

Workbook of 30 January 2017

# BETTER CHOICES

Bringing Sustainable Mobility to Smaller Asian Cities

- Work in progress -

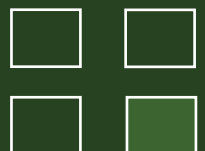
Workbook prepared to inform international colleagues and peers working with these issues in different parts of the world, some of whom we hope may be interested to follow progress efficiently and possibly comment from time to time. Sections of particular interest will be posted privately on line, and signaled to those interested in having access to the shared online site at <https://goo.gl/bp0ajN>.



eric britton & jason chang

ecoplan international

30-Jan-17





YOUBIKE. Taipei's "Last Kilometer" public bike system: >22k bikes, >300 stations, > 20 mm rides last year

## BETTER CHOICES IN BRIEF:

The crux of the strategy which is explored in these pages is an understanding that by and large human beings in any part of the world are essentially change resistant. And particularly so if the perceived changes are seen as leaving them worse off in the future – and, worse yet, are being imposed by unfeeling, out of touch government bureaucrats and politicians.

And yet, obvious as that may be, one of the most striking things that we can note from transportation policies in most places in the past has been that (a) they all too often effectively offer no choices to much of the population. Or at least (b) choices which by and large perceived by the citizen as being inferior, and in particular inferior relative to getting there by car or motorcycle.

Inferior? Waiting for a bus that shows up late in the rain is one example. Walking a kilometer without a safe sidewalk to get to a public transit stop is another. Public programs which make it hard to find a convenient parking place in the city, for no matter what, announced benevolent reasons, is perceived by most of us who are car dependent as an inferior choice. Increasing the price of petrol, which makes my daily commute even more costly. A government which on the one hand may virtuously recommend bicycle use, but which, at the same time makes no real provision for safe and convenient cycling. A ride to and from work twice a day which year after year takes more time and costs more money. And the long list of bad choices goes on.

But given the experience in leading edge places over the last several decades, and the enormous advantages offered by new technologies and new ways of organizing ourselves, there is no good reason for public policy makers not to regroup, mobilize and create as the central thrust of transport policy to provide better choices for all. To do this, we are going to have to mobilize ourselves under a radically different guiding strategy. Which is what this project is all about.

## THE THREE PILLARS.

This collaborative project is organized in three main interactive parts as follows:

- (a) **BOOK:** The first book in the *BETTER CHOICES* series is aimed to be of help to transport planners, policy makers and others concerned with these challenges in *Smaller Asian Cities*.
- (b) **LIBRARY:** Second, a high quality, collaborative online library and reference source, the **PLANNERS BOOKSHELF**, available in working form at <https://goo.gl/fv3Giv>
- (c) **PLATFORM:** A continuing cycle of articles, op-eds, contributions and references posted to **WORLD STREETS**, available online at <https://goo.gl/GwNZbg> and to continue over the full year ahead. Supported by dedicated Facebook page at <https://goo.gl/cB6CnO>



## WORKING OUTLINE: (THINKING POINTS) <sup>1</sup>

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1. **WELCOME- AND WHY AND FOR WHOM ARE WE HERE**
  2. START: MOST TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS BEGIN WITH A FELT NEED, REAL OR IMAGINARY . . .
  3. WHY CLIMATE IS THE ESSENTIAL STARTING PLACE FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT (KNOCK-ON EFFECTS)
  4. WHY BETTER CHOICES?
  5. HOW TO DEAL WITH A “WICKED PROBLEM”
  6. TRANSPORTATION – MOBILITY – ACCESS – PROXIMITY – PRESENCE
  7. **SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION: THE STATE-OF-THE-ART IN 2016**
  8. POLIS VS. POLITICS
  9. CHANGING MINDS: BEHAVIOR, SOCIALIZATION AND CHOICES (AT ALL ENDS OF THE SPECTRUM)
  10. THE FIVE CIRCLES OF BEHAVIOUR
  11. BETTER CHOICES (TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR)
  12. **THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF THE MODERN MOTOR CAR**
  13. FUTURE OF THE CAR IN THE CITY
  14. TURNING POINT: 1970s  
INNOVATION CURVE AND THE FORTY-YEAR LAG
  15. **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND POLICY IN SMALLER ASIAN CITIES (1980-2016)**
  16. MADAME MAYOR? KNOWING THAT YOU ARE VERY BUSY BUT . . .
  17. WHAT IS HOLDING THEM BACK?
  18. TANGLED WEBS: LOBBIES AND PARTY POLITICS
  19. IN A WORLD OF INFINITE INFORMATION RESOURCES
  20. PARADIGM SHIFT: IT’S A VERY DIFFERENT NEW WORLD OUT THERE. (TRANSPORT/INFORMATION INTERFACE)  
THE BITTER PILL (ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS AND THE . . . CAR)
  21. **THE NEW MOBILITY MAJORITY**
  22. Counterintuitive: Getting Comfortable with Contradictions (5 surprises)
  23. Vision – Strategy – Means – Tactics
  24. Vulnerable populations
  25. Slowness and propinquity  
Big Mistakes You Don’t Have to Make (*Worst Practices*)
  26. **THE 20 CRITICAL PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY**
  27. The Caretaker Role of Civil Society
  28. Why would I ever want to own a car? (The best and the brightest)
  29. If I Could Change Only One Thing
  30. Selling New Mobility
  31. LIGHTING OF A FIRE
  32. Why I am prudently optimistic about the sustainability transition for 2017-2020
- Annex A: Sustainable Transport Planners Bookshelf - <https://goo.gl/SyOCf5>  
Annex B: Putting World Streets to work - <http://wp.me/psKUY-34e>  
Annex C: KNOOGLE: World Streets Knowledge Browser - <https://goo.gl/MJSRAX>  
Annex D: Universities, courses treating sustainable transport in cities - <https://goo.gl/IOKXgl>  
Annex E: International Advisory Panel - <HTTPS://GOO.GL/AVHMQO>

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<sup>1</sup> This outline is being updated to reflect the ongoing learning process, and will be posted in mid-February in its intended final form.



## CRITICAL PATH

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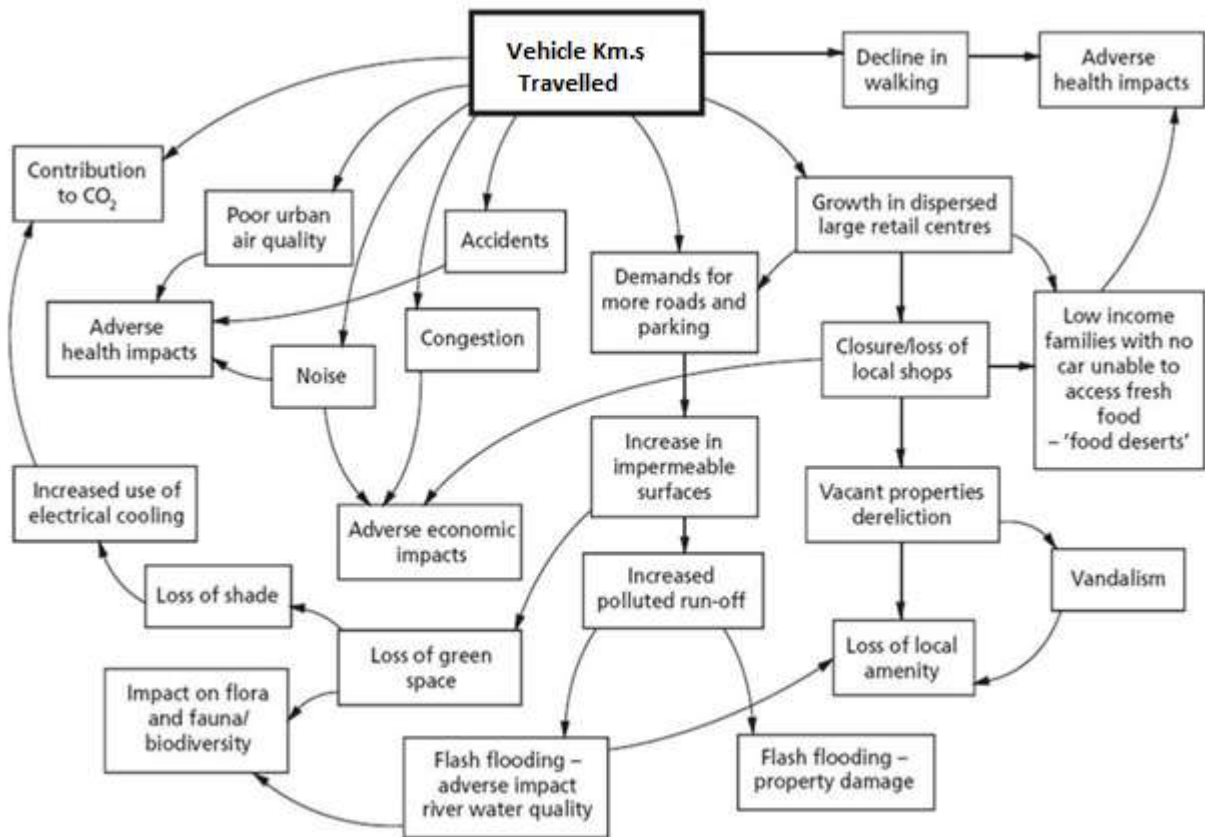
A first stab at the critical path that sets out the principal arguments and contentions shaping this book (and, incidentally, which set it off from the rest). While the book is looking specifically at transport related issues in and around cities, and particularly in smaller cities in Asia, that said the underlying patterns, problems and opportunities are universal.

1. CLIMATE: Our point of departure: our central focus is neither transportation nor mobility -- but climate modification as the high-emergency universal challenge of 21st century society.
2. EMISSIONS: Climate change brings us in turn to emissions and greenhouse gases as our principle target, metric and test. (Some 20% +/- of these emissions come out of our sector.)
3. MOST RESPONSIVE: Of all the main sectors responsible for emissions (industry, agriculture, etc.), transport is the one *most amenable to rapid modification and improvement*.
4. VKT REDUCTIONS: The only way of achieving significant reductions is to reduce VKT by corresponding large amounts. The book goes on to show the many ways to get that job done
5. KNOCK-ON EFFECTS: Significant VKT reductions impact positively on just about everything that constitutes the Sustainable Mobility/Cities Agenda. (See impact chart in progress)
6. NEAR-TERM: There are many ways of curbing emissions, drastically and quickly. Maximum stress must be on making enormous, visible, verifiable strides in the period 2017-2020. This will be a period of high commitment, trial, failure, success and learning for the future.
7. PINCERS: The reduction strategy has 2 primary pincers: (a) a massive shift to *Better than Car* mobility options (with reliance on full cost pricing); combined with (b) massive commitment to renewables and electricity to rip fossil fuels out of the equation.
8. BETTER THAN CAR: The key is to combine new thinking, information technology, sharing, entrepreneurship and active citizenry to provide a flexible spectrum of “Better than Car” mobility options. There is a huge base of experience to draw on, both in Asia and beyond.
9. RENEWABLES/ELECTRIFICATION: The second pincer: a massive program of support for renewables, along with a strong commitment to shifting from fossil fuels to electricity.
10. RETHINKING WORK: The New Mobility system that comes out of this policy mix has an extremely important work, employment and social justice dimension.
11. WOMEN: High priority. Design your system to provide safe and fair transport for women of all ages and you have a winning sustainability strategy. Don’t, and you won’t.
12. MASSIVE CUTS: The book introduces as a discussion target that of reducing VKT by 80% over the coming 10 years, starting immediately targeting ca. 10% reductions for 2017. The author understands that this target will be ridiculed. But that’s the target. Let’s see what it gives.
13. IMPLEMENTATION: Once this target has been set, the author goes on to outline a vision, strategies and tactics for obtaining these necessary huge reductions, both in general and then more specifically for smaller Asian cities.
14. BEHAVIOR: The vital other side of the Climate/Transport Emergency Program. We need to use every trick in the book of anthropologists, behavioral psychologists, neurologists and behavioral economists, and aim them at the full range of key actors to change, yes, their behavior and choices. Of which certainly most important are the political leaders, their main sources of counsel, and civil society more broadly. The greatest weakness and explanation for insufficient action today is at the top.



INCREASED MOTOR VEHICLE USE (VKT) – IMPACTS

Here's an impact diagram to give the reader a feel for the level of complexity and inter-dependencies that must be brought into the analysis in a sustainable transport plan worthy of the name. .



WORK IN PROGRESS: While the final version will house about 80% of the impacts indicated here, there is a handful or so of other impact areas that I want to introduce both to the diagram and the chapter on this topic . . . which in a way sets out the bottom line of the entire book. (I.e. if we cannot first understand and then find ways to deal with the simple phenomenon of excessive and at best unnecessary driving, then everything else will ultimately fall apart. To be fitted in as possible.

- a. Urban sprawl
- b. Depletes public transport service
- c. Increased distance/time in transit
- d. Community severance
- e. Social divisiveness
- f. Aggressive behavior
- g. Security on street
- h. Fewer eyes on the street
- i. Indifference
- j. Road rage
- k. Depletes countryside
- l. Favors and separates wealthy
- m. High cost street maintenance



PLANNERS BOOKSHELF

In support of the Better Choices program we have set out to test and develop an open on-line library with select references on sources intended to be useful to planners, local government, decision makers, operators, the media, students, and concerned elements of civil society.

These documents sources and references are being selected with the counsel of leading authorities and collaborators in these important components of the New Mobility Agenda.



Most of these references are available immediately online and at no cost. A small number of sources carry price tags, whose price has been reduced (??) for World Streets readers.

A first selection of sources is now on-line at <https://goo.gl/SyOCf5> to test the concept. The library's internal organization and ease of use will be getting attention in the coming weeks. Comments and suggestions are most welcome. (Green topics just getting underway to show the way.)

|                       |                     |                    |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| . GLOBAL STRATE...    | AUDITS, MAPPIN...   | BEHAVIOR, MODI...  | BETTER CHOICES...   |
| CAR FREE . . . DAY... | CARS, TRAFFIC, M... | CHILDREN/SCHO...   | CITY CYCLING        |
| CIVIL SOCIETY, T...   | CLIMATE/EMISSI...   | CULTURE, HERITA... | ECONOMIC INST...    |
| ENCYCLOPEDIA R...     | ENERGY, RENEWA...   | ENFORCEMENT, P...  | EQUITY, SOCIAL J... |
| EXTERNALITIES, ...    | GOODS MOVEME...     | HAPPINESS, WEL...  | HEALTH, FITNESS...  |
| HOV PRIORITIES, ...   | IMPLEMENTATIO...    | LAND USE, PLAN...  | LEADERSHIP, CO...   |
| LOBBIES/OPPON...      | M2Ws - MOTORIS...   | MEDIA, INFORMA...  | NEW COMS PARA...    |
| PARADIGM CHAN...      | PARKING             | PUBLIC TRANSPO...  | REGIONAL PLAN...    |
| RISK                  | SAFETY, SECURIT...  | SHARING            | SPACE, SPRAWL, ...  |
| SPEED                 | TIME                | VULNERABLE PO...   | WALKABLE CITY       |
| WIKIPEDIA ABCs        | WOMEN, EQUITY, ...  | WORK, JOBS, EM...  | WORLD STREETS...    |



### Think City | Rejuvenating the City Together

This book project – both the process behind it and the publication and distribution of the actual book slated for Spring 2017 – is sponsored in this first phase by Think City, following on an earlier project in Penang in 2013 in which the author (Britton) spent several weeks in Penang working for the most part with civil society organizations in the search for a common sustainable future for the transport sector in the state. Subsequent to this first mission, the author decided not just to drop out of the discussions but as a continuing contribution to set up a Watching Brief to continue to follow and collaborate with NGOs and other public groups and concerned individuals as a determined personal contribution to the ongoing vigorous debate. (Full information on the Watching Brief and its many parts is available at <http://wp.me/p3GVVk-xJ>). Among the most striking observations coming up repeatedly is the extent to which the issues and dilemmas, and eventual solutions or mitigations, being faced in Penang, are very like those which smaller cities are having to fact across Asia. Hence *Better Choices: Bringing Sustainable Mobility to Smaller Asian Cities*

#### Think City

Think City is a community-based urban regeneration body that seeks to create more sustainable and liveable cities. As a wholly-owned subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad established in 2009, it spearheaded urban regeneration in the George Town UNESCO World Heritage Site. Consequently, it was given the mandate to expand its initiatives to Kuala Lumpur, Butterworth and Johore Bahru. To deliver long term holistic solutions, Think City works closely with governments, local and international agencies, and various communities, building effective partnerships and enhancing capacity along the way



#### Urban Knowledge

Think City's Urban Knowledge team was established in late 2016. Its purpose is to help Think City reach its aspiration to be a regional thought leader in urban regeneration by 2020. The team's focus areas are a) capacity building through publications, how to manuals, seminars and training workshops; b) primary and commissioned research on South East Asian urban settlements; c) developing and testing new ideas in urban regeneration; and d) building regional networks and partnerships. The team will also act as the organisation's knowledge bank by collating and storing digital and spatial data and institutional learnings. Current activities include research on the future of mobility, greening rooftops in KL, affordable housing models and small towns; baseline population and land use surveys; and territorial planning for the Malacca Straits Diagonal.



## World Streets: The Politics of Transport in Cities

Insights and contributions from leading thinkers & practitioners around the world



START | EDITORIAL | RESOURCES | LENSES | MEDIA | OP-EDS | SEARCH | CONTACT

*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire*

World Streets is an independent, public interest, collaborative internet forum founded in March 2009 and since then working daily in support of sustainable mobility, sustainable cities and sustainable lives agenda, worldwide -- and which, as a matter of policy, we make freely available to all who are looking to understand, support, and contribute to the sustainability agenda anywhere in the world.

As of today, we count a total of 6,980 registered readers, coming at last inspection from some 149 countries on all continents. On an average day, we welcome anywhere from 50 to 200 visitors, with occasional peaks that reach above a thousand.

World Streets' mission is to create and support open, generous, international peer networks to help improve your city's streets and public spaces. During the 2,906 calendar days that have passed since World Streets opened its door in March 2009 we have, helped by 128 collaborators, managed to publish and share a total of 1,807 original articles, along with an open library 3,497 photographs, maps, drawings and renderings of many different sorts. We even have our own New Mobility Fine Arts Collection which you can visit and enjoy at <https://goo.gl/M7FSPE>

The range of topics and places covered is enormous all stocked in this enormous database. But it is important for readers to be able to find what they are looking for. To this end, you can find a small battery of efficient search engines -- at <http://wp.me/psKUY-34e>

Once a year we ask our readers for their critical comments and suggestions for World Streets. Check them out at <http://wp.me/psKUY-4oI>. (Here is one we particularly liked.)

*Two boys were playing football in my street earlier this week.  
What a wonderful sight. Time to reclaim our World Streets!*  
– Dirk van Dijl, Netherlands





ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

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**Eric Britton:**

Trained as a development economist, Professor Eric Britton is MD of EcoPlan International, an independent advisory network providing strategic counsel for government and business on policy and decision issues involving complex systems, social-technical change and sustainable development. Founding editor of [World Streets: The Politics of Transport in Cities](#) and the [Journal of World Transport Policy & Practice](#) he is Distinguished Professor of Sustainable Development, Economy & Democracy at the [Institut Supérieur de Gestion](#) in Paris. His work focuses on sustainable development, efficiency, economy and equity in city transport and public space, team building and helping government to ask the right questions and find practical solutions to mobility, public space and job creation issues.

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A leading world expert in ITS and sustainable transportation, Dr. S. K. Jason Chang (台大土木系教授/先進公共運輸研究中心主任 張學孔) is Professor of Civil Engineering in National Taiwan University and Director of the university's Advanced Public Transport Research Center. He has served as advisor to the Taipei City Government for almost 20 years. He has been actively involved in many international societies and activities, including Chair of Taipei Public Transport Association, Executive Director of Transportation Institute in Taiwan, Vice President of ITS Taiwan, BOD member of the World Congress on ITS, BOD Member of Eastern Asia Society for Transport Studies, and Member of America Society of Civil Engineers, Member of ITE. He has published more than 100 journal papers, 150 conference papers, and more than 100 technical reports. Jason is a fervent cyclist.

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