



By Sajuti Rahman, associate editor, May 15, 2020

Monterey water board waylays affordable housing, by Dennis L. Taylor, *Monterey Herald*, May 13, 2020

[“A decision by Monterey Peninsula water officials”](#) to deny use of water from what “the district holds in reserve ... leveled a severe blow to the city’s ability to construct new housing units. In effect, one state agency is demanding Monterey provide more housing while another agency is prohibiting the city from building more units because of water. ... The general manager of the water district told [Water Demand] Committee members that the State Water Resources Control Board sent an email ‘expressing its concerns’ with Monterey’s request. In total, six shovel-ready projects around the city would generate 303 units with an average of 77 percent affordable housing, but without additional water, only 92 could be built.”

The pandemic demonstrates how vulnerable US transit systems are, by Angela Pachon, *UPenn Kleinman Center for Energy Policy*, May 6, 2020

“Transit agencies will need to operate with a reduced ridership while continuing to offer an affordable service. Despite the financial pressure to cut expenditures, [ongoing efforts](#) to update routes and better integrate different travel modes to attract riders should continue. Decision-makers must also consider that transit in the US will be the only travel mode for the poorest among us, a population that cannot afford to live near their workplaces to cycle or walk.”

Pandemic underscores transit accessibility difficulties, by Abigail Cochran, *StreetsBlog Cal*, April 21, 2020

“People with disabilities, like everybody else, need to access essential goods, like food and medicine, and services like medical care. The [\\$2.2 trillion relief bill](#) signed into law on March 27th appropriates [\\$25 billion to transit agencies](#) to cover expenses related to the coronavirus response.” [Go here](#) to read how on-demand transportation providers (like ride-hail services and taxis), transportation agencies, and public health authorities are rethinking strategies to properly serve people with disabilities during the pandemic and beyond.

Mexico City smog defies coronavirus lockdown, by Raul Cortes Fernandez, *Reuters*, April 27, 2020

“While city dwellers around the world take some consolation in improved air quality thanks to the coronavirus pandemic, festering garbage dumps, dirty diesel-fueled generators, and frequent forest fires have ensured Mexico City’s air remains smog-filled. Carlos Alvarez, head of an environmental group, said the area had some 400 open-air dumps and 50,000 industrial generators in hotels, offices, and businesses, many of which were still operating



Housing, the environment, the virus, and public transportation

despite the quarantine. Now, experts worry that COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, could prove more lethal in Mexico City than elsewhere.” [Read more here.](#)

Options to phase-out fossil fuel production in California, by *Ethan Elkind*, April 29, 2020

“California is the seventh-largest oil producing state in the country. Yet continued oil and gas production contrasts with the state’s aggressive climate mitigation policies. Berkeley Law’s Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment (CLEE) just released the 66-page report (PDF), ‘[Legal Grounds: Law and Policy Options to Facilitate a Phase-Out of Fossil Fuel Production in California.](#)’ The report analyzes steps California leaders could pursue on state- and privately-owned lands. [Read more](#) about the options discussed among state leaders related to fossil fuel phase-out with less harm to jobs and local economies.”