

## The Benefits of Road Diets

---

A road diet, also called a lane reduction, is a technique in transportation planning whereby the number of travel lanes and/or effective width of the road are reduced in order to achieve systemic improvements.

### Safety:

- Reduces chances of car crashes
- Reduces impact of car crashes
- Increases pedestrian and overall safety
- Reduces conflict between people who bike and drive
- Reduces air pollution
- Reduces speeding of cars
- Reduces delays at intersections
- Increases mobility for pedestrians
- Safer access to parking in front of businesses

### Economic:

- More people feel safe and comfortable on the street therefore are more likely to visit it
- Increases revenue for local business
- Low cost solution for safety with high benefit results
- New street infrastructure, like bike racks or transit stops, can provide a buffer to car traffics and increase business to local shops

### Safety Statistics from Road Diets:

- A study from the US Department of Transportation found:<sup>i</sup>
  - A 19 - 47% reduction in overall crashes when a road diet is installed on a previous four-lane undivided facility.
  - A decrease in crashes involving drivers under 35 years of age and over 65 years of age.
  - A reduction in the vehicle speed differential and vehicle interactions, which can reduce the number and severity of vehicle-to-vehicle crashes. Reducing operating speed decreases crash severity when crashes do occur.
  - A reduction in conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles.
  - A decrease in the complexity of crossing maneuvers.
- Four-lane undivided highways are more susceptible to crashes.<sup>ii</sup>

### Operational Statistics:

- A study from the US Department of Transportation showed that road diets can improve traffic flow:<sup>iii</sup>
  - Separating left-turning traffic has been shown to reduce delays at signalized intersections.
  - Side-street traffic can more comfortably enter the main roadway because there are fewer lanes to cross. This can reduce side-street delay.
  - Another study also reported a 7% reduction in vehicles traveling over the posted speed limit.
- Road diets increase the comfort level for bicyclists by increasing separation from vehicles.<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Knapp, Keith, Brian Chandler, Jennifer Atkinson, Thomas Welch, Heather Rigdon, Richard Retting, Stacey Meekins, Eric Widstrand, and RJ Porter. "Road Diet Informational Guide." *Road Diet Informational Guide* (2014): n. pag. Web.

<sup>ii</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation. "Road Diet." *Systemic Safety Measures* (2012): 1-2. Web.

<sup>iii</sup> Knapp, Keith, Brian Chandler, Jennifer Atkinson, Thomas Welch, Heather Rigdon, Richard Retting, Stacey Meekins, Eric Widstrand, and RJ Porter. "Road Diet Informational Guide." *Road Diet Informational Guide* (2014): n. pag. Web.

<sup>iv</sup> Bohn, Michael. "Road Diets: Making Streets Slim Down Is Good For Pedestrians, Businesses And Even Traffic." *Planetizen* (2010): 1. Web.