



Department of Transportation

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RE: Transportation Demand Management Ordinance Introduction

Since 1970 American population has increased by 60 percent, yet annual vehicle miles traveled has increased by 190 percent – a difference by a factor of 3. This motor vehicle traffic placed demands on our transportation system, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and de-densified land use – consuming farm/open land.

Traditionally transportation officials across the nation have sought to expand the street network to accommodate the increased traffic demands from development. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) changes this paradigm by reducing development trips rather than expanding roadway capacity. TDM programs have been implemented across the nation with success. For example, Arlington County Virginia saw a 38 percent reduction in VMT from 2008 to 2014 through a TDM program administered as part of the site plan review.

TDM is a package of policies and strategies designed to increase transportation system efficiency and shift travel patterns in a way that reduces single-occupancy vehicle trips. Examples of TDM include encouraging bike and transit use. The “Imagine Madison” Comprehensive Plan, Strategy 5 advocates the implementation of TDM strategies to serve high intensity development. Two priority recommendations in the “Madison in Motion” Transportation Plan are also focused around administering a TDM initiative.

Madison has been requesting/requiring TDM measures through the development review process for over 20 years. However, its application has been uneven. Developers are unsure what TDM measures may be required. Planning Commission members and Council members struggle to determine how many TDM measures are enough to warrant approval – leading to prolonged discussions. This has created an environment of uncertainty for developers and policy makers, making it difficult to address the goal of reducing motor vehicle traffic.

This proposed ordinance addresses these challenges by building a program based on the best practices of other cities across the nation. It standardizes the process using measures proven to reduce motor vehicle travel. Developers have a choice of measures to reduce motor vehicle trips in a way that best suits their needs. Commission and Council members do not have to deliberate on “how much is enough” because the process makes these decisions. Every development is treated consistently. And finally, residents get to enjoy the benefits of less traffic, noise, and emissions.

We look forward to working with stakeholders and policy makers to refine this ordinance and program.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Lynch, PE, PTOE, PTP, AICP
Director of Transportation
City of Madison