What is Vehicle Miles Traveled Per Capita, and why does it matter?

200 people can fit in ...

- 177 cars
- 3 buses
- 1 light rail train
- on their bikes
Background

- RCW 47.01.440 VMT reductions
- RCW 70A.45.020 GHG reductions
- WSDOT duties, RCW 47.01.078
- 2021 State Energy Strategy calls for reducing Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)

Use energy more efficiently and decarbonize transportation energy
VMT Reduction Proviso

2021-23 Transportation Budget SSB 5165, Section 218 (3)

(3) $250,000 of the multimodal transportation account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to partner with the department of commerce in developing vehicle miles traveled targets for the counties in Washington state with (a) a population density of at least 100 people per square mile and a population of at least 200,000; or (b) a population density of at least 75 people per square mile and an annual growth rate of at least 1.75 percent as determined by the office of financial management. Given land use patterns are key factors in travel demand and should be taken into consideration when developing the targets, the department and the department of commerce shall partner with local jurisdictions, regional transportation planning organizations and other stakeholders to inventory existing laws and rules that promote transportation and land use, identify gaps and make recommendations for changes in laws, rules and agency guidance, and establish a framework for considering underserved and rural communities in the evaluation. The department and the department of commerce shall provide an initial technical report by December 31, 2021, an interim report by June 22, 2022, and a final report to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature by June 30, 2023, that includes a process for establishing vehicle miles traveled reduction targets, a recommended suite of options for local jurisdictions to achieve the targets, and funding requirements for state and local jurisdictions.
Commerce Climate Proviso

- GHG and VMT reduction guidelines for comprehensive plans
- Prioritize communities that have experienced:
  - Air pollution
  - Health disparities
  - Disproportionate burden
- Include small cities and rural communities
- Model climate change and resiliency element
Welcome to 2040 & Beyond
Your Washington State Transportation Policy Plan

2040 & Beyond

ECONOMIC VITALITY

MOBILITY

PRESERVATION

ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

SAFETY

STEWARDSHIP
Technical report outline (Dec 2021)

- Purpose
- Proviso counties
- VMT targets
- Land use & transportation connection
- Opportunities
- Outreach
- Next steps

Areas of focus

Specified in current proviso language
Land use and transportation

Diagram showing urban development with improved proximity for better transportation options.
Interim report scope of work

Topics:
• Propose statewide target(s) and baseline
• Background information on local target setting
• Identify actions for VMT reduction for comp plan updates
Partner survey (Feb 2022)

How are VMT reductions already addressed in current plans?
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WSDOT_VMT

• What has worked well? Potential case studies.
• Challenges?
• What types of materials would be useful for local agencies?

• Interest in further engagement?
  – VMT reduction actions
  – Statewide target setting
  – Total vs light duty per-capita VMT
  – Approaches to local target setting
Partner survey

Of the 75 initial responses:

- 58 plan under GMA
  - 50 fully plan
- 32 address VMT reductions in plans
  - Land use element
  - Transportation element
  - Environment
  - Regional plans
  - Commute Trip Reduction

In cooperation with transit agencies, promote the facilities and services to encourage alternatives to automobile travel and/or to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled (modal split, trip generation and trip length) including:

- Structural alternatives (public transit [such as grade separated guideways, for bus and rail applications]; construction of new high-occupant vehicle lanes; limitations on highway/roadway construction; carpool/vanpool facilities; non-recreational bicycle/pedestrian facilities);
- Non-structural/regulatory alternatives (growth management [concurrency; urban growth areas]; road/congestion pricing; auto-restricted zones; parking management; site design; ridesharing incentives, and transportation systems and demand management). (CPP Tr-15)
Emerging insights

• Specific strategies, case studies, examples scaled for small to mid sized jurisdictions.
  – City of Pasco

• How are VMT targets developed to address diffused rural communities?
  – Grant County

• More useful than materials would be state funding for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit mobility.
  – City of Redmond

• Land use shifts take a long time. In Thurston, our region, like most of Western Washington, was developed and built when long driving distances were considered desirable, and it is difficult to reverse-engineer that land use pattern.
  – Thurston Regional Planning Council

• Case studies; information based on the best available data
  – City of Vancouver
VMT reduction actions
Examples
Final report

• Due to legislature June 2023
• Process for setting local targets
• Final recommendations
• Funding analysis
VMT reduction actions - discussion

- Are there success stories we should consider?
- People or groups we should make sure to speak with?
- Are there strategies that merit particular focus?
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