

MAP Statement on Transportation for Mobility and Climate Change Mitigation

February 10, 2021

The MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (MAP) believes that mass public transportation is the most efficient and preferred people mover, for many reasons:

- Adequate, dependable, and efficient public transportation is essential to the proper reopening, recovery, and functioning of our economy and society as we reset to emerge from the pandemic;
- It is the key solution to traffic congestion and enable more people to find gainful employment and commute to and from their work daily, providing a multiplier effect to the infrastructure investment; and
- It is one of the important mitigation measures to address climate change due to greenhouse gases from vehicle emissions.

We recognize the facts from the recent Social Weather Station survey pointing to mass transportation as the preferred mobility solution of the public.

We support Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez's call for bolder collective and unified action against the climate crisis and the United Nations Secretary-General's call to declare global climate emergency.

We support Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade's measures and initiatives to develop and provide adequate mass public transportation detailed in a recent statement.

The MAP supports a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort with a comprehensive approach to marshal our resources and undertake these measures with urgency:

Policy imperatives

1. Policy shift to full development of eco-friendly clean energy land, sea and air transportation network using electric powered and natural gas fueled high-capacity public buses, trains, ferries in highly urbanized cities to attain higher commuter throughput, while utilizing fewer private vehicles, lesser road space and minimizing carbon footprint.
2. Paradigm shift in road space allocation away from a private vehicle-oriented policy in favor of mass transportation. Road space is a scarce community resource that must be optimally used in favor of the majority. We submit that the answer is efficiency and productivity and not building more or wider roads for low occupancy, traffic-causing private vehicles.
3. Development of more dedicated busways conforming to global standards and international standards. The new EDSA rapid busway, located at the innermost lanes, has proven to be a practical game-changing efficient people mover and merits serious consideration in major thoroughfares.

Process

4. Promote high occupancy vehicle (HOV) usage in private motor vehicles, particularly during defined peak traffic hours. This is a proven and effective scheme for the optimal use of the road network while, color and number coding schemes have proven ineffective as vehicle reduction measures.
5. Reduce strain on public transportation and stress on the environment by promoting live, work and play mix-use compact communities or districts to render destinations within short commute or walkable distance. Develop satellite bedroom communities outside the city to be served primarily by mass transportation, preferably rail. Urban sprawl must be broken with intermediate green belts.

People

6. Support other modes of mobility, such as cycling and walking, which entail the provision of appropriate road space for bike lanes and wide tree-lined sidewalks accessible to wheelchairs, and other assisted mobility devices for PWD's, starting with EDSA, to accommodate people with different preferences and resources.

Technology

7. A coordinated national telecommunications policy that encourages more competition, increases investment in bandwidth capacity, regulates in favor of the end users, and reduces the marginal cost of web access, recognizing that hybrid work and education arrangements have the opportunity to prosper, lessening the need for daily commutes and lowering our overall carbon footprint as a society.
8. Air pollution mitigation measures must be based on location and period-specific air readings. The low national annual average air pollution readings must not be relied on as basis for policy actions, such as choice of fuel options, as they are misleading and inaccurate. The bad air readings of highly urbanized cities are watered down by the low readings in less developed cities and the seasonally cleaner air due to typhoons.

Relationships and connectivity

9. Improve the relationship of private connectivity to public transportation by establishing park and ride facilities in strategic entry points to the inner city. One such location is the convergence junction of Marcos and Sumulong highways where the LRT2 extension line will soon be completed.
10. Improve multimodal connectivity between busway, rail and ferry transportation services, (to include crossing Laguna Lake) as a sustainable alternate means of transportation. This will also reduce traffic and integrate more closely the economy of the eastern shore communities to the western part of Metro Manila.

Policy makers must take heed of the challenges and successes of the green urban policy of other countries and other urban centers where reliance is being placed on mass transit. Road lanes and pavement are being reduced to provide more space for sidewalks, trees and landscaping. Fewer vehicle loads on the surface will calm the street for a more conducive atmosphere for pedestrians to walk and promenade, which will have the salutary effect of injecting more vibrancy to the community to support shops and commercial establishments.

The MAP believes bold collective action through appropriate transportation policies is essential to avert the looming climate crisis.