



## Urban Planning: Part 2 - Traditional urban planning is no longer fit for purpose

Traditional master planning that separates land-use into separate rather than integrated functions prioritising car use is inefficient and does not reflect the pressing need to reduce carbon emissions and resource use.

Urban planning is concerned with the way in which people live and access essential services. It guides investment in infrastructure and other services to meet the medical, employment, educational, cultural, and purchasing needs of residents. The way in which people live is constantly changing and adapting. Urban planning needs to respond to these changes by being holistic - ensuring climate resilience, social inclusion, and economic empowerment, supported by appropriate investment.

The current urban planning priority is to ensure that neighbourhoods and other city features are energy efficient and minimise carbon emissions. This has led to new approaches to urban planning. These approaches include “the compact city” and “the 15-minute city”.

A compact city is an urban settlement based on the principle of minimising the need to travel long distances between where people live, work and access services. It includes mixed-use development and easy access to community facilities that often involve urban regeneration, particularly of city centres. Compact cities necessarily involve high-densities, mixed use development, mass public transport to reduce individual car usage. Compact cities reduce energy consumption, prioritise the use of public transport systems, promote the preservation of green space and the rejection of single-function development. Streets are used to facilitate commercial development and to create safe areas for pedestrians to walk in.

Cities ought to develop as a set of dense neighbourhoods connected with mass public transport that provide high-speed cross-town travel. Each neighbourhood has its own set of facilities that cover most of the needs of those that live there.

This series of city related policy and information briefs draws on lessons learned from cities and infrastructure work carried out by Triple Line over the past five years. It is intended to contribute to more sustainable, inclusive and climate-resilient cities that generate equitable economic growth opportunities for all by identifying market-driven solutions to urbanisation challenges and strengthening democracy and decentralisation processes through capacity building of government agencies at national, regional and city levels.

## The 15-minute city

The 15-minute city is a variation of the compact city. The essential difference is that compactness is defined by the distance a citizen can walk or cycle in 15 minutes. It is based on the principle that everyone should have easy access to urban services and amenities. Cities should be made up of walkable and bikeable neighbourhoods that are both physically and financially accessible. Mass public transport is developed to link 15-minute neighbourhoods. Creating 15-minute cities involves reconfiguring existing neighbourhoods and transport networks, ensuring that they have the facilities and amenities that enrich the lives of urban dwellers.

Non-motorised transport is a good compliment to mass public transport. Cycling and walking or running is gaining favour in many cities around the world due to the numerous benefits it brings. These include the obvious cost and health benefits. Bicycles are cheap to buy and maintain. They are space efficient and is the most energy efficient form of transport. Provided that cities provide dedicated cycle lanes that are separated from cars, cycling is relatively safe. Increasingly, cities are making provision for cyclists and employers are providing lock-up facilities for bikes and other cycling equipment such as helmets. City authorities have sought ways of incentivising the use of bicycles. Many cities around the world have set up cost effective cycle hire schemes to make it easy for citizens to cycle to their destinations.

## What is needed to reduce transport related CO<sub>2</sub>?

The primary actions required in cities to reduce the GHG emissions of their transport systems include:

- Investment in public transport. This could include busses, light railway systems, underground rail, BRT systems, mini-busses and possible river transport.
- Restrictions on the movement of private vehicles such as prohibiting them from certain areas of the city.
- Restrictions on parking of private vehicles in certain areas of the city.
- Incentives for the ownership of fuel-efficient vehicles such as electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles and other fuel-efficient vehicle systems.

Other methods used to reduce dependence on private cars include:

- Car-pools
- Lift sharing
- Short-term car hire
- Congestion charging
- Creation of cycle lanes and pedestrianised roads

## What should cities do?

- Educate planners in new, sustainable planning practices
- Halt all out-dated and inappropriate planning practices
- Set new increased population density requirements
- Redefine neighbourhoods to create 15-minute access to transport and all services including work, school and food
- Utilise all energy saving transport options that avoid cars
- Make abundant use of non-motorised transport
- Ensure disabled people have access to the mobility they require
- Create exemplar neighbourhoods and infrastructure

**TRIPLELINE**

PLEASE CONTACT:

Mathis Primdal: [mathis.primdal@tripleline.com](mailto:mathis.primdal@tripleline.com)

Richard Slater: [richard.slater@tripleline.com](mailto:richard.slater@tripleline.com)

