

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) at CDTA:

An overview of TDM initiatives developed and implemented by CDTA and CDTC (1999 – 2008).

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CDTA

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the Travel Demand Management (TDM) programs administered by the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) and the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). CDTA is the transit operator and CDTC is the metropolitan planning organization for the 4-counties in the Capital Region.



Funding for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs have been programmed in the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) since 1997 using federal funds from the Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. Demand management programs are designed to reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel, fuel consumption, air pollution and parking demand by making travel options like buses, carpooling, walking more attractive and affordable. The CDTA and CDTC partnership has resulted in successful implementation of pilot TDM programs, and has an aggressive agenda to increase the program breadth and effectiveness.

Since 1999 CDTA and CDTC have implemented various TDM initiatives that could be divided into the following categories:

- **Transit Subsidies:** The programs that offer transit subsidies tend to be very popular; however, to establish a long-term behavior change, provision of transit subsidies should have conditions attached; for example, a condition to establish a permanent commuter benefit program at an employment site.
- **Making Transit More Attractive:** Transit can help to achieve principal goals of TDM. In order to make it more attractive and encourage ridership, programs like Guaranteed Ride Home and Flexible Parking were developed. These programs provide a safety net to transit riders and improve transit experience.
- **Comprehensive Approach to TDM:** As a result of executing various programs, we learned that to be successful TDM programs require customized approach. It is important to survey potential program participants to determine their commute preferences, trip origins, work hours and workdays flexibility and other factors. CDTA is using Survey Monkey to administer electronic surveys and analyze collected data.

TDM is not an exact science. The programs constantly evolve to fit the needs of modern commuters. To keep up with changing demand, CDTA and CDTC are constantly working on developing new programs. Some of the most recent initiatives include conversion of the Commuter Register website to www.iPool2.org – a new website equipped with instant ride-matching capability and development of Transit for Refugees and Immigrants program.

Going forward, we plan to expand existing programs (e.g. Homeownership Incentive Program) and develop new initiatives such as vanpool pilot project for the Capital Region. We are also in the process of conducting a Transportation Management Association (TMA) Feasibility Study.

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This study could lead to the establishment of Capital Region's first TMA to serve campuses and businesses located in the Washington/Western corridor.

TDM programs are consistent with overall CDTA goals. For example, one of the goals of CDTA is ridership increase which directly tied to decreased vehicle miles traveled and use of single-occupancy vehicles. CDTA also works on promoting a message that using alternative modes of transportation helps to reduce environmental pollution and help Capital Region residents save money.

Funding and Expenditures

Funding for TDM programs comes from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. **Figure 1** summarizes distribution of funds during past eight years (1999-2007).

Figure 1: TDM Grant Spending: 1999-2008¹

	Grant x388	Grant x429	Grant x446	Grant x471	Grant x528	Grant x545	All Grants Total
<i>CDTA Pass Subsidies: PEF, CSEA, Albany County, City of Albany</i>	\$59,739	\$253,197	\$231,507	\$209,625	\$22,459	\$0	\$776,527
<i>Marketing</i>	\$0	\$148,523	\$0	\$44,678	\$217,521	\$52,497	\$463,218
<i>Staff & Administration</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,007	\$115,024	\$54,834	\$239,865
<i>LINK Program</i>	\$0	\$37,389	\$32,183	\$39,703	\$63,312	\$24,737	\$197,324
<i>NYSDEC Pilot Program</i>	\$0	\$28,897	\$55,713	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$84,610
<i>Commuter Ca\$h (BID)</i>	\$0	\$0	\$167,596	\$162,011	\$0	\$0	\$329,608
<i>Health Net</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,034	\$6,639	\$44	\$17,717
<i>Homeownership Initiative</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,050	\$18,450	\$37,500
<i>Visitors Pass Pilot</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,675	\$0	\$12,675
<i>SWIPER Parking Benefit</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$105,320	\$4,158	\$109,478
<i>Guaranteed Ride Home</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17	\$0	\$0	\$17
Programs Total	\$59,739	\$468,005	\$487,000	\$467,067	\$446,976	\$99,886	\$2,028,673
Remaining Grant Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$370,280	\$370,280

¹ As of 06/2008

Transit Subsidies



Subsidies are used frequently to encourage transit ridership. Over the years CDTA and CDTC have implemented a variety of programs to encourage people to ride transit - or at least give it a try.

One of the earliest programs to promote transit with subsidies was a program targeted to New York State employees – CDTA transit pass subsidies for members of the Professional Employees Federation (PEF) and the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA). Program

participants received a 25% discount (higher than offered through CDTA’s regular Corporate Program) on the purchase of CDTA monthly bus passes (Swipers). The principal goals of the program were to establish a permanent commuter benefit program because of the high percentage of state employees in the Capital Region workforce. The transit subsidy program was very popular among state employees. However, the goal of establishing a permanent commuter benefit program was not achieved. When the 3-year sunset on the use of CMAQ funds for a program came, CDTA continued the deep discounts until the inception of NYS-Ride program.²

The lesson that CDTA and CDTC learned from this early program was that stronger conditions on participation are needed in order to achieve permanent programs with employer participation. This knowledge was successfully applied in the later TDM programs.

The second program to attract State employees to transit was a pilot program for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) employees. The NYSDEC headquarters were relocated from a suburban location, with ample free parking, to downtown Albany. The program was launched in the summer of 2001 in conjunction with the move, and lasted through 2002. The program offered deep transit subsidies to employees interested in riding transit to work. Both CDTA and commuter carriers from suburbs were included in the program.

The major difference between the NYSDEC program and earlier programs was that it contained conditions that people had to consent to in order to continue receiving transit subsidies. Most important, participants had to relinquish their parking permits. Making a limited number of daily parking tags available in a controlled fashion accommodated a need for occasional parking. Program outcomes and benefits included a reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) by 1.58 million miles, which translates into a savings of 60,000 gallons of fuel and 645 tons of pollution over the period of 3 years.

The pilot program has been implemented in three phases:

- **Phase One:** June 2001 to October 2002 – This phase had close to 100 participants, half of which were full time bus riders. About 28 Phase One bus riders changed their OGS parking permits as a result of their reduced need for parking. Six bus riders gave up their garage permits, seven gave up their peripheral lot permits, and fifteen gave up their Water

² NYS-Ride is a pre-tax commuter program for New York State employee.

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St. permits and about ten shared permits. The majority of those commuters who retained parking permits parked in their respective lots only several times a month.

- **Phase Two:** November 2002 to January 2004 - Participants were required to suspend their OGS parking permit in order to receive bus coupons. Occasional use parking was provided up to 6 times a month. 64 people suspended their OGS parking permits in order to participate in Phase Two and 50 were full-time bus riders. One month before the subsidy program was to end, 78% of riders said they would continue taking the bus regularly, 13% said they would at a reduced rate, and less than 1% were undecided or not going to take the bus.
- **Phase Three** began in February 2004 when the DEC program merged with the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District's Commuter Ca\$h bus subsidy program.

The NYSDEC program achieved a higher level of success than the program for PEF and CSEA. However, the employer still did not develop a comprehensive Commuter Benefits program under Section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code. Based on this experience, CDTA and CDTC made an important adjustment to the TDM programs – enrollment in the Commuter Benefits program would be an essential condition for any organizations willing to participate in the TDM programs that provide transit subsidies.

The Commuter Ca\$h program was developed to expand the NYSDEC pilot to other downtown businesses in cooperation with the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District (BID). There were several TDM objectives for the program, such as to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), fuel consumption, parking demand, and the cost of commuting, as well as to improve air quality particularly in downtown Albany. The **Commuter Ca\$h** program offered discounts on CDTA bus passes as well as commuter carriers from suburban counties. The discounts were available to any employee working in the BID boundaries.

Eligible employees received transit pass discounts for six months. At the six-month mark, the eligibility ended unless the **employer** contacted a TDM program manager and committed to implementing a permanent commuter benefits program. The employee continued to receive discount coupons for an additional six months, or until the employer program was in place.

An exit survey was conducted as participants left the program. The survey data indicated that 56% of the participants that had driven alone or took transit occasionally before participating in the **Commuter Ca\$h** program, would continue to take the bus when their eligibility ended. The Commuter Cash Program was a success in many different ways. The following are statistics gathered at the program's end in February 2005:

- 1305 people participated in the program (includes those previously in the CDTA's Swiper Corporate Program);
- 985 new participants (excludes those that the CDTA already had an agreement with before the program);
- 475 new transit riders (about 1/3 never took the bus before, 2/3 only occasionally);
- 160,600 vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) removed per month;
- 147,300 monthly emissions reduction;
- 7300 gallons monthly fuel savings; and

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- 87,350 gallons of fuel, 1.92 million miles traveled, and 900 *tons* of pollution annual savings.

The next two TDM programs arose out of work that CDTA and CDTC conducted regarding workforce development for people transitioning from public assistance to work. Focal points included the healthcare industry – particularly nursing home facilities – and the restaurant industry, both of which reported persistent issues in attracting and retaining workers. In the Healthcare Network TDM, healthcare employers agreed to provide a permanent transit benefit program for their employees in accordance with section 132 of the IRS Code if a sufficient number of employees participated in the program. Employees who were not regular transit riders were encouraged to try transit for their daily commuting needs. Interested employees signed up for the program at their human resources office and received an unlimited use, one-month pass on CDTA buses. Employees were encouraged to sign onto the permanent transit benefit program, and upon doing so would receive an additional one-month transit pass.

195 employees participated in the Healthcare Network Program in seven different healthcare facilities: Teresian House, Baptist Nursing, Our Lady of Mercy, Daughters of Sarah, Evergreen Commons, Eddie Heritage, and St. Peter's Hospital. As a result of this TDM program, permanent commuter benefit programs were established in every participating facility, and they remain CDTA Corporate Customers to this day.

The Restaurant Industry TDM program had the same structure, but it was not as successful. Employers cited large turnover in the workforce as the reason why setting up a program was not helping in recruitment or retention. This experience showed that two similar programs could have very different outcomes, proving that one size does not fit all.

CDTA and CDTC have developed a TDM program to encourage homeownership in transit supportive areas in partnership with non-profit organizations and municipalities.³ This program reduces single-occupancy vehicle trips by providing each household with 2 CDTA transit passes per month for a maximum of 24 months, provided that a household members complete entrance and exit surveys regarding their travel behavior.

The first program under the Homeownership umbrella was launched in Albany's Midtown in 2005; the program continues to be active and attract new participants. Since the beginning of the program, 25 households have taken advantage of it. Of participating households, 16 had completed two year membership.

The Schenectady Housing Development Fund Corporation joined the program in 2007. Currently, there are 5 households participating and the program is growing.

As a result of outreach, CDTA was able to attract a new neighborhood organization to the Homeownership Program. The South End Improvement Corporation in Albany has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CDTA to offer this program to new South End homeowners. 14 households have taken advantage of the program.

³ A full three-year report on Homeownership Incentive Program is available upon request.

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The Homeownership Incentive Program is popular among urban homeowners, and survey results show a positive trend towards achieving the goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips, and strengthening homeownership in urban neighborhoods. Exit surveys of Albany Midtown households showed that after participating in the program, people were more likely to continue using buses. Survey responses showed that the majority of households felt the program was a great way to learn about the transit system.

Currently, CDTA is working with Affordable Housing Partnership, Better Neighborhoods, Inc., and TRIP NeighborWorks Homeownership Center to include these organizations into the program.

Transit for Refugees and Immigrants (TRI) was launched in February of 2008. The goal of the TRI program is to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips among newly arrived immigrant and refugee populations of the Capital Region. The program introduces people new to the country and, specifically, to the Capital Region, to transit services before they buy a car, reducing their likelihood to purchase an older, more polluting vehicle in the long term.

The program consists of an education (transit training) and subsidies (free Swipers for program participants for up to 9 months period) components. Eligible participants are required to take pre and post program surveys about their travel habits and preferences. 130 people are currently participating in the TRI program and the program is growing.

CDTA's work program for 2008 and 2009 includes a TDM project for Saratoga that will be modeled after the Commuter Ca\$h and NYSDEC efforts. The goal of this program is to establish a permanent commuter benefit programs at 20 downtown Saratoga-based businesses.

The Saratoga program will work with the Downtown Business Association and the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce to provide direct user incentives. The number of employers that start to offer transit benefits to their employees as well as the number of employees that continue to use transit after the pilot is over would measure successful implementation. The program will also include entrance and exit surveys.

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Chapter Summary Matrix				
Program	Goals	Approach	Results	Lessons Learnt
Transit Subsidy for NYS employees	Establish a Permanent Commuter Benefit Program.	35% discount on transit passes.	<p>Large bulk transit pass purchasers were identified.</p> <p>Permanent Commuter Benefit Program was <u>not</u> established.</p>	Stronger conditions on participation are needed to achieve permanent programs with employer participation.
NYSDEC TDM Pilot	<p>Establish a Permanent Commuter Benefit Program.</p> <p>Introduce relocated NYSDEC employees to transit services.</p>	<p>Deep subsidies on purchase of CDTA and commuter carrier passes/tickets.</p> <p>Parking management.</p>	<p>90 people took advantage of the NYSDEC pilot in the first 18 months.</p> <p>Vehicle/Miles Traveled were reduced by 1,580,000 miles, which translate into a savings of 60,000 gallons of fuel and 645 tons of pollution (CO₂, NO_x, HC, CO).</p> <p>Parking demand in NYS facilities was reduced by 57 spaces.</p> <p>Permanent Commuter Benefit Program was <u>not</u> established.</p>	<p>Employees were willing to give up their parking permit in exchange for a transit subsidy.</p> <p>An important adjustment to future TDM programs was made - enrollment in the Commuter Benefits program became an essential condition for organizations willing to participate in the TDM programs that provide transit subsidies.</p>
Commuter Ca\$h	<p>Increase transit use by downtown workers.</p> <p>Reduce environmental issues such as air pollution caused by congestion of traffic.</p> <p>Provide relief for the increased demand in parking.</p>	Transit pass/ticket discounts.	<p>Total program participants -1305</p> <p>Total “new” employees- 985 (excludes those that CDTA already had an agreement with before the program).</p> <p>Total “new” or “increased frequency” transit riders- 475 (about 1/3 never took the bus before, 2/3 only occasionally).</p>	<p>The program was a success. Exit surveys showed that it helped to attract new transit riders.</p> <p>The program included a condition: establishment of a Permanent Commuter Benefit program in exchange for extended discounts. This condition proved to be effective in helping to encourage the establishment of a Permanent Commuter Benefit Program.</p>

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Healthcare Network TDM	<p>Help people transitioning from public assistance to work.</p> <p>Establish a Permanent Commuter Benefit Program.</p>	Transit Subsidies: 1-2 months of free CDTA Swipers	<p>195 employees in seven different healthcare facilities participated: Teresian House, Baptist Nursing, Our Lady of Mercy, Daughters of Sarah, Evergreen Commons, Eddie Heritage, and St. Peter’s Hospital.</p> <p>Permanent Commuter Benefit Programs were established in <u>every</u> participating facility, they remain CDTA Corporate Customers.</p>	The program was a success. This model can be expanded to other medical/healthcare facilities.
The Restaurant Industry Initiative			Employers in this industry cited large turnover in the workforce as the number one reason why setting up a Commuter Benefit Program was not helping in workforce recruitment or retention.	The outcome showed that similar programs could have different outcomes, proving that “one size does not fit all”.
Homeownership Incentive Program	TDM program designed to encourage homeownership in transit supportive areas in partnership with non-profit organizations and municipalities with similar goals.	Free CDTA passes: 2 passes per eligible household for a period of 24 months.	The Homeownership Incentive program is popular among eligible urban homeowners, and the first program exit surveys show a positive trend towards achieving the goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips, and positive effect on strengthening homeownership in urban neighborhoods.	The program is active and continues to attract new participants. It is a good model to build similar initiatives, promoting homeownership in urban areas. The renter population should also be explored as a potential market for program expansion.
Transit for Refugees and Immigrants	Reduce single occupancy vehicle trips among newly arrived immigrant and refugee population of the Capital District	Free CDTA passes: 1 pass per eligible individual for a period of 9 months.	New Program	New Program

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CDTA's work program for 2008 and 2009 includes a TDM project for Saratoga that will be modeled after the past successful TDM projects such as Commuter Ca\$h and pilot TDM for NYSDEC employees. The goal of this program will be to establish a permanent commuter benefits program at a minimum of 20 downtown Saratoga-based businesses.

Making Transit More Attractive

A major obstacle for people to make a commitment to becoming a regular transit rider is the occasional need for a personal vehicle. Starting in 2008, Swiper cardholders will be eligible to receive free occasional use parking and discounted monthly parking at selected lots operated by the Albany Parking Authority (APA). Swiper users will have two parking options: free occasional-use parking and monthly parking at half the market rate.

Occasional-Use Parking: A partnership of CDTA, CDTC and APA have an agreement to allow Swiper holders to park up to 5 times per month in pocket lots located along Central Avenue, at the WAMC public lot at Central and Quail, and at the Quackenbush parking lot. Using “Smart Meters” to track use and to prevent fraud, this program allows CDTA customers the flexibility to drive to work on occasions when they need their personal vehicle. Because Smart Meters can recognize and retain information on frequency, time, and day of use of Swiper cards, this data source will allow for program analyses.

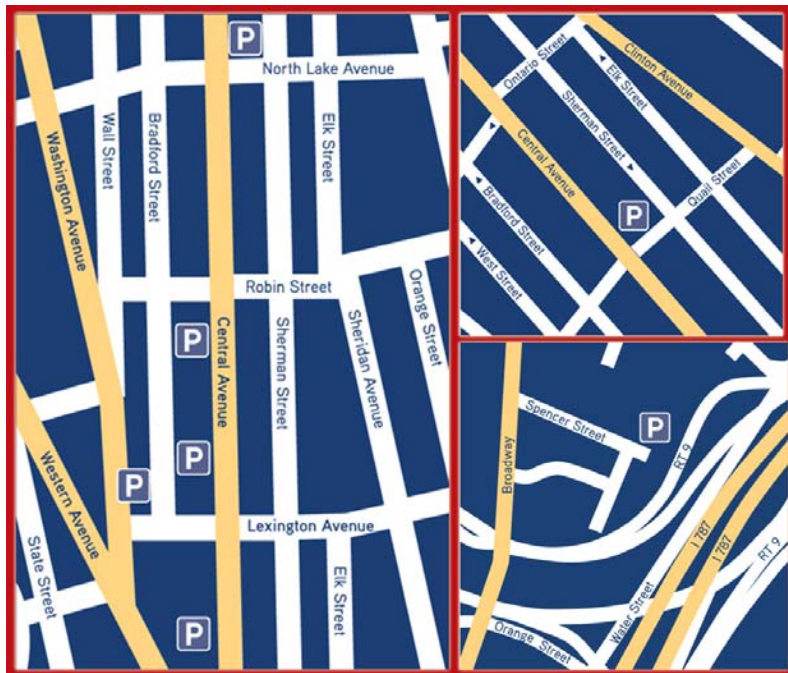


Figure 2: Parking Lots Map

Monthly Parking Passes: The APA manages an 80-space shared use lot at the WAMC Performing Arts Center lot (between Central and Sherman Avenues at Quail St.) with market-rate parking permits. Each month, CDTA can sell up to 50 reduced-rate parking hangtags to Swiper users on a first-come, first-serve basis. Hangtags will entitle Swiper users to use the lot as a park and ride and avoid parking downtown, where spaces are more expensive and less available.

Another obstacle to transit use is the need to transfer between different operators when

commuting from outlying counties. There are a number of different operations that provide commuter service to downtown Albany. The LINK Program allows commuters to connect from any of these buses to CDTA buses free of charge. LINK tickets are activated in the CDTA farebox and valid for unlimited CDTA rides for the entire day. This program is highly valued by those who use it. Additional promotion of the LINK through other TDM programs to reach a wider audience will introduce the program to new users. The demand for this program is high among the Capital Region commuters.

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Another market segment where alternate modes could achieve congestion and air quality benefits is the tourist market. To test this idea, a 3-day visitor pass was implemented in Saratoga Springs during the summer of 2006. Free 3-day visitor passes were available at 15 distribution outlets in Saratoga, including Information Booths, hotels and the train station. CDTA hired an ambassador to oversee pass distribution, ride buses, and publicize the program. The ambassador also surveyed pass users, operators, and our partners in the hospitality industry on their opinions.

The program was a success in raising awareness of transit services, getting people to try transit, and building relationships with the tourist and hospitality industry in Saratoga Springs. Ridership on the trolley service was 8% more than in 2005, and use of regular route buses increased by over 20%. CDTA offered the same level of transit service in 2006 as in 2005 on both the trolley and the fixed route service, making this a true test of the value of promotion and marketing. Survey results showed that a 3-day unlimited use pass convinced tourists to leave their car parked and use the bus to get around during their stay. The demographics of the users of the 3-day Visitor pass are a marked contrast to the typical CDTA rider, clearly demonstrating the importance of targeted marketing. Tourists were willing to use CDTA services in Saratoga even though most (70%) had a car available during their stay and don't take transit in their daily life. Based on these results, CDTA introduced a 3-day unlimited pass as part of the CDTA family of products targeted to the tourism and hospitality industry, with bulk rate and promotional incentives. The Albany Convention and Visitor's Bureau recently became a partner with CDTA in promoting this product.

Similar to making parking available for occasional use, providing safety net of a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) in the case of emergency is a low-cost TDM element that eliminates a barrier to both transit and carpooling. CDTA provides a GRH to Swiper cardholders, and CDTC provides this benefit to carpoolers registered through the Commuter Register web site. These programs provide a free taxi ride in a case of an emergency. The program provides a security blanket for those venturing out of single occupancy vehicles.

Marketing and public outreach are important elements of any TDM initiative. CDTA has developed a new identity, or brand, for the system to demonstrate its commitment to innovation and customer-focused services. The iRide™ brand is influencing CDTA transit products and service.

CDTA has invested in the development of a new website to make it more appealing to a larger audience. The redesigned website (www.cdta.org) provides a wealth of information about bus fares, schedules and system updates in an easy to find format. The newest feature of the website is an interactive map, and a "MapQuest"-type trip planner for transit trips. In addition to CDTA trip planner, customers can plan their trips using Google Transit.

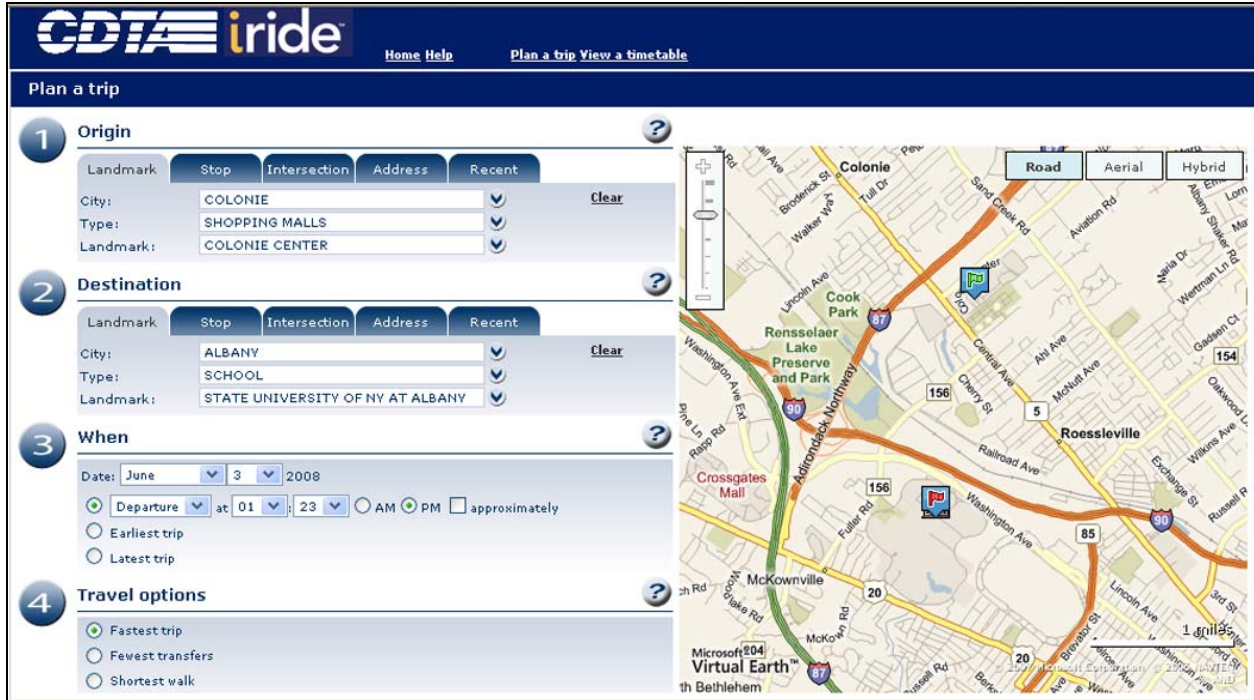


Figure 3 CDTA Web-Based Trip Planner, www.cdta.org

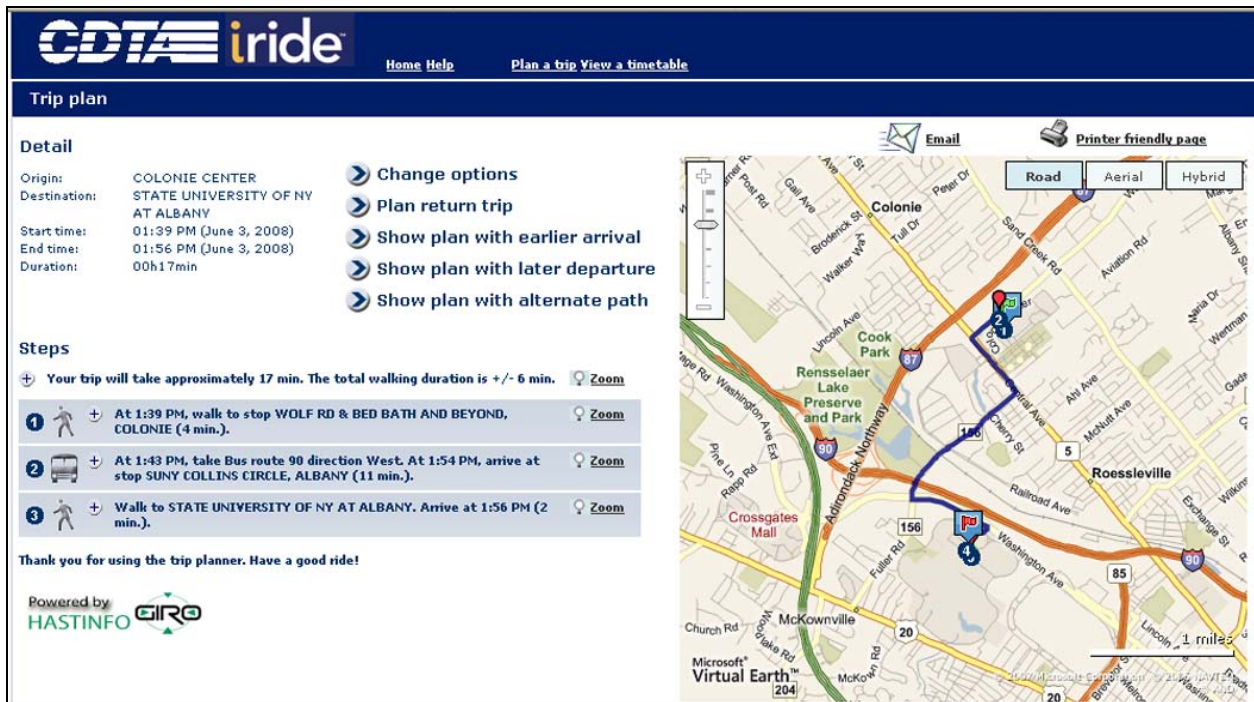


Figure 4 CDTA Web-Based Trip Planner (example of a trip plan), www.cdta.org

In order to attract customers and make the transit experience more enjoyable, CDTA simplified its fare structure in 2006, and launched a major public outreach campaign surrounding these changes. The positive response CDTA received to that effort—which included an award from the American Public Transit Association—provided the foundation for CDTA’s ongoing efforts to communicate clearly our goal of making the system easier to understand and use.

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A new system map and rider's guide were produced as a resource to help customers understand the services that are available and how to use them. The new materials are available in print and online, providing 24-hour access to information about CDTA to current and prospective riders.

Comprehensive Approach to TDM

As the regional TDM program matures, more comprehensive and cooperative approaches are being pursued. A full-time staff person is now devoted to developing TDM initiatives in anticipation of increased activities, interest and success.

Growing a Greener Business has been designed in response to numerous requests from private sector businesses for transit service. In many instances, fixed route transit is not the best solution in suburban locations without transit supportive infrastructure. At the same time, there is a growing interest in becoming “greener”, including seeking LEED Certification, which includes sustainable site design.⁴ Growing a Greener Business program provides transportation solutions that will fit the needs of business in the Capital Region.

The primary goal of the Growing a Greener Business program is to provide Capital Region employers with tools to reduce SOV trips. Besides achieving its direct goal, the program is expected to deliver benefits to employers and their employees. It will help decrease parking demand and on-site congestion, freeing up land for commercial uses or aesthetic design. Employees will benefit from financial savings created by the program, especially in the light of constantly rising gas prices.

The program consists of two steps, which identify a TDM approach that fits the needs of the organization: Step 1 – Employee Transportation Survey; Step 2 – Choosing a TDM Approach. In Step 1, CDTA surveys employees on travel patterns and preferences, work hours, and origins. Step 2 varies depending on the results from the surveys. In some places, transit subsidies for existing services will achieve the goals; in other places, incentives and assistance for vanpools or carpools would better meet employee needs. CDTA serves as a technical advisor, although short-term “try transit” programs can be part of the removing initial barriers. The estimated cost of the program will vary on case-to-case basis, depending on the TDM tools used.

CDTA and CDTC has recently converted Commuter Register website (www.commuter-register.com) to www.iPool2.org. In addition to ride-matching capabilities the website provides information on park and ride locations, bus schedules and fares, and other commuter related programs. iPool2 serves people who live or work in the Capital Region (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties).



As part of a long-range plan to promote commute alternatives, CDTA and CDTC are pursuing the region’s first Transportation Management Association (TMA). A TMA is a non-profit, member-controlled organization that promotes alternative modes of transportation in a particular area, such as a commercial district, mall, medical center, university campus, or industrial park. A TMA can have numerous roles like managing a shuttle or car-sharing services.

⁴ For more information of LEED Certification please visit: www.usgbc.org

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The Harriman Campus - University at Albany Transportation Linkage Study identified the establishment of a TMA as an important goal for managing the growth and development of the three major campuses: the Harriman Research and Technology Park (formerly the Harriman State Office Campus), the University at Albany (the Uptown Campus and the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, formerly Albany Nanotech) and the Patroon Creek Corporate Park. A TMA Feasibility Study has been initiated to build consensus among the affected parties, which includes the neighborhoods adjacent to the campuses. The conduct of this study will be a major focus of regional TDM efforts in 2008 and 2009 and is hoped will provide a precedent for future activities.

Future Direction for the Program

This section provides an overview for development of the Travel Demand Management (TDM) program through fiscal year 2011. The direction of the TDM program includes developing of programs that proved to be successful in promoting alternative modes of transportation and reducing single occupancy vehicle travel.

Marketing has proven to be an effective tool in educating and attracting people to transit. It helped CDTA convey information to customers in a clear and user-friendly format. Marketing also helped to package services and programs in a more appealing way. For example, green and sky-high gas prices messages relate CDTA to a wider audience that identify with these issues.

One of the goals of improving outreach efforts to the riders and non-riders is the development of a Travel Demand Management page on the CDTA website. This page will contain information about sustainable transportation options, description of TDM programs, and a suggestion form that visitors can use to suggest programs or comment on existing ones. It will also inform the public about ongoing TDM studies and their recommendations. This section will improve the communication line with program participants. It will convey messages that CDTA works to achieve overall transportation sustainability by offering a variety of transportation options that work for a wide group of people.

Marketing is a powerful tool in promoting CDTA services and attracting new transit riders. Based on past spending patterns, funds for marketing were allocated as follows:

- FY2009 - \$ 56,000
- FY2010 - \$ 72,000
- FY2011 - \$ 67,500

One of the goals of the TDM program is to reduce single occupancy travel and introduce the Capital Region residents to a wider range of transportation alternatives. These programs are important because they allow potential CDTA customers to try riding a bus without financial consequences. Incentives are an effective way to attract people to any service or product including transit. The demand for such programs will increase once a TDM webpage is launched because it will make the information more widely available to the public and interested agencies.

In addition to increasing ridership, transit subsidies create a number of other positive benefits. One example is the Homeownership Transit Incentive Program. By providing transit incentives, this program not only attracts new riders to CDTA, but makes the urban homeownership more attractive. It helps new homeowners to get established in the area by providing free transportation and save on gas, car insurance and maintenance.

Transit for Refugees and Immigrant (TRI) also falls under the Try Transit umbrella. This program has become popular among the eligible group. A rapid growth of demand is anticipated in the near future. In addition to developing a loyal customer base and reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel, this program offers participants to increase their economic vitality, quality of life and mobility.

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CDTA plans to introduce TDM pilot programs modeled after successful initiatives like Commuter Ca\$h and the NYSDEC pilot. These programs will offer a comprehensive approach to transportation options. It is important to acknowledge that transit will not work for everyone. That is why programs must include other elements like carpool or flexible parking. However, transit subsidy will remain the major component of TDM initiatives.

Future TDM pilots that are currently planned for execution are:

- FY2009 - Saratoga Springs TDM Pilot (budget \$130,000)
- FY 2010 – TDM Pilot for NY5 Corridor (to be launched in conjunction with the beginning of BRT service. The estimated budget is \$100,000)
- FY2011 - TDM pilot or feasibility study; location to be determined (budget \$95,000)

TDM programs involving transit subsidies are popular and in high demand. Based on past spending, it is estimated that these programs will require about \$230,000 per year for successful implementation, which is about 40% of the funds available under TDM grant received by CDTA.

The table below shows an estimated budget distribution among various TDM activities over a period of next three years. In addition to a TDM grant, a separate pool of funds was set aside for a vanpool pilot program, however, these funds will not become available until FY2012.

Figure 5 Estimated TDM Budget: FY 2009 – FY 2011

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
Staff/administration	\$126,000	\$131,000	\$136,000
Marketing	\$56,000	\$72,000	\$67,500
<i>Events</i>	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$5,000
<i>Consultants</i>	\$35,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
<i>Printing</i>	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$6,500
<i>Promotional Giveaways (logo cups, pens, magnets, stickers, etc)</i>	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$6,000
LINK Program	\$60,000	\$62,000	\$62,900
Homeownership Transit Use Incentive Program	\$27,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Swiper Flexible Parking Benefit	\$12,600	\$12,600	\$12,600
Guaranteed Ride Home	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Commuter Register Website Maintenance	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
TDM In Construction Zones	\$10,400	\$15,000	\$15,000
Transit for Refugees and Immigrants	\$70,000	\$71,900	\$80,000
Saratoga Springs TDM Pilot	\$130,000	\$0	\$0
Growing a Greener Business	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$10,000
Central BID TDM Pilot (promotion of BRT)	\$0	\$100,000	\$0
Other TDM Pilots Projects/Feasibility Studies	\$0	\$0	\$95,000
TDM webpage development and maintenance	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$5,000
Starting Amount	\$525,000	\$525,000	\$525,000
<i>Remainder</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0

Travel Demand Management: Past, Present & Future Initiatives and Programs

The current level of financing is sufficient to sustain the present level of activities; however, it does not provide funds for the development of major initiatives like the expansion of SWIPER flexible parking benefit to Schenectady⁵ or introduction of a carshare program to the Capital District. These programs will require additional funding.

CDTA is in the process of conducting a Transportation Management Association Feasibility Study. A consultant team was selected to assist CDTA in this process. The timeline for the completion of the study is August 2009. A TMA will require additional start-up funds, if found feasible. The amount of funds required will be determined during the Feasibility Study as a part of TMA Business Plan.

Another unfunded but highly desired program is a vanpool initiative. There is a pool of money set aside for a vanpool pilot in Saratoga County; however, funds are not available until FY 2012. In addition, the need for vanpool emerges throughout Capital Region. CDTA, CDTC and Downtown Albany BID has partnered with VPSI – one of the nation’s largest vanpool providers – and submitted two vanpool project proposals to NYSERDA. If funded, these projects will help establish several vanpool programs throughout the Capital Regions.

As a part of the Growing a Greener Business, CDTA is conducting numerous surveys among employees of organizations seeking alternative modes of transportation. The survey results show a similar trend: employees are interested in finding alternatives to SOV; however, diverse origins make a traditional bus route not feasible. Under these conditions, vanpools and carpools seem to offer a solution. CDTC and CDTA are working on improving carpool matching website for the Capital District; however, there are no funds to start developing vanpools.

⁵ Additional funds will be required to pay for CDTA’s portion of Smart Meters acquisition and installation.

Conclusion

This report provides an overview of the regional TDM program – past and future - as designed by CDTA and CDTC. TDM strategies are a critical part of a regional transportation strategy to reduce single occupancy vehicle use, and encourage to changes in travel behavior.

The effectiveness of TDM strategies depends on a variety of factors, and CDTA and CDTC have learned, through trial and error, what works and what doesn't:

- o We have learned the importance of targeted research, using transportation surveys in advance of project design.
- o We have learned the importance of employer commitment to a permanent commuter benefit program.
- o We have learned that transit subsidy alone is not sufficient to achieve mode change; supportive programs like flexible parking and guaranteed ride home must also be available.
- o We have learned that the Capital Region's land use and commute patterns require a number of alternatives because transit cannot meet all of the demand.

TDM initiatives must be a part of a larger transportation system. Introduction of a single TDM strategy will not have a significant impact on travel patterns or behavior; nor is it a substitute for improving the overall transportation system. Done comprehensively, however, TDM can enhance regional mobility by offering alternatives and incentives to allow those to gain a foothold.

The success and development of TDM programs administered by CDTA and CDTC highly depends on the level of financing to accommodate growth. The current funding will sustain most of the current programs and introduce about one large-scale TDM pilot project per year.