

MOBILITY NEWSLETTER

Research and reporting from California, the U.S.,
and around the world.

November 07, 2023



November News Update:

Mobility headlines from around the world



15-minute cities at risk ahead of UK's prime minister's new plan

October 2nd



The "15-minute city" is a concept that advocates for urban planning that allows for residents to access core amenities from anywhere in the city within 15 minutes by bike or by walking. Recently, the concept has come under attack due to conspiracy theories falsely accusing such planning as freedom-restricting, especially to drivers.

In an effort to "back drivers," the UK's prime minister aims to introduce a plan that will prevent councils from creating 15-minute cities. The plan includes reviews of motorcycles in bus lanes and low-traffic neighborhoods, among others. The plans ultimately aim to target "anti-driver" restrictions and traffic-based revenue generation.

Sources: [dezeen](#)

More federal support on the way for transit and electric vehicles

October 6th



“One-third of subway and commuter rail vehicles are more than 25 years old,” said FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez”



The Federal Transit Authority **announced \$197 million to replace old railcars**, citing maintenance costs and poor accessibility as major drivers for the updated system. Funds will be available through the [Rail Vehicle Replacement Program](#).



The IRS has released support for **Clean Vehicle Tax Credits** through guidance that will allow access to Inflation Reduction Act credits “at the point of sale,” a highly anticipated move. While consumers can enjoy lower up-front costs, dealers can leverage streamlined processes to offer such credits.

Prepaid cards prove valuable for clean transportation subsidy programs

October 17th

In early 2022, the California Integrated Travel Project partnered with [Valley Clean Air Now \(CAN\)](#) on a demonstration project to design and develop a universal Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) equity charging card. The preloaded and reloadable contactless debit card makes transportation easy, improving access to ZEV charging, transit, bike sharing, and scooter sharing, among others. Participants were largely **low-income ZEV drivers** and other candidates throughout the **Central Valley** and **Southern California**.

With the demonstration project complete, we're happy to announce that it proved that prepaid cards play a big role in **distributing subsidies** and incentives to **those who need them most**.

Sources: [Cal ITP](#)

74%

of survey respondents agreed the card helped them get familiar with contactless payments.

87%

of survey respondents reported that the card allowed them to drive their Zero Emission Vehicle the same or more.

30%

of Phase 2 participants tried more than one sustainable mode of travel, averaging 2.5 different alternatives..

20+

charging brands used during the demonstration, confirming the need of an open loop solution.

Source: Cal ITP

In 2021, an estimated \$7,000 per truck was lost due to congestion

October 26th

According to the American Transportation Research Institute, congestion on the nation's roads cost the trucking industry a record **\$94.6 billion** in 2021.

California topped the list for worst congestion costs. Here are the impacts by the numbers:

- 1.27 billion hours waiting in traffic
- California accounted for \$9 billion in congestion costs
- Estimated an **additional 69 million metric tons of carbon** emitted from idling

All of these impacts are in turn passed down to consumers and the environment.



CARB approves updates to its Community Air Protection Program

October 26th

The California Air Resources Board approved **Blueprint 2.0**, a statewide strategy designed to support community-driven efforts to **improve local air quality** through the **Community Air Protection Program**. The program empowers members of disadvantaged communities by placing them “at the **decision-making** table” with their local air districts. The update stands to improve support for 19 currently selected communities and improve pathways for more to participate.

The changes come as a culmination of lessons learned from the program in its first five years. **Since 2018 the program has saved...**

- 17,100 tons of nitric oxide
- 1,390 tons of Reactive Organic Gases
- 790 tons of particulate matter

Source: [CARB](#)



Source: Microsoft 2023

CARB approves updates to its Community Air Protection Program

October 26th

The major changes expected from **Blueprint 2.0** involve the introduction of three tools including...

Access to community air grants

Funds support technical assistance and community participation.

Flexible incentives funds

Air districts can now create new incentives that can better meet community priorities.

Community enforcement

Centralizes community priorities, using a geographic area-focused investigation strategy.

Past Actions

- Fleet replacement for zero emission vehicles
- Route planning to reduce mobile emissions sources
- Electric charging infrastructure
- Low-income car-sharing programs
- Transit improvements
- Required increased transportation demand management strategies for new developments
- Multilingual outreach and education
- Many more...

Source: [CARB](#)

Montreal paves the way for lower cost rapid transit

October 30th

Earlier this Summer, Montreal unveiled the first five stations of its planned 42-mile light metro rapid transit network, **Réseau express métropolitain (REM)**. This first phase has already achieved over 30,000 riders daily since its launch. The project is also making a splash in the industry for its low cost for an infrastructure of such a scale (see right).

Key Findings

- Leveraged “**existing rights of way**” and existing infrastructure, like repurposing tunnels, for the route.
- Prioritized embedding the new rail project in the **existing bus network**
- Fast delivery thanks to a single entity to guide the lifetime of the project, leading everything from financing to delivery. This **avoided negotiation delays** that would otherwise be expected if multiple entities were involved in contracting.
- **Support from political partners** smoothed the project from streamlined permitting to shielding from criticism due to “NIMBY”-ism.*

*NIMBY stands for “not in my backyard,” which alludes to when a person opposes some developments locally but has no objections for the same developments in other geographic places.

Project	Cost per mile, in millions
Réseau express métropolitain, Montreal	138M
Interborough Express, New York	396
Green Line extension, Boston	485
Blue Line extension, Montreal	1,270
D Line extension, Los Angeles	1,380
BART extension, Santa Clara County, CA	2,030
Second Avenue Subway Phase 2, New York	4,300

Source: Transit Costs Project at New York University's Marron Institute

Sources: [Bloomberg](#)

