

Mandatory Trip Reduction Programs

**Local Government and Environmental Coalition
City of Boulder Transportation**

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Local Government/Environmental Group Coalition

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Boulder County Public Health

Denver Environmental Health

City of Fort Collins Air Quality Program

Jefferson County Environmental Health

Environmental Defense Fund

Rocky Mountain Clean Air Action

Also Presenting

City of Boulder Transportation

Washington's Mandatory Program

- **Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law instituted in 1991**
 - The state law mandated that local governments pass CTR ordinances
 - Trip reduction targets set by state for local jurisdictions
- **CTR is intended to reduce:**
 - 1) Air Pollution
 - 2) Traffic Congestion
 - 3) Energy Consumption

(Climate Change will be added as a 4th goal in 2008)

How CTR Works

- Applicable to employers with 100 or more employees
 - Additional criteria concerning # of commuters arriving between 6am-9am.
 - Excludes most retail, schools, and construction sites
- Employers must:
 - Provide information about transportation options to employees
 - Make a trip reduction plan specific to each site
 - Make a good faith effort to follow the plan
 - Conduct annual (soon to be biannual) employee survey.
- **Results are not mandatory**, participation in CTR is.

CTR Participants

- **1200 employer sites**
- **500,000 commuters**
- **25% of employees in CTR area (20% statewide)**

CTR Results

	Drive Alone Rate ¹	Avg. CTR VMT ²	Avg. WA VMT ³
1993	70.9%	10.1	10.1
1995	67.9%	9.3	9.5
2007	63.4%	8.3	9.9
Total	7.5%	17.8%	2.0%

1—Drive alone rate is for all commuters in CTR counties

2—Avg. one-way VMT is for all commuters whose employers participate in CTR

3—Avg. one-way VMT for all commuters in the state

CTR Transit Options Utilized

- Public Transit is the preferred option in areas with accessibility
 - Infrastructure is clustered around 1 metropolitan area (Seattle)
 - Sporadic across Western part of state (Spokane)
- Telework & Flextime Schedules satisfy CTR for ~30% of employers
- Carpool/Vanpool also popular choices.

CTR Program Costs

- Program funded at \$2.75 million/year
- Employers invest (on average) \$18 for each dollar invested by the state.
- Employer costs are highly variable, dependant upon the value of the program at each site.
- Employers have voluntarily increased their investment in CTR over time.
 - “Makes good business sense.”
 - Employees value CTR as part of their benefit package.

CTR Successes

- Reduced criteria emissions by 3730 tpy (10.2tpd)
- GHG reduced by 74,000 tpy (CO2 equiv.)
- 5.5 million gallons of fuel conserved annually.
- Strong partnership created amongst employers, counties and state agencies.

“The business community has generally embraced the ideals of the (CTR) program and their responsibilities. The program allows businesses to support a state policy goal, and they get something out of it.”

(Survey response from WA 2005 Report to Legislature)

Economic Benefits of CTR

- CTR is recognized as a valuable tool for economic development.
- Lloyd District TMA (Portland, OR) adopted CTR as an area development strategy:
 - 3% decrease in commercial vacancy rates (2001-2004)
 - Over 1 million square feet of development has been created with no net increase in parking supply
 - CTR projected to save at least \$140 million by time of project completion

CTR Support from Business Community

- Employers had “up-front” involvement in developing the program
 - Parallel process for agencies and employers
 - High priority given to development of strategic partnerships
 - “The program’s involvement of business is what keeps it a national model.”—2005 Legislative Report
- Employers are involved in CTR governance (board representation)
- Forum available to resolve program issues
- Business’s rallied behind CTR when program cuts were proposed by the state legislature

Incentives for Businesses

- Costs savings associated with reduced employee turnover and absenteeism
- Improved employee recruitment and retention rates
- Reduced costs of providing parking
 - Univ. of WA estimates that 10 years of CTR participation has saved over \$100 million.
- Federal tax benefits for qualifying investments
- Marketing programs that recognize participants and promotes the program
 - Being “Green” is good PR
 - Transit is an extremely cost-effective choice when evaluating sustainable options.

Other CTR Programs

- Maricopa County, AZ
 - County Ordinance, but county covers most/all of Phoenix metro area
 - Since 1997
- Numerous other state/local ordinances
 - AZ, CA, MN, GA, FL, MD, OR, VA

Mandatory Trip Reduction Myths

1. “Offer only the prospect of modest reductions at a significant cost.”
 - CTR has significantly reduced mobile source emissions statewide and at \$723/ton reduction is extremely cost-effective.
2. “Do not produce expected results—costly programs achieve results of no greater than a 5% increase in AVR.”
 - 50% underestimation of WA’s CTR results
3. They are a “rigid command and control strategy” that mandates employers to “participate in a ‘one size fits all’ approach.”
 - Mandatory Programs & Business Flexibility **are not** mutually exclusive concepts.

Quotes taken from “Travel Reduction Pilot Program for the Denver Region: Final Report”, 1994.

Denver's Voluntary Pilot Program

- “The pilot program resulted in increased exposure to trip reduction strategies and information, but no change in travel behavior.”
- “Trip reduction programs implemented by employers in the pilot program generally were not effective.”
- “The inescapable conclusion is the program resulted in no reduction in solo driving, and only a very small but statistically significant increase in walking (3 walks per 1000 commute trips).”

Quotes taken from “Travel Reduction Pilot Program for the Denver Region: Final Report”, 1994.

Why Voluntary Programs Don't Work

- “Employers took participation in the study seriously; however, the study had a low priority compared to other corporate issues.”
- A WA survey of CTR employers indicated that
 1. If the program were no longer mandatory:
 - 62% would cut employee education**
 - 36% would reduce or eliminate transit subsidies**
 2. If the program was expanded:
 - 50% would increase education**
 - 42% would provide additional subsidies**

Quote taken from “Travel Reduction Pilot Program for the Denver Region: Final Report”, 1994.

This is “old news” for Denver

Quotes taken from the 1994 “Travel Reduction Pilot Program for the Denver Region: Final Report”

- “Mandatory programs may be necessary to obtain continuous and widespread employer action, but stringent policies are not associated with greater effectiveness.”
- “Stringency may be less important than simply the presence of an ordinance to ensure a minimum level of company participation and commitment.”

Benefits of Mandatory Programs

- Allow for greater SIP credit than voluntary programs
- Annual/bi-annual reports provide consistent, good quality data
- Better results than voluntary programs
 - Mandatory participation eliminates the perception of competitive disadvantage and “levels the playing field” for businesses that want to make strong investments in sustainability

Trip Reduction Programs in Colorado

- A mandatory program in the Front Range & Northern Front Range would support many of Colorado's long-term policy goals:
 1. Improve air quality
 2. Reduce traffic congestion
 3. Curtail energy consumption
 4. Take action on climate change/sustainability
- Mandatory programs can be structured to provide reliable data and achieve significant results, as well as being cost-effective and business friendly.
- In order to realize all of the benefits, this should be a year-round program for all of Colorado. The greatest benefits to air quality, however, will be obtained during ozone season (increased mode choice).

Similar Transit Systems in WA & CO

- CTR counties in WA have a sporadic transit system
 - Centralized around 1 metro area (Seattle), much like Denver
 - Counties, such as Spokane, who value the CTR program most heavily for air quality have the least infrastructure.
 - The Northern Front Range shares many characteristics
 - Micro-transit systems are the best option to fill these gaps.
 - Evolution from fixed routes to flexible systems
 - Residential-based programs
- Washington currently spends more \$\$\$ on vans and buses than CTR program administration.

Pro-active Program Implementation

- Colorado's TMAs are well-known and respected by employers and policy makers.
- TMAs should be involved in mandatory trip reduction program development and review.
- TMAs can act as a liaison between agencies and employers
 - Tailor plans to meet needs of individual employers
 - Recruit voluntary participants
 - Facilitate annual surveys and reports
- Provide resources to participating employers
 - In WA, the 12% voluntary participation rate for CTR is largely attributable to businesses who wish to access the free transit resources associated with the program.

Flexibility in Mandatory Programs

- All stakeholders should be involved in trip reduction program governance
- A taskforce to oversee program implementation and ongoing review should be developed that includes representation from:
 - State and local public health agencies
 - Employers
 - TMAs
- Educate and encourage employers to implement trip reduction strategies that are most appropriate for the individual site from a large menu of mode choices.
- Good Faith Effort vs. Stringency

Thank You

- Washington Department of Transportation
- Washington Department of Ecology
- Bill Obermann, UrbanTrans Consultants, Inc.