

A photograph of a city street scene. In the foreground, a man wearing a dark jacket, glasses, and a face mask is riding a bright orange shared bicycle. He has a black backpack. To his left, a woman in a light pink top and face mask is walking. In the background, other pedestrians and a motorcyclist are visible, all wearing face masks. A traffic light with a red light is visible in the distance. The scene is set on a paved urban street with buildings and trees in the background.

**SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY  
POST-COVID-19: HAVE WE GOT THE TOOLS  
WE NEED?**

**20 MAY 2020**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

# A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

In May 2020, during the global COVID-19 crisis and lockdown, FIA Foundation hosted an online meeting which brought together key partners from across the international sustainable transport community to:

- **Discuss** the implications of the COVID-19 crisis on sustainable mobility;
- **Consider** the emerging evidence of city actions in response to COVID-19; and
- **Identify** what further tools or resources could be useful to support the locking-in of those actions.

As valued partners and grantees of the Foundation, in some cases over many years, those who took part in the discussions were world-leading experts, individuals and

organisations, whose perspective on these issues and engagement in framing solutions is essential.

Caroline Watson, C40 Cities Programme Director for Transportation and Urban Planning, gave an insight into the very latest developments across the C40 city network, and Elliot Treharne, Head of Air Quality for Greater London Authority (GLA), described recent events in London. Both emphasized the need for well-resourced support and capacity-building going forward from the crisis, but also reinforced the importance of positivity and bravery in taking this chance to drive real improvements for healthier and safer streets.

The discussion - which is summarised below - considered five main issues:

## 1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport has taken a massive hit as a result of COVID-19. People are more fearful of using it, and in many cities have been told to avoid using it if at all possible. In Wuhan public transport use has fallen from 56% to 24%, a trend replicated among many other cities. In the medium term, social distancing rules may mean that only 30% of previous capacity may be available for months to come. Increased patterns of home working are also likely to reduce demand on the public transport system. This is likely to have huge long-term impacts on revenues.

Operators in cities around the world have put a huge amount of effort into cleaning vehicles and carriages in order to reassure riders and are supporting other means of enabling social distancing on their services. For example, in Auckland, New Zealand, an app supports people to social distance when seeking to access public transport, by telling them how many people are on the bus which is coming, and whether it is likely to be safe to board.

Ridership is returning in some countries recovering from COVID-19, particularly where strict sanitization rules have been introduced. Improving the quality of public transport may be counterintuitive to some policymakers now, as they identify it with risk. However, cities which

are considering actions to create more dedicated lanes, concentrate on essential routes, and support better integration with shared mobility services, are likely to emerge with better public transport services as a result.

In terms of the interlinked issues of climate challenge, equity of access, air quality and congestion, the roles of shared mobility and public transport are key and must be supported, through finance investment and subsidy schemes as a crucial element of any recovery package.

“People are becoming more fearful of public transport... and even after lockdown is lifted there is a risk that people will prefer to use their car.”



**Caroline Watson,**  
C40 Cities

## » Challenge - How to preserve the role of public transport

## 2 PRIVATE VEHICLE USE

Private vehicle use dropped dramatically during the lockdowns which took place in most major cities. However, there is a concern that there will be a huge increase in the number of journeys taken by car in response to the concerns about public and shared mobility identified above. For example, car use in Wuhan has already increased from 34% to 66% after the lockdown ended.

Some surveys say that many drivers will continue to eschew their cars once there is greater freedom to drive, in many cases because of the benefits of cleaner air which they have seen during lockdown. In London there has been around a 50-60% reduction in travel more generally compared to the previous year. Emissions were already down 35% due to the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), but there has also been an additional reduction of 26% as a result of the lockdown. It is positive that London has implemented a strengthened congestion charge, but many other cities have delayed introduction of Low Emission Zones. These need to be put in place quickly.

“Are we at a turning point for car dependency. I hope so, but jury is still out. After the financial crisis, the car industry got back to trend growth in two years... We have to keep up the huge struggle on vehicle standards.”



David Ward,  
Global NCAP



GLA's Head of Air Quality, Elliot Treharne spoke about London's Ultra Low Emission Zone.

The share of the population vulnerable to the effects of air pollution has increased and will continue to increase as many people who have had COVID-19 are left with long-term respiratory illness and chronic disease as a result.

Any bounce-back in vehicle use reinforces the need to ensure that regulations and vehicle standards, including for freight are maintained, implemented and even tightened further – particularly the EU standards on CO<sub>2</sub>, which are due to be reviewed next year. It is also important to monitor the secondhand car market, as electric vehicle (EV) and other low carbon vehicles are not yet affordable in many places. One area that may also need more focus is motorcycle emissions as there may be a widespread shift to these as a way of commuting long distances.

Direct-to-customer deliveries are being used more than ever before. However there are risks to the expansion of new EV models, including from low oil prices. Initial analysis suggests that these low emission options such as e-cargo bikes and electric vans need to be supported in order to secure a real market share, such as the policy of cash subsidies for clean vehicles implemented by the Chinese Government.

### » Challenge – How to avoid even greater car dependency

## 3 WALKING AND CYCLING

The lockdown has seen many more people walking and cycling in cities. A switch to these modes would in the longer term have real air quality and health benefits. Whilst there is not yet evidence of the full extent of this switch from public transport or cars, or indeed of its permanence, many cities have been introducing temporary infrastructure changes to support them.

For example, Auckland now has 22km of new bike lanes around the city, and have closed areas in the city centre to traffic. Milan, which was one of the first cities to experience the health impacts from COVID-19, has converted 35km of streets to pop-up bike lanes. Stanley Park in Vancouver has been dedicated entirely to walking and cycling.



There have been some other key 'game changers' in the reallocation of street space, such as in Paris where businesses can make a request to the city to turn parking bays into space for retail. Barcelona has also radically increased its pedestrian network.

Ultimately, to enable cities to manage the huge pressure on the public transport system which social distancing will require many more people will need to walk and cycle - leading to potentially a tenfold increase in cycling and a five fold increase in walking.

**"One of the real positives of the lockdown has been that people have noticed how clean the air is, they have had more space on the streets and there has been an increase in walking and cycling."**



**Elliot Treherne**  
Greater London Authority

This is a huge opportunity to ensure that cities do not simply revert to car dependency. These moments for change are not a new phenomena; pandemics have always shaped cities. From the boulevards in Paris to the embankment in London, the horrors of a health emergency have also offered the opportunity to re-shape for the better. In the past the challenge was dirty water - ours is dirty air.

Aspects of lockdown may help with that as many people will no longer return to working in offices five days a week. However, more homeworking whilst it is a low-cost solution that should be supported, is not for all jobs, and those who need to travel longer distances to get to job and services will still need access to safe routes once they reach the city. The Mayor of London's [Streetspace plan](#) aims to reallocate road space, where appropriate throughout a wide network of routes that extend out towards the suburbs and to support the onward trips of commuters who arrive at the big mainline stations. Two bridges across the river Thames will be dedicated to buses, walkers and cyclists, thereby creating the largest car free area in any major capital city.

We also need also to re-think growth and land-use assumptions, particularly around density, and retail space in city centres. As Paris has shown, with its '15 minute city' concept, there could be a switch towards a new local model, where services and employment are local and journeys are shorter which may be more resilient and sustainable. In developing countries there may also be an impact on informal settlements.

Safe spaces for pedestrians and cycling are vital and clearly part of the solution. Wider pavements will be needed, and dedicated spaces on roads for cyclists. Designing the right infrastructure will prevent an increase in the number of accidents. Many existing urban roads are rated by the International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) as 1-star for walking and cycling. As cities cater to more demand for active transport options they must also look at how to improve safety. There will be co-benefits to providing low-cost solutions that could help low- and middle- income countries.

Our urban areas currently are a decimated space for children, and all too often women feel unsafe in many of the mobility modes they use. There has also been tremendous burden on families, especially women, in this period. City design cannot simply be safe and green - it must also be just. That means addressing the needs of these groups, as well as people with disabilities, and recognising that it the poorest citizens who already rely most on cycling and walking.

We also need to be careful about speed. Low speed is an enabler for safer cities.

School streets is something that London was working on ahead of lockdown, but now accelerating it. In order to ensure that there is sufficient

space outside schools for people entering and leaving, road closures are out in place for specific times at the beginning and end of the day - to make it harder for cars, easier for walking and cycling, and to enabling social distancing. A network of 'school streets' could reduce exposure for children.



## » Challenge - How do we make permanent the temporary improvements for walking and cycling?

## 4 RECOVERY PACKAGES

The COVID-19 crisis has had a massive impact across our communities, our societies, and our economies. There is a great deal of on-going discussion about the need for governments to offer general and more tailored support, from transfer payments to the unemployed and furloughed, to financial injections into ailing industries and sectors.

There is a growing call for integrated green recovery packages, which do not take us back to business as usual, but rather a new normal - based on reducing pollution, poverty, and increasing resilience - with sustainability at its heart.

Seen through a sustainable mobility lens, this will involve resisting some of the calls from established fossil-fuel dependent modes for bail-outs which do not at the very least, include ambitious moves towards zero-carbon compatible investments. Lending compatible with the aims of the Paris Climate Agreement should be at the heart of the response, with clear alignment with the globally agreed SDGs and climate ambitions.

This is not an inferior path to take. Many of the modes under discussion offer real economic and job creation

“WRI is proposing ‘build back better’ - we can’t go on with ‘business as usual’. There are a few things we must do. Firstly, we have to protect mass transportation. We cannot go back to car dependency. Second is safe space for pedestrians and cyclists.”



**Claudia Adriaola**  
World Resources Institute

opportunities, whilst a green recovery that takes an integrated approach to health, climate and air quality, will lead to beneficial financial savings or benefits in many areas such as health also or ‘co-benefits’ in those areas too.

## 5 WHAT SUPPORT IS NEEDED?

Some city leaders are already making bold political choices to embed the changes they made as a response to COVID-19 into the mobility plans of their cities for the medium and long term. Translating what has turned out to be the ‘biggest street experiment ever’ into permanent investments will move us on from the tactical urbanism we have been practicing for too long, into real change in a way which could not hitherto have been imagined.

The political dimension of this is critical, and little can replace high-level political commitment such as that shown by Mayor Sadiq Khan in London, or Mayor Hidalgo in Paris. In addition, there are funding requirements which have become all the more critical in a time of falling revenues from public transport and economic downturn.

During a period of economic upheaval, this is unlikely - or at the very least difficult - without mutual support, capacity-building, and resources for the policymakers and politicians. It is vital therefore that more direct and practical support emerges from the sustainable mobility community itself.

There is no ready roadmap for this crisis. Cities need to talk to each other to see how to address this challenge, and how to capitalize on the opportunities. Some - particularly African - cities are overwhelmed

“Cities are looking at each other for guidance, direction and ideas more than ever. We need to continue to shine a light on the great examples so that cities hear from each other and shine a light on what is possible and have a positive peer pressure.”



**Heather Thompson**  
Institute for Transportation  
and Development Policy

simply dealing with the crisis itself, and are discovering that their transport systems are ‘not fit for purpose’. Authorities which are seeking to provide safe and sustainable mobility options may not have historically prioritized walking and cycling, and so there is ‘hand holding that needs to be done’. Cities face tough political choices, and so peer support and learning from other cities and support networks such as C40, ICLEI, SLOCAT and ITDP are really important.

**“Let’s not forget to pick the low-hanging fruit... and see what we can do in avoiding unnecessary mobility, to keep traffic off the road.”**



**Ferry Smith**  
ANWB & FIA Policy  
Commission

Most cities need detailed guidance on how to implement sustainable urban mobility plans in the short-, medium- and long-term. Guidance is also needed about how to make cities more resilient to future pandemics. These capacity-building resources exist already in many parts of the sustainable mobility community. A toolkit and common platform which draws them together would be a useful resource.

Good evidence and data is essential to support the advocacy required to build change. For example, quantifying the increase in accessibility delivered by the temporary measures to support walking and cycling - not just the air quality and greenhouse gas benefits, but also increased urban access - will be useful for the political debate that will come, for example around the proposed implementation of a future zero emission areas. By the same token, as we promote cycling and walking, we need

to help guide cities to monitor air quality using micro-air sensors and other innovative data sources so that we can incentivize policymakers to do more because of the widespread benefits which are reported.

Beside access to good practices, we also need to address the issue of access to funding for cities. All too often, when funds are made available they are funneled through state governance to other priorities, leaving cities in need. And, of course, we need to make sure there’s a constructive dialogue between public and private sector.

Understanding public attitudes and level of support around street closures, and improved walking and cycling facilities is vital. There is for example some evidence of strong public support for a lot of measures, particularly around air quality because of COVID-19 is a respiratory condition.

Whilst everyone in the sector will have their own value to add, it would be extremely helpful in terms of clarity and effectiveness if we could align our advocacy and share a common message, which for example prioritizes actions, and identifies quick wins.

We know what needs to be done - for example reduced speed, more space for pedestrians, avoid, shift, and improve - to support recovery, to clean up air and to keep kids safe. We should keep this topic on the agenda, and build strong alliances to secure the change which we want. A permanent forum, or coordinated global advocacy hub, which seeks to progress the agenda, would add real value.

## **10 CORE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DISCUSSION**

- **Protect public transport**
- **Support walking and cycling**
- **End car dependency**
- **Build back better – sustainable recovery packages**
- **Capacity-building support**
- **Strong evidence and data**
- **Resources are key**
- **North / South balance**
- **Include vulnerable groups**
- **Build alliances and set priorities**

## ANNEX 1: LIST OF ATTENDEES

Greig Craft	President	AIP Foundation
Mirjam Sidik	CEO	AIP Foundation
Jeffre Witte	Executive Director	Amend
Ferry Smith	Director Public Affairs	ANWB / FIA
Cecilia Vaca Jones	Executive Director	Bernard van Leer Foundation
Esther Goh	ECD Specialist	Bernard van Leer Foundation
Patrin Watanatada	Knowledge for Policy Director	Bernard van Leer Foundation
Annya Schneider	Project Associate	Bloomberg Philanthropies
Jens Aerts	Senior Urban Adviser	Bureau for Urbanism
Caroline Watson	Programme Director	C40 Cities Climate Leadership
Kate Laing	Programme Manager, Zero Emission Areas	C40 Cities Climate Leadership
Glynda Bathan	Deputy Executive Director	Clean Air Asia
Imogen Martineau	UK Portfolio Manager	Clean Air Fund
Anumita Roychowdhury	Executive Director, Research and Advocacy	CSE India
Colin Gourley	Senior Infrastructure Adviser	DFID
Emma MacLennan	Director General	EASST
Luca Pascotto	Head of Road Safety and Global Advocacy	FIA
Marc Juhel	Special Adviser	FIA
Aggie Krasnolucka-Hickman	Programmes Manager	FIA Foundation
Avi Silverman	Deputy Director	FIA Foundation
Beatrice Dumaswala	Communications Coordinator	FIA Foundation
Kate Turner	Media Manager	FIA Foundation
Natalie Draisin	North American Director & UN Representative	FIA Foundation
Richard Clarke	Researcher	FIA Foundation
Rita Cuypers	Director of Partnerships	FIA Foundation
Saul Billingsley	Executive Director	FIA Foundation
Sheila Watson	Deputy Director	FIA Foundation
Miquel Nadal	Secretary	FIA HLP
Susanna Hausmann	Chief Program Officer	Fondation Botnar
Maria Fernanda (Nani) Rodriguez	President	Fundacion Gonzalo Rodriguez
Maria Pessano	Executive Director	Fundación Gonzalo Rodríguez
Chris Large	Senior Partner	Global Action Plan
Oliver Lord	Air Quality Manager (Transport emissions)	Greater London Authority
Holger Dalkmann	Senior Adviser	HVT Program/DfID
Drew Kodjak	Executive Director	ICCT
Rachel Muncrief	Deputy Director	ICCT
Tim Dallmann	Senior Researcher	ICCT
Edgar van de Brug	Programme Manager	IKEA Foundation
Bernard Obika	Team Leader - HVT	IMC Worldwide
Louise Cathro	Principal Consultant	IMC Worldwide
Jacob Teter	Transport Energy Analyst	International Energy Agency
Susanna Zammataro	Director General	International Road Federation (IRF)
Mary Crass	Head of Institutional Relations and Summit	International Transport Forum

Pierpaolo Cazzola	Advisor - Energy, technology and environmental sustainability	International Transport Forum
Stephen Perkins	Head of Research and Policy Analysis	International Transport Forum
Monica Olyslagers	Safe Cities and Innovation Specialist	iRAP
Rob McNerney	CEO	iRAP
Heather Thompson	CEO	ITDP
Jeffrey Michael	Distinguished Scholar	Johns Hopkins University
Olive Kobusingye	Senior Research Fellow	Makerere University School of Health Sciences
Maria Segui-Gomez	International Consultant	Maria Segui-Gomez
Elliot Treharne	Head of Air Quality	Mayor of London's Office
Heather Allen	Senior Consultant gender & Sustainable Transport	Median
Ankita Chachra	Senior Program Manager	NACTO GDCI
Fabrizio Prati	Senior Program Manager	NACTO GDCI
Nancy Pullen-Seufert	Director	National Center for Safe Routes to School
Ben Paul	Director	Neu Architects
Kim Wiley-Schwartz	Asst. Commissioner for Education and Outreach	New York City Department of Transportation
Michael Repogle	Deputy Commissioner	NYC DOT
Karen Vancluysen	Secretary General	Polis
Hannah E. Murdock	Project Manager and Analyst, Research Direction	REN21
Katherine Findlay		REN21
Kalpana Viswanath	CEO	Safetipin
Richard Retting	National Practice Leader for Safety & Research	Sam Schwartz Consulting
Jeanne Long	Director, School Health & Nutrition	Save the Children
Liesbeth Jans	Manager, Strategic Foundation Partnerships	Save the Children
Mark Major	Senior Advisor	SLOCAT Partnership
Maruxa Cardama	Secretary General	SLOCAT Partnership
Greg Archer	UK Director	T&E
Margaret Peden	Head Global Injury Programme	The George Institute for Global Health UK
David Ward	President	Towards Zero Foundation
Marco Conner	Deputy Director	Transportation Alternatives
Philip Turner	Director Sustainable Development	UITP
Lizzette Soria	Policy Specialist	UN Women
Carly Gilbert-Patrick	Global Programme Lead - Share the Road	UNEP
Rob de Jong	Head, Air Quality and Mobility Unit	UNEP
Raoul III Bermejo	Health Specialist	UNICEF
Rebecca Ivers	Professor and Head of School	UNSW Sydney
John Symons	Senior Research Fellow	Victoria University
Kim Sweeny	Principal Research fellow	Victoria University
Bronwen Thornton	CEO	Walk21
Nhan Tran	Head, Safety and Mobility	WHO
Karla González	Manager	World Bank
Nancy Vandycke	Program Manager	World Bank
Beatriz Cardenas	AQ director WRI Mexico	WRI
Ben Welle	Director Integrated Transport & Innovation	WRI
Claudia Adriazola	Global Director Health & Road Safety	WRI



## ANNEX 2: SHARED RESOURCES

During the discussion a number of organisations shared resources in the chat function that might be useful to others. These are collated below:

### Child Health Initiative

- Manifesto 2030:  
[www.childhealthinitiative.org/connect/publications/these-are-our-streets-manifesto-2030](http://www.childhealthinitiative.org/connect/publications/these-are-our-streets-manifesto-2030)
- Every Child's Right to Breathe. Info on approaches to school streets in our London case study from a couple of years ago here (p43-44):  
[www.childhealthinitiative.org/media/460791/every-childs-right-to-breathe-spreads.pdf](http://www.childhealthinitiative.org/media/460791/every-childs-right-to-breathe-spreads.pdf)

### C40 Cities Knowledge Hub

- COVID-19 resource:  
[www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/cities-and-coronavirus-covid-19?language=en\\_US](http://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/cities-and-coronavirus-covid-19?language=en_US)

### ITDP

- Blog post containing some info on change of travel modes and people's preferences in China:  
[www.itdp.org/2020/03/26/post-pandemic-chinese-cities-gradually-reopen-transport-networks/](http://www.itdp.org/2020/03/26/post-pandemic-chinese-cities-gradually-reopen-transport-networks/)

### Polis:

- Various resources:  
[www.polisnetwork.eu/document/covid-19-keeping-things-moving/](http://www.polisnetwork.eu/document/covid-19-keeping-things-moving/)  
[www.polisnetwork.eu/news/post-lockdown-mobility-a-covid-19-webinar-series-for-polis-members/](http://www.polisnetwork.eu/news/post-lockdown-mobility-a-covid-19-webinar-series-for-polis-members/)  
[www.polisnetwork.eu/news/covid-19-tailored-technical-meetings-a-new-service-for-polis-members/](http://www.polisnetwork.eu/news/covid-19-tailored-technical-meetings-a-new-service-for-polis-members/)  
[www.polisnetwork.eu/document/resources-covid-19-mobility/](http://www.polisnetwork.eu/document/resources-covid-19-mobility/)

### SLOCAT

- Dedicated resource page on COVID-19 and Sustainable Transport including links to many resources and past webinars:  
[www.slocat.net/covid-19-and-the-sustainable-transport-community/](http://www.slocat.net/covid-19-and-the-sustainable-transport-community/)

### IRAP

- May help ensure 5-star safety for active users in cities in justifying and implementing pop-up and permanent facilities:  
[www.resources.irap.org/General/iRAP\\_Case\\_Study\\_5\\_Star\\_Cities.pdf](http://www.resources.irap.org/General/iRAP_Case_Study_5_Star_Cities.pdf)
- For schools and 'on the spot' safety rating for pedestrians Star Ratings for Schools:  
[www.starratingforschools.org/](http://www.starratingforschools.org/)
- TAC claim cost data filtered for active road users can help inform the discussions locally and globally:  
[www.vaccinesforroads.org/global-impact-of-injuries/](http://www.vaccinesforroads.org/global-impact-of-injuries/)

### **High Volume Transport (HVT):**

- Collective Action Paper:  
[www.transport-links.com/news/hvt-calls-for-collective-action-for-covid-19-response-for-transport-systems-in-low-income-countries/](http://www.transport-links.com/news/hvt-calls-for-collective-action-for-covid-19-response-for-transport-systems-in-low-income-countries/)
- Webinar hosted by HVT on the impact of COVID for people with disabilities can be viewed here:  
[www.transport-links.com/news/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-mobility-of-people-with-disabilities/](http://www.transport-links.com/news/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-mobility-of-people-with-disabilities/)

### **Greater London Authority**

- Streetspace plan:  
[www.tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/streetspace-for-london](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/streetspace-for-london)
- Project on freight emissions from scaling:  
[www.zeroemissionsnetwork.com/](http://www.zeroemissionsnetwork.com/)

### **World Economic Forum**

- Strategic intelligence map for air pollution:  
[www.intelligence.weforum.org/topics/a1G0X000006O06IUAS?tab=publications](http://www.intelligence.weforum.org/topics/a1G0X000006O06IUAS?tab=publications)

### **Clean Air Asia**

- Walkability Survey and Index helps pedestrians give feedback on the state of pedestrian facilities.  
[www.cleanairinitiative.org/portal/node/1470/](http://www.cleanairinitiative.org/portal/node/1470/)

### **Transportation Alternatives**

- Launching a coalition pushing for OpenStreets throughout the city as vital for pandemic recovery:  
[www.openstreets.nyc](http://www.openstreets.nyc)

### **WRI**

- Blog on green recovery and urban mobility issues:  
[www.wri.org/blog/2020/04/coronavirus-public-transport-stimulus-packages](http://www.wri.org/blog/2020/04/coronavirus-public-transport-stimulus-packages)





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