

Sochi Looks to Ease Traffic Ahead of Olympics

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Sochi authorities have turned to Muscovite methods in the race to ease traffic congestion prior to the Olympic Games.

As in the capital, the Sochi city government is removing superfluous traffic lights and painting over crosswalks at points where underground walkways are available, Vedomosti reported.

Authorities have also launched a Moscow-style surveillance program called Typhoon where cars with cameras roam the city recording incidents of illegal parking.

Parking meters are soon to be installed across Sochi and the nearby Adler district, city officials said.

Fees will be lower in multi-level garages than in the streets so as to encourage drivers to use

garages for long-term parking.

There are 21 parking lots in Sochi currently and several more are to be opened in the upcoming month, raising the total number of parking places in the city to 3,383, officials said.

A detour around Korortny Prospekt, the city's main thoroughfare, should be opened for use in January next year.

The recent innovations were preceded by massive road projects carried out in anticipation of the Games, including construction of new junctions, hundreds of kilometers of roads and a motorway to Krasnaya Polyana, the site of many competitions.

However, the new facilities will not be enough to solve Sochi's transportation problem, said Mikhail Blinkin, director of the Institute of Transport Economics at the Higher School of Economics.

To really ease congestion, the government's policy would have to lower the city's demand for car transport, he said.

While there were 360 cars per every 1,000 Muscovites in 2012, in Sochi more than 400 out of 1,000 residents owned their own vehicles, according to statistics from the local traffic police.

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