

# Transport in Destination Development

## A truly integrated destination project needs a truly integrated transport plan

**Martin Tillman, Associate from the international transport consultants Steer Davies Gleave, is responsible for undertaking transport strategies in a range of mature and emerging markets and understanding implications for urban design and for overall investment prospects. He explains how building transport into our destination development plans from the beginning of a project helps to create liveable neighbourhoods and integrated communities that create the conditions for strong investment performance.**

It was St Augustine who said that "the world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page". I fully subscribe to his view and would add that his wisdom should be applied both internationally and at a more local scale to include our towns and cities. Travelling is not just about visiting overseas locations, but also about exploring where we live.

Many people tend not to see, or rather look at, their own towns and cities as they move in and around them; they do not stop to take in the view and reflect. With acknowledgement to St Augustine, it could be said that transport is a window on the local world, and those who use only one form of transport see only one view. If transport affects how people see an area, or how they feel about a place, we need to consider its overall impact and, perhaps more importantly, how to create a transport system that can bring about positive change.

### Four pillars of transport

Transport has four pillars of influence:

- **ECONOMY** – providing fast, reliable and cost-effective access to jobs, services, and leisure to benefit local and national economies.
- **ENVIRONMENT** – reducing carbon emissions and local air pollution through the encouragement of walking and cycling, use of public transport, and vehicles with low / zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- **SOCIAL ISSUES** – ensuring everyone has access to essential facilities, regardless of wealth or location, and that neighbouring areas are not severed by high-flow transport corridors – whether these are multi-lane freeways or public transport routes. These measures should also respect the local culture.
- **HEALTH** – designing people-friendly areas and routes to encourage walking and cycling as part of our day-to-day travel habits.

Each pillar is essential, but it is only when they are used together that they have the power to provide greater benefits for all. These pillars apply equally at local, national and international levels.

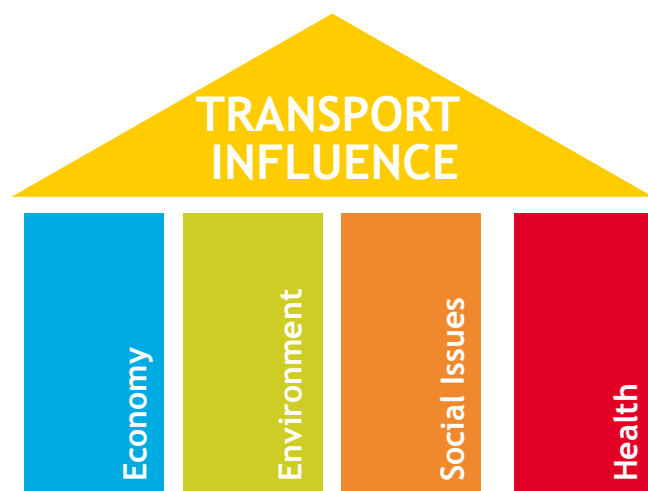
Together, these pillars create an identity for an area, influencing the look and feel of a place. However, transport identity can also be used to help develop the four pillars. Many reading this article will have travelled overseas recently, and some of their recollections will be related to the transport system – whether this was by plane, car, bus, train, boat, cycling or walking. For example, in London, people's

perception of the city may include red double-decker buses, underground trains, or black cabs. In Amsterdam, it might include canal boats and cycling, in Spain, the large pedestrian squares, in India, rickshaws, in France the wide boulevards, and in the USA, Greyhound buses and the heavily trafficked freeways in cities. These modes of transport influence how people perceive a place, how long they want to spend there, and related to this, how much money they spend.

Importantly, places in which people enjoy spending time tend to be areas that are easy to walk around, maintain cultural integrity, have visual links, feel safe and secure, and continue to maintain their interest. People like walkable cities, where they can interact with other people, and feel that they are part of the overall fabric of the area. As a transport planner, my role is to work with governments from around the world, at both local and national levels, and with international developers, architects, environmentalists and town planners, to ensure that transport is considered from the outset of any new



scheme. My projects range from individual buildings to an entire country and, no matter the size, all four of the transport pillars are important to the overall planning process. In 2007, I worked with Locum Consulting in masterplanning a new city and town at Almaty International Airport in Kazakhstan. My involvement was at a strategic level and required the creation of a transport plan to prepare for expected future travel demands. Advice was provided on the number of highway lanes required and the suitability of different types of public transport systems that could be used, both externally and internally. Advice was also provided on walking and cycling routes,





and on encouraging the use of public transport through design. These transport plans were developed to encourage economic development through improved accessibility to jobs, leisure and retail services, reduced reliance on the private car, and healthier lifestyles through increased public transport provision and walking / cycling design measures. In addition, they aimed to promote social interaction through permeable neighbourhoods. All of these measures were designed to contribute to the future identity and branding of the area.



### Developing transport plans for new destinations

In planning new cities and towns, it is important to develop permeable street patterns, usually based on the grid system rather than cul de sacs, to encourage walking, cycling and public transport. At the same time, access for private cars can be designed through the use of traffic management measures. This encourages people to explore their areas and interact rather than be cocooned and detached in a private car. Local public transport nodes should be no further than 500m walking distance (less if possible) from residential units, and there should be an encouragement to provide shared street surfaces, which provide equal priority to vehicles and pedestrians and have the effect of slowing down traffic and allowing people to take back the streets. These streets are popular in Europe, and transport planners are extending the use of them in new designs. My colleagues and I worked with Surrey County Council to help design the Transportation and Access Plan for the town of Horley, near Gatwick Airport, based on the shared street principle and the creation of a new town square from an existing traffic junction.

For the emirate of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, we are working with the Department of Transport to prepare the Surface Transport Master Plan which will set out the transport plans up to the year 2030. Our work includes the preparation of the transport policies and options for future local, national and international links by all modes of transport. We are working to design a world-class transport system that respects the four pillars of transport, and integrates branding and cultural identity. The vision is for Abu Dhabi to be recognised for the excellence of its transport infrastructure.

### Technology and transport planning

Part of my role as a transport planner and strategist is to understand the latest innovative transport technologies and solutions and incorporate them into plans according to local culture and conditions. Again, these can make a significant impact on the identity of a scheme. For example, I have been researching water-cooled cycle tracks in Qatar, neighbourhood electric vehicles in the USA, automated cycle parking schemes in Europe, local, automated, post distribution centres in Germany, wi-fi buses, alternative fuel buses, electric delivery vehicles, and the impact of CO<sub>2</sub> - related car tax and parking charges on the use of the private car.

New technology and ideas are usually attractive through their innovative nature or space age design and some of these may ultimately form part of our towns and cities. However, transport planners need to remember that they are designing at a human scale, and that transport infrastructure is there to help achieve benefits for economies, environment, social / cultural well-being, and health. For example, even if all car drivers used a solar-powered car from tomorrow, we would still not solve the severance effect of highways and freeways, or encourage healthier lifestyles with increased walking and cycling.

Planners should not be constrained by transport or prioritise it above all else, but instead they should design and integrate transport into their plans from the beginning to create liveable neighbourhoods and integrated communities, where people interact and engage with their surroundings. These will be the successful towns and cities of the future with true local identities and a sense of place.

### Martin Tillman

Associate, Steer Davies Gleave