



2025 Los Angeles – A National Example of Sustainable Living

Chris Wolfe, President, Americans for Energy Independence, Studio City

Today, Los Angeles is seriously behind the curve when it comes to a clean living environment and in building a sustainable society. Two examples that impact every city dweller, visitor and tourist are traffic congestion and air pollution. These two problems are closely linked and are a result of poor urban planning (sprawl) and a continued reliance on inefficient and polluting automotive transportation.

Due to the size and commercial importance of Los Angeles to California and to our nation, we are in a unique position to not only set an example, but to drive the adoption of innovative solutions to these problems.

Los Angeles can lead the way in lowering traffic congestion by seriously investing in functional mass transit and modifying building codes to be friendlier to higher density housing. We can build a more energy efficient and cleaner city by requiring bio-fuel usage, adopting state-of-the-art building efficiency codes and requiring solar electric and solar water heating installations on all new residential development.

Solutions to Traffic Congestion:

- ★ Eliminate carpool lanes as these have been proven as ineffective incentives and could quickly ease current traffic burdens.
- ★ Add numerous new subway lines (re-engineer) to our woefully inadequate subway system. Add direct feeds to the airport and express trains from outlying areas to the airport and high density work areas. Consider Tokyo, Paris or London as good examples.
- ★ Convert carpool lanes into metro/subway (BART-style) mass transit alleys.

- ★ Promote/subsidize higher density residential development in around concentrated business areas and near new metro lane extensions.
- ★ Pressure state and national leaders to increase 30 year old CAFE standards for automotive fuel efficiency and retain or increase incentives for people to move to smaller more fuel efficient vehicles – improves parking, lane visibility, and reduces pollution.
- ★ Promote the use of automotive/vehicle sharing pools – eliminating the need for people to own a car all together or reduce the need to own a truck or van.
- ★ Mandate that truck (class 3-8) delivery and pickup operations occur between the hours of 9pm and 4am – greatly improves traffic flows, eliminates excessive idling, reduces pollution and improves productivity.

Solutions to Air Pollution:

- ★ Implement many of the suggestions for improving traffic congestion and good progress will be made on reducing air pollution as well.
- ★ Promote/mandate state-of-the-art energy efficient building requirements for all new commercial and residential developments.
- ★ Phase in a requirement to use bio-diesel in all commercial diesel powered vehicles (e.g. trucks, buses, construction equipment) that operate within city limits. This can be phased in over a period of 15 years, starting with 2% and graduating to 80%

– according to a UC Davis study, this would reduce particulate and cancer causing pollutants.

- ★ Work with neighboring cities (e.g. Long Beach) and migrate all local maritime (port) and rail yard diesel vehicles to bio-diesel.
- ★ Mandate that all lawn services companies must use either manual or electric mowers and only electric blowers for residential yard work – most yards in LA can easily be handled without gasoline powered equipment.
- ★ Assess the impact of mandating “native-scape” landscaping to eliminate the need for excessive lawn care and watering.
- ★ Promote/subsidize/mandate solar electric and solar water heating for all new homes within LA city

jurisdiction – this equates to about a 5% cost adder to home prices and leverages the state’s 1 million solar home initiative.

- ★ Mandate that all automobiles that are paid for by the city or where use is reimbursed by the city be hybrid vehicles or achieve more than 30 MPG – our elected officials and city employees must lead by example.

In business, one usually starts with a few goals in mind and then identifies the strategies and tactics needed to make progress against these goals. As a resident of Los Angeles, my hope is that significantly reducing traffic congestion and improving our air quality would be two of this city’s most critical objectives over the next two decades. In pursuing these goals we can make our city’s roads safer, make our environment healthier and create a world-class sustainable metropolis.