THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN TRANSPORT INSTITUTIONS AND POLICY IN MALAYSIA, 1957-1978*

by
LOH WEI LENG

Much of the basis on which a city is formed is to draw on economies of scale and specialisation as well as reduced transport costs, which are the benefits of urbanisation and of a compact land use.[1] As the urban transport system is a sub-system of the larger urban system, contributing to the economic and social viability of the city or metropolitan area, the need for an efficient transport system to serve the urban centre is self-evident. In other words, if one is interested in the continued development of the city, then urban transport development is a concomitant. In this context, the urban transport policy should be aimed at devising an optimal transport system which meets the requirements of the city, more specifically, to improve the mobility or urban residents.

This paper attempts to show why urban transport policy for the Federal Capital, Kuala Lumpur, can be taken as a proxy for the Malaysian urban transport policy. The paper will examine urban transport in Kuala Lumpur in more detail, touching on transport studies and a specific transport project, and then on the administration of urban transport. This will be followed by a discussion on the evolution of the urban transport policy before closing with some concluding remarks.

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*As the focus of this paper is on Kuala Lumpur, the period 1957 to 1978 has been selected in view of the fact that with the formation of a Master Plan Unit for Kuala Lumpur in 1978 emerged the prospect of a continuous and integrated planning process and a new era in urban transport policy making. Prior to the late seventies, urban transport planning was conducted separately (i.e., it was not dealt with a part of the broader town planning) and for specific periods.

[1]See R.L. Bish and H.O. Nouse, *Urban Economics and Policy Analysis* (Tokyo: McGraw-Hill Kogakusha Ltd., 1975) 2, and H.E. Hordon, *Introduction to Urban Economics: analysis and Policy* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973), 2, 17.

In a discussion of urban transport policy, it might be appropriate to begin with an identification of those involved, namely the bodies responsible for the design, the making and the implementation of policy, with a view to ensuring the orderly and efficient functioning of the urban transport system. This should assist in our understanding of all the dimensions of any particular policy.[2]

There are two main components of urban transport facilities and services, fixed plant in the form of urban roads and mobile plant in the form of road transport for urban areas. Public authorities are usually expected to provide the former while the latter can be furnished by either the public sector and/or private sector. If, in the case of road transport, private transport enterprises wholly undertake the physical transfer of people and goods, then the public authority's role would usually be that of regulation of those services.

Following the organization of political authority along Federal, state and local authority lines, the provision of transport facilities has also been on those lines.[3] In other words, urban roads such as roads inside Municipal boundaries fall within the ambit of the Municipal government, with the exception of those roads classified as Federal roads which usually begin before the town concerned and subsequently enter and traverse the urban territory.

As for transport, the official classification used of public service vehicles and commercial goods vehicles, applicable for the whole country, reveals that, unlike in the case of roads, the decentralization principle does not operate, i.e. a division of authority among Federal, state and local governments. Instead, the Road Transport Licensing Board (hereafter RTLB), a national body, provides public control of road transport by way of licensing and regulation related to vehicular usage and general traffic rules, with the Road Transport Department (hereafter RTD) as its implementing arm. Notwithstanding the fact that the RTLB and the RTD have nationwide jurisdiction over road transport, local governments with responsibility over related facilities such

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[2]The Federal, state and local authority structure is one which has been in operation since pre-Independence days. See *Report of the Royal Commission of Enquiry to Investigate into the Workings of Local Authorities in West Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1970) for a fuller historical description.

as bus stops and terminals and through their exercise of traffic regulations[4] within their geographical boundaries, have their roles to play vis-a-vis transport. Other bodes need also to be noted for their supplementary, but not insignificant roles in related areas such as enforcement (Traffic Police), road safety (Road Safety Council), parking (Treasurer section of the local government authority) and town planning (Town Planning section of the local government authority).

Having established that local government authorities are largely responsible for the provision of urban transport facilities (except for designated Federal roads within their territories) and share with the RTLB and the RTD control of urban transport, the question arising from this is whether there exists an umbrella organization which coordinates urban transport development of the different urban areas or whether each urban entity operates independently. In Malaysia, the latter situation applies so that, strictly speaking, it is inaccurate to talk in terms of development of a Malaysian urban transport policy. A discussion of the development of urban transport policy in Malaysia would in fact involve the narration of the separate evolution of the transport system in the different urban centres in Malaysia.

The term "urban" has been officially defined as a gazetted area with a population of 10,000 and above.[5] Following this definiton, there are quite a number of urban areas.[6] However, if we confine our discussion to the larger major urban centres, these would include Kuala Lumpur, Georgetown, Ipoh and Malacca.

In the hierarchy of urban authorities, the larger urban centres, i.e. Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Ipoh and Malacca have Municipal governments with Town Councils being next on the rung, followed by Town Boards.[7] All these local authorities are responsible for the provision of basic services, among which transport is one.[8] It is one thing though, to provide facilities, which can be done in an *ad hoc* fashion, i.e. in response to needs which

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[4]Some examples from the city of Kuala Lumpur of traffic regulations affecting road transport include the designation of Bus Lanes for public service vehicles, the prohibition of commercial vehicles into the Central Business District during peak traffic hours.

[5]Malaysia, *1980 Population and Housing Census of Malaysia. General Report of the Population Census*, Vol. 1, 1983, 77.

[6]See Appendix D of the *Report ...into the Workings of Local Authorities*, 326-327.

[7]See Chapter 6 of the *Report...into the Workings of Local Authorities*, 326-327.

[8]*Report... into the Workings of Local Authorities*, 23.

arise from time to time, and quite another to plan for an expansion of facilities such as road capacity in relation to projected increases in vehicle population. If we turn for a moment to take a look at what has transpired in this area at the national level, highway and transport planning is a relatively recent phenomenon.[9] In the first decade after attaining independence (1957-1967), maintenance of the existing network was the order of the day as local officials took over the reins of administration from the expatriate.[10] Only by the mid-sixties did the issue of improving the existing network and the question of planning arise.

The first stage in any transport planning process in that of the transport study whose task is to gather information which is subsequently analysed and thereafter translated into policy recommedations. The first transport study undertaken in Malaysia is the 1964 Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study followed by the nationwide 1968 General Transportation Survey. As their designations suggest, the focus of the first transport study was on the principal urban centre in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, the capital city, while the second transport sudy was the earliest systematic look at the whole transport system of the country, assessing all the transport modes (air, sea and land) and not merely the land transport system. It would appear then that the initial effort in urban transport planning, from which urban transport policies would arise, was for Kuala Lumpur. The next urban transport studies of the early seventies, when more attention was paid to this subfield of transport,[11] were once again for Kuala Lumpur. From this can be deduced that urban transport planning began in Kuala Lumpur, or more precisely was undertaken for Kuala Lumpur, and only after that did other metropolitan centres such as Georgetown have the benefit of transport studies.[12] In other words, Kuala Lumpur as the capital, not surprisingly, was the first to experience urban transport planning, after which other urban centres followed its lead. This

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[9]D. Inderjit Singh, "Highway Progress and Future Development Plans in Malaysia". Paper presented at the Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australasia Symposium. Kuala Lumpur. February 1979, par. 38.

[10]D.Inderjit Singh, "Highway Progress", par. 35.

[11]Zaidan Hj. Othman, "Urban Transport in Kuala Lumpur," German Foundation for International Development Seminar on Urban Transport Planning, Bangkok, December 1978, 150.

[12]Japanese International Cooperation Agency, *Penang Transport Study*, 1980.

being the case, when one refers to urban transport policy in Malaysia before the eighties, it is essentially urban transport policy which has been developed for Kuala Lumpur.

Urban Transport in Kuala Lumpur

1. Transport Studies and A Transport Project

As early as 1963, both the Federal and the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Governments were aware of the need to equip Kuala Lumpur, the state and Federal capital, as well as the main population, commercial, industrial, financial, cultural and educational centre of Peninsular Malaysia, with a modern transport system. The authorities were cognizant of the key role that the transport system can play in the future development of Kuala Lumpur, how the transport system, through provision of road access, parking facilities and public transport services, can affect the nature and quality of development in Kuala Lumpur. With that in mind, a transport study was commissioned to recommend a satisfactory transport policy and a plan to implement the policy.

The main thrust of the recommendations of the 1964 Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study was on a road building program, and also on a particular type of road, i.e. bypass facilities.[13] This was in view of (a) the main findings of the Study, that the inadequate capacity of the existing street system is due, in no small measure, to the lack of ring or circumferential roads when 40% of the traffic entering Kuala Lumpur is through traffic; that reconstruction of roads and streets in the Central Area is not feasible due to the high density of building development along all the major roads; and (b) the current wisdom on traffic at the time which was that access to the city was not to be denied to cars, lorries, taxis, buses or pedestrains.

However, although the recommendations were accepted by the then Municipal Council of Kuala Lumpur, only some of the

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[13]R.Crooks, Michell and Peacock, Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton, *Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study, 1964*, 105, 110, 118. Ring roads and new streets formed 56.16% of recommended expenditure, improvements to existing roads formed 29.9% , contingencies and engineering formed 11.5% while immediate improvements took up 2.14% and improvements to public transport facilties (terminals) a negligible 0.19%.

relatively minor projects were implemented.[14] Reasons and problems put forward by government engineers are the usual recurring ones like shortage of funds and manpower and land acquisition difficulties.[15] As a consequence of this lack of action, and the fact that the 1964 Study confirmed that "the existing principal streets, transportation terminals and parking facilities serving the Federal Capital are *already strained* to meet existing travel demands (italics supplied)"[16], the traffic situation by the 1970s had become pressing. Thus, in 1972, a Klang Valley Regional Planning and Development Study (hereafter Klang Valley Study) was undertaken. As previous planning efforts were felt to be inadequate, mainly because they did not take into account the Klang Valley region and its impact on urban development in Kuala Lumpur, a regional perspective was deemed necessary in the design of a new transport policy for Kuala Lumpur.[17] The Klang Valley Study provided a new approach to urban transport, incorporating recent international thinking in this field. A restraint policy and a new emphasis on public road transport services were the novel features of the Klang Valley Study recommendations. A further study to investigate in more detail the broad transport policies for Kuala Lumpur recommended by the Klang Valley Study was commissioned. This was the 1974 Urban Transport Policy and Planning Study for Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur by consultants Wilbur Smith (hereafter Wilbur Smith Study).

The Wilbur Smith Study went on to endorse the key features of the Klang Valley Study and designed a Transport Plan with a view of restraining the use of private vehicles while improving public transport. To achieve these objectives, the Transport Plan includes the following components: (1) road building improvements to existing roads and interchanges and the construction of new roads, (2) improvement of public transport through provision of additional capacity, more efficient operations, the

[14]C.J. Devies, "Transportation and Traffic Management, Kuala Lumpur", Paper presented at Asian Centre for Development Administration (ACDA)/Southeast Asian Agency for Regional Transport and Communications (SEATAC) Conference on Urban Transport Administration in Southeast Asian Capitals, Bangkok, 1975, 69-70.
[15]Lee Teck Chiow et al., "Urban Transport Problems, Kuala Lumpur", n.d., (1970?) (mimeographed), 2 and Zaidon Hj. Othman, "Urban Transport in Kuala Lumpur", 4
[16]Crooks et al.,"Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study", 1.
[17]Lee Teck Chiow et al., "Urban Transport Problem", 6.

formation of a Public Transport Unit to manage and coordinate public transport in Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur, (3) introduction of a number of traffic management measures which would restrain private vehicle usage such as the imposition of higher parking charges, etc., and which would improve public tansport services such as provision of bus priority lanes, bus priority at intersections, etc.

In 1976, the World Bank, which has maintained a continued interest in transport development in Malaysia since its participation in the first transport sector survey, the 1968 General Transportation Survey, agreed to finance the implementation of the Wilbur Smith Study Transport Plan.[18] The Second World Bank Urban Transport Project[19] was the fruition of the urban transport planning efforts since 1972. And in the next five years, this project contributed to changing the face of Kuala Lumpur with the construction of new and extensive ring roads, substantial improvements to existing roads, the introduction of a new public transport element into the transport scene, the now familiar and ubiquitious minibus and the appearance of new traffic engineering measures such as redesigned interchanges, new traffic signals and bus lanes.[20]

2. Urban Transport Administration

From the foregoing discussion, it has been established that there are two important aspects of urban transport: (1) provision of facilities in the form of roads and fixed plant for public

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[18]This project is the logical outcome of the World Bank's involvement in the urban transport sector of Peninsular Malaysia. It started with provision in the 1972 First World Bank Urban Transport Project to finance the Wilbur Smith Study. Thereafter, there was provision, as part of the 1973 Second World Bank Highway Project, to finance detailed engineering studies after the completion of the Wilbur Smith Study with a view to an Urban Transport Project, i.e. this present project. Put in another way, the Second Urban Transport Project is the anticipated culmination of a process which began with a feasibility study, moving on to detailed engineering after governmental acceptance of recommendations from the feasibility study; and at stages, the World Bank was an active participant.

[19]This has been designated the Second Urban Transport Project as the First Urban Transport Project involved construction of an urban road as well as the financing of an urban transport study, i.e. the Wilbur Smith Study.

[20]See G.J. Roth, "World Bank Lending for Urban Project Transport, Illustrated by an urban transport in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia", *Traffic Engineering and Control*, Jan. 1977, for more details.

transport such as bus stops and terminals, and (2) supply of public transport services, the component of road transport which is responsible for a relatively substantial proportion of passanger movement in the urban transport system. There is a third dimension which needs further elaboration, that which has been referred to alternatively as traffic engineering or traffic management. What is traffic engineering or traffic management? What role does it play in urban transport? A slight digression is warranted to answer these questions before proceeding to elaborate on the urban transport institutional structure in Kuala Lumpur, responsible for carrying out the planning and implementation activities.

From an examination of the objectives and scope of urban transport and traffic engineering/traffic management, it would appear that there is a heavy overlap - their concerns and approaches being broadly similar with the slight difference being one of emphasis. An urban traffic engineer would emphasise making the most out of the existing network and would prefer to only consider minor physical changes[21] while an urban transport engineer may be prepared to consider more substantial changes in terms of provision of additional facilities. One can deduce this distinction in approaches as it is often pointed out that traffic management is a low-cost solution when compared with the more costly alternative of supplying additional transport facilities through construction[22]

Both urban transport and traffic engineering/traffic management share the same objective, that of attaining the smooth functioning of the urban transport system. However, with reference to the first two aspects of urban transport identified above, namely the provision of facilities and public transport services, traffic engineering/traffic management measures are those which (a) involve the planning and design rather than the physical construction of facilities, and those which (b) regulate public transport services rather than involving their supply. The other nomenclature usually used, traffic operations, is indicative of the focus of traffic engineering/traffic management measures, that is to say, activities which relate to facilitating traffic movements.

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[21]Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Integrated Urban Traffic Management* (Paris: OECD, 1978), 9.

[22]Ibid., 17 and 14.

Before moving onto a description of the urban transport institutional structure in Kuala Lumpur, yet another short digression is necessary. A brief history of local government in Kuala Lumpur is required to enable us to place in perspective the various components of the evolving urban transport administration.[23]

In 1952, Kuala Lumpur had its first Municipal elections. Between 1952 and 1960, the partially elected (12 elected members, six nominated members) Municipal Council was responsible for the administration of Kuala Lumpur. In 1960, the Federal Capital Act gave full control of the Federal Capital to the Federal Government whose powers devolved on the Federal Commissioner. He was assisted by an Advisory Board composed of Official and Unofficial Members. In other words, since 1960, there was no elected local government. In 1972, the status of Kuala Lumpur was raised to that of a City. The administration of Kuala Lumpur remained unchanged except in name, i.e., the Federal Commissioner was succeeded by a Datuk Bandar (Mayor) who was also assisted by an Advisory Board.

In 1974, Kuala Lumpur City became the Federal Territory which meant an expansion of area under its jurisdiction. The administering body for the Kuala Lumpur urban area became officially known as City Hall, hence, in addition to the Federal Territory designation, Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur is still sometimes referred to as Kuala Lumpur. The administration remained the same except for internal organizational restructuring, i.e., many new departments were created to cope with rapid urban growth and ever-increasing services required.

A sub-committee of the Advisory Board, the Traffic Advisory Committee, has been in operation since even before the establishment of the Municipal Council in 1952, i.e. from Municipal Commission days (1948-1952). Other than the technical department responsible for the planning and implementation of traffic management, the Municipal Engineer's Department, subsequently the City Engineer's Department, and eventually the City Hall Traffic Management Department, the one unit in the Municipal/City Administration involved in traffic management is the Traffic Advisory Committee.

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[23]Saources for this section are *Annual Reports* of Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council *Annual Reports* of Federal Capital Commission *Annual Reports* of Dewan Bandaraya Official Information Book, *Penganugerahan Bandaraya Kuala* Lumpur Feb 1972

(a) Provision of Urban Transport Facilities

In the early sixties, and certainly in 1964, the responsibility for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of roads was divided between two bodies, the Federal Public Works Department (PWD) and the Municipal Engineer's Department. In the sixties, as in the seventies, the former is in charge of the "Federal Highways entering Kuala Lumpur and for certain of the principal streets within the town which are continuations of these highways or are principal feeders to them" while the latter is in charge of all other urban roads and streets. The Federal PWD was already engaged in the design and construction of major Through Routes in Kuala Lumpur as early as 1959 while from 1964 till 1970, the Roads Branch of the Federal PWD was divided into two with one of those sections being the Through Route Section.[26]

Subsequent to 1970, according to available sources,[27] there was one senior executive engineer who was responsible for Roads and Bridges in the Kuala Lumpur region. At any rate, what is clear is that, in the seventies, right up till the Second Urban Transport Project in 1976, the Federal PWD was involved to the tune of $20 million in the Second Malaysia Plan period in the design and construction of Kuala Lumpur bypasses and throughways.[28]

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[24]Crooks et al., "Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study", 131.

[25]Federation of Malaya, Public Works Department (PWD), *Annual Report 1960* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1962), 1.

[26]See Public Works Department, *Annual Report 1964*, 94; PWD, *Annual Report 1966*, 58; Malaysia, *Organisation of the Government of Malaysia*, 1967 (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1967) 406-407; Jabatan Kerja Raya, "Proposals for Technical Staffing, Roads and Airfield Division", Kuala Lumpur (1970?) (mimeographed). In the organization chart presented in the PWD, *Annual Report 1963*, there is no indication of the existence of a separate section for Kuala Lumpur Through Routes. This first appeared in the 1964 Annual Report.

[27]The 1972, 1973 and 1973 editions of Malaysia, *Organisation of the Government of Malaysia*, and Jabatan Kerja Raya, "Proposals for Technical Staffing..." are the only available sources on the organization structure of the Roads Branch of the PWD. The last PWD Annual Report published was the 1966 edition.

[28]See Malaysia, *Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-1975* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1971) 191; *First Malaysia Plan period, 1966-1970*, for Kuala Lumpur by passes and throughways was RM11 million. See also the 1971, 1972 and 1973 editions of the Tresury, *Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*, where mention is made under the heading, "Development Estimates, Capital Works Programme" for the Ministry where the PWD is lodged, of the Kuala Lumpur Bypass and Through Roads Project

This can be taken to indicate that a team of engineers in the Federal PWD was continually engaged in work on roads in Kuala Lumpur. For the Second Urban Transport Project, this pattern continued, as a counterpart team of engineers from the Federal PWD participated in the implementation process of the World Bank funded project. Thus, in terms of the provision of urban transport facilities in Kuala Lumpur, two organizations are responsbile, the Federal PWD and the Municipal City Engineer's Department, and its successor, the Traffic Management Department.

(b) Traffic Operations

The following statement sums up very well the traffic management situation in Kuala Lumpur before the Second Urban Transport Project:

> The transportation management structure in the [metropolitan] region is complex, there is no clear transportation policy and the implementation of traffic improvement measures is often handicapped by the lack of qualified staff.[29]

This was the situation that the World Bank project attempted to address. In the next section on urban transport policy, an assessment of the extent of success of the project will be made while the matter of "implementation of traffic improvement measures" under the project will be clarified soon.

Quite a number of government bodies share responsibilities for traffic management functions and as "there does not seem to be any permanent institution... which has been established to address the particular traffic and transportation needs of the metropolitan area",[30] it follows that no clear transport policy can be enunciated as it would have to come from an organization having overall responsibility for traffic management in the metropolitan area. In fact, the possibility of conflicting policies may well arise.

The main government bodies before and after the Second Urban Transport are the Traffic Advisory Committee, the Mu-

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[29]C.J. Davis, "Transportation and Traffic Management, Kuala Lumpur", a.

[30]D. Willcox and C.E. Stonier, "Metropolitan Transport authority", Paper presented at ACDA SEATAC Conference on Urban Transport Administration in Southeast Asian Capitals, Bangkok, 1975, 62.

nicipal/City Engineer's Department/Traffic Managment Department and the Traffic Police while there are other bodies also involved such as the Municipal/City Treasurer's Department, the Municipal/City Town Planning Department and the Federal/State/Municipal/City Road Safety Councils.[31] The Commissioner of the Federal Capital (1960-1972), subsequently the Datuk Bandar, as chief executive of Kuala Lumpur, is responsbible for the management of traffic in the city.[32] He is assisted by an Advisory Board. One of the many sub-committees is the Traffic Advisory Committee. This Traffic Advisory Committee "which meets monthly, is concerned only with *short term* planning aimed at reducing traffic congestion and improving traffic flow in the area of the Federal Territory (italics supplied)."[33] The Commissioner/Datuk Bandar acts on the recommendations of the Traffic Advisory Committee and the Municipal/City Engineer's Department/Traffic Management Department implements suggested changes which have been accepted.[34]

The traffic engineering work undertaken by the Engineer's Department before the 1964 Study seems to have been done in an *ad hoc* manner.[35] In the Annual Reports of the fifties, it was given separate but very brief mention (a few sentences) under the heading "traffic control" or "road traffic", while in the sixties, before 1965, it was not given separate mention. In 1965, the Traffic Section within the Engineer's Department was first mentioned.[36] The record of traffic engineering activities carried out was lengthy, approximately four pages out of the eight pages of the Annual Report of the Engineer's Department. This new emphasis on traffic management meritted more than cursory attention from city engineers. Despite the fact that the terms of

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[31]Davies., "Transportation and Traffic Management", 47, Chart 3.
[32]Ibid., 50.
[33]Ibid., 49.
[34]Ibid., 50.
[35]This account is based on *Annual Reports of Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council*, (subsequently Federal Capital Commission and Dewan Bandaraya).
[36]In a report prepared by the former City engineer, Lee Teck Chiow, he implied rather than stated explicitly, that the creation of a Traffic Section seems to be a response to the findings of the 1964 Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study. See "Urban Transport Problem", p. 1. "on the findings of this {1964} study and the creation of a Traffic Section in the Municipal Engineer's Department of Kuala Lumpur, immediate improvements were carried out to 40 intersections, streets and radial routes from the Central Area of the City".

reference of the Traffic Section appeared to be quite broad, the increased attention given by the Engineer's Department to traffic management after 1964 was still inadequate. In his study of urban transport in Kuala Lumpur, Davies found that:

> The activities of the Traffic Section included:
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> 1. The design and lay-out of all road improvement schemes in the City, and the supervision of construction.
>
> 2. Control of all building development on land adjoining City roads, and control over the provision of all car parking facilities.
>
> 3. The design of traffic management schemes, and the provision of facilities for the City's public transport system.
>
> 4. Collection and analysis of transportation data.
>
> 5. Implementation of new traffic projects.
>
> Because of staff shortages, the daily work of the Traffic Section had been confined mainly to activities in the first two groups.[37]

The Traffic Section of the City Engineer's Department was elevated into a Department in 1975 with the formation of the Traffic Management Department. With this change in status came an increase in staffing for the traffic management function. Thus, it was now able to address not only the first two activities mentioned above by Davies but also the third, fourth and fifth activities. The problem of a lack of staff for implementation began to be more positively addressed.

The enforcement of traffic regulations is carried out by the Traffic Division of the Police Force. The Traffic Police is under the Ministry of Home Affairs while Kuala Lumpur is under the Ministry of Local Government. A mechanism for coordination

[37] Davies, "Transportation and Traffic Management", 51-52.

between the City and the Police does exist and this is via the Traffic Advisory Committee as a representative of the Traffic Police is a member of that committee. The Traffic Police in Kuala Lumpur carries out the universal three basic duties of traffic police divisions everywhere:

1. traffic direction to aid traffic flow,
2. police traffic accident investigation, and
3. apprehension and warning of violaters.[38]

Traffic congestion in Kuala Lumpur is such that police control is required at the major intersections and this task was taxing the Traffic Police Force in Kuala Lumpur in 1976.

Two other traffic management tasks are carried out by the City Treasurer's Department and the City Town Planning Department.[39] The former deals with the financial aspect of parking in Kuala Lumpur; it supervises the car parking attendants who collect parking fees. In the planning done by the latter, strategies for urban transport are part of its responsibility. However, its work has been hampered by the lack of staff and by the fact that development outside its city boundaries are not within its purview.[40] The authority for land-use planning in the Klang Valley is the Selangor State Government and in view of the effect of land-use planning on traffic movements, it is not surprising that a regional planning and coordinating organization has been mooted many times.[41]

There is yet another traffic management activity, road safety, with yet some other separate bodies to deal with this matter. There is, firstly, a national Road Safety Council (RSC), established in 1954, which has overall responsibility for road safety activities in the country.[42] At the next levels, state and local governments have RSCs or committees which organize what are

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[38]See D.J. Hanson, "Traffic Engineering Administration", in John E. Baerwald, ed., *Transportation and Traffic Engineering Handbook* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 1043.

[39]Davies, "Transportation and Traffic Management", 52-55.

[40]Ibid., 55 and 91.

[41]Ibid., 94-95. See also Klang Valley Study.

[42]For a full list of the objectives sof the Road Safety Council, see the first page of any of the *Annual Reports*. The *Annual Reports* of the Road Safety Council (RSC) are the reference for this and the following two paragraphs.

essentially public education projects in their vicinities - exhibitions, poster competitions, safe driving competitions, lectures, talks, film shows, etc. However, the authorities are also cognizant of the fact that road safety should be approached from three spheres, enforcement, engineering and education, so that the RSCs also touch on engineering and enforcement matters in relation to road safety in their meetings.[43]

In Kuala Lumpur, the City Administration has had its own road safety committee,[44] which together with the Traffic Advisory Committee have been "conducting its own campaign to educate road users in road safety and undertaking publicity for the nation's campaign..." [45] In other words, the City Road Safety Committee initiates activities as well participates in national level activities. In fact, it is the state and local government RSCs which implement the national RSC decisions.

However, state and city RSCs do not have staff to handle road safety matters. It is only the Federal RSC which has a small permanent staff. Thus, despite their efforts, or rather because of their limited efforts, accident rates in Malaysia are still high enough to cause concern, with accident rates being especially high in Kuala Lumpur.[47] Given such a situation, road safety is not merely one of the many traffic management concerns but remains an important traffic management concern in Kuala Lumpur.

(c) The Management of Public Transport

> Extensive public transport services in the Kuala Lumpur urbanised area are provided by privately-owned bus and taxicab companies. About 88 per cent of public transport journeys are made by bus, and 12 per cent by taxicab.[48]

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[43]RSC, *Annual Report 1967*, 37-38; RSC *Annual Report* 1970, 35; RSC, *Annual Report 1971*, 49-50.
[44]RSC, *Annual Report 1967*, 34; RSC, *Annual Report 1970*, 32; RSC, *Annual Report 1971*, 47; Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council, *Annual Report 1959*, 8.
[45]RSC, *Annual Report* 1967, 38.
[46]Davies, "Transportation and Traffic Management", 19.
[47]Lau Lee Ching, "Urban Management in Malaysia, A Study of the Federal Territory", M. Ec. thesis, University of Malaya, 1978, 67. In 1967, 28.5% of total accidents in the country occured in Kuala Lumpur.
[48]Wilbur Smith Study, 4-5.

In terms of the management of public transport in Malaysia and Kuala Lumpur, this is done indirectly through licensing, scheduling and fare policies rather than directly through public ownership of public transport enterprises. As mentioned above, the Road Transport Licensing Board is the policy making body which controls and regulates the use of commercial vehicles, in accordance with the Road Traffic Ordinance while the Road Transport Department is its implementing arm.[49] In addition to these two bodies, local governments also have a hand in the management of public transport as they can "exercise a substantial degree of control over routes and operations through road traffic regulations. They also prescribe the location and design of bus stops, in some cases provide the shelters, benches and other amenities at the bus stops."[50] In Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur, other than the Kuala Lumpur City Administration, a number of contiguous suburbs in Selangor State are also involved in the moulding of the environment in which public transport has to operate.

From the above description, it can be seen that, as in the case of traffic operations, in the sphere of public transport, a sub-category of urban transport, there is fragmentation of responsibility. So far, three organisations have been identified, RTLB, RTD and the Traffic Management Department. At first glance, it may appear quite unnecessary to distinguish the RTLB from the RTD since the former is meant to be responsible for policy making with the latter in charge of implementation of policies. However, the RTLB is lodged with the Ministry of Public Enterprises while the RTD is in the Ministry of Transport, each with their own raison d'etre, objectives and very likely, different time schedules. Thus, they should be seen as different entities.

In the seventies, the thinking on urban transport redirected attention to the role of public transport in urban areas and affirmed the need for balanced transportation (between private vehicles and public transport). The Second Urban Transport Project adopted this strategy of balanced transportation and accepted the Wilbur Smith Study view that more and special attention

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[49]Malaysia, *Organisation of the Government of Malaysia*, 1967, 199.
[50]Wilbur Smith Study, 4-5.

had to be given to public transport in Kuala Lumpur. As such, a new institution, the Public Transport Unit was established. While initially, the focus of the Public Transport Unit was to be on Kuala Lumpur, in time it was not expected to be confined to Kuala Lumpur only but would also be responsible for the management of public transport for the whole country.[51] Thus, when the Public Transport Unit was formed, it was not set up as a separate organisation for Kuala Lumpur but was attached to the Highway Planning Unit, which in 1975 became the Highway Planning and Public Transport Unit.[52] Nonetheless, the bulk of the Public Transport Unit's work in the early days was for Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, in terms of the bodies with jurisdiction over public transport in Kuala Lumpur, in addition to the RTLB, the RTD and the Traffic Management Department, a fourth organisation, the Public Transport Unit has to be placed on the list. This merely underlines the statement above that the multiple jurisdiction situation in traffic operations is replicated in the field of public transport.

A Review of Urban Transport Policies

For a statement of the government's policy on transport, the Five Year Plans are the best references to ascertain priorities within the sector.[53] Here, the question of interest is the extent of importance accorded by the government to urban transport.

Government policy on urban transport in the sixties and seventies differs, as is to be expected. Policy in the sixties is evident in action taken in the form of the commissioning of transport studies. These have to be planned for, implying some expectation (attainment of certain objectives) from these studies. The transport studies of the sixties were the 1964 Kuala

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[51]The Wilbur Smith Study which recommended its formation intended it for urban Kuala Lumpur, viz., "It is recommended that the jurisdiction of the Unit include (a) the Federal Capital Territory; and (b) all areas within a six-mile airline distance of the boudaries of the Territoty." (p.vii).

[52]The Highway Planning Unit was established in 1966 to plan for the road system of the whole country.

[53]Basha Nordin, "Transport Planning and Implementation", *Journal of the Chartered Institute of Transport*, Malaysia Section, 1976/7 issue, 3. "For each mode of transport the Government adopts a definite planning strategy in each of its Five-Year Development Plan to meet its socio-economic objectives and to develop the mode in phases following a certain criteria of priorities".

Lumpur Transportation Study and the 1968 General Transportation Survey. One an urban transport study and the other a national sector survey. Some awareness of the need to deal with urban transport seemed to be present, hence the first study. Nevertheless, the degree of concern with urban transport seemed also to be relatively limited as there was no treatment of urban transport in the General Transportation Survey. Evidence of the fact that urban transport was not a high priority item can be seen from the allocation for roads in the First Malaysia Plan (1966-1970). Municipal roads, compared with other categories such as Federal roads, new development roads, state and rural roads, received a smaller per cent of the total allocation for roads.[54]

Another indication that urban transport was not accorded much importance before the 1970s is the lack of implementation of the 1964 study recommendations. It has been argued elsewhere that the figures for the Road Plan were unrealistically high, accounting for non-implementation of the recommendations. On the other hand, if urban transport had been given its due and had not been relegated to a back seat, funds could surely have been found for some, if not all, of the recommended major projects.

It was only in the seventies that there was increased interest in urban transport. The allocation for urban roads in the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975) was 13.36% of total road development expenditure, when compared with 9% in the First Malaysia Plan.[56] Increased interest in urban transport, visible in the early seventies, was sustained through to the late seventies as can be seen from the allocation for urban transport in the Third Malaysia Plan (1976-80), amounting to $151.5 million or 11.86% of the total, which in absolute terms was double the Second Malaysia Plan figure of $71.6 million. The Third Ma-

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[54]*First Malaysia Plan*, 141-42. See also Zaidan Haji Othman, "Urban Transport in Kuala Lumpur", 150. "In the early days, Government's efforts were (sic) not focused entirely on urban transport and this can be seen from the public investment on transport infrastructures"

[55]Davies, "Transportation and Traffic Management", 69-70.

[56]First Malaysia Plan, 141. "Municipal roads" is used as the proxy for urban roads Second Malaysia Plan, 191. The allocation for "Municipal roads", "Kuala Lumpur by passes and throughways", "Petaling Jaya-Kuala Lumpur roads" are added up. The total is taken as the allocation for urban roads.

laysia Plan figure has to be discounted to take into account inflation; nevertheless, the increase in absolute terms is still substantial. Government policy on urban transport in the seventies followed closely the international thinking on urban transport, accepting in the main, the recommendations of the Klang Valley Study and the Wilbur Smith Study.[57] The Second Kuala Lumpur Urban Transport Project was designed to implement these recommendations, with some modifications.

It would appear from the financial allocations for urban transport in the Second Malaysia Plan and Third Malaysia Plan that urban transport was finally granted its appropriate share of the transport vote in the seventies and that Malaysia has conformed to the evolving state of the art in the field of urban transport, moving from traditional concerns with road building in the sixties to a greater reliance on traffic management in the seventies. Evidence of the shift in thinking from an emphasis on increasing road capacity can be seen from the new institutional set-up established as a consequence of the Second Urban Transport Project.

The main planning and implementation agency for urban transport in Kuala Lumpur is now the Traffic Management Department which is a fully-fledged department in its own right, as opposed to being a small sub-section of the City Engineer's Department. The name selected for it also informs as to its intended focus. The second organisational innovation is in the formation of the Public Transport Unit which is testimony of a new commitment to balanced transportation for urban areas. While this apparent institutional development may reflect a willingness to adopt the current international technology on urban transport, the degree of commitment to the suggested changes in approach remains in question when one scratches beneath the surface.

Two things come to mind immediately. The Second Urban Transport Project has not been able to do much about the complex urban transport management structure which Davies referred to nor have all the traffic management components of the World Bank project been implemented. In terms of the urban transport institutional structure, although one can identify one main policy maker for all three aspects of urban transport (pro-

[57] *Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980* (Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1976), 344.

vision of facilities, public transport management and traffic operations), the Datuk Bandar who acts on the advice of the Traffic Advisory Committee, and an additional policy maker for public transport, the RTLB, the governmental agencies in charge of planning and implementation continue to be numerous. In other words, the problem of fragmentation of responsibility has not been resolved, much less addressed. As for the issue of implementation, the problem is no longer one of lack of qualified staff with the formation of the Traffic Management Department but rather the controversial nature of some of the traffic management measures. The private vehicle restraint measure has proven to be politically sensitive so that the area road pricing scheme, scheduled for 1976, has been postponed a number of times.[58] In terms of the other main thrust of the Second Urban Transport Project, the upgrading of the public transport system, this has never been assumed to be an easy task. Be that as it may, improving the public transport situation has also been shown to be more intractable than envisaged. Thus, while there has been more substantial effort made for urban transport in the seventies as compared to the sixties, much less has been achieved that what was intended.

If, in fact, there is fragmentation of responsibility in the Kuala Lumpur urban transport scene, does it really matter if policies continue to be made and implemented? The answer is "yes" because multiple juridsiction brings with it some negative consequences. In the first place, it invites conflict in approaches in the design of urban transport policies. Although this may be deemed to be healthy and be seen as democracy in action, it does make for cumbersome delays, not only in arriving at a decision, but more so when it comes to implementation. This second consequence, slow implementation, is inevitable as many competing views often reflect the different priorities of the various bodies involved. It may also sometimes result in inconsistent implementation due to different perspectives and interpretation of a given policy. Another format can always be introduced if one wishes to retain the access to various inputs at the planning

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[58]See the following newspaper articles: "Area Road Pricing, Just Waiting for the Green Light" *Business Times*, Feb. 14, 1979; "Kuala Lumpur's Pay-to-enter Traffic Scheme in 'Cold Storage'". *New Straits Times*, May 19, 1979.

stage. For instance, the familiar committee device can be used whereby representatives from the different bodies involved in a certain field such as traffic operations are invited to participate by the main planning and implementation agency. The latter is then given the task of ensuring a full and speedy implementation of policies made.

On the issue of implementation where it has been found that efforts at private vehicle restraint and at public transport upgrading have not made much headway, again the question, "Does it really matter?" can be posed. This matter has to be raised as it can be shown that there are alternative ways of dealing with the problems of urban mobility and congestion which the above efforts are meant to address. However, what needs to be noted here is that the Second Urban Transport Project measures have been selected as they have been seen to be the less costly of strategies as opposed to more costly alternatives such as light rapid transit, whether elevated, at-grade or underground.

In other words, one should continue to strive for an improvement of the urban transport institutional structure in Kuala Lumpur and for an eventual implementation of the traffic management measures aimed at private vehicle restraint and public transport upgrading.

Concluding Remarks

In an examination of urban transport policy in Kuala Lumpur, at first glance, it would seem that urban transport policy has developed in line with current international technology and that urban transport practice in Kuala Lumpur is very up-to-date. However, upon further investigation, this development may be found to be relatively superficial. If this is indeed so, the question, "Does is really matter?" has been posed. And, with reference to the urban transport management structure, the case for more organisational integration is quite strong.[59] Experience from

[59]See for instance OECD, *Integrated Urban Traffic Management* and Willcox and Stonier's "Metropolitan Transport Authority. A Suggested Approach to Organizing and Financing Urban Transport Services in Five ASEAN Capitals" for more on integrated approaches to urban transport.

the Kuala Lumpur urban transport scene supports the argument that different bodies perceive and interprete policies differently, resulting in delays in implementation.[60]

As for the balanced transportation strategy, given the present economic situation where governments are faced with unfavourable economic prospects, shrinking revenues vis-a-vis increasing responsibilities, the least cost solutions would seem to be preferable to those requiring larger investment outlays. For, despite straitened economic conditions, every city will continue to strive for less congestion than it presently has, let alone contemplate an increase since it is quite clear that congestion seriously undermines the quality of city life. What this implies is that the private vehicle restraint and public transport upgrading measures should definitely be given a second and closer look.

What lessons for other Malaysian urban centres can be derived from the Kuala Lumpur experience? Before attempting to answer this question, some other related matters need to be considered. Are there compelling reasons for the present structure of separate urban transport entities to continue? Are the principal transport problems of the different Malaysian cities so dissimiliar as to warrant the development of individual urban transport policies? Should we not be moving towards an overall Malaysian urban transport policy? The answer to these questions lies in the fact that each urban area possesses its own unique features and environment which call for varying emphases in addressing the urban transport problem. What this indicates is that while all cities face similar problems of congestion as well as the need to improve mobility, and in light of the current international technology which favours more balanced transportation, i.e reduce private vehicle usage and increase public transport ridership, the general approaches and strategies are broad enough to allow for the adoption of different traffic management measures which are appropriate to a particular city. This brings us back to Kuala Lumpur's urban transport policy. If other cities

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[60]See Chapter 5 in Loh Wei Leng, "Foreign Technical Asistance to Peninsular Malaysia: Some World Bank Road and Road Transport Projects", Ph.D. thesis, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1983 for more details on the efforts of the Traffic Management implementing the Second Urban Transport Project.

accept the logic of a policy of more balanced transportation, they then can look more closely at the circumstances surrounding the implementation of this policy in Kuala Lumpur and try to avoid the pitfalls encountered while emulating the more positive aspects of the implementation process.

Thus, with reference to a Malaysian urban transport policy, if Kuala Lumpur continues to provide leadership in its selection and implementation of broad principles and strategies from time to time, as it seems quite likely to,[61] the other urban centres in Malaysia can profitably draw on its expertise and experience when designing their own urban transport plans and systems in line with their specific terrain, circumstances and needs.

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[61]The Federal Government has shown itself to be willing to incur substantial investment for the Kuala Lumpur urban transport system. The first and second World Bank urban transport projects were, in fact, for Metropolitan Kuala Lumpur with initial expenditures of RM40 million and RM98.4 million. Bearing in mind that these figures are for a single project, they are very large amounts to account for 7.5% and 7.7% of the total allocation for road development in the Second Malaysia Plan and the Third Malaysia Plan. That the Federal Capital is treated as the premier city in all respects, including transport, is only to be expected. (Cf. *Second Malaysia Plan*, 191 and *Third Malaysia Plan*, 357).