



wards a walkable Philippines

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# #WalkEDSA

- Five years ago, we walked the whole length of EDSA as a step towards igniting a conversation about walkability...
- Amid traffic, the caught the attention and went viral.
- Political developments have since overtaken the advocacy



# #WalkEDSA: 9 lessons

- There is no organized walking infrastructure. Sidewalks terminate abruptly, leaving the pedestrian unsure about how to proceed.
- Pollution is really a major obstacle. The noxious air, the heat, and the noise are all forms of pollution that made the walk at times stressful.
- Some pedestrians don't follow the rules. While affirming pedestrian welfare, we saw – and do acknowledge – that pedestrians are also part of the problem when they do not follow pedestrian lanes and traffic lights.





# #WalkEDSA: 9 lessons

- There are nasty drivers who don't respect pedestrian lanes. Once, I was nearly hit by a car that insisted on passing through the lane even when the driver saw that I was already crossing.
- EDSA is built on an architecture of social injustice. Walkways are just an afterthought, like that overpass in Ortigas which isn't even 6 feet in height. Billions are spent on our roads, benefitting those who can afford to have private vehicles, followed by those who can afford to take taxis and PUVs.
- Creativity and design have a big role to play in making the roads not just walkable and safe, but also beautiful and inspiring. Walking is much more manageable – and interesting – if there are attractions along the way.



# #WalkEDSA: 9 lessons

- Walkability should be “inclusive.” One of the memorable sights we saw in EDSA was that of a man on a wheelchair, precariously being pushed on the highway itself as there was no sidewalk wide enough for him to pass through.
- Metro Manila is actually walkable. Walking the whole EDSA may not make sense for everyday purposes, but Magallanes to Buendia was a nice, relatively clean segment with trees, and it was actually pleasant to walk on.
- There is an untapped demand for an advocacy to get people walking. Pedestrians comprise a majority of the population but because we have not imagined ourselves as a community, our interests have been sidelined.





# Five years later...

- The untenability of our current modes of public transport is clearer than ever - and so are our elitist, car-centric policies.
- The pandemic has created new difficulties for public transport and has renewed interest - by force of necessity - on active forms of transport



# Walking, revisited

- “Walking is the first and most natural of the forms of transport available for humankind”
- Historically, people did much more walking on a daily basis as compared to today





# Walking, revisited

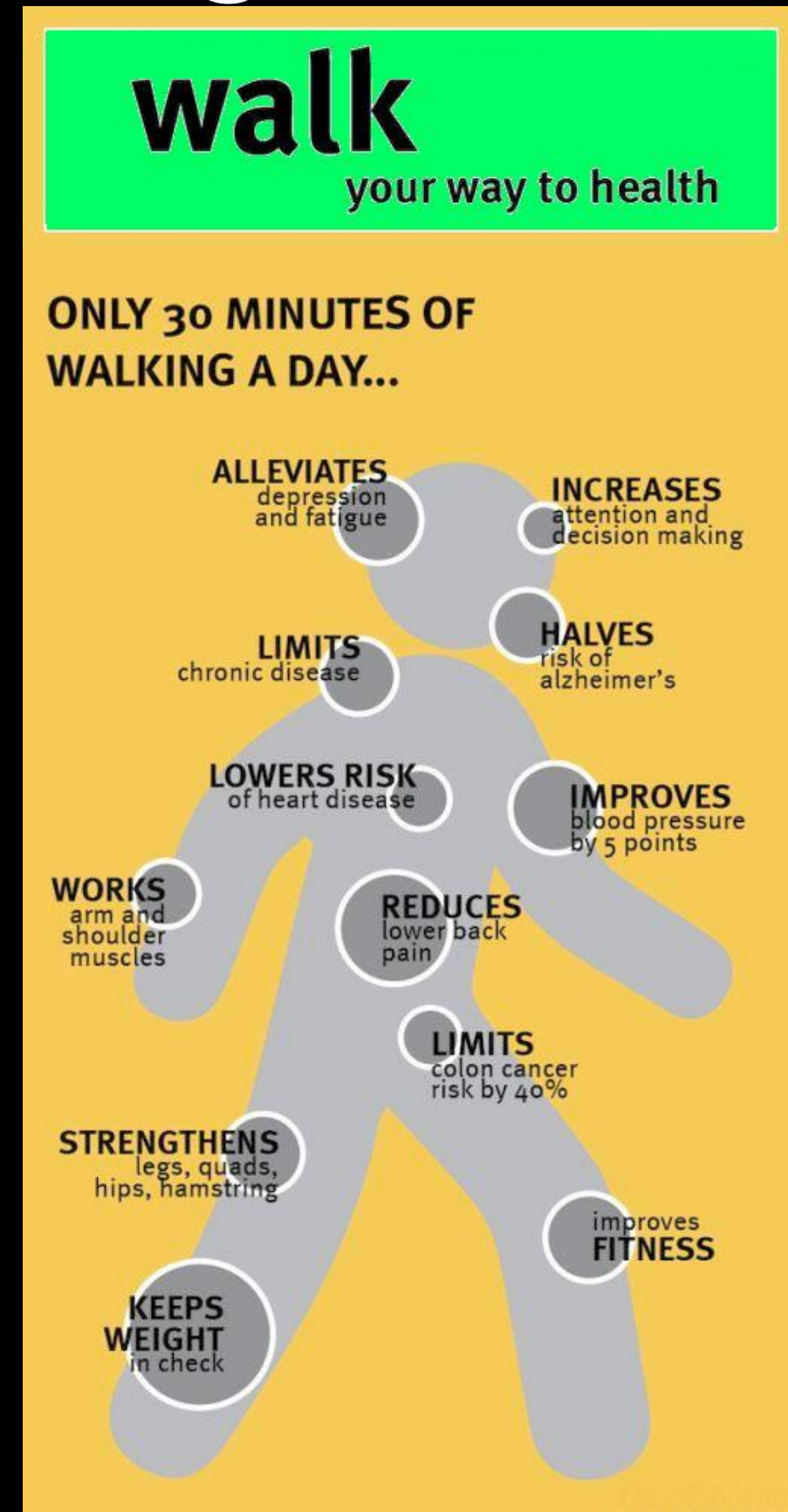
- Modern technologies have enabled our sedentary lifestyle but there is growing recognition that walkable cities are the future
- This has raised equity concerns (e.g. bubbles like BGC) but in fact, it is the poor who tend to walk more and also stand to benefit from widespread walkability



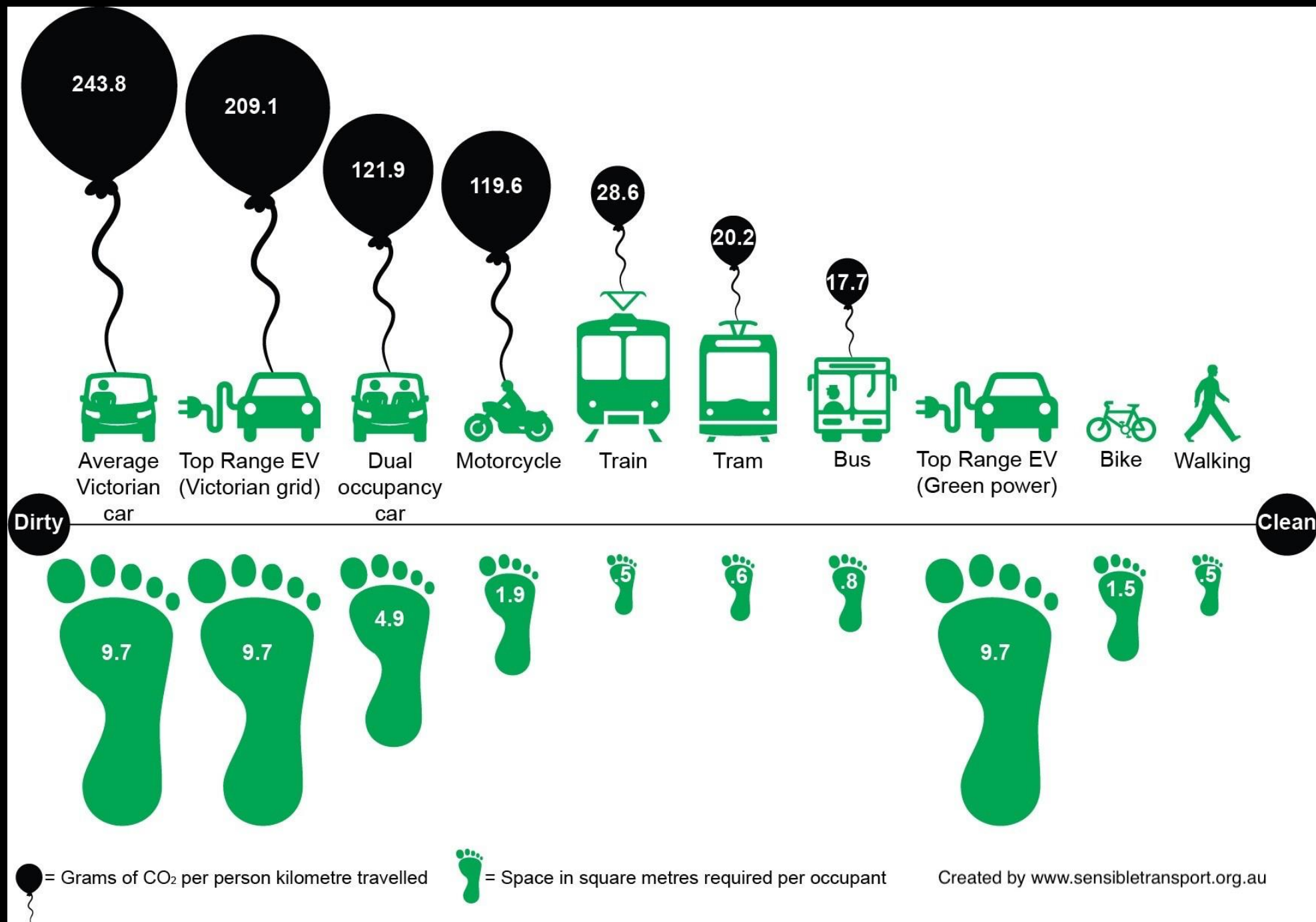


# Benefits of walking - health

- Walking is associated with good cardiovascular health outcomes - and those in walkable neighborhoods have less risk for NCDs
- More walking = less pollution
- Walking is also good for mental health
- Exposure to sunlight: Additional benefits, and so does exposure to greenery



# Benefits of walking - environment



- More footsteps = less carbon footprint



# Benefits of walking - reducing traffic

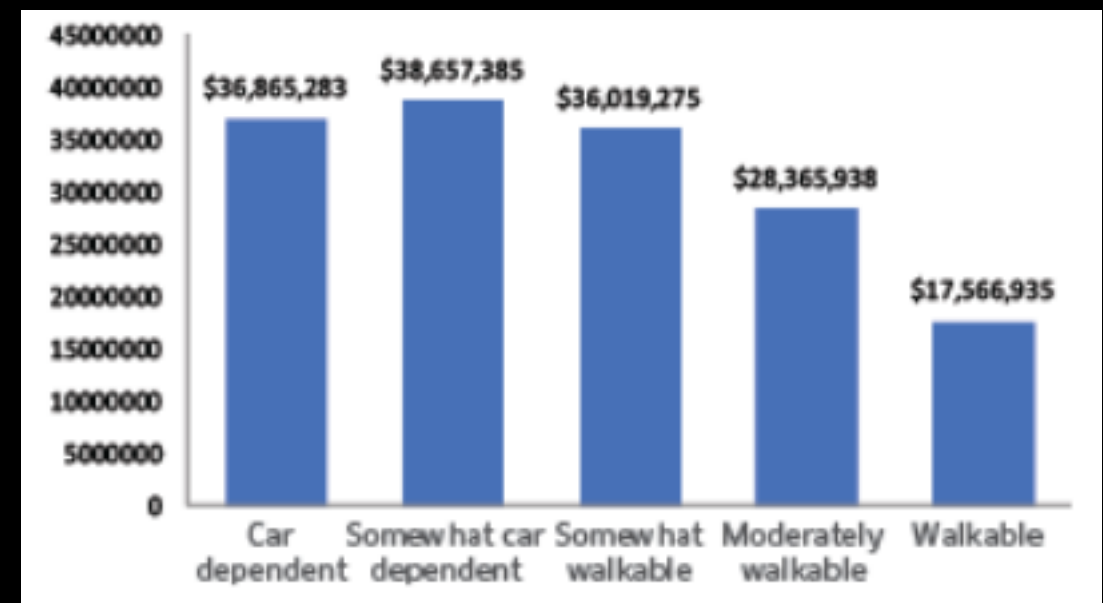
- Many routes people take in Metro Manila on a daily basis are actually walkable, with travel times comparable to private or public transport:
- Katipunan MRT to UP Diliman -15 mins
- Makati to BGC - 45 mins
- Rockwell to Ortigas - 30-40 minutes



# Benefits of walking

## - economy

- Economic benefit for the person - it's free! (Cf. Grab rides that can cost hundreds)
- Studies show that walkable spaces promote economic activity - it is easy to discover and buy from shops when you're walking past them
- Indirect economic benefits of traffic savings - in light of JICA study that traffic costs Filipinos billions.
- Indirect economic benefit of health outcomes





# Benefits of walking - social solidarity

- The metaphor “people from all walks of life” speaks for itself
- Walking bridges social distances; we educate one another about our diversity and shared experiences



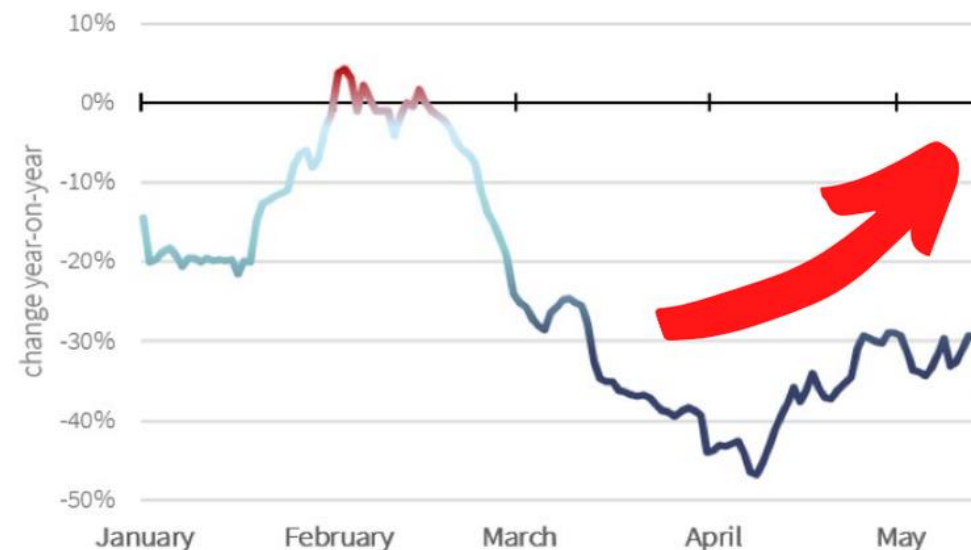
# Barriers to walking: Health concerns

GREENPEACE

## AIR POLLUTION IN METRO MANILA

### Change in Average PM2.5 in Metro Manila

30-day running average, compared with 2019



## IS GOING BACK UP

SOURCE: CREA Analysis of IQ Air monitoring data



# Barriers to walking: Safety

PHILIPPINES

## Road deaths in PH: Most are motorcycle riders, pedestrians

In its 2015 report on road safety, the World Health Organization says 1.25 million people have died globally due to road accidents, with motorcyclists comprising 23% of deaths



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1st Grade

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3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

6th Grade



ROAD CRASH. Filipino rescuers carry an unconscious rider beside a motorcycle after an head-on collision with another vehicle at a busy street in Makati city, south of Manila, Philippines, May 18, 2009. Photo by Francis Malasig/EPA

# Barriers to walking: Security



*"My first experience with catcalling happened when I was 12 years old and at that moment, I suddenly realized how uncomfortable you can feel in your own city. Catcalling is not a compliment, not a joke, and it is definitely not "okay." It is a form of sexual harassment and I strive for the day women can walk around their neighborhoods without feeling scared. Ultimately, all we want is respect; and respect is what we deserve." – Kate Henson, Quezon City*



# Barriers to walking: Access

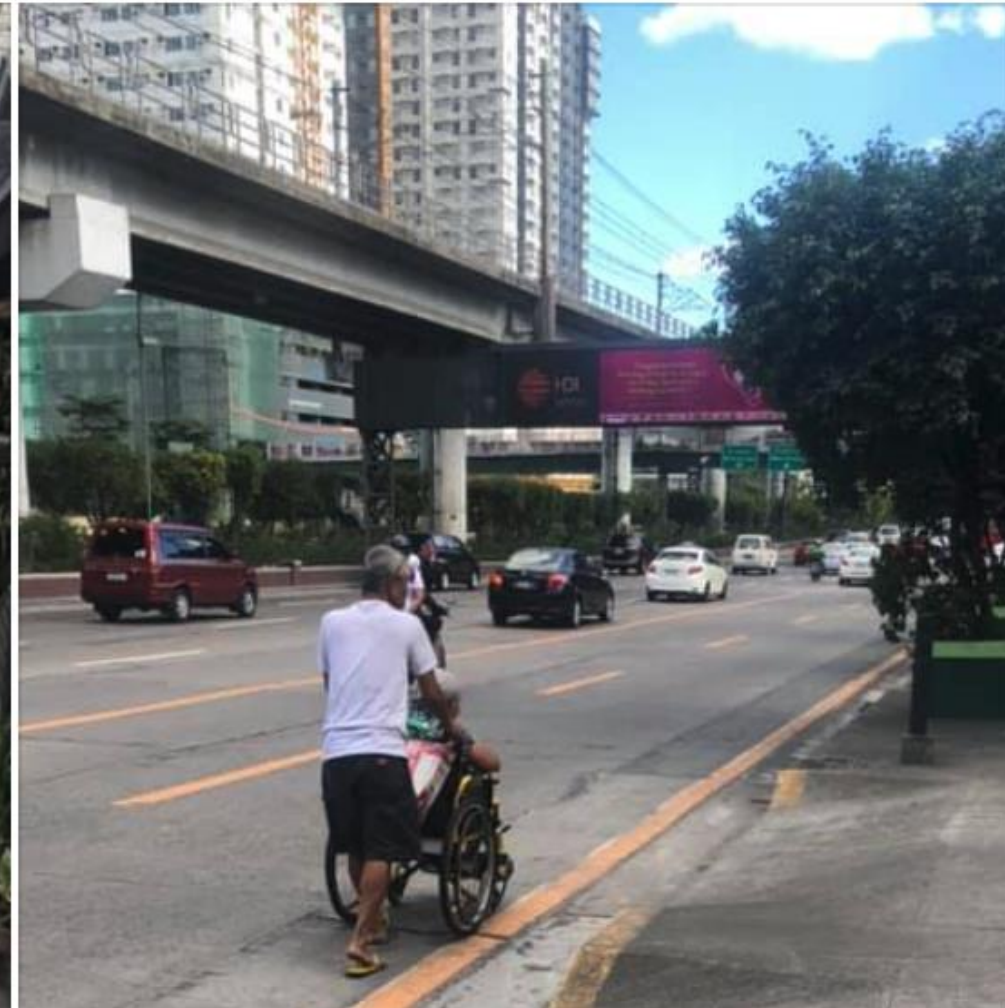


**Eric Estonido**

about a year ago



The disappointing state and the sad reality of our sidewalks. [#inclusivemobility](#) [#pwd](#) [#EDSA](#)

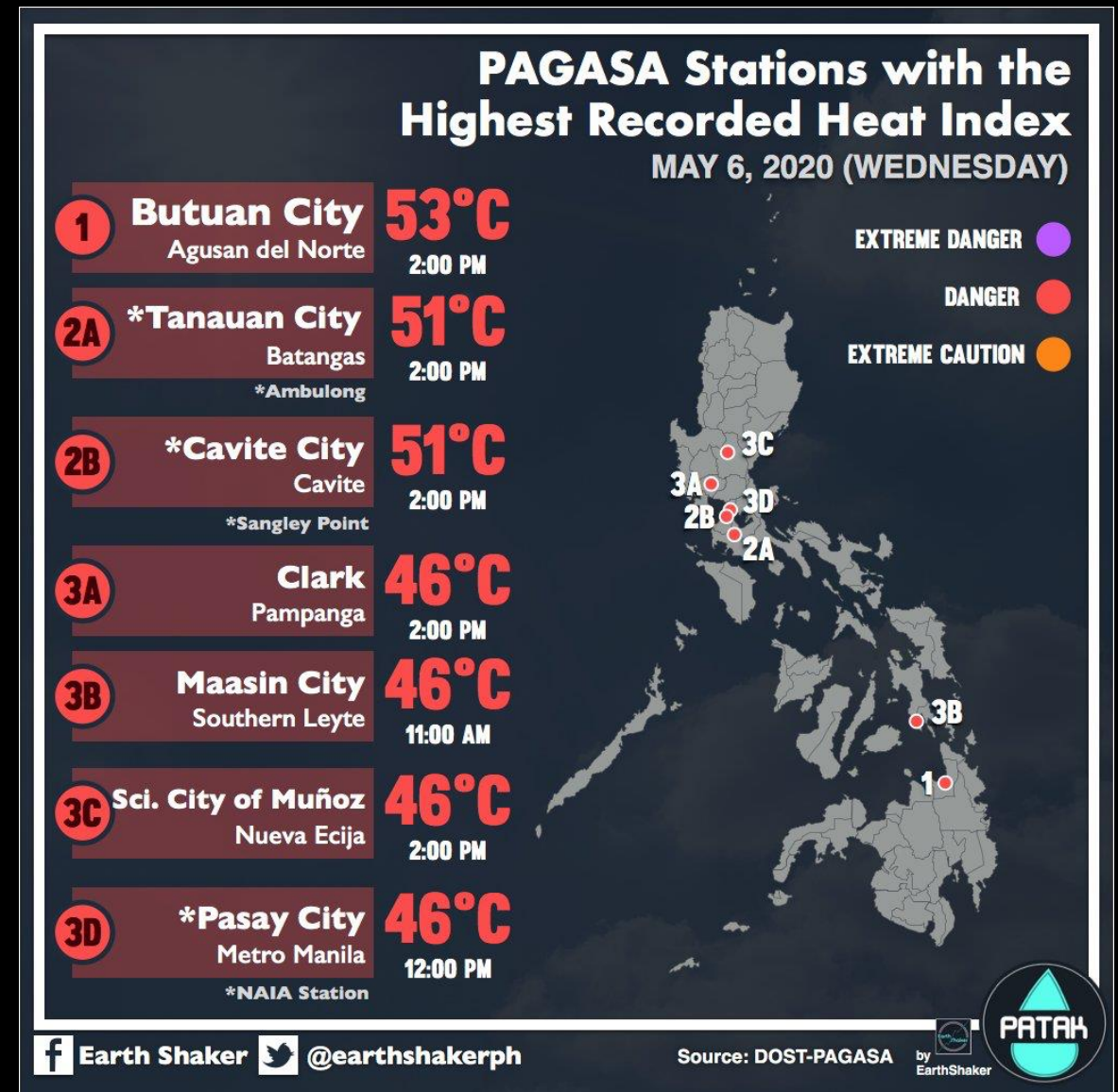




# Barriers to walking: Access



# Barriers to walking: Culture






# An opportunity for action

- There is unprecedented political support for active transport - can it be sustained?
- This can lead to more infrastructure...
- ...and better policies
- But we need stronger advocacy

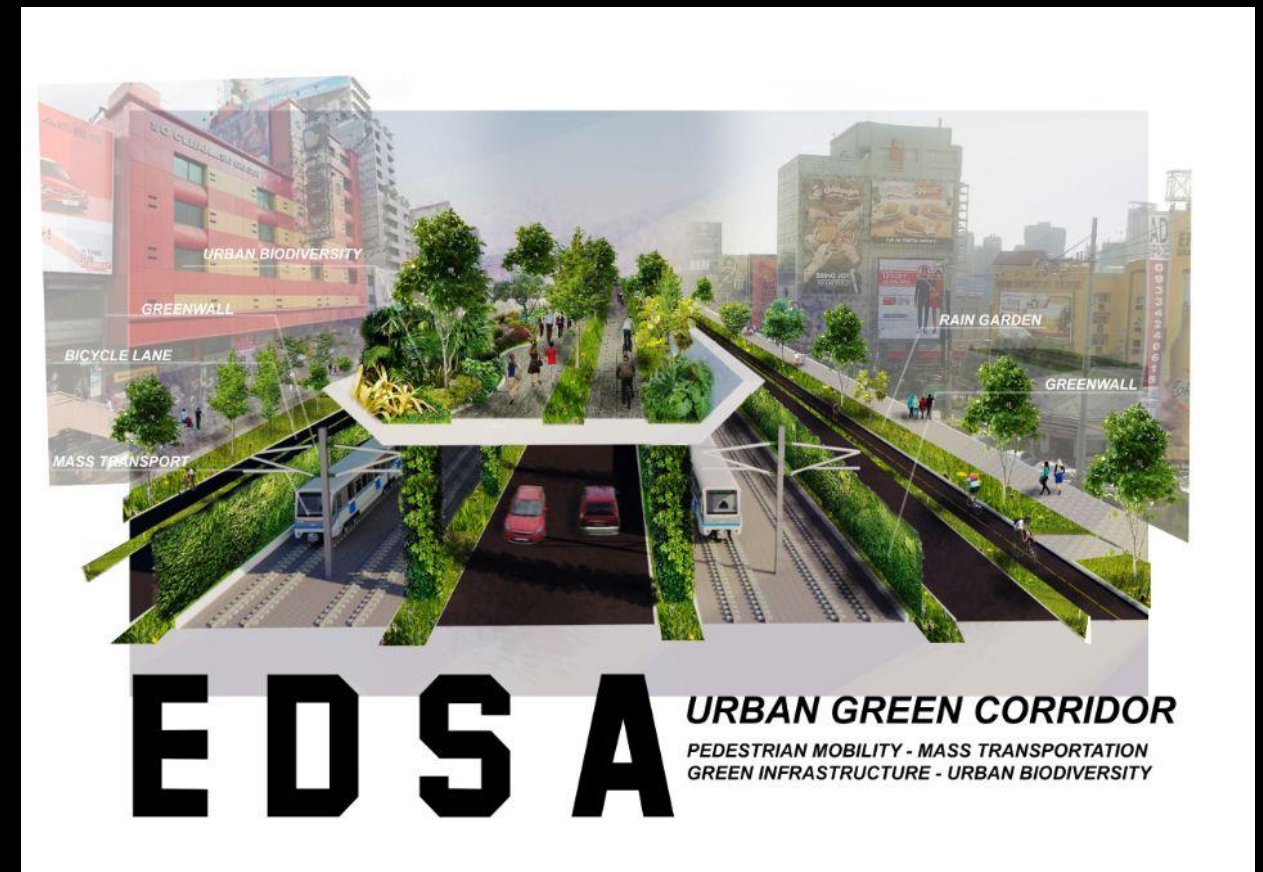


 Inquirer.net

EDSA bike lane closed after half-day trial run | Inquirer News

# A need for more research

- We need to understand people's concerns about walking including cultural and local concepts (e.g. pawis) - role of social sciences
- We need more studies that will quantify the benefits of walking, and lay the rationale for walking infrastructure
- What is the best design? How can we make walkways that people will use and enjoy?



<https://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/2018/12/11/edsa.html>



THANK YOU!

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