

9 The Crescent, off Parklands Road, Westlands (After Kalsion Towers)  
P. O. Box 1291-00606 Nairobi, Kenya  
T: +254 773 829 547/8, +254 733 888 540, +254 708 299 175  
E: info@shipperscouncilea.org  
W: www.shipperscouncilea.org

**Shippers  
Council of  
Eastern  
Africa**



## **URBAN MOBILITY NEEDS- A CASE FOR MOBILITY AND ACESIBILITY**

### **Introduction**

With more than Half of Africa's Population soon living in Cities, providing a sustainable response to demand for mobility of urban dwellers is an urgent and growing concern. Studies have established that annual Population Growth rate in Africa as a result of Rural Urban Migration is approximately 4.5% . This poses major development challenges in terms of access and mobility to meet current and future populations.

Economic growth will result to accelerated motorization rate. This will result to hampering movement of people and goods in Many cities and Economic Zones causing both environmental, health and economic concerns which are challenges for transport.

Inadequate policy frameworks and weak capacity to address the environmental, social and safety risks of fast growing motorization result in crippling congestion in urban areas. Lack of coordinated planning of land use and transport has lead to inefficient cities, congestion and unsatisfied transport demand particularly for poorer segment of the population.

### **A CASE FO NAIROBI METROPOLITAN**

Nairobi Metropolis serves several satellite towns where the majority of Nairobians reside. Apart from the City and its environs, Residents who work in the city of Nairobi and its environs reside in towns around Kiambu, kajiado, Machakos, and Parts of Narok. The population of Nairobi has grown from about 300,000 in 1963 to about 3.3 Million in 2008 and with an average annual growth rate of growth rate of approximately 5% due to rural urban Migration; the current population is expected to be in the region of about 4.2 Million. In the same period there has been limited increase in the existing road infrastructure capacity with population tethering towards new infrastructure expansion such as Thika Road, Mombasa Road, Namanga Road, Magadi Road and Kagundo road. The development of by passes in Eastern, Northern and Southern Bypasses was expected to ease traffic into the city. This however created a new challenge for city planners as real estate developers saw an opportunity for new frontiers in development of high capacity dwellings supported by an increasing middle class population.

A report by the Ministry of Transport in 2007 indicated that although 15.3% commuters in Nairobi use private cars, they account for about 36% of the vehicular traffic on our city roads and another 29% commute by sue of matatus which in itself accounts for 27% of the vehicles on our city roads. A substantial number of commuters walk to work accounting to almost 47% due to the cost and in some cases proximity to the work places. With over 700,000 cars entering the City daily, perennial jams will continue to bedevil the city of Nairobi, leading to substantial loss of productive man hours, fuel costs, environmental emissions and health risks leading to lower productivity and stress levels.

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It's lost to policy makers that despite the available statistics on the population of motor vehicle numbers, residential density and other demographic realities, infrastructure developments is not influenced by such demographics and is mostly driven by political interest without regard to commercial values and movement of the labour force. This calls for a rethink of the strategy to ease transportation and access to commercial city and production centers.

### **EASING CONGESTION AND ACCESIBILITY FOR CITIES AND CORRIDORS**

In order to achieve mobility and ease congestion, relevant regulatory institutions must work together with infrastructure development institutions to ensure that development of roads and related infrastructure is structured with the aim of facilitating movement, ease congestion and provide a friendly environment for population to commute safely, efficiently and predictably. The NTSA, Road agencies and Police should come up with strategies for seamless connectivity and enabling infrastructure and regulation that guarantee safety, movement and order. Key among the strategies includes;

- i. Establishment of an enabling efficient and responsive governance system, with clear needs anticipation, guiding action and planning and integrated management and development of transport systems
- ii. Minimize the need for motorized travel, through clear planning of urbanization, and encouraging developments that avoid travel through integrated settlement
- iii. Provision of infrastructure and facilities for non motorized modes such as walking and cycling thus modal shift from high presence of motorized traffic
- iv. Improvement of the efficiency of the existing modes for efficient usage and safe journeys while minimizing environmental impact.
- v. Review the licensing and registration of Public transport vehicles with focus towards encouraging Mass Rapid Transport equipment
- vi. Review of the registration and licensing of heavy commercial vehicles to enforce use of technology to track, manage and fleet management.
- vii. Due to high levels of safety concerns arising from fatal accidents caused by the Public transport vehicles, strict inter agency coordination must be enforced and linked to future investments.
- viii. Development of Road side stations (RSS) with facilities for driver rest, checks, refreshments and health facilities. This will avoid accidents caused by fatigue, roadside parking and unplanned stops.

There is need for urban planners to work with road developing agencies in planning settlements to ensure incorporating of mass Transport Systems such as Rapid Bus Transport (BRT), trams, rail and high capacity buses to ensure reduction of personal use by citizens. This however should be accompanied by very clear structured implementation and standards that meet the requirements of the middle class while providing a vital savings in resources and environment.

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Counties should be encouraged to develop policies with NTSA to ensure safe and efficient passage of the population to and from productive stations.

Gilbert Langat

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Chief Executive

Shippers Council of Eastern Africa

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