

Below is the Executive Summary from the report Green Transit: Environmental Innovations Benefiting all Canadians. A complete copy of the report can be purchased by visiting <http://www.cutaactu.ca/content.asp?ID=134>.

Green Transit Environmental innovation benefiting all Canadians

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Executive Summary

Canadian public transit systems and the manufacturers that supply them are providing innovative solutions to the environmental challenges facing Canadians today. Most Canadians know that public transit delivers a critical public service. And a fair number of us appreciate that public transit plays a vital role in protecting our environment by reducing traffic congestion. But the fact that public transit systems are at the forefront of testing and evaluating groundbreaking environmental technology has remained a little known fact for too long.

The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) has published *Green Transit: Environmental innovation benefiting all Canadians* to set the record straight and to build support for the important environmental initiatives happening in over 100 communities across Canada. CUTA is the association of providers of urban transit services, suppliers and related organizations in Canada. Its mission is to promote the role of urban transit in enhancing mobility and to support its members in the fulfillment of their mandates. Membership includes 100 transit systems, 10 government agencies (federal, provincial and municipal), 200 business members (firms or people engaged in the manufacture or sale of transit equipment or services) and 50 affiliates.

This paper outlines the broad environmental challenges facing Canadians today and the role that public transit is playing in meeting these challenges. Global warming is on the rise and Canadians can expect to feel its negative effects if important steps aren't taken today. Already approximately 5,000 Canadians die prematurely each year from high pollution levels and poor air quality¹.

A renewed commitment to public transit from all levels of government will help fight the effects of global warming and related air pollution problems. Public and not private transit is the way forward. Recent developments, outlined briefly in this paper, show that Canadians may be ready now more than ever before to entertain serious environmentally sustainable alternatives to today's automobile.

Among these sustainable alternatives are advanced fuel technology and improved engine design. Clean diesel, natural gas, electricity, fuel cells and hybrid electric vehicles are examined in turn. The paper goes on to place these advances in a community-based context. Snapshots of local initiatives, along with the names and contact details of the people who are working to enhance the environment through improved technology and planning, round out the paper.

¹ Government of Canada News Release, *Government of Canada Announces Next Steps in Program to Reduce Particulate Matter, a Primary Component of Smog*, July 17, 2000.

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