

PRESS RELEASE

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LivableStreets Alliance, in collaboration with ITDP, brings Enrique Peñalosa, Former Bogotá Mayor who implemented radical change in the Colombian capital city, to Boston on February 4-7, 2009.

Enrique Peñalosa will be giving a free and open to the public presentation, hosted by LivableStreets Alliance, at the Boston Public Library, Copley, about his progressive transportation vision and urban happiness. Thursday, Feb 5, 6:30 pm. Over 250 attendees expected.

BOSTON, MASS. (February 3, 2009) – LivableStreets Alliance, a non-profit that promotes rethinking urban transportation to make Boston a more connected livable city, will be hosting the former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia, Enrique Peñalosa on February 4-7, 2009.

“Listening to Peñalosa will inspire citizens and policy makers in the Boston area to consider allocating our urban street-space to better uses, such as transit, biking, walking,” says Jackie Douglas, Transportation Advocate for LivableStreets Alliance who is coordinating the visit.

An accomplished public official, economist and administrator, Enrique Peñalosa completed his three-year term as Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia on December 31, 2000. While mayor, Peñalosa was responsible for numerous radical improvements to the city and its citizens. He promoted a city model giving priority to children and public spaces and restricting private car use, building hundreds of kilometers of sidewalks, bicycle paths, pedestrian streets, greenways and parks. He received the Stockholm Challenge Award for organizing a Car-Free Day in 2000 and a referendum vote then endorsed it annually. As part of the pico y plata license plate restriction program, he removed 40% of cars during peak hours. Peñalosa also led efforts to improve Bogotá's marginal neighborhoods through citizen involvement; planted more than 100,000 trees; created a new, highly successful bus-based transit system; and turned a deteriorated downtown avenue into a dynamic pedestrian public space. He helped transform the city's attitude from one of negative hopelessness to one of pride and hope, developing a model for urban improvement based on the equal rights of all people to transportation, education, and public spaces.

Over the course of his four day stay, he will be giving the following public presentations:

- Thursday, Feb 5, 6:30 pm, Boston Public Library, Rabb Lecture Hall
- Friday, Feb 6, 8:15-9:30 am, 1 Financial Center, 18th floor, hosted by MoveMass
- Friday, Feb 6, 12-2 pm, MIT, Stratton Student Center room 491, Building 20.
- Friday, Feb 6, 3:25-5:00, Northeastern University, 200 Richards Hall
- Saturday, Feb 7, 3:30-4:30 pm, Bikes Not Bombs, 284 Amory St, Jamaica Plain

In addition, we have scheduled several private meetings with Peñalosa, including:

- A meeting with Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and key cabinet members
- A joint meeting with Department of Public Health Commissioner John Auerbach and Undersecretary of Transportation Jeff Mullan
- Meeting with advocacy partners: WalkBoston, Institute for Human Centered Design, Bikes Not Bombs, Charles River Conservancy, and MassBike

LivableStreets Alliance is a non-profit organization that believes urban transportation has the power to make Boston a more connected, livable city. We challenge people to think differently and to demand a system that balances transit, walking, and biking with automobiles. We promote safe, convenient, and affordable transportation for all users in urban Boston. Streets that are enjoyable to use will better support neighborhoods and small business districts. LivableStreets believes that to remain a competitive, world-class city, Boston needs a world-class transportation network, one that makes our city a better place to live, work, and play. In our short existence we have brought a more open dialogue back to city planning, built relationships with stakeholders and informed community process. For example, we convened a coalition of advocacy groups halted the Commonwealth Avenue reconstruction project and brokered a safer pedestrian crossing of the BU bridge [one of the City's most dangerous areas for bikes/peds] and bike lanes to Kenmore Square.

Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), founded in 1985 and based in New York City, has become a leading organization in the promotion of environmentally sustainable and equitable transportation policies and projects worldwide. ITDP was created by sustainable transport advocates in the U.S. to counteract the export to developing countries of costly and environmentally damaging models of dependence on the private automobile. ITDP works with municipalities and non-governmental organizations in developing countries to implement projects that show how air pollution, carbon emissions, traffic congestion and accidents can be reduced, or how the basic mobility of the poor can be improved.

What is a livable street? A livable street incorporates the needs of transit riders, pedestrians, cars and cyclists. We must encourage the modes of transport that provide the most benefit and lowest costs to society. They encourage physical activity, social interaction and allow vibrant public spaces to thrive. Bus and bicycle lanes, pedestrian priority at traffic signals, wide sidewalks with trees and benches and safer car speeds are some of the design elements we promote in order to create healthier, more sustainable and more enjoyable urban environments.

For more information, visit www.livablestreets.info or contact Jackie Douglas at Jackie@livablestreets.info, 617.621.1746, 914.318.3603 (mobile).

For an event flyer and for more details, visit <http://www.livablestreets.info/penalosa>

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