

# Sustainable Development Report

Issue #3

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Estolano LeSar Perez  
ADVISORS LLC

ELP Advisors works with cities, agencies, stakeholders, foundations and business groups to craft strategies to grow thriving, healthy, vibrant communities.

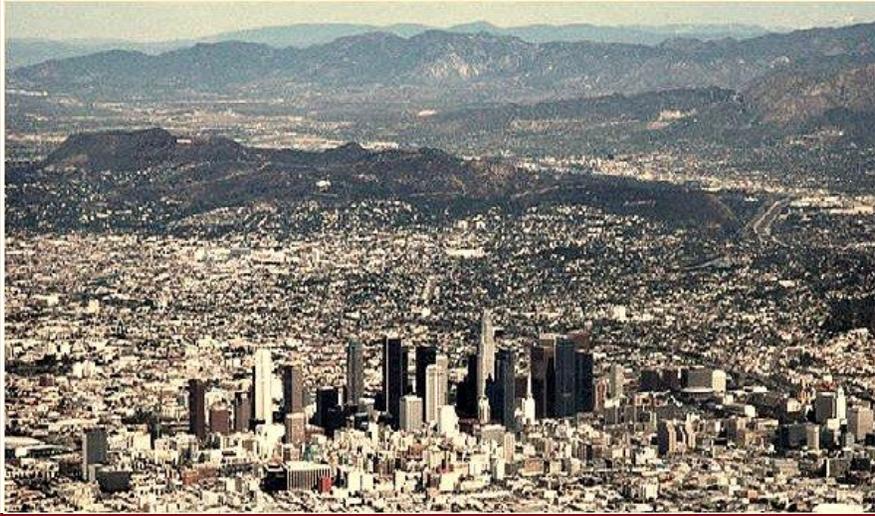
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## Congress Threatens Sustainability Gains

This issue of the monthly Sustainable Development Report focuses on the progress made and the perils threatening sustainable transportation policy and development. As *The Architects Newspaper* details, California is beginning to enjoy the fruits of a Transit Oriented Development boom, driven by new investments in rail lines. However, the U.S. House of Representatives has targeted the Sustainable Communities Partnership, TIGER grants and other core elements of federal efforts to relieve congestion, improve air quality, promote economic productivity, and enable communities to remake themselves into more livable, walkable neighborhoods.

As Los Angeles gears up for a third CicLAvia that will reclaim the streets for people and not cars, some in Congress are threatening to hold up extension of the federal transportation bill unless funding to improve bicycling and pedestrian access is stripped from it. Even in this stalled recovery, the movement of communities working to rebuild themselves into healthier, more accessible, vibrant places to live, work and play continues to grow. The contrast between the creativity and energy of our cities and the posturing and paralysis in Washington, DC could not be greater. This is the time to tell Congress that our communities demand more than just deficit reduction - we need investment to build a stronger, more economically and environmentally sustainable America.

Sincerely yours,

Cecilia V. Estolano | Jennifer LeSar | Katherine Aguilar Perez



## RUBBER SIDEWALKS

In Vancouver, residents and visitors alike may notice a more comfortable stroll along the 400-block of East 17th Ave. The city has installed a rubber sidewalk replacing the cracked concrete sidewalks with material made from recycled tires. The city will monitor the performance of the sidewalk for the next four years.

Rubber sidewalks are about 30% more expensive to install than concrete sidewalks, but long-term maintenance costs are lower. The material reduces landfill waste from tires and can be recycled.

To read the full article [click here](#). To learn more about rubber sidewalks [click here](#). And to see current installations throughout the U.S. and Los Angeles [click here](#).



## NO MORE CUL-DE-SACS

"We discovered while we are separated from other uses and neighbors, it is difficult to get anywhere."

-Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission in Allentown, Pennsylvania has released a street connectivity document that urges developers to ditch cul-de-sacs in favor of through streets. The commission cites the following advantages: reduced trip times, decreased demand on arterial streets, and reduced infrastructure costs. This is more anecdotal evidence that connectivity principles are spreading, even in suburban locations. Are developers listening?

To read the full report [click here](#).



## EVENTS

### TOD Database: One Stop Shop for Station Area Data

September 20, 2011  
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. PDT

### Transportation & Leadership at Caltrans

September 20, 2011  
11:15 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. PDT

Solutions for Sustainable

## CicLAvia: L.A.'s Biggest Block Party

October 9th, 2011: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.



**CicLAvia** transforms LA's streets into vibrant public spaces where people can get around any way they choose -- except by car. On Sunday, October 9th, Angelenos are invited to take to the streets and experience their city in a new way. The 10-mile route stretches from East Hollywood to Boyle Heights, with a new southern extension to the African American Firefighter Museum on Central Avenue and a northern extension to El Pueblo de Los Angeles and Olvera Street.

As part of the CicLAvia Walks initiative, CicLAvia has launched a new mini-grant program to encourage creative and fun activities along the route. The winners were announced today, and include a wide range of performances, art installations, and interactive attractions. Together they will greatly enhance CicLAvia's festive atmosphere and give participants a multitude of reasons to slow down and enjoy the route. Here is a sampling of what you can expect to see:

### Sound Forest -- Alan Nakagawa

The sound forest will be an interactive installment along the route that will allow visitors to play any of about 30 percussion instruments. The site will include a mix of traditional (cow bells, cymbals, tambourines, woodblocks, etc.) and nontraditional (scrap metal, plastic bottles, bicycle tires, etc.) items. The sound forest will also feature experimental sound musicians that will accompany the general public.

### Human Parade Float -- Alexis Disselkoen & Paul Pescador

This project will involve 10-12 brightly-attired performers located along the CicLAvia route. As performers encounter each other they will physically connect using a variety of items (velcro, buttons, zippers, etc.). When all of the performers are assembled, they'll form a roughly 10' x 15' human parade float.

For more information on CicLAvia please visit [ciclavia.org](http://ciclavia.org) or become a fan on [Facebook](#).

**Communities: 2011 Learning Conference on State and Local Housing Policy**

September 26-28, 2011  
Washington, D.C.

**National Community Planning Month**  
October, 2011

**2011 Urban Land Institute Fall Meeting and Urban Land Expo**  
October 25-28, 2011



315 W. 9th Street, Suite 1010  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
Phone: 213-612-4545  
Fax: 213-488-3468

[www.elpadvisors.com](http://www.elpadvisors.com)  
[www.lesardevelopment.com](http://www.lesardevelopment.com)



## Core Transportation & Sustainable Communities Funding Threatened



**Transportation for America reports that the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate must extend the original SAFETEA-LU bill by the end of the month or federal aid for transportation projects will stop.** On September 13th, the House passed the first hurdle by approving a six-month extension at current funding levels. The Senate is expected to do the same, but the battle is on to preserve funding for bike and pedestrian projects in SAFETEA-LU.

**Meanwhile, the House has outlined its proposed appropriations for numerous important transportation programs** and nearly all have been cut, and several face outright elimination. The TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Grant Program, the Sustainable Communities Partnership, TIGGER (Transit Investment in Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction) Grant Program, and High Speed Rail would be completely eliminated while Amtrak and formula transit and road grants would face severe cuts.

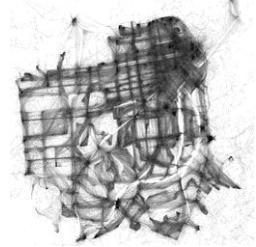
**Even if Congress raises the final appropriation numbers for these programs, the specter of the debt reduction super-committee means that these programs will stay on the table for further cuts.** Given the composition of the current Congress, the business community is a crucial voice that needs to weigh in on the value of these programs not only in the dollar amounts needed but also in the importance of continuing the momentum toward more sustainable growth. The smart growth principles that underlie the Sustainable Communities Partnership and TIGER Grant programs are critical for driving overall federal transportation policies in a direction that maximizes the use of federal dollars for congestion relief, air quality improvements, and economic productivity.

**As Congress searches for ways to create jobs, smart growth advocates and allies should underscore that these critical**

**transportation investments result in vital jobs in cities across the country.** According to America 2050, California, a state with 2.2 million unemployed people, would lose over 164,000 jobs if SAFETEA-LU is not extended -- the most of any state.

[Click here](#) to see a chart of highlighted transportation and sustainable communities federal funding programs slated for elimination or severe cuts.

For more information visit [Transportation for America](#) or [America 2050](#).



## TOD Boom in California



[A recent article in The Architects Newspaper, entitled "Home on the Rails"](#) highlights the current and proposed transit projects in California. The article notes that the pursuit of these projects in conjunction with Transit Oriented Developments (TOD) signals a change in development patterns and attitudes. **Developers, transportation authorities and local planning agencies are promoting higher density, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use developments.** The article highlighted several well-recognized L.A. County METRO TOD projects, such as Hollywood & Vine, as well as new TOD projects proposed along the Gold Line.

In Los Angeles County, the momentum in TOD planning has been fueled by the passage of Measure R in 2008. The initiative includes a half-cent sales tax increase countywide, and it is projected to raise \$40 billion over the next 30 years. **To leverage this investment, L.A. Metro is working with ten LA County cities to remove regulatory constraints to make way for new development.** With grant funds provided by Metro, these cities are updating local planning documents for existing or proposed transit stations and range from General Plan Updates to TOD Station Area Plans. Thoughtful and deliberate TOD planning has the opportunity rejuvenate an area by attracting economic development and supporting local workforce development programs.

To read the full "Home on the Rails" article, [click here](#). To learn

more about Metro's Transit Oriented Development Planning Grant program, [click here](#).



## Sustainable Economic Development in Lean Times

**Former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm will keynote a conference aimed at identifying sustainable economic development strategies in lean fiscal times on November 17 at the David Brower Center in Berkeley.** UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design (CED) and UC Berkeley Law School are co-hosting this second in a series of conferences on Urban Sustainability. Panels will include discussions on the causes and dimensions of local fiscal distress, the challenge of doing real estate development in a post-redevelopment world, and approaches to sustainable economic development, including the role of a resurgent manufacturing sector.

Panelists include California State Senator Mark DeSaulnier, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Director Fred Blackwell, Genessee County Michigan Treasurer and County Land Bank Chairman Dan Kildee, William Witte from Related California, Jesse Blout from the Strada Investment Group, LAANE Executive Director Madeline Janis, Pratt Center for Community Development Executive Director Adam Friedman and Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council Executive Director Dan Swinney. [Click here](#) for more information and registration.

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