A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT

History forever changed course with the birth of the automobile. Here in California, the car culture and sprawling development set us on a path with profound impacts. There are the international conflicts and environmental degradation from our dependence on oil. There are the high-profile health impacts like the obesity epidemic, and the more subtle ones: our survey of medical clinics found that inadequate transportation is the #1 reason low-income people miss appointments. There are the crippling costs, as low-income families now spend 30% or more of their income just to get from Place A to B. And finally, there is the inescapable reality that the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in California is transportation.

What’s thrilling is we now have a chance to make world-class transportation and walkable communities the norm – not the exception – across the state. In a tremendous victory in September, California adopted ambitious transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions targets for 18 regions across the state. From San Diego to the Bay Area, regions will create “Sustainable Communities Strategies”: detailed plans to meet emissions targets through better public transportation, integrated land use planning, a more affordable mix of homes, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements.

This opportunity means that everything we’ve dreamed of and advocated for is within reach. Yes, the obstacles are real. We face challenges like California’s fiscal crisis, drastic cuts to affordable housing funds, and outdated local zoning codes that require huge parking lots rather nurturing vibrant streets and sidewalks.

But we’re well on our way to making big, bold changes, and it’s thanks to you. Your support and involvement are why TransForm, working with so many wonderful partners, is helping to lead the way towards a new era of smart growth and sustainable transportation in California. This annual report shows what you’ve made possible and what may be right around the corner: making history.

Sincerely,

Stuart Cohen, Executive Director       Andy Thornley, President

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Federal
Defending Commuter Benefits

In 2009, Congress more than doubled the amount employees can deduct from their paychecks before taxes to apply towards public transportation commuting costs. The benefit went from $120 to $230 per month to match the deduction car commuters get for parking. But the $230 per month transit tax benefit was set to expire and go back to just $120 per month while car drivers continued to enjoy a $230 parking benefit.

Thanks to a huge outcry, which included emails and calls from hundreds of TransForm’s activists, the benefit has been extended for one year. This is a big win for commuters, plus is great for overall transit ridership.

In our conversations with legislators, it’s clear that hearing from so many constituents is what got them on board with keeping the tax benefit. Well, they’re not going to stop hearing from us. Moving ahead, we want this benefit to be made permanent!

Organizing for a Better Transportation Bill

TransForm is coordinating the Transportation for America campaign in Northern California. The Transportation for America campaign is bringing together a huge coalition to advocate together for the new federal transportation bill to break from its highway-focused past and instead create a transportation system focused on ensuring access to opportunity, public health and environmental sustainability.

In the past year, we worked hard to get this issue the attention it deserves by turning out business and health leaders at key hearings and arranging meetings between Congressional leaders and community stakeholders. Our efforts focused on sending a consistent message to Senator Barbara Boxer, who chairs the committee writing the federal transportation bill: please lead the way in transforming America’s transportation policy. We’re also showcasing the innovative policies and programs from the Bay Area and California to help leaders see what’s working that can be applied nationwide.
State

Climate Law Creates Historic Opportunity to Reform Transportation and Land Use

After nearly two years of organizing and advocacy, a new day dawned in September when California adopted ambitious transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions targets for 18 regions across the state as part of the recent passage of SB 375. As regions now work to come up with “Sustainable Communities Strategies” to meet these targets, we have an historic opportunity to trigger major transportation and land use changes.

Winning these ambitious targets wasn’t easy, though. When the California Air Resources Board first released draft emissions targets in the spring, they were incredibly weak. Plus, regions throughout the state wanted to keep the bar low so they could continue with the status quo of transportation planning and spending. So we rallied. Our biggest push was through ClimatePlan, a statewide network of environmental, social justice and public health organizations that proved instrumental. ClimatePlan mobilized stakeholders throughout the state to pressure decision-makers. ClimatePlan also generated technical analysis proving higher targets are both possible and desirable, turning the tide in support for more ambitious targets. TransForm co-founded, fiscally sponsors, and provides staff support for ClimatePlan.

In the Bay Area, our closest allies on this issue – including Greenbelt Alliance and the American Lung Association of California – put serious pressure on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to do more. Our activists sent hundreds of emails to Commissioners pushing for higher targets. TransForm and the Natural Resources Defense Council worked together to showcase strategies to achieve emissions reductions. Ultimately, the Bay Area adopted a target of 15% for 2035, three times higher than the original proposal.

Now, with these ambitious targets in place, we will push the Bay Area to shift policies and funding to create walkable, transit-oriented communities with a more affordable mix of homes. We’ll also help other regions do the same!

Protecting and Expanding Funds for Public Transportation

Over the past decade, billions of state dollars marked for California’s public transportation have been redirected for other uses. In just the past year, $1 billion alone was redirected! You can see the impacts everywhere: service cuts, fare increases, and too many neglected buses and trains. While two bills passed in 2010 mean public transportation agencies anticipate receiving at least $300 million in future years, these funds are still inadequate and have no legal protection from future raids.

Thanks to support from foundations and individuals, however, we now have a strong Sacramento presence with two fantastic staff: Graham Brownstein, our state policy director, and Ahmad Chapman, our state transportation organizer.

We recently launched a major new campaign focused on getting California’s leaders to invest in transit (see www.InvestInTransit.org to sign the petition). We’re bringing together a diversity of individuals, businesses, and organizations with a unified message: our state’s economy, environment and quality of life, depend on good public transportation!

Graham and Ahmad are meeting with legislators and engaging new partners daily to identify new ways to raise funds for public transportation, walking, and biking.
Regional
Winning $80 Million to Reduce Driving

Back in 2008, TransForm put forward a bold idea: what if the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) funded a regional program that would support innovative ways to reduce emissions from transportation? After two years of advocacy and organizing partners to support this idea, MTC awarded $80 million for a first-in-the-nation regional Transportation Climate Action Program. Especially gratifying: $28 million of the $80 million had been recommended for highway ramp meters, but the outcry from TransForm activists and our partners changed this!

This year, the program came to life with funding for an incredible range of programs including: Safe Routes to Schools programs in all nine counties; a bike-sharing pilot project between San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties; a to-the-minute ridesharing program in Marin, Sonoma, and Contra Costa counties; and much more.

Our efforts to influence how regional transportation dollars are spent mean there’s now funding to bring “Safe Routes to Schools” programs to every county in the Bay Area and help thousands of kids build lifelong healthy habits. A report we wrote quantifying how much Safe Routes programs reduce emissions helped make the case.

Landmark Civil Rights Decision Holds BART Accountable

For more than a year, TransForm advocated for BART to rethink the Oakland Airport Connector project and come up with something better. With a price tag of nearly $500,000,000 and anticipated operating costs of at least $14 million a year, the boondoggle of a project will put BART so deep in debt they will likely have to raise fares and cut service to make ends meet. That means BART’s 300,000 daily riders will ultimately pay the price for this project.

The proposed project has more problems than simply its price tag. Because it will average just 23 miles/hour and drop people in an existing parking lot rather than the terminal, it’s expected to attract only a small number of new riders over current AirBART service. It will also likely cost riders $6 each way on top of BART fare and have no local stops, making it a lost opportunity to improve public transportation near the airport for Oakland workers and residents.

We simply couldn’t stand by with this huge injustice foist upon the local community and BART riders. So Public Advocates, on behalf of TransForm, Urban Habitat, and Genesis, filed a Title VI compliant with the Federal Transit Administration. FTA agreed that BART had not adequately assessed the impacts of the project on low-income communities. As a result, $70 million in stimulus funds for the project was redirected to suffering public transportation agencies across the Bay Area – a huge victory for transit, jobs, and justice.

Although the project ultimately received other funding and the green light, there are some positive changes that came out of this effort. BART and Metropolitan Transportation Commission leaders are now questioning whether we can really afford all the megaprojects on the books when we’re cutting existing service. Across the country, agencies are now making major, much-needed improvements to their public participation processes.

The independent analysis TransForm commissioned showed that taxpayers will pay a shocking $102 for each new rider of the Oakland Airport Connector due to the project’s huge costs and low ridership projections.
Local

The Great Communities Collaborative Shows What’s Possible in Land Use Planning

Amazing things happen when you really involve people in local land use planning processes. New development doesn’t just build houses, condos, and apartments. It reflects the needs of the people who already live there. It creates space for parks, bike paths, libraries, childcare, and health facilities. It supports local businesses and diversity. It builds community in the truest sense of the word.

The Great Communities Collaborative, a partnership of nonprofits and community foundations coordinated by TransForm, is proving this by engaging people – particularly low-income people and people of color – in local land use planning so they can shape future growth and create great communities with good public transportation options.

The Collaborative has worked with residents and community groups in over 25 key locations around the Bay Area since 2006. TransForm is leading outreach efforts for the Oakland Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, International Boulevard Corridor Plan, Pittsburg/Bay Point BART Master Plan, the Antioch Hillcrest e-BART Station Area Plan and in Berkeley. Land use plans are now coming to life that include strong affordable housing policies, specific amenities residents want like grocery stores, and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly design improvements. The Great Communities Collaborative is now being lauded as a national model for how local land use planning can yield big regional impacts, such as reduced climate emissions. White House staff and representatives of the Department of Transportation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency received a briefing on the Collaborative. The California Chapter of the American Planning Association recognized the Collaborative’s work with their 2010 Education Planning Award.

The Great Communities Collaborative includes Greenbelt Alliance, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, Reconnecting America, Urban Habitat, San Francisco Foundation, and Silicon Valley Community Foundation. In 2010, the Collaborative was instrumental in establishing the Bay Area’s Transit-Oriented Development Fund, a new revolving loan fund to finance land acquisition for affordable housing development in select locations near rail and bus lines.
Revolutionizing Public Transportation Service

Bus Rapid Transit, with its dedicated lanes, state-of-the-art buses, and frequent service, is revolutionizing public transportation around the world. For years, TransForm’s been leading efforts to bring Bus Rapid Transit to the Bay Area as an affordable way to make bus service much faster and more reliable. Now, we’re getting close!

Santa Clara County’s Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is planning over 30 miles of Bus Rapid Transit service along its most heavily utilized transit corridors. TransForm is engaging communities in shaping the first leg of Bus Rapid Transit along the Alum Rock corridor so it reflects the needs of nearby residents and is a model to shape and inspire future service.

This spring a dedicated group of TransForm interns and volunteers surveyed 217 merchants along the Alum Rock corridor about the project. As public radio station KALW reported in March, this outreach created real transit advocates out of small business owners as they had a chance to learn about and shape the project. Survey results showed that most merchants are supportive of Bus Rapid Transit thanks to the better bus service it will provide customers and employees, and TransForm is now working with VTA to ensure the specific concerns merchants brought up are addressed.

Meanwhile, after years of outreach to residents and decision-makers in the East Bay, we were thrilled when both the Oakland and San Leandro City Councils voted to create a specific proposal for dedicated lanes for Bus Rapid Transit along International Boulevard and Telegraph Avenue. Dedicated lanes are critical to Bus Rapid Transit truly revolutionizing bus service.

Five Proud Moments from 2010

• Stuart Cohen was awarded a prestigious Ashoka fellowship for fostering innovative ideas and bold action as TransForm’s executive director. Ashoka is a global association of the world’s leading social entrepreneurs from more than 60 countries.

• TransForm was honored by the civil rights organization Public Advocates for championing transit justice and public accountability through our advocacy work on the Oakland Airport Connector.

• TransForm was ranked the #1 nonprofit in the Bay Area in fighting climate change by Philanthropedia’s 97 climate change experts.

• The Transbay Transit Center officially broke ground. TransForm, working with SPUR as well as other groups, pushed for this “Grand Central Station of the West” for more than a decade to be the cornerstone of a truly regional public transportation system.

• The 150 participants in the Car-Free Challenge collectively logged an incredible 8,000 miles on public transportation, 3,000 miles on bicycle, and 1,000 miles on foot as they tried to drive as little as possible for one week while raising awareness of the need for better car-free options.

The Transbay Transit Center broke ground, an historic moment in creating a truly regional public transportation system. TransForm, SPUR, and others pushed for this project for more than a decade.
Quick Q & A with a Grantmaker
Gina Dalma, Program Officer
Silicon Valley Community Foundation

We talked with Gina Dalma about GreenTRIP, TransForm's innovative new program that Silicon Valley Community Foundation helped get off the ground. GreenTRIP certifies new residential and mixed-use developments that keep the number of new parking spaces as low as possible plus offer incentives for new tenants to drive less and own fewer vehicles.

The first five GreenTRIP certifications were awarded in 2010 to developments proposed in San Jose, San Mateo, Hayward, San Leandro, and Berkeley. Together, these five developments will provide their residents with over 2,000 free annual transit passes and 600 free annual car share memberships — for the next 40 years! And by reducing parking, some of the developers had the money to build more affordable homes than they otherwise would have. Several developers said the GreenTRIP certification process helped explain how well-designed, transit-oriented development can reduce traffic, which helped win support from city staff and neighbors. It's a win-win-win situation!

Q: What excites you about GreenTRIP? Gina: When I read TransForm's grant proposal, it was clear GreenTRIP was exciting, could really be scalable, and could have a huge impact. It has something for everyone. It has a smart growth incentive for every stakeholder.

Q: What's your long-term vision for GreenTRIP? Gina: I see people actually looking at the listings in the real estate section of the newspaper and making sure that the house they're considering buying or renting has a GreenTRIP stamp on it.

Q: What's your favorite part of your job? Gina: This is a really easy answer. Meeting amazing leaders in the nonprofit world who want to change the world. And they are changing the world. And just being able to meet and support them in any way is something that makes me very happy.

Q: If you had 5 words to describe TransForm's work, what would they be? Gina: Relevant, relevant, relevant. Strategic. Collaborative.

Many thanks to Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the 20 other foundations that generously supported TransForm in 2010.

Active and Independent Living Depends on Good Public Transportation

Wayne Kirchoffer describes his active and independent lifestyle in a place that allows him to lead an active life without a car. His friends who don't drive and live in places without options aren't so lucky. "They rely on paratransit service or get a friend once in a while to pick them up and take them grocery shopping," says Wayne. "They're stuck."

They're more than stuck. Of non-driving seniors who live in lower density areas, only one out of 17 goes for a walk on any given day. But in areas like where Wayne lives, one out of three walk each day. As for Wayne? "I try and walk about 10 miles a day."

But Wayne's freedom and mobility are at risk due to what's happening with public transportation funding. "They keep cutting the service, raising the rates, and driving people away. It's a vicious cycle," says Wayne. "When is it going to end?"

That's where TransForm comes in, fighting for more funding for public transportation at the regional, state, and federal levels. "There's a big need for TransForm's work," says Wayne. "That's part of why I became a founding member of the Advocates' Fund."

For reasons of health, happiness, climate change and community, we need more people to be able to live in places where they can follow in Wayne's footsteps... literally!
Parents Make All the Difference in Getting Kids Walking and Biking to School

Coco Ramirez is in a state of constant juggling as a working mom, especially with twin sons Manuel and Diego. But somehow she still finds time to be a parent volunteer at Cherryland Elementary School with the Safe Routes to Schools Alameda County Partnership, which is led by TransForm. “Car drivers don’t respect kids like they should,” says Coco about why she got involved. “I’ve seen too many close calls.”

Now, Coco’s recruiting other parents to lead efforts to make it easy, fun, and safe for their kids to walk and bike to school more often.

“Parents love to be part of making their kids safer,” says Coco.

The Safe Routes to Schools Alameda County Partnership tackles safety issues head-on by teaching kids skills for safe walking and biking; involving the community and city officials in improving pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure; and working with law enforcement. Most importantly, it gets parents like Coco excited to organize things like “walking school buses”, where parents take turns leading groups of kids on routes to and from school.

“We’re now working in more than 90 public schools in Alameda County and getting thousands of kids safely walking and biking to school who weren’t before,” says Nora Cody, TransForm’s Safe Routes to Schools Director. “This would be impossible without the dedication of hundreds of incredible parent volunteers. Their enthusiasm is contagious!”

“I see how proud the parent volunteers feel in making a difference for their kids and community,” says Coco. And they absolutely should!

TransForm Is Ready to Respond Thanks to New Advocates’ Fund

“This is a big moment for TransForm,” said Stuart Cohen, TransForm’s executive director, when we officially established the Advocates’ Fund with the support of 30 founding members. “All these amazing people are stepping up so we have the resources to be strong advocates from the local to federal levels. It’s powerful.”

The Advocates’ Fund was established to ensure TransForm has the flexibility and resources to respond to and win on urgent, high-impact advocacy opportunities. Funds will provide core support for TransForm, thereby allowing us to direct dollars to the areas of greatest need and urgency. This type of support is critical for advocacy nonprofits like TransForm. It will allow us to take on the incredible opportunities over the next few years and help usher in a new era of smart growth and sustainable transportation for the Bay Area and California.

“It really is an historic time to make the kinds of changes TransForm pushes for, so this was a no brainer,” said Rocky Birdsey, the first founding member of the Advocates’ Fund. “We need TransForm to be ready to respond to these opportunities.”

The generous support from the founding members was used a match for the year-end appeal, inspiring more than 100 smaller donations. In total, more than $50,000 was raised by the end of the year to launch the Fund! We will continue to build the Advocates’ Fund so TransForm can always be the Bay Area’s watchdog on regional transportation issues, hold decision-makers accountable, and have a strong voice in Sacramento.

Founding Members of the Advocates’ Fund

Stuart Baker
Robert Baltzer
Noble Birdsey
Peter Calthorpe
Phil Erickson
Caryl Gay & Didrik Hoag
Earl & Bonnie Hamlin
Simon Ilyushchenko
Steven Keller & John Scheuerman
Patricia Kennedy
Wayne Kirchoffer
Doug & Susan Linney
John & Clysta McLemore
Roy & Judy Nakadegawa
Tanya Narath
Barbara Sahm & Steven Winkel
Pat & Gregg Schwinn
Rick Theis
Jonathan Weiner
Corinne Winter & Andy Ball
Anonymous

Staff gathered around the commemorative display of the Advocates’ Fund to express their gratitude to the founding members for investing in the future of TransForm.
TransForm regularly receives multi-year grants that are carried over from one year to the next. The revenue reflected above represents funding that was available to TransForm for use during 2009, some of which was received in prior years. Likewise, some revenue secured in 2009 is not reflected above, as it has been restricted for use in future years.

For a copy of TransForm’s audited financial statements or IRS Form 990, please call us at (510) 740-3150. Our 2010 financial statements and 990 will be available late spring 2011.
Five Ways to Connect with TransForm

1. Attend a TransForum.
2. Like us on Facebook.
3. Follow us on Twitter.
4. Take action.
5. Request our e-newsletter.

Visit www.TransformCA.org to connect now!

Our Mission

TransForm works to create world-class public transportation and walkable communities in the Bay Area and beyond.

We build diverse coalitions, influence policy, and develop innovative programs to improve the lives of all people and protect the environment.

Our Beliefs

• All people deserve affordable, safe, and easy access to jobs, services, and nature on foot, bicycle, or public transportation.
• People should play a central role in shaping the future of their communities.
• Communities can become healthier and more vibrant while also nurturing the diversity and inclusion of existing residents, rather than displacement.
• Growth should be directed towards existing developed areas, not our precious remaining open space.
• We can only achieve our mission by working with people from a wide range of backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives.

We Asked Our Fans For a Few Words That Describe TransForm

Vital Collaborative Scrappy Successful Leaders Smart Determined Visionary Equity for all Grassroots Watchdogs Stubborn Dedicated Transformative!