



**Washington State Ridesharing Organization (WSRO)**  
**July 2006 "Commute Trip Reduction Efficiency Act" Workshops**  
**Small Group Discussion Feedback**

WSRO hosted two summer workshops to provide information on the modified CTR program and to get feedback on proposed changes. One workshop was held on July 12 in Lacey and the other was on July 18 in Spokane. At the workshops, participants divided into small groups to provide feedback on four key CTR program areas:

- I. Program Administration
- II. Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers
- III. Program Goals and Measurement
- IV. Integrating Commute Trip Reduction and Local Plans

Here are the combined comments received from both workshops:

## **I. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The new CTR law makes the following changes regarding program administration:

- a. Modify the good faith effort clause so that employers are expected to notify jurisdictions when they substantially modify their program and are also expected to provide documentation of program implementation when requested by the jurisdiction.
- b. Allow jurisdictions more flexibility in reviewing employer programs.
- c. Establish broader participation and higher accountability for state agencies as CTR employers.

There is also an opportunity to make changes to the CTR administrative guidelines beyond the changes made in the law.

1. What elements of the CTR program have been the easiest to administer?
  - Rideshare online website
  - Email (ETC communication)
  - Automated system/tracking calendar
  - Clear expectations from local agency to employers
  - Defined/turn key material, canned promotions, incentives, prize packages
  - Marketing materials, tools, and jurisdiction-prepared themes
  - Online reporting system
  - Training materials and tools
2. What elements of the CTR program have been the hardest to administer?
  - Flex passes for large employers, particularly lost passes
  - Lack of support/infrastructure to implement program (vanpool/transit)
  - Enforcement of non-compliant employers
  - Low survey response rate (need incentives), tracking surveys
  - Communication and lack of info sharing

- Transfer of knowledge when changing ETCs
  - Management support for survey response, incentives, and to model by example
3. In your view, what administrative elements in the current CTR guidelines are essential and should continue?
- Providing CTR plans, surveys, and materials to employers
  - Extension of due dates for survey submission
  - Exemptions for company, which faces bankruptcy or reductions in workforce
  - Tele-work and flex place/schedules
  - Exemptions for employers and employees under appropriate circumstances
4. To achieve the goals of the CTR Efficiency Act, what new administrative elements would help make implementing CTR more effective and efficient?
- Not allow shift changes to become non-effective by CTR law
  - Online tools and tracking calendar
  - Standardize guidelines
  - Additional resources and staff (state and jurisdictions)
  - Improved responsiveness from all entities including transit agencies
  - Better cross-jurisdictional coordination of rideshare opportunities
  - Buy-in from city planners, transit, and developers
  - More technical support, marketing, and training programs
  - Timing of surveys--seasonality may cause issues and bad data
  - Help in identifying affected status
  - A system to track ETC changes at all sites and notification of ETC changes
5. What tools would you suggest to help with program administration (i.e. web-based tools, standard forms, etc?)
- Web-based tools. Tracking Calendar. Web specific info for grants and funding
  - Statewide tracking calendar listed on all marketing material
  - State offering software licenses for jurisdiction and employers statewide
  - Training on site, via web, or via video conferencing statewide
  - Canned and customized promotional materials and themes
  - Inter-jurisdictional sharing of promos, materials, communication, and outreach
  - Online resource and creativity sharing
6. What can state agencies do to establish themselves as effective leaders for CTR employers?
- Advertising
  - Remove challenge to commuters of crossing county lines
  - Make TDM a high focus at WSDOT
  - Capture data from program successes and failures
  - Share and promote agency successes through forums
  - Encourage and recognize local jurisdictions Hold forums for sharing data
  - Publish Web page dedicated to grant program
  - Set an example
  - Attend meetings to show support
  - Get management support of facilities and infrastructure that support alternative

modes of travel including vanpool programs, subsidized transit passes, incentives, commuter recognition, on-site showers, bike storage, and flexibility w/regards to bus schedules, weather delays etc

7. What are some of the pros and cons to administering CTR?

*Positives:*

- Electronic use for promos-newsletters online reporting
- ETC online annual report, consistent due dates for annual report with jurisdictions
- Use of information boards and email messages to share information
- Partnering with human resources to include CTR in packets and presentations for new hires
- Jurisdiction visits are effective and helpful
- Quarterly networking opportunities for ETCs--consider revisions to survey notice to ETCs

*Negatives:*

- Admin info – program elements
- Annual promotion sent to employees
- Automatic approval notice turned off
- Identify and connect with new employers
- Survey response rate of return
- Survey signature page should be electronic

## II. GROWTH AND TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY CENTERS

The purpose and objective of the GTEC program is to provide greater access to urban centers while increasing the number of people efficiently traveling on the state transportation system. The purpose of the GTEC rules is to provide a consistent framework for local jurisdictions to implement comprehensive plans, development regulations, and transportation investments that support population growth and economic development, transportation-efficient land uses, and transportation demand management strategies in the state's key urban centers.

1. Based on your understanding of the GTEC program, what benefits do you see for establishing a GTEC in your jurisdiction?
  - More focused state resources
  - Support to lead success through opt-in
  - Expanded market size
  - Increased administrative efficiencies and resources
  - Coordination of transit capital and CTR investments
  - Environmental impact/mitigation
  - Benefits for existing dense areas and for future projected areas that may qualify--“Pre-developed approach”
  - Development requirements would be tied to formation of a GTEC
  - Strategies for establishment-regulatory land use
  - How do we institutionalize development agreements? (when building owners change) Pasadena example.
  - All comprehensive plan components would be connected in planning process

involving regional, local, and state planning organizations, cities, neighborhood associations, leasing and retail management companies, environmental groups, etc.

- Property managers deeply involved in program administration, marketing and promotions
- Resident based programs would utilize homeowners associations, management companies, Rotary clubs, neighborhood groups, etc.
- More local flexibility, opportunity and customization

2. Would your area be interested in establishing a GTEC? Why or why not?

- Yes, Maybe
- There have been preliminary discussions with most affected CTR areas at this time about GTEC formation. There are many variables currently being discussed and considered and the draft rules for GTEC are changing almost daily. There appears to be a general consensus that GTECs could potentially have a huge impact on the CTR effort for a variety of reasons. Funding has been identified as a major factor that could contribute significantly to GTEC formation, success and sustainability.

3. How can funding sustainability for GTECs be ensured? When will the state cut off GTEC funding, since the expectation is that GTECs be self-sustaining?

The intent is for the state to provide match funding for local and regional investment. There is no policy developed as to how the funding allocation develops over time, but the intent is for local jurisdictions and employers to establish a local sustainable funding source to implement the GTEC, after a period of state assistance.

4. How will funding for GTECs be prioritized? Is there a limit to the number of funded GTECs?

The CTR board will prioritize GTECs based on their funding policy. It could be to fund only the GTECs with the most aggressive and substantive programs, or to fund GTECs in areas that are just starting down the urban center path, or a mix of both. If there are more certified GTECs than funding resource, the CTR board will give out funding based on its policies to those GTECs that best meet the criteria.

It's possible that a GTEC will be certified but not funded, if there are more GTECs than available funding. However, part of the long-term intent is for GTECs to be prioritized in other competitive grant programs, including the regional mobility grant program and the Transportation Improvement Board, so these are other funding opportunities.

5. What structures/models are envisioned for implementing and administering a GTEC?

There are many possible models. A transportation management association (TMA) is one, but there are other possibilities as well.

6. Will RTPOs need additional staff to help with certification of the GTEC program?

RTPOs have indicated that their certification role will not require additional resources from the state.

7. Why would employers want to support a GTEC with their own financial resources? What are some benefits of CTR/GTECs for employers?

The main benefits for employers are savings in parking costs, increased employee retention, and better access to the worksite. Employers will need to see program benefits as outcomes of their investments, and that meeting larger area goals for TDM will help their business.

8. To develop a GTEC, who would need to be involved?

Planners, engineers/public works, transit, business associations, and influential representatives of the GTEC target market.

9. Would your GTEC make more sense as an employee-focused GTEC or a residential-focused GTEC?

Potentially one or the other or both. King County Metro's In Motion program is a useful model for residential-based programs.

10. Would traffic impact fees potentially be a part of a GTEC?

Yes, traffic impact fees and other development mitigation measures are part of the GTEC framework.

### III. PROGRAM GOALS AND MEASUREMENT

The draft CTR rules propose to give local jurisdictions the flexibility to establish program goals and targets in their areas. For example, a jurisdiction could establish the same target for every employer worksite or vary the target based on the level of available services and amenities serving employer worksites. A jurisdiction could also choose to meet its trip reduction targets by focusing on commute trips made by residents.

1. Does your jurisdiction like the idea of flexibility in setting goals?
  - Yes, area and geography specific
  - Allow maximum flexibility in setting goals, considering the basic state minimums as a guideline
2. How would your jurisdiction approach setting targets?
  - Need to understand what happens to the goals at the end of the 4-year measurement period (at the end of the four year measurement period the authorized jurisdiction would likely look at new goals and targets considering all changes that have taken place during the last four years)
  - Make use of all available data including historical data
  - Take the process in steps
  - Recognize that there may be new ways to attain goals

- Consider growth potential, services and employer/residential make-up, local and regional comprehensive land use plans and political realities.
3. Is your jurisdiction interested in meeting its area target by focusing on residents?
- Yes, a number of jurisdictions including Issaquah, Bellevue, and Ballard are considering residential-based GTECs.
  - Programs currently operating, such as “In Motion,” may provide helpful information for setting up a residential GTEC,
  - Depends on planning and securing sustainable funding available for a residential GTEC approach.
4. What kinds of strategies would you use for reducing residential-based trips?
- Work with homeowners associations, neighborhood groups, housing authorities, etc.
  - Vanpools may be the best approach
  - Depends on the characteristics of the GTEC--considerations for existing services, growth potential, sustainability, and program administration
5. To achieve your area targets, what enhancements will be needed by local jurisdictions, transit agencies and other TDM providers for the following TDM categories:
- a. Policies and Regulations
    - Comprehensive Plan coordination and integration, developer involvement and TMP process
    - Re-think UGA boundaries and local regulations if needed--possible restructuring of GMA boundaries to include areas that have potential to assist with the CTR effort.
    - Emphasize the need to increase flex scheduling/place and telework options, perhaps make flex work schedules mandatory
    - Further integration of CTR into comprehensive land use and growth projections
    - Eliminate turf issues at all levels. Coordination and collaboration by all concerned parties with a focus on the big picture
    - Create solutions without asking for additional funding
  - b. Services and Facilities
    - Provide more services and facilities—more of everything!
    - Hold mini-workshops for management to help managers understand CTR program and gain additional support for employee and company participation at the highest level.
    - Provide technical resource support
    - Look at revising survey periods
    - Continue and improve incentives
  - c. Marketing and Incentives
    - Engage the jurisdictions, local authorities, and lead agencies. Follow proper channels.

- Do more presentations to small jurisdictions (participants were asked to make recommendations on additional jurisdictions that would benefit from a CTR briefing by WSDOT staff)
- Management set by example
- More coordination with transit agencies
- Eliminate “turf” issues
- Proposed Goals and Measurements are attainable given a appropriate support and flexibility in designing a plan
- Residential GTECs have potential and appear to be a “previously untapped resource”

#### **IV. INTEGRATING COMMUTE TRIP REDUCTION AND LOCAL PLANS**

1. How well does your jurisdiction currently integrate the CTR program with its local comprehensive planning?
  - Tribal jurisdiction--casino buses go everywhere, possibilities for new partnerships
  - Different modes are integrated fairly well, parking is not
  - There is little support for CTR in many communities.
  - The local planning process does not incorporate CTR into many plans, and frequently the goals are in conflict
  - CTR, in general, has not historically been a major component in comprehensive planning for jurisdictions
  
2. What are some existing conflicts between your local jurisdiction’s CTR program and comprehensive plan?
  - Residential and unincorporated areas are in conflict due to lack of services, infrastructure, support, etc.
  - Integration seems to be improving in some cases
  - Limited CTR budget.
  - Capital investment and transit levels of service
  - Residential areas that may qualify for CTR funds in the form of GTECs present special challenges to work through that are not addressed in comprehensive plans
  - There are a variety of conflicts between comprehensive planning and CTR because it’s relatively new and hasn’t been considered before.
  
3. What are some ways you would suggest that CTR can be better integrated into the local planning process?
  - Transportation Management Plans (TMPs)—CTR as conditions of development
  - Enforcement is difficult with relation to property owners--developer says yes to plan but no commitment by new owner(s)
  - CTR plan needs to be involved in the planning process as early as possible
  - Need to look at subdivision TMPs
  - Provide infrastructure that supports CTR—transit, bike, and walk access, etc.
  - The state can help local governments by facilitating a CTR discussion among jurisdictions and by providing examples of best practices and benefits of CTR
  - Develop a model ordinance for CTR incorporation into the local planning process

- CTR should be integrated early in the process to provide maximum cooperation and collaboration with in the comprehensive planning process
  - Jurisdictions would like the state to develop implementation templates and act as an organizer and facilitator for inter-jurisdictional discussion
4. What process should be set up to ensure that CTR and local planning can avoid conflicting each other's goals and objectives?
- Reward concurrency
  - New laws to focus on residential GTECs
  - New strategies conditioned on ultimate capacity
  - Include Transportation Demand Management (TDM) as part of the mitigation process
  - Leadership direction to start CTR early in process and strategy
  - Mitigation credits for development
  - Coordinate inter and cross-county travel
  - Multi-media transit hub
  - Provide more clarity to local governments on requirements and process quickly
  - Leadership--help from WSDOT is appreciated and is expected in the future
  - Inter-county/agency cooperation will help with this process.
5. What kinds of technical assistance can the State provide to help with your CTR planning process?
- More funding
  - Add CTR and TDM to Growth Management Act (GMA)
  - Federal funding to subsidize/match existing funding
  - Technical Assistance Group (TAG) can help
  - Continue outreach and communication effort through WSRO workshops, Public Transportation Conference, etc.
  - Provide GTEC templates, tools and materials, canned programs and training, etc.
  - Continue with all existing training and assistance and identify future opportunities as the new CTR program evolves and changes