

ahead. From their buildings, leisure, tourist and retail habits, through transport, workplaces, producer and consumer services, to cities' vast non-renewable energy producers and users. Current city energy systems lock citizens into a brown energy commodity that is priced to concentrate wealth and global political power rather than to create a common good that underpins a flourishing life for all. The negative results are all around us: localized pollution, increases in greenhouse gases, fuel poverty and high utility prices.

In their place, we need to unlock a civic-energy revolution of distributed energy networks, local smart grids, municipally owned energy and zero-emissions, community-led developments. This involves new planning ordinances and mass national retrofit programmes to ensure that every single building is zero carbon; municipal energy companies modelled on the German Stadtwerke, which generate from 100 per cent renewable sources and undercut corporate energy giants; and people's energy action to ensure a 100 per cent moratorium on fossil fuels and fracking. A vast transfer of subsidies underpins all this.

Civic innovations, such as those developed by Repower London, are flourishing, especially in Combined Heat and Power (CHP), onshore wind, solar photovoltaics, anaerobic digestion, local smart grids, energy-storage technologies and the new skills that will underpin these. The new civic-energy sector could really mean that the age of the large power plant is replaced with a constellation of distributed but highly connected small and medium zero-emission energy providers. Every home, garden and street becomes a micro power station. The potential is huge. But will action be connected enough and fast enough to avoid the now dangerous effects of staying on the path of high-emissions urbanism? Part of the equation is demand-curtalement, so city life becomes more

localized and less energy-bloated. In essence, zero-carbon targets save cities by starting to untangle the energy system that keeps capitalism, and our ceaseless growth paradigm, going. That's the big challenge.

The second big area of action is transport. This is about the urgent task of how and why we need to lock down city car culture. Almost all modern ills can be understood through the rise of the private fossil-fuel-powered automobile: unnecessary road deaths, the global pandemic of urban air pollution, mounting greenhouse-gas emissions, geopolitical wars, the concentration of corporate wealth and mounting consumer debt, depression, status anxiety, obesity, alienated streetscapes, the decline of vibrant public life and the corrosive effects of individualism.

We simply need to lock down city car culture: privatized, corporate-led, fossil-fuel-hungry automobile dependency, and growth-based planning. This is not about merely addressing the technical issues of designing and building the low-hanging fruit of sustainable-mobility options like bike lanes and mass rapid transit, although of course these are essential first steps. We need to unlock car-free, socially just, zero-carbon, common-owned mobility. Getting rid of cars means getting rid of the conditions that makes us need cars. It's a new mobility paradigm based on responding to climate breakdown, social inequality and living well. This is all absolutely achievable. In only just over one hundred years, we have witnessed the rise of only a handful of cars to a number approaching a billion. The story of the car is so brief it can easily be reversed. But it requires action across culture, infrastructure, work, organizations, behaviour, finance, marketing, power and politics. In particular, it requires vast shifts in subsidies to green and affordable travel and planning decisions that prohibit all new car-based activity. How we choose

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