



# The UN Car Free Days series: On the Road to Sustainability

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# Why is the UN interested in Car Free Days?

- An equitable and accessible transport system provides the foundation for sustainable development.
- Millennium Development Goals: alleviate poverty *transport provides access to health care facilities, schools, and employment and thus, if equitable and accessible, can help to alleviate poverty*
- World Summit on Sustainable Development: promote policies that enhance economic growth and social equity while protecting the environment  
*Car Free Days aim to create a long term vision of the city that takes all three pillars of sustainability into consideration*



# Rough History



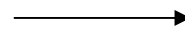
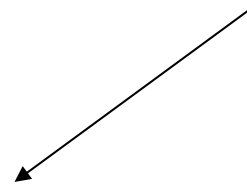
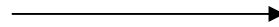
H.B. Creswell, British  
Architectural Digest 1890s:  
“But the mud! And the noise!  
And the smell! All these  
blemishes were the mark of the  
horse.”



Car brings promise:  
cleaner, quieter, able to  
move more weight over  
long distances. Problem:  
replaced each horse with  
ten cars – in some urban  
centers, cars move  
slower than horses did



# Logic: build more roads



Search for  
equilibrium: Induced  
Demand

Sustainable?



# Change Perspective

- Increasing use of private vehicles not a cause of city's ailments but a symptom of our poor understanding of how a city works
- Problem not too much traffic but *not enough space for people*
- How does this change the way we plan our cities?
  - ~ Need for density, mixed modes of transport and public space
  - ~ absolute reduction in use of private vehicles not a negative → reduced congestion, greater efficiency



# Car Free Days: Pattern Break

- Eric Britton, EcoPlan and the Commons

Car Free Days provide an opportunity to break the normal pattern of behavior, take a breath, and participate in a dialogue about the future of the city – to create a new *long term* vision about how the city should grow and develop



# Growth of Car Free Days

- 1961: Jane Jacobs, “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” – car restraint in cities
- 1974: Four Sunday Car Free Days in Switzerland in response to Oil Crisis
- June 1996: Reykjavik, Iceland.
- 9 September 1997: La Rochelle, France
- September 22, 1998, 34 French Cities “En ville sans moi voiture” → Develops into European Car Free Day and Now World Car Free Day
- February 2000, Car Free Sundays in Italy
- Thursday, 24 February 2000, First of now annual Bogotá Car Free Days
- 19 April 2001: Earth Car Free Day as part of Earth Day activities: over 500 cities around the world



# UN Car Free Day series

- ‘Ground level’ Preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development
- 6-8 February 2002: Colombia Car Free Day and Regional Practicum
- 8-10 May 2002: Fremantle Car Free Day and Regional Practicum
- 26 August 2002: Presentation at WSSD via Virtual Exhibit





# En Bogotá Sin Mi Carro

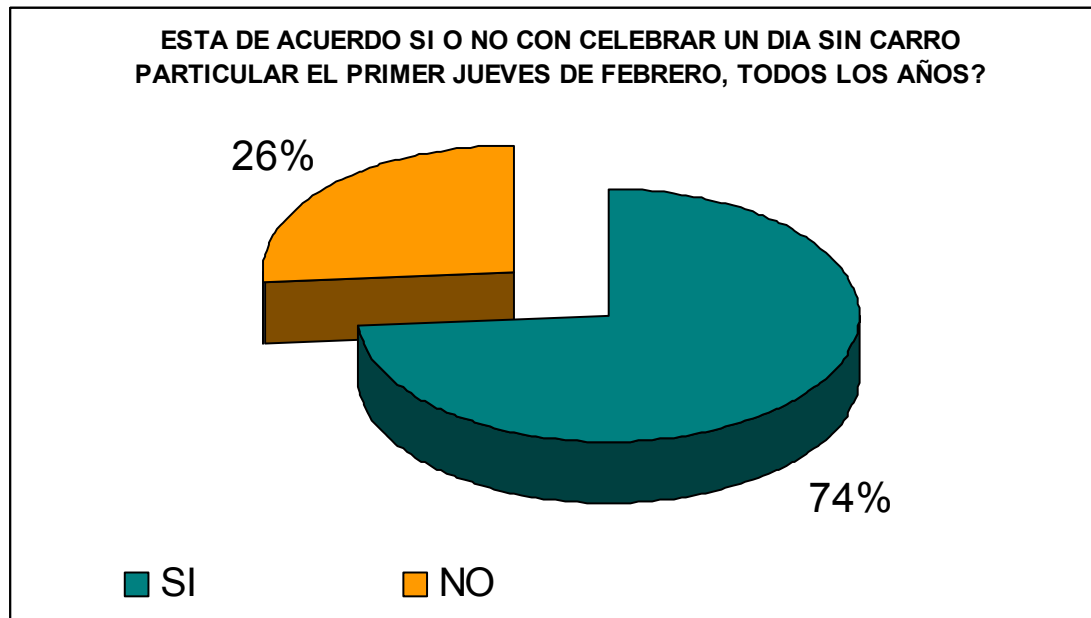


- Largest Car Free Day in the world – only event that is completely compulsory
- What makes it work?
  - ~ high density
  - ~ culture of citizenship ensures compliance
  - ~ strong culture of alternative transport use
- Transport not only an issue of protecting the environment but promoting social equity through equal access to public space
- Emphasis on increased efficiency through diminished use of private vehicles



# Colombia Car Free Day

- Ministry of Environment:
  - ~ 7 February: 4 cities      ~ 24 October: 6 cities
  - ~ Seeking annual Colombia Car Free Day
  - ~ Met with positive response from citizens





# Regional Practicum for Mayors

- Mayors, city officials and experts from across Latin America drafted the Mayor's Declaration for the WSSD – Identified following as major issues of concern:
  - ~ Disproportionate public spending on the needs of private vehicles and the tendency toward excessive utilization of private vehicles
  - ~ Insufficient expenditure on public and alternative transport
  - ~ Road safety
  - ~ Environmentally detrimental effects of the transport sector, especially air quality



# Regional Practicum for Mayors

- Agreed Car Free Days are an effective way of, among others,
  - ~ Improving perceptions about public and alternative transport
  - ~ Promoting greater citizen participation in the policy dialogueand applauded Bogotá for its efforts. A number of cities expressed interest in holding their own Car Free Days.



# A completely different approach



- City of Fremantle is a small, historic city in Western Australia.
- Highest car-dependence rates in Australia
- Very limited public transport
- Car Free Day used to raise awareness of transport issues and promote active participation of citizens



# Shed Your Car Day Objective

- To demonstrate the benefit to business of reduced car traffic in Fremantle
- To encourage people to experience available public transport options
- To encourage a greater "sense of community" and safety within Fremantle
- To encourage behavior change towards reduced car use

SHED YOUR CAR DAY



2002 FREMANTLE



# Small Space, Wide Range of Activity





# Regional Practicum for Mayors

- Mayors, city officials and experts from across Australia and New Zealand
- Issues of concern:
  - ~ Wide spread Car Dependence
  - ~ Lack of public support for public and alternative transport
  - ~ Environmentally detrimental effects of the transport sector
    - ~ City growth patterns



# Regional Practicum for Mayors

- Widespread support for Fremantle's initiative
- Eight Australian cities have pledged to hold Car Free Days this year
- City of Christchurch, New Zealand pledged to hold Car Free Day



# Conclusion: Citizen Participation

- Most effective solutions are those that involve citizens in dialogue
- focus on the positive effects of change rather than demonizing or placing blame
- By creating a transportation system that at least provides equal access to all citizens, city governments can provide the foundation of possibility.

