Driving Less –

Reducing Vehicle-Miles Traveled in the Land of Freeways

To meet California’s goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reductions in driving will be necessary. But how will the state’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) meet their targets for reductions in vehicle-miles traveled (VMT)? This presentation looks at three of the many questions raised by this challenge: Will the recent downturn in VMT take care of the problem? If not, which of the possible strategies are likely to help the most? In particular, will the current bicycling craze make a difference? One thing that is certain is the need for a multi-faceted approach to reducing VMT.

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Dr. Susan Handy is a Professor in the Department of Environmental Science and Policy and the Director of the Sustainable Transportation Center at the University of California Davis. Her research interests focus on the relationships between transportation and land use, particularly the impact of land development patterns on travel behavior. She is internationally known for her research on the connection between neighborhood design and walking behavior. Her current work focuses on improving understanding of the choice to bicycle as a mode of transportation. She is a member of the Committee on Women’s Issues in Transportation of the Transportation Research Board and has served on committees of the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council.