

# LivableStreets Rethinking urban transportation

e-bulletin #16

September 21, 2006

## Greetings!

Click here to view this ebulletin [as a printable PDF](#).

Contact Jeff Rosenblum 617-939-3824,  
jeff@livablestreets.info, for more information.

LivableStreets E-bulletin has over 1500 subscribers!

[Click here for a comprehensive calendar of events.](#)

Join us next friday Sept. 29 for our next street social-- relaxing and fun, with great food, beer, and cool people! This event is co-sponsored by [Cambridge Green Streets Initiative](#) who is celebrating their monthly walk/ride day on the 29th as well.

The New York Times

## CALIFORNIA SUES 6 AUTOMAKERS OVER GLOBAL WARMING

By Nick Bunkley  
September 21, 2006

[Click here for the entire article...](#)

California, which has battled the automotive industry over new global warming regulations for years, sued the world's six-largest automakers yesterday, demanding that they pay for environmental damage caused by the emissions of their vehicles.

"Global warming is causing significant harm to California's environment, economy, agriculture and public health," said the state's attorney general, Bill Lockyer.

"Vehicle emissions are the single most rapidly growing source of the carbon emissions contributing to global warming, yet the federal government and automakers have refused to act."

## street social

Eat, drink, learn, play, support

Friday Sept. 29, 5:30-8:30pm

Office/Exhibit space + Patio

70 Pacific Street @ Sydney, Cambridge

\$15 suggested donation



Cosponsor: Cambridge Green Streets

Come join us [outside!] for some great food [vegetarian], music, and a short video about the challenges of our urban streets. Mingle with us and others like you who are committed to improving urban transportation.

[Click here for more information...](#)

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## 1. ALTWHEELS FESTIVAL- THIS FRIDAY THRU SUNDAY



**AltWheels festival unites a broad coalition of transportation & energy leaders**

**to address our oil addiction**

LivableStreets Alliance is a proud Bronze-level sponsor of 2006 AltWheels! The AltWheels Festival is convening a broad, public/private coalition of automakers, municipal organizations, transportation professionals, environmental and educational leaders, and bike and walk groups, to find real alternatives to our costly addiction to oil.

**THIS YEAR THE FESTIVAL WILL BE DOWNTOWN BOSTON AT CITY-HALL PLAZA ALL DAY FRIDAY & SATURDAY!**

Witness this unique coming together of more than 80 transportation- and energy-related entities, during the fourth annual AltWheels Alternative Transportation Festival on Friday and Saturday, September 22 and 23 at Boston's City Hall Plaza and on Sunday, September 24 at the Larz Anderson Auto Museum in Brookline. The three-day celebration will offer a one-stop opportunity to see more than 15 different, clean, effective transportation options that you can buy now -- plus new technologies coming in the near future from Ford, General Motors, Toyota, Volkswagen and other leading automakers. Boston's Museum of Science, New England Aquarium and Children's Museum will all host informative, fun exhibits on transportation and energy plus lots of interactive-learning activities on how to create a more sustainable world.



**Join Doug Mink, Boston's premiere advocate for bicycling, for two great bike tours** (these are free and open to all) [... more information...](#):

SATURDAY 3pm - "Boston's Bikepaths - Old and New" (16 miles)

SUNDAY 10am - "Tour Boston's Emerald Necklace" (13 miles)

[For more information...](#)

## 2. BOSTON'S "HUB ON WHEELS" BIKE RIDE SUNDAY OCT. 1 TAKES OVER STORROW DRIVE!

The suit, filed in United States District Court in Northern California, is the first such attempt to hold automakers accountable for the greenhouse gases that vehicles produce. It accuses General Motors, Toyota, Ford, Honda, Chrysler and Nissan of creating a public nuisance by building millions of vehicles that collectively discharge 289 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually.

Mr. Lockyer contends that the products of the six companies are responsible for a fifth of the carbon dioxide emissions nationwide and nearly a third of the emissions in California, which has more vehicles than any other state.

He said he would seek at least "tens of millions" in damages for past, current and future contributions to air pollution, beach erosion and reduced water supplies.

The automakers named in the suit declined to comment on it directly, but a trade group representing them labeled the accusations a "nuisance suit" similar to an unsuccessful attempt by several Northeastern states to hold utilities liable for environmental damages.

"Automakers are already building cleaner, more fuel-





## Want to ride your bike down Storrow Drive? Now's your chance!

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner Stephen Burrington will close part of Storrow Drive to motorized vehicles for the exclusive use of Hub On Wheels riders!

Sign up for the 10, 20, or 40 mile rides. All rides start from Downtown Boston, City Hall Plaza, Sunday October 1, 8:00am (Registration 7:30am). This is a ride not a race, and is fully supported for safety with marshals, bike mechanics, food, toilets, signs, and rest stops.

**Register by FRI. SEPT 22 midnight to be entered in drawing for free Giant Cypress LX bicycle!** [Register here...](#)

**Volunteers needed!** [Volunteer here...](#)

[Click here for more information...](#)

### 3. FARE INCREASE- MEET HEAD OF MBTA AND KEY TRANSIT ADVOCATES- MON. SEP 25 4:15pm



**MBTA Rider Oversight Committee meeting (TROC), OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, Monday September 25, 4:15-6:15pm at the Transportation Building, MBTA General Manager Daniel Grabauskas and Massachusetts Transportation Secretary John Cogliano in attendance.** Hear about the future of your transit system. [Click here for directions...](#)

**What is TROC?** In 2003 as a response to pressure by several transit advocacy groups over the last fare increase. "To be responsive to riders, the MBTA will establish a Rider Oversight Committee ... The Committee will address various transit related issues, including but not limited to the MBTA's Fare Policy, fare structure, fare equity issues, service improvements, service quality standards, ridership data collection and alternative funding sources for both the capital program and the operating budget."

The committee is comprised of 8 (non-voting) members of the MBTA staff, 8 members of the general public, and 8 advocacy groups representing their members and constituents. The advocacy groups include: [ON THE MOVE- Greater Boston Transportation Justice Coalition](#), [T-Riders Union](#), [Conservation Law Foundation](#), [LivableStreets Alliance](#), [Sierra Club](#), [MassPIRG](#), [Washington Street Corridor Coalition](#)

[Click here for LivableStreets article on the fare increase...](#)

efficient vehicles," the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, based in Washington, said in a statement. "Today's autos are 99 percent cleaner than a generation ago, and every model of auto is now available with some type of fuel-efficient technology."

Dave Barthmuss, a G.M. spokesman in Los Angeles, said the automaker was working toward the eventual goal of selling clean, hydrogen-powered vehicles and, as an interim step, had invested in technology like flex-fuel engines.

"We are spending significant financial and human resources to commercialize alternatives," Mr. Barthmuss said.

James D. Marston, director of the energy program at the nonprofit Environmental Defense, said G.M., Ford and Chrysler could improve their bottom lines by reducing emissions. He cited a study released this week by transportation researchers at the University of Michigan that suggested the three automakers would sell more cars, adding \$2 billion in annual profits, by raising the fuel economy of their vehicles only a few miles per gallon.

The industry is "wasting a lot of money paying lawyers to fight, and we ought to be spending

[Click here for LivableStreets' Citizen Info Sheet...](#)

[Click here for MBTA's brochure on the fare increase/restructuring...](#)

[Click here for more information...](#)

#### **4. ROSE KENNEDY GREENWAY FORUM, TUE. SEP 26 5:30-7:30pm**



**What is possible for the future of the Greenway? How will it be enjoyed, and by whom? What can we learn about park programs and cultural events in other cities such as Chicago, San Francisco, and Montreal?**

##### **Common Ground: A look at the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway today.**

Public forum at Faneuil Hall-- Tuesday, September 26, 5:30-7:30 pm (Free and open to the public). An overview of the physical nature and current state of the Greenway as the parks prepare to open

next year. A look at what opportunities exist for future development

Join the Boston Society of Architects/AIA and the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy for a series of events this fall focusing on the great potential of our city's new Greenway. Opening in 2007, the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway will be a public space, open for cultural events and daily activities.

[Click here for the Boston Society of Architects information about the Greenway...](#)

[Click here for Mass Pike's website about the Greenway...](#)

##### **NOTE: October 1 Greenway Walk cancelled.**

Unfortunately, due to the delayed planting schedule for the Greenway parks, the BSA's walk through the parks scheduled for October 1 has been postponed until the spring of next year.

[Click here for more information...](#)

#### **5. STATE'S PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE COMMITTEE BRINGS ADVOCACY TO THE POLICY TABLE**

*by Amanda Patterson, Staff Writer for LivableStreets Alliance*



that money on engineering," Mr. Marston said. "Automobile manufacturers need to get the message that they've got to do something different. "

Mr. Lockyer, a Democrat, is campaigning this fall to become California's treasurer. Some industry observers believe the suit to be merely a ploy to attract votes, but Mr. Lockyer disputed that in an interview yesterday. "What am I supposed to do, not do my job because there's an election?" he said.

He also said the suit was not an attempt to persuade automakers to back off their legal challenges to rules enacted by the state aimed at cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2004, the state enacted similar requirements for auto emissions, which the automakers sought to throw out in federal court. That law was aimed at reducing pollution created by cars and light trucks by 25 percent and from sport utility vehicles by 18 percent.

Last month, the California Legislature passed a measure designed to regulate industries' production of greenhouse gases. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is expected to sign the bill into law this month.

Bicycle and pedestrian advocates have been invited into the inner sanctum of Massachusetts transportation policy, the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), as members of the state's new Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board, which has been in existence since last November.

The Advisory Board was created by a legislative mandate to oversee the biking and walking activities of the EOT, and to revise the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Every other month, seven advocates and seven agency representatives get together to think together about "the big picture issues," as WalkBoston's Wendy Landman puts it.

"The committee is trying to insert bike and pedestrian voices into state policies and spending," Landman said.

Bringing together players from agencies and organizations whose roles intersect with both bicycle and pedestrian issues and the state budget is an important first step toward a comprehensive state-wide approach.

With such a broad purview, it's hard to mark the committee's specific accomplishments, but working together on issues personalizes the issues and cuts back on reactive behavior, according to Michael Halle of MassBike.

"You can start thinking of things as people instead of causes," he said.

With everybody at the same table, it's easier to understand the conflicts between constituents as well as the logic of policy decisions. Halle cited DCR bike path use and design as an example.

Bike advocates want to be able to commute and ride safely, and bike paths provide a safer alternative to riding on roads not designed to accommodate bike traffic. Pedestrian advocates want bike paths to be safe for everyone, and speeding bikes can be dangerous to walkers, their children and their dogs. And many city planners would like bikers to use the paths so the whole road can be used for vehicle traffic, avoiding the need for bike lanes and other bicycle accommodations.

Before every one was sitting down together on the commission, those conflicts would be registered as complaints at public hearings, frustrating officials and advocates alike.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board is well placed to make change in how the state plans for its bikers and walkers, though their only mechanism to create change is communication and understanding.

"The people on the commission have good connections and good will," Halle said. "The biggest challenge is that there is so much that can be done on the state level."

Marc H. Ross, a professor of physics at the University of Michigan who has studied automobile emissions, said automakers set themselves up to become a target of environmentalists as they worked to maximize sales of sport utility vehicles.

"Regardless of the negative social aspects of those vehicles, they proceeded to develop that market as much as they could," he said.

[Click here for the entire article.](#)

## Other Links...

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[This year at Boston City  
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*Unfortunately, no information is available about this advisory board or the bicycle and pedestrian program on EOT's website. Please contact Josh Lehman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for the State of Massachusetts, for more information-- 617- 973-7329, Josh.Lehman@state.ma.us.*

## **6. BOSTON AREA ADVOCATES ATTEND NATIONAL PRO-WALK/PRO-BIKE CONFERENCE**



Four leaders from the advocacy groups LivableStreets Alliance, WalkBoston, and

Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition attended the biennial professional conference on walking and bicycling held this year in Madison, WI. Also in represented from the Boston area was the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the City of Cambridge, and the Planners Collaborative consulting firm. There were no attendees from Mass. Executive Office of Transportation, Mass. Highway Dept., nor the City of Boston. Meanwhile, government officials from cities including Chicago, New York, Portland (OR), San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Vancouver (BC) were in attendance.

The National Center for Bicycling & Walking's Pro Walk/Pro Bike biennial conference series typically attracts an international gathering of more than 600 bicycle and pedestrian program specialists, advocates, and government leaders committed to improving conditions for bicycling and walking. Conference participants include federal, state and local agency staff; engineers; planners; transportation officials; educators; public health specialists, park and recreation managers; and advocates who range from executives of international organizations to lay people with an interest in improving the quality of life and health in their community.

[Click for more information...](#)

## **7. BOSTON BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL SEEKS ENTRIES**



Organizers for the second annual Boston Bike Film Festival have asked

filmmakers with a penchant for cycling to submit their work to be shown this October at venues in Boston and Cambridge . Among other benefits to acclaimed and amateur filmmakers, the Festival offers a chance to get

their films in front of cycling-sensitive audiences.

"Last year was a near-sellout crowd" said Cat Bryant, director of the Festival. "and we hope to reach an even wider audience this year."

Submissions for different genres are outlined on the website and initial submissions should be on either VHS or DVD. All submissions must be postmarked by September 22, 2006. Signed Submission and Release forms should accompany each entry.

[Click here for more information...](#)

## 8. NEW YORK CITY UNVEILS PLAN AND COMMITMENT TO BOOST BICYCLING

On Tuesday September 12, 2006, top officials from the City's Transportation, Health, Police and Parks Departments gathered in Central Park to release the [findings](#) (PDF) of a groundbreaking year-long effort that examines the last ten years of bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries in New York City.



In conjunction with the study's release, the agencies pledged to encourage and facilitate cycling [in a number of ways](#) (PDF) including, but not limited to, installing 240 miles of new bike lanes and greenways, providing more bicycle parking citywide, increasing police enforcement against motorists parked in bike lanes, providing educational information for motorists about the rights of cyclists as well as legislative and analytic improvements regarding cyclists rights and habits.

This unprecedented commitment to cycling and cyclist safety is an important part of moving New York City's transportation policies closer to those of our forward-thinking competitor cities around the globe. In 2002, the Mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoë, committed to building 200 miles of bike lanes, pedestrianizing large swaths of main arterials and modernizing bus lanes. Since then, traffic has decreased by 10% and more than 80% of Parisians support the changes. New York City's new-found dedication to the bicycle may be the first signs of a similar sea change on the horizon.

Health Commissioner Tom Frieden, whose department led the multi-agency study, remarked that "All [cyclist] deaths are preventable, and each one is a tragedy." He continued, "Engineering solutions are more likely to be effective [at

improving safety] than urging people to change their behavior." In fact, only one cyclist fatality between 1996 and 2005 occurred in a bike lane.

Transportation Commissioner Weinshall agreed stating, "The data demonstrates cyclists need more safe places to ride and DOT will be working to provide them."

Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe highlighted the increase in car-free hours in Central and Prospect Parks and his departments work to build more car-free greenway paths, both of which have contributed to the steady increase in cycling in the city over the past twenty years.

NYPD Chief of Transportation Michael Scagnelli spoke to the police department's efforts to ticket motorists who park and drive in bike lanes.

And, all of the officials reiterated the importance of drivers respecting cyclists' right to the road, of drivers and cyclists obeying traffic laws and of cyclists wearing helmets.

See the City's [official release](#) (PDF) and more details about the study and the planned improvements.

Get to know [Ryan Russo](#), the New York City Department of Transportation's Director for Street Management and Safety. [StreetsBlog](#) recently caught up with this key player in helping the city meet its pledge to encourage and facilitate safe cycling.

Read the City's report, "[Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005](#)" (PDF).

The announcement is a [huge victory](#) for Transportation Alternatives and the NYC Bike Coalition. Since last July we have been working to convince City officials to adopt our [Bike Safety Action Plan](#). Tuesday's announcement meets nearly every point of our Bike Safety Action Plan and clearly demonstrates that our advocacy is working.

[Click here for more information...](#)

email: [jeff@livablestreets.info](mailto:jeff@livablestreets.info)  
phone: 617-939-3824  
web: <http://www.livablestreets.info>