

## Why should we provide commute options?

To keep travelers, freight, and our economy moving, we must make the most efficient use of our highway system. Used in conjunction with other techniques to increase efficiency, commute options can help offset the pressures on our highways due to population and economic growth. When we move more people per vehicle, we place fewer burdens on our highway system than when people drive alone.

*“Washington State commuters are increasing their use of alternatives to driving alone. A number of factors influence individual choices in commuting, including the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Program. However, the significantly higher use of commute alternatives at CTR worksites compared with other worksites in the same areas makes it clear that the CTR Program is working.”*

— CTR Task Force 2003 Report to the Washington State Legislature

## What do commute options look like?

Commute options include the use of carpools, vanpools, buses, trains, ferries, bicycling, walking, compressed work hours, or working from home. They are part of a broader set of strategies for encouraging travelers to use the system differently, known as *transportation demand management* or TDM.

Other strategies for managing demand include providing real-time traveler information, charging tolls that fluctuate based on available system capacity, charging for parking, and planning our communities to minimize the need for driving.

Research has shown that when people try a commute option and have a satisfactory experience, many of them will incorporate it into the variety of choices they are accustomed to having in their lives.

Through the programs described on these pages, WSDOT works with local governments, public and private employers, transit agencies, and private companies to provide more and better options for commuting and to encourage their use.

## Trip Reduction Performance Program (TRPP)

The Legislature provided \$1.5 million for the 2003–2005 biennium for a new and innovative performance program. The program encourages entrepreneurs, private companies, transit systems, cities, counties and non-profit organizations to provide services and incentives to employees that result in fewer vehicle trips arriving at worksites.

After proposals are selected in a competitive process, WSDOT will pay start-up costs of up to 50 percent of the total proposal and pay for trips reduced.

In 2004, WSDOT selected 33 proposals and 29 were completed. Fourteen projects exceeded their goals, seven projects made at least 50 percent of their goals, and the overall program exceeded trip reduction goals by 41 percent.

*One of the top-performing TRPP projects came from the Spokane County CTR Office. Spokane-area employees received financial incentives for using an online calendar — mycommute.org — to plan their commutes. The project reduced 985 vehicle trips per day, almost four times the 254 trips per day estimated in the project design.*

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 average price per trip reduced over the year was \$242, compared to the estimated \$460 annual public cost of providing roadway capacity.

For more information, visit [www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/program\\_summaries/pg\\_intro.cfm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/program_summaries/pg_intro.cfm).



## Vanpool Grant Program

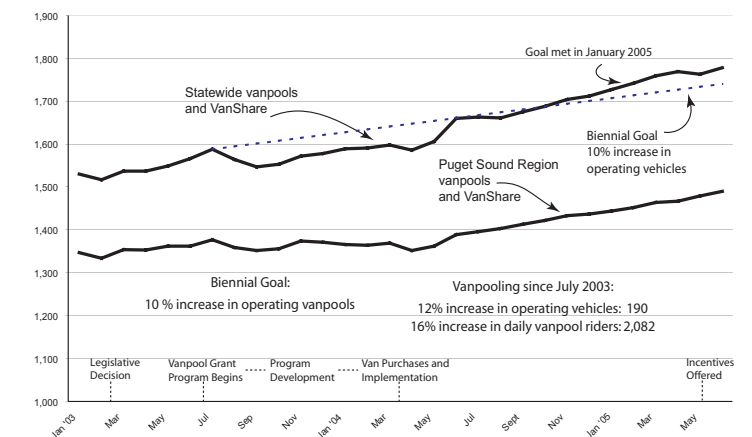
The goal of the vanpool grant program is to double vanpooling in ten years. Originally funded at \$4 million for the 2003–2005 biennium, the 2005 Legislature has provided \$5 million for the 2005–2007 biennium.

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 program is statewide with a focus on congested corridors and in areas where opportunities for providing roadway capacity are limited or expensive.

The chart below shows the growth in statewide vanpools since the vanpool grant program began.

## Public Vanpools Operating in Washington

January 2003 to June 2005



Source: WSDOT Vanpool Database.

Between July 2003 and June 2005 the number of vanpools on the road in Washington State increased by nearly 12 percent to 1,778 vehicles. During the same period vanpool riders statewide increased by 16 percent to 14,823 daily riders.

The Puget Sound region has the largest public vanpool fleet in North America. Washington transit systems operate more than 40 percent of the public vanpools in the United States. Vanpools in the state carry nearly six million passenger trips a year.

## Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Program

Washington State's CTR program works with major employers in the state's ten most populous counties to encourage employees to commute without driving alone. About 500,000 employees at nearly 1,100 worksites in the state have access to CTR programs.

### Washington's Success Story

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. Since then, the drive-alone rate in Washington has remained consistently below the national average.

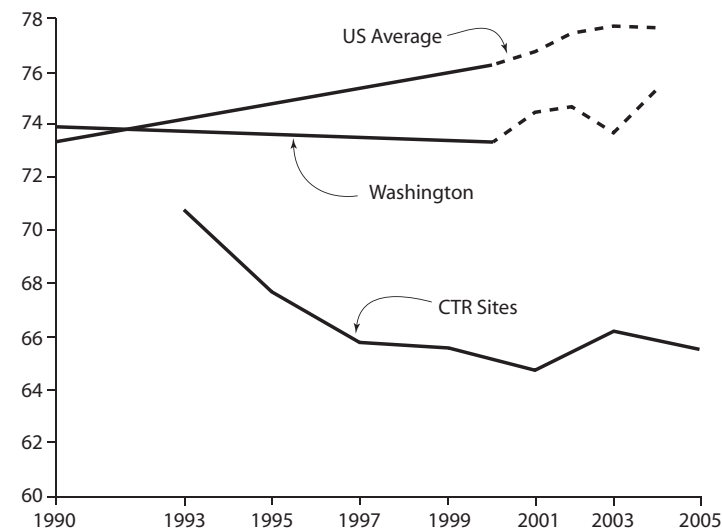
The drive-alone rate at worksites participating in CTR since 1993 decreased even more. The drive-alone rate at these sites decreased from 70.8 percent in 1993 to 65.7 percent in 2005. Statewide, employees commuting to CTR worksites made nearly 20,000 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning in 2005 than they did when they entered the program.

### CTR Reduces Delay

In the Puget Sound region, employees commuting to worksites participating in the CTR program made nearly 13,500 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning in 2003 than they did when the worksites entered the program. These vehicles would otherwise be traveling during peak periods on some of the state's most congested roadways. Their absence has a significant impact on congestion, reducing daily delay in the region by an estimated 6.3 percent.

## Drive Alone Comparison

### Trends in Drive Alone Commuting 1990 – 2005



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, CTR Survey Database. Census data for 1990 and 2000 is from the decennial census; 2001 through 2004 is from the American Community Survey.

### CTR Task Force Studies Options for the Program

The CTR Task Force must report to the Legislature in December 2005 and recommend whether the program should be continued, modified, or terminated. The Governor-appointed Task Force represents the varying statewide perspectives of citizens, businesses, state agencies, transit agencies, and local jurisdictions. The Task Force will recommend changes to improve the program and increase its benefits for the transportation system.

For more information about the program redesign and the Task Force's recommendations, visit [www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/taskforce/tfmaterials.cfm#program](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/taskforce/tfmaterials.cfm#program).