

Commute Trip Reduction Survey Refresh

Summary of proposed changes, as approved by TDM Technical Committee in September 2020

Status update for proposed changes as of February 2021

Background

In March 2020, WSDOT conducted 32 interviews related to the Commute Trip Reduction survey and data products. Based on those interviews a set of [draft recommendations](#) for changes were developed and released for a month-long comment period. Comments were received from the City of Bellevue, City of Kent, City of SeaTac, City of Seattle, Community Transit, Eastern Washington University, Greater Redmond TMA, Microsoft, Pierce County, and T-Mobile. The comments and draft recommendations were workshopped with a sprint team consisting of members of the TDM Technical Committee. The remainder of this document summarizes the revised draft recommendations **with updates to the planned work as of February 2021.**

Version 1.0 Project Description

The new CTR survey tool will be the place to administer your CTR survey, monitor your survey, and view your results as they come in. The CTR survey will be a 3-minute anonymous, mobile-friendly survey available in multiple languages. Any worksite added by the Jurisdictional representative can survey, but CTR-affected worksites must survey at least once a biennium. Paper surveying and equivalent data collection methods will be accepted if the data is inputted into a template. Please see [attached survey question and answer proposal](#).

There are two major milestones for version 1.0 this year:

- Spring 2021 user testing
- Fall 2021 launch

Changes to Survey Questions

- ~ **Recommendation 1:** Remove the first two questions from the [survey](#) about employment status and typical days started between 6a and 9a.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Allow employers the choice to survey their affected employees or all of their employees.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ The current survey questions do not accurately capture affected employees, as there is no question about length of employment.
 - ~ We have not seen a statistically significant difference between the (potentially) affected/unaffected employees' NDATs and VMTs.
 - ~ Interviewees reported not using the information from these questions.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change
- ~ **Recommendation 2:** Remove the third question from the [survey](#) about commute distance.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ No longer ask employees to estimate their one-way commute distance. Instead, require commute origin information, either through placing a pin on an intersection near the

- beginning of their commute (preferred method), or by providing their starting zip code.
 - ~ Commute distances will be calculated using shortest network distance from the dropped pin or zip code centroid to the work address location through the Google API or a similar.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Accuracy of commute distance is questionable and inconsistent.
 - ~ A pin would allow more precise commute distances.
 - ~ A pin would allow for an educated guess as to the corridors people use to get to work.
 - ~ The point level data would allow for granularity lost when some zip codes are large or a CTR-affected city has minimal zip codes.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.
- ~ **Recommendation 3:** Customize the fourth question from the [survey](#) about modes.
- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Questions will be customized for respondents based on their geographic location, matching mode options such as TNC and employer shuttles to people in the area where those services are available.
 - ~ People who choose public transportation will be asked how they got from the public transportation station/stop to work (e.g., last mile mode).
 - ~ The question will also clarify compressed work weeks and teleworking.
 - ~ Other modes will be simplified and/or combined.
 - ~ Remove “overnight business trip” and “did not work” as mode options.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Reduce mode options that are not applicable.
 - ~ Simplify choices to reduce confusion.
 - ~ Make the survey feel appropriate to the area (e.g., not have people feel the survey answers are specific to the Puget Sound area).
 - ~ Understand challenges for last-mile connections that worksites can address in their CTR strategic plans.
 - February Update:
 - ~ “TNC” and “employer shuttles” are modes that people can toggle on if they are pertinent for their survey; otherwise, those options will not be displayed.
 - ~ Compressed work week days off (CWW) will be calculated using a respondent’s selected work schedule (question 1). For example, selecting 4/10s will count as one CWW.
 - ~ Development of last-mile question for people selecting public transit is still planned but will not be included until a later version of the survey (version 1.0+).
- ~ **Recommendation 4:** Remove fifth question from the [survey](#) about carpool/vanpool occupancy.
- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ For people selecting vanpool/carpool, create a pop-up question for occupancy estimates.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Streamline the survey process for people not using those modes.
 - February Update:
 - ~ Pop-up occupancy question will also appear for people selecting the TNC option.

- ~ **Recommendation 5:** Change the seventh question from the [survey](#) about if the week reported was typical.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Ask people to report on their typical week, rather than asking them if the week was typical.
 - ~ For people that do not have a typical week, there would be a separate instruction: "If you don't have a 'typical' commute schedule, please report on your commutes for last week."
 - Rationale:
 - ~ The purpose of asking for last week is to capture anomalies in how people commute (e.g., someone normally takes the bus but need the car for an appointment after work).
 - The data is not accurate enough to require that level of detail; we accept a 50% response rate and survey respondents self-select, meaning the results are rarely representative of actual behavior at the site.
 - The program is interested in behavior change; it is better to know how someone regularly commutes than if s/he had a uncommon commute day the previous week.
 - ~ This helps to insulate the data from contextual factors, such as it being "bike to work week" or there being construction in the area.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.

- ~ **Recommendation 6:** Move the eighth question from the [survey](#) about work schedule to the front.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Have the first question of the new survey ask about a person's work schedule, with common schedule (e.g., 5/8s, 4/10s, 9/80) and part-time options.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Compressed work week days off (CWW) were underreported on the previous survey (e.g., CWW were anywhere between 90% and 25% of expected, giving the schedule of full-time workers).
 - ~ This allows us to calculate CWW automatically; this should be more accurate than depending on respondents to pick the CWW mode.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.

- ~ **Recommendation 7:** Remove the ninth question from the [survey](#) about paying to park.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Remove the question.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Information about the cost of parking is included in the worksite's program report.
 - ~ Interviewees reported not using the information from these questions.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.

- ~ **Recommendation 8:** Remove the tenth question from the [survey](#) about frequency of teleworking.

- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Use the question about modes to collect telework information during normal commute weeks.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Options for this question did not capture the full range of telework schedules.
 - ~ Interviewees reported not using the information from these questions.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.
- ~ **Recommendation 9:** Reformat the eleventh and twelfth question from the [survey](#) about reasons people do and do not drive to work.
- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Have follow-up questions about why people do or do not drive to work be specific to the person's answers (e.g., if someone never drives, s/he would not be asked why they drive).
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Make the survey shorter and more relevant to each participant.
 - ~ Make the options actionable in terms of TDM strategies that could address those concerns.
 - February Update:
 - ~ We propose to work with a TDM Technical Committee Sprint team on this question.
 - ~ Please see **attached** survey question and answer proposal for more detail.
- ~ **Recommendation 10:** Consider showing a result snapshot once a survey is complete to provide instant feedback.
- February Update:
 - ~ For version 1.0 we plan to have a "completed" notification for the survey taker.

Changes to Survey Format

- ~ **Recommendation 11:** Shorten the survey and use skip logic.
- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Survey will have four key questions (i.e., schedule, mode, commute origin, TDM strategies), with pop-up questions for occupancy. See **attached**.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Provide worksite and employees with a survey that takes only two minutes to complete, in order to reduce perceived burden and increase participation.
 - ~ Remove questions that provided data that few/no jurisdictions/worksites were using.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.
- ~ **Recommendations 12 and 13:** **These two fall 2020 recommendations have been combined:**
- 1) no longer include ability to add supplemental questions
 - 2) do not require email addresses to access the survey
- Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Have employees access the survey through a link specific to their worksite, rather than using their email address to verify which survey they should be taking.

- ~ Add a comment box at the end of the survey to collect any additional information a worksite wants; data can be downloaded by site after the survey is complete.
- Rationale:
 - ~ Collecting email addresses was onerous and created privacy concerns that made some worksites not want to survey.
 - ~ In the 14-plus years of previous surveying, less than one supplemental question was requested and added per year.
 - ~ Email addresses were occasionally used to enter participants into a worksite-sponsored drawing.
- February Update:
 - ~ For version 1.0, we are not planning to include a comment box.
 - As a workaround for collecting email addresses of survey participants, site ETCs can ask employees to send a screenshot of the completed survey to be entered into a drawing or for other tracking purposes.
 - This obviates the need for the system to collect email addresses; that information stays with the company.
 - ~ We propose to revisit this with the TDM Technical Committee and program participants to decide how to handle it for future versions of the survey.
- ~ **Recommendation 14:** Create guidance for alternative data collection format and requirements and ensure visibility of that guidance.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.

Changes to Surveying Process

- ~ **Recommendation 15:** Encourage worksites to survey as frequently as they choose. Note: Surveying at least once a biennium is still required.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Currently, only the most recent biennial survey for a worksite is kept in the CTR database. If a site surveys more than once in a cycle, the previous results are overwritten.
 - ~ Allow worksites to have access to more than one set of survey results per cycle.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Surveying more often allows the site to use recently collected CTR data to inform and institute new CTR strategies, and then survey the workforce shortly after the implementation to see if those CTR strategies are having an effect.
 - ~ Currently, with two years between each survey, changes in the data could be caused by many factors, such as a different employee populations or externalities (e.g., gas price fluctuations, major highway construction, unseasonable weather).
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.
- ~ **Recommendation 16:** Discontinue use of ScanTron bubble sheets for paper surveying.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ The new survey will be mobile-device friendly and available in multiple languages.
 - ~ A PDF image file of the survey will be provided to worksites upon request.

- This can be printed for those sites only able to survey using paper.
- The survey information would then to be entered into a spreadsheet (or other) by the sites representative.
- We will create an upload function for CSV files to be used by sites who print and use paper surveys.
- Rationale:
 - ~ ScanTron sheets will not be compatible with the new system.
 - ~ Purchasing the special ScanTron sheets costs tens of thousands of dollars per biennium.
 - ~ Creating and shipping ScanTron surveys around the state is antithesis to the goals of the CTR program.
 - ~ We hope worksites will do everything they can to avoid using paper surveys, even ones they can print.
- February Update:
 - ~ No change.

Changes to Data Policies

- ~ **Recommendation 17:** We recommend that some sites be exempt from surveying.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ This proposal is not to exempt sites fully from the program. Sites would still be CTR-affected, responsible for having an ETC and CTR strategic plan, et cetera.
 - ~ Decision to exempt would be at the discretion of the jurisdictions.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Jurisdictions can spend an inordinate amount of time trying to survey sites.
 - ~ The return on investment for the jurisdiction's effort is often low or nonexistent.
 - ~ Sites unwilling to survey tend to put less effort into their CTR programs.
 - ~ Exempting sites from surveying can be used as an incentive to get the site to promote CTR in a different way (e.g., a site is excused from surveying for two years if it institutes a ride-matching program).
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.
- ~ **Recommendation 18:** Remove specific response rate requirements.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Based on a worksite's population, we will build a functionality into the surveying tool that shows when the worksite achieves a certain level of statistical significance (e.g., 95% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval).
 - ~ Jurisdictions will still be able to mandate their own response rate requirements.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Requiring a 50% or 70% response rate for worksites of different populations is arbitrary.
 - ~ Instead, response rate should be based on the population of the worksite.
 - For example, a worksite of 100 people would need to achieve a response rate of 80% to have the same confidence level and interval as a worksite of 1,000 people achieving a 28% response rate.
 - February Update:

~ No change.

Changes to Data Products

- ~ **Recommendation 19:** Eliminate the PDF worksite reports.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Replace old PDF reports with interactive dashboards.
 - ~ The “aggregate report” would also be in a dashboard format and renamed the “CTR Program Report.”
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Update the look and feel of the program.
 - ~ Make the data more functional.
 - February Update:
 - ~ For version 1.0, the previous “aggregate report” will be renamed “results dashboard.”
 - ~ For version 1.0, there will be no program report. Information will be continue to be collected about industry type.
 - ~ We propose to revisit this with the TDM Technical Committee and program participants to decide how to handle it for future versions of the survey.

- ~ **Recommendation 20:** Develop new tools sites can use to strengthen their CTR programs.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Provide information on peer comparison (where applicable) by geographic and industry type.
 - ~ Provide TDM suggestions based on the sites’ locations and amenities available to them.
 - ~ Provide origin-destination heat maps based on employees home locations (these will be summarized at the zip code level).
 - Rationale:
 - ~ These tools can serve to motivate worksites and give them insights into ways they can strengthen their programs.
 - February Update:
 - ~ For version 1.0, we are not planning to include the peer-to-peer comparison tool nor the TDM suggestions.
 - ~ We propose to revisit this with the TDM Technical Committee and program participants to decide how to handle it for future versions of the survey.

- ~ **Recommendation 21:** Provide raw CTR data to worksites and jurisdictions.
 - Proposed new practice:
 - ~ Data will be downloadable as a CSV file.
 - ~ Advanced users would have additional methods for interacting with the data.
 - Rationale:
 - ~ Provide end-users the data they need to make informed decisions.
 - February Update:
 - ~ No change.

~ **Recommendation 22:** Provide more trainings and more robust informational documents (e.g., FAQs, policies, guidance).

- February Update:

- ~ No change.