

# Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program Update

## Summary

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to the strategies a city uses to influence travel behavior and accommodate growing demands on its transportation system. Los Angeles City Planning (LACP) and Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) are working to update the City's TDM ordinance to meet increasing transportation demand in a sustainable way.

The updated TDM Program would require new developments that exceed minimum size thresholds to incorporate Transportation Demand Management strategies that reduce vehicle trips. TDM strategies can include infrastructure such as bicycle facilities, programs such as carpooling and telecommuting, and incentives such as providing transit passes to building occupants. Through this update, the City aims to reduce the need for drive-alone trips by providing a variety of transportation options and increasing accessibility throughout the City, which benefits the environment and public health, and can ease congestion.

## Background

In 1993, the City of Los Angeles adopted its first Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance, which requires non-residential developments of more than 25,000 square feet to implement a limited set of TDM strategies. Since then, transportation options have expanded, including the regional rail and bike networks, new options such



as bike share, carshare, and rideshare services, and alternatives such as telecommuting.

The proposed update of the TDM Program responds to these changes as well as changes in California state law that shape how cities analyze transportation. With the goal of reducing single occupancy vehicle trips and the distances people travel in cars, updating the TDM Program is part of a larger state-mandated effort to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting more sustainable transportation options.

In addition, the proposed TDM Program aligns with City policies and planning documents. Mobility Plan 2035, the transportation element of the City's General Plan, encourages greater use of TDM strategies to reduce drive-alone trips and includes updating the TDM ordinance as an implementation program. Both the City Council and the Mayor have identified updating the TDM ordinance as a priority, and it is an initiative in LA's Green New Deal (the Sustainable City pLAN).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### What is the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program update?

The proposed Transportation Demand Management Program is an update of the City's existing TDM ordinance. That ordinance applies only to limited projects (new, non-residential development of more than 25,000 SF) and requires projects to implement between one and six specific TDM strategies. The updated Program will apply to more projects than the current ordinance, including residential developments, and increases flexibility by offering a menu of more than 40 TDM strategies.

There are three main components to the update. An *ordinance* will amend the TDM requirements in the zoning code. A new *Program Guidelines* document will provide details on the TDM strategies and process. Also, LADOT, in collaboration with the non-profit organization Hack for LA, is developing an *online TDM Calculator tool* that will provide a simple process for entering project information, understanding the TDM requirements, and selecting TDM strategies.

## **Why is the TDM Program being updated?**

New mobility options and improved connectivity, including the expansion of LA Metro's transit system, the growing bike and pedestrian network, and the advancement of technology and app-based services, have developed since the TDM ordinance was adopted in 1993. Meanwhile, climate change and air quality concerns have led to new state and local policies that seek to reduce the total distance people travel in cars, also known as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). An updated TDM Program can reflect the wide range of transportation options available today and focus on reducing VMT by requiring new development projects to add to and incentivize the use of sustainable travel options.

## **How will the proposed TDM Program work?**

New development projects that exceed minimum size thresholds would be subject to the updated ordinance, and would be required to incorporate strategies identified in the proposed TDM Program that reduce vehicle trips. The program will use a point system, which allows the TDM requirements to scale in relation to the size of a project and creates a range of options for compliance. Each of the more than 40 TDM strategies will have a point value based on how effective it is at reducing VMT and drive-alone trips. Meanwhile, a proposed development project would be assigned a “point target” based on the size of the project and the amount of parking it provides. A project would be required to select several TDM strategies from the menu to add up to its point target. This system places fewer requirements on small projects and requires more strategies from large projects that have greater demands on the transportation network. Compliance with the TDM program would be a ministerial process, and would not need a public hearing or entitlement from City Planning.

## **What is the Menu of TDM Strategies?**

The menu includes more than 40 TDM strategies that have been shown to reduce VMT and drive-alone trips. Some are services that would be provided by the building owner, manager, or employer, such as car share memberships and telecommuting. Others are physical strategies that would be built into the project or the surrounding area. The menu offers strategies suitable for different project types, land uses, and transportation conditions throughout the City, and can be updated over time to reflect the performance

of TDM strategies and include innovations in transportation technology or new mobility services. The proposed TDM strategies fall into the following categories:

- Affordable Housing
- Bicycle Facilities
- Car Sharing
- Child Care
- High-Occupancy Vehicles
- Information
- Mixed-Use
- Mobility Investment
- Parking
- Shared Micro-Mobility
- Telecommute
- Transit Access
- Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs)
- User-Defined Strategies

### Which projects will be subject to the TDM Program?

The TDM Program will apply to new development projects that meet one or more of the following minimum thresholds. Both ministerial and discretionary projects will be subject to the TDM Program. The ordinance will not apply to single family houses. Affordable housing projects will always be subject to the lowest level of requirements, regardless of their size.

Housing	16+ units
Hotel	50+ guest rooms
Employment / Office	25,000+ sf
Retail / Medical Care	50,000+ sf
Warehouse / Industrial	250,000+ sf
Arena, Stadium, or Multiplex Theater	250,000+ sf total floor area, or 9,000+ seats
School	100+ students

### How does the TDM Program update relate to SB 743 and the new VMT metric?

Before the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 743 in 2013, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) required that cities use metrics based on vehicular delay, or Level of Service (LOS), to measure transportation impacts on the environment. SB 743 ushered in a statewide shift from Level of Service to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which instead measures the distance people travel in cars and encourages transportation options that support people, travel choice, and the environment. This represented a statewide effort to reduce emissions and vehicle travel. LA City Planning and LADOT implemented the



shift to VMT in July 2019, a year in advance of the state’s deadline. The City’s update to the TDM Program will further these efforts by promoting travel options that reduce drive-alone trips, in turn reducing VMT and harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

### **How will the TDM Program respond to travel behavior changes as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic?**

Travel patterns have changed in response to the Safer at Home Public Order of the COVID-19 pandemic. LADOT is actively evaluating the changes to travel trends in response to the pandemic and has seen a general increase in working from home and corresponding declines in driving and transit use during this period. However, the trends are not distributed equally across incomes, as higher income workers are often able to take advantage of working remotely while essential workers tend to live in lower income households and continue to rely on transit to get to work. Although it is not known how these trends will shift as the pandemic subsides, a revamped TDM Program can support continued telecommuting arrangements, while also providing infrastructure improvements to benefit people that continue to rely on transit and other sustainable modes of travel, and incentivizing others to try new ways of traveling.

### **What examples of TDM exist today?**

TDM programs exist at the regional and local levels today. On the regional level, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) requires large employers (250+ employees) to implement emission reduction programs that use TDM strategies such as marketing campaigns and carpooling to decrease driving alone. In Los Angeles, 17 different Specific Plans currently contain TDM requirements. Some require qualifying development projects to implement specific TDM strategies, such as marketing and education, unbundled parking, or forming a Transportation Management Organization (TMO) that coordinates and implements TDM strategies for the properties and tenants in the plan area. Additionally, cities including Santa Monica, Burbank, Pasadena, San Francisco, and Seattle have TDM requirements.

### **What is the TDM Program update process?**

City staff conducted initial public outreach and research into best practices in 2018. From 2019 to 2020, LA City Planning and LADOT developed the concept for the

proposed TDM Program. This Fact Sheet and an [Informational Video](#) provide an overview of the proposed TDM Program, and draft documents will be shared for public review in Spring 2021. There will be opportunities for public input throughout the coming months, including via a webinar, a public hearing, and the adoption process.



**2020 - 2021**

Informational Video

Prepare:

- Draft Ordinance
- Program Guidelines
- TDM Calculator



**Spring 2021**

Share Draft Documents for Public Review

Webinar



Public Hearing

Refine Draft Documents



Adoption Process:

1. City Planning Commission
2. Council Committees
3. City Council



Ordinance Becomes Effective

Program Phase-in

## Where can I find more information?

Additional information, including this Fact Sheet in Spanish and an Informational Video, is available on LA City Planning's Mobility Policy webpage, under *Proposed Ordinances and Initiatives*: [planning4la.org/mobility](http://planning4la.org/mobility).

The best way to hear about upcoming opportunities to provide feedback on the TDM Program update is to join the email list. Sign up using the form on the [website](#).

## Contact Us

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