

## Walkable cities: a global movement

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## Walk21?

- Champions the development of healthy, sustainable and efficient communities where people choose to walk
- Supports professionals
  - Walking promotion in cities, regions and countries:
    - Benchmarking
    - Masterclasses for local professionals
    - Roadshows to inspire practitioners and the political powerbase
  - National conferences, workshops and walkshops
  - The International Walking Charter
  - Walk21 international conferences
- [www.walk21.com](http://www.walk21.com)

## Why focus on walking?

- Transport issues
  - Everybody walks
  - Every journey has a walk component
  - Historically, walking has been ignored
- Non-transport issues
  - There is more to walking than walking – meeting, sitting, playing etc
  - Promoting walking engages many non-transport professions – retail, urban regeneration, social inclusion, crime reduction
- By promoting walking, everyone benefits

## Walking at the Millenium

- The forgotten mode
  - Invisible in governance
  - Lack of knowledge, data
- Walking seen as a transportation matter only
  - Infrequent partnerships with health, community etc
- Walking defined as a problem
  - Focus on safety issues, rather than strategic opportunities
- Vocabulary: *'The Pedestrians Association'* (UK, 1929 - 2001) becomes *'Living Streets'*



## Walking benefits: walking is more than just a mode of transport

- Supports inclusive mobility
- Encourages community cohesion
- Increases personal security
- Produces economic health
- Provides freedom for children
- Underpins public transport

## An explosion of interest around the world in walking

### The Walk21 Conference Series

- First global conference, *Walk21*, London, February 2000 aimed to:
  - Confirm importance of walking issues
  - Provide an international platform
  - Highlight best practice
  - Identify research, networking and funding opportunities
- Then Perth, San Sebastian, Portland, Copenhagen, Zurich, Melbourne, Toronto, Barcelona, New York City, The Hague, Vancouver

## Walking is a pre-condition for an economically healthy city

A good walking environment is a good economic environment



The slower we travel, the more we spend

## Direct economic benefits of improvement of retail environments

### IMMEDIATE

- Increased footfall
- Longer stays (hours/days)
- More expenditure
- More intensive commercial exploitation of area
- More uses and spend on the street
- Increased property values
- Higher rents
- More repair/regeneration of sites therefore spin off construction investment
- New business formations
- New traders and therefore increased 'pulling power'
- More & varied jobs

### STRATEGIC

- Improvement in town's retail rankings
- New strategic roles for public space stimulating tourism spend
- Confidence booster promoting wider urban regeneration
- Ability to integrate latent economic assets
- Creation of new economic quarters
- Improvement in quality of life assisting workforce recruitment and retention
- Creation of new image – cafe society, festival city, seasonal city, evening economy hub – to stimulate profile and investment

After Michael Loveday

## Why is this important?

### The economy

- USA: high and rising % of income on transport and health care
- These 2 are related! And they will continue to rise!

### Compare:

- Copenhagen richer than every US city
- 50% of trips by foot and bike
- Denmark's health cost is 8.5% GDP

### Question:

Which economy will be competitive into the future?

## Examples of major progress in walking

- Local/neighbourhood e.g. Active and Safe Routes to Schools
- Complete Streets
- World cities
- Benchmarking against best practice

## Bailey Middle school, somewhere in the USA, 10.35 a.m.



### Bailey Middle School 3:40 pm



### ASRTS (Active and Safe Routes to School) goals

- Where it's safe, get kids walking and biking
- Where it's not safe, make it safe



### Local interventions: Active and safe routes to school

#### USA

- First activity not until 1997
- \$612m in 2005-2009



#### Elsewhere

- International Walk to School Month (IWALK)
  - 2000: 8 countries
  - 2009: 40 countries, over 3 million children
- UK: A School Travel Plan in every school by 2010



### School Travel Initiatives in Canada 14 years of growth

By 2010:

- Nova Scotia
- Ontario
- Manitoba
- Saskatchewan
- Alberta
- Quebec
- British Columbia
- The Yukon



By 2012, growth to:

- Nfld & Labr.
- PEI
- New Brunswick
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

[www.saferoutestoschool.ca/partnership/](http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/partnership/)

### Dieting main roads

The arterial strip problem



The complete streets solution

- Reducing speeds and traffic danger
- Widening footpaths, adding cycle lanes
- Improving public transport to encourage modal switch
- Greening the street and making it more attractive



Times Square, 2010: 'Turning a famous square into a famous place'

"Once you realise that you can use your streets to improve the quality of life, the economics and the environmental health of your city, I think that's a transformative moment"

Janette Sadiq-Khan

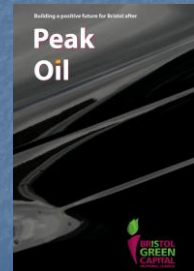
"It's shifted the paradigm for what a street and sidewalk experience is supposed to be like in New York City"

## The world has changed: we are in a new environment

- Growth and change must be achieved in a new environment of:
  - Climate change
  - High fuel cost, price churn and reduced availability
  - Obesity crises
  - Ageing of the population (= >disability)
  - Economic instability
- Opportunities
  - The imperative of Peak Oil
  - Demographic shifts

## Opportunities: Peak Oil

- We are now finding one barrel of oil for every three that we use: we've spent most of our oil lottery winnings
- Much new oil from deep sea fields and tar sands is very expensive and energy inefficient, exacerbating climate change
- We are not going to have any choice about travelling less, shorter, greener and smarter



## First reactions in the USA to fuel price volatility



## Opportunities: Going with the demographic flow

### Example one: Generation Y

- 2/3 of Y's want to live in a walkable community, NOT in a suburban tract ranch
- The first 'smart growth' generation
- Huge coming shift in the market: not a question any more of promoting smart growth, but a new generation demanding it

## Opportunities: Going with the demographic flow

- Example two: The 'Silver Tsunami' of boomers
- Richest will move to the urban core; rest will 'age in place'
- Irony: suburbs (that grew to raise boomers) have to be re-purposed (to allow boomers to live out last days)

## Opportunities: the role of Government

- Heart Foundation, 2010:
  - "A whole-of-government approach is crucial to the creation of 'walkable' communities in new and existing developments"
- Need for partnerships:
  - "Suppression of mutual loathing in pursuit of a grant"

## Value for Money: An Economic Assessment of Investment in Walking and Cycling

Adrian Davis, 2010

- DfT's economic appraisal method applied to three Links to Schools schemes in 2005
  - Bootle: improving an existing route close to a number of schools: BCR 29.3:1
  - Hartlepool: Toucan crossing and general infrastructure improvement: BCR 32.5:1
  - Newhaven: A new shared-use path linking two secondary schools: BCR 14.9:1
- *"Investment in infrastructure and to facilitate increased activity levels amongst local communities through cycling and walking is likely to be a 'best buy' for our health, the NHS at large in terms of cost savings, as well as for the road transport sector"*

## Key issues and conclusions

- Around the world, there is a stunning renaissance in interest in walking as transport and user of public space
  - Hardware: making places walkable, makes them liveable
  - Software: encourages people to use public space
- Walkability has a positive impact in a range of areas
  - One methodology, multiple outcomes

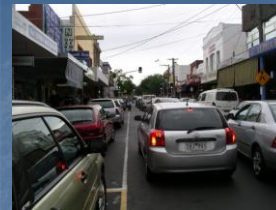
## International Charter for Walking



David Miller, Mayor of The City of Toronto, signs the Charter

Eight Principles supported by 34 actions

A framework for local policy and investment



The key question.....

What kind of place do you want to live in?

Final thought: walkers are the indicator species for quality of life



Thank you!

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