ROAD DIET

Safety | Livability | Low Cost

M·Y·T·H·B·U·S·T·E·R·S

Road Diets' Economic Impacts

Myth: A Road Diet will reduce vehicle throughput and hurt business.

An ever-increasing number of transportation agencies are implementing Road Diets, which reallocate vehicle lanes for a number of uses, including accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Road Diets are also a means of traffic calming that can reduce speeding-related crashes and improve overall roadway safety. However, a common concern associated with Road Diets is that the configuration could be harmful to the economic health of the neighborhood due to a reduction of traffic volume along the corridor.

> *"More people on foot are better for businesses."*
>
> Jeanette Sadik-Khan
> Former New York City DOT Commissioner

Source: NYCDOT

Evolution of a street: Road Diet on 9th Ave., Manhattan, NY.

A closer look: What changes for the local businesses?

Road Diets have serviced many communities nationwide and research shows they can positively impact business sales and property values. For local businesses, a Road Diet can improve economic vitality by changing the corridor from a place that people "drive-through" to one that they "drive-to." Replacing vehicle travel lanes with on-street parking options, walking areas, and bicycle lanes can make the street a more attractive "park once" area. With these improved facilities, a motorist is more likely to park, walk around, visit restaurants or shops, and enjoy the setting, benefiting the economy and public safety of the neighborhood. Bicycle and pedestrian transportation groups often organize social events that benefit nearby businesses. Recent studies have shown that roadway modifications, which increase pedestrian volumes, can result in a decline in a neighborhood's crime rate.[1] Several cities have quantified their Road Diet's effect on economic growth.

1 Two-Way Street Conversion: Evidence of Increased Livability in Louisville, William Riggs & John Gilderbloom, Journal of Planning Education and Research, March 2016 vol. 36 no. 1 105-118

Case Studies

Indianapolis' Cultural Trail

In 2008, the City of Indianapolis, IN, used Road Diets to complete the 8-mile long Indianapolis Cultural Trail that encourages biking and walking along the cultural districts, neighborhoods, and the city's greenway system. The redesign brought more people on foot and vitalized the area. Over $300 million of new development was constructed along the route between 2008 and 2012.[2]

Source: Indianapolis Cultural Trail

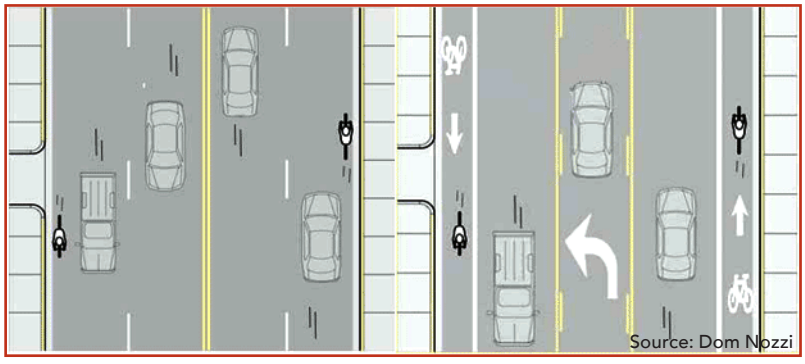
Brooklyn's Vanderbilt Avenue

In New York City, Brooklyn's Vanderbilt Avenue saw a doubling in retail sales in the 3 years following installation of bicycle lanes and a tree-lined median, significantly outperforming borough-wide and city-wide trends.[3]

Source: NYCDOT

Charlotte, NC

The before and after study of a Road Diet implementation in Charlotte, NC, indicated a $43 million increase in the non-residential tax value of properties fronting the East Boulevard Road Diet.[4]


Source: Dom Nozzi

Road Diets are a powerful traffic calming tool for urbanized areas that can help communities improve safety, nurture lively neighborhoods, and increase local business sales. For more examples, FHWA Office of Safety developed a series of 24 case studies about Road Diets throughout the United States, illustrating that Road Diets can positively impact neighborhoods.[5]

2 Road Diet Case Studies. Federal Highway Administration. FHWA Report No. FHWA-SA-15-052. Washington, D.C. Available at: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road_diets/case_studies/roaddiet_cs.pdf.

3 The Economic Benefits of Sustainable Streets, NYCDOT. Available at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/dot-economic-benefits-of-sustainable-streets.pdf.

4 The Economic Merits of Road Diets, Dom Nozzi, 2013. Located at: https://domz60.wordpress.com/2013/03/12/the-economic-merits-of-road-diets/.

5 Road Diet Case Studies. Federal Highway Administration. FHWA Report No. FHWA-SA-15-052. Washington, D.C. Available at: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road_diets/case_studies/roaddiet_cs.pdf.