Washington State
Commute
Trip
Reduction




CTR TASK FORCE

2005

REPORT TO THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

Washington State
Commute Trip Reduction

CTR TASK FORCE

2005

REPORT TO THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

Prepared by the Commute Trip Reduction Task Force with support from the Washington State Department of Transportation, Public Transportation and Commute Options Office, February 2006

To comment or request more information:

Phone the Public Transportation and Commute Options Office at (360) 705-7846

Email cottonk@wsdot.wa.gov

Write to the Washington State Department of Transportation, PTCO Office, PO Box 47387, Olympia WA 98504-7387

This report is available electronically at **www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/**

This information is available in alternative formats
You may request this information in large print, Braille, cassette tape, or on computer disk by calling the Public Transportation and Commute Options Office at (360) 705-7846. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may place your request for an alternative format through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1.

Washington State Department of Transportation
310 Maple Park Avenue S.E.
PO Box 47387 ◆ Olympia WA 98507-7387
360-705-7920 ◆ Fax 360-705-6820

Washington State
Commute
Trip
Reduction

January 17, 2006

To: Washington State Legislature
From: Judith Giniger, Chair
Commute Trip Reduction Task Force

Subject: 2005 CTR Report to the Washington State Legislature

It is my pleasure to submit the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Task Force's 2005 legislative report. This is the fifth report submitted by the Task Force, the final one required under the current CTR Law, RCW 70.94.521-551. The report assesses the program and recommends improvements to its efficiency. The recommendations reflect work with employers, governments, and other interested parties over the last two years.

The Task Force finds that the CTR program is successful and should be continued. In 2005 fewer commuters drove alone to work sites participating in CTR, reducing nearly 20,000 vehicle trips each morning statewide. The seven percent reduction in drive-alone trips at CTR work sites from 1993 to 2005 creates substantial benefits for the transportation system, particularly at major bottlenecks and chokepoints on state highways. In the central Puget Sound, the absence of 14,200 vehicle trips reduced delay by an estimated 11.6 percent during the peak travel period on average mornings in 2005.

CTR commuters reduced petroleum consumption in Washington by nearly 6 million gallons in 2005 (saving $13.7 million through the choices they made in the program), and reduced emissions of regulated air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

To increase efficiency, the Task Force is proposing changes that would:

- focus the program on urban growth areas in the most congested areas of the state;
- increase planning coordination among local jurisdictions, regional organizations, and the state; and
- increase local flexibility in implementing the program.

The Task Force also recommends creating a voluntary Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center Program, which would provide state incentives and technical assistance to local jurisdictions to develop CTR programs in key employment centers.

Because of the program's success, the Task Force recommends that the state continue the program with recommended changes and provide additional funding to support changes to the scope of the program. In addition, recent state investments in performance grants and vanpooling could be strengthened by making funding for these programs more flexible.

If you have any questions about the information contained in this report, please contact me at (360) 705-7920.

CONTENTS


Express Lanes
ONE
WAY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington State Legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law in 1991 to reduce traffic delay, air pollution, and petroleum consumption. This 2005 legislative report contains the CTR Task Force's assessment of the program and recommendations for improvement. The Task Force finds that CTR is successful and should be continued, with modifications to make the program more effective, efficient, and targeted.

HOW IS THE CTR PROGRAM PERFORMING?

The program is working. At CTR worksites, fewer commuters are driving alone, reducing nearly 20,000 vehicle trips each morning (see page 4).

The program is cost-effective: the state cost of the CTR program is 54 cents per reduced trip (or $136 for the year). This is a fraction of the overall economic value of a trip not taken (see page 7).

CTR enhances transportation efficiency

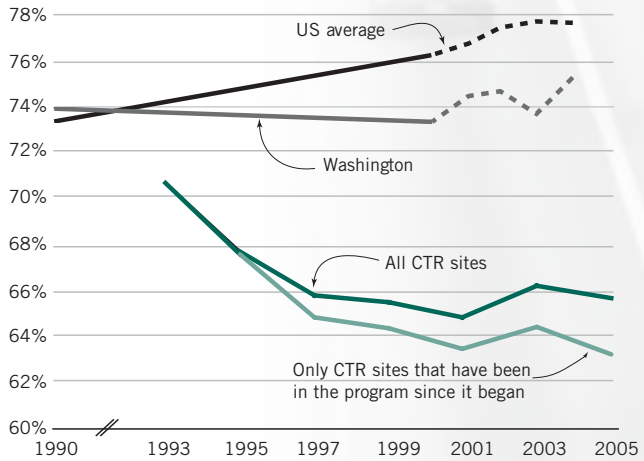
The Task Force finds that making the transportation system more efficient is the program's most important goal. The seven percent reduction in drive-alone trips at CTR sites from 1993 to 2005 creates substantial benefits, particularly at bottlenecks and chokepoints on key highways.

CTR employees in the central Puget Sound made more than 14,200 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning in 2005 than they did when their employers entered the program. The absence of these trips reduced delay by an estimated 11.6 percent during the peak travel period on average mornings in the region (see page 7).

CTR conserves energy and improves air quality

CTR commuters reduced petroleum use in Washington by about 5.8 million gallons of fuel in 2005, saving $13.7 million through the choices they made. They also reduced emissions of three regulated air pollutants by nearly 3,700 tons and emissions of greenhouse gases by the equivalent of 74,200 tons of carbon dioxide (see page 8).

DRIVE ALONE COMPARISON
CTR Worksites, Washington state, and the United States, 1990 to 2005
percentage of commute trips taken by driving alone



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau for Washington and U.S. averages, WSDOT CTR Survey Database for CTR sites. Census data for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial census; data for 2001 through 2004 (the dotted lines) are from the American Community Survey.

WHAT DOES THE TASK FORCE RECOMMEND?

The Task Force's principal recommendation is that the CTR program should continue. See Chapter Three. With the rest of its recommendations, Task Force intends to make the CTR program:

- More *effective* by reducing more drive-alone commute trips,
- More *efficient* by focusing on drive-alone trips that, when shifted into other modes, provide the best return for the level of investment,

- More *targeted* on those areas with the greatest need for trip reduction,
- More *integrated* with local land use and transportation policies, plans, and regulations, and
- More *aligned* with local, regional and state transportation investments.

Modest changes to the current program to make it more effective, efficient, and targeted

The Task Force proposes incremental changes, including:

- *Focus the program on the urban growth areas in the most congested areas of the state* (central Puget Sound, Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater, Vancouver, the Tri-Cities, and Spokane);
- *Increase the planning coordination* among local jurisdictions, regional organizations, and the state; and
- *Increase local flexibility*.

Development of a voluntary program for urban growth centers to enhance the performance of key highway corridors

Local jurisdictions around the state already identify key employment and residential centers in their local plans. These centers rely on the transportation network for access by commuters, customers and residents. If transportation access is constrained, local growth and development will also be constrained.

Successful implementation of CTR will improve access to and within centers and create efficiencies for key state transportation corridors. The Task Force recommends creating a an optional Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) program that would provide state incentives and technical support to local jurisdictions to develop CTR programs in key employment and residential centers.

Additional state investment and policy changes to help employers be more successful

The Task Force has several additional recommendations to support transportation efficiency, including:

- Study potential solutions for managing transportation demand for schools and other educational institutions,
- Provide additional funding for CTR and other supporting programs,
- Prioritize employment and residential centers for state and federal road and transit funding, and
- Engage the Washington State Department of Transportation in establishing TDM policies.

INTRODUCTION

The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program was created by the 1991 legislature to reduce the economic and environmental degradation caused by the increasing number of commute trips made by employees in Washington State. To accomplish this, the CTR program works with employers to encourage employees to commute without driving alone every day. The program also encourages transportation service providers to expand the opportunities available to employees for commuting in ways other than driving alone.

The results of these efforts are demonstrated in the daily choices made by more than 560,000 employees at the 1,114 worksites participating in CTR. The use of commuting choices other than driving alone has increased at CTR worksites over time, and their significantly higher use at CTR worksites compared with other worksites in the same areas makes it clear that the program is working. The success of the program provides cost-effective benefits for transportation efficiency, energy conservation, and air quality.

In 2004, the Task Force commissioned a study by Cocker Fennessy, Inc., a Seattle-based public affairs firm, to research the views of transportation leaders who were familiar with the program and represented a variety of perspectives, including private business, elected and non-elected public officials from all levels of government (local, regional, state, and federal), transit authorities, and transit experts. Several key themes were expressed by a majority of the interview participants:

Washington has the largest publicly-owned vanpool fleet in the country, composed of more than 1,900 vans statewide.

- The CTR program should be continued.
- The CTR program should be adequately and consistently funded.
- The existing policy goals are good; the goal of managing congestion is particularly important.

Using the *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* as a starting point, the Task Force invited the jurisdictions currently implementing CTR to share their views of the program's challenges and opportunities. The program's technical assistance staff evaluated the past and future program through a variety of data sources. Building off of these analyses, the Task Force established a committee in May 2005 to further evaluate the current program and develop recommendations for change. In November 2005, the Task Force adopted a legislative proposal and its final set of recommendations.

THE SUCCESS OF THE CTR PROGRAM PROVIDES COST-EFFECTIVE BENEFITS FOR TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY, ENERGY CONSERVATION, AND AIR QUALITY.

This report represents a milestone in the evolution of the CTR program. The CTR Task Force, the program's oversight body, must report to the legislature every two years, reviewing the program's performance and recommending whether the program should be continued, modified, or terminated. The CTR law sunsets the Task Force on July 1, 2006, and the Task Force has worked since August 2004 to identify challenges facing the program and chart a course for the program's future in this final report required under current law.

This report examines the performance of the CTR program and other supporting programs. It also documents the analysis and intent behind the Task Force's recommendations. The Task Force aims to make the CTR program:

- More *effective* by reducing a greater number of drive-alone commute trips,
- More *efficient* by focusing on the drive-alone trips that, when shifted into other modes, provide the best return for the level of investment,
- More *targeted* on those areas that have the greatest need for trip reduction,
- More *integrated* with local land use and transportation policies, plans, and regulations,
- More *aligned* with local, regional and state transportation investments,
- More *locally driven*, with program goals based on local and regional needs and targets,
- More *regionally based*, with a CTR planning and programming linkage to the regional plans and programs developed by regional transportation planning organizations working with local jurisdictions, and
- More *flexible*, with the ability for local jurisdictions to tailor transportation demand management (TDM) programs to fit their needs and to reduce the program's administrative costs.
- More *financially stable* by integrating state, regional and local funds.

"When I've been to other places nationally, no one else took this approach. Washington is unique in that we still have a functioning program here. But it's probably time to take it apart now to see if there's a way to do things better."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

This report is organized as follows:

Chapter One: The Performance of the CTR Program describes the intent of the CTR program, the latest results, the impacts of the program, and its costs and benefits.

Chapter Two: Changes to the CTR Program: A Focus on Efficiency documents the history of the current CTR program and the intent behind the Task Force's proposed changes.

Chapter Three: Task Force Recommendations for the CTR Program describes the Task Force's CTR program recommendations for the 2006 legislature in detail.

Chapter Four: Task Force Recommendations for Other State Transportation Efficiency Programs discusses other state commute options programs that complement efforts taken by employers under the CTR program. The legislature has asked the Task Force to evaluate several of these programs and this chapter presents the Task Force's analyses and recommendations.

Chapter Five: Conclusion discusses the possible benefits of the Task Force recommendations and summarizes the roles for development of the new program should the legislature adopt the Task Force's legislative proposal.

1. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CTR PROGRAM

This chapter describes the intent of the CTR program, the latest results, the impacts of the program, and its costs and benefits.

WHAT IS THE INTENT OF THE CTR PROGRAM?

The intent of the CTR program is to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and energy use. It requires major employers to implement programs to reduce the proportion of employees who drive alone to work. Changes in commuter choice, such as increasing the average occupancy of vehicles traveling on the road, bicycling, walking, or not traveling to work at all, lead to fewer vehicle trips during the peak period.

The CTR program seeks to improve transportation efficiency by focusing on employees traveling to work during the morning commute between 6 and 9 a.m. Use of the transportation system is concentrated during the morning and afternoon peak periods as people travel to and from work and school and make associated trips to shop for groceries, pick up children from school, and run other errands.

Because the CTR program targets employers with 100 or more full-time employees commuting to work during the morning peak travel period, it reaches only a small portion of the overall workforce. CTR worksites account for only 25 percent of the employment in the nine counties where CTR is currently required.

The primary benefit of an efficiency strategy such as CTR is that it quickly and inexpensively frees up capacity on the transportation system. CTR protects investments in new capacity by moderating growth in travel demand, making the program especially important for regions that are growing rapidly and already experiencing significant congestion. Even modest shifts in travel patterns can create big changes in the efficiency of the system, particularly at major bottlenecks and chokepoints where demand consistently exceeds capacity.

THE EMPLOYEE DRIVE-ALONE RATE AT CTR WORKSITES HAS **DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.**

WHAT ARE THE 2005 RESULTS FOR THE CTR PROGRAM?

The employee drive-alone rate at CTR worksites has decreased significantly

The percentage of people who drove alone to work to CTR worksites declined from 70.8 percent in 1993 to 65.7 percent in 2005, a decrease of more than seven percent. The effects of these individual choices encouraged by the CTR program show up in statewide figures, as well.

In Washington, during the decade from 1990 to 2000, the percentage of people who drove alone to work decreased slightly from 73.9 percent to 73.3 percent. Washington and Oregon were the only states where the percentage dropped. In all other states, the average rate for drive-alone commuting increased. Part of this success can be attributed to the change in the drive-alone rate at CTR worksites, which has remained consistently below the

Even modest shifts in travel patterns can create big changes in the efficiency of the system, particularly at major bottlenecks and chokepoints where demand consistently exceeds capacity.

state and national average since the program began. *See Figure 1-1.*

The CTR program's success at reducing the drive-alone rate means that it contributes to one of the state's transportation policy goals established in 2002.[1] The benchmark in the law is to decrease the drive-alone rate in the state's urban areas.

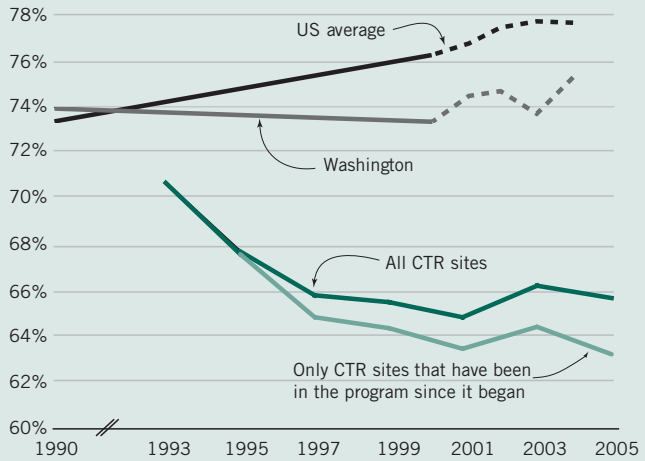
Another way to look at how commuters in the CTR program are changing the way they travel is to note the declining percentage of employees that *always* drive alone to work each week and never use an alternative to driving alone. Over time, an increasing share of commuters to CTR worksites statewide use an alternative to driving alone at least once a week (a decline of 23 percent in always-drive-alone from 1993 to 2005). Downtown Seattle, already far below the statewide average, saw a decline of 35 percent over the same period. *Figure 1-2* illustrates that the program is successful both statewide and in areas where the drive-alone share is already relatively low.

The number of vehicle trips to CTR sites has decreased significantly

Statewide, according to the data analyzed from CTR employee surveys, employees commuting to CTR worksites made nearly 20,000 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning in 2005 than they did when they entered the program.[2] This level of trip reduction is about equal to the program's effectiveness in 2001, following a drop in performance in 2003.[3] *See Figure 1-3.*

[1] The legislature created RCW 47.01.012 in 2002 to establish policy goals for the state's transportation system. The law lists priority goals for safety, infrastructure condition, congestion, and other issues and directs the Washington State Transportation Commission to develop performance measures to track the policy goals. For more information, see **www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability/benchmarks/default.htm.**

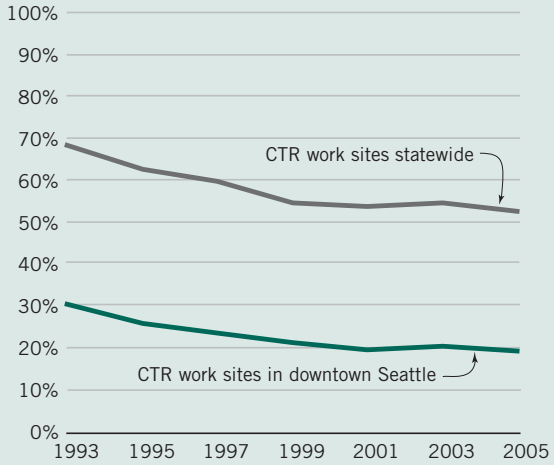
Figure 1-1
DRIVE ALONE COMPARISON
CTR Worksites, Washington state, and the United States, 1990 to 2005
percentage of commute trips taken by driving alone



The percentage of commuters who drive alone to all CTR worksites declined more than seven percent from 1993 to 2005, and the drive-alone rate for the program remains below the state and national drive-alone rate. The drive-alone rate for those employers with complete data that began the program in 1993 declined more than 14 percent from 1993 to 2005.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau for Washington and U.S. averages, WSDOT CTR Survey Database for CTR sites. Census data for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial census; data for 2001 through 2004 (the dotted lines) are from the American Community Survey.

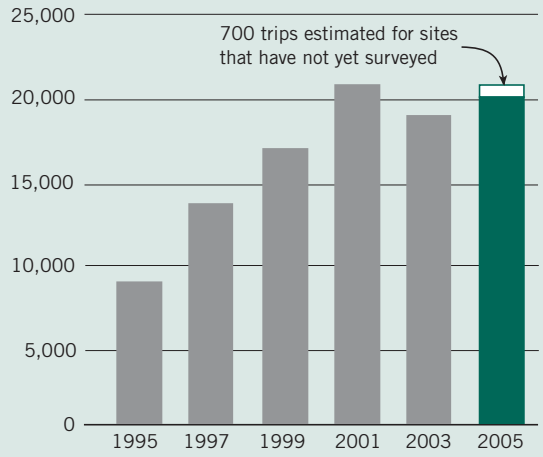
Figure 1-2
SHRINKING PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES THAT ALWAYS DRIVE ALONE
percent of employees at CTR sites



The percentage of employees that always drove alone to work at CTR worksites statewide declined 23 percent from 1993 to 2005. Worksites in downtown Seattle saw a decline of 35 percent over the same period.

Source: WSDOT CTR Survey Database.

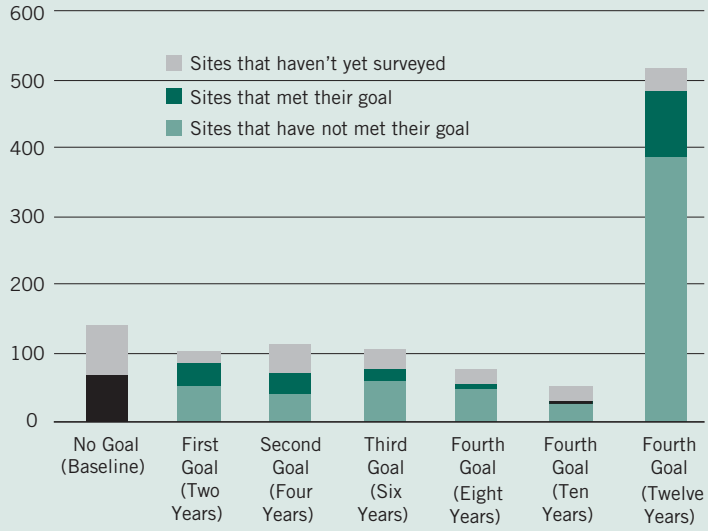
Figure 1-3
NUMBER OF VEHICLE TRIPS REDUCED AT CTR SITES



Surveys completed for 2005 show a reduction of 20,000 vehicle trips measured by the CTR program. Because not all worksites have completed surveys for 2005, WSDOT has estimated the reduction in trips for these sites based on worksite history.

Source: WSDOT CTR Survey Database.

Figure 1-4
WORKSITES THAT SURVEYED DURING THE 2005 CYCLE



Some individual employers met the statutory goals in 2005, but the program as a whole did not. The largest group of employers in the CTR program, represented by the Fourth Goal (Twelve Years) bar at far right, has participated in the program since it began.

Source: WSDOT CTR Survey Database.

The miles of travel to CTR sites has decreased significantly

Statewide, employees' round-trip commutes to CTR worksites accounted for just over 2.1 billion vehicle miles traveled, or VMT, in 2005.[4] Without the changes in employee travel measured by the CTR program, the commute VMT to these sites would have been 5.9 percent higher – an estimated difference of nearly 126 million miles. *Table 1-2* on page 8 shows the VMT reductions measured by the CTR program since 1995.

Even these slight shifts in travel patterns can have large benefits for the transportation system. The morning peak VMT (excluding heavy trucks) in the nine CTR counties would have been 1.6 percent higher, and 2.8 percent higher in King County, without the changes in commuting behavior linked to the CTR program.[5]

VMT is a measure of the use of the transportation system. A lower number of VMT means that people are traveling less (either in terms of shorter distances or not as often) or that people are traveling more efficiently (if drive-alone commuters switch to a carpool or bus, overall VMT is reduced, but the amount of *person miles traveled* remains the same).

Balancing the amount of travel on the system with what its capacity can effectively

"CTR is one of the few programs that have the potential to increase capacity on the transportation system in a sustainable manner. It is the kind of program DOT should be doing more of, especially since it is specifically dealing with the transportation system's capacity in peak hours, high density areas and choke points in main areas."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

[2] Worksites participating in the CTR program conduct surveys in alternate years, asking all of their employees to respond to a series of questions about their commute choices. Results for each worksite are compared to a baseline survey conducted the year that the worksite entered the program. For the 2005 survey cycle, 237,141 surveys have been completed, with an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 additional surveys remaining to be completed.

[3] Part of the drop from 2001 to 2003 may be attributed to the state's economic recession. Most of the 2001 surveys were completed before the recession, and once it began, WSDOT staff received anecdotal information that employers were cutting back on incentives and subsidies for their employees. The recession also probably contributed to some job turnover at worksites, with lags between hiring and re-establishment of the use of other commute modes.

[4] Vehicle miles traveled is the total number of miles traveled by a vehicle.

[5] WSDOT estimates a total of 21.9 billion vehicle miles were traveled in the nine counties participating in CTR during 2004, which would have been almost a percent higher without the change in commuting to CTR sites. A commonly accepted approximation is that 20 percent of daily VMT occur during the morning peak travel period.

handle is one of the state's policy goals for the transportation system.[6] The target is to maintain the state's VMT per person at year 2000 levels. As for the CTR program, the commute VMT per CTR employee decreased from 8.7 miles per day in 1997 to 8.3 miles per day in 2005.[7] The decrease since 1997 means that the CTR program's success is helping the state meet its VMT target.

Progress toward the program's statutory goals varies

The CTR law sets goals for affected employers to reduce single-occupant vehicle commuting or VMT to their worksites on a graduated schedule. After performing a baseline measurement, employers are required to make a good faith effort to achieve the following goals:

- 15 percent reduction in two years (first goal)
- 20 percent reduction in four years (second goal),
- 25 percent reduction in six years (third goal), and
- 35 percent reduction in 12 years (fourth goal).

While some individual employers have met or exceeded the goals set out in statute, as a whole the CTR program has not achieved the statutory goals for 2005. *Figure 1-4* on page 5 shows the proportion of employers who met their scheduled goals in 2005.

For the overall program, meeting the reduction goals would require significant changes in policy and investment, as noted in the Task Force's 2001 report to the legislature. (Changing policies and investing more funding in CTR to meet the goals would be produce significant benefits for the state.[8]) Individual worksites vary widely in their performance due to a number of factors, including:

- Management support,
- Availability of funding incentives,
- Availability of transit services,
- Parking costs,
- Commute distances and congestion during commutes,
- Employee turnover and fluctuation in the numbers of employees at sites,
- Location of the worksites, and
- Land use patterns.

Part of the challenge for the current program is that the statutory goals are arbitrary. They are not tied to the needs of the transportation system at or near the worksite or in the region, which hinders their utility as investment targets and linkage to other system goals.

"The trip reduction goals are limited and need some refinement to be more effective; they were not well thought out from the beginning—they seemed to be pulled from thin air."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF THE 2005 RESULTS?

Whether it's using an alternative work schedule or traveling to work by means other than driving alone, the individual choices made by commuters to CTR worksites add up to substantial statewide benefits in transportation efficiency, energy conservation, and air quality for the state, employers, and commuters.

CTR enhances transportation efficiency

The CTR Program helps to make the state transportation system more efficient by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicle trips and the level of VMT on the transportation system. A higher proportion of trips made in high-occupancy vehicles, or by walking or bicycling, or avoided altogether during the morning commute means reduced delay for everyone travel-

[6] Targets are set under RCW 47.01.012.

[7] Part of the difference from year to year is the adjustments based on commute mode. One person may travel in one vehicle five miles to work, which would be 5 VMT per employee, or two people may travel in one vehicle five miles to work, which would be 2.5 VMT per employee.

[8] The 2001 CTR legislative report estimated that in the Puget Sound, a 35 percent reduction would create capacity equivalent to the I-90 Bridge.

ing on system when the use of the system is peaking. Most respondents in the *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* believed that the most important goal for the CTR program was to help reduce congestion.

The program is a cost-effective tool for increasing transportation efficiency. For the central Puget Sound, it has been estimated that instituting an average toll of $1.84 per trip ($460 for the year) would manage demand at a level that would maximize the flow of vehicles on the system.[9] In 2005, the CTR program's cost to the state was 54 cents per reduced trip (or $136 for the year). Comparing these values shows that the CTR program's cost per reduced trip is a fraction of the overall economic value of a trip not taken.

Fewer trips in critical places at critical times reduces delay in central Puget Sound

In the central Puget Sound, the CTR program plays an especially important role. Employees commuting to worksites participating in the CTR program in the central Puget Sound made more than 14,200 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning in 2005 than they did when the worksites entered the program. Many of the reduced trips would otherwise have passed through the region's major traffic chokepoints during peak periods. Their absence has a significant impact on congestion, reducing delay by an estimated 11.6 percent during the peak travel period on average mornings in the region.

The CTR program is one of several strategies for reducing delay in the Puget Sound Region. *Table 1-1*, from the 2003 Task Force legislative report, presents the results from a preliminary attempt by the Texas Transportation Institute to compare the reductions in delay from various strategies, including ramp metering, incident management, signal coordination, and investments in public transportation and high occupancy vehicle lanes.

CTR conserves energy

The absence of about 20,000 vehicles on the state's roads each workday morning in 2005 reduced petroleum use in Washington by about 5.8 million gallons of

Table 1-1

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF REDUCTIONS IN DELAY FROM DIFFERENT STRATEGIES IN THE PUGET SOUND REGION, 2001
(in thousands of hours per year)

	Operational Strategies			Public Transportation		CTR
	Ramp Metering	Incident Management	Signal Coordination	Public Transp.	HOV	CTR
Est. annual savings in delay	2,355[ab]	900[ab]	350[ab]	29,690[bc]	975[bc]	1,677[cd]

Source: Texas Transportation Institute, 2003, with additional calculations for CTR conducted by the Puget Sound Regional Council and the WSDOT Public Transportation and Commute Options Office. These results should be considered as preliminary. They were developed from an experimental methodology. The relative magnitudes of the delay reductions estimated for the different strategies can be compared; however they should not be added together. For additional information see the 2003 *Urban Mobility Study* (pages 51-58 and Table a-6).

a Estimated effect of applying the strategy to levels of traffic congestion that existed in 2001.
b For King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.
c Estimated effect of adding vehicle trips back into the transportation system.
d For King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap Counties. For consistency with the other estimates in the table, the delay reduction estimated for CTR in the table is what PSRC estimated for the CTR Program in 2001. The delay savings estimated for 2003 is 1,841 thousand hours per year. Although employees at worksites in the CTR Program have increased their use of public transportation, using transit is only one choice employees are making more frequently. Therefore, the lead author of the TTI study believes that almost all of the delay reduction estimated for the CTR Program is in addition to the reductions estimated for public transportation and HOV in this table.

A variety of indicators show that CTR is meeting the intent of the program to reduce vehicle trips:

- CTR reduced about 20,000 trips in 2005.
- CTR reduces the miles that employees travel for commuting.
- People are changing the way they get to work at CTR sites, more so than at non-CTR worksites.
- CTR reduces delay in the Puget Sound region.
- CTR reduces petroleum consumption and helps improve air quality.

[9] Based on the optimal tolling rate for efficient use of the highway system in the central Puget Sound region discussed in WSDOT's Regional Toll Revenue Feasibility Study, July 18, 2002 working draft.

Table 1-2

CTR PROGRAM PERFORMANCE: EMISSIONS AND ENERGY REDUCTIONS					
Survey year	Number of surveyed sites	Annual VMT reduction (miles)	Annual fuel savings (gallons)	Annual reduction of emissions of criteria pollutants (tons)	Annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (tons of CO^2 equivalent)*
1995	866	49,200,000	2,200,000	2,540	27,000
1997	949	77,500,000	3,500,000	3,690	45,000
1999	1,008	100,000,000	4,400,000	4,090	59,000
2001	1,051	127,900,000	5,600,000	5,600	79,000
2003	1,051	118,200,000	5,200,000	4,740	70,000
2005	886	125,700,000	5,800,000	3,730	74,000

*CO^2 equivalent is combined effect of CO^2 and the 100-year equivalents of CH^4 and N^2O.

"The CTR program is a very important part of meeting our state's metro area traffic congestion challenges. It also provides a stimulus for added transit ridership and van and carpool use. And it is a smart fit within the cluster of alternatives that we provide to the general public for commuting... our HOV system, commuter rail, transit, van and carpools, light rail in the future, etc. CTR enables the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts. It enables all components to work better in an integrated fashion than individually."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

fuel. The average fuel price from December 2004 to November 2005 was $2.35 per gallon in the Seattle/Bellevue/Everett area.[10] Based on this average, CTR commuters saved $13.7 million in 2005 by reducing their energy consumption. *Table 1-2* shows the fuel savings measured by the CTR program since 1995.

CTR improves air quality

Because employees at CTR worksites collectively reduced the VMT to their worksites, they eliminated nearly 3,700 tons of emissions of criteria pollutants (carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and oxides of nitrogen) in 2005.

In 2002, the Department of Ecology estimated that motor vehicle operations contributed 55 percent of criteria pollutant emissions in our state. WSDOT estimates that the CTR program reduced about one percent of the motor vehicle emissions of these pollutants, or about a third of a percent of the state total.

The reduction in VMT accounted for a reduction of nearly 56,000 tons of carbon dioxide in 2005, and reduction in emissions of other gases equivalent to another 18,200 tons of carbon dioxide. WSDOT estimates that these 74,200 tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent is between 0.2 and 0.6 percent of statewide emissions from motor vehicles.

Table 1-2 shows the reductions in emissions measured by the CTR program since 1995. Note that despite an increase in the amount of VMT reduced in 2005, compared to 2003, fewer emissions of criteria pollutants were reduced over the same time period. The average emissions per vehicle for criteria pollutants is beginning to decline, due to the phasing in of cleaner vehicles and cleaner fuels.

WHAT ARE THE CTR PROGRAM'S COSTS AND BENEFITS?

The CTR program provides benefits at several levels: a better performing transportation system, energy savings, improved air quality, local economic development, employee benefits, employer cost savings, and more. *Table 1-3* compares the history of investment by the state, local jurisdictions, and employers.

State investment, state benefits

The State of Washington invested $2.7 million in the CTR program in 2005. This investment, combined with those of local jurisdiction partners and participating employers, provided significant benefits for the state's citizens. Quantifying some

[10] This average is the unweighted first of month price in the Seattle/Bellevue/Everett area from the American Automobile Association's Daily Fuel Gauge Report (http://198.6.95.31/index.asp).

of the performance indicators discussed previously in this chapter, the Task Force concludes that the program provides the following benefits:

- At least $24 million in reduced cost of delay in the Puget Sound region (calculated using 2003 data),
- Savings of $13.7 million in fuel costs for employees commuting to CTR worksites based on driving fewer miles,
- Reduction of 3,700 tons of criteria pollutants,
- Reduction of the equivalent of 74,200 tons of carbon dioxide.

Partnerships are key to the success of the CTR program

The state has enjoyed a strong partnership with employers, counties and local jurisdictions through the CTR program. Respondents in the *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* indicated that business and private sector involvement is a positive and necessary aspect of the program.

Local jurisdiction investment

County and local jurisdiction partners reported that they invested about $940,000 in their local CTR programs in 2005.[11]

Employer investment

In 2004, employers invested $49.4 million in their CTR programs, more than $18 for each dollar invested by the state. Employers continue to increase their investment in the CTR program, saying it makes good business sense and that the technical assistance and tools from the state program provide a helpful incentive.

Leadership and technical support from the state and local governments is very important to employers. In 2003, DDB Seattle conducted 114 interviews at companies participating in CTR, asking how these employers would change their CTR programs if the level of support from the local government and/or state was continued at the same level, eliminated altogether, or increased.

Figures 1-5 and *1-6* show the results of the study. If support was increased, about half of the employers indicated that they would increase educational activities and about

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

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

"The program's involvement of business is what keeps it a national model."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

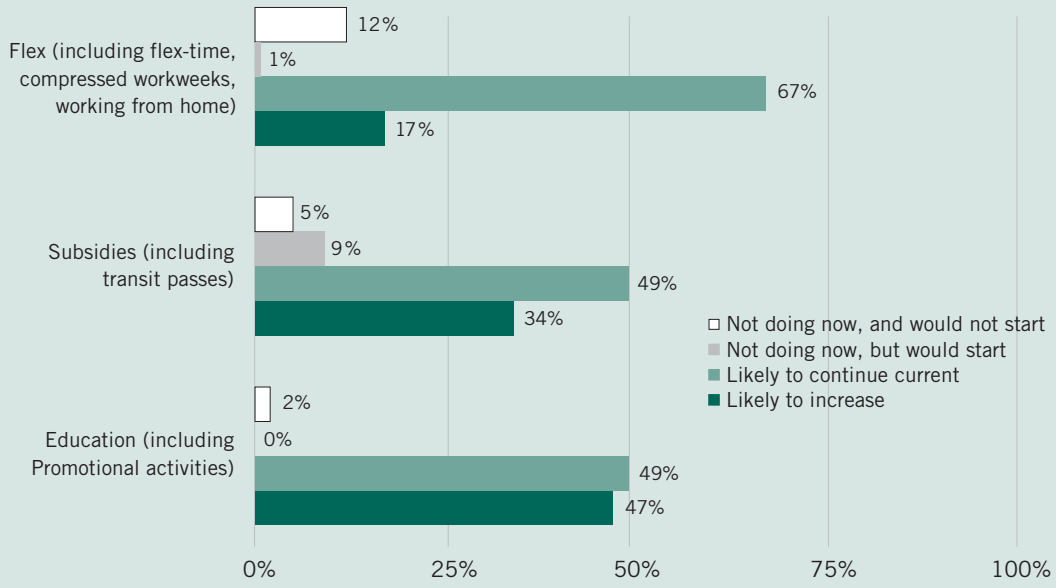
Table 1-3

CTR INVESTMENTS BY EMPLOYERS, LOCAL JURISDICTIONS, AND THE STATE

Reporting year	Employer Spending		Jurisdiction Spending		State Spending	
	In current year $ (one year preceding reporting year)	In constant 2005 $	In current year $	In constant 2005 $	In current year $	In constant 2005 $
1993	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,145,000	4,465,900
1995	6,100,000	8,174,000	N/A	N/A	3,145,000	4,214,300
1997	21,200,000	26,924,000	N/A	N/A	3,145,000	3,994,150
1999	26,100,000	31,842,000	3,202,000	3,906,440	3,089,980	3,769,776
2001	35,000,000	40,600,000	1,821,000	2,112,360	2,627,000	3,047,320
2003	36,300,000	40,293,000	2,234,000	2,479,740	2,631,350	2,920,799
2005	49,400,000	51,870,000	940,879	987,923	2,705,000	2,840,250

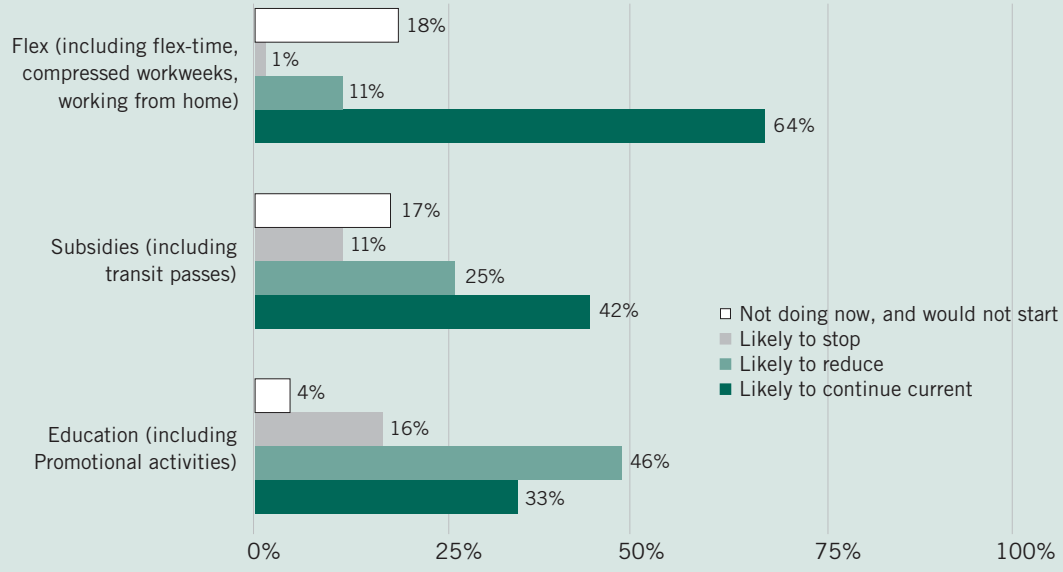
[11] For the 2003–2005 biennium, the CTR program switched to a new method for collecting information on what jurisdictions spend on the program (above what they receive from their contracts with the state to administer the program). The switch was made to reduce the cost of reporting and collecting the information, and to reduce the chances of double-counting funds from the state as funds from the jurisdiction. However, the new approach appears to be undercounting jurisdictional spending as reported for 2005 in the table. Program staff is examining the discrepancy and how to correct it.

Figure 1-5
EMPLOYER RESPONSE IF STATE CTR SUPPORT INCREASES



Source: "Impact of Support Changes on Employer Participation in the Commute Trip Reduction Program," DDB Seattle, 2003.

Figure 1-6
EMPLOYER RESPONSE IF STATE CTR SUPPORT IS ELIMINATED



Source: "Impact of Support Changes on Employer Participation in the Commute Trip Reduction Program," DDB Seattle, 2003.

a third would increase subsidies. Nine percent of employers that were not giving subsidies stated that they would with additional support.[12]

If support was eliminated, 62 percent of employers said that they would cut education and 36 percent said they would reduce or stop subsidies.

Many employers recognize the benefits of CTR for their businesses and organizations, which include:

- Reduced costs of providing parking,
- Reduced costs from employee turnover and from absenteeism,[13] and
- Reduced federal corporate and individual income tax payments when employers make investments that qualify under the US internal revenue code.

For example, the University of Washington estimates that over the last 10 years its CTR program has enabled it to avoid adding approximately 3,600 parking spaces, saving the university and the state more than $100 million.

Employers also support CTR because they are involved in its governance as members of the CTR Task Force and have a forum to resolve program issues. For example, employers influenced the legislature to add the "good faith effort" clause to the CTR law in 1997.[14]

"First and foremost, the state should be commended for maintaining a focus on the travel demand strategy. Having a program that enables employers to work with public sector as partners, managing single occupant travel during peak hours should be congratulated. The program saves millions if not billions in avoiding costs that would be incurred without CTR. It seems that the types of benefits accrue throughout the system—on highways, city streets, direct access roads, and driveways, reducing traffic all over."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

[12] Support was defined as training, information, problem solving, and performance measurement.

[13] In 2003, 15 major regional commuter assistance organizations across the United States reported successfully marketing commuter assistance programs to employers using business-based arguments. These arguments included (1) the contribution of commuter benefits to employee recruitment and retention, which appealed to employers in a tight labor market and to those with high turnover; and (2) the comparatively low-cost of commuter benefits compared with other benefits provided by employers (from *TCRP Report 87: Strategies for Increasing the Effectiveness of Commuter Programs*, pages 74-75, available at gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_87.pdf).

[14] RCW 70.94.534 [2].

2. CHANGES TO THE CTR PROGRAM: A FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY

Every two years, the Task Force makes recommendations to the legislature on whether the CTR program should be continued, modified, or terminated.[15] Because the CTR law dissolves the Task Force in July 1, 2006, this report marks a defining moment in the history of the program. For the past two years, the Task Force has focused on evaluating the program and charting its future.

In August 2004, the Task Force began a process of public involvement to gather perspectives about the program's current successes, challenges, and potential directions. It invited implementing organizations to describe the challenges and successes in their counties. It also commissioned a study, conducted by Cocker Fennessy, to survey the state's leading transportation policymakers and advocates about their views of the program.[16]

In May 2005, building off of the insights provided by previous Task Force reports, the Cocker Fennessy report, and testimony from local jurisdictions and others, the Task Force began an in-depth examination of the program's scope, structure, and funding. On November 21, 2005, the Task Force adopted a legislative proposal for the 2006 Legislature based on its recommendations.

This chapter describes the CTR program's history, some the differences between the CTR program and other programs, the Task Force's general findings for the CTR program, and the Task Force's intent to focus the program on transportation efficiency and economic development.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE CTR PROGRAM IN THE PAST?

Since its inception, the CTR Task Force has encouraged employers and other organizations to raise CTR policy and design issues for discussion. This collaboration helped to inform the development and subsequent modifications of the CTR Guidelines,[17] and several topics resulted in legislative changes to the program. *Table 2-1* lists milestones in the development of the program.

The share of commuters who took the train (primarily the Sounder) to CTR worksites grew 44 percent from 2003 to 2005.

HOW DOES THE CTR PROGRAM COMPARE TO OTHER PROGRAMS?

In the *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey*, most respondents perceived the program as successful and as a national model. The CTR program is the only statewide employer-based transportation demand management (TDM) program in the United States and has developed a national reputation for leadership, innovation, and effectiveness.

The 2003 Task Force report to the legislature compared Washington's CTR program to similar programs in three metropolitan areas in the western United States. While it is difficult to compare existing employer-

15 As required by RCW 70.94.537 [5].

16 The study is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/taskforce/CockerFennessy_Report_2004.doc

17 The primary function of the Task Force in the CTR law was to develop guidelines for the CTR plans of affected jurisdictions. The intent of the guidelines, based on RCW 70.94.537 [2], is to ensure that employers facing similar circumstances that might affect employee commuting behavior are treated the same in all important respects, regardless of the jurisdiction in which they are located.

based TDM programs due to their varying scale and diverse approaches, the Task Force found that the CTR program exhibited several strengths that sets it apart from these other programs:

- CTR is unique for its complex partnerships between state and local governments, transit agencies, planning organizations, and employers, while other programs have more traditional hierarchical structures.[18]
- CTR has a more rigorous evaluation approach than the other programs and uses more conservative assumptions in calculating impacts.
- CTR has stronger accountability for employers, compared to other programs that have a more relaxed approach to measurement and reporting (making it difficult to determine how many employers are actively participating in the program.)
- CTR generates significant local and private investment in furthering the goals of the program. The centralized administration characterizing other programs tends to discourage significant local investment.

The Task Force intends to build on the program's strengths and address some of its challenges by linking the program to the needs of local jurisdictions, employers, and the state transportation system.

Table 2.1 Milestones for the CTR Program, 1991–2005

1991
- Legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction Law to mitigate air pollution, energy consumption and traffic congestion.
- The CTR Task Force was formed.

1992
- CTR Task Force developed program guidelines in conjunction with employers and local jurisdictions.
- CTR zone baselines were set, establishing a starting point for employer SOV and VMT reduction.
- The eight-county group formed to share information and address technical issues.

1992–1994
- Local jurisdictions adopted CTR ordinances.
- Employers began implementing worksite CTR programs, including conducting baseline employee commute surveys.

1994
- The Legislature established the Rideshare Tax Credit, based on research indicating tax credits would spur additional employer investment in CTR. *Recommended by the Task Force*

1995
- Employers surveyed their worksites to determine achievement of the first goals for reducing single-occupant vehicle trips (SOV) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- The CTR Task Force submitted its first report to the Legislature, concluding that employers were participating in the program and the program was beginning to show results.

1996
- The Legislature expanded the tax credit to all employers statewide and to all commute options to driving alone. *Recommended by the Task Force*

[18] In fact, when Governor Locke's proposed budget eliminated funding for the CTR program in 2003, employers lobbied to save it.

WHAT ARE THE TASK FORCE'S GENERAL FINDINGS FOR THE CTR PROGRAM?

Examining the program through the state's existing transportation and land use policies and priorities, including state investment programs and the Growth Management Act, the Task Force developed the following general findings for the program:[19]

- CTR is a cost-effective strategy for transportation efficiency and mobility,
- The current target market for CTR does not deliver the highest possible return for the state investment in the program,
- CTR could be better integrated into overall transportation investments by focusing CTR dollars in congested areas,
- Jurisdictions implementing the CTR program are not consistently engaged or willing to invest their own resources in CTR to leverage the efforts of the CTR-affected employers and the state, and
- The current program's one-size-fits-all structure may be too rigid and too burdensome to maximize benefits.

The Task Force proposes organizing the program so that it makes a closer connection between economic development and transportation efficiency.

1997

- The CTR Task Force recommended and the Legislature enacted changes to the CTR law, clarifying employer responsibilities, changing goals for worksites and creating a public awareness campaign.
- Whatcom County became the ninth county subject to CTR.

1998

- The program received an additional $2.5 M from the High Capacity Transit Account to support vanpooling; subsidies at non-profit and public agency sites; and grants to help employers overcome specific worksite.
- In response to legislative direction, the CTR Task Force and WSDOT launched the public awareness campaign ("Relax. There's more than one way to get there"). *Recommended by the Task Force*

1999

- To continue enhancing CTR, the Legislature allocated $3.9 million of federal Congestion and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.
- The Legislature discontinued the Employer Tax Credit due to revenue loss associated with the repeal of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax.
- The Task Force submitted its second report to the Legislature, concluding that CTR was working and was a good investment for the state.

2000

- The Legislature eliminated $1.2 M from the CTR operating budget.
- The Task Force submitted its third report to the Legislature. The report concluded that CTR provided an excellent return on state investment but was not on track to meet program goals and recommended additional investments in the program and an expansion of trip reduction efforts.

2003

- The Legislature restored the Employer Tax Credit and funded a new performance grants program. By January 23, 2004, 211 employers claimed $2.1 million of the tax credit. *Recommended by the Task Force*
- Benton County became the tenth county subject to CTR.
- Benton County is currently in the planning stage of the program and currently waiting for the outcome of the 2006 legislative session.
- The CTR Task Force delivered its fourth report to the Legislature.

2005

- The Legislature increased the credit limit and made program changes that will allow all employers equal access to the employer tax credit.
- The Legislature funded an improved performance grant program at $1.5 M for the 2005–2007 biennium. The Task Force revised the grant program to create the Trip Reduction Performance Program.
- The CTR Task Force delivered its final required report to the Legislature proposing that the program be continued with modifications to make it more efficient, effective, and targeted.

[19] Visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/taskforce/tfmaterials.cfm#program for more information about the Task Force's evaluation of the program.

MAKING THE LINK BETWEEN TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS THE NEXT STEP FOR THE PROGRAM

Since its inception, the CTR program has engaged employers in resolving transportation system problems. Influencing the transportation services provided by employers has helped to move commuters more efficiently, freeing up capacity on the transportation system. Prior to the inception of the CTR program, the transportation service most widely provided by employers to employees was parking – and little if anything else. After being influenced by the CTR program, the scope of their support for their employees' transportation needs has broadened significantly to include bus passes, flexible work hours, carsharing, vanpooling, and more.

Every other year, WSDOT conducts a survey of employer expenditures resulting from implementing the CTR program. Employer expenditures have increased more than five-fold since 1995. Employers continue to increase their investment in the CTR program because it makes economic sense. The money that an employer saves, whether by providing fewer parking spaces for employees or by improving recruiting and retention, can be directed to the employer's other purposes.

Economic efficiency and transportation efficiency are closely linked. Employers and developers seek opportunities to grow and expand, while governments seek opportunities to increase the efficiency of the transportation system and move as many people and goods as possible within available resources. Within the CTR program, these objectives converge.

For example, the University of Washington estimates that over the last 10 years its CTR program has enabled it to avoid adding approximately 3,600 parking spaces, saving the university and the state more than $100 million. The CTR Task Force has looked at examples in the CTR program and elsewhere of how transportation investments have supported economic development, and its recommendations are designed to strengthen this relationship.

The Task Force seeks to align local, regional and state policies and investments in ways that support the significant investments of major employers in transportation services.

ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY AND TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ARE CLOSELY LINKED.

"In large urban areas we need to pay special attention to these programs to prevent gridlock that would reduce the quality of life. In doing so, we can keep the state competitive with other states/regions in an economic sense."

— Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey participant

The Lloyd District Example

To illustrate the relationship more clearly, this report presents the success of the Lloyd District Transportation Management Association (TMA)[20] in Portland, Oregon, in which employers have collectively saved millions of dollars in avoided parking costs, while the drive-alone rate has declined from 60 percent in 1997 to 41 percent in 2004 and the proportion of people riding the bus to work has increased from 21 percent to 41 percent over the same time period.

The Lloyd District is located east of downtown Portland, across the Willamette River. It contains 275 acres, 20,000 employees, and more than 600 businesses. It is adjacent to four dense central city neighborhoods. Freeway access to the district is limited.

[20] The Lloyd District is a non-profit business association representing large and small employers in the Lloyd District that provides transportation programs and services for its members, as well as outreach, technical assistance and advocacy.

Portland's Employee Commute Options (ECO) rule requires urban districts in the metropolitan area to reduce auto trips by a certain percentage, and this was part of the impetus for the development of a TMA for the Lloyd District. Its members were focused on an economic development perspective, rather than the regulatory mandate, and made investments in transportation efficiency to get the Lloyd District exempted from the ECO rule.

In 1990, projections showed 17,000 new jobs targeted for the Lloyd District – a doubling of the existing employee base, with no corresponding improvements slated for the roadway system. At that time, the district had no formal system for transportation management and no formal organization representing businesses. There was free and ample parking, low-density development and a lack of transit service and bike lanes.

Linking program goals to system needs and improving access

The business community recognized the impact of congestion and that limited access would not allow the district to meet its growth goals unless changes could be made. They developed the Lloyd District Partnership Plan, which established goals for commute "market share," tying them to projected congestion impacts.

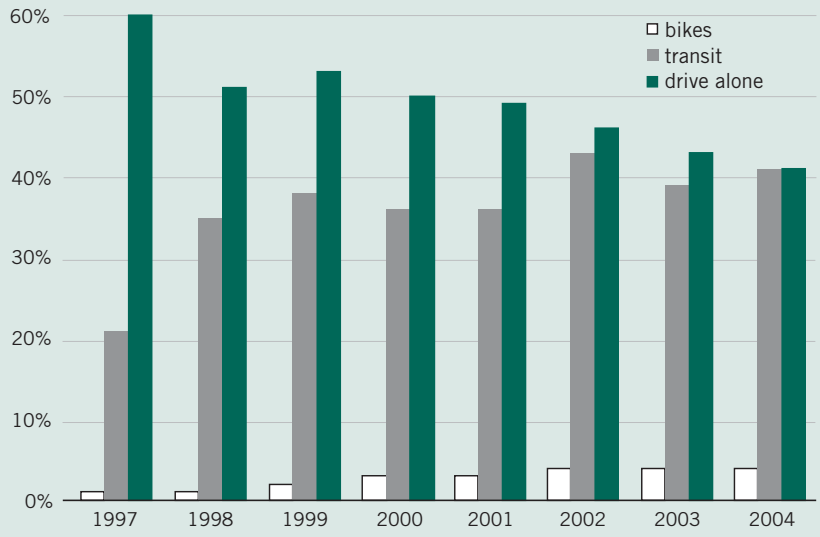
Establishing a partnership of supportive investments

The plan also established a "performance-based system of access" where investments from one partner were matched by another. The partners – the City of Portland, Tri-Met (the transit agency), and the private sector – committed to the plan and the TMA was formed in 1994. The private sector committed to funding transit passes, supported new parking development maximums and parking meters, and committed to establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) by 2000 to provide a funding match. The City of Portland agreed

Figure 2-1

CHANGES IN COMMUTER CHOICE

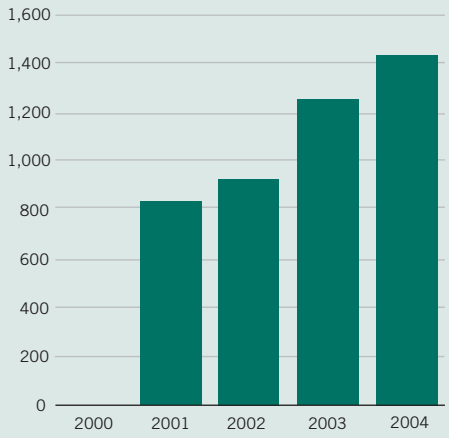
Lloyd District, 1997–2004



In the Lloyd District, the drive-alone rate has steadily declined since 1997. More than $1 million is invested annually by employers in the district's transit program, which issued about 6,000 transit passes to employees in 2005 and has brought three new bus lines to the commercial core since 1997. Source: Lloyd District TMA.

Figure 2-2

VEHICLES REMOVED FROM PEAK HOUR
Lloyd District 2000–2004



As a result of the Lloyd District's efforts, there were 1,433 fewer vehicles entering the district during the peak-hour commute in 2004. This freed up road capacity and parking for customers coming to spend money in the district. It also allowed the district to avoid building additional parking structures to accommodate employee vehicles. Source: Lloyd District TMA.

to dedicate 51 percent of the net revenue from parking meters to the partnership, while Tri-Met promised to direct new transit service if sales of transit passes reached the goal.

Changes in commuter choices have produced substantial benefits

In 2005, transit provided 41 percent of the commute trips into the district and bicycle market share climbed to four percent, as shown in *Figure 2-1*. Commercial vacancy rates were down to three percent in 2004 (from 12 percent in 2001), and over one million square feet of development has been created since 1995 with no net increase in the parking supply.

As a result of the investments of employers, there were 1,433 fewer vehicles coming into the Lloyd District during the peak-hour commute in 2004, as shown in *Figure 2-2*. To accommodate these vehicles would have required two seven-story parking garages costing a total of at least $28 million.

With the reduced need for new employee parking spaces, spaces freed up by employees become business assets available for retail customers. Reducing the need for 1,433 parking spaces made parking available for nearly 6,000 additional daily customers and over $34 million annually in potential revenue to the businesses in the district.

Achieving 2015 targets will save millions of dollars in parking costs

Parking savings is the key to the economic development success in the Lloyd District. To achieve its targeted growth in jobs under the status quo scenario, the district would need to accommodate more than 8,100 parking spaces for commuters by 2015. The cost to develop the parking supply is estimated at more than $220 million.

However, if the district meets its 2015 commute market share targets and reduces the rate of drive-alone commute trips, the district projects a need for only about 2,400 parking spaces, at a cost of about $60 million.

Taking a step forward in the CTR program

The positive relationship between economic development and transportation efficiency underpins the Task Force's recommendation to create a Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program, described in the next chapter. The CTR Task Force's recommended changes for the CTR program will create the institutional structure and financial incentives to encourage development of these sophisticated partnerships.


TO DOWNTOWN
2454
METRO
COSMETIC DENTISTRY
DENTAL
The Seattle Times
USA TODAY

3. TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CTR PROGRAM

This chapter describes the Task Force's recommendations for the CTR program. The recommendations are first summarized and then described in detail.

The Task Force's recommendations are intended to make the CTR program:

- More *effective* by reducing a greater number of drive-alone commute trips,
- More *efficient* by focusing on the drive-alone trips that, when shifted into other modes, provide the best return for the level of investment,
- More *targeted* on those areas that have the greatest need for trip reduction,
- More *integrated* with local land use and transportation policies, plans, and regulations, and more aligned with local, regional and state transportation investments,
- More *locally driven*, with program goals based on local and regional needs and targets,
- More *regionally based*, with a CTR planning and programming linkage to the regional plans and programs developed by regional transportation planning organizations working with local jurisdictions, and
- More *flexible*, with the ability for local jurisdictions to tailor TDM programs to fit their needs and to reduce the program's administrative costs.
- More *financially stable* by integrating state, regional and local funds.

Generally, the Task Force's recommendations propose modest, incremental changes in the current program. The most significant changes in the base program would increase planning coordination and make administrative requirements more flexible.

The most substantive recommendation is the establishment of a voluntary program for urban-scale employment and residential centers that rely on the transportation network for access by commuters, customers, and residents. The voluntary program would be flexible enough for local jurisdictions to craft their own solutions to reducing drive-alone trips. The CTR program's current performance in activity centers is one of the primary reasons for this recommendation: the trip reduction rate for CTR worksites in designated urban centers in the Puget Sound is 6.0 reduced trips per 100 employees, outperforming those worksites outside the centers, which reduce trips at a rate of 3.9 reduced trips per 100 employees.

The CTR Task Force recommendations intend to increase planning coordination among local jurisdictions, transit agencies, and CTR employers.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Continue the CTR program and make improvements.** Incorporate the Task Force's recommended changes to improve the program.

Program scope

2. **Use morning peak congestion as an indicator for where to implement the CTR program.** Rather than using population as the indicator, using morning peak period congestion on state highways to define CTR-affected areas.
3. **Focus the CTR program on urban growth areas with the most congested state highways.** Define CTR-affected areas as those urban growth areas containing state highways with more than 100 person-hours of daily delay during the morning peak period of travel, as well as any contiguous urban growth areas. Major employment installations

"I would continue the program, but modify it. They need to make it more broad and integrate it with existing TDM programs. It needs to be more effectively linked to transportation and land-use planning. This is easy to say, but hard to do. The effectiveness of the CTR Program is so tied to land use it's hard to make it effective if we don't look at land use also."

— Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey participant

The share of CTR commuters who telework increased 47 percent from 2003 to 2005.

in the counties of the affected urban growth areas that are outside of those areas, including military bases and the Hanford site, could also be affected. Allow local jurisdictions, working through the regional transportation planning organizations, to propose to add or exempt urban growth areas in their regions. Allow unaffected areas to opt into the program and be eligible for state funding if they meet state criteria.

4. **Keep the current definition of a major employer and evaluate changing the commute window in the future.** Continue with the current definition, including the exemptions for seasonal agricultural workers and short-term construction worksites, with the intention to examine the costs and benefits of removing or modifying the commute window two years after implementation of the new program.
5. **Study potential TDM strategies to address transportation issues at schools and other educational institutions.**
6. **Create a voluntary Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program.** The program would provide state incentives and focus funding resources to support certified Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center programs and transportation-efficient land use policies in locally designated areas.

Program structure

7. **Establish a CTR planning framework with a planning role for regional transportation planning organizations.** Use local CTR plans to develop a regional CTR plan that rolls up into a state CTR plan that uses the local and regional data to set statewide program goals.
8. **Streamline and reconstitute the CTR Task Force into the CTR Board.** Reduce the number of members from 28 to 16, add two representatives from Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, introduce staggered terms, remove the sunset date, require a program review every four years, and establish a Technical Advisory Group to focus on the program's administrative and technical issues. The Board would work with WSDOT to develop administrative rules (Washington Administrative Code) for the program and to develop the state plan and state goals.

Program administration

9. **Modify the good faith effort clause to ensure closer collaboration between jurisdictions and employers.** Enhance collaboration by requiring employers to notify jurisdictions when they intend to modify or eliminate substantial elements of their program and to provide documentation of implementation when requested by a jurisdiction.
10. **Allow jurisdictions more flexibility in reviewing employer programs.** Change the review requirements in the current law to allow jurisdictions to review programs every other year, rather than every year, based on their own discretion.
11. **Establish a more effective leadership role for state agencies as CTR employers.** Institute enhanced reporting requirements for state agency programs and require state agencies sharing a common location in CTR-affected urban growth areas where the total number of state employees is 100 or more to be treated as an affected worksite.

Other recommendations to support the CTR Efficiency Proposal

12. **Prioritize Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers (GTECs) and other urban-scale activity centers for state and federal transportation funding.** Work with funding partners, such as the Transportation Improvement Board, metropolitan planning organizations, and the legislature to prioritize

certified Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers or other urban-scale activity centers for state and federal road and transit funding.

13. **Work with WSDOT to establish a state TDM policy.** The policy should include evaluation of TDM strategies in plans for major projects and corridors, development of goals and performance measures for using TDM in corridors, and development of a congestion-pricing policy that encourages use of high-occupancy vehicles, ensures that alternatives to driving alone exist where pricing is implemented, and implements pricing strategies on major new construction projects to increase throughput in CTR urban growth areas.
14. **Provide additional state funding to implement the recommendations for the CTR program and increase its effectiveness.** Increase state funding for the CTR program to fulfill the mandate of the Task Force's legislative proposal and to make the program's supporting elements more effective.
15. **Increase funding for the Vanpool Investment Program.** Vanpool demand is exceeding supply, and funding should be provided to expand the vanpool fleet and to enhance operations.
16. **Examine the Rideshare Tax Credit and the Trip Reduction Performance Program and develop recommendations for the 2007 Legislature.** The Task Force or its successor entity should review the parameters of both programs and examine options for shifting funding between the two programs based on their effectiveness.
17. **Work with WSDOT to establish a TDM Construction Mitigation Policy and a Technology Demonstration for I-405.** The Task Force or its successor should work with WSDOT to establish a "TDM Construction Mitigation" policy and funding plan for major highway improvement projects where capacity will be constrained during construction. TDM strategies should be used to maintain or maximize vehicle throughput in the construction zone through the duration of the project. The Task Force recommends that WSDOT establish a technology demonstration for the vanpools on the I-405 construction mitigation project.

THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT THE STATE CONTINUE THE CTR PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION 1

Continue the CTR program and make improvements

The Task Force's overarching recommendation, based on the program's performance described in Chapter 1, is to **continue the CTR program, incorporating the Task Force's recommended changes to improve the program.** The Task Force recognizes the program's success, its cost-effectiveness, and the significant benefits it provides for the state's citizens.

The Task Force's recommendations address the program's scope, structure, and administration. The Task Force also recommends other policy initiatives and increased funding to support the proposed changes to the CTR program.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROGRAM'S SCOPE

The Task Force examined two main aspects of the current program's scope: its *geography* (where it is focused) and its *demography* (which employers are affected). The recommendations for the current program scope generally continue the same program requirements but target the program to the most congested urban growth areas of the state. The Task Force also recommends an optional Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program to achieve some of the opportunities in the current base program.

Geography: Where the program is focused

RECOMMENDATION 2

Use morning congestion as the indicator for where to implement the CTR program

"Number one goal is congestion. Air quality is not near the problem that is used to be because of technology advances. Our major problem is congestion."

— Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey participant

The Task Force recommends using morning peak period congestion on state highways to help define CTR-affected areas. The intent of this recommendation is to focus the program where it is most needed.

The CTR law currently defines the program's focus as the counties of the state with a population greater than 150,000. In 2005, ten counties met this criterion: Benton, Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Yakima, and Whatcom. Benton County is in the planning stages of the program. See *Figure 3-1* for a map of the counties with active CTR programs.

Is population threshold the right indicator for defining the most effective area for the program? The state's more urban counties have more economic activity, with an increased dependence on the transportation system, greater emissions of transportation-related air pollution, and more energy consumption, relative to more rural counties.

However, the 150,000-population threshold does not directly equate to a particular level of congestion. The amount of congestion differs considerably in the program's ten affected counties, which means that targeting CTR based on population doesn't necessarily target the most congested areas of the state.

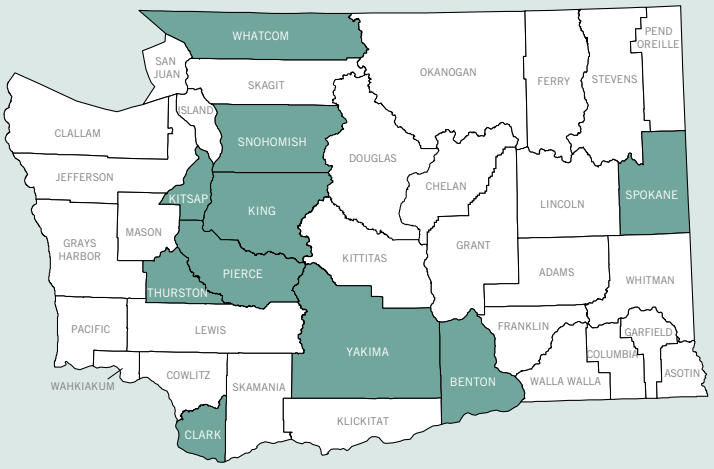
The value of CTR is in the most congested highway corridors of the state. Targeting transportation demand management strategies such as the CTR program on congested highway segments can provide the greatest benefits for transportation efficiency. Reducing trips in congested areas also addresses air quality and energy consumption goals, since congestion causes increased idling and wasted fuel from vehicles sitting in traffic.

CTR is codified in law as part of the state's Clean Air Act, but air quality – at least as it pertains to criteria pollutants from transportation (carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and oxides of nitrogen) – isn't as acute an issue as it was when the law was passed in 1991. In fact, in November 2005, Washington became the first state west of the Dakotas to be in full compliance with federal air quality standards (in 1995, 13 areas of the state routinely exceeded the standards). Improvements in technology and fuel, particularly from Washington's new vehicle emissions law, will continue to reduce criteria pollutant emissions from the state's vehicle fleet.

Today's transportation and air quality concerns have shifted to greenhouse gases and air toxics. These areas are a more prominent and critical focus of attention for the transportation sector. Reducing vehicle trips in congested areas of the state will best address these concerns by enhancing the efficiency of the system, reducing the

Figure 3-1

THE TEN COUNTIES OF THE STATE CURRENTLY REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CTR PROGRAM



Source: WSDOT.

emissions from idling and stop-and-go driving.

The Task Force decided to continue focusing the program on the morning commute, rather than switching or expanding to other travel, such as the afternoon commute or events travel. Morning trips are primarily for one purpose (getting to work and school), so strategies can be better targeted and the results are easier to measure. The Task Force will continue to discuss potential programmatic strategies for events-related congestion.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Focus the CTR program on the urban growth areas with the most congested state highways

The Task Force recommends defining CTR-affected areas as those urban growth areas containing state highways above 100 daily person hours of morning peak period delay, as well as any contiguous urban growth areas.

The Task Force evaluated whether counties are the most appropriate scale for the program. Congestion is generally limited to the core urban areas in a county. Reducing trips in a congested area gives a better return than reducing trips in an area with little or no congestion. If the program's resources are to be most effective, they could be focused on areas smaller than the county level.

Key transportation corridors or dense growth clusters are examples of the types of units where CTR can be most effective. Major worksites, as well as smaller employers, are generally clustered in employment centers in urban areas.

Urban growth areas offer a more effective unit of emphasis than a county. Each county that is required to plan or chooses to plan under the Growth Management Act must designate an urban growth area or areas "within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature" (RCW 36.70A.110). Using the urban growth area as the program unit makes a stronger connection between CTR and the Growth Management Act, and focuses CTR as a growth management strategy on those areas that local jurisdictions have determined to be the locations to focus future growth.[21]

To determine the urban growth areas with the most congestion, the Task Force evaluated various indicators to compare relative levels of congestion around the state. After choosing daily person hours of delay per mile in the morning peak[22] as the congestion indicator, the Task Force then examined different congestion thresholds to determine the locations where CTR is most needed.

Using an indicator that compares relative levels of congestion allows one to determine which areas experience the worst congestion. The Task Force proposes using 100 daily person hours of delay per mile in the morning peak as the indicator for where the program should be focused. *Figure 3-2* shows the urban growth areas that would be affected using this approach.

As part of the Task Force recommendation for congested and contiguous urban growth areas, major employment installations in the counties of the affected urban growth areas that are outside of those areas, including military bases and Hanford, should also be affected. This recommenda-

[21] Urban growth areas have been established around the state and change slightly from year to year as local jurisdictions expand or shrink the urban growth boundaries based on their planning projections and local policies. An urban growth area is not a governmental entity, and multiple jurisdictions may be contained within one. This presents a minor challenge when thinking about who would be responsible for a CTR program within the UGA boundaries.

[22] The daily person delay per mile in the morning peak is the total accumulation of every person's additional travel time due to congestion every morning on a particular highway segment. Person delay measures the congestion experienced for every *person*, rather than every *vehicle*. Delay is calculated using traffic volume and capacity data collected for state highways around the state as part of the Highway Performance Monitoring System.

tion will focus the program on the locations with the highest travel demand, so it can provide the greatest value to the transportation system.

Every area is different, so if some flexibility is designed into the process, regions could tailor their affected urban growth areas in a way that makes the most sense locally. The Task Force intends for regional transportation planning organizations and metropolitan planning organizations, working with local jurisdictions, to have the ability to propose to add or exempt urban growth areas in their regions. The Task Force would approve urban growth area additions and exemptions.

Whatcom and Yakima Counties would not be required to implement a CTR program under the congested urban growth areas approach. The Task Force intends for jurisdictions in those two counties, as well as other unaffected areas, to have the option to opt-in to the program and be eligible for state funding if they meet criteria to be developed during the program development and implementation process.

Figure 3-2

THE URBAN GROWTH AREAS THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CTR PROGRAM BASED ON THE CONGESTION THRESHOLD PROPOSED BY THE CTR TASK FORCE

Source: WSDOT.

Demography: Which employers are affected

RECOMMENDATION 4

Keep the current definition of a major employer and evaluate changing the commute window in the future

The Task Force recommends keeping the current definition of a major employer, including the current exemptions for seasonal agricultural workers and short-term construction worksites, with the intention to examine the costs and benefits of removing or modifying the commute window two years after implementation of the new program.

The Task Force contemplated changing the definition of an affected employer to expand the scope of the program. Changing the definition could help the program reach a greater portion of the commute market. The Task Force looked at the following parameters of the current definition:

- The employer size threshold (currently set at 100 employees),
- The commute window (currently set as employees scheduled to arrive to work between 6 and 9 a.m.),
- Full-time vs. part-time, and
- Twelve continuous months.

Employer size threshold. WSDOT staff estimated that lowering the employer size threshold to 50 would add nearly six times the worksites and a little more than double the employees. The additional administrative burden of a lower threshold means that it isn't feasible to reduce the employer size any further under the current base program. However, a district or center-based approach, with different administrative requirements, could capture the benefits of a larger market share without the corresponding costs.

Commute window. Currently, only employees that arrive to work between 6 and 9

a.m. are affected. The congestion indicator is also based on the 6 to 9 a.m. morning peak. Yet the width of the congested peaks is generally acknowledged to have spread to longer periods in the morning and afternoon. Widening or dropping the commute window all together would bring in more worksites and employees that contribute to morning congestion. However, the Task Force would like to evaluate the effects of its proposed changes to the program before recommending a change in the commute window.

Full-time versus part-time. The program currently only affects full-time employees, who typically work standard schedules and travel to and from work during peak travel periods. The Task Force evaluated including part-time employees in the program, but due to the variable schedules, shorter shifts, off-peak work hours, and the temporary nature of part-time employment, including these types of employees in the program would likely not provide enough benefits to outweigh the associated challenges.

Twelve continuous months. According to previous Task Force research, lowering the 12-month requirement to an academic year to pick up school faculty and staff would add about 260 worksites to the program. Schools, like major worksites, are commute destinations, with concentrated traffic flows during morning and afternoon peak periods. School transportation issues are of increasing concern, particularly to local neighborhoods living with the traffic back-ups generated as parents drop their children off at school in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Study potential TDM strategies to address transportation issues at schools and other educational institutions

Recognizing that school transportation issues will require multiple types of solutions, **the Task Force recommends that the legislature commission a study of potential TDM strategies to address access and congestion issues at schools.**

In the past, the Task Force has recommended amending the CTR statutes to include college and school faculty in the program as a way to address some of these issues. When the Task Force examined the issue in summer 2005, however, the benefits of extending the CTR program to school faculty and staff were inconclusive. While an extension would create a larger CTR market share, help to address neighborhood commute issues, and help raise student awareness of trip reduction, it would be difficult to export the current CTR model to schools, given their current funding and staff resources.

"I think the program should be expanded to encompass smaller employers, meaning down to the 50-employee level or 25-employee level."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers

RECOMMENDATION 6

Create a voluntary Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program that provides state incentives and leverages funding resources to support transportation demand management programs and transportation-efficient land use policies in locally designated areas

The Task Force recommends that the legislature enable local jurisdictions to designate growth and transportation efficiency centers, urban areas of the state that contain a concentration of jobs and/or population and that meet land use and transportation criteria established by the local jurisdictions and applicable regional transportation planning organizations using CTR Task Force guidance. The Task Force intends for state funding and technical assistance to be provided as incentives for local jurisdictions to establish voluntary programs in growth and transportation efficiency centers. Beyond the minimum program requirements, growth and transportation efficiency center programs would have wide flexibility in program strategies and administration.

The CTR worksites located in the designated growth centers in the Puget Sound reduce trips at a rate of 6.0 reduced trips per 100 employees – outperforming those worksites outside the centers, which reduce trips at a rate of 3.9 reduced trips per 100 employees.

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

While the Task Force does not recommend changes to the definition of an affected employer in the base program, it is interested in targeting a larger share of the travel market in the state's key growth areas for employment and residential development. Major worksites, as well as smaller employers, are generally clustered in employment centers in urban areas. Local plans generally seek to direct growth into these growth centers, and CTR efforts could focus on these employment clusters and centers by requiring participation of larger employers and encouraging participation of smaller employers to benefit the entire corridor. Thurston County has recently employed such a cluster concept to coordinate the CTR efforts of colocated facilities on major corridors.

Providing local flexibility is crucial so that a local jurisdiction can implement a program that makes the most sense for the local context. A local jurisdiction may choose to lower the employer size threshold, for example, while reducing administrative requirements to achieve greater benefits. A local jurisdiction may also a design a structure that works within a development or district, rather than a worksite-by-worksite approach.

In many centers around the state, a large proportion of employers are smaller than the 100-employee threshold for CTR. In Bellevue, for example, only 19 percent of the employees in the city work at CTR-affected worksites.

Another reason for a more flexible approach is the significant turnover of employers and employee transportation coordinators (ETCs)[23] in the current program.

Of the 1,114 worksites implementing CTR today, only 48 percent began the program in 1993, due to mergers, reorganizations, and relocations for the original companies. *See Figure 3-3.* This turnover presents significant challenges for the program; new worksites that enter the program require program development and technical assistance and several years to establish effective programs that meet employee needs.

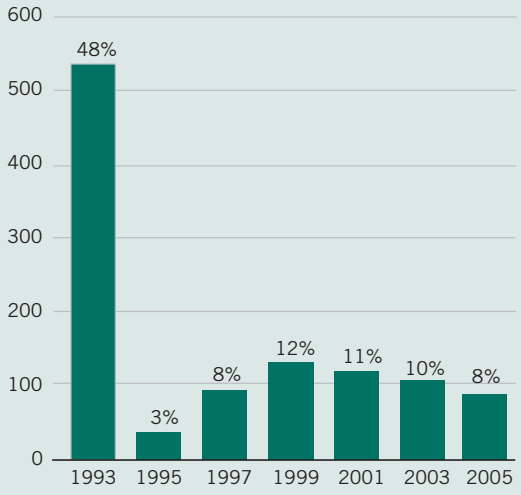
The CTR program's local implementing organizations report employee transportation coordinator turnover as a source of concern. More than 40 percent of employee transportation coordinators at CTR worksites have worked as an employee transportation coordinator for two years or less, according to a sample of employer annual reports. For many employee transportation coordinators, their CTR function is added on top of other job duties. The average employee transportation coordinator spends about seven hours a week administering to the CTR program.

Each new employee transportation coordinator requires training and support from their local jurisdiction before they can begin to function effectively in their position. With high employee transportation coordinator turnover, funds that would

Figure 3-3

WORKSITES ENTERING THE CTR PROGRAM

Number of Worksites



About half of the current worksites in the CTR program have been with the program since it began in 1993. Source: CTR Database.

[23] ETCs are individuals and work groups that are appointed by employers to promote alternatives to driving to work alone. Employers are required to appoint an ETC as part of the CTR law.

otherwise be used to improve program implementation and effectiveness are used for basic training.

It may be more effective to manage implementation of the program at the center level and rely less on employer management.

The centers concept is not new to local and regional planning. Many local jurisdictions and some regional transportation planning organizations around the state identify key urban centers that contain a concentration of employment and/or residents and are emphasis areas for growth and development. The Puget Sound Regional Council, for example, has worked with local jurisdictions to designate 25 "growth centers" and nine "manufacturing and industrial centers" that meet certain activity densities and other transportation and land use criteria.

Enhanced trip reduction in centers would translate to freed-up capacity on the transportation corridors serving those centers, while local jurisdictions would accrue benefits for economic development by improving access to jobs, decreasing requirements for added employee parking, and increasing space for commercial and residential development.

This proposed program articulates the state's interest for TDM to be more broadly used, particularly in key employment centers, since this can reduce pressures on the state highway corridors that serve the centers. The intent of this program is to establish tools and incentives from the state for local jurisdictions that prioritize TDM as a transportation and economic development strategy, and to encourage coordinated TDM, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and road investments in areas targeted for growth. One benefit of this approach is that in each center, parking policies, zoning, transportation concurrency, and CTR provisions could all be coordinated in the same plan in a site-specific manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Task Force examined the current program structure to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's plans and the role of the Task Force.

CTR planning

RECOMMENDATION 7

Establish a state CTR planning framework with a planning role for regional transportation planning organizations

The Task Force recommends establishing a state CTR planning framework with a planning role for regional transportation planning organizations.

The planning framework for the current program consists of trip reduction goals for employers established by state statute, which are implemented in the plans of local jurisdictions. The statute requires local CTR plans to be consistent with and incorporated into regional transportation plans and local comprehensive plans, but in practice, most local CTR plans are not integrated with other transportation plans.

The CTR program goals in the statute were created somewhat arbitrarily, and are not based on planning data or tied to system efficiency outcomes. More effective, realistic program goals would be based on an evaluation of local, regional and state needs and the potential impacts of a nominal amount of reduced trips in key locations.

The percentage of commuters bicycling to CTR worksites increased 21 percent from 2003 to 2005.

The question that the Task Force and local program staff have grappled with is how to better integrate CTR with local, regional, and state transportation planning and investment and land use planning.

"I would like to see the Task Force membership be smaller and more balanced."

— Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey participant

The proposed framework would consist of local CTR plans, a regional CTR plan, and a state CTR plan that sets the statewide program goals. The Task Force intends for cities and counties in the affected urban growth areas to update and adopt a local CTR plan consistent with state criteria. The Task Force intends to provide specific guidance for including a CTR plan as part of the TDM measures in the transportation element of the local comprehensive plan.[24]

The Task Force recommends a planning role for regional transportation planning organizations, which is not currently required by the CTR law, for two main reasons:

- First, the intent is for CTR to be elevated as a transportation strategy within the regional planning process and allow local information to be better utilized at the regional and state levels to establish priorities and integrate CTR programs with other planning processes.
- Second, the intent is for CTR, TDM, and growth and transportation efficiency centers to be a higher priority in the planning and programming of state and federal funds by regional transportation planning organizations/ metropolitan planning organizations.

The intent is for the local, regional, and state CTR plans to be coordinated in a collaborative fashion that involves all major stakeholders, including transit agencies and major employers, and that parallels local and regional planning processes under the Growth Management Act. Specific details of these relationships will be defined in the rule-making process.

Both the Growth Management Act and CTR law require coordination with one another, but there is no established process for ensuring such coordination. Previous research by WSDOT and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development has determined that local planners, policy makers, developers and employers lack adequate information about the tools available for doing so. The degree of coordination between CTR and other plans varies considerably from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Increasing the alignment between CTR and the Growth Management Act will help integrate planning under both laws.

CTR Task Force

RECOMMENDATION 8

Streamline and reconstitute the CTR Task Force into the CTR Board

The Task Force recommends that it be streamlined and reconstituted into the CTR Board.

The CTR law dissolves the Task Force on July 1, 2006. Due to the program's need for policy oversight and guidance of program implementation, particularly with the recommendations for adding a stronger planning framework to the program, the role of the Task Force should continue in some form.

The Task Force evaluated several different models for its future, including shifting its responsibilities to other state transportation policy bodies, changing the mix of its representation, and filling a regional role with regional transportation policy boards.

Several factors figured into the Task Force's discussion:

- A key strength of the current Task Force is that all of the entities involved with CTR are represented, including the major employers who are regulated under the law, so it offers a balance of perspectives.
- The current size of the group is much larger than most other state boards and commissions, and many of the employer slots are unfilled.

[24] Additional guidance from the CTR Task Force or its successor entity to jurisdictions on other issues, such as multimodal levels of service and concurrency, may also be appropriate over time, as a means for removing barriers for successful development of centers.

- The proposed changes to the program emphasize a state role in planning and policy development. As a policy board, the Task Force may not be the most appropriate forum for handling some of the program's administrative details.

This recommendation would reduce the number of members from 28 to 16, add representation for the regional transportation planning organizations, introduce staggered terms, remove the sunset date, build in a program review every four years, and establish a Technical Advisory Group to focus on technical/administrative issues. The Board would work with WSDOT to develop the agency's rules for the program (to replace the current guidelines).

The intent is for the CTR Board to fulfill the state CTR planning function by reviewing local and regional plans and using this input to develop a state goal and state plan. From a policy perspective, this will be an important board function. The program's administrative details would be delegated to the Technical Advisory Group for discussion and recommendations back to the Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Task Force evaluated ways to make the CTR program administration more efficient and to improve state agency leadership for agency CTR programs.

Administrative efficiency

Most of the program's administrative requirements are contained in the *Commute Trip Reduction Task Force Guidelines* (last revised in 1997). The Task Force will be revising the guidelines to implement the proposed program changes, so it did not focus on changes to the guidelines. Instead, it examined areas in the current CTR law that could be amended to give more flexibility to the administrative requirements in the law and in the guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Modify the good faith effort clause to ensure closer collaboration between jurisdictions and employers

The Task Force recommends modifying the good faith effort clause to ensure closer collaboration between jurisdictions and employers.

The current CTR law requires that employers make a *good faith effort* toward achievement of the program's goals. It defines an employer good faith effort as meeting the minimum requirements for employer programs and working collaboratively with its jurisdiction to continue its existing program or make improvements over a period of time.

Clearer, more definitive language about what constitutes a good faith effort would reduce administrative effort. The review process is undermined when employers modify or eliminate substantial elements of their program without discussion with jurisdictions, making it difficult to work collaboratively. It can also be difficult for a jurisdiction to know whether an employer has actually *implemented* an approved program. It also takes time and effort for jurisdictions to identify new employers that are affected by CTR, but there is no clear mechanism in the law to solve the issue.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Allow local jurisdictions to review employer programs at least once every two years rather than requiring a review every year

The Task Force recommends changing the required frequency of program review from annually to at least once every two years.

The current CTR law requires jurisdictions to annually review each employer's progress and good faith efforts toward meeting the goals. This means that jurisdictions are expected to spend an equal amount of time

with every employer, regardless of how well or poorly an employer might be doing under the program.

If the frequency of program review were more flexible, the jurisdiction could save resources by focusing on those employers that need more attention and allowing employers making progress to report only when new measurement results are available.

Combined with the recommended changes to good faith effort, jurisdictions would have more tools and flexibility under the law to work with employers. Even without this change in the law, the CTR Guidelines could be adapted to allow those employers that have made progress to submit abbreviated reports in a measurement off-year.

State agency programs

RECOMMENDATION 11

Establish a more effective leadership role for state agencies as CTR employers

The Task Force recommends instituting enhanced reporting requirements for state agency programs and requiring state agencies sharing a common location in CTR-affected urban growth areas where the total number of state employees is 100 or more in one location to be treated as an affected worksite.

The current CTR law establishes a "leadership role" for state agencies to "aggressively develop substantive" programs. State agencies have to meet the same requirements as other major employers and have their own section in the law defining their relationship to local jurisdictions.

The Department of General Administration is the lead agency for state agency CTR programs. It coordinates an interagency task force to create a state agency CTR plan and to consider and recommend policies for all state agencies regarding issues such as parking, incentives, and work schedules. In the beginning of the program, General Administration reviewed the initial CTR programs of each affected state agency and worked with agencies to make modifications. Today the local jurisdiction fills this role.

Some of the issues with state agency programs that most concern the Task Force are:

- It is unclear what state agencies' leadership role should be and whether it's happening or not,
- Employee transportation coordinators at state agencies continually voice frustration at a lack of management support and executive attention, and
- Colocated state agencies are inconsistently determined to be affected by local jurisdictions.

General Administration staff led a discussion of the state-agency sections of the CTR law with the interagency task force, and working with the Task Force formed recommendations for the state agency portions of the legislation.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT THE CTR EFFICIENCY PROPOSAL

State transportation demand management policies

The Task Force has adopted several TDM recommendations that will maximize the success of the CTR efficiency proposal.

RECOMMENDATION 12

Prioritize Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers and other urban-scale activity centers for state and federal road and transit funding

With the objective of creating *priority areas* where state transportation investments are linked to improving access to and within Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers, **the Task Force recommends that WSDOT and the CTR Board work with funding partners, such as the Transportation Improvement Board,**

metropolitan planning organizations, and the legislature to prioritize certified Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers or other urban-scale activity centers for state and federal road and transit funding.

The goal is to increase collaboration among local governments, regional transportation planning organizations, transit agencies, and others to integrate land use and transportation decision-making at the local level and support the transportation investments of CTR-affected employers. The proposal asks these entities to do their best, with constrained resources, to support the formation and development of the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers as a local and regional priority. Many jurisdictions already designate activity centers in their comprehensive plans. This proposal provides a financial incentive and formalizes the state's interest in supporting the success of those centers.

RECOMMENDATION 13

Work with WSDOT to establish a state TDM policy that includes evaluation of TDM strategies in major plans, work with local jurisdictions to develop TDM corridor mobility goals and performance measures, and develop a congestion pricing policy

In 2005, WSDOT commissioned a study by Dan Carlson at the University of Washington[25] to examine the agency's role in TDM and how it relates to the agency's broader transportation goals. Building off some of the recommendations in the report, **the Task Force recommends that WSDOT establish TDM policies** requiring:

- Evaluation of TDM strategies in WSDOT's major project and corridor plans;
- Development of WSDOT and local jurisdictions (cities, counties, transits) TDM corridor mobility goals and performance measures to track progress; and
- Development of a congestion-pricing policy that encourages HOV use, ensures that alternatives to driving alone exist where pricing is implemented, and implements pricing strategies on major new construction projects to increase throughput in CTR urban growth areas.

Funding needs

RECOMMENDATION 14

Provide additional state funding to implement the recommendations for the program and increase its effectiveness.

To carry out the changes recommended by the Task Force, more resources will need to be provided for local jurisdictions, regional transportation planning organizations, and WSDOT's CTR office. The Task Force has prioritized its funding recommendations for increased funding according to this logic:

1. Funding that should be provided so local jurisdictions, regional transportation planning organizations, and the state CTR office can **fulfill the mandate of the proposal**. For local jurisdictions, this means maintaining their current services for employers while fulfilling the development requirements of the proposal. For regional transportation planning organizations, this means coordinating a regional planning process in order to develop a regional CTR plan. For the state CTR office, this means increased technical assistance for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program development and the proposed planning framework.
2. Funding for **supporting elements** that will make the proposal more effective.

"I've always thought that if you're going to spend $10 billion on a transportation corridor, why do that unless the corridor has an effective demand-management program."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

[25] The report, *WSDOT's Role in TDM: Strategic Interest, Structure, and Responsibilities*, is available at: **www.depts.washington.edu/trac/bulkdisk/pdf/616.1.pdf**.

"I think we should increase the investment level and expand the program."

— *Cocker Fennessy Interview Survey* participant

To fulfill the proposal's mandate, the Task Force recommends the following:

1. A one-time allocation for **regional transportation planning organization planning** of $500,000 in FY 2007.
2. Two additional FTEs for **state technical assistance** ($300,000/biennium beginning in FY 2007).[26]
3. Additional **base program** funding of $1.9 million/biennium, beginning in FY 2007, which will be necessary for local jurisdictions to maintain their current level of employer services while fulfilling the requirements of the efficiency proposal. The CTR efficiency proposal requires local jurisdictions to update their CTR plans, implement local code changes and examine changes to policies and development requirements. Existing program resources are not sufficient for local jurisdictions to complete these tasks while continuing to provide trip reduction services to employers.

To fund supporting elements that will make the proposal more effective, the Task Force recommends the following:

4. Funding for **opt-in** urban growth areas at $320,000/biennium. The CTR Board would approve opt-in proposals from local jurisdictions. Creating this fund will assure that adequate funding is available for the jurisdictions required to do the program, while providing a means for voluntary jurisdictions to continue effective programs. The Task Force intends for local jurisdictions to match the state funding with locally derived funds at a level to be

Table 3-1
CTR EFFICIENCY ACT

CTR TASK FORCE FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2006 LEGISLATURE				
	Current allocation	FY 07 Addition	Addition in subsequent biennia	Subsequent biennia funding total
Recommendation 14				
1. RTPO Planning	$0	$500,000	$0	$0
2. State technical assistance	$1,700,000	$150,000	$300,000	$2,000,000
3. Base program (allocated to local jurisdictions)*	$3,815,000	$950,000	$1,900,000	$5,715,000
4. Opt-In areas	$0	$0	$320,000	$320,000
5. Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program	$0	$0	$2,100,000	$2,100,000
6. Marketing	$80,000	$525,000	$1,000,000	$1,080,000
Recommendation 14 Sub Total	$5,595,000	$2,125,000	$5,620,000	$11,215,000
Recommendation 15				
Vanpool Investment Program	$5,000,000	$4,460,000	$1,125,000	$6,125,000
Total (14&15)	$10,595,000	$6,585,000	$6,745,000	$17,340,000

* Additional base program funding is intended to be allocated to local jurisdictions in phases: development funds in FY 2007, incentive funds in 2007-2009, and performance funds in 2009-2011 and beyond.

Contact: Brian Lagerberg, 360.705.7878; lagerbb@wsdot.wa.gov

[26] Beginning in FY 2007 and continuing through future biennia, $300,000/biennium for two FTEs; one FTE for program rules development and CTR implementation, one FTE to provide technical assistance for the GTEC program.

determined during the development of opt-in criteria.

5. Funding for the **Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program** at $2.1 million/biennium. Strong financial incentives from the state will assist local jurisdictions that volunteer to develop Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center programs. A state fund should be established to match local investments in Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center programs: $2.1 million/biennium would provide a state match of $350,000 per biennium for six Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers.[27] The fund would require a minimum local match of 50 percent (using locally derived funds, including federal funds and private sector investment). As more Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center programs are implemented into the future, more state match funds may be needed.
6. Funding for **marketing** at $1 million/biennium beginning in FY 2007. High gas prices create an opportunity for marketing and public education to have a higher-than-usual success rate at raising awareness and encouraging trial use. The current practice of having local jurisdictions create their own materials leads to an array of competing campaigns and messages as well as duplication of resources (spending and staff time). Funding for a state campaign will save money and staff time across the state. Marketing is crucial for effective implementation the CTR program changes and to re-brand state TDM programs.

[27] Using a transportation management association model as an example, it costs approximately $700,000 each biennium to operate a TDM program for a moderate-size city serving about 60,000 employees and about 275 employers.


Tacoma
Portland
Bellevue
Spokane
LIMITED SIGHT DISTANCE
50

4. TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER STATE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

Other commute options programs at the state level support the CTR program by providing services for local jurisdictions, transit agencies, and employers to meet demand. These programs include the Vanpool Investment Program, the Rideshare Tax Credit, the Trip Reduction Performance (TRP) Program, and TDM construction mitigation. The Task Force is interested in making changes to these programs to focus them on transportation efficiency and the overall direction for the CTR program.

The legislature has asked the Task Force to determine the effectiveness of the vanpool investment program, the tax credit, and the TRP program. This chapter describes the current status of these programs and the Task Force's recommendations for improvement.

VANPOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Washington leads the nation in vanpooling with the largest public vanpool fleet and some of the most successful programs in North America. Public vanpools in the state carried over six million passenger trips from October 2004 to September 2005.

New investment by the 2003 Legislature will lead to continued growth and statewide expansion. It developed a 10-year transportation plan that included $30 million to expand vanpooling statewide, with $4 million available for the 2003 – 2005 biennium. The goal of the Vanpool Investment Program is to double the number of vans in operation over the next decade to 3,130 vans. The 2005 Legislature provided an additional $1 million for the 2005–2007 biennium for a total for $5 million.

The program is statewide with a focus on congested corridors and in areas where opportunities for providing roadway capacity are limited or expensive. Providing funds for the purchase of vans allows transit operators to invest in areas of the program such as public awareness, operational enhancements, customer outreach, and technology enhancements. The funds are for public transit agencies and can be used only for capital costs associated with putting new vans on the road and for incentives for employers to increase employee vanpool use.

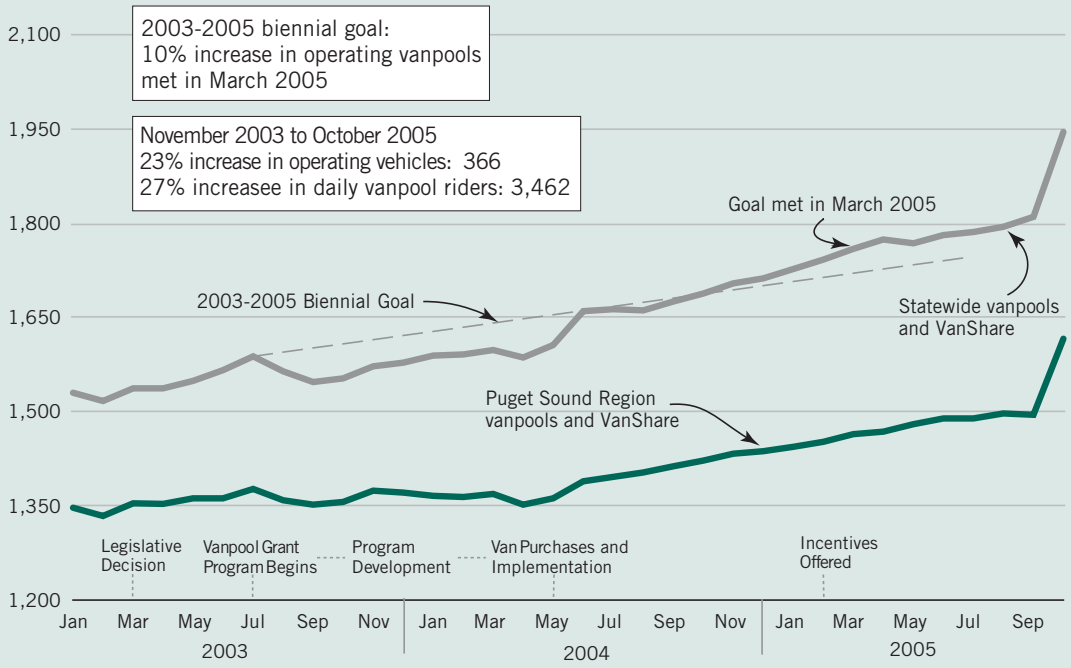
The investments and enhanced collaboration as part of the program have contributed to the state's growth in vans and riders. Vanpool numbers through October 2005 represent historic highs in terms of vanpool occupancy, number of vans in operation, number of *VanShare*[28] vehicles in operation, and number of passenger trips. Between November 2003 and October 2005 the number of vanpools on the road in Washington State increased by 23 percent from 1,572 to 1,938 vehicles. During the same period vanpool riders statewide increased by 27 percent from 12,852 daily riders to 16,314 daily riders.[29] *Figure 4-1* shows the dramatic growth in statewide vanpools since the vanpool grant program began and particularly in October 2005 when rising fuel prices increased commuter interest in vanpooling.

As part of this program, partners worked together to expand RideshareOnline.com, a free statewide service that introduces

[28] *VanShare* vans provide connections between buses, the Sounder train, and ferries. A group can park a van at any transportation hub, such as a park and ride lot, rail station, or ferry terminal, and use it again for the return trip.

[29] This increase occurred despite the impacts of the Boeing Company machinist strike in September. Nearly 100 vans from five transit agencies were parked during the month and, of those, a small percentage folded permanently.

Figure 4-1
PUBLIC VANPOOLS OPERATING IN WASHINGTON
January 2003 to October 2005



The Vanpool Investment Program met its vanpool growth goal for the 2003-2005 biennium in March 2005. Between November 2003 and October 2005 the number of vanpools on the road increased by 23 percent and the number of riders increased by 27 percent.

Source: WSDOT Vanpool Database.

commuters to others who might want to vanpool or carpool to work together. As the price of gas rose in summer and fall 2005, commuter interest in RideshareOnline.com skyrocketed. In September 2005 nearly 13,000 individuals sought ride match information from the online service. *See Figure 4-2.*

With WSDOT-administered grant funds, 10 transit agencies purchased 170 vans in 2003-2005. Although the legislature authorized $5 million for the Vanpool Investment Program in the 2005 – 2007 biennium, increased requests for vans are likely to use all the available funds in 2006. Seventeen operators, including five newly formed systems, estimate that they will need to order nearly 200 expansion vans for FY 2006, about 30 more than the 170 ordered for the entire 2003-2005 biennium. That will expend over $4.6 million.

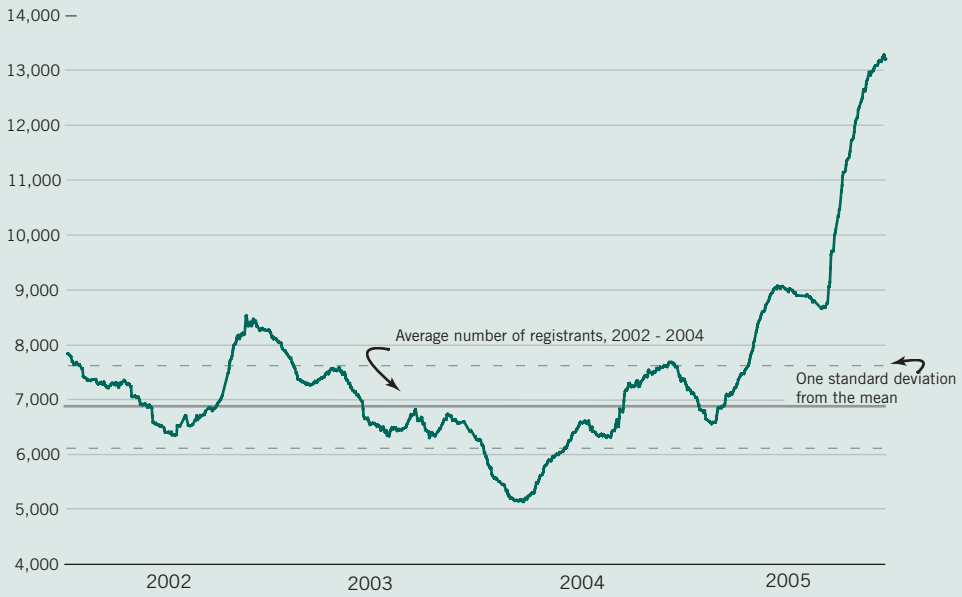
While gains in vanpooling can be attributed to the recent high price of fuel and to better ride matching information, growth can also be attributed to the use of targeted financial incentives and employer outreach to increase the van occupancy rates. WSDOT is currently studying how the incentives influence long-term commute choices.

In its supplemental budget in FY 2005, the Legislature asked the CTR Task Force to determine the cost effectiveness of the vanpool grants, including vanpool system coordination. The Vanpool Investment Program has benefited small and large operators throughout the state, who have mentored and learned from one another through the increased level of coordination among agencies. The program created the first statewide effort to develop goals and an investment plan. In addition, vanpool operators have demonstrated leadership by

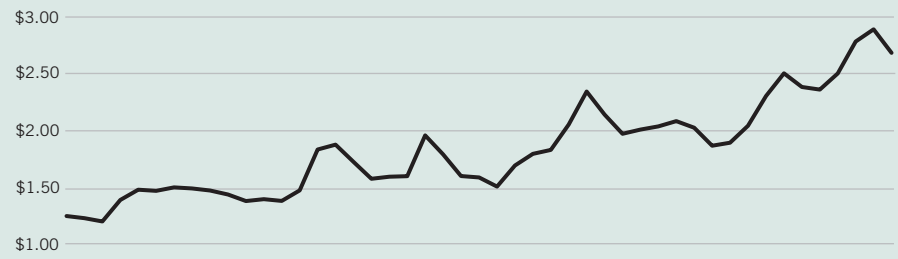
cooperatively leveraging funds and sharing resources statewide:

- King County Metro has led efforts to expand RideshareOnline.com and to provide vans for the brokerage program, an innovative program that makes one system's excess vehicles available to other systems.[30]
- Ben Franklin Transit has provided leadership on the Statewide Vanpool Team and has worked to train and mentor agencies as they develop new or better vanpool programs.
- Pierce Transit has led the efforts to develop the first statewide vanpool media campaign.

Figure 4-2
COMMUTER INTEREST IN RIDESHAREONLINE.COM
Number of registrants in system, 2002 to 2005



PRICE OF GASOLINE
Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, 2002 to 2005



As the price of gasoline began to spike in the summer of 2005, commuter interest in ridesharing did as well, as measured by the number of registrants in the RideshareOnline.com system. The previous spikes in interest by commuters correspond to RideshareOnline promotions. In early 2005, WSDOT expanded RideshareOnline.com statewide and offered incentives from February to October 2005.

Sources: King County Metro and the American Automobile Association.

[30] As part of the new Vanpool Investment Program, WSDOT and the operators created the brokerage program to fill short-term needs for vans until transit operators get their new equipment. The new brokerage program makes one system's excess vehicles (older vehicles waiting to be sold) available to another system that has formed a new vanpool but lacks a vehicle to serve the riders. WSDOT acts as a broker between transit systems. King County Metro, Community Transit, and Island Transit made vans available to agencies throughout the state in the 2003-2005 biennium. Six transit agencies were able to meet customer needs immediately by taking advantage of this program.

- Ben Franklin Transit, Pierce Transit, and Community Transit led efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive vanpool program peer review at the request of Spokane Transit.

With the dramatic increase in vanpool ridership and increased collaboration among vanpool operators and the state, the Task Force finds the program to be cost-effective and recommends that the program receive additional resources to meet demand and increase the occupancy of the vans.

RECOMMENDATION 15

Increase funding for the Vanpool Investment Program

As the CTR program continues to develop, employer services must be expanded to meet demand. After three years of work, it is clear that growth in vanpool demand is exceeding supply. **The Task Force recommends the following funding increases for the program:**

- **Vanpool fleet capital expansion** purchases will help vanpool operators meet the demand for vanpooling. The Task Force recommends that the legislature provide an additional $3.9 million in FY 2007 to purchase 150 vans (100 for Puget Sound-area operators). This would increase vanpool ridership by 1,245 riders. This one-time allocation would only be used to purchase vans for systems with vehicles traveling into CTR areas.
- **Operational enhancements** to increase the average occupancy of the vans. The Task Force recommends that the legislature provide new funding for operating enhancements in FY 2007 ($560,000) and onward from 2007-2009 ($1.125 million/biennium). Operating enhancements including incentives, increased technical assistance, and public outreach will help maximize the effectiveness of the program. The state's objective is to increase the average van occupancy from 8.3 riders per van to 8.8 riders per van (one rider for every two vans). This would be an ongoing funding request.

RIDESHARE TAX CREDIT

The state offers a tax credit for employers who offer financial incentives or subsidies to employees to take public transportation, participate in vanpools or carpools, or use non-motorized transportation (RCW 82.70). The Department of Revenue administers the credit. The tax credit is offered as a rebate of business and occupation (B&O) and public utility taxes up to certain limits. Employers may apply for a tax credit of up to $60 per employee per fiscal year or up to 50 percent of the CTR financial incentives, whichever is less. The credit limit is $200,000 per applicant and

Table 4-1

EMPLOYER UTILIZATION OF RIDESHARE TAX CREDIT				
Year	Credits Taken	Employers taking credit	Percent of employers in CTR	Percent of dollars to CTR employers
1994	$ 287,241	19	63%	93%
1995	$ 282,800	20	60%	92%
1996	$ 972,855	180	47%	85%
1997	$ 1,305,299	205	45%	83%
1998	$ 1,515,208	235	42%	81%
1999	$ 1,464,478	193	53%	86%
---------- Tax credit discontinued 2000–2003 ----------				
2004	$ 2,247,225	265	53%	93%
2005	$ 1,837,936	187	55%	93%

credits may be deferred for up to three years. The tax credit is set to expire on July 1, 2013.

The tax credit originally took effect on July 1, 1994. In 1995, the legislature amended the program to allow a wider group of employers to apply for the credit, broaden the range of eligible financial incentives, and limit the amount of tax credits on a per-employee and per-employer basis.

The total amount of tax credits claimed has grown since the program began in 1994. The program ended in 1999 and was reinstated again beginning in FY 2004. The Legislature provided $4.5 million for the 2003–2005 biennium. During FY 2004, 230 businesses claimed the maximum $2.25 million by March.

The 2005 Legislature increased the credit limit by $500,000 and made program changes that will make the tax more broadly available. Companies will now apply for tax credits in January, and if the total amount of approved credits exceeds the total state limit, then the Department of Revenue will proportionally reduce the credits for all applicants. This change is intended to allow all employers equal access to the tax credit.

Figure 4-3 shows the location of CTR worksites in the north Puget Sound region and whether they received a tax credit in 2004 or 2005, as well as the non-CTR program employers who received the credit in either of those years. The vast majority of the sites that received the credit are located in the urban growth areas targeted by the CTR efficiency proposal described in the final chapter. The Task Force will continue this analysis and will also examine the performance of CTR employers that received the tax credit.

The tax credit is intended to give smaller, non-CTR affected employers an incentive to offer commute benefits to their employees. Non-CTR employers use the credit but proportionally, receive a smaller amount than CTR employers. *See Table 4-1.* Since the reinstatement of the tax credit, the percent of employers taking the credit that are CTR-affected employers has ranged from 53 to 55 percent, while the amount of credit to CTR employers has been 93 percent.

TRIP REDUCTION PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

In 2003, the legislature directed WSDOT to develop a performance-based program to encourage entrepreneurs, private companies, transit systems, cities, counties, nonprofit organizations, developers, and property managers to provide services and incentives to employees that result in fewer vehicle trips arriving at worksites (RCW 70.94.996). The Legislature provided $1.5 million in the 2003 –2005 biennium for the program. The program is scheduled to expire on January 1, 2014.

The amount of performance awards to program applicants is based on the value to the transportation system of the vehicle trips reduced. The legislature directed the CTR Task Force to develop an award process that gives priority to projects achieving the greatest reduction in trips in the most cost-effective way, and to consider such factors as the local cost of providing new highway capacity, the congestion levels in the area of the proposal, and geographic distribution of funds. Projects are selected through a competitive process.

In 2004, 29 projects were completed. Fourteen projects exceeded their goals, seven projects made at least 50 percent of their goal, and the overall program exceeded the collective trip reduction goal by 41 percent. The state paid nearly $1.1 million for over 5,100 annual trips removed from the highway system and $161,508 in performance bonuses. Overall, the program's total price per reduced trip over the year was $242. In comparison, WSDOT estimated that instituting a toll of $1.84 per trip — or $460 per year — would manage demand at a level that would maximize the flow of vehicles on the transportation system in the central Puget Sound.[31]

After the first program cycle in 2004-2005, WSDOT and the CTR Task Force initiated a process to solicit feedback and make improvements to the program. The program rules were amended in 2005 based on the lessons learned.

Table 4-2 shows four examples of TRP projects for the first year. The CTR Task Force will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the TRP program and work with WSDOT to make improvements in future program cycles.

Figure 4-3
B&O COMMUTE TRIP REDUCTION TAX CREDIT
North Puget Sound Area

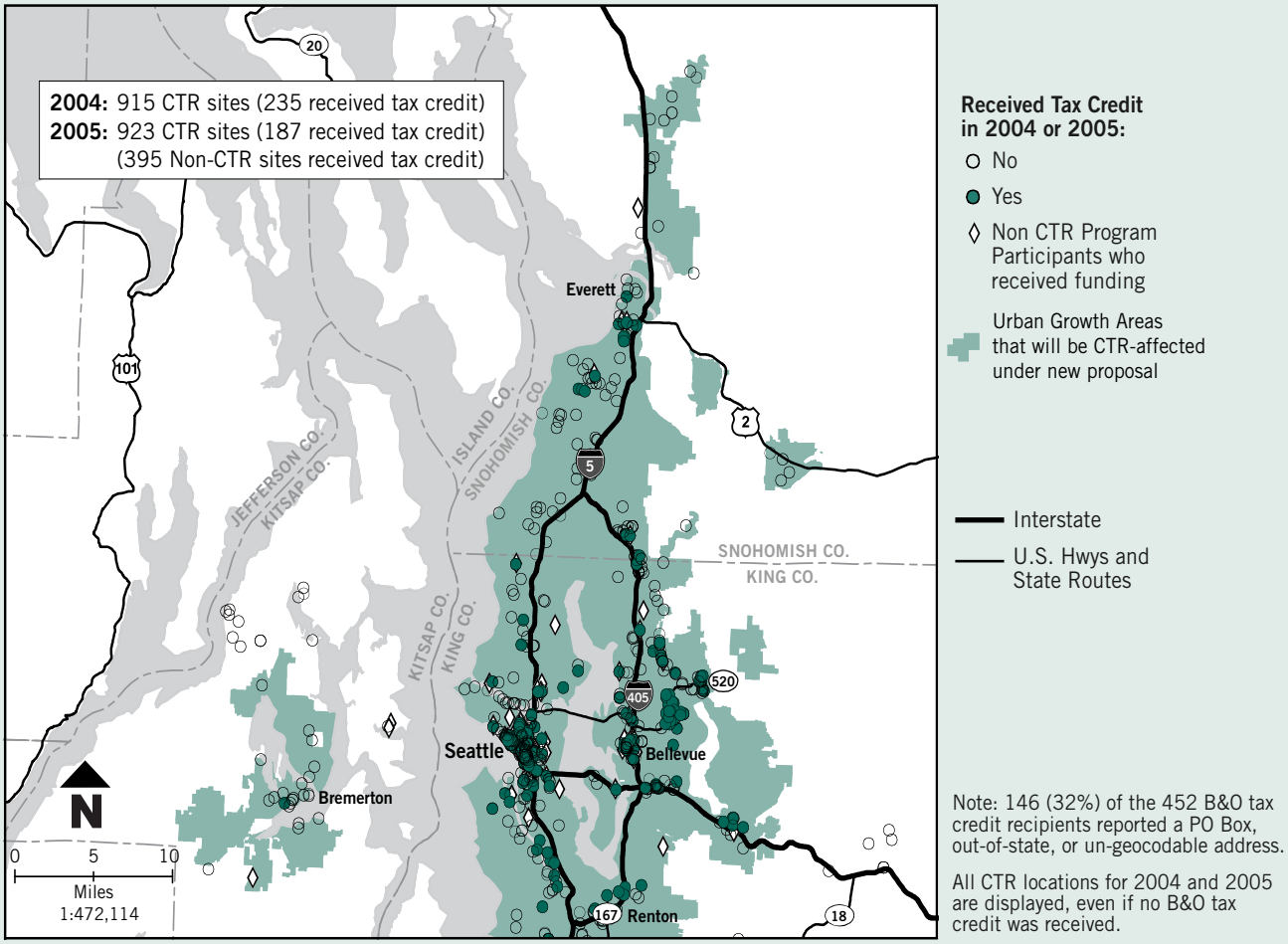


Figure 4-3 The majority of worksites that received the tax credit in 2004 or 2005 are located in the urban growth areas targeted by the CTR efficiency proposal, as seen in this example from the North Puget Sound area. Source: WSDOT analysis of data from the Department of Revenue and the CTR Survey Database.

[31] Based on the optimal tolling rate for efficient use of the highway system in the central Puget Sound region discussed in WSDOT's Regional Toll Revenue Feasibility Study, July 18, 2002 working draft.

Table 4-2

TRIP REDUCTION PERFORMANCE PROGRAM - PROJECT EXAMPLES					
Project Title	**Project Description**	**Keys to Success**	**Annual Trips Reduced**	**Total Award**	**Annual Cost Per Trip**
Spokane County's CTR Tracking Calendar at "MyCommute.org"	To provide a user-friendly, online system to capture data on employees, and to encourage drive alone commuters to try one of the many commute options. This on-line calendar allows for the collection of data every month, creating a better picture of the frequency of employee use of the various commute modes than an annual weeklong snapshot.	Incentives were used to entice employees into to trying an alternative. ■ Visa cash cards ranging from $10 to $50 for participants ■ Three grand prizes of $500, $1000, and $1500 for participants ■ Three $500 cash card prizes offered to ETCs who participate	985	$118,800	$119
City of Redmond *Reward for Performance*	The City of Redmond partnered with King County Metro and the Greater Redmond TMA to provide performance-based incentives to employers for reducing the number of vehicle trips to their Redmond worksites, as well as for maintaining those trip reductions into a second year.	■ Incentives were used to entice employees into to trying an alternative ■ During the first and second year of the program participating employers were rewarded $300 for each trip reduced ■ The employer will also receive an additional $150 for each reduced trip that is maintained into the second year ■ A total of $97,780 in incentives was given to employers for their reduction in commute trips	1,032	$147,600	$143
Pierce County *Individualized Employer Support Program*	This project brought together funds for financial incentives, part-time staff support, and personalized marketing materials that serve the needs of the participating employers.	■ New carpoolers could earn up to $80 after three months of using a carpool for at least eight days each of those consecutive months or $50 after just two months. Two temporary full-time marketing and communication specialists were also hired to work with assessing the sites, developing the incentives and marketing materials, and providing help with the promotion of the incentives.	506	$145,194	$287
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center *Save the Gas, Earn the Cash*	This project reduced employee-parking demand both on and off campus by offering financial incentives to increase the occupancy of carpools and vanpools.	■ Employees were initially drawn to the project by incentives. In addition, an FHCC employee was designated to facilitate ride matching. Success of the project was due in great part to the ride matching effort.	116	$54,198	$460

RECOMMENDATION 16

Examine the Rideshare Tax Credit and the Trip Reduction Performance Program and develop recommendations for the 2007 Legislature

The Task Force recommends that its successor analyze the Rideshare Tax Credit program to form recommendations for the 2007 legislative session. These recommendations should result from an analysis of the program that focuses on:

- Whether small employers have sufficient access to the tax credit,
- Opportunities to focus the credit on performance and effective CTR program implementation; and
- Options for shifting funding between the Trip Reduction Performance Program and the tax credit based on the effectiveness of these programs.

CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

WSDOT has not consistently made use of demand management strategies to mitigate construction-related delay on highway projects. The CTR Task Force believes that these strategies are cost effective during construction and that once in place may lead to longer-term strategies that support successful implementation of CTR.

In the I-405 project, a significant demand management component has been planned with a goal of maintaining transportation capacity during construction. Capacity targets, in terms of vehicle trips to be offset, have been established and demand management strategies are undergoing final planning and evaluation.

The Hood Canal Bridge project will make use of several demand management strategies during the closure of the bridge. These strategies included public outreach, development of a bridge closure rideshare program, and passenger only ferry service.

The lessons learned from these and other mitigation efforts can be used to establish a more systematic assessment and application of demand management strategies for construction traffic mitigation purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 17

Work with WSDOT to establish a TDM Construction Mitigation policy and a Technology Demonstration for I-405

The Task Force recommends that its successor work with WSDOT to establish a "TDM Construction Mitigation" policy and funding plan for major highway improvement projects where capacity will be constrained during construction. TDM strategies should be used to maintain or maximize vehicle throughput in the construction zone through the duration of the project.

The Task Force also recommends that WSDOT should implement a Technology Demonstration for I-405. This project would:

- Improve the ease with which commuters could begin vanpooling and reduce the administrative cost to providers, employers, and operators.
- Improve the efficiency of vanpooling by creating real-time brokering of available seats and system monitoring.
- Assist vanpool operators in measurement and evaluation and help WSDOT determine the effectiveness of the vanpool system in relieving highway congestion.


RIDE THE NEW WAVE
SOUNDTRANSIT
9700

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter describes the benefits of the Task Force's recommendations and the implementation strategy for the new program if the CTR efficiency proposal is passed by the legislature.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS?

For the state

- Focuses state CTR resources on reducing drive-alone trips in the most critical areas of the state, increasing the program's benefits for the state transportation system and providing a greater return on investment.

For local jurisdictions

- Helps fulfill Growth Management Act requirements for transportation demand management (TDM) planning with state fiscal support
- Encourages integration of transportation, land use, and economic development planning and integrates CTR into local and regional transportation and land use planning, increasing its visibility and potential effectiveness
- Operationalizes support for current comprehensive plan goals and projections
- Encourages transit agencies to plan and provide services in support of comprehensive plan goals
- Brings in local employers to participate in the planning process
- Focuses CTR funds into urban growth areas and centers
- Matches local goals to encourage growth in designated areas
- Provides greater administrative flexibility for program reviewers to focus efforts where they can be most effective
- Provides funding incentives to create innovative, effective trip reduction programs in centers, tailored to local needs and plans
- Directs transit agencies, regional transportation planning organizations, and the state to prioritize transit, state, regional and local services and facilities into serving designated growth and transportation efficiency centers, which will support local CTR programs

For major employers

- Employers are attractive to employees when employees enjoy good access to work locations.
- Employers benefit when reduced demand for drive alone commuting frees up highway capacity for higher value trips, including the movement of freight and goods.
- CTR programs have the potential to introduce enhanced employee benefits at little or no cost to the employer
- Employers will be able to more effectively engage in local planning processes that have direct impacts on their business

For regional transportation planning organizations

- Provides cost-effective tools to help regions fulfill their transportation and economic development objectives

EMPLOYERS BENEFIT WHEN REDUCED DEMAND FOR DRIVE ALONE COMMUTING FREES UP HIGHWAY CAPACITY.

- Helps integrate demand management into overall land-use and transportation planning and funding decisions
- Helps focus transportation investments and CTR benefits where they're needed most – in areas of congestion. This helps make programs more efficient, effective, and understandable to the public and the private business community
- Helps jurisdictions address the Growth Management Act requirement for TDM in an integrated way
- Helps regional transportation management organizations measure local implementation of TDM through the regional transportation planning organization process of plan review

HOW WILL THE NEW PROGRAM BE IMPLEMENTED?

The Task Force's CTR efficiency proposal would change the current CTR law. If it is passed by the legislature, the Task Force or its successor entity (proposed to be the CTR Board) will develop the administrative and planning details required by the new law, working in a public process with its partners around the state. This process will parallel the development of the original guidelines for the program in the early 1990s. As the CTR Board develops the administrative rules for the program, local jurisdictions and regional transportation planning organizations will begin to implement the planning requirements under the new program.

This section does not describe a specific timeline or next steps for the program development phase because the legislature has not made its decision on the program and some of the program's parameters may shift. The intent of the Task Force's recommendations is as follows:

- The state CTR Board, supported by the program's technical assistance staff, works collaboratively with local jurisdictions, regional transportation planning organizations, transit agencies, major employers, and others to develop program rules, criteria and guidance for local CTR plans, Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers, and regional CTR plans.
- In a collaborative effort at the regional level, regional transportation planning organizations, local jurisdictions, and others initiate a regional CTR planning process, developing transportation criteria for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers and minimum requirements for transportation demand management programs within Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers. The state CTR office intends to provide staff to assist with Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center planning and development.
- Local jurisdictions adopt local CTR plans and submit the plans to the regional transportation planning organization as information for regional planning purposes. Regional transportation planning organizations would not have the authority to reject a local plan.
- Local jurisdictions *may* designate Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers. If a jurisdiction seeks state CTR funding for a Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center, it applies to the regional transportation planning organization for certification that the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center meets the minimum criteria and requirements developed as part of the regional planning process.
- Regional transportation planning organizations submit local and regional CTR plans to the state CTR Board for review. Regional transportation planning organizations and the state would collaborate to discuss regional plans and ensure consistency. The state CTR Board would certify that both local and regional CTR plans meet the minimum requirements of the law and are consistent with program rules.

CTR Board

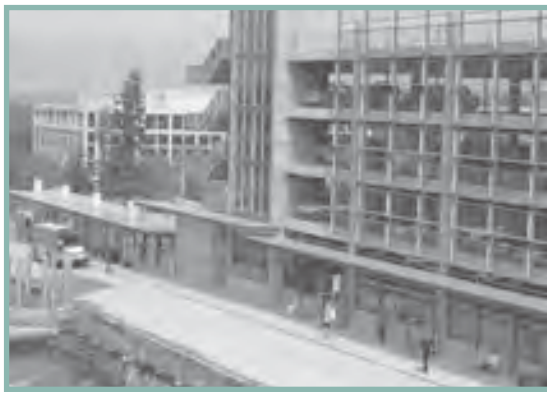
Under the proposal, the CTR Board is required to work with WSDOT to establish rules for local, regional, and state CTR plans and implementation procedures by March 1, 2007. Several of the required elements of the rules currently exist in the CTR Guidelines. The proposed new or modified elements of the rules include:

- Guidance criteria for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers,
- Data measurement methods and procedures for determining progress toward CTR goals,
- Establishment of criteria and procedures for regional transportation planning organizations, in consultation with local jurisdictions, to propose to add or exempt urban growth areas,
- Identification of the affected areas of the program every four years
- Guidelines and deadlines for creating and updating local CTR plans, including guidance to ensure consistency between the local CTR plan and the TDM strategies identified in the transportation element in the local comprehensive plan,
- Guidelines and deadlines for creating and updating regional CTR plans, including guidance to ensure the regional CTR plan is consistent with and incorporated into TDM components in the regional transportation plan,
- Methods for regional transportation planning organizations to evaluate and certify that designated Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers meet the minimum requirements and are eligible for funding,
- Guidelines for creating and updating Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center programs, and
- Establishment of statewide program goals.

The Board would also be required to create a state CTR plan and update it every four years. The Board would review and certify local and regional CTR plans and work with regional transportation planning organizations and local jurisdictions to establish the state CTR plan.

The Board would also evaluate the program and recommend changes to the rules every four years, with the first assessment report due July 1, 2011. It would continue the current Task Force role of submitting recommendations to the legislature every two years.

The Board would also establish a Technical Advisory Group, consisting of representatives from state, regional and local government, private, public and nonprofit providers of transportation services, and employers or owners of major worksites in Washington. The Technical Advisory Group would replace the current nine-county working group with expanded functions and a more direct advisory role to the CTR Board. The Technical Advisory Group would advise the Board on the implementation of local and regional CTR plans and programs, program evaluation, program funding allocations, and state rules and guidelines.



The 1,700 parking spaces at the recently opened Eastgate Park and Ride will provide parking for bus riders, carpoolers, and vanpoolers along I-90 in Bellevue.

Local jurisdictions

The intent of the proposal is for local plans and the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program to be developed by local jurisdictions in collaboration with major employers, transit agencies, citizen groups, the applicable regional transportation planning organization, and other interested parties.

Under the proposal, local jurisdictions would update local CTR ordinances to reflect the state law and rules, update its local CTR plan to be consistent with state requirements, work with regional transportation planning organizations to develop regional criteria for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers,

and consider designating Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers.

Regional transportation planning organizations

The proposal gives regional transportation planning organizations a planning role in the program. Regional transportation planning organizations containing an affected urban growth area would be required to develop a regional CTR plan that includes regional goals, strategies, a sustainable funding plan, performance measures, and minimum criteria for Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers. Regional transportation planning organizations would be required to submit an annual progress report to the state CTR Board.

Regional transportation planning organizations would review proposals from jurisdictions to designate Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers and determine whether the proposed Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center is consistent with the criteria in the regional plan. Regional transportation planning organizations would collaborate with the state CTR Board to evaluate the consistency of local CTR plans with the regional CTR plan.