

Global Agenda Council on Personal Transportation Systems 2012-2014



Understanding/Context

Ever since Henry Ford invented industrial manufacturing, the automobile has been the prime mode of personal transportation. Governments around the world have invested heavily in building the relevant infrastructure to support this system of personal transportation. It has provided individual mobility, employment, innovation and wealth to many nations. However, with dense levels of car ownership in developed nations, tremendous growth in emerging markets and urbanization at record levels, megacities are struggling with congestion and poor air quality. They cannot keep up with needed infrastructure expansion or they struggle to finance its upgrade. New models of car ownership are evolving, governments are strongly pushing for alternative-energy vehicles to improve air quality in cities, and consumers hope that new information technologies will help them to improve their travel experience and reduce time wasted in traffic. Recently, major car makers have made announcements on the development and implementation of self-driving cars. However, alternative-energy vehicle sales have been disappointing, sustainable business models for new ownership are still lacking, and the integration of new information technologies and intermodal transportation is still far from being seamless.

Shaping the Agenda

To support cities in the development of their future personal transportation systems, the Global Agenda Council on Personal Transportation Systems has developed a vision of and framework for how cities can improve personal mobility in the near future. The framework outlines possible actions that can be taken, best practice examples, and new ideas for alternative solutions. Further, it references the urban mobility index of the Young Global Leader community to have a quantitative measurement of how cities can improve personal transportation by using the framework.

The Council has also been asked to join the Advisory Board of the World Economic Forum's Future of Urban Development

Initiative to work with selected Chinese cities to help them solve their transportation challenges and build sustainable transport systems.

“Megacities are struggling with congestion and poor air quality. They cannot keep up with needed infrastructure expansion or they struggle to finance its upgrade. New models of car ownership are evolving, governments are strongly pushing for alternative-energy vehicles to improve air quality in cities, and consumers hope that new information technologies will help them to improve their travel experience and reduce time wasted in traffic.”

Over the next eight months, the Council will host a seminar series across Forum communities to share insights on issues relating to personal transportation. The findings of the seminar series will then be synthesized and a video will be created summarizing the Council's thinking. The Council's objective is to improve personal mobility by sharing insights, providing direction and catalysing change.

Contact Information

Research Analyst: Tiffany Misrahi, Knowledge Manager, Global Agenda Councils, tiffany.misrahi@weforum.org

Council Manager: Philipp Saylor, Associate Director, Automotive Industry, philipp.saylor@weforum.org

Forum Lead: John Moavenzadeh, Senior Director, Head of Mobility Industries, john.moavenzadeh@weforum.org