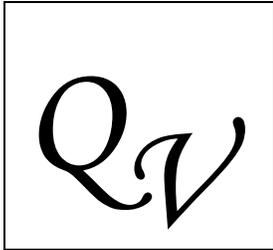




HAYWARD AREA PLANNING ASSOCIATION



How far away is your car?

At home, my car is less than 40 yards from my bedroom. At work, it is farther away, maybe two hundred yards. How far away from your car do you think you could live before you would have to take dramatic action? A half mile away? That would be too far for most people—most Americans. We are attached to our cars by a psychological umbilical cord. We don't think of it that way; we think in terms of the practical necessities of everyday life and the convenience of our car.

Most of us have set up our lives to have reasonably good work, home, and commute situations, considering the alternatives available to us. The problem is we are killing the planet.

Isn't the price of gasoline too low?

Gasoline is about the only major commodity we buy frequently. We buy major things—a house, a car, an appliance, furniture, computers—infrequently, and we buy minor things—grocery items, meals out—frequently, but gas is the only one both major and frequent. We are very sensitive to the price and it is the most advertised price visible on our roads. For most people, up is bad, down is good. I live in a different world.. The price of gasoline is far too low to reflect its real costs, and we need to tax it more, while lowering other taxes on labor and goods—“tax bads, not goods.” There are many bads associated with gas, the most important of which is global warming.

Other people should do something about global warming. Most Americans, who now believe global warming is a problem, do not have a clue as to what they can do about it. Voters in November 2006 approved Prop. 1a to take money from education and health and put it into highways, and Prop 1b, to borrow money from the general fund to build more highways. More highway capacity usually increases car travel demand which reconstitutes the roads and leads to demands for more capacity. We continue to go backwards on global warming.

The Iraq War is somebody else's fault. Nope; it is our fault. We depend on oil. Somehow our oil got under their sand. So we pursue an intellectually bankrupt and morally corrupt policy of unprovoked aggression and military occupation of a foreign land at a horrible price to the Iraqi people and our military. But we can't really do anything about it because we have everyday life to live, at home, at work, shopping, and driving our cars. I do it, too; I'm part of that problem.

Consider Quarry Village. The Hayward Area Planning Association is promoting Quarry Village, a dense, walking oriented townhouse project near our California State University East Bay Hayward campus. Quarry Village will have its own frequent, rapid bus service to the campus and downtown Hayward, and its own grocery store, cafe, and restaurant. I want to move there, and we've found about 100 other people who want to live there also. We need about 900 more, which is difficult, because parking at Quarry Village will be scarce and expensive. We can turn the dream into reality—if we can find the 900 more people. Take a look: www.quarryvillage.org

Sherman Lewis, President, HAPA.