

World News

INDONESIA



Jakarta to Expand BRT and Implement Congestion Charge

Jakarta Governor Sutiyoso intends to have ten Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors operating by the time he concludes his second term as at the end of 2007, as well as implementing a road pricing system on the corridors. Such bold plans could propel Jakarta into a position of global leadership in the transportation sector.

TransJakarta opened in January 2004 as Asia's first full-featured Bus Rapid Transit system (including exclusive BRT buslanes and pre-paid boarding stations) and now carries over 100,000 people each day. It was initiated in perhaps the shortest implementation period and lowest cost of any full BRT system in the world. The initial 13-kilometer corridor was designed and built in only eight months. The corridor's infrastructure cost less than US\$1 million per kilometer (.62 mile), making it possible for the city to build without outside financing.

Hard-pressed to keep up with transportation demand, the BRT provides a way for Jakarta's citizens to get through the notorious congestion. Because of this, car drivers have shifted to the busway, resulting in reductions of all emissions—including greenhouse gases.

itdp.org

LOS ANGELES

Work on L.A. Light-Rail Route to Begin



After more than two decades of planning, construction will begin this October on an 8.5-mile light-rail line between downtown Los Angeles

and Culver City. Transit officials and West-side residents hope that the first phase of the Metro Expo Line, set to open in summer

2010, eventually will continue west to Santa Monica.

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said major rail construction projects, such as the \$640-million Expo Line, will improve the quality of life in the region by easing traffic congestion and bettering air quality. "The only way we are going to be able to address gridlock is through groundbreaking like these," he said.

The train will follow the route used by Pacific Electric's Santa Monica Air Line, which transported commuters from downtown to Santa Monica from 1914 to 1953. Transit officials predict that by 2020, more than 43,000 riders a day will use the rail line.

"If just 1% of the people on the Santa Monica Freeway take this line, it will be the



most successful [line] in the country," said Presley Burroughs, a longtime Crenshaw-area resident who has helped build support for the transit line over the last 25 years.

latimes.com

INDIA



Beijing to Ban Cars at 2008 Olympics

To reduce traffic congestion and pollution, officials in Beijing will prohibit the use of private cars at sporting events during the 2008 Olympic Summer Games.

Ticket holders will be able to ride special Olympic buses for free to the events. Beijing's often gridlocked traffic, along with choking pollution, has emerged as among the most nettlesome issues for the city in preparing for the 2008 Olympics. City officials and experts

discussed a range of possible measures, from expelling many of the city's estimated 1 million migrant workers to shutting down heavily polluting factories to ease congestion and smog during the Games.

In addition to the limits on private-car use, Beijing will also designate lanes on major roadways for Olympic traffic and bar other vehicles from using those lanes. Xinhua [News Agency] said 130 kilometers (80 miles) of city roadways will be designated as "Olympic lanes."

planetizen.com

SWEDEN



Stockholm Approves Congestion Charge in Referendum

Stockholm voters approved a new road toll system designed to reduce traffic, noise and pollution, officials

Near-complete results for the Sunday referendum showed that 51.7% of Stockholm voters approved the traffic toll, while 45.6% voted against it. The referendum in the Swedish capital took place in conjunction with national elections for parliament that saw a center-right alliance voted in and ousted Social Democrats (who implemented the congestion charge) after 12 years in power.

The congestion fee was contested when city officials introduced it in a seven-month trial that ran between January and July.



But public opinion swung in favor of the charges after studies showed that weekday traffic on average dropped 20% during the trial, while pollution decreased nine to fourteen percent.

Drivers had to pay a fee when entering and leaving the city during rush-hour. Similar systems are already in place in other cities, including London, Oslo and Singapore.

A city analysis showed permanent congestion fees would bring a net profit of nearly 500 million kronor (€54 million; US\$69 million) a year—money that would be spent on improving public transportation and better roads.

ap.com