

**Transcript of presentation given by Enrique Peñalosa at the 2002 Urban Forum
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Thank you very much Christine. Thank you very much for this opportunity. I have some slides that I might show at the end, but I prefer to try to present to you a model of a city, that perhaps does not yet exist, but that we should be trying to create, at least as a new type of model. City's creation is the most important thing that can happen at this moment in our lives. Type of cities that we build _____ is going to determine the quality of life and even economic development for hundreds of years to come. But the task for us is not just to create a city that works efficiently but also to think of a city that creates most propitious conditions for happiness. Happiness is difficult to define, impossible to measure yet we cannot forget this is what the whole is about and we must put economic development then in certain perspective.

Relative to cities there has been a tremendous advance in the environmental thinking over the last forty years. Fifty years ago the word environment did not exist perfectly or ecology. While today any child, any 8-years old child could tell us what the ideal environment is for a happy whale or a happy mountain gorilla. Unfortunately we are much less clear about what the ideal environment would be for a happy child and I must ____ you that last years, before September 11, the most triumphant moment in the history of the United States, in terms of economies, technology, military might etc. I met with the CEO of the largest pharmaceutical corporation in the United States and the main area of research for this corporation that was Glaxo. SmithKline, they spend \$4 billion a year in research, was anti-depressants, because that is the fastest growing illness in the United States. Therefore, we have to think that these problems that we talk about are just not to be solved through economic development. Two months ago or a month and ___ ago or something. The economist published an article titled The Colombia recession of Brazil as if it was some sort of cancer that was coming to Brazil, and it mentioned how Sao Paolo's murder rates were shooting up while Bogotá's were really going very fast down and Brazil, particularly Sao Paolo has a AGDP that is closer to that of an Italian city than to that of Bogotá. Bogotá is also in a country where we are at war, practically. Yet, Bogotá murder rates and crime rates are going down very fast. So much so that ten years ago Sao Paolo's murder rates were half of Bogotá and today they are double that of Bogotá. Therefore, economic development is not really that panacea. It will not ____ that Washington DC also has a higher murder rate than Bogotá. Transport is very interesting and different, from all development problems that developing societies face, for one reason. Most problem that are solved by the _____ and World Bank tend to be solved with economic development, health, education, culture, housing but transport gets worst with economic development. Therefore, it really shows that, unless we change the model, there is something that is not really sustainable about the present model that we have. I will try to mention a different model that will perhaps be a little shaking at first but I think if we are truly committed to environmental sustainability, social justice and even economic growth we should look at it with some care. The core of the new model is to have a city where automobile use, care use is completely banned, restricted fully during rush hours every day. People should not be able to use cars at all during between 2.30 to 3 hours in the morning and 2.5 hours to 3 hours in the afternoon. Citizens will only move

in public transport or bicycles or walking. It seems very simplistic. However, imagine the environmental impact and it would free immense resources currently devoted to roads mainly for the upper income citizens that could be then used to invest in the more urgent and important needs of the poor and most important you will allow cities to become a place for people more than for the cars. The other _____ element in the new city is abundant, high quality public pedestrian space. There should be as much pedestrian space as road space, physically protected by cycle bath, lush, exclusively pedestrian avenues. Every city in the world has demolished a large amount of house to make room for roads for cars. Why do not we begin to think of demolishing parts of a city to make room for lush, pedestrian only avenues. No child should grow farther more than three blocks from a park. I mean engineers have told us that we cannot build a road without a lamp every so many meters. As soon as you build a road there is always the lamp every so many meters. We have not bothered to incorporate within these rules that how far should a child grow from a park. This is a matter of health, spiritual and physical health and all stories of the world show that people do not go further than 3 or 4 blocks to a neighborhood park. So this is a type of thing that should _____ and around the city large tracts of land around the cities should be public, green land. There should be pedestrian and bicycle paths in the countryside around the cities through the upper classes country houses gardens, for example, we should have a all water front with public access and the infrastructure for this to be possible. God made us walking animals, pedestrians. We need to walk, not in order to survive, but to be happy, just as the bird needs to fly or the fish needs to swim or a deer needs to run. We could of course, like a bird, survive inside a cage. I mean, I have a sister that has some birds and even they lay eggs and have babies inside the cage this big, but if you suspect the birds will be happy inside a cage the size of this auditorium and happier still if they would fly free. In the same way we could survive inside an apartment but it seems that we would be happier if we could go out and have sidewalks, wide sidewalks. Again we begin to talk about things that cannot be measured, which is unfortunate for engineers or economists. But we cannot measure why a ten meter sidewalk make people happier than a two meter sidewalk. I was almost impeached as a mayor for getting cars out of the sidewalks and taking out these illegal parking bays in the city have been carved out of sidewalks. People would say Hay there is enough space for cars to be parked and still for people to walk by, because we think as sidewalks are next to roads that sidewalks are of roads. Really sidewalks are _____ of parks and plazas. Sidewalks are not for passing or for going to places. Sidewalks are for living, for kissing for talking, for doing business, for many other things. So it will be just absurd to say that in sidewalks there is no _____ space for walking and for parking as well, just as to say that n the main city park you could turn into a parking lot as long as you have enough space for people to walk by. But this is something all over the third world, mainly, you see cars on top of sidewalks and this is a clear demonstration of lack of democracy, as I will explain a little later. One would think this is a frivolity to talk about public pedestrian space in third world cities, which have so many _____ needs. However, if we really think about, it is impossible all these GD coefficients that economists like so much, there is nothing you can do about the individual and his condition in pure practical terms. Instead you can do much through public consumption to improve the people's lives. The fact is that during work in the third world, during work time economic differences are not felt that much. You can have the Vice President of the bank being as happy or relatively

happy or satisfied or unsatisfied as the lowest ranked employee. The huge difference appears when they go into a leisure time because the upper income person can have a car go on vacations go to the clubs, go to restaurants, go to a country house and the poor persons and his or her family has not alternative for their leisure time different than public space. The only leisure time alternative to television is public space. Thus, all the workers _____ have these few hours. Therefore, the minimum that a democratic society should have is high quality sidewalks and public space. For _____ years when I was the mayor, the city changed. I mean for those who know. Bogotá is changed completely. From being the city perhaps most hated by its inhabitants for decades, is changed into a city where people love their city and they feel proud of it. In the middle of the _____ session in history what was the great secret? Nothing, just trying to make a city a little bit more for people than for cars. Parks we made, greenways we made for example, a pedestrian street of 17 km. This is an interesting case, a 17 km (60) meter wide, it is wider than this room, perhaps the largest pedestrian street in the world with trees, lamps, benches, but what is interesting, through some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city, where no _____ roads are paved. That is what is interesting because it goes against the logic. If we had paved the roads of this neighborhood nothing would have changed, instead this is the manifestation of respect for human dignity and creates community, community interactions, integrates neighborhoods and this is what creates security. So now you have an idea of what is it that we want as a city because we cannot talk about urban transport until we know what kind of a city we want, and if we want to talk about what kind of city we have to know how do we want to live. The important questions are not about engineering when we talk about urban transport but about the ways to live. So some of the promises of these new cities are we want the city to be an egalitarian as possible and egalitarian does not mean in terms of income but in terms of what matters. We live on what _____ is practical is not income in this relation or (these fancy GD coefficients but quality of life distribution and the equality is that which matters to a child for example, it has to do with access to recreational facilities, access to parks, access to education, to nutrition. Urban transport is a political and not a technical issue. The technical aspects are very simple. The difficult decisions relate to who is going to benefit from the models adopted. Do we dare create that transport model different from the so called, advanced cities? Do we dare create a transport system giving priority to the needs of the poor? Or are we really trying to solve the traffic jams of the upper income people?

That is really the true issue that exists and of course, the new city should have a high population density. When we talk about urban transport we are really talking about density. The high population density is needs for many reasons, first – to have low cost, high frequency public transport. It is impossible to have of course, low cost high frequency public transport with a low-density city. So the high density is our main goal throughout the world, and most developing country cities have high density, not out of great planning but because they have not had the money yet to have the cars and build the highways that create low-density civilizations. But we are still on time to avoid what every urban _____ wants to avoid now that is too late in the advanced countries, so we have density to have low cost, high frequency public transport. We want to have high density to have shorter transport times. We want high density to have mobility for non-drivers, such as the poor children and the old. We want high density to have abundant

people in the public, pedestrian spaces. What we most want to see is people. You know, in the United States they invented a word that is called “shopping” you know, and it is a very interesting word, because first when one is learning English one thinks shopping means to go buy things. But not it is not to buy things; it is just to go look at things where they sell them, so that you might eventually become interested in buying one. But of course later on you realize that what it really means is people go to shopping malls to see people so that they do not commit suicide in desperation ___ happens in the suburbs, you know. We need to see people. Of course, we need also high density means high, rich, cultural offering because if people live very far and some friends invite them to go to the theatre and to dinner and so they have to drive an hour and come back an hour they will most probably say. Oh let us leave it for another day, and of course in less density cities there is less theatres and less restaurants, as an obvious consequence. So everybody now wants high density. We are not going to go into this and there are many other reasons. So the only way, if we do not have, if we have a restricted car use, and this is the most important, if we have a restricted car use we will inevitably have a suburban development such as the United States, inevitably. I mean we can talk of all sorts of fancy regulations or policies ____ but. If we do not restrict, severely, car use we will have sub-urbanization. Even Paris, Paris the most beautiful, this is a matter of simply offering good public transport. Paris has the best public transport in the world and perhaps it is the most beautiful city in the world, and yet over the last twenty years despite there having been new sub-way lines, users of public transport are completely stagnant. While cars coming into the city are increasing between 3% and 4% yearly. Distances between home and work have almost doubled in Paris over the last 20 years. Before this happens in Paris, I mean what will happen in Bogotá for example, I mean we are not exactly as exciting to live inside the city. Therefore, the only real solution is to restrict the use of cars and not simply to offer good public transport. It is very different, similar but different. The _____ similar nature of car based traffic is illustrative, of course it in fact, gets worse as the society gets richer, unless cars are restricted, with progress, with economic progress, we will get more traffic jams, more noise, more pollution, more health problems, more low density city expansion ___ urban development and this I want emphasis for the World Bank. If we do not restrict cars _____ with progress, with economic progress, what we will get is more regressive public expenditure on road building and maintenance that _____ benefits mainly the car owning upper-middle classes. In a city where the poor do not use cars, road building and improvement in order to relieve congestion, is extremely regressive. It takes scarce, public resources, that should be used to attend the poor, more urgent needs than to attend the upper classes needs and of course, I will tell you as a former mayor I mean, it does not matter if the schools for the poor do not have teachers or if they do not even have schools, this does not matter. But if there is a pothole on the way from the house or the area of the _____ newspaper or from the newspapers, this pothole is going to take up all the news edition of the night or it is going to have big pages in the papers. The pressure from the 5%, 10% ,20%, 40% of the upper income people who have cars is going to be so huge that if cars are not restricted, sooner or later there will be traffic jams and the pressure will be so huge to build more roads, more road infrastructure that it is going to be completely impossible to do otherwise. We have a very sad result that new roads solve nothing and this is also something that has to be taken into account by the bank when they finance these projects. It has been found all

over the world that trying to solve traffic problems, making new road infrastructure is like trying to put out a fire with gasoline. Because along with the road, a bigger road, a better road will only stimulate further development a new highway will create its own traffic. If you create a very good road from the center of the town to the outskirts of the city will only stimulate the development of new neighborhoods, universities, shopping malls and in ten years we will have exactly the same traffic jams. I mean it would take the developing countries 150 years to get the _____ highway infrastructure that the typical American city has and in the United States time lost in the traffic jams is almost doubling every 5 years. Therefore, it is very clear it is completely irrational but some things are counter ___ for example, _____ as in so many _____ it is counter evident that lowering interest rates creates more inflation. The same way putting more roads creates more traffic jams among other things, because it is exactly same thing to double the number of cars as to have the same number of cars doing double the distance. And this has been true all over the world, but it is incredible that because the upper classes have these huge pressures we continue to try to solve traffic problems by making more roads. The problem is that it not only does not solve anything but makes the city ever less humane. The more every road, high velocity road through the city is like a fence in the middle of a pasture. It encloses people, so the poor people have only more costs to pay, more noise, more air pollution, less walkability in the city, a city less for humans and more for cars. So the only way, the only real solution is to have people move in public transport and some people think we should do it through having _____ charges, user charges that is very dangerous because the costs generated by cars are so huge that I do not know if they could be compensated by any type of charges. But more over you could eventually have a situation where only a few people have cars and they create all sorts of costs for the rest of the society because they pay. So, I am going to poison you and destroy your quality of life but do not worry I am going to pay you for it, you know.

I want you to imagine the following scenario: imagine a city where a hundred or two hundred millionaires decide that they are going to move about by helicopter. So if you are a neighbor there you may feel very uncomfortable that this neighbor of yours makes a huge noise every time he takes off and thus is no theory. Actually in the outskirts of New York there was this discussions a couple of years ago because there was some guy that wanted to take off and go to Manhattan. Despite that it was a very large estate and all of this the neighbors said they did not want this and he went to court and the guy lost. He could not use the helicopter out of his garden. So why is this interesting, because it is a very interesting similarly to the car situation. It shows that first it is project; the cars are wonderful and project as long as only 10% 20% people in the city have cars. It works wonderful, you know. Of course, as long as we assume that the cleaning ladies, the doormen and the workers will never have cars, much less their children and families. So cars are wonderful and the same thing with helicopters. Helicopters were fine as long as 20 or 300 people that want to use them, but obviously you cannot use them for the whole city. The other thing is that it generates huge costs to the society than the helicopters, because they use up extremely valuable real estate space that is in the roads and the cost of the infrastructure. They pollute more, they make noise, they destroy the walkability and humanity of the city so if we agree, that helicopter use should be restricted there are much more arguments to agree that car use should be restricted. There are many more

reasons for this. Of course, this has never been done anywhere, this type of car restriction, yet when the French.

Revolution was made; nobody had even made a revolution like the French. You have had some terrible injustices, inequalities that seen after the revolution they seem so absurd, I mean, how could people have stood _____ for hundreds of years with such inequalities. But you can get sourced to injustice; daily injustice that you think you can survive with this. If we believe in democracy and participation people should have a clear understanding of this, and this type of thing, I believe, should be preferably in World Bank documents as clear as this. If there is something that I have said that is exaggerated, that seems is not true please tell me in the present sessions because to me I think these are so obvious that we continue to copy a model pregnant with injustice and in quality and regressive policies. So people should be able to vote on this, and this is exactly what we did in Bogotá. I mean what would ay people.

If we believe in the quality and declaration of human rights and all of this, so personally everybody is equal regardless of their educational levels or income levels or everything. So the vote of each person is worth the same, so in a developing country let me ask you, almost by definition a developing country or society is where the majority of the people do not have cars, almost by definition. So what do the car less people have to loose if car use is restricted?

They will have to win. I mean, we believe in democracy. Democracy is not only voting. Democracy is much more than that. Democracy is having the public good prevail over the private interest that is what democracy is. Democracy is having the majority's interest because, of course, democracy is manipulated. Who are owners of television, of the newspapers, of everything? Of course, they are going to be against car restrictions. But is this really democracy, this manipulation of people? Why, I mean, if cars are restricted the poor people are going to have less time in their transport because the buses are going to find less traffic jams or are going to have much transfer time, they are going to have less pollution, less noise they have nothing but benefits from this. If we have democracy 80% of the people are going to benefit and only 20% theoretically are going to be affected, because I think even the rich ones are going to be better off afterwards. On October of 2000, the people of Bogotá approved the referendum asking them whether they wanted all cars off the streets during 6 hours everyday, 6 hours consisting of 0600 to 0900 hours and 0430 to 0730 p.m. and this was approved. Unfortunately, there was a legal discussions where there was one third of the potential voters participated or not so the legal validity and discussion. Despite this had much more votes than the congressional votes for congress. But the important thing is this is the type of issue that should be brought before the people. I hear one of these documents of the World Bank meeting _____ it is about participation and they talk about community but let us people really participate, let people decide where they want _____ after explaining to them all of these things, where they really want street cars or not. I mean, it almost seems self evident that the majority of the people will benefit and there would be a huge amount of resources, public investment resources freed to the needs of the poor. We have also have some other interesting things to restrict the car use. For example, we had a car free day in Bogotá. A

seven million-inhabitant city completely restricted the use of cars for one day and people loved it. They even held a referendum asking people whether they want to have a car free day every year on Thursday, not a Sunday. One Thursday every year and the city works perfectly. Everybody is much better off. The city works fine without cars the whole day. There was a mistake I made because I should have asked them whether they wanted to have a car free day every month or every week and not every year. But now 85% of the people polled support this car free day that is being held every year since about three years ago. We have many schemes I only want to say that the fact is that if we decide that we want to give priority to the majority and not to the small higher income minority, we can. Any developing country city has a huge road network that can be used to put up a very modern bus system, such as the "Trans Millennium" in only three years, from scratch. From not having one _____ returned on this until operation we put up this 38 km "trans millennium" system which now, only after a year's operation is moving 630,000 passengers daily. We have a tariff of 40 cents of a dollar and it is much faster than moving about the city by car. So much so that 9% of its users are people who formerly used to drive to work. But most important about this is that have to work on city space everywhere to make sidewalks. This cost \$5 million a km as opposed to \$ 100 million or more per km for a subway. Of course, upper classes always want subways. Not because they _____ their business, but because they prefer to put few people on the ground, where they have to see them, because in no developing country the upper classes use the subway system. They just want the subway system so they can put the poor underground and forget about them. They dream that after that the traffic problem will disappear. Of course, it does not but anyway after a few billion dollars after it besides it is much nicer to be above ground and look at the city than to be underground like a rat. I mean, it may be necessary finally sometimes, but this is something that is very easy to implement. I can even go into the technicalities of this. This is only a political question. Are we willing to take cars out of a few lanes to give exclusive rights of way to buses? Are we willing to do this? Are we really going to take into account the interest of the majority of the people of environmental sustainability? And finally to end I will just tell you that all of these things that we are talking about as I say, are really about happiness. To try to make a city as more humane and happier. However, I think we get a _____ we get something that was unexpected a gift in result and this is the most important thing we can do for economic development. I hear, for example, very much that education is the most important thing for economic development. But I find so many Columbians with PhDs living in the United States some even work for the World Bank. I went to Singapore last year and they were very desperate. Because every time the United States, the Americans wants to flagellate themselves and say how bad their education system is they compare themselves to Singapore. Singapore is always the best in everything in results, but the people in Singapore were sending, envoys and this is not a lie. It is absolutely true, to all the cities in the world because many of their best people were emigrating because they were very bored in Singapore. So what I am trying to say is that quality of life in a city may be the most important competitive factor in the new economy in the post industrial society. In the agricultural society the source of wealth was land. In the industrial society the source of wealth and power was capital so all countries try to attract capital through subsidies, protection. But in the new economy the source of wealth is creative people, and therefore, the most competitive factor that a society can have is quality of life – Where?

In its cities, because where else? What is it that is going to make Microsoft put up an one thousand engineer research facility in a third world country where they can have good engineers for one fifth of what it costs to have them in Seattle? – Quality of life. Therefore, all of these things we are talking about have to do with quality of life that almost inadvertently they are also perhaps the most important economic growth policy. I think, that we have to think a little different if we truly want to have a more egalitarian society and a better society because the way we have been doing our city, so far is not working even in the advanced countries. Thank you very much.

We have time to show pictures? If you want to see a few pictures it would take me two minutes.. This is like week long in Bogotá 120 km of main streets, and we get a million and a half people every Sunday, people just driving bicycles. This gives a sense of community a sense of belonging. At night, Bogotá is supposed to be very safe. During X-Mas time we close these streets for one night and we get three million people, one night. Zero crime incidence, zero. This is the _____. This is, I mentioned, the _____ going to the poor neighborhoods. This is how it works, I mean. This is the bicycle path right through the middle of the avenue. You see in the center. We put 200 kms.

This is the main street in down town Bogotá, which we turned into a pedestrian street and we took out _____ brought it to run on the surface. This is the street in down town Bogotá we turned into a pedestrian one, this in the one. This is the pedestrian street that I tell you about that is 17 km long going through some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. In some many areas this is what developing _____ cities can do because this is yet unbuilt. IN ten years this will be completely urban, but _____ This is also new, some schools and parks but this a 17 km long pedestrian street, more pedestrian street, pedestrian _____ in some of the poorest areas. This is some way _____ parks, made by the community. The community proposed them and we contracted with them. This is in the poorest areas of Bogotá. See what would these people be doing if these were not there. They have nothing else in life to be happy, except watch television or drink alcohol and destroy each other and themselves. This is a 45 km greenway. Everywhere all drainage canals we put the sewage water in a _____ culvert. This is a 45 km greenway through a very dense city. That, of course, also has been opposed by some upper class neighborhoods because it connects very poor neighborhoods because it connects very poor neighborhoods to very rich neighborhoods. This is some park down town. We even took a cemetery to make this park. Five years ago six years ago this park was abandoned completely and now we get 200,000 people every Sunday here. That is it. Thank you.

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