

# **Travel Demand Management Implementation Strategies**

## **2.1 City-Wide Approach**

This document was prepared as part of the City-Wide Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to aid developers, institutions and businesses in reducing overall traffic and parking demand within the City. It also serves to focus the City's long-term transportation programs and investments, aligning them with the goals of the community and making them more sustainable. It has been designed to support and complement the statewide and regional TDM programs which already exist in Connecticut.

### **2.1.1 Regional Context**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation operates a program called Connecticut Commuter Services. Under this program, three contractors are tasked with providing commuter services throughout Connecticut. The Rideshare Company serves northern and eastern Connecticut, Rideworks provides service in south central Connecticut, and Metropool serves southern Connecticut, including Norwalk. The commuter services provided include rideshare matching, vanpool consultations, traveler information, commuter tax benefit programs and a guaranteed ride home program. Additional information for these programs is provided in Section 1 – Chapter 5.

The Southwestern Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), the planning agency for the region of Connecticut which includes Norwalk, is tasked with predicting future travel demand and outlining possible measures for mitigating traffic over a 20 year span. These traffic mitigation measures are aimed at ensuring compliance with Federal air quality standards. The plan for mitigating traffic in the region, which includes TDM strategies, is outlined in the 2003 report, Congestion Mitigation System Plan – Vision 2020. SWRPA provides support for the Connecticut Commuter Services program.

The City of Norwalk should aim to expand on the state and regional initiatives and connect developers, business leaders and commuters with the tools and resources it needs to reduce their carbon footprint, improve air quality and save money. This includes fostering and supporting a Transportation Management Initiative (TMI)



comprised of local businesses. A TMI is a collaborative, business-led and City-supported effort to address traffic congestion and ease parking demand by reducing the number of vehicle trips into the City of Norwalk.

### **2.1.2 Significant Corridors**

The City should incorporate TDM strategies into significant corridor projects within the City. Infrastructure which supports the use of alternative modes, such as roundabouts, sidewalks, bike lanes, median islands, bus shelters, accessible ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian push buttons and signal phases at intersections should be provided as an integral part of every City-funded project.

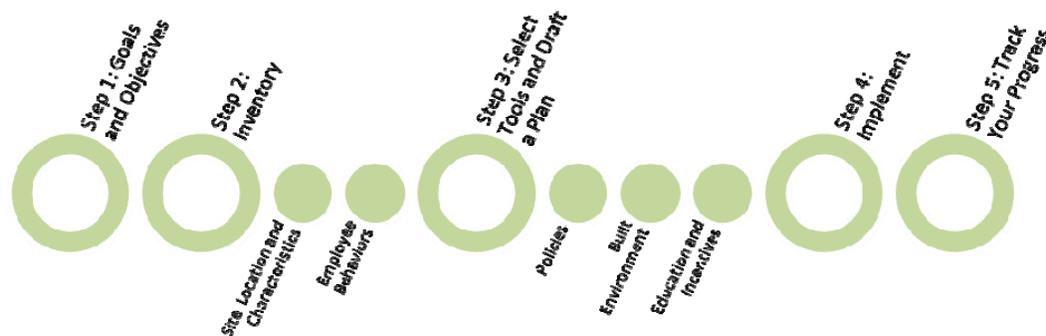
### **2.1.3 Significant Development Projects**

Designing a site with TDM in mind can be profitable for developers trying to get the maximum return on their investments. Parking is expensive and can inhibit placement of more revenue generating uses on a site. Structured parking can reduce site coverage but is often cost prohibitive. A better solution is often to reduce the number of trips to and from the site, reducing the demand for parking.

The City should encourage TDM-friendly design in new development applications as such enhancements, in addition to their trip reduction benefits, can be a major selling point for attracting and retaining businesses. On-site services such as restaurants, gyms, childcare, banking and postal services, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities can make the public areas of the site more vibrant and inviting while reducing trips off-site. Revenue generated from these amenities stays on your property rather than a site down the street that has attracted your tenants. Ease of access to the site by transit can be a selling point for potential tenants as it gives them a larger labor market to draw from when recruiting employees. The Merritt 7 Corporate Park, located on East Avenue in Norwalk, was designed to provide tenants and their employees with many transportation options. As a result, the development has thrived even amid a major economic downturn. To learn more about Merritt 7's successes with TDM, see the case study in Section 1 Chapter 5.

## **2.2 Creating a TDM Plan**

A goal of the City of Norwalk is to lay a framework for sustainable transportation practices and to assist stakeholders in incorporating TDM tools and services into their overall transportation strategies. It is not the City's intent to regulate but to provide the tools and support necessary for commuters, businesses, institutions and developers to make TDM benefit their organization. The basic steps in creating a TDM plan are illustrated in the chart below:



Several example forms helpful in initiating a TDM program are provided in the Section 2 Appendix. These include a site inventory worksheet, sample employee survey forms, a sample tenant survey, and a sample TDM program budget worksheet.

### 2.2.1 Overview of Strategies

Exhibit 5-1 includes a brief overview of some of the TDM strategies that can be used to create a TDM plan for existing and proposed development sites. The TDM toolbox is made up of tools, such as transit, vanpool, telecommute programs and alternative work schedules, as well as support services like education, incentives, and commuter tax benefits. A more in-depth discussion of each tool is provided in Section 1, Chapter 5 of this document.



## Exhibit 2-1 TDM Strategy Toolbox

Tool	Description
Pedestrian Facilities	Sidewalks between activity centers, pedestrian-friendly site layout.
Bicycle Facilities	Shower and locker facilities, bicycle parking, bike paths
Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC)	An employee, typically in HR or Administration, who provides education and administers employee transportation benefits.
Rideshare Matching	A service that identifies people living within the same area who work at the same location, or those who live near a park and ride lot or child care facility who work near each other.
Vanpool Subsidies	Vans, whether employee-sponsored, owner-operated, or third-party operated, transport people living within the same area who work near each other.
Telecommute Programs	Allowing employees to work from home or another off-site location part-time or full-time.
Alternative Work Schedules	Allow companies to reduce congestion and minimize operating costs while offering employees more flexibility.
Incentives	Encourage employees to start or continue alternative commuting behaviors. Incentives can be financial or involve recognition, prizes, or time off.
Commuter Tax Benefit	The federal tax code includes several financial incentives from employers and employees to promote alternative modes of transportation. For all of these options the employer must participate in the tax program before employees are allowed to participate.
Guaranteed Ride Home	Employees who use alternative modes to get to work often worry that they will be stranded without a vehicle if an emergency should arise in the middle of the day or if they have to work late. Providing a guaranteed ride home program can give employees peace of mind in their decision to bike to work, carpool, vanpool or use transit.
Managed Parking	Space for parking is often limited, and even when creating new spaces is possible it comes at a premium. Managing parking can limit the demand and encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.

To assist organizations in honing in on the most appropriate trip reduction strategies to meet their specific goals, a quick implementation matrix is provided below in Exhibit 2-2. Further information on each of these strategies is provided in Section 1, Chapter 5 of the TMP.

**Exhibit 2-2 TDM Strategy Implementation Matrix**

Strategy	Effectiveness <sup>1</sup>	Cost <sup>2</sup>	Who <sup>3</sup>	Report Section/ Local Resource
<b>Facilities</b>				
Pedestrian Facilities	4	\$	D	Section 1-Chapter 5.2.1
Bicycle Racks/Bike Lockers	3	\$	D/E	1-5.2.2
Showers and Lockers	3	\$\$	D	1-5.2.2
TDM-Friendly Design	5	\$	D	1-5.2.3
On-Site Amenities	3	\$\$	D	1-5.2.3
<b>Alternative Work Options</b>				
Flextime	3	X	E	1-5.2.4
Staggered Work Hours	2	\$	E	1-5.2.4
Compressed Work Week	3	X	E	1-5.2.4
Telecommute Program	3	\$	E	1-5.2.5 Telecommute Connecticut! <a href="http://www.telecommutect.com">www.telecommutect.com</a>

Source: Ratings System adapted from GoBoulder Transportation Options Toolkit.

1 Effectiveness is rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most effective.

2 Key:

X = No cost/cost savings/too variable to estimate

\$ = Low cost (less than \$10 per year per employee)

\$\$ = Medium Cost (\$10-\$30 per year per employee)

\$\$\$ = High Cost (more than \$30 per year per employee)

3 D= Developer, E = Employer



<b>Incentives &amp; Support Services</b>				
Employee Transportation Coordinator	5	\$\$\$	D/E	1-5.2.6
Rideshare Matching	2	X	D/E	1-5.2.7 MetroPool www.metropool.com
Traveler Information	2	\$	D/E	1-5.2.6
Traveler Information Center	5	\$\$\$	D	1-5.2.6
Cash and/or Prizes	4	\$\$	D/E	1-5.2.8
Special Events/Workplace Challenges	3	\$\$	D/E	1-5.2.6
Commuter Tax Benefit	5	X	E	1-5.2.9 Commuter Tax Benefit www.commutertaxbenefit.org
Bus or Train Passes	4	\$\$	D/E	1-5.2.10
Vanpool Subsidies	5	\$\$	E	1-5.2.11 Easy Street www.easystreet.org 1-800-972-EASY
Vanpool Empty Seat Subsidy	3	\$	E	1-5.2.11 Easy Street www.easystreet.org 1-800-972-EASY
Company Commuter Vehicles	3	\$\$\$	D/E	
Guaranteed Ride Home	3	\$	D/E	1-5.2.12 Connecticut Commuter Services www.ctrides.com 1-877-CTRIDES
<b>Parking Strategies</b>				
Preferential Parking	4	\$	D/E	1-5.2.13
Parking Cash-Out	10	\$\$\$	D/E	1-5.2.13
Parking Pricing	10	\$	D	1-5.2.13
Unbundled Parking	8	X	D	1-5.2.13
Managed Parking	8	X	D/E	1-5.2.13

Source: Ratings System adapted from GoBoulder Transportation Options Toolkit.

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### **2.2.2 Funding Sources**

Once a trip reduction goal has been set, funding for a TDM plan or program must be established. A sample TDM program budget worksheet is provided in the Section 2 Appendix to provide a starting point for developers, institutions and businesses in thinking about developing a plan. Smaller businesses may find funding for a commuter program through creative means, such as funding commuter awards and prizes using money from redeeming recyclables.

In some cases, particularly with large mixed-use development projects, significant grant funding may be available through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program as well as the CDC Community Transformation Grants (CTGs) for projects which promote health and active living. Grants are available through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Federal Transit Administration also offers grants for transit-related projects.

### **2.2.3 Education and Marketing**

Once TDM goals have been set and a budget has been made for implementing a TDM plan, an education and marketing campaign should be established. Travel Demand Management is about influencing individual behaviors. Employees must first have repeat exposure to information about their travel options and benefits in order to consider taking an alternative mode or modifying their schedule. The next step is often a trial use to determine if the alternative mode or schedule will fit with the employee's lifestyle. If the employee has a positive experience, they will likely continue the alternative commuting behavior.

Education and internal marketing to employees can improve the TDM program's chances of success. Providing information on transportation and parking as part of new employee orientation and conducting lunch and learn presentations on commuting are low-cost ways to increase awareness of the various travel options that are available. Another simple education method is setting up a table display at company or on-site events. Larger developments may find it worthwhile to provide a traveler information center which provides maps and commuter information.

Special events can create momentum for a new TDM program or renew interest in an ongoing program. The Way to Go! Commuter Challenge is a week-long campaign to promote alternative commuting where businesses or employees compete for recognition and prizes. A Way to Go! Commuter Challenge or Bike to Work Week can convince individuals to try an alternative mode, which is often the first step in creating behavior change.



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External marketing of the TDM efforts of a business, such as applying for national recognition of those efforts, is an effective way of showing potential employees and the community that the business is socially responsible and commuter-friendly. One recognition program is Best Workplaces for Commuters, which provides national recognition to employers who provide outstanding commuter benefits. Workplaces that meet the national standards for excellence in commuter benefits receive tools, training and support for implementing commuter benefits. Another recognition program is the Bicycle Friendly Business designation from the League of American Bicyclists. Businesses who meet the requirements for this free designation receive recognition and technical assistance for making their workplace even more bicycle friendly.

#### **2.2.4 Goals and Tracking**

One of the first steps in creating a successful TDM plan is setting meaningful and obtainable goals. Goals can be specific, such as reducing the overall number of trips by 15% or they can be more qualitative, such as reducing the organization's carbon footprint or improving employee health. Setting specific, quantitative goals requires an understanding of the potential effectiveness of the various TDM tools and strategies. Exhibit 2-3 presents a list of TDM strategies and the trip reduction that can generally be expected, based on empirical evidence from existing TDM programs as compiled by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

**Exhibit 2-3 Automobile Trip Reduction Potential**

TDM Strategy	Automobile Trip Reduction
\$1/day Financial Incentive	3-7%
\$2/day Financial Incentive	6-15%
Parking Cash-Out	10-13% at work site
Compressed work weeks	7-10% at work site
Telecommuting Programs	1-4% area-wide
Walking/Bicycling Facilities Improvements	1-2% area-wide
Carpooling/Vanpooling programs	1-3% area-wide
Marketing and Promotion	1-3% along with other measures

Source: From CDOT TDM Toolkit

The next step in tracking is gathering baseline data. This may be accomplished through an initial inventory along with a survey or baseline traffic counts.

## 2.3 Future Steps

DPW staff should seek out interested business leaders to create a Transportation Management Initiative (TMI): a collaborative, business-led and City-supported effort to address traffic congestion and ease parking demand by reducing the number of vehicle trips into the City of Norwalk. This effort should be focused in South Norwalk, Uptown, Norwalk Hospital, and the area surrounding the Route 7/15 interchange where existing transit infrastructure and density are likely to support the effort.

As first steps in identifying interested parties, DPW staff or representatives familiar with TDM strategies and implementation may initiate a direct mail or email campaign, along with a “lunch and learn” presentation to the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce. These communications should focus on the many benefits TDM has for business and the information and resources the City can provide. The City may coordinate and team with MetroPool, Norwalk Transit and Metro-North Railroad to present information on transportation options and transit connections.

The City may then host several meetings with interested business leaders to discuss creation of a TMI or TDM plans for their individual companies. Once a TMI is successfully established, the reins may then be handed to the business leaders to make transportation decisions which will have the greatest benefit to them collectively, and the City will play a supporting role.

The DPW should also work with the City Planning office to include a requirement for new developments and businesses to create a TDM plan as a condition for site plan approval. This requirement will focus on setting goals and determining which TDM tools



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may benefit the business or development rather than legislating that every business follows a prescribed plan. For example, the zoning requirements may require that a business submit a TDM plan which aims to reduce trips by 10%.

Using the chart in the “Goals and Tracking” section of this report, this could be accomplished through actions as simple as providing employees with commuter information, offering a carpooling or vanpooling program (which may be accomplished through visits from Metropool), and offering a telecommute program. Institutions may choose to provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities and offer a financial incentive through the Commuter Tax Benefit program. There are many combinations of TDM tools and services which may meet the requirement, but the overall goal of the requirement is for employers and developers to simply think about transportation options.

The City of Norwalk should consider pursuing the Walk Friendly Community designation as a way to advertise and promote its dedication to providing a walkable environment and greater diversity of travel options. The Walk Friendly Communities program recognizes communities that are working to improve a wide range of conditions related to walking, including safety, mobility, access and comfort. The application for this program may be obtained from the website at [www.walkfriendly.org](http://www.walkfriendly.org).

TDM strategies are limited in their effectiveness by the built environment. For example, providing an incentive to employees to walk or ride their bikes to work will not be effective unless safe bicycle facilities and sidewalks exist. For this reason, the DPW should coordinate with City Planning to consider moving away from Euclidian planning practices and implementing a form-based unified land development ordinance such as SmartCode that fully supports Smart Growth development and TDM practices. The SmartCode, much like the roadway design elements in the Norwalk City-wide Transportation Management Plan, focuses on the context of the area and the desired urban form, rather than specific land uses. It provides visual and written descriptions of design elements such as lot widths, block sizes, building heights and setbacks, placement of buildings on the lot, parking locations, etc.

It is important that City Stakeholders, municipal and business leaders in Norwalk work closely together to develop real, implementable TDM strategies that will reduce the number of trips by single occupant modes. Some of the initial steps outlined in this toolbox can help the City and its leaders gain momentum and build upon some of the recent TDM successes of the Merritt 7, Norwalk Hospital, and Norwalk Parking Authority.