

► **Implement demand-responsive pricing for parking in major activity centers**

Improve parking availability and reduce traffic congestion in downtowns and other major activity centers by adjusting the price for on-street parking, parking lots, and parking garages throughout the day based on the parking demand in the area. If implemented correctly, at least one parking space on each block would be available at all times, allowing those who are willing to pay for premium parking spaces to do so, while parking rates on streets further from a destination are reduced. Motorists could access pricing information online and through smartphone apps, allowing them to find parking easier and faster.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand curb-lane parking restrictions as needed
- Develop and adopt access management standards
- Expand the use of emergency vehicle preemption
- Review and update regional transportation operations plan

TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Travel demand management (TDM) involves using a series of strategies to encourage the use of alternative methods or times of travel, with the goal of reducing traffic congestion and vehicle emissions. VISION 2050 recommends that the State, local units of government, and private businesses pursue the following TDM strategies to encourage the use of alternative travel times or travel modes.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

► **Enhance the preferential treatment for high-occupancy vehicles**

Continue and enhance the preferential treatment for high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs): transit vehicles, vanpools, and carpools. This involves providing queue bypass lanes for vanpools, carpools, and buses at metered freeway on-ramps, and providing preferential carpool and vanpool parking at businesses and destinations. Additional measures include transit signal priority systems and reserved bus lanes along congested surface arterial streets and highways, which are discussed in the *Public Transit* section.

► **Expand the network of park-ride lots**

Promote carpooling and the resultant more efficient use of the Region's transportation system by expanding the network of park-ride lots.



Park-Ride Lot Served by Public Transit
Credit: SEWRPC

75%

OR MORE of the cost of most county and local road projects is **funded through local property taxes**, rather than the gas tax.



Tolls with Pricing Based on Congestion Level
Credit: Minnesota Department of Transportation

- ▶ **Price personal vehicle travel at its true cost**
Increase the percentage of the costs of construction, maintenance, and operation of street and highway facilities and parking facilities borne by the users of those facilities, by implementing road user fees, cash-out of employer-paid parking, and parking pricing.

Much of the costs of constructing and maintaining county and local roads in the Region are paid through property taxes. Shifting these costs to increases in motor fuel taxes and considering a vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) fee, tolling, and/or congestion pricing to supplement or replace the motor fuel tax system, would result in users of county and local roads paying the costs, rather than property tax payers.

User fees can also encourage the use of alternative modes of travel, lessening the number of vehicles, and potentially the amount of congestion, on the arterial street and highway network.

WHAT ARE SOME USER FEE OPTIONS?

Current user fees primarily include Federal and State motor fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees. Some alternative user fees that should be considered—to either supplement or replace the motor fuel tax system—include:

- **VMT fee:** a road pricing measure that imposes a fee on a motorist based on the total distance they drive over a specified period of time. This strategy provides a more equitable means of paying for the costs of the transportation system as motorists would pay for their actual use, rather than paying based on the amount of fuel purchased. A distance-based fee would encourage residents to drive less, potentially reducing total VMT, traffic volumes, and congestion.
- **Tolling:** requires a motorist to pay a fee to use a particular highway facility. Requiring motorists to pay for the facilities they use would provide additional funds to cover the costs of those facilities, and may result in residents choosing alternative modes of transportation. However, Federal law currently prohibits implementing tolls on Federal-aid highways.
- **Congestion pricing:** a user fee for an express lane or highway facility that adjusts based on the time of day and level of congestion. Applying economic supply-and-demand methodology, the fee increases during times of high traffic volume and congestion, and decreases during times of low traffic volume and no congestion. In addition to producing revenue, effective express lane pricing efficiently moves vehicles through a congested corridor and effective highway facility pricing encourages travelers to shift to alternative modes of transportation or to seek alternative routes or times for their travel.

Cash-out of employer-paid parking is a way the cost of parking facilities can be borne by their users. It involves employers charging their employees the market value of parking—rather than subsidizing the costs of parking facilities by providing free parking. Employees then have a choice to park at work, or to accept a cash payment or salary increase and give up the parking space. Parking cash-out encourages employees not to drive alone to work, because they could “pocket” the cash payment or salary increase.

► **Promote demand management, car sharing, and live near your work programs**

Implement a Region-wide program to promote transit use, bicycle use, ridesharing, pedestrian travel, telecommuting, compressed work weeks, and work-shift rescheduling, through education, marketing, and promotions aimed at encouraging alternatives to driving alone.

Also, expand car sharing services to reduce private vehicle ownership and support live near your work programs that provide down payment assistance, location efficient mortgages, and rent subsidies for people who buy or rent a home near their employer.

► **Facilitate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian movement in local land use plans and zoning**

Facilitate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian movement as part of preparing and implementing detailed, site-specific neighborhood and major activity center land use plans. This includes encouraging development of mixed-use and higher-density neighborhoods with employment, shopping, parks, and other entertainment options nearby to facilitate biking and walking and reduce the need for residents to own or use a car.

Parking facilities can consume large amounts of land that could otherwise be developed, and can increase the costs of a development in mixed-use and high-density developments. VISION 2050 recommends local governments in urban areas consider removing minimum parking requirements from their zoning ordinances, instead allowing developers and businesses (i.e., the market) to determine the appropriate amount of parking required for an area.



Car Sharing Vehicle
Credit: City of Milwaukee

