



THE CASE FOR A VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT) REDUCTION TARGET IN NEW JERSEY

BENEFITS FROM A 20% REDUCTION IN VMT FOR NEW JERSEY¹

- Avoids using 7 billion gallons of gasoline
- Avoids electricity demand by 66 terawatt-hours due to reduced electric vehicle charging
- Reduces 79 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent

ON AVERAGE:



Saves each household \$2,254 a year



Prevents 167 crash fatalities and 2,500 crash injuries per year



Saves 1,219 lives per year from improved air quality and physical activity

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COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Land use and transportation strategies that reduce VMT also increase business activity while reducing per-capita infrastructure costs.
- Human-scale mobility, which prioritizes walking and biking in city design (bike lanes, compact land use, small block sizes, etc.), has resulted in increased revenues for businesses and jurisdictions.²
- Investments in greenways, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities create more jobs per dollar than status quo projects, and every dollar spent on pedestrian and biking infrastructure adds another \$5.20 in value to the regional economy.³
- Improved transportation options and reduced driving could save up to \$201 billion in energy infrastructure, \$128 billion in public health costs, and \$5.9 trillion in vehicle ownership costs through 2050, presenting a more effective and affordable climate solution than the current car-dependent model.⁴



CLIMATE MITIGATION

- The transportation sector is NJ's largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and vehicle electrification alone will not be enough to meet the state's emissions reduction goals; instead, numerous studies conclude that reducing VMT is key to GHG reduction.



PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

- Compact, walkable development reduces overall VMT by shortening trip lengths and enhancing quality of life by making it easier to access destinations. By diverting travel to low-speed local streets (fewer fatal collisions), older drivers with diminishing driving skills can get around safely.
- Development that reduces VMT creates better access to public spaces and increases physical and social activity, improving physical and mental health.
- High VMT-type neighborhoods with limited walkability are linked to adverse mental health outcomes, resulting in social isolation, anxiety, increased blood pressure, headaches, and stress. Residents who live in these areas are more likely to be obese, have a higher Body Mass Index, and have a greater prevalence of hypertension.⁵

REFERENCES

¹ Grunwald, Lombardi, Moravec, Veysey, and Warsing, 2024. Smarter MODES Calculator: Smarter Mobility Options for Decarbonization, Equity, and Safety. Rocky Mountain Institute.

² Smart Growth America and The State Smart Transportation Initiative, 2021. Drivers of VMT and Priority Reduction Strategies: Washington State. Smart Growth America.

³ Lombardi, Moravec, Veysey, and Warsing, 2024. Drive Less, Live More: How States Can Lead the Way in Climate-Smart Transportation. Rocky Mountain Institute.

⁴ Christensen, Cooke, De Barros, Mitchell, Shen, and Wiley, 2024. Freedom to Move: Investing in Transportation Choices for a Clean, Prosperous, and Just Future. Union of Concerned Scientists.

⁵ Currey, Ganson, Miller, and Fesler, 2015. Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) Impacts on the Environment, Human Health, and Fiscal Health. The State Smart Transportation Initiative.