

State of the Commons/EcoPlan 2008 Report and Outlook

The New Mobility Agenda Triple-Dividend:
Protect the environment. Improve our
Cities. Strengthen the economy.

Paris, Tuesday, 8 January 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Below please find our annual State of the Commons/Ecoplan Report, offering a quick recap of 2007, a look ahead to 2008, and an introspection about the nature of problem-solving in our main areas of competence, which I am pleased to share with you and hope to get your feedback and ideas on.

The keys to the year directly ahead are two: First, to face the music and recognize the full dimensions and urgency of the problems before our cities and our planet. And in parallel with this, to find more effective ways to solve these challenges, through more seamless international networking and collaborative problem solving. There is a great deal of knowledge and good accumulated experience out there, but it needs to be better harnessed and put to work for your city. Many of these wheels have already been invented; so here is no reason to start from zero every time. But how to spot, chose and adapt the best for your unique case? That is the challenge before each city and project team.

All of which is by way of saying that our 2008 work program keys on collaborative problem solving, making effective use of the alliances, materials and knowledge bases that have been built up within the [New Mobility Agenda](#) over the last two decades. Key partnership projects for 2008 will key on the [Advisory Briefs](#), which have started with the first [World City Bike Planning Brief](#), and which in the coming months will expand to include Briefs covering experience and lessons learned in the areas of carsharing, economic instruments (such as road pricing and congestion charging), and the new busway projects (BRT et al). But there is more to the Agenda than its pieces.

We see the individual briefs and the projects they set out as specific steps in a process of a much broader rethinking of transport in cities, in your city. Which brings us to our latest program, [Reinventing Transport in Cities](#), a collaborative undertaking which in our view has to start with the mayors and local civic leaders as the keys to the future of their cities. That's the big challenge for 2008

And now for the recap and outlook for our on-going programs. Though not without in closing inviting you to share with us your plans, projects and work interests for 2008. Cooperation is a two way street. Let's make it a busy one.

With all good wishes,

Eric Britton
Managing Director

Europe: 8/10 rue Joseph Bara, 75006 Paris, France. T: +331 4326 1323
USA: 9440 Readcrest Dr. Los Angeles, CA 90210. T: +1 310 601-8468
E. eric.britton@newmobility.org. E2. fekbritton@gmail.com Skype: ericbritton

Dedication :

Hans Monderman, 1947 – 2008. In memoriam

As we were going to press this morning with this report and work plan for 2008, I learned of the sad news that our dear friend and colleague Hans Monderman has passed away today. It is a great loss.

Hans was an exceptionally creative, energetic and original thinker and doer, right up the middle of the New Mobility Agenda at its best. His specialty was not to write lots of fat reports or sit in conferences, but rather to get out onto the street and show people and policy makers what can be done if we apply our minds to it. His approach has been called “Designing for Negotiation”, which he in his usual modesty admitted works better in some places than others. At busy urban intersections with slow traffic, he found that it is often safer and more effective to get road users to focus on looking at one another instead of traffic control devices.

An article that appeared in the New York Times on his work in 2005 started with the following, which I share with you here as a good lead-in to his original approach:

"I want to take you on a walk," said Hans Monderman, abruptly stopping his car and striding - hatless, and nearly hairless - into the freezing rain. Like a naturalist conducting a tour of the jungle, he led the way to a busy intersection in the center of town, where several odd things immediately became clear. Not only was it virtually naked, stripped of all lights, signs and road markings, but there was no division between road and sidewalk. It was, basically, a bare brick square.

But in spite of the apparently anarchical layout, the traffic, a steady stream of trucks, cars, buses, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians, moved along fluidly and easily, as if directed by an invisible conductor. When Monderman, a traffic engineer and the intersection's proud designer, deliberately failed to check for oncoming traffic before crossing the street, the drivers slowed for him. No one honked or shouted rude words out the window.

"Who has the right of way?" he asked rhetorically. "I don't care. People here have to find their own way, negotiate for themselves, use their own brains.

We were all so lucky to be able to benefit from Hans' work over these years and when I learned that health was starting to fail in 2004 I took the initiative of nominating him for the 2005 Word Technology Environment Award, and then putting the full force of our international network behind his nomination,. It worked and brought him to the award ceremonies in San Francisco where he thrilled the audience with his lively acceptance speech outlining his original ideas and approaches. For many there this was the first time they had ever heard about anything like that.

To learn more about his contributions, a good place to start is his [Wikipedia entry](#), and for a shot at how it works on the street have a look at the joyful little film that Robert Stussi turned on the occasion of a visit “Unexpected interview in Groningen: [A Homage to Hand Monderman](#)”. The full text of that Times article can be had [here](#).

Hans wrote me a few lines only last Tuesday reacting to a little brainstorm on a concept I call “slowth” (in part derived from his work) - with cautiously optimistic comments that the sharing space approach is taking hold. His note closes with the words: “I attach two pieces of text I found very challenging.” Which I now share with you:

- John Adams on “[Hypermobility: A Challenge to Governance](#)”, Amsterdam, 11 May 2006
- Pier Giorgio Di Cicco’s [Closing Address to the Oct. 2007 Walk21 Conference](#), Toronto, 3 Oct. 2007

I am honored to dedicate the work of the New Mobility Agenda over 2008 to the memory of Hans Monderman. We shall miss him greatly.

Eric Britton, Paris, Tuesday, 8 January 2008

The Commons: A wide open, world-wide open society forum concerned with improving our understanding and control of technology as it impacts on people in our daily lives. Seeking out and pioneering new transformational concepts for concerned citizens, activists, community groups, entrepreneurs and business. Supporting local government as that closest to the people and the problems. Increasing the discomfort zone for hesitant administrators and politicians. And through our long term world-wide collaborative efforts, energy and personal choices, placing them and ourselves firmly on the path to a more sustainable and more just world.

I. Main themes guiding our work: 1966 to 2008 and beyond

Five central themes drive our work: sustainable development; governance, collaborative problem-solving, transport in cities, and the climate link to transport policy and practice. And in all this we are on the constant look-out for *triple-dividend policies* that protect the climate, improve our cities and strengthen the economy.

1. Sustainable development and social justice

The starting place was set from the beginning in 1966 when I decided (for reasons I am not really able to put my finger on today) to focus my life work on, to quote, “better understanding and managing technological and economic change as it impacts on ordinary people, in our daily lives”. Over the years this central theme gradually took shape through a wide variety of projects and work circumstances, and a certain number of felicitous accidents, bringing us by the late eighties to this central guiding theme.

2. “Two cheers for the market (Not three)”

This cogent statement, made a generation ago by Arthur Okun, then Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors under President John F. Kennedy, is to my mind the principal flagship for public policy in the 21st century. The transition to a more sustainable way of life will only be possible if we can figure out how to harness and dynamize the full entrepreneurial energies and creativity of the private sector at its vigorous best. That much we know. However the shift cannot be left to market forces alone. We cannot reasonably expect the private sector to move toward sustainability without wise governance. Guide rails are needed both to evoke and to channel the huge energies and competences of the private sector, and that is what public policy is all about. And finding the right mix is tricky stuff indeed.

3. Collaborative problem-solving

Early on I decided that rather than taking the brick and mortar form of most consultancy groups and think tanks emerging at the time our contributions should instead key on the creation and management of open, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and persistent (i.e., long term) peer networks and partnerships for problem solving and from this broad base, providing independent counsel and policy direction for governments, the private sector and volunteer and community groups in a broad range of problem areas in which we and our informal groups of associates have high competence. One of our colleagues (Professor Mikoto Usui) at an early meeting of The Commons in 1974 at the historic (XIII century) Abbaye de Royaumont just north of Paris referred to these informal open teams as “invisible colleges”. Nice, and it still works for me. The goal was to ensure that each of these informal cooperating groups is able to provide wide international coverage and a wide variety of points of view and political orientations (North/South, East/West, Left/Right). (See the International Advisory Council for our Kyoto World Cities program at <http://ecoplan.org/briefs/general/panel.htm> for more on that).

This has been one of the keystones of our work, and it has taken its present shape in steps and over time. The “virtualization” process that makes it work had already begun to bite in the mid eighties as we moved over to email (1982) and then (1988) started to create our first shared libraries and discussion groups on the internet. By 1993 we had started to use videoconferencing on a daily basis and put the web (1995) a steadily expanding series of program sites along with a third generation of discussion groups/fora serving and uniting a growing collection of individuals, groups and agencies around the world who share our interests and concerns.

Warts and all we have after a couple of decades of persistence managed to network something like five thousand experts, observers and groups in more than fifty countries through these various programs and discussions. And this provides rich background for our work and the work and information backdrop of many of those who participate actively. If you go to the New Mobility Agenda home page at <http://www.newmobility.org/> and click Talking New Mobility in the left menu, you will have direct access to many of these.

4. Transportation, Cities and the New Mobility Agenda

Our decision to dig deep in this particular sector has two origins, both going back a number of years. First, back in the early days of EcoPlan, several chance assignments looking into various kinds of transportation and mobility futures starting with that first three-volume outlook report, "New Technology and Transportation: 1970-1990". That lavishly funded world survey got us off and running in the sector.



As the seventies progressed it became increasingly clear that this was also a terrific sector to concentrate on from the broader perspective of our basic objectives, namely the quest for sustainable development and social justice -- and this simply because of all the main segments of society and the economy, the transport sector was and is the easiest area in which we can move to new and more efficient models.

The real beauty of the transport sector as a target for near-term, massive overhaul, is that the starting point is so terribly weak – namely, we have over the decades step by step and without really thinking about it, built up a grotesquely wrong-headed “system”, especially when it comes to all these matters of how we organize for people and goods to get around in our daily lives in and around our cities. (Old mobility = spending more time stuck in traffic; waiting for a bus in the rain that may not ever come; paying more for transportation services each year which simply get step by step worse: paying both from our own pockets for these services, and as voters and taxpayers who are being asked to fork out more cash each year for these declining levels of service. Have a look over to your left for an example of old mobility at its daily best. And have a look at your window while you’re at it: you’ll almost surely see more of the same, unless you and your city are very lucky and farsighted indeed.)

If that idea of sustainable mobility as a “learning bench” for the rest is not immediately clear, let me suggest you ponder the gut-wrenching difficulties we face in other such areas as globalization, climate modification, international migration, rocketing unemployment, aging populations, failures of international institutions, drugs, disaffected youth, the many egregious performances we are witnessing under the all too easily trotted out rubric of “democracy”, and the long and mainly sad list goes on and on.

Next to all these the issues surrounding the moving of people and stuff are by contrast dead simple, I promise you. So, in the face of this fundamental reality my reasoning was: why not start here with this simplest case, and see what can be done from this base to create new visions and models, which others may then be able to use and build on for their own pioneering work in those other much tougher challenges. (Should you wish to have a feel for how this works, let me refer you to our latest new mobility program, Reinventing Transport in Cities at <http://www.invent.newmobility.org>. This gives you at least a start.)

5. Climate Change (The Great Black Hope)

Over the last several years two great truths about our sector have emerged from the shadows. The first is that while the issues of sustainable transport are increasingly well understood at the leading edge and thus have been making notable progress in a certain number of places around the world, the hard truth is that the old mobility model (basically “build it and they will come”) is still robustly in place and the one that is driving policy and practice for almost every decision and investment in almost every city and country in the world.

And then, slowly slowly, from quite another direction, and indeed to our great surprise, along comes the climate link -- and there at least we encounter a growing and increasingly shared sense of emergency that has been missing to now in our work. “Reinventing Transport in Cities” suddenly becomes now just a “nice to do” but an “absolutely must do”. That’s a huge difference.

And so – and I really do think this was an important decision all around – we decided to hitch our new mobility wagon to the star of climate emergency. For me an important turning point in this process were eighteen words in a talk that President William Jefferson Clinton gave in Los Angeles in August 2006 in which he launched his Clinton Climate Initiative. His 18 words were precisely the following: “We have to reduce about 80% of our greenhouse gas emissions over the next 10 to 15 years.”

That’s our ticket for 2008 and beyond. Big, fast GHG reductions on the street. Without waiting around for it to happen all by itself. Good for the planet. And great for your city, for you and for your family.

And not to forget these vital building blocks:

- **Logistics:** It's 2008 and this has to be a core strategy to define and connect people and their choices. We have these great tools for the first time to better understand and organize people and systems over time and space. The 21st century connect of supply and demand. Let's put them to work.
- **People:** Diverse, difficult, suspicious, disappointed in politics, and averse to change. But needful. You have to like people, and be ready to take the time to get to know them as they are and wish to be, to be effective agents of change in our push to sustainability and social justice. Deeply like them.
- **Deep democracy:** Mussolini once said that the only way to govern Italy was that to station next to each Italian his own policeman. And if we look at the structures of many of our cities and policies we will see often at least a bit of that. Governance from the center and by prescription. Too many laws, too much centralization, too much compartmentalization, all with an assumption that the "center" knows best. But it's 2008 and we live at a time of an increasingly well educated, capable and active citizenry. The goal of deep democracy is to build our future in partnerships with creative public servants and community leaders reaching out to and empowering these citizens and groups. They are there and they are the vital constituents of good governance and change. (A great example are the emerging wave of city bike projects around the world. Systems designed and brought on line in close cooperation with local citizens, and used by us ordinary people to make our own choices about how to get around in our cities: when we want, where we want, safely and in good health, and with as close to zero carbon as we can get. Try it: you'll like it! – <http://citybike.newmobility.org/> . Deep democracy.)

* * *

Bottom Line:

Where does this leave us then as 2008 gets underway? We have decided (a) to concentrate, and to the extent possible (b) to simplify.

We shall in all our work between now and 2012 focus all our efforts on programs, projects and measures that aim to enable major cuts in GHG emissions from the sector in the two to five years directly ahead. Major? Indeed. We need to be looking at reductions in the range of 20 to 50%. And now! Not in 2050 or even 2020.

How to achieve such scale reductions in such a short period of time? For starters we have to shed the idea that "new technology" can help us out in this. The first step is to be lucid. There is simply not time for us to hope blindly that new engines, new vehicles, or new fuels are going to show up to bail us out of the climate bind.

No, the only way to get the job done is to take very big chunks of traffic off the road – most of these private cars. So, if we need 50% GHG reductions from the sector in our city, we are going to have to reduce traffic by a roughly corresponding amount. But careful there! This is not an entirely negative, Malthusian challenge. To the contrary: it is a challenge of great joy and creativity. A triple-dividend challenge.

Getting this right requires a two-pronged strategy: First, finding the way to clear the traffic without wrecking the economy or our ideals of social justice. Second, by creating in a very short period of time an integrated package of new mobility services which permit people to get around more efficiently, with more choice and cheaper than in the old car-only system. We call this our "New Mobility Bouquet" And if you want to see how it works, check it out at Reinventing Transport in Cities at <http://www.invent.newmobility.org/>

Now let's have a look at 2007 before we look out to the future.



“New Mobility - We deliver”.

II. Looking back on 2007:

2007 has been a good, at times difficult and altogether an important year in many ways. Perhaps the most interesting and formative since we got started on this long road this back in 1966. Let me run you quickly over the main highlights, along with a few words on some of the main lessons learned.

1. Reinventing Transport in Cities - The Climate Link

This is the program that came out of our decision to link our work to the climate issues which provide such strong motivation for change and improvement in the sector. The fundamental hallmark of this open collaborative program is that indispensable pairing of major traffic reductions within that two to five year time horizon. The program is intended to serve as a lively and effective information sharing process about leading edge developments, an international base for collaboration, and no less as a marketing/development tool to generate new projects, clients and forms of support. (See <http://www.invent.newmobility.org> for more.)

2. New Mobility Agenda – The Cities Programs

The idea behind this wing of our activities is to get support to organize “city missions”, which key on the organization of somewhere from at least two-five day programs of workshops, presentations, outreach projects, etc. around the “reinventing transport” theme. Over 2007 there were four such exercises, in the cities of Paris, Chicago, Stuttgart, and most recently Dubai (see below for a first round of details). It is my hope that these missions will over 2008 make extensive use of the expert networks and competences that are already in place.

3. New Mobility Advisory Briefs

There is today a great gulf between what is being looked at and done in the transport sector in most cities -- and the way it is being handled at the leading edge. But many of the most useful things that local government can put into play are insufficiently known in most places. The Briefs provide concise information and decision counsel to leaders on out-standing policies succeeding in leading cities around the world today. This program, which initially got underway in 2006, took on new life in 2007 as we decided to use it at the framework for the first completed report in this series: the “New Mobility City Bike Strategies Policy Brief”. This initiative came out of the path-breaking Paris city bike project (you have heard about the great Vélib’ project here with some 20,000 bikes out on the streets – a city transformation project if ever there were one). For more on this: <http://www.citybike.newmobility.org/> and <http://www.newmobilityadvisory.org>

4. The Greening of Paris



In the opening months of 2007 we looked out the window and decided that the world might do well to learn more about the Paris project for transforming its mobility arrangements. (see <http://www.paris.newmobility.org> for details). In addition to an ongoing cycle of studies, consultations and presentations, a twenty minute film on the experience was completed in the last days, to be shown at the forthcoming 2008 World Sustainable Transportation Award ceremony in Washington DC. One of the ‘products’ of this work was that we were able thus to support aggressively international recognition for Paris’s on-going work and achievements

5. The New Mobility Fora – Activation, Maintenance, Extension

This is an on-going task requiring daily attention. The specialized fora which take the form of discussion groups shared libraries, are each focused on specific topics and targets. These include those of the [New Mobility Agenda](#) and the [Journal of World Transport Policy & Practice](#) (all clickable here) , as well as those looking specifically at issues involving various aspects of [Carsharing](#), [Non-Motorized Transport](#), [Value Capture/Tax Reform](#), [Kyoto World Cities](#) and [Global South/Sustran](#), all on a worldwide basis.

6. Copenhagen Agenda for Sustainable Cities

We had the honor to join with a prestigious selection of some fifty of our most distinguished international cities colleagues from almost as many countries in a group project sponsored by the Danish Ministry of Environment. Our assignment : to brainstorm in network fashion to see if we could come up with something on the order of an "agenda" to help guide and orient cities around the world in their tough struggle for sustainability. The result: a statement of "Ten Principles for Sustainable City Governance". A great exercise with some quite surprising and unconventional results. You may want to check it out by clicking [here](#). Recommended!

7. First steps of collaboration with Clinton Climate Initiative

Over 2007 this consisted mainly of a continuing round of discussions and exchanges, as we tried to see how to reconcile and fit the very specific focus of the New Mobility Agenda (i.e., transport in cities) to their much broader agenda (virtually all sectors, and within transport every mode from air, marine, rail, etc.) – as well as our much tighter time focus (the next few years) to their broader approach with more emphasis on technological progress. In addition to these exchanges, the Clinton team kindly provided some of the initial seed money for the first of our Advisory Briefs (City Bike Strategies) as well as help in to arrange a well-supported three day series of workshops and brainstorming sessions on Reinventing Transport in Chicago. A good beginning.

8. City of Stuttgart and the Cities for Mobility network

Spent several weeks over the year working with the mayor of Stuttgart and his team to help form and develop this new international network to assist for the most part smaller cities around the world looking to reinvent transport. This is an ongoing project for 2008.

9. Dubai (of all places)

As you know from the media, this is quite possibly the only city in the world that makes Shanghai look like they're taking their time. And as you can well imagine, when it comes to matters of transportation – and environment -- they are stuck right in the middle of the old twentieth century "build it and they will come" model. And if nothing happens to get them onto a new trajectory, it's going to be an environmental and life quality catastrophe, a close to worst case negative model for the rest of the world. As it happens, the Urban Land Institute last fall invited me to spend a week to Dubai as part of an international advisory mission in support of their new Urban Framework Plan, it being my end to provide a critical appreciation of how they are doing in the areas about which I am supposed to know a thing or two. This is an on-going project and it is my position that if we can somehow help the government team to move to fundamentally sustainable model of new mobility, this will be a wonderful positive example for the world. Stay tuned and keep your fingers crossed..

10. And China?

You would expect that under the circumstance we should be doing quite a few things there, but the only peep that came from that way in 2007 was an invitation to come to Shanghai to deliver a half-hour keynote speech to a conference of mayors they were organizing in April on the theme of transport in cities and carfree days. The offer was the usual: business class air travel, first class hotels and a modest honorarium. But I had to tell them that I can't work like that and such quick-in/quick-out presentations simply are not in line with my personal travel CO2 constraints (see <http://ebtravel.newmobility.org/>) which require that when I get on a plane I have to work for one day in that place on sustainability projects for each hour spend in the transit (one way). This meant that they would have to work with me on these issues for more than a week, to which they then pleaded budgetary constraints, time, etc. etc. So rather than move my personal lard physically I eventually handled my half hour contribution via zero-carbon videoconferencing. An altogether satisfactory solution under the circumstances, thought is sure does point up we need to do a better job in getting these messages out. But now what?

11. Meanwhile, back in France:

There was a lot of other stuff going on over the year, but most of this you will be able to find via the several websites indicated here. One though that you will not, has been my inability at the end of the day to shape the policy of the French government as they are undertaking to reconfigure their ministerial portfolios to create a new Super-Ministry of Environment which now encompasses not only environment and climate, but also the former ministries of public works, transport, energy, habitat, and territorial development. I thought I was getting very close in my work on this at the ministerial level; however at the end of the day the entire process was taken into hand by their professional civil servants who are now busy rearranging the deck chairs. Hmm.

* * *

So, to cap the year, what was really going on? A fair level of international interest in what we are doing, some concrete accomplishments, insufficient media coverage and support to make it stick on the needed international scale, and in terms of finance, a lot more outgo than income. Now and against this backdrop, what lessons have been learned and how is 2008 shaping up?.

III. 2008: First projects in the pipeline

Here in brief are the first triple-dividend projects and eventual assignments already shaping up for 2008. Almost all of these are partnership projects, and in many cases our participation is in a supporting role.

1. New Mobility Policy Briefs/Collaboration

This first brief in the Reinventing Transport in Cities series -- City Bike Development Strategies (Vol. 1, No. 1)-- has now been completed and a first marketing program is now getting underway. It sells for € 1450 a copy (€ 950 if they order before 15 Feb.). You will see full background on the project and the report if you click to <http://www.citybike.newmobility.org/>. Additional Briefs planned in series for 2008: Carsharing Strategies; Economic Instruments; Busway Innovations; Dynamic Ride-Sharing (digital hitchhiking), and Unified Access (fare cards). These are hot topics together with our networks we offer really quite unique background and insights on how to make them work. (Part of this strategy is also to seek out national and other sponsors to fund special editions adapted and refined for specific countries or other groups. Including language editions.)

2. New Mobility Cities programs

Under discussion with Stuttgart, Paris, Dubai, Vancouver and a few others which are just starting to get underway. These projects are expected to pay their way and to contribute to overheads. A key to this: active working alliances with mayors associations and cities groups. These include: Cities for Mobility, US. Conference of Mayors, French Association des Maires de France, plus ongoing discussions with Transport Canada, US DOT, and the French Ministère de l'environnement. It's my best guess that the quality of our websites and products such as the new Greening of Paris film are going to be critical here.

3. A Public Bicycle Project for Vancouver (A prototype)

A good example of our international collaborative networking process. We are working as part of a Canadian team to lay the strategic base for an eventual city-wide public bicycle project to be fully planned over 2008, implemented in the first half of 2009, so tested and ready for the city on the occasion of the 2010 Winter Olympics. This is a sensible, doable project, and our hope is to make it into an open project for other cities to follow and profit from. Have a look at <http://www.forum.worldcitybike.org> and check out how we are trying to reach deep into both local and world level expertise to help make this a great project and model for other cities.

4. Green Driving – Sustainable mobility step by step

This partnership project involves the tailoring of a comprehensive package of measures and policies, whose overall objective is to provide a positive framework for drivers in cities in transition. It incorporates a range of measures which facilitate "green parking", carsharing, HOV access, technology assisted ride-sharing, and more.

5. The Greening of Paris - Film

The just-completed 18 minute rough cut video introduction will be used to seek financial support for a professional full hour length film for TV, DVDs and theaters (as was the case with "Contested Streets", which you can call up on the site). "Contested" has been projected in movie houses on several continents and the DVD has sold more than a thousand copies. It has recently been picked by the Sundance Film Festival for distribution. (You can view the rushes at <http://ecoplan.org/library/greening-paris.wmv>)

6. Dubai Advisory Mission 2 (and possibly 3)

The plan is for two more advisory missions as part of the ULI team in 2008, the first of which for March, but yet to be finalized. (I feel strongly that if we can make progress here in moving Dubai toward the New Mobility Agenda this could be a very important contribution and high visibility model for cities looking to find their way.)

7. Climate Change: 2008 Presidential Strategies for Economic & Environment Policy

I have been asked to contribute chapters to this book already in process under the joint editorship of Edward and Robert Ayres. This is an urgent project and has as its goal to present a high profile environmental and technology platform in an attempt to influence this year's presidential elections in the US, much as the Pacte pour l'environnement worked to influence the 2007 elections in France..

8. Stockholm Partnerships for Sustainable Cities

An important program for the basic objectives to which I am firmly committed. Over 2002 I served as senior advisor to the first "Partnerships," and for the June 2002 meeting in the Great Blue Hall (where the Nobel Prizes are discerned) I led that international jury and hosted the award ceremony. (More on that at http://partnerships.stockholm.se/jury_index.html. I am in discussions with a team led by the mayor of Stockholm about organizing a June 2009 conference, which will have to get underway in the first half of the year ahead.)

IV. 2008: Opportunities to be grasped, improvements to be made

Beyond those first on-going projects, there are a handful of other more general issues, tasks and opportunities to which my associates, colleagues and I intend to give close attention in 2008. Chief among these:

More Alliances, more team projects, more creative use of networks

Our main strengths over the years have been our ability to create and maintain useful international peer networks. However we have not thus far made sufficient hands-on use of them at the level of specific projects, assignments and collaborative undertakings. The networks thus have to be more creatively dynamized and tailored to be more directly useful to all involved. The focus in all our work is on projects and improvements in cities, and to make these real requires *in-place* competence and contacts. This is no “virtual” task. The current Vancouver Public Bicycle study is one good example of creative team building to support outstanding new mobility innovations. The ULI project in Dubai another, finding new ways to bring world competence to this city-state in its high profile search for sustainability. And a forming-up international collaborative project to support and accelerate the development of carsharing in cities is another. But there needs to be yet more.

I think we are using the wrong tools

Or rather we – just about all of us would-be “agents of sustainable change” and not just your servant – are not making nearly adequate use of the rich and expanding panoply of new tools out there for spatial and temporal analysis which can help us better show the present (warts and all) and demonstrate the future in ways that make it clear to politicians, administrators and the public that change is possible and can be made with a high certainly as to what it is going to bring about. We can envisage and share the future and the choices we can make, and we now have the tools to start to do this. This is going to be among our major paths of enquiry and collaboration in 2008. (We have a lot to learn. . . and a lot to learn from. Not bad for a start.)

Communications overhaul needed here

We need to undertake a major overhaul of our communications routines and software, starting with our websites which for the most part are too clunky and opaque to get the job done. There is a huge amount of information buried in them but that’s the problem; it’s buried. Likewise, the two dozen discussion fora and shared libraries are far too limited in terms of their practical usefulness and ease of access. Time for a major overhaul on both these scores. Similarly, the quality of our print products is at best “adequate” -- but in a world in which there is such a huge mass of stuff competing for your attention, adequate is not enough. Finally, there are some terrific interactive group learning tools which can be put to work to gain further public support and inputs into new projects and program when it counts (early!). So much more on all this.

The Seventh Art – Let’s unleash it

What is holding the world back in the tragically necessary move to more sustainable lives and a healthier planet. Well, certainly not because the need is not there. No, what is holding us back is that most of us who care about these things are simply not getting the message out. Yes, Al Gore has done his bit and its great - but as even he says it’s only a start. He tells us what is wrong and missing, but we now need to put some meat on these bones and move toward concrete actions that will make the difference. We believe that with our associates in dozens of countries around the world we are in a good position to work with media firms and personalities to do just that – get the message out! We have a portfolio of ideas for films, videos and DVDs, and invite you to get in touch to discuss. We are ready to roll.

Now . . . what was that good idea of yours for a project or funding support for 2008?

Pointing the way to New Mobility



<http://invent.newmobility.org>