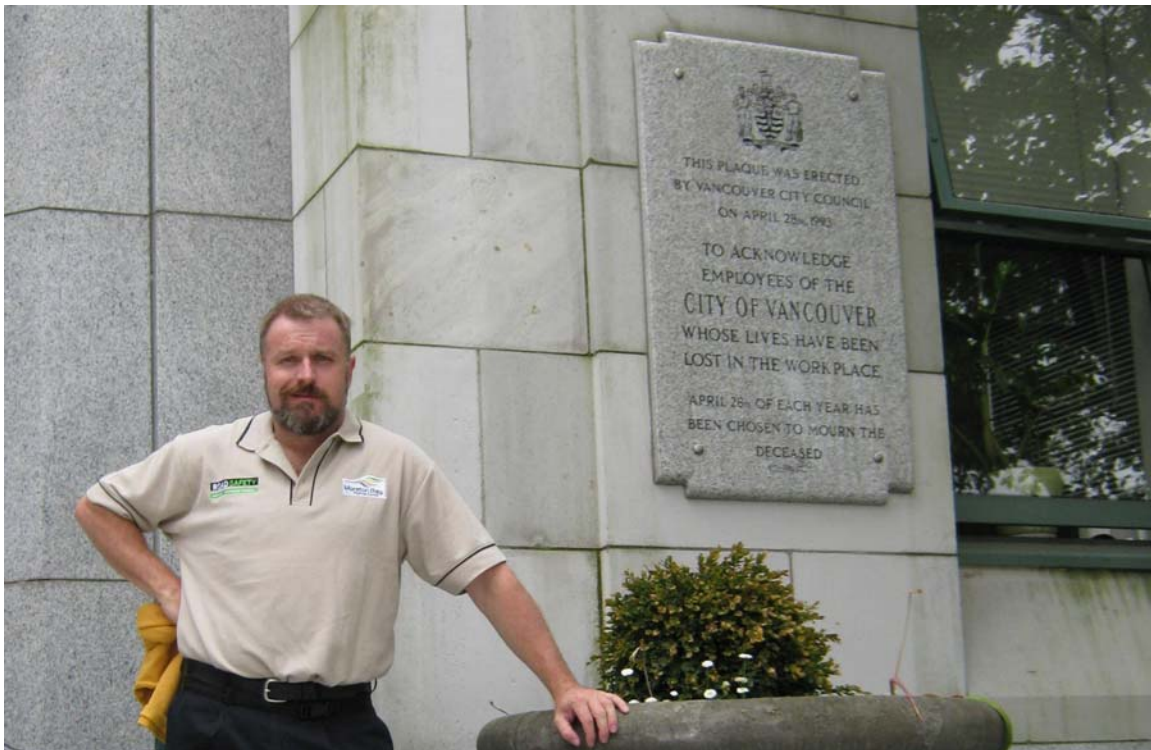


# 2009 ICLEI World Congress and North American Study Tour



Jason Deller - B.Eng (Civil), Grad. Dip Road Safety RPEG MIEAust IPWEAQ  
MLGMA

<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u></b>	<b><u>- 4 -</u></b>
<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b>	<b><u>- 5 -</u></b>
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>WORLD CONGRESS OPENING</u></b>	<b><u>- 6 -</u></b>
<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>ICLEI WORLD CONGRESS OVERVIEW</u></b>	<b><u>- 8 -</u></b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>CLIMATE CHANGE, TRENDS AND CONSEQUENCES</b>	<b>- 8 -</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>ACTIVE TRANSPORT</b>	<b>- 10 -</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>CLIMATE CHANGE STEPS TOWARDS SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>- 11 -</b>
<b><u>5</u></b>	<b><u>OBSERVATIONS OF EDMONTON</u></b>	<b><u>- 13 -</u></b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>FARMERS MARKETS, OLD STRATHCONA</b>	<b>- 13 -</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>TRANSPORT SUSTAINABILITY - ECOMOBILITY TOUR</b>	<b>- 13 -</b>
<b><u>6</u></b>	<b><u>NORTH AMERICAN STUDY TOUR OBSERVATIONS</u></b>	<b><u>- 18 -</u></b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>VANCOUVER</b>	<b>- 18 -</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>SEATTLE</b>	<b>- 24 -</b>
<b>6.3</b>	<b>SAN FRANCISCO</b>	<b>- 28 -</b>
<b><u>7</u></b>	<b><u>WORLD CONGRESS AND STUDY TOUR PRINCIPAL FINDINGS</u></b>	<b><u>- 33 -</u></b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>RESILIENCE</b>	<b>- 33 -</b>
<b>7.2</b>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY AS CORE BUSINESS</b>	<b>- 33 -</b>
<b>7.3</b>	<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S IMPORTANT ROLE</b>	<b>- 33 -</b>
<b><u>8</u></b>	<b><u>CONCLUSION</u></b>	<b><u>- 35 -</u></b>
<b><u>9</u></b>	<b><u>APPENDIX A - LIST OF MEETINGS AND SITE TOURS</u></b>	<b><u>- 36 -</u></b>
<b><u>10</u></b>	<b><u>APPENDIX B - CONGRESS SESSION: B10 ECOMOBILITY</u></b>	<b><u>- 37 -</u></b>
<b><u>11</u></b>	<b><u>APPENDIX C – CONGRESS SESSION : C10 CYCLING CITIES</u></b>	<b><u>- 38 -</u></b>
<b><u>12</u></b>	<b><u>AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY</u></b>	<b><u>- 39 -</u></b>

Photo 1: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada .....	- 6 -
Photo 2: Edmonton City Council Chambers.....	- 7 -
Photo 3: Tour Delegates meeting Pam O’Conner – Mayor of Santa Monica .....	- 10 -
Photo 4: Farmers Markets.....	- 13 -
Photo 5: Edmonton Light Rail .....	- 14 -
Photo 6: ecoMobile Tour .....	- 15 -
Photo 7: Example of Poor Pavement Condition .....	- 16 -
Photo 8: Jerry Dobrovony, Assistant City Engineer, City of Vancouver.....	- 18 -
Photo 9: Urban Water Sensitive Design .....	- 19 -
Photo 10: Urban Water Sensitive Design .....	- 20 -
Photo 11: The Green Building .....	- 20 -
Photo 11: Burrard Bridge to a Cycleway.....	- 21 -
Photo 12: Walking, Cycling, Parking Urban Renewal .....	- 21 -
Photo 13: Millennium Park - Village for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics .....	- 22 -
Photo 14: Downtown Seattle .....	- 24 -
Photo 15: Seattle Motorway.....	- 25 -
Photo 16: Motorway is being removed.....	- 25 -
Photo 17: High Point Estate Detention Basis .....	- 26 -
Photo 18: City of San Francisco Council Chambers .....	- 28 -
Photo 19: Electric Vehicle Recharge Facility Trial .....	- 29 -
Photo 20: Micro Wind Turbines .....	- 30 -
Photo 21: The Famous San Francisco Street Cars .....	- 32 -

# 1 Executive Summary

In June 2009, with the generous support from the IPWEAQ Foundation Board, I was fortunate to be able to attend the ICLEI North American Study Tour held in conjunction with the ICLEI World Congress in Canada. The tour included the following:

- ICLEI World Congress in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Sunday 14 – Thursday 18 June 2009;
- Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: Friday 19 – Sunday 21 June 2009;
- Seattle, Washington, United States: Sunday 21 – Monday 22 June 2009; and
- San Francisco, California, United States: Monday 22 – Wednesday 24 June 2009.

These cities offered numerous examples of practical and successful local government approaches to sustainability and liveability. Both the World Congress and Study Tour were interactive and highly facilitated experiences with multiple opportunities for networking and exploring best practice examples. The tour included onsite visits, briefings from Councillors and chief executives and networking dinners with international sustainability experts.

Nearly 600 delegates from 57 countries came together for the five-day triennial conference to learn how local sustainability initiatives are making a global difference. The World Congress is dedicated to reviewing the progress, studying future challenges and sharing intense discussions on ICLEI strategies. The main presentations can be downloaded from <http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=7755> or from the hyperlinks included against each presentation.

On my return many people asked what was learnt. Given all the amazing people met and places visited, it would seem to be a difficult question to answer - from the stunning vistas and achievements of Vancouver, where the planning priority order went from pedestrian, bicycles, public transport, freight and setting private motor vehicle last, to the remarkable people in San Francisco working of electric vehicles and wind turbines. However, what stood out was the fact that whilst Australia has the same level of technical skills, knowledge and innovation as anywhere in the world, we are failing to deliver the next steps to broad scale implementation. Local government has a significant role to play in addressing green house gas emissions and road congestion and road safety is without question a daunting infrastructure and service delivery task to achieve.

In summary, the North American Tour was a most memorable, educational, humbling and life changing experience. I am extremely thankful for the support given by the Trustees on behalf of the Foundation and will share what I have learnt whenever the opportunity arises. to as many people who are prepared to listen.

## 2 Introduction

The International Council for Local Government Initiatives (ICLEI) was formed in 1990 to provide leadership in the linking of local governments to global environmental policy processes including multi-lateral environmental agreements. Since then, ICLEI has grown to a global sustainability network of over 1000 local governments in 68 countries. ICLEI has 15 offices in 12 locations on all continents, with ICLEI Oceania being housed at Melbourne City Council.

ICLEI have developed methodologies and innovative tools which are applied through the local government membership. This network of members are undertaking climate action planning initiatives and working on water, sustainability and biodiversity management.

In 2009 nearly 600 delegates from 57 countries came together for a five-day triennial conference to learn how local sustainability initiatives are making a global difference. The 2009 ICLEI [World Congress](#) held in [Edmonton, Canada](#) from June 14-18 was dedicated to reviewing progress, studying future challenges and sharing intense discussions on ICLEI strategies.

The World Congress had four elements:

1. A report back on achievements and review of progress;
2. A look at global trends and scenarios, resources of communities and economies of cities which dictate parameters for local action;
3. Discussion of opportunities for local action; and
4. Establishment of cornerstones for future strategy

The main presentations can be downloaded from <http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=7755>

ICLEI Oceania organised attendance at the ICLEI World Congress in Canada and ICLEI North American Study Tour for a small group of councilors and senior management representatives from the Councils of Ryde, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Melbourne, Moreland, Busselton, Joondalup, Adelaide and Penrith.

With the generous support from the IPWEAQ Foundation Board I was fortunate to be part of that group. The study tour itinerary included the following:

- ICLEI World Congress in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009;
- Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: Friday 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2009;
- Seattle, Washington, United States: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009; and
- San Francisco, California, United States: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

These cities offered numerous examples of practical and successful local government approaches to sustainability and liveability. Both the World Congress and Study Tour were interactive and highly facilitated experiences with multiple opportunities for networking and exploring best practice examples. The tour included onsite visits, briefings from councilors and chief executives and networking dinners with international sustainability experts.

### 3 World Congress Opening

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

After 20 hours of flying from Brisbane on Friday morning, delegates arrived in Edmonton at 3.00pm on the same day. With its location so far north, sunset didn't begin until 10.30pm with full dark not until 11:30pm. A few hours later, around 4.00am, it was light again! Without doubt, it was one of the longest days of my life and the tour group won't forget "that Friday" anytime soon. With the limited overseas travel I've had I was aware of changing to the local timeframes as soon as possible, so the first night I stayed up late and got up early.



**Photo 1: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.**

The first day was one of the few free days on the study tour, perhaps due to the jet lag issue. In fact this was the last free day scheduled for the following 12 days. It was a beautiful summer day so everyone went exploring the city of Edmonton. It was an effort to get a good cup of coffee but it was refreshing to stumble on the local Farmers Markets where I tried the Bison Balls - a little gamey yet quite tasty.



**Photo 2: Edmonton City Council Chambers**

The Town Hall is amazing (Photo 2), with a wading pool outside that would no doubt convert to a skating ring in winter. We were witness to a huge Gay pride celebration, complete with a parade through the city.

## 4 ICLEI World Congress Overview

Monday 15<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009

With four full days of presentations, workshops and ICLEI meetings there were several stand out presentations: global energy use by cities (it's increasing, but can be reduced through energy efficiency); [ecological footprint](#) and [eco budgets](#) (Australia is one of the very few developed countries to be an ecological creditor); and the role of cities and biodiversity.

### 4.1 *Climate Change, Trends and Consequences*

Over the four intense days, Congress participants exchanged views and experiences on a broad range of matters relating to the challenge of global environmental change.

It was almost 'United Nations' in its feel, with diverse representation from the international local government movement. Broad perspectives were brought to the table and, like the United Nations, there were factions promoting a different emphasis or viewpoint. The Global South (representing the continent of Africa), Europe and the US appear to be strong entities within ICLEI. Asia and to some extent Oceania were less well represented and vocal, which I believe ICLEI should focus on correcting. For instance, Asia as a region holds 60% of the global population and the majority of large growing cities, which makes for a compelling case for greater emphasis on that locality.

It was quite interesting to get candid feedback and a wider international perspective on how Australia is viewed. Our delegates were asked questions about the difficulties faced by our first people, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and more currently, Indian students. Australia's continued exportation of coal to developing nations was not overtly raised but subtly acknowledged.

Notwithstanding the above, there were a number of examples demonstrating Australia's sustainability leadership beyond that of our international peers, most notably in relation to water saving initiatives and social planning and development.

Most local government approaches spoken of at the Congress were urban and metropolis (greater than one million people) in character. It seems that a critical mass required for real innovation is found with an agglomeration of around one million people, especially if in a high density form of living. This presents challenges for Australian cities which are typically smaller and less densely populated. It suggests a case for greater amalgamation of effort through strong and functional regional alliances of local government and argues for a new model of governance to create resilient cities of the future.

Australia is not alone in its need to reinvent the governance model required to adequately address the consequences of global environmental trends. It became increasingly apparent through the Congress and subsequently on the North American Study Tour that the global city membership (government, community and business) of the future will be required to work in a radically different way.

Challenges for Australia will come from the multiple levels of government, low density settlement patterns and continuing ambivalence in relation to the consequences of climate change similar to the annual road trauma and fatalities. This, however, may be no more challenging or

complex than for the rest of the world, where in many cases countries abut one another and both resources and consequences are shared, creating an inter-dependence to address underlying issues.

It was apparent that the world view is that action at the local level is the most effective way to mitigate the effects of climate change. However, while local leaders are motivated to lead the effort, they lack the necessary funds. Significant major capital investment is required if the necessary transformations in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions are to be achieved within whatever timeframes are finally agreed to and funding is a significant issue for local governments.

In support of the case for new governance arrangements, the point was repeatedly made throughout the Congress that climate change is not a stand-alone issue. It pervades all aspects of government, business and community operations. It complicates pre-existing issues so there is a need for integration with responses being made to these issues. All parties need to refine their ecological values and work for broader collaboration to find agreement on the responses to climate change.

Cities, businesses and communities need to plan for climate resilience. Many examples were given of networked approaches, such as the ICLEI US membership's conceptualisation and continuing development of the Local Climate Action Fund. The intention is the establishment of a means by which local government can finance energy efficiency and climate protection projects and private investment in the fund is currently being sought.

Chicago Green Office Challenge calls for companies and building owners to help Chicago become a greater place to live and work by saving energy and money. The Local Government Green Jobs Pledge is designed to provide local leaders with a forum committed to promoting economic development that creates green jobs, restores communities and improves the environment.

## **4.2 Active Transport**

On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009, I had the privilege to meet with Pam O’Conner – Mayor of Santa Monica, California. It was a relaxed discussion where I asked her a number of questions about their methods of addressing congestion and active transport.

It was interesting to hear that all new residential, commercial and industrial developments in Santa Monica are required to have a “no net new trips” at peak hours. This has to be demonstrated during the approval stage through a Traffic Impact Assessment. Furthermore as new Council projects proceed, they need to have community benefit offsets in conjunction with the “no net new trips” concept.



**Photo 3: Tour Delegates meeting Pam O’Conner – Mayor of Santa Monica**

As with other cities, such as London, the local government in Santa Monica is considering different approaches to congestion pricing including cordon tolls and parking fees. The debate isn't so much as to whether or not they should be priced but rather what is a suitable charge.

Funding approvals and construction programs for light rail have been finalised for introduction into Santa Monica. It is anticipated that three stations will be completed in the near future adjacent to high generation community centres.

Finally, Mayor O’Connor discussed the multi-modal strategy being developed including land-use integration along with bicycles. She believes, in her words, ‘We just need a better network’, referring to the construction of a more comprehensive and connected bike network.

## **4.3 Climate Change Steps towards Solutions**

On Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009, “Opportunities for the Fundamental Transformation of Communities & Cities” was perhaps the most energizing session of the congress. Peter Newman, Professor of Sustainability, Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute and Gustav Grob, President, International Clean Energy Consortium (ICEC) were given the task of demonstrating how faster and fundamental change in Governance and Management, Construction, Mobility, Energy and Material and Waste Flow, among others, was vital for eco-efficient, resilient and just communities.

### **4.3.1 Peter Newman, Professor of Sustainability.**

“There is hope” was the opening state by Professor Newman and after a number of intensely dark sessions, it was particularly refreshing to hear this firm optimistic view.

He spoke with authority about resilient cities, having written two books on the issue, and how climate change and peak oil have undermined the old economy.

Whilst global economies have suffered from the recent recession, it has provided a chance for change which leads to innovation. In his view, the future is smart and sustainable or otherwise known as the “resilient city”.

The following issues were outlined from his presentation:

- The resilient city is a renewable energy city:
  - Re-defining urban spaces as power production opportunities;
  - Windpods – roof mounted wind systems;
  - Storage is an issue for power opportunities;
- Carbon Neutral Cities;
- Biophitic Cities - Bringing biodiversity back to the city;
- Distributed City - Small scale water, energy and waste systems;
- Eco-efficient city;
- Place based cities:
  - Emphasis on local food;
  - Land/water interface.

Professor Newman spoke at length about the Sustainable Transport City. Clearly he believes transport is one of the biggest issues for the resilient city. He continued in summary:

- Urban sprawl is beginning to die and society is starting to realise car dependence is not smart;
- Toxic loans given in the recent global crisis are linked to toxic urban scatter;
- US cities may have to be "bulldozed" in order to survive;
- The "normal" suburbs are not smart and not sustainable, they don't have centres relating to the new economy
- The old style urban highways are not being built as best practice (although this may not apply to new tunnels);
- Big urban freeways do not decrease delay;
- In the US, car use is in decline, as apparently younger people are moving back into the city;
- Dramatic increases in public transport have been seen in the US;

- Road space can then be taken away and used for public transport with the change in public transport use;
- Phoenix took out whole lanes and replaced with light rail;
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD), Pedestrian Orientated Developed (POD) and now Green Orientated Development (GOD) is Professor Newman's new mantra;
- Electric vehicles are now becoming a viable option with their lithium-ion batteries;
- Smart grid, renewables, electric vehicles with green buildings. Need plug in parking and smart meters;
- Working from the household level, LivingSmart based on the TravelSmart; and finally; and
- Integrated packages examples do exist – Vauban Freiburg.

## 5 Observations of Edmonton

### 5.1 Farmers Markets, Old Strathcona

Farmers markets at Old Strathcona appeared to be a very popular event. One of the merchants, an asparagus farmer, explained that her financial return from the markets was twice that achieved if she sells through a third party. As a result her farm is more viable and two of her children have now returned from careers elsewhere to live and work on the farm. She described herself as a 'price fixer', not a price taker.



Photo 4: Farmers Markets

### 5.2 Transport Sustainability - EcoMobility Tour

The City of Edmonton has a population of about one million people with housing styles not dissimilar to most of the cities and higher populated areas, in the form of detached housing. They have become reliant on motor vehicles with perhaps the highest modal split in Canada.

In an effort to address this high reliance, the city is committed to ecomobility, which is essentially a term describing alternative modes of transport to that of the motor vehicle- more specifically, the single occupant motor vehicle. Walking and cycling networks are extensive and an impressive light rail system has been established and is in the process of being extended.

The light rail runs through the downtown to key nodes, such as one of the campuses of the University of Alberta. Transit-oriented development is being planned adjacent to the light rail through high density zoning. The University is strongly integrated within the town because, as their spokesperson put it, they need to be 'located in successful cities'. Student fees incorporate a small contribution for public transportation after which they are able to travel free on public transport.

It was interesting to see that there does not seem to be too much concern with pedestrian safety from walking onto the track. As can be seen in the photo below, there is insufficient fencing along the track. Payment is through an honour system which opens up an interesting discussion between trusting the patrons to 'do the right thing' to a more enforcement based approach.



**Photo 5: Edmonton Light Rail**

The congress offered a number of site visits, termed “mobile workshops”. On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009, I undertook the ecoMobility "Local Motion" mobile workshop which included a visit to the first ecoMobility community demonstration project in Canada.

Nestled in the neighbourhood of Parkallen, the demonstration project is an initiative between the City of Edmonton and the community of Parkallen, with support from Transport Canada and "The Global Alliance for EcoMobility".

The day saw us use a variety of ecoMobile transportation options to travel between the conference centre and Parkallen , including light rail, walking and cycling. Once there we looked

at a selection of the activities and physical changes undertaken to create the demonstration project.



**Photo 6: ecoMobile Tour**

Time was short, as they always seem to be in these types of activities, however we did have an opportunity to view the first video shorts of the project, visit the “bike and modes “try-it” library and see some of the ecoMobility school initiatives. Prior to the bike ride back to the CBD there was a discussion with Audra Jones, Director of Sustainable Transportation, Edmonton about the challenges, learnings and opportunities of creating an ecoMobile neighbourhood.

In her presentation, Jones stated the plan for Edmonton City was to have everyone with five minutes’ walk from a high speed bike network. With severe cold weather and snow for most of the year, bicycle usage is an issue and the result is few bike lanes on the road. To achieve their goal, a comprehensively connected bicycle network plan has been developed.

Not only are they planning to connect the bicycle network but intend to complete the 3600km of missing footpath links which they call ‘sidewalks’. Clearly this is an ambitious task for budget competition. Naturally, the links will be constructed in accordance with a priority for areas of higher pedestrian density.

Apart from footpath links, one of the biggest issues facing the infrastructure in Edmonton is maintenance. With the impact of significant periods of snow inundation maintenance is a real issue. The bike and walking tour showed clearly the poor conditions of pavement and road assets in Edmonton.



**Photo 7: Example of Poor Pavement Condition**

Jones went on to outline a number of issues facing Edmonton City and initiatives they are undertaking, such as:

- End of trip facilities;
- As most single vehicle trips have free parking in town there is serious debate about car parking pricing;
- 2400 people are already registered in the car pool city program with an online website;
- Car Pool parking spaces are being trialed;
- A reroute program was, at the time, only a month into trial. The program is aimed at allowing individuals to track their trips;
- With political support for Transportation Demand Management (TDM), a number of partnerships have been established with major employees and institutions;
- Bike month event;
- Development of a calculator so individuals can determine savings both in dollars and environmental terms from various commuting options; and
- A walkability strategy implemented from Council's Community Development Department on the basis of health and well-being outcomes.

In closing, I asked about her staffing levels and was advised that the sustainable transportation section had 15 positions (five FTE) with a budget of \$200-250k Canadian dollars each year. Naturally this is subject to annual budgetary review and, as in all areas, undergoes a constant battle to secure funding each year.

## 6 North American Study Tour Observations

At the conclusion of the World Congress, the ICLEI Oceania delegation undertook a Study Tour of Vancouver, Seattle and San Francisco between June 19 – 24, 2009. The list of meetings and site tours is attached.

### 6.1 Vancouver

#### Friday 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009

The first stop on the North American tour was [Vancouver](#). We arrived at lunch time on Friday and commenced a series of meetings with Vancouver City Council. We met with Brent Toderian, Director City Planning (blog [www.planetizen.com/blog/10088](http://www.planetizen.com/blog/10088)), Chief Jerry Dobrovny, Assistant City Engineer and sustainability policy staff.



**Photo 8: Jerry Dobrovny, Assistant City Engineer, City of Vancouver**

The key observation here was that difficult, bold and visionary planning approaches can produce resilient cities. In the 1960's the City of Vancouver was proposing to progress their development along the same vehicle based approach to planning as other North American cities. A motorway which would bisect the downtown was approved but public opposition emerged and the decision was rescinded. Mobility into and through the city was revisited and an entirely new hierarchy

was established. The hierarchy, in descending priority, was walking, skating or rollerblading, cycling, mass public transportation, freight and finally the single motor vehicle or private vehicle.

As a result Vancouver is walkable, clean and vibrant. They are also embarking on some amazing initiatives and have an Eco Density policy based on sustainability, liveability and affordability which guides all of their development. Significant investment is beginning to be evident in these initiatives such as the urban water sensitive design (see photos 9 and 10). In addition, there are many green roofs and almost every balcony has something green growing on it as seen in photo 11.



**Photo 9: Urban Water Sensitive Design**



**Photo 10: Urban Water Sensitive Design**



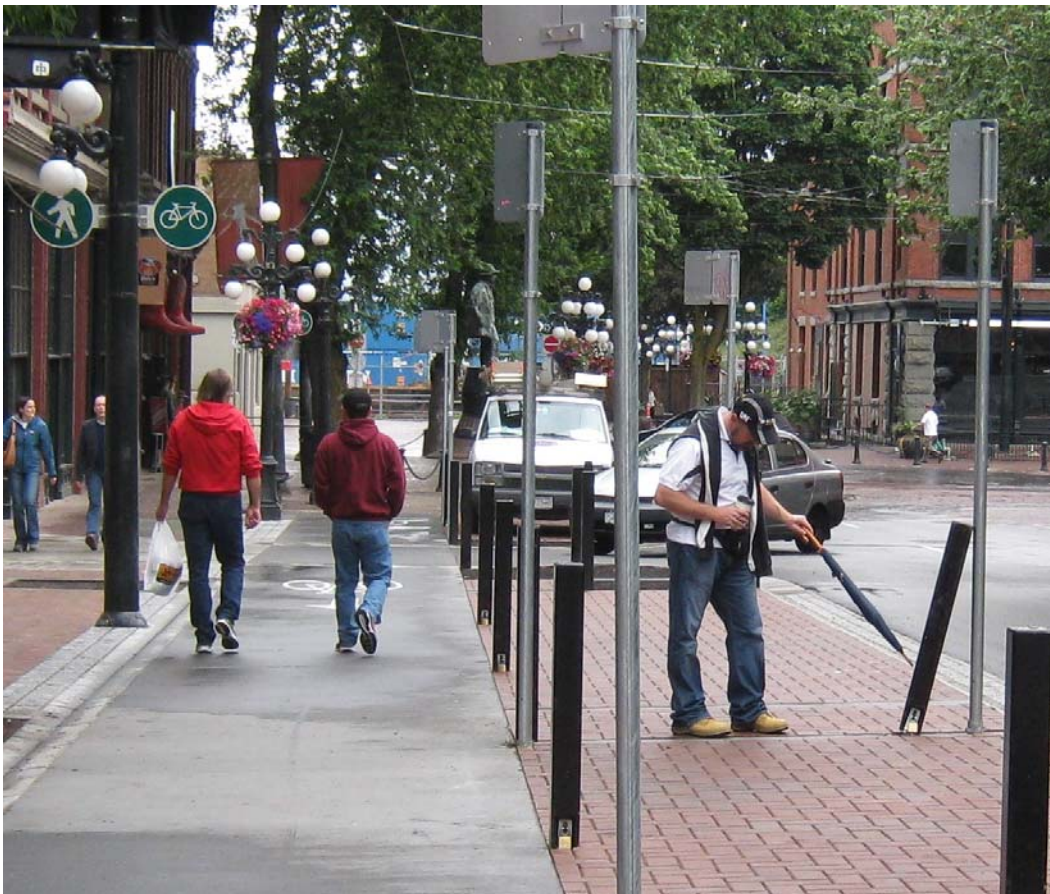
**Photo 111: The Green Building**

Their aim is to become the [most sustainable city](#) in the world by no later than 2016.



**Photo 12: Burrard Bridge to a Cycleway**

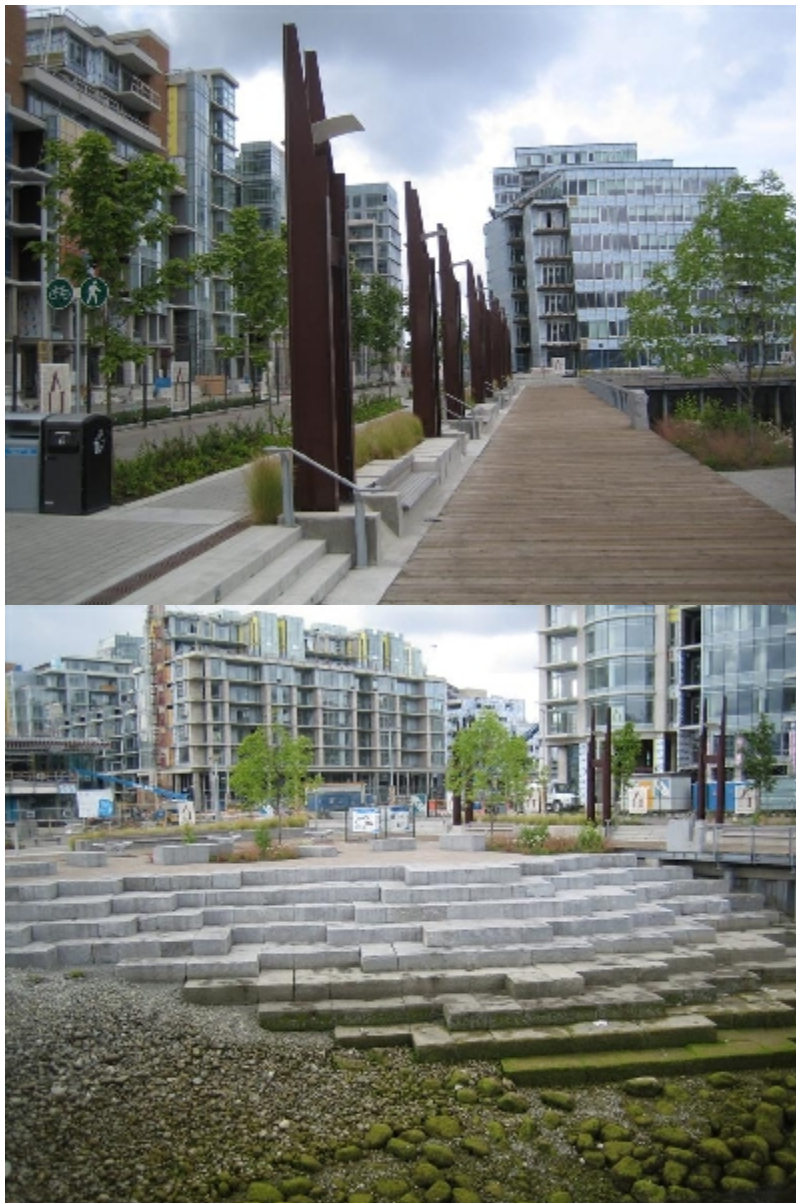
One of the most amazing examples demonstrating their transportation hierarchy is the recent conversation of a travel lane on the Burrard Bridge to a cycle way. The rationale was that bike and pedestrian trips have increased so much that they needed more space and in doing so can promote more trips.



**Photo 13: Walking, Cycling, Parking Urban Renewal**

On the housing front, they have developed the 2010 Winter Olympic Village, which is a carbon positive development consisting of low cost housing on the waterfront (check out the website - <http://vancouver.ca/olympicvillage/>).

Land use options were shaped around the transport hierarchy. Intense densities were allowed in the CBD and the city's population growth aspirations were targeted at a worldwide market that would be receptive to such an urban form. As a result, a cosmopolitan new population was attracted to a high-rise, walkable city set within an impressive natural environment.



**Photo 14: Millennium Park - Village for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics**

Like many North American cities, there are social challenges. A large homeless population exists and typically this group has profound substance abuse issues. The city is working to manage this issue in its older, more squalid precincts, which are the only places still available to this subgroup. The issue is being addressed by place management, where the city first upgrades the public domain and shortly thereafter provides incentives for landowners to redevelop their properties. The opportunities of heritage buildings are promoted with development occurring up and over these. The challenge has been to avoid extensively gentrifying this area to the extent that the whole downtown becomes unaffordable.

One of the things that is quite noticeable with their construction strategy in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympics is that the city did all of the public realm work before the building construction started. Vancouver was a very beautiful place to walk beforehand and even though construction at the time still had about six months to run, there was no adverse affect.

## 6.2 Seattle

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> and Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009

The tour group boarded a hire bus to [Seattle](#) which required a somewhat time-consuming crossing from Canada into the USA. One of the first things we saw was the [Space Needle](#), a legacy from the 1962 World Fair. Seattle was a contrast to Vancouver with a much more 'hard urban' feel.



**Photo 15: Downtown Seattle**

While Vancouver rejected a motorway, Seattle embraced the idea. A 12 lane, two level motorway now runs through the City separating the CBD from its more attractive asset, the waterfront. In many ways it is very similar to how the South East Freeway in Brisbane runs along the Brisbane River.



**Photo 16: Seattle Motorway**

Realising the profound adverse impact that the motorway has on the effective functioning of the CBD, it is now being undergrounded at an immense expense.



**Photo 17: Motorway is being removed**

Whilst the motorway shown in Photo 11 is being removed, the drive is more from its infrastructure failures from minor earthquakes over the years.

Generally, Seattle is moving its CBD away from a motorway focus. Examples include:

- Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan 09, which co-ordinates the actions of government, community and business to facilitate pedestrian movement ([www.seattle.gov/transportation/community\\_parking.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/community_parking.htm)) is a strategy for the City Centre which focuses on growing the economy, solving transportation issues, fostering great neighbourhoods and providing a diverse range of quality public spaces;
- Center City, Seattle – liveable, workable, 24/7;
- SDOT’s community parking program.

In addition to the motorway and transportation work, Seattle is working hard to reduce impact on waterways (river, streams and harbour). They are undertaking good work with natural drainage systems and community education on the management of storm water in homes ([www.seattle.gov/util/rainwise](http://www.seattle.gov/util/rainwise)).

We took two tours - one to [High Point Estate](#), a new development that uses water sensitive urban design to manage its storm water with beautiful landscaping and porous road surfacing. It was clear that the latest sub-division designs being done in Australia, certainly in South East Queensland are technically cutting-edge, if High Point is the latest technology in the US.



**Photo 18: High Point Estate Detention Basis**

The delegation visited Seattle City Hall and attended a council meeting. One of the delegates, Cr. Stephen Yarwood, Deputy Mayor of Adelaide City Council, addressed the meeting which was televised to the public.

Their ‘Town Hall Meetings’ concept is interesting. The public are invited to discuss critical issues and challenges. These include:

1. How can the city best address the challenge of youth violence
2. What can the city do to help ensure the public schools work
3. What can the city protect and increase trees from the urban forest

City Hall is a sustainably focused building. Both the design and the function of the building were impressive and it has been designed to last 100 years, replacing the municipal building which experienced only 40 years of use. Benefits include:

- 24% reduction in energy use;
- 100% less potable water use for irrigation;
- 30% less potable water use indoors; and
- 27% reduction in storm water runoff.

## 6.3 San Francisco

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009

San Francisco city is the second most densely populated city within the US. The lifestyle, amenities and character in the downtown and surrounding suburbs is exceptional.

Local government in these major cities exists on an entirely different and larger scale to Australia. Their functions are much more diverse and their economic power provides greater opportunity for intervention and initiative in relation to sustainability.



**Photo 19: City of San Francisco Council Chambers**

Notwithstanding, there are factors which make San Francisco in particular a leader in so many respects and obviously a city patently at the creative edge. This began with its genesis as a gold rush frontier town and as a major settlement place for people re-starting their lives after the Second World War. From there came the liberal social movement of the 1960's and more recently, the IT industry housed in what is now known as Silicon Valley.

The values and behaviour of the city's leadership appear to match those required for a resilient city. The Department of Environment reports directly to the Mayor and candidates for the next Mayoral Election are trading blows in terms of their 'green' principles and aspirations. The city's employees include sustainability leaders of international repute.

Wade Crowfoot, Director of Climate, City of San Francisco described the leadership challenge as the *Inertia of Status Quo*. He posed the question “How do you make an action an agent of change?”

Transport is a significant focus for the City of San Francisco. One initiative in this area is a [pilot to collect waste grease](#) (cooking oil etc) and use it to run their bus fleet, which so far is looking successful. The city is also a national leader in alternative fuel clean vehicle technology with more than 800 clean vehicles in its fleet. The council encourages its 28,000 employees and the public to travel other than by car with a range of trip reduction programs such as:

- Pre-tax Commuter benefits programs;
- Emergency ride home;
- Bicycle promotion;
- Ride sharing programs;
- A city bicycle fleet program; and
- Clean vehicle taxes - encouraged by incentives and mandated in some respects.

In addition, San Francisco is also pushing ahead with electric vehicles. They have a number of recharging facilities outside Town Hall, and are getting ready to roll out more in partnership with four service providers ([Better Place](#) is one example).



**Photo 20: Electric Vehicle Recharge Facility Trial**

An initiative of the city has been the development of an [Urban EcoMap](http://www.urbanecomap.org) (www.urbanecomap.org) which allows residents to see the amount of greenhouse gas volumes generated in their

neighbourhood. The site also offers tips on how to reduce these emissions. See also <http://calculator.ecoactionteams.ca>



On one site visit, the delegation went to a renovated former industrial building. The internal space was sub-let to young, innovative, start-up businesses. The particular unit visited was shared by five young creative people. These included engineers, mechanics, graphics and IT experts who ‘sparked off’ one another.



Photo 21: Micro Wind Turbines

This clustering of young, free-thinking talent in the one space is a smart use of loose planning provisions to promote innovative business opportunities and collaborations. Under the theme of wind power, there is an active [program to promote the uptake of micro wind turbines](#). It is early days but they have a few installations and trials occurring.

An initiative of note is that the city has [banned bottled water](#) from its facilities. They have 28 00 staff and this initiative saves them US\$750,000 per year. Furthermore, the city has invested significant effort around improving [building energy and water efficiency](#). Recently they have mandated that all buildings (commercial and residential) need to [provide composting and recycling facilities](#), and that all buildings need to achieve a level of water efficiency before they can be sold.

A tour of the downtown public spaces was also informative. The City has encouraged developers to provide public open space in return for the value uplift they receive from the increased development potential of their sites through rezoning. Of special interest were the publicly accessible rooftop gardens denoted by a sign at street level. They provide high-quality landscaped spaces from which different perspectives of the City can be viewed.





**Photo 22: The Famous San Francisco Street Cars**

## **7 World Congress and Study Tour Principal Findings**

There were three principal findings, or themes, from the World Congress and Study Tour - resilience, sustainability as core business and local government's important role.

### **7.1 Resilience**

Current environmental trends are unsustainable because of:

- The pace of global environmental change;
- The trend toward degradation of eco-systems globally;
- The overshoot of the human footprint on the Earth's capacity requirement; and
- Resourcing of local efforts.

As the world becomes increasingly urbanised, cities are the places where significant action is needed.

Resilient cities anticipate and plan for the future. They reduce dependence to achieve resilience. They are characterised by strong and passionate leaders are networked and where the collegiate potential of governments, businesses and communities are all effectively focused on resilience.

Our networks should include all within the city as well as our national and international peers. ICLEI will be an important partner in this regard. The partnership with ICLEI's international members will be reciprocal because there are areas where Australians are leaders such as social planning and water management.

### **7.2 Sustainability as core business**

Climate change is not a stand-alone matter. It complicates pre-existing issues and so it needs integration with the responses that are being made to these issues.

It needs to be embodied in the culture, values, behaviours and actions of the governments, businesses and communities within the city. To facilitate this, much greater awareness is required of the issues and challenges. Good data, knowledge and research are needed, but their absence should not be an argument for ambivalence or lack of action.

The mere commencement of action or the achievement of milestones will not, in itself, guarantee adequate outcomes. Global eco-systems are under stress and there is a need to constantly revisit milestones to ensure that they are still appropriate.

### **7.3 Local Government's Important Role**

Action at the local level is the most effective way to mitigate the consequences of climate change. Local leaders across the world are motivated to carry forward climate protection efforts but they lack the recognition of their important contribution from other levels of government.

There is a need for official recognition of each cities' capacity to deliver greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation in response to the impacts of climate change in the post-Kyoto Agreement Era. The upcoming C20 provides an opportunity to promote this recognition of local government to an international audience.

The technical expertise exists in Australia, along with knowledge and innovation as good as anywhere in the world. We are simply failing in delivering the next steps of broad scale implementation, which will require maturity and leadership from CEO's right down to the technicians delivering the initiatives.

## 8 Conclusion

The 2009 ILCEI and North American Study Tour was a packed itinerary and I was fortunate to have the pleasure of travelling with 11 other people who were all passionate about their work and were willing to share their thoughts and ideas on the possibilities that sustainability could provide their cities.

On my return many people asked what was learnt. Given all the amazing people met and places visited, it would seem to be a difficult question to answer - from the stunning vistas and achievements of Vancouver, where the planning priority order went from pedestrian, bicycles, public transport, freight and setting private motor vehicle last, to the remarkable people in San Francisco working of electric vehicles and wind turbines. However, what stood out was the fact that whilst Australia has the same level of technical skills, knowledge and innovation as anywhere in the world, we are failing to deliver the next steps to broad scale implementation. Local government has a significant role to play in addressing green house gas emissions and road congestion and road safety is without question a daunting infrastructure and service delivery task ahead.

In summary, the North American Tour was a most memorable, educational, humbling and life changing experience. I am extremely thankful for the support given by the Trustees on behalf of the Foundation and will share what I have learnt whenever the opportunity arises.

## 9 Appendix A - List of Meetings and Site Tours

### Vancouver

#### **Meetings:**

- City of Vancouver staff, including presentations on the following:
  - Sustainable Planning by Mr Brent Toderian, Director of Planning
  - Sustainability by Ms Melina Scholefield, Manager of Sustainability
  - City Green Transportation by Mr Jerry Dobrovolny, Assistant City Engineer

#### **Site Tours:**

- Carrall Street Greenway, a major public realm, community building and economic revitalization initiative (<http://vancouver.ca/engsvcs/streets/greenways/city/carrall/index.htm>)
- Olympic Village (<http://vancouver.ca/olympicvillage>) with Roger Bayley, principal of Merrick Architecture Design Manager for Vancouver's 2010 Olympic Village development, Millennium Water
- Granville Island, an urban planning and public engagement success story

### Seattle

#### **Meetings:**

- City of Seattle Office of Sustainability, including presentations on the following:
  - Carbon neutral transportation and car-reduction strategies
  - Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement
  - Seattle's Climate Action Plan
  - Green Building Task Force
- Council President, Richard Conlin, presentation and welcome by City Council.
- King County staff to discuss adaptation initiatives

#### **Site Tours:**

- High Point re-development to discuss urban development, affordable housing and green infrastructure ([http://www.seattlehousing.org/redevelopment/high\\_point](http://www.seattlehousing.org/redevelopment/high_point))
- Tour of City Hall and information about Seattle Green Buildings

### San Francisco

#### **Meetings:**

- Wade Crowfoot, Director of Climate, City of San Francisco
- Jared Blumenthal, Director San Francisco Department of the Environment
- ICLEI-USA staff in Oakland head office

#### **Site tours:**

- Municipal renewable energy projects
- Electric Vehicle Network

## 10 Appendix B - Congress Session: B10 EcoMobility

EcoMobility is an environmentally sustainable form of mobility and accessibility that integrates non-motorized and public transport. It allows people to move in their local environment without relying on private motor vehicles.

Many cities around the world are making efforts and investments in order to achieve a more “ecomobile” urban environment. The aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motorized transport, reduce traffic congestion and increase productivity, ease air pollution and enhance the public health of citizens.

During this session, representatives of cities that have carried out ambitious sustainable transportation plans will present their experiences and the challenges they faced along the way. Their example should inspire and serve as an example for other cities seeking to improve the sustainability of their urban transportation policies.

Facilitator *Jason Deller, Principal Engineer, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Australia*

Introduction *Veronica Pérez Sueiro, Advocacy and PR Coordinator, Global Alliance for EcoMobility, Germany* [presentation] [paper]  
**EcoMobility (Alliance) – An Introduction**

Presenter *Julie Cournoyer, Local Motion Project Coordinator, City of Edmonton, Canada* [presentation]  
**Local Motion - Transforming a Neighborhood in Edmonton**  
A month long demonstration project in June 2009 which promotes the use of travel options which are healthy, accessible and flexible, good for the environment and encourage vibrant and liveable neighbourhoods. This is the first model of this type in the world, encouraged by the EcoMobility Alliance.

Presenter *Wan-su Park, Mayor, City of Changwon, Republic of Korea* [presentation]  
**How Changwon is Converted into a Bicycle Friendly City**  
The City of Changwon works towards becoming an environmentally friendly bike model city at a national bike rally. This is a relevant contribution to eco mobility.

Presenter *Paul Van der Pol, Head of Department, City of Tilburg, Netherlands* [presentation]  
**Tilburg Presenting its Progress**  
World Congress. Where is the city today?

Presenter *Helena Hecimovic, City Councillor, City of Koprivnica, Croatia* [presentation]  
**Koprivnica - Promoting Eco Mobility Since Many Years**  
Koprivnica got a certificate of honour for the "Cities Enjoy Bicycles Award" at the 2006 World Congress. Since then this town has made further progress worthwhile to share.

Rapporteur *Verónica Pérez Sueiro, Advocacy and PR Coordinator, Global Alliance for EcoMobility, Germany*

### Recommended Reading:

[www.ecomobility.org](http://www.ecomobility.org)

[www.edmonton.ca/environmental/programs/local-motion-eco-friendly-transportation.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/environmental/programs/local-motion-eco-friendly-transportation.aspx)

## 11 Appendix C – Congress Session : C10 Cycling Cities

Improving the infrastructure of a city or town to promote bicycling is a relatively inexpensive, small-scale change that supports alternative transportation and can bring immediate benefits.

Better cycling infrastructure can also save lives by creating safer conditions for cyclists and as a direct consequence improve the safety of all other road users.

During this session, participants will discuss which measures need to be put in place by a local government to make cycling safer and more comfortable and thus encourage people to use bikes more frequently.

The session is organised in the wake of Craig Haskin. Craig was the Manager for Strategic Information and Planning of the City of Cape Town and thus a warm partner to ICLEI for climate projects and the World Congress 2006. Craig lost his life with 40 years in February 2009 when he was cycling and hit by car, driven by an unlicensed driver.

Facilitator *Piet Van Zyl, Executive Director, City of Cape Town, South Africa [presentation]*

Presenter *Sheila Watson, Director of Environment, FIA-Foundation for Automobile & Society, United Kingdom*

**The "10% Rule to Improve Road Safety" [presentation]**

This joint project of the FIA Foundation and UNEP motivates for spending 10% of all road infrastructure projects supported by bilateral and multilateral donors to be committed to road safety, including bike paths

Presenter *Jason Deller, Principal Engineer, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Australia*

**Moreton Bay Regional Council's Award-winning Road Safety Project [presentation]**

This presentation traces the journey taken to develop a multi-agency Road Safety Partnership Project to reduce road trauma at the local government 'grass roots' level across all travel modes through infrastructure and behaviour changes initiatives.

Presenter *Alfredo Syrkis, Leader of the Green Group, Rio City Council, Brazil*

**The Rio de Janeiro Experience: A Bicycle Networking in a Heavily Motorized Culture**

Rio's experience: building Brazil's largest bicycle paths network in an automobile dominated culture. The political and practical challenges of non-motorized mobility in megacities in the South.

Presenter *Michael Heesch, Head of Planning & Urban Development, City of Hannover, Germany*

**Hannover - Masterplan Mobility [presentation]**

The new Masterplan Mobility puts a strong priority on cycling and lays the ground for measures to improve security of innercity cycling.

Rapporteur *Verónica Pérez Sueiro, Advocacy and PR Coordinator, Global Alliance for EcoMobility, Germany [presentation]*

### Recommended Reading:

[www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au](http://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au)

[http://www.unep.org/urban\\_environment/events/capetownFIA.asp](http://www.unep.org/urban_environment/events/capetownFIA.asp)

[http://www.unep.org/urban\\_environment/PDFs/MakeRoadsSafeCapeTown.pdf](http://www.unep.org/urban_environment/PDFs/MakeRoadsSafeCapeTown.pdf)

## 12 Author Biography

Jason Deller - B.Eng (Civil), Grad. Dip Road Safety RPEG MIEAust IPWEAQ  
MLGMA



Jason has been working in local government for more than 15 years and is the Principal Strategic Transport Planning at the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, the fourth largest local government (by population) in Australia .

With a degree in Civil Engineering and Graduate Diploma in Road Safety from QUT, he was instrumental in establishing the Moreton Bay Regional Council Road Safety Partnership Project to increase local government road safety capability and to improve road safety on local government controlled roads along with winning the 2008 Queensland Road Safety Award for Local Government.

Jason was a finalist in the 2009 Public Sector Professional of the Year in the IPAA Queensland *Public Sector Excellence Awards* and later invited to speak at the Australian Local Government Association National Local Roads and Transport Congress, providing his insight into the road safety and transport challenges facing urban cities.

Clearly, Jason has a passion for road safety, is married and a proud father of a beautiful 4 year old girl and a roguish 2 year old boy.