

Parking space management: Remove a spot, reduce global warming?

January 25 2011, By Susan Carpenter

"Parking management is a critical and often overlooked tool for achieving a variety of social goals," according to a new study released Wednesday by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy in New York.

The study cited improved air quality, reduced [greenhouse gas emissions](#), reduced [traffic congestion](#), improved road safety and revitalized city centers as the key benefits of parking reform.

Those benefits have been achieved in various European cities through a mixture of public policies, regulatory tools and physical design attributes, the study found. In Amsterdam and certain boroughs of London, for example, drivers pay more to park cars that emit higher levels of carbon dioxide. In Hamburg and Zurich, every new off-street parking space that is built is matched with the removal of one on-street space.

In Madrid, physical barriers are used to prevent parking in pedestrian pathways. In Copenhagen, parking spaces have been eliminated and repurposed into bike paths.

Other tools in use across Europe include increased parking fees to reduce parking space occupancy and the need for cars to cruise around searching for spaces; taxes on employers for each parking space available to employees; and limiting the number of [parking spaces](#) developers are allowed to build.

"What's happening in China and India and many other rapidly urbanizing places is they are simply copying the model of the U.S. that has dominated urban development for the last 60 years," said Michael Kodransky, global research manager for the nonprofit group and co-author of its report, "Europe's [Parking](#) U-Turn: From Accommodation to Regulation."

"What we found through this work is that Europe was on a very similar trajectory, but it started to shift away from just catering to increased demand. For a long time there was a connection between [economic prosperity](#) and motorization, and in Europe there's been a shift. Cities that are doing quite well are moving away from just catering to car access."

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Citation: Parking space management: Remove a spot, reduce global warming? (2011, January 25) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-01-space-global.html>

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