
# Travel doesn’t have to cost the earth

Five concrete steps towards a climate-smart and fair transport sector in Stockholm

planka.nu

*This report was originally released in Swedish in November 2008 by Planka.nu, since then we have been thinking about making an English translation of it. And, finally, here it is! Even if the main focus of this report is the transport sector in Stockholm we believe that the problems we identify and the solutions we propose can, with some alterations, be applied to other cities as well.*

**Planka.nu** is a network of Swedish groups that works for a free public transport and organizes commuters in a fare-strike which includes a solidarity fund where members pays each others fines. In 2008 Planka.nu started the international site www.freepublictransports.com, a meeting point for activists working for a free public transport.

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# SUMMARY

In 2009 the current Kyoto protocol will be replaced by a new international climate agreement. The Swedish EU presidency means that Sweden will play a key role when the world leaders gather in Copenhagen to sign the new agreement.

With this in mind, we in Planka.nu want to turn the focus from abstract percentages and climate targets to concrete political measures. The transport sector is the major climate villain in Sweden, being responsible for more than 40 percent of our environmentally hazardous emissions. The main culprit is road traffic, which since 1990 has increased its emissions with no less than 12 percent. Today it is responsible for approximately 30 percent of all emissions.

A powerful climate adjustment requires comprehensive infrastructural changes in the transport sector. The key to climate adjustment is to be found in the cities, where most of the emissions are generated. Through simple reforms such as planning our cities for public transport, bicycle and pedestrian transport, we can actively reduce car traffic and cut the emission rates in our cities.

This report presents five concrete steps towards a fair and climate-smart reconstruction of the Stockholm transport sector:

- Transport-saving social planning
- Major investments in rail-carried public transport
- Stop on all road expansions
- Car-free city-centre
- Fare-free public transport

We hope that this report will contribute to a deeper discussion about how we want to shape our city, and put focus on the importance of a fairly conducted climate adjustment.

*Planka.nu*
*Stockholm, Sweden*
*September 2009*

# INTRODUCTION

*The climate threat is the most fatal problem mankind has ever faced.*

In 2009, the current Kyoto protocol will be replaced with a new international climate agreement, a process in which the EU must be one of the main drivers. As holder of the EU presidency, Sweden will play a key role when world leaders gather to sign the new agreement. Does the Swedish government deserve such a pivotal role? – We don't think so.

The politicians take pride in demands for one abstract percentage target after the other, but that's not good enough. The figures need to be followed by concrete steps, and in that respect today's politicians are completely paralyzed.

In Sweden, the transport sector is the main climate culprit, being responsible for more than 40 percent of our climate impacting emissions.[1] Contrary to common assertions, Sweden has in fact not reduced its emissions at all, since the entire transport sector is generally excluded in statistics. On the contrary, the transport sector is the only sector with constantly increasing emissions.[2] Road traffic is the biggest scoundrel; since 1990 it has increased its emissions with no less than 12 percent.[3]

A powerful climate adjustment requires substantial infrastructural changes in the transport sector. The key to climate adjustment is to be found in the cities, which are responsible for the biggest emissions. Through simple reforms – e.g. planning the cities for public, bicycle and pedestrian transport – we can drive away the cars from our cities.

In the countryside, it is harder to change the transport systems. All the more important then to take powerful steps in the cities, where it is considerably easier to implement comprehensive changes. All too often the countryside is used as a weapon against progressive traffic reforms; the caricature being the single mom with 20 kilometres to the nearest day-care centre, unable to solve her "life puzzle" without a car. However, the reality is completely different. The majority of the motorists are men. They live in big cities and they travel without a infant seat beside them; their only co-passenger is a brief-case. Moreover, despite the problems involved, many rural districts have in fact increased their climate-friendly public transports.[4]

This report from Planka.nu is an effort to lay out a way forward. We use Stockholm as an example, but climate adjustment is, of course, necessary everywhere. Below every headline we list concrete proposals for diminishing climate-hazardous emissions through investments in modern, fair and climate-smart city planning. The responsibility for putting these solutions on the political agenda lies with us in the climate movement.

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[1] Naturvårdsverket: *Tvågradersmålet i sikte?*, p. 29.

[2] European Environment Agency: *Transport and environment: on the way to a new common transport policy*

[3] Vägverket: *Största minskningen av bränsleförbrukning på nya bilar någonsin men trots detta ökar utsläppen*

[4] TfK: *Utvärdering av försöket med nolltaxa i Kristinehamn*, p. 12-15.

# THE 2 DEGREES CELSIUS TARGET

*"It is our firm belief that if nothing is done right now, it will be too late."*

Andreas Malm

The EU and Sweden has set a 2 degrees Celsius target, meaning that the average temperature on our planet must not rise with more than 2 degrees compared with pre-industrial levels.[5] The scientist world considers 2 degrees as a limit for what the planet can cope with. Beyond 2 degrees several feedback mechanisms are predicted to set in, after which a continuing rise of temperature would be impossible to prevent.[6]

The Swedish environmental protection agency (SEPA) has developed a number of scenarios for Sweden's energy and transport system. These scenarios provide guidelines for how the 2 degrees Celsius target can be achieved.[7] According to these estimates, the maximum emission level allowed is 1,15 tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per capita. This means that Sweden needs to reduce its emissions with 85 percent.[8]

To arrive at these figures, the SEPA uses estimates stating that the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere must not exceed 450 parts per million (ppm) if we are to limit the increase in the average temperature of our planet to 2 degrees Celsius. Prior to industrialisation, the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 280 ppm. Today it exceeds 385 ppm.[9]

However, more and more people are beginning to doubt that drawing the line at 450 ppm will be enough. In 2008, the Tällberg Foundation and the Stockholm Environment Institute directed an appeal to the delegates of the on-going UN climate negotiations. 150 scientists, politicians and business leaders support this appeal, which states that we must in fact bring down the carbon dioxide level to 350 ppm in order to keep the average temperature of our planet from increasing with more than 2 degrees Celsius as compared with pre-industrial levels. 350 ppm is, of course, less than the current carbon dioxide level. This target not only presupposes that the increasing emissions are brought to a halt; it also requires a decrease in today's carbon dioxide levels.[10] The climate impact of various levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is no exact science, but considering how much is at stake, powerful measures need to be taken for us and our planet to be on the safe side. In the growing climate movement, 350 ppm has become an important figure as proof of the necessity for offensive investments to lower existing carbon

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[5] Regeringskansliet: *EU:s stats- och regeringschefer överens om ambitiösa klimatmål*

[6] IPCC: *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*, p. 23.

[7] Naturvårdsverket: *Tvågradersmålet i sikte?*

[8] Naturvårdsverket: *Tvågradersmålet i sikte?*, p. 32.

[9] IPCC: *Climate Change 2001: Synthesis Report,* p. 8.

[10] *Tällberg Foundation: Svensk aktör tar strid i klimatfrågan*

dioxide levels, and not only reduce the emissions.[11] Some scientists and climate activists even say that 350 ppm is too much, and that we need to return to pre-industrial levels around 280 ppm.

A 2 degrees Celsius increase in the average temperature must be seen as the maximum limit. Already today, with a 0.6 degree increase in the average temperature, we are witnessing natural catastrophes and unacceptable changes in the ecosystem.[12] Irrespective of the limit, climate change needs to be fought today.

It has become something of a pastime for those in power and climate activists to outbid each other on percentage targets and carbon dioxide levels. We do not oppose binding emission decrease percentages like the ones stated in e.g. the Kyoto protocol. However, it is our opinion that focusing only on percentages and figures will put us on the wrong track. On one hand, it is difficult to follow up on the consequences of a pledge to decrease emissions with a certain percentage - which is clearly illustrated by the failure of the Kyoto protocol to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. On the other hand, agreements like the Kyoto protocol encourage so called flexible mechanisms and trade with emission rights. This means that we in Sweden can pay a ridiculously small amount of money for a project in a developing country, without any possibility to monitor if this really results in reduced carbon dioxide emissions.[13]

Our main criticism against those who suggest figures rather than concrete political steps is that this tends to overshadow the fairness aspect of the necessary social changes. Because there is not only *one* way to reduce emissions. With excessive trust in the market's ability we run the risk of getting stuck in a one-way policy. We do not necessarily see the cheapest solution to the climate crisis as the best solution. When we in the climate movement only set percentage limits for emissions, we simultaneously hand over the decisions on how to reach these limits to the politicians and the market. We consider it crucial that the readjustment to a climate-smart society is conducted in a fair manner. We are not interested in lowering the carbon dioxide levels by forcing poor people in the industrialized world to turn off their radiators when heating costs are sky-rocketing or if, in the process, people in poor countries are deprived of their possibilities to improve their standard of living. Moreover, the local, national and global aspects of a fair share policy are vital to our possibilities to gain support for powerful measures.

For the reasons stated above we consider it crucial that concrete, fair and powerful measures for social change are initiated immediately, and that we in Sweden primarily assume responsibility for our own emissions and bring them down on home ground.

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[11] e.g. www.350.org

[12] Naturvårdsverket: *Kommunikationsstrategi för Klimatkampanjen*, p. 21.

[13] Naturvårdsverket: *Flexibla mekanismer*

# TRANSPORT-SAVING SOCIAL PLANNING

*"Let Stockholm be a real city. A condensed city, not a patchwork."*

Eduard Ahlqvist

Planka.nu struggles to make public transport as good and available as possible – for the sake of the environment and because we believe that every citizen should be entitled to free transportation. However, we do not think that transport is a good thing per se, rather the opposite. There is no intrinsic value in the fact that people spend their time just moving from one point to another. The more the citizens have access to, at as short a travel distance as possible, the better. This is why we consider it important to make a distinction between necessary transports and leisure travel – and to minimize necessary transport in order to create space and time for leisure transportation.

The fact that citizens in a big city like Stockholm are spending more and more of their time on necessary travel – to and from work, school, societal institutions and grocery shopping – is a development that needs to be halted.

For example, we may note that the number of trips has increased sharply since the proximity principle concerning schools was eliminated in several municipalities across the country. Instead of going to the school closest to their home, students are now being transported across our cities. This means that an unnecessarily big part of children's and adolescents' time is wasted on transport. Moreover, it has major social consequences: our local communities are fragmented, demands on our schools are undermined and the segregation in our society increases.

The type of traffic chosen determines how the city is shaped. Roads cut up society and cause phenomena such as suburbs totally addicted to cars and islands of gigantic shopping centres next to the highways. It is simply not true that new roads counteract segregation by tying together the outer city areas. These asphalt networks create isolating and excluding structures, they result in more emissions and they decrease the access to housing close to natural environments. Instead we need to invest in rail-carried public transport and densification of already existing local communities. One way would be to move new workplaces to areas with high unemployment in order to decrease unnecessary commuting.

Freight transports are responsible for the largest increase in road traffic. This can be vehemently counteracted through easy tax reforms, better transport coordination and large investments in shifts to train freight.[14]

Anti-pedestrian and anti-public transport cities, with a social supply adapted to car drivers, have a major negative effect on public health. On one hand, individuals are prone to illnesses caused

[14] Vägverket: *Klimatstrategi för vägtransportsektorn*

by an inactive life style; on the other hand, the situation has major socio-economic implications. According to The National Institute of Public Health in Sweden, city planning leading to physical inactivity costs Sweden around 20 billion Swedish kronor, SEK (1 SEK ≈ 0.1 €), per year.[15]

We want the city planned so that our society can provide for everyone – close, easy and fare-free. This gives us a double profit: we get more spare time and lesser strain on our public transport system. Combined with a well-developed and fare-free public transport, this will lead to an increase in leisure travels. This has been proved through previous tryouts with fare-free public transport.[16] Leisure travel is, in contrast to necessary transportation, a social activity in itself. Urban planning which makes more spontaneous travel between different parts of the city possible would benefit all its citizens. Through closer contact between different neighbourhoods and with infrastructural opportunities for a living city, we can make Stockholm "smaller", and, at the same time, more diversified.

In other words, fare-free public transport is a vital part of active urban planning as a way to heal the wounds that the car society has inflicted on our local societies, since fare-free public transport would help level out the social and economic disparities which cut through our city.

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[15] Statens folkhälsoinstitut: *Samhällsplanering för ett aktivt liv*, p. 13.

[16] TfK: *Utvärdering av försöket med nolltaxa i Kristinehamn*, p. 5.

# MAJOR INVESTMENTS IN RAIL-CARRIED PUBLIC TRANSPORT

*"People all over the world (you don't need no money)*
*Start a love train, love train (don't need no ticket, come on)"*

The O'Jays

Rail-carried public transport is much more energy efficient and has a higher passenger capacity than other systems. The future climate-smart society is going to need substantial capacity increases in the field of public transport, which is why investments in rail-carried traffic should be a matter of course. Rail-carried traffic neither requires environmentally hazardous battery technology nor climate threatening fossil fuels – it can run on green electricity from the electricity grid. Other environmental benefits are lower noise levels and close to insignificant amounts of air pollution. These environmental benefits are in fact prerequisites for a nice, green and modern city.

Large investments are needed, both in national rail infrastructure and in local and regional public transport.

The existing Swedish railways are not enough. Capacity limits have already been reached in many parts of the country, many routes are in need of substantial renovation and The Swedish Rail Administration, Banverket, is even talking about shutting some down. This is in stark contrast to the massive investments in high speed trains on the continent, for example in Spain. Friends of the Earth Sweden have suggested that every year one percent of Sweden's GDP should be invested in rails, and they have added concrete suggestions for necessary expansions.[17] This suggestion needs to be taken seriously for our national rail traffic to have a future.

In our cities, investments in new rails are necessary, since they have a much higher passenger capacity than for example bus lines. Track extensions are often combined with rehabilitation of the street space and urban renewal which makes the cities more attractive and human. By replacing existing roads with a fully covering tramway system, narrow asphalt sideways can be replaced with esplanades for pedestrians and verdant avenues, resulting in a more beautiful, silent, clean and safe city. Giving priority to public transport, bicycle and pedestrian esplanades is a natural way to limit car traffic and parking space. Tramways are not only another way of commuting; they physically compete with the cars and contribute to a modal shift in traffic. Also, tramways are known to attract car drivers to public transport better than for example buses.

[17] Miljöförbundet Jordens Vänner: *Resan mot framtiden*

In Sweden today, only Stockholm, Gothenburg and Norrkoping have tramways – and in all these three cities rail expansions are currently being planned. Other cities also have more or less far-reaching plans to introduce tramways, mainly in order to increase the capacity on overloaded bus lines. And even if the existing bus lines are not congested, we have to build for a future increase in demand on public transport to enable a fast shift in society. The reason why this expansion is so slow is that local public transport needs to be locally financed, whereas the climate threat is a global matter. Therefore, it is only reasonable that the government would finance a climate adjustment to rail traffic.

# STOP ON ALL ROAD EXPANSIONS

*"The argument runs: if only there were more infrastructure and thus more space, the congestion would disappear. Unfortunately this argument is no better thought through than the argument that that if only everyone had more money we would solve poverty so let's print some more money!"*

European Federation for Transport and Environment

At the end of 2007, we released the report *Highway to Hell?*, summarizing the then prevalent critique of the car society in general and, specifically, the highway bypass project Förbifart Stockholm. At the same time, the Swedish government presented its proposition for infrastructural investments in the so called Stockholmsförhandlingen – a report compiled by Conservative party member Carl Cederschiöld. Our goal with *Highway to Hell?* was to start a discussion about the necessity of the planned highways by listing and discarding the myths presented in the propaganda connected with Förbifart Stockholm. We wanted to highlight the possibilities in traffic solutions which do not devour the infrastructural budget and contribute to the grave climate crises.[18] The situation grows more serious day by day and the chances of finding workable compromise solutions diminish. For this reason, we demand a total stop on all new road projects.

Road transports are inefficient, bulky and bad for the climate, outdated even. Despite this, multibillion investments in new roads are planned. New roads inescapably lead to increased car traffic. A new highway does not solve the problems caused by the old ones.[19] In a modern society, the only defendable investments in new infrastructure are the ones which enable a fair climate adjustment.

So what about "green cars"? Isn't car traffic at least as climate-smart as rail-carried means of transport? This is what the representatives of the car lobby contend and, to a large extent, what the media report. But the contention is far from correct. To begin with, around 20 percent of life-cycle energy requirement for cars are related to production and maintenance.[20] Secondly, the so called "green" fuels at our disposal are not very environment-friendly. Moreover, the ethanol produced in South America and the increased demand for ethanol leads to a considerable increase in raw material prices. There is not enough cultivable soil to feed the farmers cultivating it and, at the same time, to satisfy the needs of the Western world for new car fuels.[21] Neither are electrical cars an alternative in the cities. Despite increasing numbers of recyclable energy sources, energy consumption on the whole needs to decrease. The resources

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[18] Planka.nu: *Highway to Hell?*

[19] T & E: *Transport and the economy, the myths and facts*, p. 15.

[20] Dirks et al.: *Environmental impact of scrapping old cars*, p. 139.

[21] Miljöförbundet Jordens Vänner: *Rättvisa Mål*, p. 33.

spent on private cars ought to enable daily life for people who live in the countryside, not for the city-dwellers.

By economists road expansion is traditionally seen as one of the most efficient ways to save a weak economy, but the crises of the 21st century demand different solutions. With today's knowledge about the consequences of car traffic, short-sighted action is not reasonable. From a socio-economic perspective, roads are not lucrative – the real costs of car traffic are extremely underestimated. The costs of pollution such as noise, acidification, eutrophication and carbon dioxide emissions combined with the costs caused by traffic accidents and negative impacts on public health increases the total long term costs for road expansion.[22] And this is not even counting those who do not have access to a car; people with a small income, adolescents and the elderly.[23] Increased mobility and the freedom to choose is not for everybody today, and as usual the people who are already marginalized in society are being left out. To decrease segregation and social problems, it is necessary to invest in public transport.

[22] Finnveden & Sterner: *Reflektioner på samhällsekonomiska analyser i allmänhet och på kalkylen för nord-sydliga förbindelser i Stockholm i synnerhet*, p. 14-15.

[23] T & E: *Transport and the economy, the myths and the facts*, p. 19.

# A CAR-FREE CITY CENTRE

*"Car driving (...) increases the risk for a sedentary lifestyle, obesity, high blood pressure and mental illness. Car driving also contributes to isolation and segregation, noise, air pollution and emissions of greenhouse gases. Furthermore, it impedes social relations in housing areas and hampers the freedom of movement of many groups (e.g. children and old people) in our society."*

The National Institute of Public Health in Sweden

During the last few years, there has been a considerable change in attitudes towards city motor traffic. The campaign for and the introduction of congestion fees in Stockholm resulted in lower tolerance for cars, as they poison the air, take up extremely much space and constitute concrete physical threats to unprotected road-users. The congestion fees showed the people of Stockholm that even a 20 percent drop in traffic turned the city into a much nicer place.

Already, the inconvenience of car traffic is obvious in many larger European cities. Not only is motor traffic detrimental to the urban environment and the climate; it is also ineffective and uneconomical. One example of this is Paris, where much effort has been put into lessening car traffic in the city centre through measures such as reserving large parts of the city streets for buses and bicycles.

The ever-increasing car traffic is only interpreted as a sign of people's wish for more car traffic. However, this view does not take into consideration the possibilities to use other means of transport than cars. As long as we continue to construct our cities for motor traffic, motor traffic will increase, whether people want this or not. In a comprehensive sociological study, European citizens and decision-makers were asked if they would prefer that money was invested in developing public transport or car traffic. In both groups more than 80 percent favoured public transport. Despite this, the decision-makers thought that only 40 percent of the citizens wanted to invest in public transport rather than in car traffic.[24] This illustrates what an important role we, as activists in the climate movement, can and must play.

Previously it has been suggested that Stockholm could be made car-free through a process divided into a few stages, beginning with older city areas such as Gamla Stan, Katarina Kyrka/ Mosebacke and Mariaberget, areas which are already difficult to access by car. The next step would focus on downtown Stockholm, followed by Norrmalm, Södermalm, Kungsholmen and Östermalm.[25] Because it is not only true that car traffic will increase if we build new roads; the reverse is equally valid.[26] This is why we advocate a gradual downsizing of Stockholm's road

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[24] Socialdata: *Einschätzungen zur Mobilität in Europa. Internationaler Verband für Öffentliches Verkehrswesen*

[25] Vänsterpartiet i Stockholms stad: *Motion: 2007:42*

[26] Inter alia: *Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment, Trunk Roads and the generation of Traffic*

network, a gradual raising of the congestion taxes and a gradual reduction of the number of parking lots – with the long-term objective to make Stockholm free of cars.

One common contention is that reduced urban car traffic would weaken economic activity and result in substantial losses of income for merchants in the areas concerned. This is completely wrong, however; many studies indicate that the exact opposite may be true: Car-free city centres increase not only the number of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, but also commercial activity.[27] The city centre of Stockholm is a good example of how wrong it can get when politicians are misled by ideas about the sovereignty of the car as an economic driver. The Stockholm Office of Research and Statistics has found that only six percent of all shopping trips to the city centre involve car traffic; despite this, large parts of Stockholm are destroyed by roads, parking lots and garages.[28]

Making the city car-free is certainly not only an issue of reducing the climate-perilous emissions from car traffic. Not even if we would take seriously the motorist lobby's unrealistic arguments that every new road will only be trafficked by environment-friendly cars. Yes, even if we would believe that the "green cars" really are environment-friendly, we would still be against cars in our cities. No matter how environment-friendly a car is, it still steals valuable space from us. We do not want to live in a city where parked cars are allowed more public space than we who inhabit it. A modern, living big city does not function as long as the car is placed on a holy pedestal, as is the case in Stockholm. Every little pedestrian strip laid out in Stockholm shows how starved we are of places simmering with people, places where open-air cafés and restaurants, cyclists and pedestrians have replaced the car. Places like this can only be found in cities – which is also one of the reasons why so many of us prefer urban life to rural. So let us make use of the fact that many of us live in Stockholm and want to live in a city; let us deconstruct car traffic and reconstruct the city!

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[27] Commission of the European Communities: *European Sustainable Cities Report by the Expert Group on the Urban Environment*,p. 176ff.

[28] Utrednings- och statistikkontoret: *Intervjuer med kunder på innerstadens huvudgator*, p. 4.

# FARE-FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

*"The large number of travellers who have stated that they have previously travelled by car indicates that one of the traffic objectives of the fare-free public transport experiment was reached. It is also obvious that few within the groups who were already using the public transport system were affected. "*

TFK - The Swedish Institute for Transport Research

It is not enough to make instructions and recommendations, you can not just tell people how they are supposed to change their ways of living in order to create a more environment friendly, fair and equal society. Without the necessary infrastructure and economic incentives, people will never be able to choose alternatives which go easy on the environment and benefit the whole society.

Fare-free public transport is a concrete incentive which is needed to affect peoples travel habits. Introducing fare-free public transport is probably the cheapest, most effective and fair way to make the shift from cars to public transportation. Some may think that it sounds like an unrealistic utopia, but it is in fact already reality in several Swedish municipalities as well as in other countries.[29]

We in Planka.nu advocate an increase of the county council tax to finance fare-free public transport – but other financing solutions are certainly also possible, for example through payroll taxes. Today, a little more than 50 percent of the public transport traffic run by Stockholms Lokaltrafik (SL, the Stockholm public transport company) is tax-financed – the rest is financed through ticket sales. The ticket revenues are circa 4.5 billion SEK per year, which equals a city council tax increase of 1.5 SEK. This means that a student or someone else without any taxable income would pay zero SEK per month for his or her public transport, today the price of a monthly pass is 690 SEK for everyone. For people with a monthly income of 20 000 SEK, the tax increase would be 300 SEK. All public transport users earning less than 45 000 SEK per month would benefit economically from a tax-financed fare-free public transport system.[30]

The introduction of fare-free public transport would mean more money in the pocket for practically all rail or bus commuters in Stockholm, and letting the car drivers chip in and pay for public transport would give them another incentive to leave their cars at home and choose public transport instead. In other words, fare-free public transport must be seen as a way to reward groups of people who already travel in an environment-friendly way and as an economic incentive to choose a means of transport which, from a social and environmental perspective, is vastly superior.

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[29] e.g. TfK: *Utvärdering av försöket med nolltaxa i Kristinehamn*, p. 12-15 and http://freepublictransit.org/index.php?pr=Success_Stories

[30] Strömdahl: *Nolltaxa i kollektivtrafiken en nödvändighet*

According to the SL report "Fyra prisstrategier" (Four price strategies), fare-free public transport would decrease car commuting by 81 000 trips per day and increase the number of trips with SL by 281 000 per day. The number of car trips to the the centre of Stockholm would decrease by 9 percent at peak hours and by 4 percent at off-peak hours. This would require an increase of public transport that would cost 580 million SEK per year. However, at the same time the savings from abandoning the ticket and barrier system would amount to 390 million SEK per year.[31] Something which seems important to note seeing how much money SL is throwing away on new "fare-dodger proof" barriers which serve no purpose whatsoever.[32]

With the introduction of fare-free public transport, ticket collectors, controllers and guards could be retrained to be bus drivers, train drivers, station hosts and traffic hosts instead. Another efficiency gain with fare-free public transport would be that the queues at the ticket booths would disappear and buses would not have to wait for tickets to be controlled. Moreover, the current vicious cycle of violence in the public transport system, with people who can not afford a ticket being chased by ticket controllers, could be broken. Fare-free public transport should be regarded as everyones right of access to his or her city. To turn the area of public transport into common ground would also be a first step towards stopping the commodification of more and more of our society.

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[31] Strömdahl: *Nolltaxa i kollektivtrafiken en nödvändighet*

[32] SL: *Redovisning av åtgärder mot fusk och svinn*

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