Investments in Mass Transit: A 6 to 1 return

Cities that invest in public transportation realize substantial economic benefits. They include increased real estate values, investments in neighborhood development and direct savings for city residents coping with today's high prices at the gas pump.[5] Mass transit also helps improve mobility and opportunities for the elderly– one of the highest priorities for older Americans. According to the American Public Transportation Association:

- Investments in mass transit provide an economic stimulus far exceeding the original investment, through increased jobs, income, profit and tax revenue - *as much as six dollars gained for every dollar invested.* [6]
- Washington, DC's Metrorail has generated nearly $15 billion in private development along transit lines. Between 1980 and 1990 alone, 40% of the region's retail and office space was built within walking distance of a Metro station. [7]
- Portland, Oregon's MAX light rail system has generated over $3 billion in development along MAX lines since the system was initiated in 1978. [8]
- The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light rail starter line has generated over $922 million in development, surpassing the $860 million cost of the project. [9]
- At the 2005 White House Council on Aging, access to transportation was ranked one of the top three priorities facing older Americans. The elderly also prefer public transport to driving alone by a factor of more than 4 to 1. [10]

New Jobs and Businesses in the Clean Energy Industry

As demand for clean, renewable energy continues to grow, cities that tap into this demand will have a competitive economic advantage. Renewable energy technologies, such as wind and solar power, generate more jobs in construction, manufacturing and installation than fossil fuel-based energy technologies. [11] They also create opportunities for public-private partnerships. As America's fossil fuel supply continues to decline, the importance of investing in clean energy technologies will continue to grow.

Cities promote the development of the clean energy industry in two ways: through agreements to purchase clean energy and by creating incentives for utilities, businesses and ratepayers to opt for clean energy sources.

- The City of Fargo, North Dakota partnered with Cargill Corporation to capture renewable landfill methane gas from the local garbage dump. The city paid to develop the system that captures the gas and puts it in a pipeline, and then sells the gas to Cargill, which burns the gas in its boilers. Cargill saves money on its energy costs, and the City of Fargo gets income from the sale of gas. [12]

Climate-Safe Cities Consistently Ranked the 'Best Places to Live'

Cities that take action to reduce global warming pollution routinely receive local, regional and national acclaim as the best places to raise a family, do business and lead a healthy lifestyle. Popular magazines such as *Money*, *Forbes* and *Reader's Digest* consistently give the highest marks to cities that have sound and sustainable urban planning, effective mass transit, clean air and energy-efficient buildings.[23] These are the same measures that reduce global warming pollution.

Says *Forbes* Magazine:

"Being green (or clean) can have substantial benefits. Transportation, logistics and the supply chain are best practiced where they do not have to fight traffic jams, pollution and a tattered infrastructure. That goes for people's health as well." "America's Greenest Cities," *Forbes Magazine*, 2006

Cities that have taken action on climate change have been praised in the following magazines and newspapers:

- "Best Places to Live," *Money Magazine* 2006; "The Top Cities for Doing Business in America," *Inc. Magazine* 2004; "The Cleanest Cities in America," *Reader's Digest* 2005; "America's Greenest Cities," *Forbes* 2006; "Cities Ranked and Rated," 2004.
- "Mayor has plan to clear the air" - *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, September 27, 2006.
- "Mayor outlines plan to conserve water, use alternative fuel" - *Rocky Mountain News*, July 13, 2006.
- "Mayor steers city toward eco-friendly policies" - *Albuquerque Tribune*, April 8, 2006.

Notes

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4 Ibid.
5 "Mass Transit Still Hot After $3 Gas," USA Today, October 2, 2006, at http://www.usatoday.com/money/2006-10-02-mass-transit-usat_x.htm.
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[14] US Environmental Protection Agency, Green Power Partnership: http://epa.gov/greenpower/partners/gpp_partners.htm.

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[20] Epstein P, Rogers C. Inside the Greenhouse: The Impacts of CO2 and Climate Change on Public Health in the Inner City. (2004). The Center for Health and the Global Environment, Harvard Medical School.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Cifuentes L, et. Al. Assessing the health benefits of urban air pollution reductions associated with climate change mitigation (2000-2020): Santiago, Sao Paulo, Mexico City, and New York City. Environ Health Perspect. 2001 Jun; 109 Suppl 3:419-25.

[23] A news audit conducted in 2006 by Resource Media of city rankings by prominent national magazines found that cities participating in ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection Campaign consistently rank at the top for economic diversity, quality of life and other factors.