and trust employees to meet the reduction goals. However, required reductions sometimes include penalties for not reaching certain goals or disregarding the requirements of the plan. Businesses and groups that purposefully neglect the measures are generally given harsher punishments.

Issues

Trip reduction ordinances typically must overcome pressure from both public and private sources. Cities and the state must consider whether these measures should be compulsory or voluntary and then agree on appropriate methods of enforcement for companies and developers that refuse to comply.

Who Is Responsible?

City and state officials and business management bear a large portion of the responsibility for maintaining reduction ordinances. Officials need to convey the reasons such ordinances are a necessity and how these regulations help improve standards of living, especially in terms of less wasted time in congested traffic. Business management should urge employee participation by highlighting the benefits and discussing useful techniques.

Project Timeframe

Trip reduction ordinances should be implemented in a time period that allows public and business comments to be offered and addressed. The required implementation time involves promotion and enforcement for commuter participation. Also, businesses should

spend time planning and evaluating employee schedules to ensure the best plan is installed for each company. A basic ordinance can be installed between six and twelve months.

Cost

Trip reduction ordinance costs are low when compared to other congestion mitigation techniques. The initial cost is minimal, while any additional funding is for adequate administration, enforcement, and assistance required by businesses and the government. Trip reduction ordinances typically cost between \$75,000 and \$125,000.

Data Needs

Incorporating trip reduction ordinances into business plans requires information about the number of trips, length, and mode. Data regarding the mode share (i.e., transit riders, carpools, or other method), the average vehicle occupancy and the vehicle trips or peak period vehicle trips are all needed to evaluate the need and benefit of such an ordinance. This information is necessary before and after implementation to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

Trip Reduction Ordinances Best Practices

- Type of Location: Regions with serious congestion or pollution.
- Agency Practices: Commitment to support trip reduction programs.
- Frequency of Reanalysis: Annually.
- Supporting Policies or Actions Needed: Clear trip reduction goals and objectives.
- Complementary Strategies: Carpooling, vanpooling, transit, telecommuting, and compressed work weeks.

For More Information

Crawford, J.A., T.B. Carlson, W.L. Eisele, B.T. Kuhn. *A Michigan Toolbox for Mitigating Traffic Congestion*, Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, September 2011.