

May 27, 2025

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Transportation Committee  
**From:** Calvin Chow, Analyst  
**Subject:** CB 120984 - Commute Trip Reduction Program Update

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On June 3, 2025, the Transportation Committee will discuss and possibly vote on [Council Bill \(CB\) 120984](#) that would approve the 2025-2029 update of the City of Seattle's Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Plan. Approval of the CTR Plan is a prerequisite for continued State grant funding under the Washington State Clean Air Act. The legislation would also make minor revisions to [Chapter 25.02 Seattle Municipal Code \(SMC\)](#), also known as the CTR Ordinance, which governs local implementation of the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT's) [CTR program](#).

### Background

As part of the 1991 Washington State Clean Air Act, local governments were required to adopt plans for reducing single-occupant vehicle commuting trips and large employers were required to develop and implement CTR programs with approval by local governments. Seattle's CTR program was first established in 1993 with the passage of the Seattle CTR Ordinance ([Ordinance 116657](#)), and was last amended in 2019 as part of legislation ([Ordinance 125885](#)) to approve the 2019-2023 update to the CTR Plan.

### CTR Affected Employers and Program Requirements

The CTR Ordinance applies to employers with 100 or more employees. Currently there are over 145 employers participating in Seattle's CTR program, representing 225,000 employees. Affected employers are required to baseline and report their employees' commuting behavior, and to develop a CTR plan that must be approved by SDOT.

CTR plans must include strategies for addressing commuting behavior under three categories. Category A strategies provide employees with information and amenities that support non-drive-alone commutes. Category B strategies include direct subsidies of non-drive-alone modes. Category C includes parking management strategies. [SMC 25.02.040.C.2](#) describes the specific strategies that may be considered for CTR plans.

The CTR Ordinance provides for civil penalties for failure to comply with CTR reporting and plan submittal requirements, as well as for failure to make a good faith effort to develop and implement a CTR plan. There is no civil penalty for failing to achieve CTR mode share goals.

## **Proposed Legislation**

The proposed legislation formally adopts the City of Seattle's 2025-2029 CTR Plan Update. Adoption of the updated plan is a requirement under the Washington State Clean Air Act and enables Seattle to remain eligible for future CTR funding from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Over the most recent funding cycle, Seattle received \$1.5 million through WSDOT's 2023-2025 biennial CTR grant.

The proposed legislation makes minor revisions to Chapter 25.02 SMC to clarify and standardize code language for implementing Seattle's CTR program that do not substantively change the program design. In addition to these minor revisions, the proposed legislation would allow large employers to consider two new Category B (direct subsidy) strategies for their CTR programs:

- Provision of financial assistance or company-owned assets to support home office/telecommute work.
- Subsidies for scooter share, bike share, or other shared mobility program.

Central Staff has identified no policy concerns with this legislation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or follow-up.

cc: Ben Noble, Director