

Road Diet FAQ

What is a Road Diet?

- A road diet reduces a 4-lane street (two lanes in each direction) to a 3-lane street (one lane in each direction, with a center turning lane) by simply repainting the markings on the road.
- A road diet is expected to reduce overall travel speeds and lower the number of crashes.
- Extensive research has proven that road diets are effective on roads experiencing fewer than 20,000 vehicles per day (vpd).
 - For reference, a street like Gladys has about 7,000 vehicles per day, while College Street has about 30,000 vpd.

Why consider a road diet?

- Big 4-lane streets that don't see a lot of traffic often receive numerous complaints of drivers speeding and an excessive number of preventable crashes. A road diet can provide the following:
 - 19 to 47% reduction in overall crashes
 - 5 mph reduction in average travel speeds
 - 7% reduction in the number of cars travelling over the speed limit

How does a road diet prevent crashes and reduce speeding?

- A 3-lane street eliminates three common possibilities of getting in a wreck when compared to a 4-lane street. A detailed explanation can be found on the following page.
- When there are two travel lanes in each direction, the faster drivers can easily change lanes to pass the slower drivers. However, when there is only one travel lane in each direction, the driver at the front of the pack sets the pace for everyone else.

How can a road with fewer lanes carry the same amount of traffic?

- The main issue with a 4-lane road is when a car must stop in the travel lane and wait to turn left. This impedes the flow of traffic behind them and can lead to rear-ends, unsafe lane changes, or a blocked intersection due to backed up traffic.
- A 3-lane road provides a dedicated lane for cars waiting to turn left. This allows for an unobstructed travel lane at all times, which improves the overall flow of traffic and can actually decrease travel times over a long stretch.

Road Diet Crash Reduction

The red car is stopped waiting to turn left and the other cars are driving normal.

4 Lane Road Possible Collisions

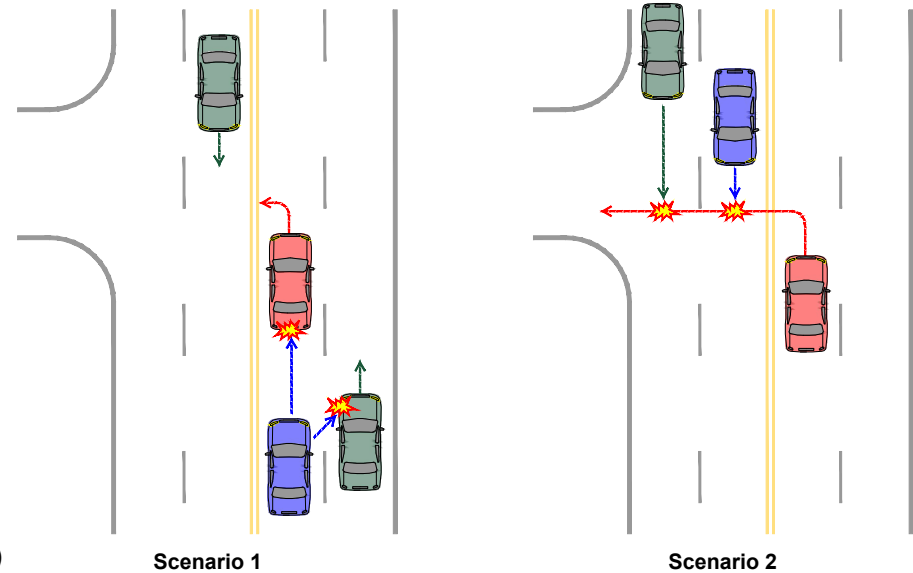
Scenario 1: The blue car is not paying attention and will either rear-end the red car or swerve at the last second and sideswipe the green car.

Scenario 2: The red car has to cross two lanes of oncoming traffic, which gives it two possibilities of getting "t-boned".

A common wreck happens in cases of backed up traffic ahead of the blue and green cars. The blue car may leave a gap and wave the red car ahead. The red and green cars can't see each other, so when the red car makes the left turn, they get hit by the green car.

Since the red car has to stop in the travel lane, all the cars behind them must slow down and stop or switch to the right lane, if possible. This causes additional possibilities of rear-ends and sideswipes along with interrupting the overall flow of traffic.

(Before)



(After)

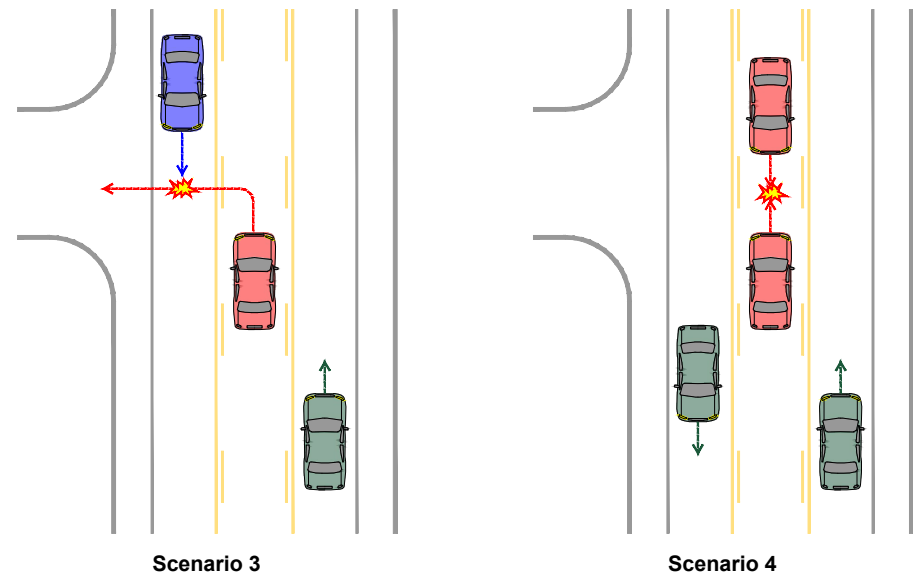
3 Lane Road (Road Diet) Possible Collisions

The same road shown above has been restriped and consists of one travel lane in each direction with a center two-way left-turn lane.

Now, cars turning left can safely wait in their own lane, which significantly reduces the possibility of them getting rear-ended. Additionally, through traffic (the green cars) no longer have to slow down or switch lanes to go around the red car, which improves the overall traffic flow.

Scenario 3: Now the red car only has one possibility of getting hit when making the left turn, instead of two. Additionally, there is no longer a lane of "hidden" traffic, like the green car in Scenario 2.

Scenario 4: The two-way left-turn lane does introduce a new type of collision, however head-on crashes of this type are rare and the cars are often traveling at slow speeds.



Scenario 3

Scenario 4