

‘Sustainable Transport Planning’ – a balancing act for roads

TOM BASKERVILLE

Regional Advisor (Strategy)

Main Roads

tom.c.baskerville@mainroads.qld.gov.au

ABSTRACT

International experience indicates growing concern over increasing negative impacts of urban transport system, especially those related to private vehicle travel, due to previously unforeseen externalities and social costs. This illustrates the need to move transport systems, especially those within urban environments, onto a more sustainable footing. There is now a growing recognition by both transport professionals and the community that unfettered increase in road capacity to accommodate travel growth is undesirable. In fact, sustainable development in cities is seen by many to be incompatible with significant increases in road capacity to support escalating car use. The problems associated with excessive car use are proving awkward for both planners and policy-makers alike as many people see cars as being essential to their daily lives. Despite the problems they have brought in their wake, the personal benefits of car travel means that to some extent they have been “planned into the system” and alternate planning solutions are not easy to find.

This really provides a significant challenge for transport planning professionals in determining the appropriateness of substantial investments in road infrastructure at a time when greater emphasis is being placed on promoting other more sustainable modes of travel. This paper focuses on transport planning responses to the challenge, especially in relation to roads, posed by the concept of sustainability.

