

# Transport and social sustainability

## From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia Pre-reading

- 1) What can “social sustainability” mean? .....
- 2) What is a “sedentary lifestyle”, what are the dangers, and which people may be affected? .....
- 3) What happens when institutions, shops, and schools move out of city centers?.....

Cities with overbuilt roadways have experienced unintended consequences, linked to radical drops in public transport, walking, and cycling. In many cases, streets became void of “life.” Stores, schools, government centers and libraries moved away from central cities, and residents who did not flee to the suburbs experienced a much reduced quality of public space and of public services. As schools were closed their mega-school replacements in outlying areas generated additional traffic; the number of cars on US roads between 7:15 and 8:15 a.m. increases 30% during the school year. Yet another impact was an increase in sedentary lifestyles, causing and complicating a national epidemic of obesity, and accompanying dramatically increased health care costs.

## Cities and sustainable transport 1) Read the text and answer questions.

- 1) How are the shapes of cities influenced by their transport systems?
- 2) What did a model of an imagined city look like?
- 3) What were the main arguments against the prevalence of cars in city transport?
- 4) How did transport planning in Europe differ from that in the U.S.A.?
- 5) Where is Curitiba?

Cities are shaped by their transport systems. In *The City in History*, Lewis Mumford documented how the location and layout of cities was shaped around a walkable centre, often located near a port or waterway, and with suburbs accessible by animal transport or, later, by rail or tram lines.

In 1939, the New York World's Fair included a model of an imagined city, built around a car-based transport system. In this "greater and better world of tomorrow", residential, commercial and industrial areas were separated, and skyscrapers loomed over a network of urban motorways. These ideas captured the popular imagination, and are credited with influencing city planning from the 1940s to the 1970s.

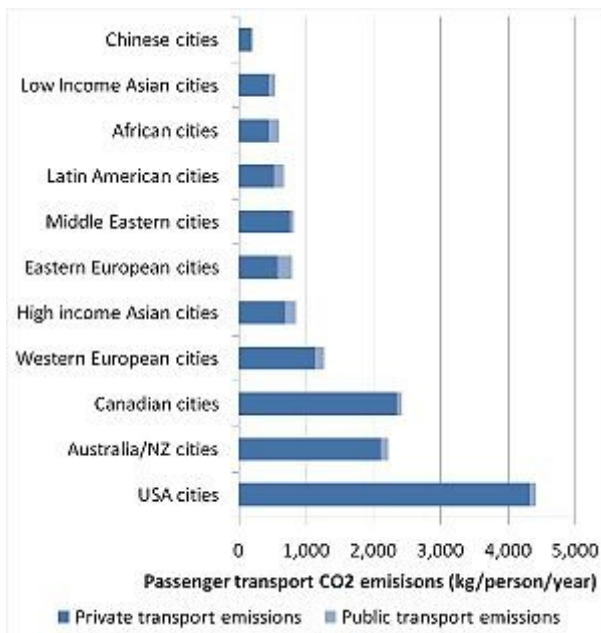
The popularity of the car in the post-war era led to major changes in the structure and function of cities. There was some opposition to these changes at the time. Lewis Mumford asked "is the city for cars or for people?" Donald Appleyard documented the consequences for communities of increasing car traffic in "The View from the Road" (1964) and in the UK, Mayer Hillman first published research into the impacts of traffic on child independent mobility in 1971. Despite these notes of caution, trends in car ownership, car use and fuel consumption continued steeply upward throughout the post-war period.

Mainstream transport planning in Europe has, by contrast, never been based on assumptions that the private car was the best or only solution for urban mobility. For example the Dutch Transport Structure Scheme has since the 1970s required that demand for additional vehicle capacity only be met "if the contribution to societal welfare is positive", and since 1990 has included an explicit target to halve the rate of growth in vehicle traffic. Some cities outside Europe have also consistently linked transport to sustainability and to land use planning, notably Curitiba, Brazil, Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Canada.

**2) Replace these words with synonyms or words with similar meaning.**

- a) walkable centre ..... b) layout of cities.....
- c) skyscrapers looming over st ..... d) The ideas captured the imagination...
- e) child independent mobility..... f) an explicit target .....

**3) Have a look at the diagram and fill in the missing parts of sentences.**



Greenhouse gas emissions from transport vary widely, even for cities of comparable wealth.  
Source: [UITP](#), Mobility in Cities Database

- a) There are major differences in transport emissions between cities; an average U.S. urban dweller emits ..... annually using private transport than a Chinese urban resident.
- b) An average U.S. urban dweller emits ..... as a Western European dweller.
- c) Dwellers in African and Latin American cities emit .....
- d) Dwellers in Australian cities emit ..... dwellers in Canadian cities.
- e) Dwellers in Middle Eastern cities and Eastern European cities .....

#### 4. Writing

Write a short paragraph (2-3 sentences) using the information from the diagram.

EXAMPLE: There are major differences in transport emissions between cities; an average U.S. urban dweller emits 24 times more annually for private transport than a Chinese urban resident, and almost four times as much as a European urban dweller. These differences cannot be explained by wealth alone but are closely linked to the rates of walking, cycling, and public transport use and to enduring features of the city including urban density and urban design.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---