



# Did You Know a Road Can Go On a Diet? Get the Facts!

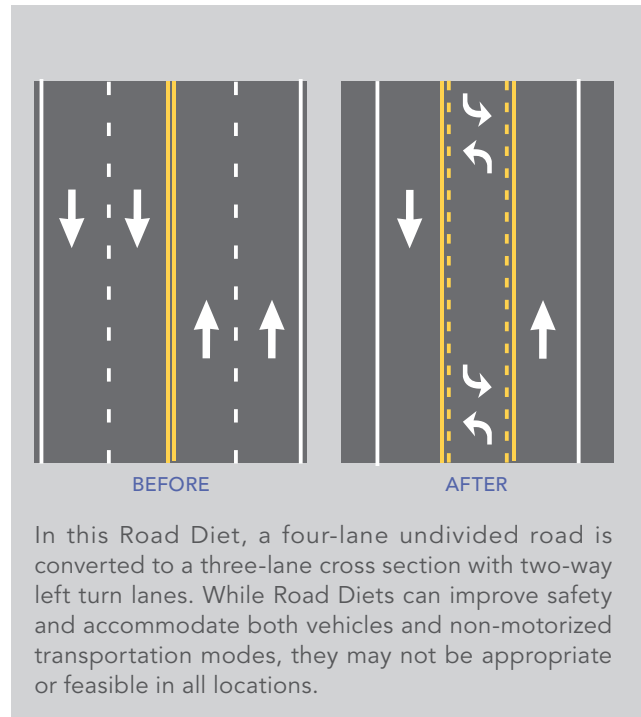
## What is a Road Diet?

A Road Diet is roadway reconfiguration to increase safety and livability at a low cost. Implementing Road Diets improves mobility and accessibility for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation passengers.

## Is a Road Diet Right for You?

Transportation agencies that are considering the implementation of a Road Diet should take into account many factors and objectives, including the following:

- Will it improve safety?
- Can it reduce speeding?
- Would it streamline traffic patterns?
- Could it improve the environment for pedestrians?
- Can it improve bicyclist accessibility?
- Would it enhance transit stops?



## What are the Benefits of a Road Diet?

Road Diets have the potential to improve safety, convenience, and quality of life for all road users. Road Diets consist primarily of restriping and can be relatively low cost if planned in conjunction with reconstruction or simple overlay projects.

For roads with traffic volumes under 20,000 average daily traffic (ADT), there is strong research support for achieving safety benefits through converting four-lane undivided roads to three-lane cross sections with a two-way left turn lane. Operational and design changes associated with Road Diets that promote safety include reduced vehicle speeds and reduced conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.

### Improved Vehicle Safety

Based on the history of Road Diet installments, studies indicate a 19 to 47 percent reduction in overall crashes when a Road Diet is installed on an undivided road that was previously four-lanes. Further studies show that Road Diets can also decrease the number of crashes involving drivers younger than 35 years of age or older than 65 years of age.

Road Diets reduce vehicle-to-vehicle conflicts that contribute to rear-end, left-turn, and sideswipe crashes by removing the four-lane undivided inside lanes that serve both through and turning traffic.



### Benefits to Drivers

In addition to reducing crashes, Road Diets can also improve the roadway in other ways:

- Separating left turns: Separating left-turning traffic has been shown to reduce delays at signalized intersections.
- Side-street cross-traffic: Vehicles on side-streets can more comfortably enter the mainline roadway because there are fewer lanes to cross. This can also reduce side-street delay
- Reduced speed differential: Road Diets reduce speed differential, provide more consistent traffic flow and less stop-and-go traffic.

**19 to 47 percent reduction in overall crashes**

### Improved Livability for All Road Users

Road Diets can be particularly beneficial to pedestrians and cyclists. Road Diets often convert vehicle space into bikelanes or sidewalks. These new features can have a tremendous impact on the mobility and safety of both cyclists and pedestrians.

Even the most basic Road Diet (converting a four-lane undivided road into two through lanes and a center two-way left-turn lane) has benefits for pedestrians and bicyclists, regardless of whether sidewalks or bike lanes are added. The three-lane cross-section also makes crossing the roadway easier for pedestrians, as they have one fewer travel lane to cross and are exposed to moving traffic for a shorter period of time.

A livable community binds transportation facilities to broader opportunities, such as access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safer streets and roads. Road Diets can be an important part of that picture.

### What are the Costs of a Road Diet?

A Road Diet can be a low-cost solution, particularly in cases where only pavement marking modifications are required. In other cases, the Road Diet may be planned in conjunction with reconstruction or simple repaving projects. Under these circumstances, the change in cross-section allocation can be incorporated at no additional cost.

Road Diets may be eligible for all Federal-aid highway programs including, the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) administered by state DOTs and local agencies.

**Get more information about Road Diets:** [www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road\\_diets](http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road_diets)

