

Message from the Editor

2008 has been a very interesting year in terms of Transport, Energy and Climate. Not only has the oil price fluctuated from \$149 a barrel to the current level of approximately \$42, we've experienced a financial crisis which has had a major impact on the automobile sector. The US Senate has just announced that they are considering a \$15 billion bail-out for the 3 biggest motor manufacturers in the USA. The European Union have said that they will only bail-out the European motor industry if they commit to the development of fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly cars. South Africa experienced an energy crisis, which is likely to stay with us for at least the next 5 - 8 years and climate change continues to make front-page news.

There have been some good news stories however, including increased development of alternative / green cars, and the focus on improved public and non-motorised transport in South Africa for the 2010 World Cup. I am sure that 2009 will be bringing us many more pieces of news and will show us if the country is committed to a more sustainable transport system.

Travel safely over the holiday season.

Lize

Integrated Rapid Transit System for Cape Town

Guest Author: Niki Covary

The City of Cape Town has recognised the importance of moving towards a more sustainable transport system and has incorporated sustainability as an overarching theme in its Integrated Transport Plan (ITP). The Integrated Rapid Transit (IRT) system has been identified as a key project in working towards achieving this.

The IRT system aims to integrate all modal options into a coherent package for the customer and to give priority over private transport. A major component of this system is the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, which comprises a high quality bus-based transit system that delivers fast, comfortable and cost-effective urban mobility with segregated right-of-way infrastructure, and rapid and frequent operations. The City's aim is to establish an IRT network across the City within 10 – 12 years. The network will ensure that more than 75% of people are within 500m of a high-quality public transport system. The IRT system will be rolled out in four phases. The initial phase (known as Phase 1A) of the project was approved by the City of Cape Town in August 2008 and is to be completed by 2010.

Phase 1A will provide a link from the airport to the Cape Town CBD and from the CBD to Green Point, Sea Point and Hout Bay, and around the inner city. There will be a trunk route up the West Coast to Bayside Mall, along Blaauwberg Road and up to Potsdam Road to Du Noon, and feeder services to Bloubergstrand, Atlantis and Mamre as well as around Table View and Parklands and through Montague Gardens via Century City to Richwood. The IRT system comprises a comprehensive Non-Motorised Transport (NMT) component. Phase 1A includes a pedestrian and cycle network in and around the CBD; as well as between the CBD and the Green Point Stadium. In addition, dedicated cycle ways will run parallel to the IRT system between the Cape Town railway station and the Blaauwberg area.

As a host city for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the City of Cape Town has contractual obligations to meet in terms of transport. It is the City's aim to ensure that the IRT system operates successfully and contributes to a lasting legacy for Cape Town commuters well beyond the World Cup

For more information, please visit www.capetown.gov.za/irt or www.sustainable.org.za/transit for a copy of the IRT Press pack

What is Bus Rapid Transit?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-quality bus based public transport system that delivers fast, comfortable and cost effective urban mobility through the provision of segregated right-of-way infrastructure, frequent operations and excellence in marketing and customer service.

BRT has virtually all the performance and comfort of a modern rail based public transport system, but at a fraction of the cost. BRT was successfully implemented in Latin American cities, such as Curitiba, Bogotá and Sao Paulo as well as other cities around the world, including Los Angeles, Brisbane and Jakarta

The most defining feature of BRT is its focus on customer service. Dedicated median bus ways provide customers with dramatically reduced travel times. Because the vehicles move quickly in peak hours, more people are encouraged to switch from private car-use to public transport which makes the whole system far more viable.

The dedicated lanes also reduce operating costs so that fares are quite affordable. Special attention is given to safety and security through the presence of security personnel and the use of closed circuit television cameras.

BRT and the Taxi Industry in South Africa

The BRT systems being developed in South Africa are not without opposition, particularly from the taxi industry. Demonstrations and disruptions in the industry have occurred in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth during the year, causing damage to infrastructure and stranding many commuters.

The taxi industry is particularly concerned about potential job losses because of the development of BRT systems. The industry also feels that there has not been enough consultation with them (at all levels) and that decisions regarding public transport in the cities have been made without them. Although municipalities have had discussions with some Taxi associations, the message has not been heard by all in the industry and there is still much confusion regarding how the projects will work in conjunction with the taxi industry.

The BRT Planning guide states that a failure to communicate a new public transport plan to all key stakeholders can greatly undermine the ultimate viability of the project. The South African situation has shown that there are a number of key stakeholders in the public transport sector and that they all need to understand the process in order to develop an efficient, safe and reliable public transport system. It is clear that many more negotiations will need to take place at all levels before agreements are signed.

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter or if you have any comments or questions, please contact us at lize@sustainable.org.za or call 021 702 3622 and ask for Lize Jennings.

Practical Tip

The holiday season means increased congestion on the routes as people travel to their holiday destinations. Accident statistics are, however, also higher during the holiday season as people rush to get to their destinations. Remember to drive carefully and considerately, keep below the speed limit and take regular breaks.

Editor's Choice

One Planet Mobility – A journey towards a sustainable future, is a programme which aims to identify and inspire the changes needed to transform personal mobility – a sector which focuses on transport used by people in their everyday life. The report outlines actions that can be put into practice immediately as well as considering the long-term social changes that are required. www.wwf.org.uk/oneplanetmobility

Upcoming Events

. We'll be advertising more events in the New Year, but for now some exciting events for 2009 include:

1. the 28th Annual Southern African Transport Conference in July and
2. the Confederations Cup that will be taking place around South Africa in June– this gives us a chance to test some of the systems and programmes that are being developed for the 2010 World Cup.

Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA)

Sustainable Energy Africa promotes sustainable energy approaches and practices through research, capacity building, information dissemination, project implementation, lobbying and networking. SEA manages the Urban TRAN:SIT Programme, which aims to build capacity in local government to develop more sustainable transport policy, strategy and implementation in South African cities.

