



Understanding California's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Requirements: A User-Friendly Guide

WRCOG, in partnership with its member agencies and key regional stakeholders, has developed a voluntary exchange program (Program) to provide a method to mitigate vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). WRCOG will serve as the Program Administrator and main point of coordination for Participants. The voluntary Program will provide Participants in need of a way to offset significant VMT impacts will be able to purchase VMT credits generated by participants with VMT credit-generating projects.

Benefits of a Regional Program

	Regional Impact: VMT reduction is most effective when addressed regionally.
	Cost Sharing: It is financially beneficial to pool resources.
	Ease of Administration: WRCOG will handle the complex tracking and reporting, simplifying the process for individual agencies.

Key Terms / Who Should be Interested?

- **Applicant:** A developer or similar entity applying to purchase credit(s) as a credit user
- **Credit:** VMT reduction credit.
- **Credit Generator:** A public agency that implements a project or program that produces a VMT reduction credit. Credit generators will enter into a Participation Agreement with the Program Administrator. This agreement enables public agencies to submit credit-generating items to the Program that are eligible to receive funding through the Program.
- **Credit-generating Item:** A specific project or program that has produced or may produce a credit.
- **Credit User:** Land development or transportation project administrator that needs VMT reduction credits for CEQA mitigation.
- **VMT Impact:** The generation of VMT above the applicable threshold of significance by a project, which may require a Credit User to seek a mitigating credit(s).



Is it a mandatory program?

No, agencies can choose to join the Regional VMT Mitigation Program, and there is no cost to join the voluntary Program.

Can I include XYZ for funding through the Program? What can I submit as a credit-generating item?

Credit-generating items should be active transportation or transit infrastructure projects (such as bike lanes and bus shelters) or programs (such as bus passes or carpool matching) that can demonstrate through substantial evidence that they reduce VMT. Affordable housing projects and other strategies can be considered. Credit generators need to provide an estimated cost and project details for each item. WRCOG is available to meet with Credit Generators to discuss which credit-generating items might be included in the program.

How much is a VMT credit going to cost?

The cost of VMT credits will depend on which credit generating items are available on the exchange at the time of purchase. This will change over time based on what credit generating items are submitted and available.

Who's going to calculate the VMT reduction associated with the credit-generating items?

Credit users need to identify and calculate their VMT impacts. Credit generators will submit the cost estimate and project information for credit-generating items, and WRCOG will calculate the VMT reduction.

The program includes an appeal process for any participating agency that disagrees with WRCOG's decisions on whether to include a credit generating item, or the VMT reduction calculation.



How does this program differ from TUMF, local City programs/fees, or other regional or statewide programs?

TUMF will continue as-is and will fund local transportation infrastructure improvements through fair-share contributions from new development projects. Credit-generating items cannot be fully funded through TUMF to be eligible for inclusion in the program.

Cities can continue to fund VMT mitigation locally, either on an ad-hoc basis on individual projects or through a local fee program, bank or exchange. Cities with a local program can still participate in WRCOG's regional VMT mitigation program.

There are no other regional or statewide VMT mitigation programs currently in existence. AB 130 recently passed and directed the state to form a statewide VMT mitigation program, however even once that program is established it will not preclude local and regional agencies from having their own programs.

WRCOG is here to assist your City!

WRCOG is collaborating with stakeholders to refine the Regional VMT Program. A program manual will soon be developed to outline participant roles, processes, and more, pending review and approval by various committees.

This guide aims to clarify the new VMT requirements and the proactive steps being taken to manage its impacts regionally. Your understanding and participation are crucial in shaping a sustainable and responsible development future.

CONTACT US

Chris Gray
Deputy Executive Director
cgray@wrcog.us
Phone: 951-405-6710

CONTACT US

Chris Tzeng
Program Manager
ctzeng@wrcog.com

