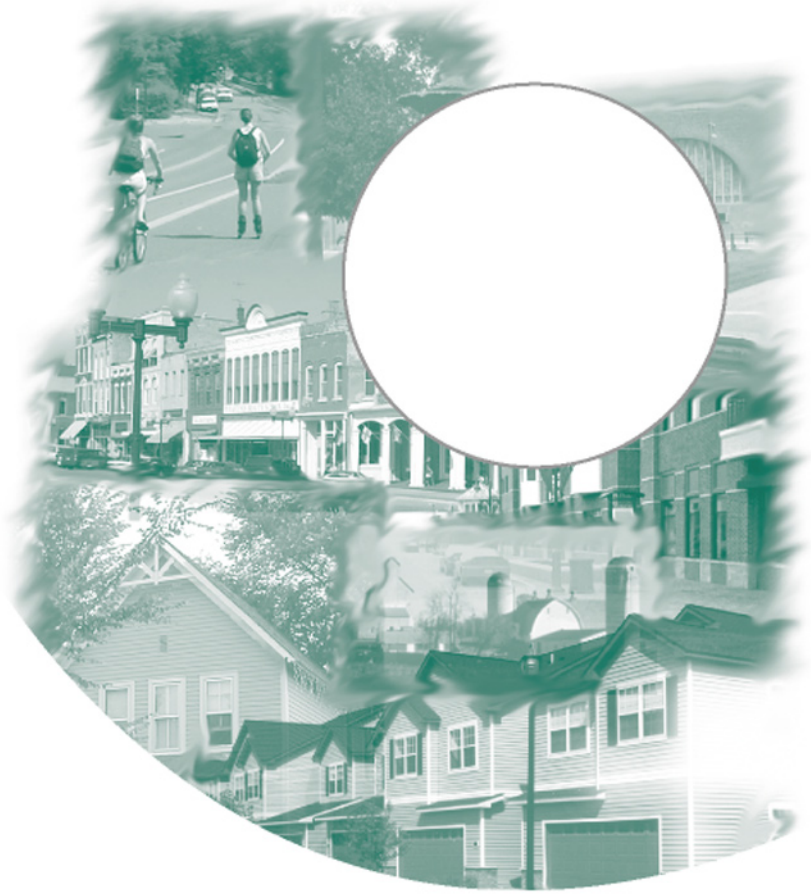
From Policy to Reality

Updated
^ Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development



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INTRODUCTION

The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, presented in a separate section, focuses on maintaining a reasonable levels of service (LOS) on roads and other infrastructure. A corollary ordinance is a Travel Demand Management (TDM) ordinance or Trip Reduction Ordinance (TRO). Larger cities in Minnesota have many investment and maintenance decisions to make in regard to transportation infrastructure. TDM or TROs mitigate the effects of new or expanding development along highway corridors, in downtown areas, or any large development by mandating or encouraging management of the demand side of traffic growth. Rather than responding to increasing demand by building more road and parking infrastructure, or by restricting development until infrastructure is adequate, the community (or developer) can invest in infrastructure and programs that get people out of their cars.

Travel Demand Management Standard

The following ordinance is directed toward larger cities and, unlike the APFO, applies exclusively to commercial and industrial development. This ordinance was adapted from the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, 549.170, 549.180.

The travel demand management plan is one method of beginning demand management. Whenever a new development or expansion of existing space is proposed, the community can require the developer to investigate and/or implement travel demand management efforts. A number of other regulatory methods of managing infrastructure investment in roads, parking, and other automobile-related infrastructure. Examples include ordinances that require businesses to invest in bicycle lockers and shower facilities to promote non-motorized travel modes, traffic calming measures to discourage use of local streets as arterials, minimizing the use of free parking to encourage alternative travel modes, and a variety of design initiatives around pedestrian sheds and transit facilities.

Transit-oriented design (described in another section) is a more prescriptive method of getting to the same goal through land use and design standards. Travel demand management requirements, in contrast, are a performance standard that can apply to any type of development. TDM allows more flexibility in meeting the goal of diversifying travel modes (by avoiding the prescriptive design of TOD). The prescriptive nature of TOD is better, however, for ensuring that transit infrastructure and building infrastructure are linked for the long term.

Rural communities are less generally concerned with traffic capacity issues than urban and suburban communities. Rural communities must note, however, that some regional transportation routes were designed to accommodate only regional traffic. Local development along regional routes, without commensurate investment in design and capacity improvement to accommodate a shift in use from regional to local traffic, can result in significant degradations in quality of service.

I. Travel Demand Management Plan

A. All development that includes any of the following criteria shall conduct a travel demand management plan (TDM) that addresses the transportation impacts of the development on air quality, parking and roadway infrastructure:

1. Any development in the downtown zone or in the suburban office park zone needing 75 or more additional parking spaces under the Model Community site design standards;
2. Any development in any zone containing one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet or more of new or additional gross floor area, or one hundred (100) or more new or additional parking spaces;
3. Any new commercial or industrial concern that will employ 100 or more people at the new location.

B. **Application for Plan Approval** - Any person having a legal or equitable interest in land which requires submission of a TDM may file an application for approval of such plan on a form approved by the zoning administrator.

C. **Administrative Review** - The planning director, in consultation with the city engineer, shall conduct the administrative review of the TDM. The planning director shall recommend to the zoning administrator any mitigating measures deemed reasonably necessary, who shall include such recommendation as a condition of the issuance of any building permit, zoning certificate or other approval required by this zoning ordinance or other applicable law. All findings and decisions of the planning director shall be final, subject to appeal to the planning commission, as specified in Chapter XX, Administration and Enforcement.

D. **Content of Plans** - Any TDM shall contain at least the following:

1. A description of the goals of the TDM and its relationship to applicable Model Community transportation policies and programs.
2. A description of the transportation impacts of the development, including but not limited to forecasts of overall and peak period employment, forecasts of trips generated and mode splits, parking demand and parking supply available, and transit demand and transit supply available.
3. A description of mitigating measures designed to minimize the transportation impacts of the development, including but not limited to on-site transit facilities, transit use incentives, preferential location of car pool and van pool parking, on-site bicycle facilities including secure storage areas and amenities, staggered starting times and telecommuting opportunities.

E. **Required Implementation of TDM Plan, and Performance Standards**

1. Any new development or existing business expanding its operation, and requiring a conditional use permit, rezoning, or that is receiving tax or funding assistance from Model Community, shall implement a TDM plan. The plan shall meet the following performance standards:

   a. Fifteen percent of employees on any given day should travel to the location using a mode other than single occupancy vehicle. Alternative modes include transit, bicycle, walking, carpooling, and telecommuting.

   b. The average vehicle ridership (AVR) for employees shall be 10% lower than the AVR for the entire Downtown District in Model Community.

   c. The AVR shall decrease over the first five years of active use in the new or expanded development.

Subsection E.1 and parts thereafter set thresholds for when a TDM plan is required. The community will need to set a threshold standard for when the TDM requirement is effective. When development demand in a particular district is high, the community set the threshold low in order to capture not only new businesses but all existing businesses that expand. When development demand is not so great, the community may want to consider the effect that the threshold will have on existing businesses.

Parts E.1.b. and c. use a performance standards based on average vehicle ridership (AVR). A number of other performance standards can be used. A standard based on AVR or on reducing trip generation from a threshold requires that the community calculate an existing AVR or threshold for the community or for the target district.