



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director *mr*
DATE: January 27, 2015
SUBJECT: Commute Trip Reduction Program – Local and Regional Plans Update

AT A GLANCE - INFORMATION

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide background information on Washington State’s Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program and its implementation at the local and regional levels. The information is provided in anticipation of Board action to approve an update to the Regional CTR Plan at a future Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

A Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law was first passed by the state legislature in 1991 followed by an updated law, the CTR Efficiency Act (RCW 70.94.527), in 2006. The CTR Efficiency Act of 2006 modified the scope of the CTR program to ensure CTR plans and employer goals are coordinated with transportation and growth plans and focus on urban growth areas with the most congested state highways. Under the CTR Efficiency Act, local jurisdictions were allowed to create Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers (GTECs) to obtain funding and flexibility in implementing programs. The Act also expanded the role of WSDOT and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) in CTR planning. A CTR Board made up of statewide representatives oversees the CTR program by establishing policy, providing guidance and allocating funding.

The overall statewide goals of the Commute Trip Reduction program are to: 1) improve transportation system efficiency; 2) conserve energy; and, 3) improve air quality. The program requires participation by the state’s largest employers; those with over 100 employees arriving at work between 6 and 9 a.m. year round and located in areas of Washington State most affected by traffic congestion.

In Clark County there are currently four CTR affected jurisdictions:

1. Vancouver
2. Camas
3. Washougal
4. Unincorporated Clark County (UGA)

In October 2007, the RTC Board approved CTR Plans for each of these four jurisdictions as well as RTC’s Regional CTR Plan and a plan for the downtown Vancouver Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC). Since then, annual reports have been submitted to the CTR Board in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. In 2013, summary CTR Plan updates were

submitted to the state to address how the CTR program is being implemented by local jurisdictions and the region. The implementation process requires that local jurisdictions, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), major employers, transit agencies, WSDOT, and the CTR Board work collaboratively. In 2015, local and regional CTR Plans are to be updated and submitted to the CTR Board.

THE STATE’S 2015-2019 CTR PROGRAM

The state’s CTR Board is consistently looking at how to improve the Program by providing more flexibility and enhancing program effectiveness. The CTR Board recently released its 2015-2019 CTR Program that lists program objectives, statewide performance goals and targets, presents options for locals to set local performance goals and targets, lists statewide strategies, performance measures and describes CTR funding (see attached). The most notable change for the 2015-2019 Plan updates is a new provision allowing for “locally-defined performance goals and targets”. The focus of this cycle’s local and regional plan updates will be on setting the future Plan’s goals and targets.

In the coming months, local jurisdictions and RTC will be working to update both local and regional CTR implementation plans as well as update local CTR goals and targets as required by the State. Information on the required Plan updates and a status report on CTR goals and targets will be provided at the February RTC Board meeting. The state CTR Board calls for locals to submit their updated CTR implementation plans to RTC and RTC, as the region’s Regional Transportation Planning Organization, is to submit an updated regional CTR plan along with the local plan updates to the CTR Board.

THE CTR PROGRAM AT THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Within Clark County, 58 local employers are considered CTR-affected worksites (located in Vancouver, unincorporated Clark County, Camas and Washougal). The CTR Program is administered by a single program administrator hosted by the City of Vancouver. Jan Bowers, City of Vancouver, works as the CTR Administrator, providing technical support and assistance to affected employers and participants in this region.

Specifically, the CTR Administrator supports and trains worksite Employer Transportation Coordinators (ETC’s), helps ETC’s with worksite promotion of CTR programs and reviews worksite CTR amenities. The state’s CTR program requires biennial survey of the commute mode used by employees. The CTR Administrator oversees the administration and submittal of these surveys among other program support and promotion functions in order to advance the program regionally.

Regionally, significant effort has been mobilized around providing a seamless web platform for CTR Program participants and the public in general. Information on the CTR Program, commute options, incentive programs and trip tracker databases are available at the ClarkCommute.org website.

NEXT STEPS

RTC will continue to work with affected local jurisdictions on CTR Plan updates. Draft Plan updates will be available to the Board at a future meeting when the Board will be asked to adopt RTC's regional CTR Plan update prior to submittal to the statewide CTR Board.

Attachment: CTR Board Information Sheet, 2015-2019 Program

20150203RTCB_CTR.docx

The Commute Trip Reduction program contributes to important statewide performance goals and accomplishes its mission to reduce transportation-related air pollution, energy consumption and traffic congestion by promoting energy-efficient choices.

The CTR Board adopts the following as its State Commute Trip Reduction Plan for 2015-2019:

Program objectives

- Engage communities and enhance program effectiveness and flexibility.
- Expand the trip-reduction market from commute trips to all types of trips.
- Evolve performance measurement for data efficiency and the new all-trips plan.
- Leverage the Governor's and WSDOT's policy direction and support.
- Integrate planning to support multimodal transportation choices.
- Respond to emerging issues and opportunities.

Statewide performance goals and targets

- Goal: Increase the use of transportation alternatives for commute trips among residents to 33 percent by 2015 (Governor's Results Washington). Correlate this goal if and when the Governor's office issues an update after 2015.
 - Target: 40% use of transportation alternatives for commutes by 2019. 6% percent point increase in jurisdiction's CTR program over their baseline.
- Goal: Reduce the state's annual per capita vehicle miles traveled by 18 percent by 2020 (RCW 47.01.440 – state VMT goals).
 - Target: 18% reduction of VMT for employees in jurisdiction's CTR program.
- Goal: Reduce the state's greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (RCW 70.235.020 – state GHG goals).
 - Target: 18% daily GHG emissions reduction per employee (based on CTR VMT target).

Local performance goals and targets: three options

1. State goals and state targets
2. State goals and locally tailored targets
3. Locally defined goals and targets

Statewide strategies

- Leverage the policy direction set forth in Governor's Executive Order 14-04 *Washington Carbon Pollution Reduction and Clean Energy Action*, which directs the development of a new program to help local government implement measures to improve transportation

efficiency and update comprehensive plans to maximize travel and land-use efficiency for the movement of goods and people with reduced GHG emissions.

- The CTR legislative proposal to expand to all trips is a strategy for implementing local transportation-efficiency measures. WSDOT, Commerce and Ecology are developing planning improvements that support this direction.
- Leverage the goals set by *Results WSDOT* for modal integration (better interconnectivity of all transportation modes) and environmental stewardship (improving the energy efficiency of transportation systems). The CTR program directly supports agency and statewide goals.
- Support legislation and funding to expand the program's focus from commute trips to all trips, through community-designed and determined trip reduction plans.
- Support for legislation to amend and extend the CTR tax-credit program.
- Develop and implement the new community all-trips program with competitive grants.
- Field-test experimental strategies for enhanced trip-reduction performance, efficiency and community customization through the board's ongoing pilot of alternate plans.
- Move the program toward community-based tailoring of plan types, goals, and successes.

Performance measures

The statewide performance goals for GHG, VMT and the percentage of residents commuting using alternatives are measured or tracked by Ecology, WSDOT and the Governor's office. Implementers will continue to measure the effectiveness of their local management strategies. The return on investment and benefit to the transportation system is a product of local implementation and success.

Funding

The CTR program budget has been and continues to be approximately six million dollars a biennium. Program funding has not increased from its original budget amount twenty years ago, despite a significant increase in the number of employer worksites and a doubling of the employees covered by the program. Twenty years of inflation has eroded more than half of the budget's purchasing power (conservatively assuming 3% inflation per year over twenty years).

To create a more sustainable and effective financial plan, efforts are being made to secure additional trip reduction-related funding.

The board may revisit its state plan upon the passage of its legislation or amended goals from the Governor's office.