



Press Release

Office of Economic Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WILL PODCARS REVOLUTIONIZE HOW WE DESIGN,
BUILD AND RETROFIT OUR CITIES?**

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (OCT.26, 2010)—San Jose is set to host the 4th Annual International Podcar City Conference this week to analyze that very question. Taking place October 27-29, 2010, at San Jose City Hall and Rotunda, [Podcar City: San Jose, “Innovating Sustainable Communities,”](#) is organized by the International Institute of Sustainable Transportation (INIST) and sponsored by the City of San Jose and the Mineta Transportation Institute.

Organizers are also presenting a **free** “Public Night” program to be held at The Tech Museum’s IMAX Theater; doors open at 6:45 p.m. with the program beginning at 7 p.m., Wed., Oct. 27. The Tech Museum is located at 201 South Market Street in downtown San Jose.

Attracting more than two hundred of today’s leading transportation professionals, city planners, business leaders, venture capitalists and elected officials, Podcar City is fashioned to explore the ways podcar technology could impact civil

engineering, real estate development, industrial design, renewable energy, “green” workforce development and more.

Current scientific research and analysis will be presented by leading authorities from the US, Europe and Asia. In addition to presentations on the history, technology, and functionality of podcar systems, there will be up-to-date reports on projects underway around the world, such as at Heathrow Airport (UK); Masdar City (UAE); Suncheon City (South Korea); Uppsala (Sweden); Ithaca, N.Y. and San Jose, Calif. (USA).

Podcars, also known as Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) or an Automated Transit Network (ATN), make up a system of small, lightweight, driverless, computer-controlled vehicles operated on an elevated guide-way. The system is analogous to a horizontal elevator, allowing riders to travel above street congestion and directly to their destination.

San Jose was selected to be the host for this event based on the city’s leadership on innovative, solutions--based mobility projects to address today’s infrastructure and climate challenges. The City is on track to build the first “true” podcar system in the nation. The initial system will serve the San Jose Airport, connect to Caltrain and future BART and light rail stations, and to other key destinations around the airport.

“We look forward to welcoming the world’s top transportation minds to San Jose,” said Mayor Chuck Reed. “With the opening of our new airport this year, the addition of high-speed rail, the extension of BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) and now the development of the first podcar system in the U.S., it’s San Jose’s goal to build one of the world’s great transit-friendly cities. Being chosen as the site for this international conference underscores San Jose’s place in transportation innovation. Podcars will help San Jose reach its Green Vision goals while becoming a model for other cities around the world.”

To help underscore the importance of this international assembly, a large Swedish delegation, including officials from the Ministries of Industry, Transport and Environment are being sent to San Jose this week to build upon the growing relationship between the European country and the US.

On September 30, both nations signed a Memorandum of Cooperation for the development of a sustainable transport system between the U.S. Department of Transport and the Swedish Enterprise Ministry.

This agreement is very timely, as Sweden has initiated a pilot program to finance and develop pioneering podcar systems at three sites of special interest. “The transport sector has been contributor to climate change, now we ensure gradually that it also becomes a natural part of the solution”, said outgoing Minister for Communications Åsa Torstensson in her opening speech at the last Podcar City Conference, held in Malmö while the UN climate negotiations took place in Copenhagen this past December.

Seeking cooperation with American cities also interested in podcar systems, members of the KOMPASS Network of 15 Swedish municipalities aiming to build more sustainable transport systems will also attend the conference with an aim of encouraging their US colleagues to collaborate with them in the process.

For more information, please visit <http://podcarcity.org/sanjose/>

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ABOUT SAN JOSE 'S GREEN VISION

On October 7, 2007, Mayor Chuck Reed introduced San Jose's Green Vision, which sets 10 ambitious goals for environmental protection and economic development. This 15-year plan envisions: creating 25,000 Clean Tech jobs; building or retrofitting 50 million square feet of green buildings; installing 100,000 solar roofs (1/10 of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's 1 million solar roofs for California initiative); reducing per capita electricity use by half; becoming a zero waste city; recycling and reusing 100 percent of the City's water; and moving to 100 percent renewable energy. A key part of the San Jose Green Vision is the creation of a Green Mobility system—an integrated and sustainable way to get from place to place. This system focuses on long-term land use planning, reducing emissions from vehicles, embracing clean transportation technology, building smart green streets, expanding pedestrian and bicycling opportunities, and creating a green airport.

ABOUT THE CITY OF SAN JOSE

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The City, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, to work and to live. For more information, visit, www.sanjoseca.gov.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION (INIST)

INIST promotes new modes of sustainable transportation through gathering and disseminating high quality information and research. INIST supports automated, effective and safe modes of transportation that can add value to existing transportation systems and create attractive, effective and economical alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles that improve people's quality of life. For more information, visit www.INIST.org

ABOUT THE KOMPASS NETWORK OF CITIES

Kompass is an expanding network of municipalities and cities working to advance podcars - a climate friendly transportation system. In less than two years, 17 municipalities have joined Kompass Sweden. The organization will discuss the possibility of initiating a Kompass USA and a Kompass International at the San Jose conference this October. For more information, visit

www.podcar.org/kompass/global/index.htm

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The US DOT selected MTI as a national "Center of Excellence" following a 2002 competition. The Institute has a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from a board assessment of the industry's unmet needs and led directly to choosing the San Jose State University College of Business as the Institute's home. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer focusing on multi-modal surface transportation policy and management issues. Visit www.transweb.sjsu.edu