Transport and Innovation: Urban Transport and Mobility

Tony May
Emeritus Professor of Transport Engineering
Future challenges

• Substantial growth in urban areas and populations
  • Particularly in developing countries
  • +30% to 50% by 2030

• Objectives for urban transport policy unlikely to change significantly, but priorities will
  • Greater emphasis on climate change, resource depletion, health, resilience

• Problems with urban transport likely to grow more rapidly than populations
  • Particularly congestion, pollution, safety, accessibility, disruption
  • But data and reliable estimates are scarce
Opportunities

• Technology will continue to contribute
  • Motive power sources and vehicle design
  • But also driverless public transport systems
• But technology will not provide all the answers
  • Particularly given skill and financial shortages in developing cities
• Behavioural change will be at least equally important
  • And requires a growing emphasis on demand management
• Innovations in transport policy will continue
  • Perhaps ten new instruments per decade
  • But need more emphasis on empirical evaluation
• Cities should not focus solely on technology and supply-side measures
  • Which have been shown to be inadequate
  • And will be unaffordable in the developing world
• Packages of policy instruments will be more effective than pursuit of individual policies
  • But packages need to be designed in terms of a given city’s needs
  • More effort is needed on the design of such packages
  • And on their empirical evaluation
Barriers to progress

• The principal barriers
  • Governance, acceptability, finance, regulation

• Innovations needed to resolve all of these
  • Drawing on research at the interface of engineering, economics with political science, psychology, sociology
  • And on experience in other sectors

• But governments can already act to reduce these barriers
  • As illustrated by the ECMT 2006 recommendations
Barriers to progress

• Data availability and technical/policy skills are also serious barriers
  • Particularly, but not only, in the developing world
• Training and dissemination of good practice are needed
• As are innovations in decision-support tools
• Innovative cities offer the most important contribution
  • But more effort is needed to help “follower” cities learn from them, to achieve effective policy transfer within and between contexts
• This is also an area in which sectors can learn from one another