

**CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
Regional Planning Services Department**

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, May 18, 2005

SUBJECT:

Travel Demand Management: Finding from a survey of employers located in the Urban Core.

BACKGROUND:

- Jan.28, 1998 CRD Finance Committee reviewed a report to form a GO Green program that proposed surveying CRD employees to determine how many walk, cycle, ride-share or use transit.
- Feb. 13, 2001 CRD Roundtable on the Environment formed a subcommittee to initiate an Employee Transportation Management Program.
- May 16, 2001 Regional Planning Committee reviewed the proposed CRD Employee Transportation Management plan. The focus of the plan was to initiate and measure the effectiveness of Travel Demand Management (TDM) by studying CRD employees.
- October 2004 Regional Planning Services initiated a survey of employers in the four core municipalities to determine if employers would support TDM programs.

DISCUSSION

This report summarizes the findings of a 2004 survey of employers which asked employers if they will support TDM initiatives. The summary of the survey is consolidated in Attachment A

Travel Demand Management is an important component of the TravelChoices Strategy. For example, a recent Federal Study about transit indicates that effective TDM programs could result in up to a 7% gain in transit ridership.

Prior to this study the only TDM surveys undertaken in the region were focused on municipal and government employees. These studies provided information that guided many local government TDM initiatives.

No prior studies have involved the private sector. The business community employs approximately 90% of the labour force in the Capital Region. As such, if the region is to achieve the significant changes in mode choice as envisioned in the TravelChoices Strategy, it needs to develop a TDM plan that includes the overall labour force.

Study area and sample size

The employers surveyed were selected from the municipalities of Victoria, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt (Urban Core). Employers were randomly selected based on their size of workforce. There were 12,850 employers in the study area and 2% of these employers participate in the survey. The survey involved four stages that included:

- 1) a broad general survey of 260 employers;
- 2) 10% of the 260 employers were contacted a second time for a direct one-on-one survey;
- 3) four small non-government focus group interviews were scheduled; and
- 4) a focus group of major government office employers was included.

Findings

The findings from “Part 1” are statistically significant for all questions where responses exceeded 250. From this part of the survey, there are many key findings that stand out and should form the basis for any TDM strategy, these include that:

- 96% of the employers surveyed would support a policy that encouraged more employees to walk, cycle, use transit or ride-share;
- 68% of the employers either supply or pay for staff parking;
- 80% believe pedestrian access to their business is important;
- 84% support adding more or better cycling facilities; and
- most employers did not know what the term “TDM” means.

TDM appears to be one of the region’s best kept secrets. Even though employers did not recognize the term TDM, they do support the goals of TDM to get more employees to walk, cycle, use transit or ride-share.

Many conditions will influence the level of support in TDM by the business community. Businesses indicated that their primary concern is their bottom-line and as such they suggested that “if TDM could be shown to be a benefit to the employer, then they would be more likely to participate”. One benefit identified from the survey included cases where some employers are getting involved in TDM in order to keep good employees.

Part of the survey examined on how to help employers initiate TDM programs. Employers view TDM as a joint responsibility. Local governments need to provide a bridging approach that provides a general framework and information source for employers and employees while non-profit groups could be used to actually work with employers to initiate and keep TDM programs on-track. The responses indicated that a comprehensive TDM marketing plan is also needed if businesses are to work with the region in implementing TDM.

In summary, this survey, the first of its kind in the region, provides new and important information about how employers view TDM and its results can help the region examine ways to advance TDM. The business community has shown an interest in TDM but there are conditions. Any future TDM action plan will need to involve all employers in the region and also be shown to be complementary to their business interests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Regional Planning Committee received this report as information.

RGS CONSISTENCY:

The proposed *TravelChoices Strategy* is an implementation component of the RGS and responds to its land use, environmental and transportation objectives. Travel Demand Management is an integral part of this strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

Larry Roberts
Manager, Transportation Planning

Mark Hornell, MCIP
Director, Regional Planning Services

ACTING CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

W. Eccleston, BA, BEd, MBA, CHRP
Acting Chief Administrative Officer