Advocacy and partnerships

We believe that, given sufficient collaboration and policy reform, shared mobility can help cities achieve deep levels of transportation decarbonization and zero-emission mobility over the next 2 decades. Today, city infrastructure and policies are predominantly designed for privately owned vehicles powered by fossil fuels. Retooling to enable more shared, green, and electric modes can drive much greater impact, and Uber is committed to doing our part to help and support a green recovery in our cities.

We're committed to working with cities, governments, and industry partners serving the transportation sector to do the following:

1. **Adopt carbon intensity and travel efficiency as key metrics for reporting and policy guidance:** Both metrics are performance-based and applicable to any form of mobility. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) and California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) recently adopted carbon intensity as the centerpiece of their Clean Miles Standard. The Union of Concerned Scientists and other environmental experts recognized this as a step in the right direction.

   Uber is now using carbon intensity, along with travel efficiency, as a performance metric to inform our business. With this report, we aim to leverage the metric to enhance transparency with users, cities, and governments throughout the United States and Canada. We strongly encourage other businesses participating in the transportation sector, transit agencies, cities, and governments to adopt carbon intensity as a key metric for reporting and policymaking. For more on the metric and its generic applicability, see this article. For more on how we used the data we collect in the normal course of business to estimate carbon intensity for this report, see the *FAQ* section.

2. **Incentivize modes of transportation that support high travel efficiency and low carbon intensity:** Cities can support transport modes that deliver higher travel efficiency and reduced carbon intensity with smart policies that improve effectiveness and incentivize their use. Such modes include walking and micromobility, high-occupancy mass transit, low-emission shared or pooled mobility, and first- and last-mile options.

   Urban transportation experts have confirmed that on-demand mobility plays a critical role in enabling more multimodal travel in cities. A 2019 report by TransitCenter found that consumers who increased their use of public transit over the last 2 years also walked and telecommuted more, increased their use of rideshare services and taxis, and decreased personal car use. Simply put, Uber riders are also transit riders, bikers, and walkers; when transit and active modes do well, Uber does well.

   Modes with lower relative performance and less positive contribution to multimodal transportation systems (for example, single-occupancy vehicle use) should be deprioritized.

   Many climate action plans from cities and governments include fuel switching and mode shift as significant themes. Increasing occupancy across all modes should also be considered as an important strategy, especially in high-capacity corridors where the potential for shared rides and corresponding low carbon intensity is greatest.

3. **Increase space for and access to modes of transportation that can perform with high travel efficiency and low carbon intensity:** Space is a scarce and valuable resource in most cities. Increased "flexible zones" (as defined by NACTO) or other shared-use curb space can help reduce deadhead and increase travel efficiency for shared-use vehicles by offering a safe, efficient alternative to vehicles traveling empty or double-parking. Removing free or low-cost parking can also reduce induced private car driving. Where applicable, high-travel-efficiency and low-carbon-intensity vehicles, trips, and critical modes (such as wheelchairs) should gain preferred access.

   Beyond the curb, cities and businesses should implement high-occupancy or low emission vehicle preferred lanes and car-free or zero-emission zones to signal new priorities. In order to achieve the greatest positive climate impact, such policies should apply to all vehicles and reward high-travel-efficiency, low-carbon-intensity modes and trips.

   We support cities in taking bold steps and instituting impactful policies to achieve their climate and other goals, such as when San Francisco removed cars from key parts of Market Street in 2019. Uber's shared-use technology platform can help citizens and visitors adapt to ambitious access policies by offering multimodal travel options that comply with new policies and help with pickup/dropoff management around controlled areas.

4. **Increase investment in car-free travel modes and infrastructure, especially mass transit and micromobility:** Mass transit and micromobility can move more people at a superior travel efficiency and carbon intensity along dense urban corridors compared to car-based modes of travel. To reach deeper levels of decarbonization, trips on Uber and throughout the transportation sector must rapidly shift toward these and other car-free, high-efficiency modes. To get there, Uber will continue to invest in new technologies that make it easier and more appealing for consumers to take more bus, train, bike, and scooter trips. Additionally, we'll lend our support to cities looking to prioritize sustainable transportation on their streets.

   We recognize the critical relationship between urban land-use policies and high-efficiency mass transit. As is evident in our open letter to the European Commission and our examination of complete street design options, Uber will continue to support thoughtful transit-enabling policies and developments—such as SB50 in California—and to promote the use of public transit by expanding journey planning and mobile ticketing on our platform. We strongly encourage policymakers and businesses supporting the transportation sector to support these policies as well.

   We will collaborate with public and private organizations to support public transit agency efforts to grow and extend service and increase infrastructure.

5. **Transform electrification initiatives to support shared EVs:** A growing body of research from places such as ITF, UC Davis ITS, and LBNL shows that combining electric mobility options with sharing and automation technologies can reduce on-road vehicles by 90% or more and cut transportation's climate impact by as much as 80%. A new report from UC Davis shows that utilization-driving technologies, such as shared mobility and ridesharing, can play a critical role in gaining life-cycle emission benefits from battery EVs as market preference for larger vehicles and battery sizes continues.

   Over time, Uber's platform can help accelerate the transition to electric mobility. As shown in the electrification case study, one battery EV driver on the Uber platform serves dozens of riders a month.

   However, significant barriers remain to electrifying shared mobility. In all cities profiled in this report, zero-tailpipe-emission trip-mileage share on Uber remains at or below consumer levels. Research shows that, due to high vehicle-acquisition costs, inadequate charging infrastructure, and decreased earnings potential from charging-related downtime, a shift to battery EVs would make most drivers economically worse off than if they drove conventional vehicles, especially high-efficiency hybrids, for at least the next 4 to 6 years.

To address these challenges, we call on both public and private stakeholders to join us in investing in and promoting the following approaches:

- **Focus more on increasing the use of scarce EVs and EV infrastructure:** One way to approach this would be to adjust EV rebate and similar programs to differentiate between high-utilization applications and private use. EVs in high-utilization, commercial applications can extend the benefits of EVs to more people, including those who cannot afford an EV but could afford a trip in an EV. Research from UC Davis shows EVs used by rideshare drivers can deliver 3 times the emissions benefits of those used by private owners. Additionally, initial industry findings show that EVs in rideshare applications can provide grid benefits and, potentially, increased renewable energy consumption. There is much we can learn from precedents being established in countries such as India, where—as highlighted in a recent report from the Rocky Mountain Institute—the new FAME II scheme proposes to subsidize all-electric 4-wheelers in commercial and shared mobility applications.
- **Expand charging policies to emphasize home and near-home charging for low-income drivers and urban fast-charging suitable for high-utilization fleets and shared mobility networks:** In the near to medium term, shared-use drivers will benefit the most from access to at-home, slower charging infrastructure to give them highly affordable access to charging, with lower-income drivers needing multi-family-unit dwelling infrastructure support. (The latest research from ICCT shows that EV drivers with at-home charging access may reach superior economics earlier.) Urban fast-charging will be critical not only to rideshare drivers but increasingly to transit-bus and local-goods-delivery electrification efforts.
- **Focus on incentivizing electric passenger miles, less on EV sales:** This could be similar to federal programs for mileage reimbursement. Vehicle sales do not directly lead to cleaner air and fewer emissions; vehicle use matters far more. Cleaner air comes from increasing the portion of passenger miles traveled by lower and zero-tailpipe-emission modes of transport and by decreasing the share of travel by those consuming fossil fuel. Those services and drivers completing more low-carbon and zero-tailpipe-emission passenger miles should gain access to federal, state, and local support on a performance or usage basis. Incentives for EV-charging infrastructure programs can similarly allocate funding on the basis of the potential future electric passenger miles traveled, improving the travel efficiency impact for each plug.
- **Help fleet management and rental service providers increase battery EV adoption to give taxi, rideshare, carshare, and other high-utilization drivers more affordable access to high-quality electric options:** For example, Colorado recently updated its EV tax credit program to extend the same level of incentive to both private car owners and those using rental EVs on ridesharing platforms.

6. **Expand driver access to affordable, high-efficiency, high-quality vehicles, especially for drivers from underserved communities:** Uber's mobility platform leverages market mechanisms that can encourage accelerated adoption of high-efficiency vehicles. In 2019, drivers serving trips on Uber's platform drove vehicles with almost 17% better fuel economy than the vehicles of average US car owners. Additionally, as of 2019, drivers using Uber drove hybrid and electric vehicles 5 times more than did their private-car-owner counterparts.

   The final carbon intensity of trips enabled by our platform depends a lot on driver access to high-efficiency vehicles in the local consumer market. For instance, carbon intensity of rides in our California markets in 2019 outperformed that of all US and Canada rides by 21% and 23%, respectively. Notably, the consumer car market in California is among the largest and greenest in the world, with an average fuel economy of on-road passenger vehicles 17% higher than the US average.

   Drivers on the Uber platform need affordable access to high-efficiency vehicles with performance (sufficient range, high passenger and luggage capacity) suitable for high-utilization applications such as ridesharing. In particular, lower-income drivers need support to shift to greener and electric vehicles. Lower-income groups are generally over-represented among shared mobility service providers, including rideshare, taxi, and other private-hire drivers. By contrast, battery EVs today tend to be owned by middle- to higher-income segments, according to the latest research from UC Davis. Without supportive policies and affordable solutions, therefore, overly ambitious shifts toward lower-carbon and more electric mobility options could disproportionately harm lower-income drivers.

   We support governments in setting ambitious fuel-efficiency policy, low-emission-vehicle standards and pricing in carbon emissions to cultivate a more competitive vehicle market with more choices for greener driving. We encourage all governments to support policies that increase the supply and affordability of low- to zero-tailpipe-emission vehicles, especially for lower income drivers and those from communities of color. To increase emissions impact, such policies can be strengthened by focusing more on vehicle use and passenger-mileage consumption, and less on vehicles sold. Over time, ridesharing and other high-utilization applications can support lower-carbon-intensity passenger miles, make advanced technology alternatives more accessible, and displace more polluting vehicle miles traveled.

7. **Promote the Shared Mobility Principles for Livable Cities to guide policy development and minimize future unintended consequences:** Uber signed on to the Shared Mobility Principles and regularly engages with NUMO, the organization leading the promotion and implementation of the principles. Proposed environmental policies and pursuits can leverage the Shared Mobility Principles to monitor for potential unintended consequences. For instance, an improperly implemented and overly rapid shift toward electrification could disproportionately impact low-income shared mobility drivers most (reference Shared Mobility Principles 4 and 5 on stakeholder engagement and equity).

8. **Price-in critical externalities from all modes:** At Uber, we want to pay for our fair share of public resource consumption. As is evident from the open letter to C40 mayors promoting road pricing (which we supported with the Global New Mobility Coalition) and our New York City congestion pricing campaign, we advocate for comprehensive road-pricing policies based on vehicles' consumption of road space (especially during congested times) and environmental impact. Trips and transportation modes with the lowest relative performance on travel efficiency and carbon intensity should pay the most, even those booked through our app. When applied to all vehicles, such policies encourage transportation providers to compete on efficiency and incentivize consumers to shift toward more efficient trips. Additional revenues generated through road-pricing schemes should be allocated to support transport options with the lowest carbon-intensity and highest travel-efficiency potential, as well as those that enhance transportation equity for vulnerable populations, such as public transit, micromobility, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Getting to 100% EV in London by 2025

In London, we can already see what's possible due to visionary climate policy and new mobility technology. In April 2019, the city implemented an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), charging drivers in the downtown area for pollution. Over the next few years, the ULEZ will grow geographically to include most of urban London and all vehicles with tailpipe emissions. Only full-battery-electric and zero-tailpipe-emission vehicles will be exempt from the charge in a few years' time.

Coupled with the existing Congestion Charge zone (CC) that now applies to private-hire applications, the ULEZ policy reset the economic playing field for drivers. Researchers expect worse-off economics for most rideshare drivers switching to EVs, compared to conventional options or hybrids, for the next 4 to 6 years. However, the London ULEZ charge means that a switch to EVs can make sense for more drivers in an earlier time frame.

Anticipating these positive economics, in January 2019 we launched our Clean Air Plan to help drivers overcome price premiums for battery EVs, with a goal of 100% all-electric service in London by 2025. With the Clean Air Plan, every driver using our app in London gets access to incentives to support acquisition of an electric car. It works through a clean air fee of 15 pence per mile, charged to riders who book trips through the Uber app in London. Uber takes no commission on the fee. Drivers gain access to assistance at the same rate as they drive. We expect to raise more than £200 million to support drivers transitioning to battery EVs over the next few years. As of January 2020, we raised £80 million to support drivers transitioning to electric vehicles and recorded almost 900,000 zero-emission journeys completed in 2019.

Uber will continue to engage with city, environmental, and urban-planning stakeholders to promote the above initiatives and collaborate on new approaches that can drive more efficient mobility. While political will is required to implement such policies, we believe it will be possible to reach zero-tailpipe-emission mobility on our platform in dozens of major cities in the US and Canada by or before 2030 through public and private sector collaboration.

To promote and develop these policies, we engage with a number of partners and initiatives, including the following:[11]

- Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi)
- Global New Mobility Coalition, of which Uber is a co-founding member
- Step Up Declaration and coalition
- Shared Mobility Principles and signatories
- The Standards Advisory Group of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB)

We hope to leverage the findings from this report to inform our plans and products, and improve our impact. We don't have all the answers, and the transportation landscape continues to evolve rapidly. We want to continue engaging with our users, city leaders, environmental and urban-planning stakeholders, and current and prospective partners to identify large-scale ways to drive low-carbon-intensity, high-travel-efficiency mobility. This is our start.

[11]This is not an exhaustive list.