



Travel Demand Study & Management Plan FAQ

v1.1 June 16, 2023

Q: What is Travel Demand Management (TDM)?

A: Travel (or Transportation) Demand Management (TDM) refers to strategies and policies designed to manage and reduce travel demand, with the goal of reducing the number of Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips and promoting sustainable transportation modes such as walking, cycling, and public transportation.

Q: Why is TDM important to Equitable Transit Oriented Development?

A: TDM is important to Equitable Transit Oriented Development because it promotes access to transportation options, addresses transportation affordability, reduces environmental impacts, enhances community connectivity, and helps mitigate displacement risks for marginalized communities.

Q: Who is responsible for implementing TDM strategies?

A: In general, TDM strategies can be implemented by a variety of stakeholders, including government agencies, employers, building owners, and transportation providers. For example, governments can implement policies and regulations to promote sustainable transportation, while employers can offer incentives for employees to use alternative modes of transportation. The guidelines provided and the subsequent rules being drafted focus on building owners.

Q: How can TDM be measured?

A: Keeping in mind that TDM strategies are attempting to change behavior over a long-term cycle, it can be measured using a variety of metrics, such as: mode share (the percentage of trips made by different modes of transportation); vehicle miles traveled (VMT); greenhouse gas emissions; transit ridership statistics; and car travel time or delay.

Q: What are the benefits of TDM?

A: The benefits of TDM include: reduced traffic congestion and air pollution; improved public health and safety; cost savings for individuals and governments; increased access to transportation for underserved communities; and a safer, more sustainable, and resilient transportation system. Ultimately, the strategies designed to incentivize better transportation choices can serve as amenities to the people living and working in a new development.

Q: Are there any challenges to implementing TDM?

A: Yes, there are several challenges to implementing TDM, including: resistance from stakeholders who are invested in the status quo; lack of funding or resources for TDM programs; and the need for effective communication and outreach to educate the public about the benefits of TDM. Additionally, TDM strategies may be less effective in areas with limited transportation options or inadequate infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation.

Q: What projects do these guidelines apply to?

A: Any development in a B, C, or D, zoning district and within ½ mile of a CTA rail or METRA station in the City of Chicago are subject to these guidelines per the Connected Communities Ordinance. CDOT will also apply these guidelines to projects currently under review authority such as Planned Developments, regardless of underlying zoning. In either case, the guidelines only apply to new construction developments. CDOT welcomes and encourages any development that is not required to adhere to the guidelines to review and consider implementing any TDM strategies independently.

Q: Do current developments in process with or without approval need to comply?

A: If a development has been submitted for review prior to the issuance of the guidelines it will not be required to comply. Also, subsequent changes to the guidelines will only be in effect after their posted date.

Q: Is a TDM study separate from the current TIS requirement?

A: Yes, A Traffic Impact Study (TIS), often currently required of developments, and a Travel Demand Management (TDM) study are both related to transportation planning, but they serve different purposes.

Q: What is the cost of a TDM study and plan?

A: Each TDM study and plan will be as unique as its development. The scope of the study, plan, and/or memo will be determined by CDOT PRC staff. A study may be scaled back, if there is little data to consider, and obvious strategies to implement or a larger study may require a consultant. The cost of plan implementation will also vary heavily based on the strategies outlined in the plan and the SOV trip reduction goals.

Q: What resources are available to support meeting the guideline requirements?

A: In addition to the “Guidelines for Travel Demand Study and Management Plans” and this FAQ document, a “Travel Demand Management Strategies” document is available containing various strategies that are being incorporated into TDM plans around the country. CDOT PRC staff will also be available to answer questions and help guide developers in the process.

Q: Are the strategies listed in the “Travel Demand Management Strategies” document the only options for developing a Transportation Demand Management Plan?

A: No. Developers may work with CDOT PRC staff to develop guidelines that include strategies not listed in the provided document, so long as they reasonably contribute to reduced SOV trips to and from the development.?

Have more questions? Please review our website at Chicago.gov/CDOTPRC

Contact CDOTPRC@cityofchicago.org for any additional information.