



# Sustainability and Central Texas: Are We There Yet? Overview of Shuttle Pilot Project

March 22, 2010

# Collective Strength



**LOUISIANA SPEAKS**

A LONG-TERM COMMUNITY PLANNING INITIATIVE OF THE LRA

Our Voice. Our Plan. Our Future.



# 2008 US City Sustainability Rankings

1. Portland, OR
2. San Francisco, CA
3. Seattle, WA
4. Chicago, IL
5. New York, NY
6. Boston, MA
7. Minneapolis, MN
8. Philadelphia, PA
9. Oakland, CA
10. Baltimore, MD
11. Denver, CO
12. Milwaukee, WI
- 13. Austin, TX**
14. Sacramento, CA
15. Washington, DC
16. Cleveland, OH
17. Honolulu, HI
18. Albuquerque, NM
19. Atlanta, GA
20. Kansas City, MO
21. San Jose, CA
22. Tucson, AZ
23. Jacksonville, FL
- 24. Dallas, TX**
25. Omaha, NE
26. San Diego, CA
27. New Orleans, LA
28. Los Angeles, CA
29. Louisville, KY
30. Columbus, OH
31. Detroit, MI
32. Phoenix, AZ
- 33. San Antonio, TX**
34. Miami, FL
35. Charlotte, NC
- 36. Houston, TX**
37. Fresno, CA
38. El Paso, TX
- 39. Fort Worth, TX**
40. Nashville, TN
- 41. Arlington, TX**
42. Long Beach, CA
43. Colorado Springs, CO
44. Indianapolis, IN
45. Virginia Beach, VA
46. Memphis, TN
47. Las Vegas, NV
48. Tulsa, OK
49. Oklahoma City, OK
50. Mesa, AZ



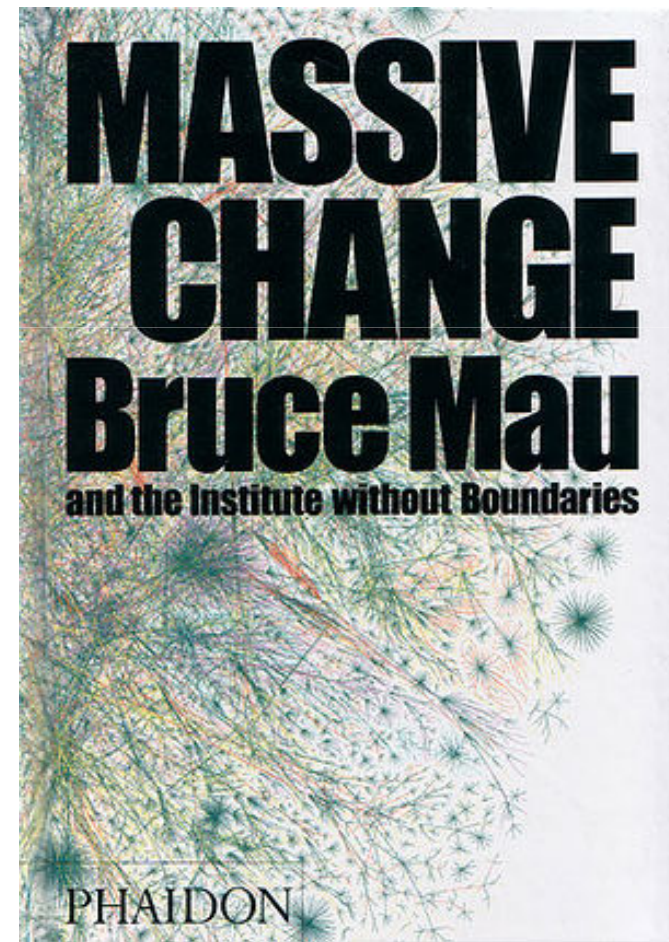
# Sustain Lane City Rankings

	Overall Rank	Housing Affordability	Transit Ridership	Food & Agriculture	Energy and Climate	Water Supply	Green Economy	Planning/ Land Use	Green Building
<b>Austin</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
Dallas	24	15	17	48	13	33	26	33	21
Fort Worth	39	2	18	35	30	31	32	49	47
Houston	36	11	14	39	24	32	33	32	11
San Antonio	33	1	28	32	32	26	30	34	38
Texas Triangle Average	29	11	22	37	21	29	27	31	25

# Massive Change

*“The new mobility culture considers not only transit but also prosperity, health, education, housing, waste and other social needs. No transportation system is an island, it must coordinate all shared systems for maximum effect.”*

*- Massive Change*



# Changes in the American Psyche 2001 to 2010

- Post 9/11. Post Bailout.
  - Animosity towards the role of Big Oil in our lives and country
  - Energy Independence is almost universally desired
  - “The Long Emergency” –is a reality we have to face
  - OD on Doom and Outrage – craving for positive/pragmatic solutions
  - Economic uncertainty is pervasive
  - Insecurity needs to be replaced by resilience
- What it means:
  - Focus on what we can control
  - Frugal is the new normal
  - Doing more with what we’ve still got: for the economy and for the environment.

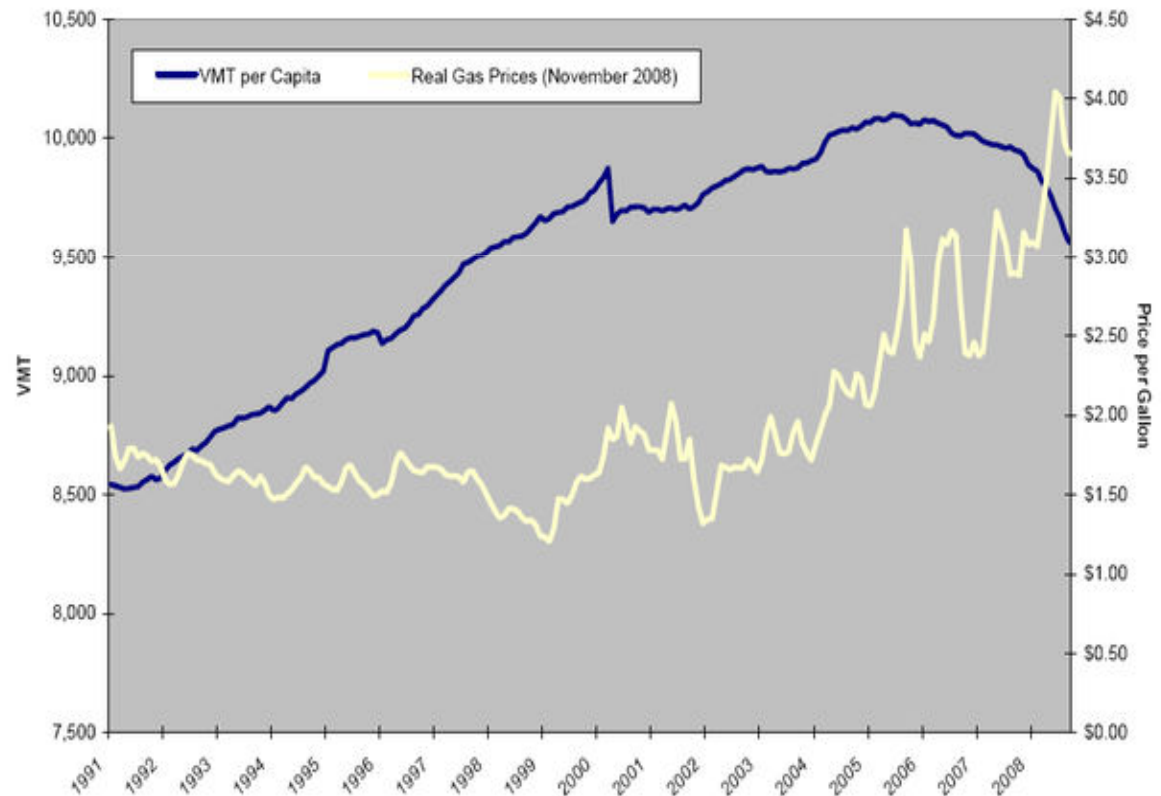
# Transportation Perspective

- Slowly moving towards a permanent, fundamental shift away from dependence on oil
- Single occupancy cars are becoming “un-cool” to the younger generation
- Private transportation systems are where the internet was in the 1970s – government controlled but headed towards a new era in entrepreneurship.
- Private/public partnerships are a key driver and often the only funding option for near future.

# Drop in VMT Signals a Permanent Shift Away from Cars

- The US is experiencing its longest and steepest drop in driving
- Recent drops in VMT (90 billion miles) and VMT per capita (388 miles) are the largest annualized drops since World War II.

U.S. Vehicle Miles Traveled Per Capita, Annualized and Real Gasoline Pump Prices  
January 1991–September 2008



# Green Dividend

- Green dividend
  - Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person by one mile per day in each of the 51 largest metro areas would produce an aggregate annual household savings of \$29 billion annually
- What can Austin's share of this be?



# Top-ranked Metro Cities VMT / Capita / Day

***Austin MSA VMT  
per capita ranks  
#41 among top  
100 large cities in  
the US.***

***San Antonio and  
Dallas have a  
smaller VMT than  
Austin.***

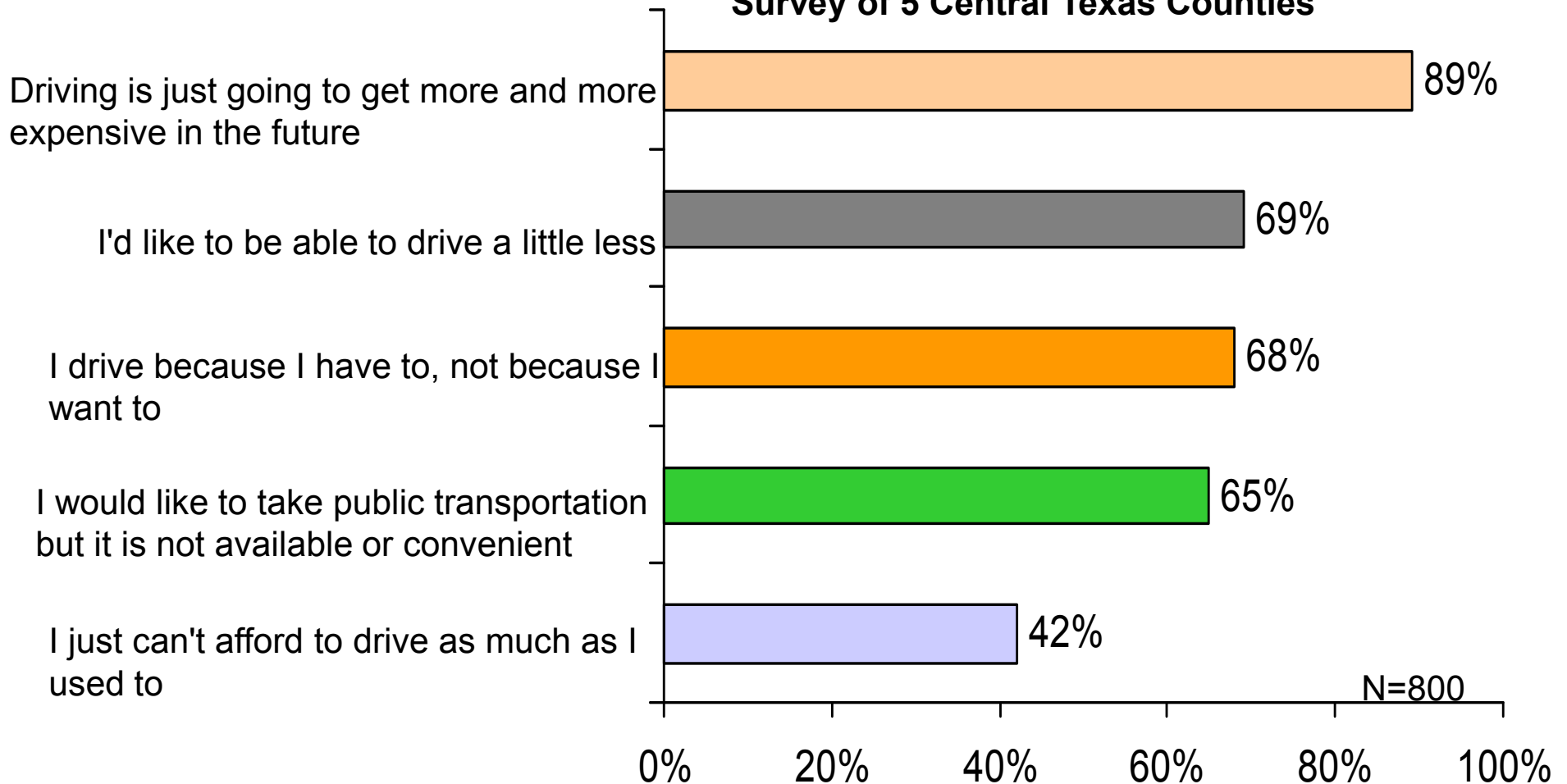
1.	New Orleans, LA	15
2.	New York, NY	16
3.	Sacramento, CA	18
4.	Portland, OR	19
5.	Philadelphia, PA	19
6.	Buffalo, NY	20
7.	Chicago, IL	21
8.	Pittsburg, PA	22
9.	Providence, RI	22
10.	Salt Lake City, UT	23
35.	San Antonio, TX	27
38.	Dallas, TX	28
41.	Austin, TX	30
51.	Houston, TX	37

# Average Time and Cost for Central Texans

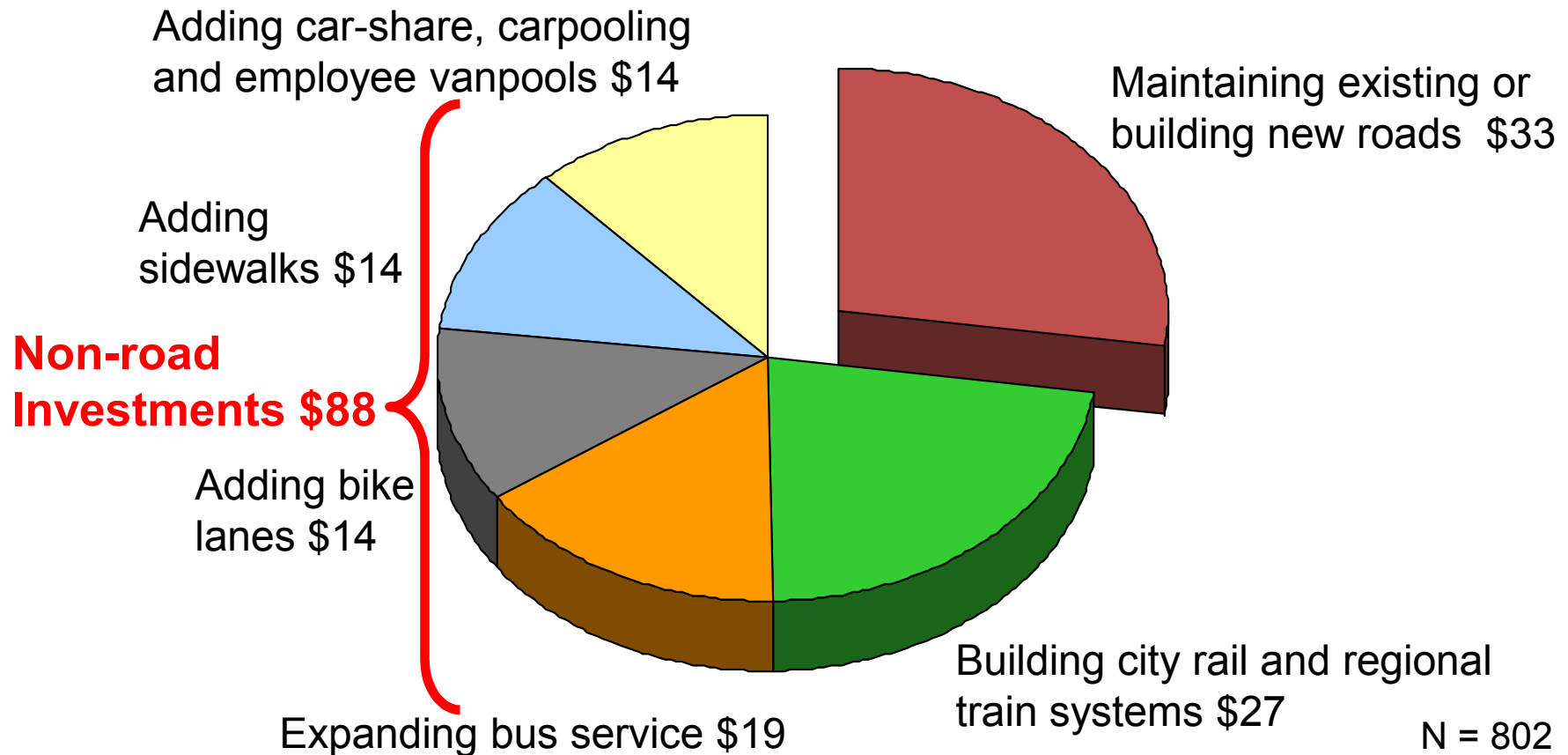
- **93%** say their car is primary mode of transportation and 80% say it is their **ONLY** mode
- **85%** of all those employed full or part time commute to their workplace, average roundtrip commute per day is 44 minutes
- Spend \$347 per month on insurance, gas, maintenance
- **Nationally, transportation costs are about 20% of household expenses, higher than average health care costs.**

# Attitudes Towards Driving Have Changed

Survey of 5 Central Texas Counties



# Investment Priorities: Implications for Stimulus \$\$



# Employer Transportation Benefits

	<b>Available to you now? Yes</b>	<b>Use it now? Yes</b>	<b>Use it in the future? Yes</b>	<b>GAP ANALYSIS</b>
Cash allowance for not using parking spaces when using alternatives	5%	4%	<b>67%</b>	<b>63</b>
Telecommuting from home one or more days per week	25%	21%	<b>64%</b>	<b>43</b>
Staggered work hours one or more days per week	31%	28%	<b>63%</b>	<b>35</b>
Car pools for employees	20%	10%	<b>62%</b>	<b>52</b>
Van pools for employees	10%	4%	<b>57%</b>	<b>53</b>
Showers available for those who walk, run or bike to work	25%	10%	<b>48%</b>	<b>38</b>



Q: For each of the following transportation benefits that are offered by employers tell me whether it is available to you now, whether you use it now and if not, if you would be willing to use it in the future?

# Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs



- Morning service starts at 5am
- Pick up as far as 54 miles away
- Operates through private transportation company

“It’s the most useful Google fringe benefit.”  
*Employee*



*“Google’s aim is to make commuting painless for its ..workers — and keep attracting new recruits in a notoriously competitive market for top engineering talent.” NY Times, March 10, 2007*

# Major Employer Shuttle Concept for Central Texas

- Based on Google model
- Vehicle features matter: WiFi, coffee and breakfast tacos essential
- Multi-employer
- Focus on integration with car-sharing
- Not subsidized during pilot – private transportation provider
- Target price roundtrip about \$10 with full use of QTB making real price much lower
- Competes head on with driving solo
- Primary commuter benefits are saving time and saving money
- Primary community benefits are boost to the local economy, higher productivity, lower congestion, lower VMT and better air quality
- Getting the most out of what we've already got.

# Role of IRS Qualified Transportation Benefit (QTB)

- Employer-based
- Works like a pretax health plan
- Fastest growing HR benefit in the country
- Employees can withhold up to \$230/month pretax, equating to ~\$90/month in savings
- Must have six or more riders in a commercial grade vehicle
- Applies to buses, van pools and shuttles of any kind, public or private
- Employees can save over \$1,000/year on taxes
- Employers paying FICA can save significant amount from their corporate taxes if they pay for some or all of employee's costs

# Selected Companies Already Using QTB

- Google
- Microsoft
- Oracle Corporation
- IBM
- Federal Government Employees - Nationwide (excluding postal workers)
- City and County of San Francisco
- City of Richmond, California
- City of Oakland, California
- County of Boulder, Colorado
- Colorado Symphony Orchestra
- WSDOT
- Charles Schwab
- United Airlines
- State of Arizona
- City of Alameda, California
- Merck and Company
- Sun Microsystems
- Verizon Wireless
- Chevron

# Pilot Overview

- Travis County (In)
- AMD (In)
- City of Austin and Austin Energy (Expected)
- Who's next?! (Preliminary discussions with Seton, IBM, Dell and others)
- Service starts in June for three month pilot in two or three corridors selected based on greatest need among the pilot participants

# Goals of the Pilot

- How best to market shuttle concept in Texas?
- How much VMT reduction can be achieved?
- How best to work with major employers?
- How scalable and replicable is this concept for the rest of Texas? How viable are shuttles here?

# What We Have Learned So Far

- Employers in Central Texas are not strategically focused on transportation management – yet
- Employers don't know about QTB – yet
- Employers are not willing to pay for employees commutes (yet?) but may be willing to make QTB available so that employees can make up their own minds
- Employees will choose alternative transportation options if they are convenient and price-competitive. Younger employees are especially interested in alternatives
- Integration with car-share services are essential for getting around in-between commute hours

# Additional Commuter Needs

- Short ride and occasional support for:
  - Offsite meetings
  - Personal appointments/errands
  - Off-site lunch
  - Personal emergency
  - Off hour commute home (special rate)



# How You Can Help

## Major Employers:

- Designate a transportation strategy manager
- Find out if you already have a QTB benefit, execute it/add it (not rocket science)
- Survey your employees to see how many are interested (we have an electronic version you can customize)
- Let us come do briefings for your employees and sign them up

## Non-employers

- Talk to your friends who work at major employers
- Drive a little less
- Explore car-sharing, car-pooling and van-pools with your friends and co-workers and do as much tele-commuting and trip-chaining as possible

# Conclusions

- Transportation Infrastructure in Central Texas needs billions of dollars – but no one can say where it will come from or when.
- But we can do more – way more – with what we've got.
- Shuttle program is just one example of how sustainability can happen in small, steady ways.

*"The future belongs to those who understand that doing more with less is compassionate, prosperous and enduring and thus more intelligent -- even competitive."*

- Paul Hawken

# Reports Used in PowerPoint Include:



San Francisco study finds employee shuttles good for the city  
November 23, 2009

Study: [http://www.sfcta.org/images/stories/Planning/Shuttles/ShuttleSAR\\_Draft\\_PnP111709.pdf](http://www.sfcta.org/images/stories/Planning/Shuttles/ShuttleSAR_Draft_PnP111709.pdf)

Google's Buses Help Its Workers Beat the Rush  
by MIGUEL HELFT  
March 10, 2007



<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/10/technology/10google.html?pagewanted=all>

Chicago's Green Dividend – A CEOs for Cities Report  
February, 2008

[http://www.ceosforcities.org/work/chicagos\\_green\\_dividend](http://www.ceosforcities.org/work/chicagos_green_dividend)



Brookings Institute VMT Report

[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/1216\\_transportation\\_tomer\\_puentes.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/1216_transportation_tomer_puentes.aspx)

# Thank You



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