

TRANSFORM



TransForm's Car-Free Challenge Inspires Change

A Critical Mass with a Message

Despite California's car culture, more than 160 participants from the Bay Area and beyond just proved it's possible to leave the car behind for more trips. As part of TransForm's Car-Free Challenge, participants drove an average of only 125 miles in June (the average American driver goes more than 1,000 miles in a month)!



There's a Reason We Call it a "Challenge"

"The fact that an 11-mile trip within San Jose (from downtown to the suburbs) took 1.5 hours door to door, despite the fact that we'd timed our trip right and didn't miss any connections, should tell you something about the state of transit in San Jose," wrote Ramkumar Sridharan in a blog post during the Car-Free Challenge. "We were able to do it only because we did it as a novelty trip and had time to kill; but I can't imagine that this is feasible as a daily commute."

Kirsten Gronfield, an actress in Burbank, wrote in frustration: "I've spent the last 30 minutes on the computer trying to figure out the best way to NOT drive to the Dodger game tonight. AND I THINK I FOUND IT! The best way to take transit to the Dodger game is a ONE and a HALF HOUR bus ride! I live about 10 miles from Dodger stadium."

It Needs to Be Easier to Drive Less and Live More

"Shedding light on the need for better options for public transportation, walking, and biking is what the Car-Free Challenge is all about," said Andréa Tyler, the coordinator of the event. "Right now, public transportation service

is being cut and fares are being raised across the country. But there are hundreds of billions of dollars at play in the upcoming federal transportation bill. We want this bill to create a transportation system where cyclists and pedestrians are safe, public transportation is widely available and efficient, and roads and bridges are in good repair – so people have real choices in how they get around and driving less isn't such a challenge."

Inspiration and Impact

Sandi Potter, a mom in El Cerrito, wrote: "Another great thing about not driving is not having to look for a place to park!"

"If I am conscious of this choice that I have every day, I'm guessing that I will choose to walk at least half the time, and that can cut down on many hundreds of miles that I drive every year," wrote Anthony Chang of Mountain View.

Yvette Cashmere in San Rafael is now stopping and smelling the roses thanks to the Challenge. "Walking to work has been the best experience! I have noticed things I never even paid attention to before such as how many plants and trees are in bloom right now."

At the end of the month, those who took the Car-Free Challenge made a major impact: together they kept more than 30,000 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

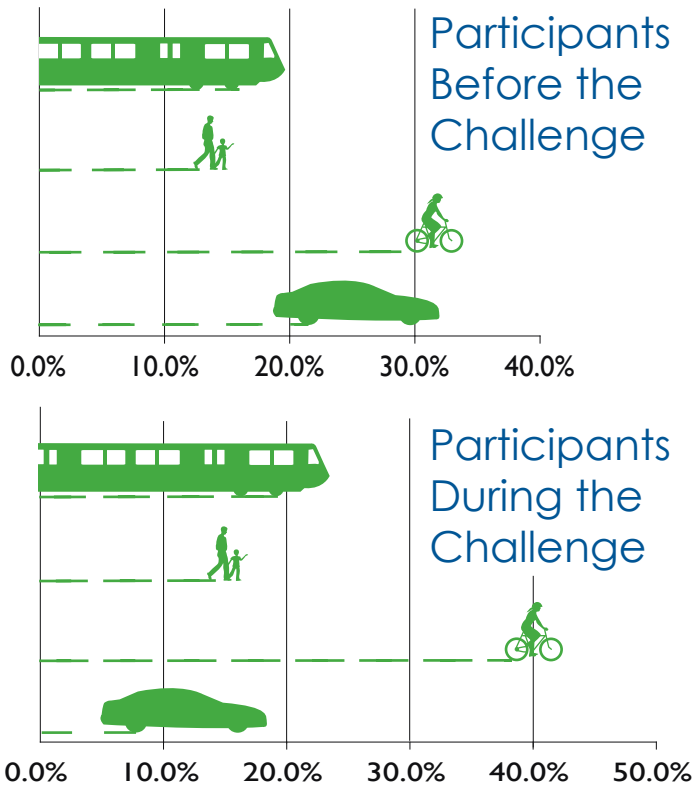
“ I’m taking the Car-Free Challenge to build some healthy habits - for me & the planet.”

– Andrea Osgood

► [Turn Over to Learn More About the Results of the Challenge](#)

Driving Less and Loving It

According to the AAA, a typical American will drive about 1,000 miles a month. In the San Francisco Bay Area, the average is around 540 miles per month. The 2009 Car-Free Challenge participants reduced their driving to an average of 125 miles in the month of June. 20 participants didn't travel in a car at all the whole month. 82% of participants said they will continue driving less even though the Challenge is over.



Fighting Climate Change and Feeling Great

Nearly 40% of California's greenhouse gas emissions are from transportation. That means that one of the best ways to fight climate change is to drive less. Because each gallon of gasoline burned releases 20 pounds of CO₂ into the atmosphere, we can estimate that more than 30,000 pounds of carbon dioxide were not released in June. What's more, people actually felt better as well! 70% of participants reported some health benefit as a result of the Car-Free Challenge. 82% said they will continue driving less than before the Challenge.

Take the Challenge in June 2010

The Car-Free Challenge asks how low can you go in terms of mileage - and challenges you to set a personal mileage goal for a seven day period (or more) during the month of June. Participants in the Car-Free Challenge share their stories of taking public transportation, walking and bicycling through a great blog - and compete for great prizes.

We want you to be a part of the huge community of people from California and around the country taking the Challenge in 2010.

► Visit us at www.TransformCA.org to start training for next year's Car-Free Challenge!

ABOUT TRANSFORM

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: Transform believes that:

- 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Transform
436 14th Street
Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94612
510.740.3150
www.TransformCA.org
www.Facebook.com/TransformCA
info@TransformCA.org