

## GCRI INTERVIEW

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**Burkhard Horn**

**Head of the Transport Division, Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment in Berlin**

**What are some of the biggest challenges that cities face with respect to traffic management?**

In Berlin, we are observing a continuous shift in the modes of transport being used. We are moving away from driving cars towards walking, cycling, and using public transportation. With respect to the number of trips taken, walking has become the most utilized mode of transport for people living in Berlin. Car use city-wide is already below 30 percent and in central Berlin at only 17 percent, making it less utilized than cycling. This is good for the city of Berlin, but at the same time it also creates new challenges concerning traffic safety and street design, especially for cyclists and pedestrians. Berlin has been growing rapidly over the past few years and new housing developments will need to be created. To do this in a way that makes it possible for people to live without having their own cars is another major issue we are addressing. Of course, the remaining car traffic has to be managed in a way that causes as few environmental and safety problems as possible. Intelligent traffic management can be very helpful for achieving such objectives.

**How can traffic flow be improved in Berlin to promote sustainability?**

Better traffic management to promote sustainability involves much more than just improving traffic flow for cars. Prioritizing busses and trams at traffic lights, providing safe crossings for pedestrians, creating "green wave" traffic lights for cyclists, and enforcing speed limits are all equally important. Of course, maintaining a steady traffic flow remains extremely important as well to reduce emissions and noise. Berlin has established various instruments to tackle these challenges.

**What developments do you foresee in the field of mobility over the next 10-15 years?**

The change in mobility behavior I mentioned earlier will hopefully continue, especially with cycling becoming increasingly important. Public transportation, however, will remain the backbone of sustainable mobility in big cities. New technologies like autonomous driving will help, but they won't be the solution for everything. More individual car use is not the long-term solution for cities.