

**May 24, 2010 Task Force Meeting  
Correspondence Related to  
Transportation & Mode Share Policies**



A number of individuals have forwarded correspondence to staff related to transportation and mode share policies. That correspondence has been consolidated into this document. This document will be posted with the public correspondence information for the next Task Force meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

**VMT Reduction & Mode Share Comments**

1. I support the goal of a **40%** reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 2040. However, this is a very ambitious goal, and the 30-year time period is a rather long lead time. I suggest that the Task Force establish some milestones along the way, and ask City Council to plan to monitor progress in reaching the ultimate goal. I might suggest, for example:

- 5% reduction by 2015
- 11% reduction by 2020
- 18% reduction by 2025
- 25% reduction by 2030
- 33% reduction by 2035
- 40% reduction by 2040

Other schedules are possible, of course. The important thing is to see whether we are on track as time goes by, and allow for some mid-course correction, if necessary.

2. One of your documents for the meeting is titled "*Local Transportation Policies to achieve up to 20% VMT Reduction*". It lists a number of measures to discourage driving and to incentivize alternative modes of transportation. I would like to suggest several additional measures to discourage parents driving their children to school (and picking them up afterwards), and to discourage teenagers from driving themselves to high school.

- a. Establish no-parking zones (or resident-only parking) on the streets adjacent to schools, to require school children to, at a minimum, walk the last block to school.
- b. Vigorously enforce the restrictions against double parking at the time that school lets out.
- c. Provide secure bicycle parking at every school (e.g., a gated bicycle storage yard, such as they have at San Jose State.)
- d. Charge a substantial fee for on-site student parking at high school. (Waived for disabled youngsters.)

3. Given the very dispersed population in many parts of the city, it would be wise to recognize that automobiles will remain the only practical alternative for at least part of many commutes. It should be city policy, however, to make it easy for people to park at

transit hubs (Caltrain and Light Rail), to take the major part of their trip by public transit. This requires that people be assured of finding parking at these hubs. Much as you might want to discourage all driving, it is better to encourage short trips to the hubs to enable the bulk of the trip to be taken by public transit.

4. In accord with #3, employers should be given parking credit (i.e. a reduction in the minimum parking requirements) if they provide a shuttle service between the place of employment and the nearest transit hub(s).

Respectfully submitted,  
Martin Delson  
(Resident, San Jose)

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Dear Envision 2040 Task Force Members,

Thanks for all of your hard work envisioning a sustainable future for San Jose.

The Cool Cities San Jose Sierra Club Team urges you to recommend **at least 40% VMT (Vehicle Miles Travelled) reduction by 2040!**

**Transportation mode shares to achieve at least 40% VMT reduction by 2040:**

- **15% Bicycling** (Currently in San Jose about 1%, Portland 8%, **Copenhagen already has 37% bike mode share!**)
- **15% Walking**
- **20% Transit**

San Jose needs **complete streets**, with pedestrian accommodations and an **interconnected bicycle network** including:

- More **bike lanes, connected trails, and bicycle boulevards** (highly successful in Palo Alto)
- **Dedicated bike lanes and dedicated bike signals, green lanes** (very effective in Portland and Copenhagen)
- Much more **bicycle access East to West**
- **Bike parking, including secure bike parking at transit hubs**
- **Bicycle sharing stations at transit hubs**

We also need **strong parking policy**, which can **raise significant revenue for San Jose:**

- **Demand-based pricing** for parking
- **Reduced surface parking lots and reduced parking requirements for residential, commercial, and industrial**
- **De-coupling parking** in high-density residential (pay for parking spots separately from residence)

- **Electric Vehicle charging stations** at parking including **smart streetlight poles**

**More public transit** is also a **crucial need for San Jose**, including:

- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**
- **Dedicated signals and transit priority** for Light Rail and Bus
- **Interconnections** with **Caltrain, BART, High Speed Rail**, and local transit
- **Business provided transit passes and shuttles** (which will reduce business parking requirements)
- **Car sharing** facilities

Here are some of the **benefits** of at least **40% VMT (Vehicle Miles Travelled) reduction by 2040:**

- **Reducing Greenhouse Gases (GHG) to lessen the impact of Global Climate Change as required by [AB 32](#)** (which requires reducing GHG by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050)
- **Compliance with [SB 375](#)**, which requires **reducing GHG** through coordinated regional and **local planning** for housing and **transportation**
- **Half of San Jose's GHG is from transportation**
- **Reducing congestion and improving air quality, creating healthier air**
- **Providing alternatives to expensive and resource-intensive private automobiles** increases **Social Equity**
- **Walking and Bicycling** creates a **healthier and happier community**
- **Enabling a car-free lifestyle can reduce cost of living by 10% or more, making San Jose much more affordable, and encouraging local spending**

This is a fantastic article by The Earth Policy Institute entitled **Reclaiming the Streets**, highly relevant to tonight's task force meeting.

[www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/book\\_bytes/2010/pb4ch06\\_ss3](http://www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/book_bytes/2010/pb4ch06_ss3)

Sincerely,

David Marsland and Anne Stauffer

Cool Cities San Jose Sierra Club Team Co-Leaders

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The following article was submitted by Susan Marsland for Task Force consideration:



## Reclaiming the Streets

Earth Policy  
Release  
Book Byte  
May 19, 2010

[www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/book\\_bytes/2010/pb4ch06\\_ss3](http://www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/book_bytes/2010/pb4ch06_ss3)

By Lester R. Brown

Cars promise mobility, and in a largely rural setting they provide it. But in an urbanizing world, where more than half of us live in cities, there is an inherent conflict between the automobile and the city. After a point, as their numbers multiply, automobiles provide not mobility but immobility, as well as increased air pollution and the health problems that come with it. Urban transport systems based on a combination of rail lines, bus lines, bicycle pathways, and pedestrian walkways offer the best of all possible worlds in providing mobility, low-cost transportation, and a healthy urban environment.

Some of the most innovative public transportation systems, those that shift huge numbers of people from cars into buses, have been developed in Curitiba, Brazil, and Bogotá, Colombia. The success of Bogotá's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, TransMilenio, which uses special express lanes to move people quickly through the city, is being replicated not only in six other Colombian cities but in scores elsewhere too, including Mexico City, São Paulo, Hanoi, Seoul, Istanbul, and Quito. By 2012, Mexico City plans to have 10 BRT lines in place.

Beijing is one of 11 Chinese cities with BRT systems in operation. In southern China, Guangzhou officially opened its BRT in early 2010. Already carrying more than 800,000 passengers daily, this system is expected to serve one million passengers per day by the end of the year. In addition to linking with the city's underground Metro in three places, it will soon be paralleled throughout its entirety with a bike lane. Guangzhou will also have 5,500 bike parking spaces for those using a bike-BRT travel combination.

In Iran, Tehran launched its first BRT line in early 2008. Several more lines are in the development stage, and all will be integrated with the city's new subway lines. Several cities in Africa are also planning BRT systems. Even industrial-country cities such as Ottawa, Toronto, New York, Minneapolis, Chicago, Las Vegas, and—much to everyone's delight—Los Angeles have launched or are now considering BRT systems.

Some cities are reducing traffic congestion and air pollution by charging cars to enter the city, including Singapore, London, Stockholm, and Milan. In London—where until recently the average speed of an automobile was comparable to that of a horse-drawn carriage a century ago—a congestion fee was adopted in early 2003. The initial £5 (about \$8 at the time) charge on all motorists driving into the center city between 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. immediately reduced the number of vehicles, permitting traffic to flow more freely while cutting pollution and noise.

In the first year after the new tax was introduced, the number of people using buses to travel into central London climbed by 38 percent and vehicle speeds on key thoroughfares increased by 21 percent. In July 2005, the congestion fee was raised to £8. With the revenue from the congestion fee being used to upgrade and expand public transit, Londoners are steadily shifting from cars to buses, the subway, and bicycles. Since the congestion charge was adopted, the daily flow of cars and minicabs into central London during peak hours has dropped by 36 percent while the number of bicycles has increased by 66 percent.

In January 2008, Milan adopted a "pollution charge" of \$14 on vehicles entering its historic center in daytime hours during the week. Other cities now considering similar measures include San Francisco, Turin, Genoa, Kiev, Dublin, and Auckland.

Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë, who was elected in 2001, inherited some of Europe's worst traffic congestion and air pollution. He decided traffic would have to be cut 40 percent by 2020. The first step was to invest in better transit in outlying regions to ensure that everyone in the greater Paris area had access to high-quality public transit. The next step was to create express lanes on main thoroughfares for

buses and bicycles, thus reducing the number of lanes for cars.

A third innovative initiative in Paris was the establishment of a city bicycle rental program that has 20,600 bikes available at 1,450 docking stations throughout the city. Access to the bikes is by credit card, with a choice of daily, weekly, or annual rates ranging from just over \$1 per day to \$40 per year. If the bike is used for fewer than 30 minutes, the ride is free. The bicycles are proving to be immensely popular—with more than 63 million trips taken as of late 2009.



*Photo Credit: iStockPhoto / Sander Nagel*

At this point Mayor Delanoë is working hard to realize his goal of cutting car traffic by 40 percent and carbon emissions by a similar amount by 2020. The popularity of this bike sharing program has led to its extension into 30 of the city's suburbs and has inspired cities such as London to also introduce bike sharing.

The United States, which has lagged far behind Europe in developing diversified urban transport systems, is being swept by a “complete streets” movement, an effort to ensure that streets are friendly to pedestrians and bicycles as well as to cars. Many American communities lack sidewalks and bike lanes, making it difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to get around safely, particularly where streets are heavily traveled.

This cars-only model is being challenged by the National Complete Streets Coalition, a powerful assemblage of citizen groups, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, AARP, and numerous local and national cycling organizations. Among the issues spurring the complete streets movement are the obesity epidemic, rising gasoline prices, the urgent need to cut carbon emissions, air pollution, and mobility constraints on aging baby boomers. The elderly who live in urban areas without sidewalks and who no longer drive are effectively imprisoned in their own homes.

The National Complete Streets Coalition reports that as of April 2010, complete streets policies are in place in 20 states, including California and Illinois, and in 71 cities. One reason states have become interested in passing such legislation is that integrating bike paths and sidewalks into a project from the beginning is much less costly than adding them later.

Closely related to this approach is a movement that encourages and facilitates walking to school. Beginning in the United Kingdom in 1994, it has now spread to some 40 countries, including the United States. Forty years ago, more than 40 percent of all U.S. children walked or biked to school, but now the figure is under 15 percent. Today 60 percent are driven or drive to school. Not only does this contribute to childhood obesity, but the American Academy of Pediatrics reports fatalities and injuries are much higher among children going to school in cars than among those who walk or ride in school buses. Among the potential benefits of the Walk to School movement is a reduction in obesity and early onset diabetes.

Countries with well-developed urban transit systems and a mature bicycle infrastructure are much better positioned to withstand the stresses of a downturn in world oil production than those that depend heavily on cars. With a full array of walking and biking options, the number of trips by car can easily be cut by 10–20 percent.

As the new century advances, the world is reconsidering the urban role of automobiles in one of the most fundamental shifts in transportation thinking in a century. The challenge is to redesign communities so that public transportation is the centerpiece of urban transport and streets are pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. This also means planting trees and gardens and replacing parking lots with parks, playgrounds, and playing fields. We can design an urban lifestyle that systematically restores health by incorporating exercise into daily routines while reducing carbon emissions and eliminating health-damaging air pollution.

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Adapted from Chapter 6, "Designing Cities for People" in  
Lester R. Brown, **Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization** (New York: W.W. Norton & Company,  
2009), available on-line at [www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/books/pb4](http://www.earthpolicy.org/index.php?/books/pb4).

Additional data and information sources at [www.earthpolicy.org](http://www.earthpolicy.org)

### **Comments Promoting Bicycling**

I am writing to encourage that you include cycling as an alternative way for more of our citizens to commute to work. Please plan for more bike lanes and any infrastructure that would make it safer to commute by bicycle. San Jose should pursue aggressive VMT reduction goals. This will translate to a healthier community with less pollution and happier people.

Regards,  
Ron Aclan  
San Jose, CA 95148

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I have lived in the South Bay area for the past 21 years. I have commuted by bicycle to Moffet Field area a couple days a week when I can. The existing bike trails are a great stress relief from being in traffic, and really make commuting by a bike a lot safer and more fun. Unfortunately, I can only at best use a trail for a third or less of my 17 mi commute across the valley since they are so few.

**WE NEED MORE BIKE TRAILS**

Concerned citizen

Jay Ambrose  
PO Box 1984  
Los Gatos, CA 95031

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My name is Jim Parker and I'm the Tax Director @ SunPower Corporation. I'm writing to encourage you to consider more bicycle and pedestrian facilities in your 2040 General Plan.

SunPower is currently considering a new HQ facility in the South Bay, and two San Jose locations are among the four finalists. One of the criteria we are considering is access to public transit and the bicycle accessibility. We currently have 25% of our South Bay employees commuting by bicycle on a full or part time basis. I've had conversations with some of the employees who have not considered bicycle commuting, and the recurring

theme is they don't feel safe on the roadways because of a lack of contiguous bicycle facilities.

I'd like to especially highlight the issue of freeway over/underpasses. Take the case of the Brokaw Road/880 underpass. There are bike lanes on either side of the underpass, yet when you get to the most dangerous part of this roadway, the merge onto the freeway, the bike lanes abruptly end. It is exactly this type of design that discourages more broader adoption of cycling as modeshare.

(By the way, the Brokaw/880 route would be the central bicycle arterial to one of our potential HQ sites).

I'd like to encourage your consideration of a General plan that considers not just the need to automobiles, but all forms of transit. I'd suggest the following goals:

- 1) San Jose should pursue aggressive VMT reduction goals and pursue those sooner rather than later
- 2) Creating a built environment that facilitates more biking and walking is a good thing for the planet, for traffic congestion and for our collective health

Thank you for your consideration and your continued service to the public good.

Jim Parker  
Tax Director  
SunPower Corporation

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I urge all you bike commuters to speak your mind and articulate a crafty response like I know you can! This is an opportunity for us to share our thoughts and experiences on what is near and dear to our hearts.

I myself ride my bike to work during early mornings hours and I absolutely love the high I'm on by the time I get to work 18 miles later. It is an opportunity to soak up the early morning sunrise, think about my daily tasks and map out my objectives for the day. By the time I arrive I am absolutely ready to start an extremely productive day of work when I ride my bike.

Unfortunately when it's time for me to come home and fight the crazy traffic, I need to ride so damn defensively I am drained and beat by the time I get home. Just last night I heard about someone opening their car door and hitting a passerby biker killing him by forcing them into oncoming traffic. These are in fact issues I am stressed with every time I leave Cisco.

For me there aren't enough bike lanes to get me between home and work. I am forced to deviate from some wonderful paved bike trails to city streets with no bike lanes whatsoever. I am fortunate to be training to ride the upcoming Aids Life Cycle ride from

San Francisco to Los Angeles, and I've been taught the rules of the road and defensive bike riding skills. Other bike riders may not be as lucky. I often encounter bikers riding on sidewalks, riding with no lights, and others just crazy enough to ride the wrong way straight on at me. This is just the beginning of where my mind wonders. Mostly I am concerned with what drivers may do. I am often reminded that I will never win a contest against a car. They are much bigger and stronger than I, and that doesn't even take into considerations things such as careless drivers and drunk drivers. I need to be able to get to work on a paved trail without fearing being hit by a car.

Seriously, I need paved bike trails all the way to work! I don't know about you, but this is our chance to make a difference. Speak your mind and tell your story. I know I plan to plead my case. My path is 65% paved, and that 35% is extremely important to me. Please do your part and share your story.

Thanks for listening,

~Roxanne Povio

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I too commute to work for approximately 3 days per week even in the colder months. I have thrilled to have the new bike trail off of San Tomas Exwy that takes me under HWY 101. But in truth there are many times I have experienced being brushed by cars off of the Expy either they are annoyed I am on the road or they are text messaging. I am not much of a thrill seeker but really enjoy riding my bike to work. Not only am I going green but also saving gas and energy. Please hear our calls of needing more bike trails. I hear daily of cyclist that are either hit, or killed due to drivers just not paying attention.

Robbi McKenzie