



Final Report of Workshop 3: Transportation Networks: Making Sustainable Transportation a Reality

Rapporteur: Liang Huew WANG
Chairman, Ho Wang SPB Limited, Hong Kong SAR, China

Chairman: Terry Byrnes
Vice Chairman, Sydney University Planning Research Centre, Sydney, Australia

To achieve the goals and objectives of transport livability, several questions were raised with the majority of them properly addressed in the workshop presentations. Workshop 3 consisted of three sessions, which was conducted according to the schedule provided. A full discussion was carried out at the end of each session, with significant contribution from the flow. The presentations therefore are considered a success which fulfilled the requirement and expectation of the Congress.

Session 1

The first session went on according to schedule with all four papers presented. The themes of presentation varied although the focus was on the big picture of whether there was something wrong in our transport system.

The first paper, citing an example in Norway, argued that urban form in favour of public transport, cycling and walking could be an influential factor in modifying travel behaviour leading to a reduction of car traffic and CO2 emissions one the one hand and the building of a carbon neutral settlement on the other.

The second paper discussed the relationship of transport pricing and residential location choice by arguing that long term travel cost should be an important yardstick in decision making, and proposed that the algorithm so designed could be of use to the real estate market.

The third paper touched upon the importance of conducting comprehensive transport plans in order to provide a base for urban transport improvement, by citing the chaotic situation in Nairobi to support his case.

The fourth paper postulated that in order to reduce travel problems a policy shift should be

required to improve the feeding system by enhancing cycling and walking facilities around the mass transit stations, by citing the example of Shanghai Metro to substantiate the argument.

In view of the fact that the presentations covered a wide spectrum of topics related to urban transport problems, the discussion which followed was also with a colourful demonstration of inconclusiveness in opinion on how to eliminate traffic and transport problems. Active discussion from the flow included land use and transport, public transport, transport pricing, CO2 emission, commuter choice and transport policy, among others, with some of the issues related to transport scenarios in Chinese cities in general and Wuhan in particular.

Session 2

Session 2 examined the issue of how to allow the majority of the urban dwellers including the disabled, to achieve sustainable daily commuting. The main focus was on non-motorized traffic with emphasis on cycling and walking. Three case studies of Chinese cities were tabled with another one on Mexico City.

The presentations were related to how to improve cycling and walking facilities on the one hand and the provision of public bike on the other. One presenter was absent and her paper was on a paradigm shift in making barrier free environment for the disabled in public transport service.

Although there is a consensus in general that the promotion of non-motorized transport is indeed necessary in counterbalance the ill effects of automobile transport, there appeared without a conclusive strategy on how this could be achieved. The discussion also touched upon the issue of bike versus e-bike, car sharing, and the failure of the planning policy in safeguarding the right of way of the under-privileged in terms of road usage and road safety.

Session 3

The last session touched upon two separate issues, one on regional integration and the other on e-mobility.

In view of urban and regional integration, it is essential but difficult to iron out a mechanism of cooperation and division of responsibility in enhancing cross-boundary transport commuting and freight services. The regional project Code 24 was cited to illustrate vividly the difficulties involved in creating a responsibility share among regions.

Last but not least, the issue of whether it is possible to rely on hi-tech options as a contributing



factor to creating a sustainable transport environment was demonstrated in the last paper which examined the current mobility and e-mobility trends as well as some of the technologies that could be integral to future e-mobility systems in developing a low carbon urban transport system and their potential impact on climate change.

Discussion in the last session was rather diversified with topics related to the efficiency and workability of relying on e-mobility technologies in solving future transport and traffic problems, issues of equity and equality in road usage, the reasons of failure for public transport services in developing markets, the right of owning a car as long as the CO₂ emission could be under control with future technology, and the right to making trips according to the wish and need of the urban dwellers, among others.

Observation

Cities today are confronted with rapid urbanization and chaotic land use mismatch and disorder resulting in serious challenges in environmental livability. With ever increase in automobile as a mode of travel, the environmental impact of cars has been further complicated by issues of climate change. There are many issues related to the transport problems which obviously could not be fully discussed in one workshop. Nevertheless, Workshop 3 provided an ignition for a wider debate which could be conducted in future congress meetings.

The papers presented in the workshop held appears to cover only the phenomenal issues without exploring the fundamental core of the transport and traffic problems we faced today. An attempt was made to arouse a discussion of the more essential questions to transport and traffic problems in the context of livable cities in vain. This shortcoming should be addressed in future meetings which should indulge in searching for an understanding to the fundamentals of the problems, if not the solutions available.