

CONGESTION BUSTER TASK FORCE DEMAND MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

As of March 19, 2002

RECOMMENDATION #1: Develop and implement incentives programs for individuals who use commute alternatives or otherwise reduce driving.

Background: Travel decisions are generally very personal, based on time, cost and convenience. Existing incentive programs are, for the most part, offered by large employers in urbanized work areas, meaning that many employees do not have access to them. The Spring, 2001 issue of TDM Review reports that 86% of American employees feel that commuter assistance benefits are useful and beneficial, yet only 17% have access to them in the workplace. Providing direct incentives for individuals would complement employer-based programs and send a strong message to all New Jersey residents that reducing VMT and SOV trips are important statewide goals by rewarding those who reduce their driving.

Strategies:

- Legislate and/or adopt regulations to require discount automobile insurance premiums for those who use an SOV alternative 20% of the time, including licensed high school student drivers who take the bus or walk to school at least one day a week.
- Legislate or adopt regulations for effectuating any or all of the following: year-end rebate, tax credit, transit voucher, license or registration fee reduction, or incentive of equivalent value to people who can demonstrate a reduction in overall driving thorough odometer readings at DMV.

HOW WILL CONGESTION BE REDUCED?

By providing tangible financial rewards for using commute alternatives and reducing VMT, more people would be inclined to do so.

WHO DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION AFFECT?

Vehicle Owners	Department of Banking and Insurance
Licensed Drivers	Department of Motor Vehicles
Insurance Companies in NJ	

WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND COST SAVINGS IN OTHER AREAS?

- Reduced revenues from insurance premiums could be offset by fewer auto and health insurance claims

- Reduction in insurance costs for general public and participants
- Reduction in transportation expenses for participants
- VMT rebate costs will be dependent on size of rebate and amount of participants. They could be funded with gasoline taxes or higher fees for fuel inefficient vehicles.
- Public savings in reduced highway maintenance, construction costs
- Optimizes public's investment in school transportation
- Advertising costs

HOW WILL RECOMMENDATION BE IMPLEMENTED?

- Changes to State Insurance regulations and insurance company policies. Identify allies/obstacles.
- Outreach and education via TMAs
- DMV policies and procedures

LEGISLATION REQUIRED:

Yes – rebate and insurance discounts. Can be mandated for insurance companies based on number of policies, or amount premiums collected within State.

SUBMITTED BY: Demand Management Subcommittee

RECOMMENDATION # 2: Expand and facilitate access to rideshare programs and services and commuter benefits programs.

Background: Because rideshare and commuter programs have historically focused on the employer, a large segment of commuters are not being reached. TEA 21 amended the Federal Tax Code to provide more flexibility to employers in offering commuter benefits programs, but administrative concerns preclude many from participating and there is no way for an individual to take advantage of the program without their employer's involvement. A combination of policy changes, public outreach and education efforts are needed to increase awareness and make ridesharing and commuter benefit programs easier to administer and more readily available to the traveling public.

Strategies

- Include rideshare applications with license and registration renewal notices

- Develop and fund innovative public/private partnership advertising strategies; for example, a Drive Responsibly campaign paid for in part by automobile dealers/manufacturers, oil companies.
- Enhance transit voucher programs in New Jersey and surrounding areas by integrating them into a uniform system that would allow electronic processing of orders and direct mailing of vouchers to employees statewide.
- Replace blue rideshare info signs with new, more eye-catching signs placed in strategic locations.

HOW WILL CONGESTION BE REDUCED?

The strategies listed above could reduce congestion by making alternatives to the SOV more attractive and readily available. To fully realize the congestion relief benefits of this strategy, and all TDM strategies, they should be part of a comprehensive program that includes transit enhancements, employer services and incentives.

WHO DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION AFFECT?

- Commuters
- Employers
- Transit Chek/voucher providers and fulfillment centers
- NJDOT
- NJDMV
- Traveling public

WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND COST SAVINGS IN OTHER AREAS?

- Reduced fuel consumption costs/reduced gas tax receipts
- Employer and employee tax savings
- Advertising costs
- Postage savings by including rideshare applications in existing mail
- Optimizes investment in and outputs of Rideshare matching system by increasing the data base without labor intensive outreach efforts
- Increases visibility of commute alternatives and TMAs
- Builds public/private partnerships

HOW WILL RECOMMENDATION BE IMPLEMENTED

- NJDOT, DMV and TMAs can coordinate development of rideshare application for inclusion with DMV mailings. Completed applications would be forwarded to appropriate TMA by NJDOT.
- NJDOT or TMAs can conduct inventory of existing rideshare information signs and coordinate on message and design and location of new signs.
- Establish a statewide policy committee to review existing commuter benefit programs and identify opportunities for integration.

LEGISLATION REQUIRED

- Possible changes to Federal Tax Code for individual commuter tax benefits without employer involvement

SUBMITTED BY: Demand Management Subcommittee

RECOMMENDATION #3: Expand Park and Ride Program

Background: Designated parking lots located at transit facilities or near major roadways can provide convenient meeting places for ridesharing and give people easier access to transit. In New Jersey, efforts to promote transit and ridesharing are hampered by insufficient capacity at many commuter Park and Ride facilities. Although Transportation Trust Fund legislation (N.J.S.A. 27:1b-21-27) sets a goal to expand or establish at least two park and ride facilities per year through FY 2004-05, there is limited funding for this and there are no existing mandates or policies for the Department of Transportation's Division of Right of Way to acquire properties for Park and Ride facilities. In addition, many municipalities are not receptive to park and ride lots in their communities.

Strategies:

- Require NJDOT Division of Right of Way to acquire land for park and rides
- Extend and strengthen the existing provisions of the Trust Fund to go beyond FY 04-05 and provide funding
- Establish land banking of properties for park and ride purposes.
- Establish a Joint Park and Ride Capital Program Commission to include NJ TRANSIT, Authorities, private carriers to elevate and prioritize park and ride projects
- Incorporate Park and Rides into design of DOT corridor improvement projects
- Provide assistance and education to municipalities on benefits of park and rides and pursue multi agency jurisdiction opportunities between state and local governments.

HOW WILL CONGESTION BE REDUCED?

Park and Rides reduce congestion by facilitating ridesharing and providing access to transit.

WHO DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION AFFECT?

- Traveling public

- Commuters
- Transit users and potential users
- NJDOT
- Transit and Transportation Authorities
- TMAs
- Municipalities

WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND COST SAVINGS IN OTHER AREAS?

- Acquisition, maintenance and operating costs
- Parking fees can offset costs
- Loss of ratables from undeveloped parcels
- Cost savings can result by including park and rides in original scope of improvement projects
- Optimize investment in transit

HOW WILL RECOMMENDATION BE IMPLEMENTED

- Park and Ride Commission could oversee and coordinate program
- Policy and or legislative action to expand Department of Transportation's role in acquisition of properties for Park and Ride facilities
- TMAs, NJDOT can educate municipalities on park and rides and benefits that can be derived from them
- TMAs can assist NJDOT with Park and Ride Inventory data collection and updates as part of Core Program

LEGISLATION REQUIRED

Yes. Changes to appropriate sections of N.J.S.A. 27

SUBMITTED BY: Demand Management Subcommittee, with input from Transit Subcommittee

RECOMMENDATION #4: Promote, modify, clarify and extend existing Travel Demand Management Legislation which provides for voluntary employer trip reduction program and contains employer tax credits.

Background: Section 27:26A –1-15 of the NJ Traffic Congestion and Air Pollution Control Act created a Challenge Grant program to fund innovative employer programs and provides for an annual employer tax credit of \$1,200 per participating employee or 10% of the costs of the commuter transportation benefits. Unlike Federal legislation, NJ Legislation applies to employer investments in telecommuting,

compressed work week programs and bike/pedestrian programs, a fact which is not commonly known. Employer response to the incentive programs has been minimal, possibly because the legislation requires employers to be Smart Moves Partners to qualify. To increase participation, data should be obtained to determine which programs and incentives are most useful for employers as well as the barriers to their implementing them. There is also a need for specific information on telecommuting in New Jersey.

Strategies

- Conduct research to identify employer needs and concerns
- Identify employers willing to participate in parking cash out pilot program
- Identify appropriate changes to legislation and constituency to make the case for them
- Develop marketing/advertising campaign to increase awareness of tax credits and benefits of commute option programs with emphasis on telecommuting, bike/pedestrian enhancements and alternate work arrangements
- Incorporate Employer Services in TMA Core Program

HOW WILL CONGESTION BE REDUCED?

Employers can influence their employees' commute patterns by offering options to SOV commuting or limiting free parking. By identifying employers concerns and tailoring programs to meet them, the programs are more likely to be utilized.

WHO DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION AFFECT?

- Employers in New Jersey
- NJDOT
- TMAs
- NJ Commuters

WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND COST SAVINGS IN OTHER AREAS?

- Reduced costs to employers
- Higher employee morale
- Low cost employee benefits
- Better use of space
- Opportunities for employers to demonstrate leadership and positive public image

HOW WILL RECOMMENDATION BE IMPLEMENTED?

TMA's are a resource already in place to work with employers.

LEGISLATION REQUIRED

Yes.

SUBMITTED BY: Demand Management Subcommittee

RECOMMENDATION #5: Collect data from employers for transportation planning

Background: Employee commute data is a valuable tool for planning transportation and transit improvements, yet there are no standard mechanisms in place for obtaining regular origin and destination data for employment sites. The Subcommittee supported the idea of a regular (annual or bi-annual), easy to administer, and non-intrusive employer survey to collect this data. The subcommittee debated whether the survey should be voluntary or mandatory and concluded that a voluntary approach should be taken initially.

HOW WILL CONGESTION BE REDUCED?

Current and accurate o/d data will help identify and prioritize needed transit and highway improvements.

WHO DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION AFFECT

Employers in NJ

WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND COST SAVINGS IN OTHER AREAS?

Data collection and analysis
Less money spent on programs that are not used

HOW WILL RECOMMENDATION BE IMPLEMENTED

Data collection can either be voluntary or mandatory. The effort can be introduced as a voluntary measure, but if response is low, it could become mandatory. Using a local or non-governmental entity such as a business or trade organization to collect the data might increase response. This effort must be accompanied by education and information to assuage employers' suspicions and concerns. This could be done through TMA's, marketing and outreach.

LEGISLATION REQUIRED

Maybe, if voluntary efforts do not yield the desired response rate.