



RECLAIMING the Streets in Malaysia

By : Gregers Reimann

Managing Director

IEN Consultants Sdn Bhd | Energy Efficient & Green Building Consultancy

www.ien.com.my | gregers@ien.com.my | +60122755630



Kuala Lumpur quite different from my 'kampung Copenhagen'



Copenhagen

Princess Mary cycling with her kids



Brompton bicycle commute 3-4 times faster than by car!

9,067 views

136 4 SHARE + ...



mysustainablefuture
Published on 18 Jan 2017

EDIT VIDEO

Kuala Lumpur

Videos of me cycling through the city ([link](#))

Aspiration



3D rendering of vibrant car-free street by KL architect

Streets BEFORE cars

Banjir 1926 - Jalan Tun Perak (Jalan Jawa)



Roads were seen as a **public space, which all citizens had an equal right to**, even children at play.

“Common law tended to pin responsibility on the person operating the heavier or more dangerous vehicle, so there was a bias in favor of the pedestrian.” Since people on foot ruled the road, collisions weren’t a major issue: Streetcars and horse-drawn carriages yielded right of way to pedestrians and slowed to a human pace.

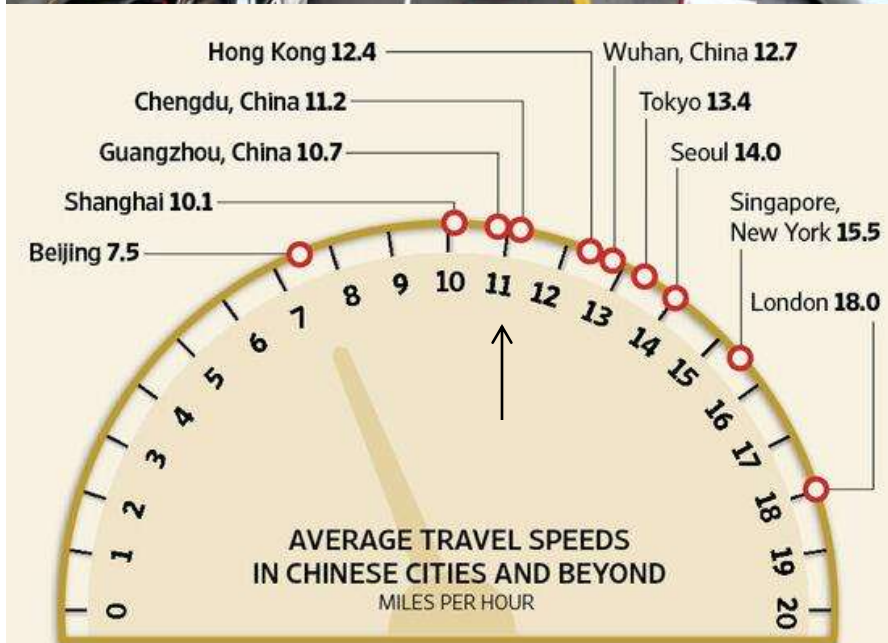
The fastest traffic was around 15-20 km/hour

Streets AFTER cars



National Conference on Street and Highway Safety conference (1924), with it's biggest players all represented the auto industry, recommended to **prioritized private motor vehicles over all other transit modes.**

A whole generation of kids grew up being trained that the streets were for cars only.” The public was educated on the dangers of cars, but mostly focused on changing pedestrian habits or extreme driver behaviors, like drunk driving.



Sources: UBS; Transport for London (data for 2011)

The Wall Street Journal

The average traffic is around 15-20 km/hour = bicycle speed

Semantics BEFORE cars became common

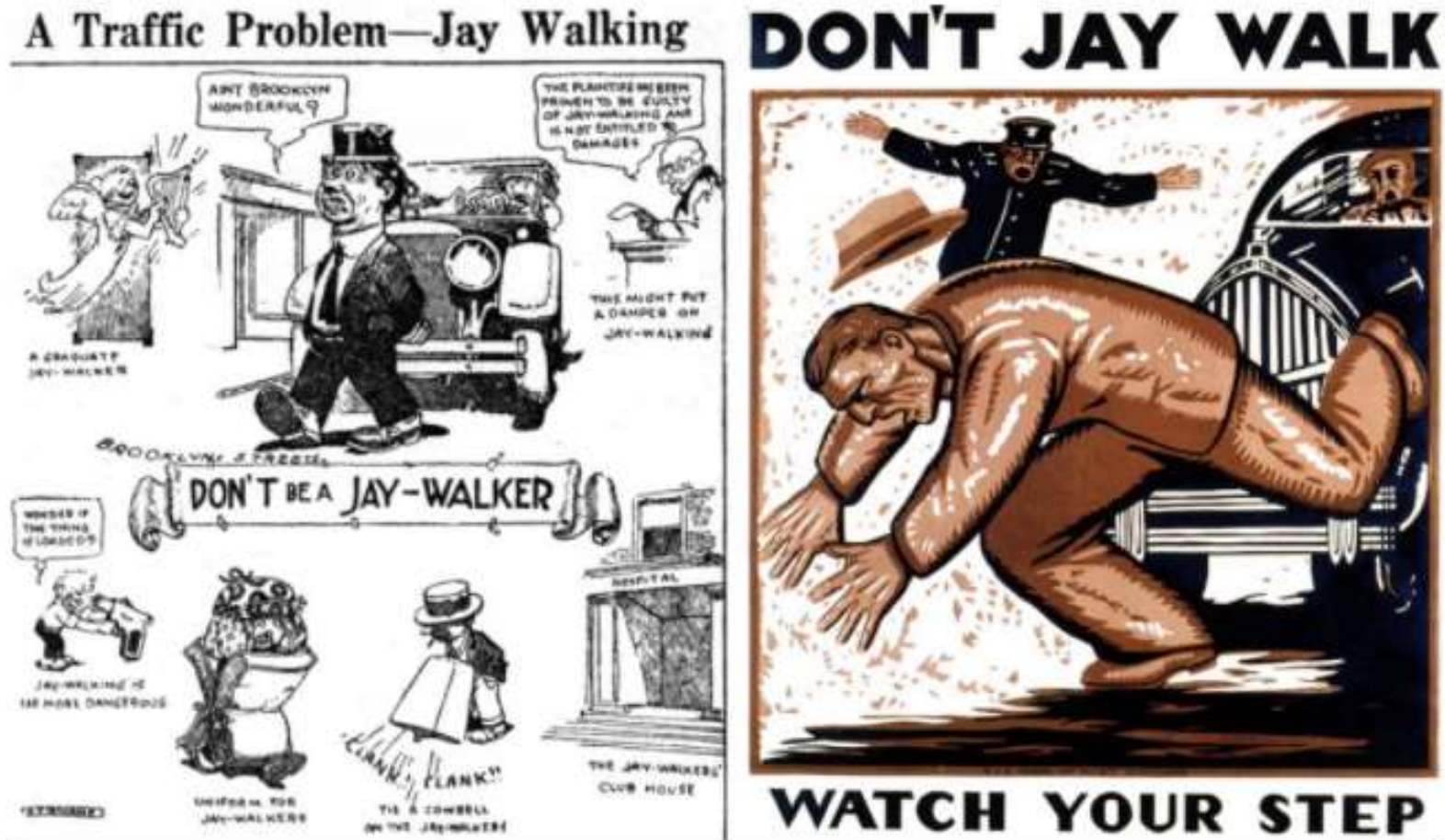


This cartoon from 1909 shows the outrage felt by many Americans that wealthy motorists could hurt others without consequence. Via the Library of Congress.

Derogatory names for car drivers:

- Joyrider
- Death driver
- Speed demons
- Vampire driver
- Motor madness
- Motor rabies

Semantics AFTER cars became common



Left, a cartoon from 1923 mocks jaywalking behavior. Via the National Safety Council. Right, a 1937 WPA poster emphasizes jaywalking dangers.

Derogatory name for pedestrian: **Jaywalker**

Originally referred to a clueless person unaccustomed to busy city life ("jay" was slang for a hayseed or country bumpkin)

If a kid is hit by a car in the street

“What evil bastard would drive their speeding car where a kid might be playing?”

“What parent is so neglectful that they let their child play in the street?”



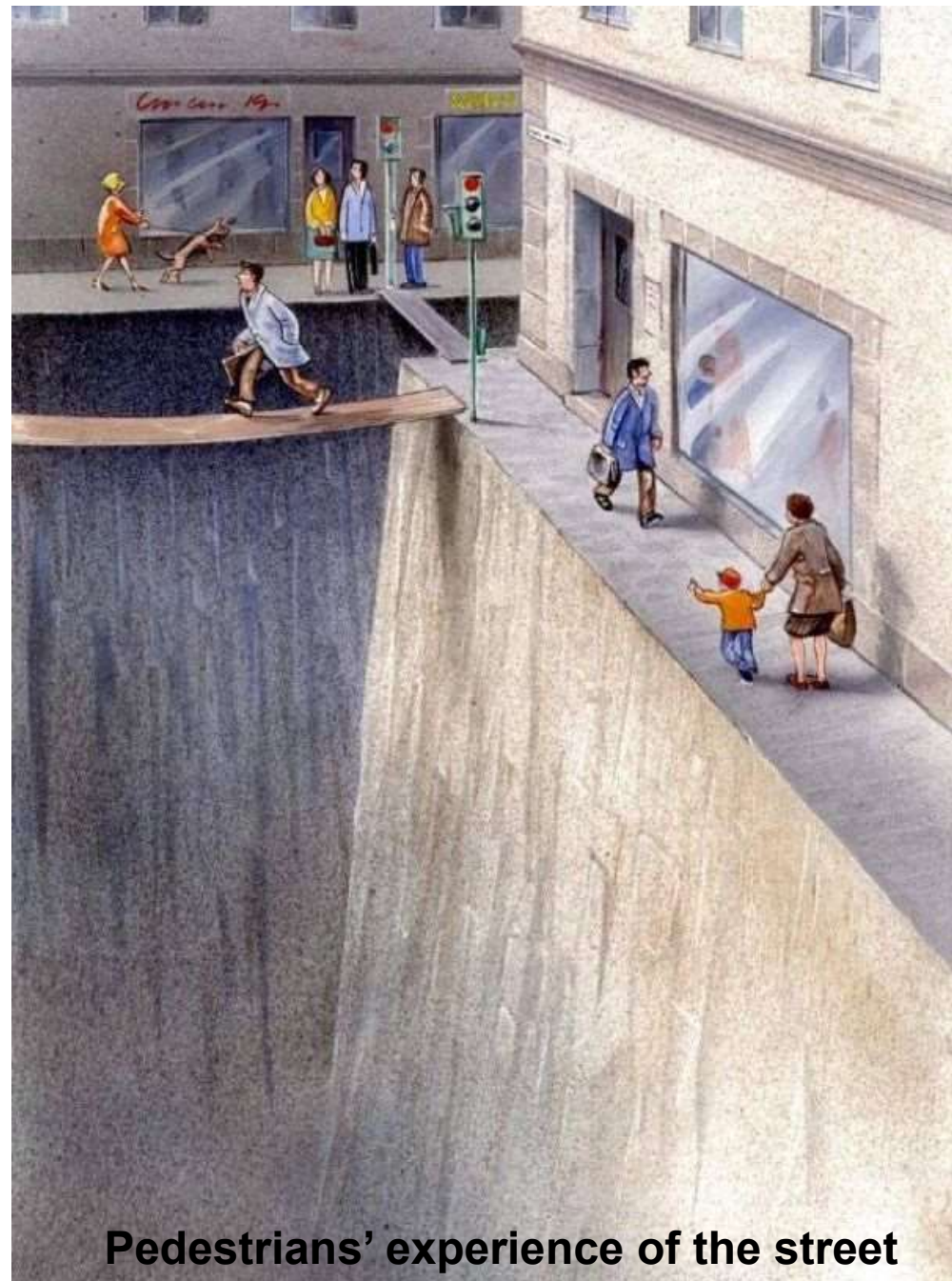
Year 1914



Year 2017

**A shift in reactions by
the common man**

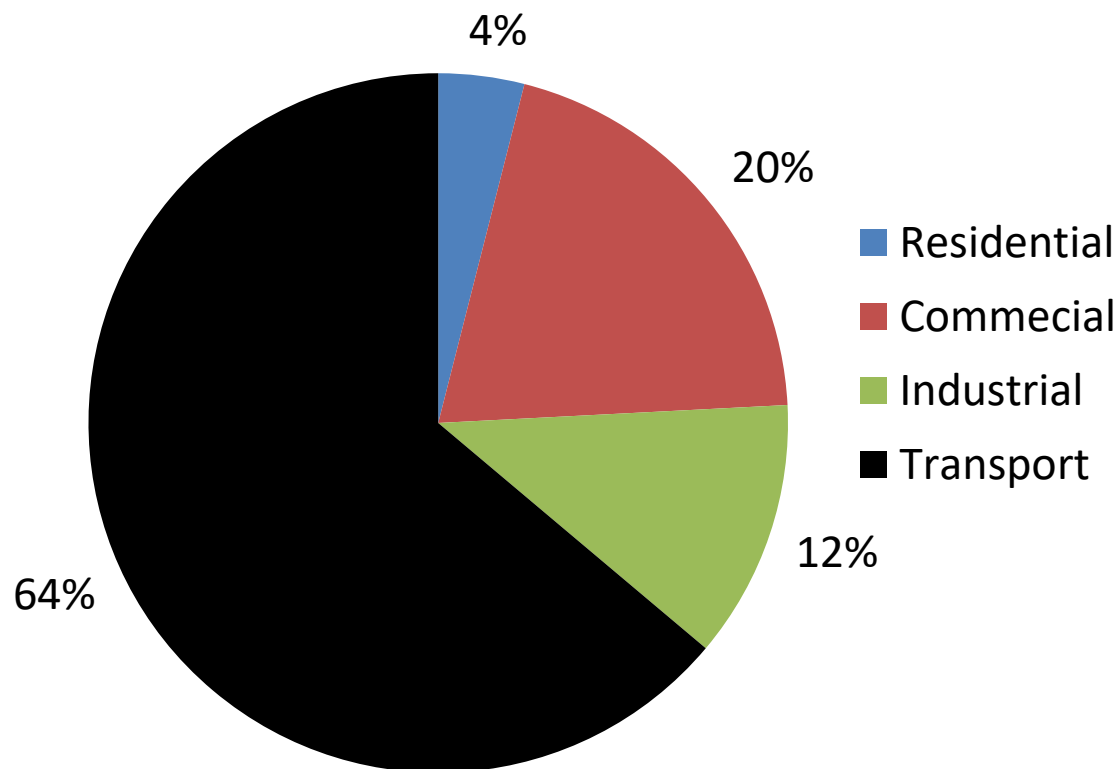
“The real battle is for people’s minds, and this mental model of what a street is for”



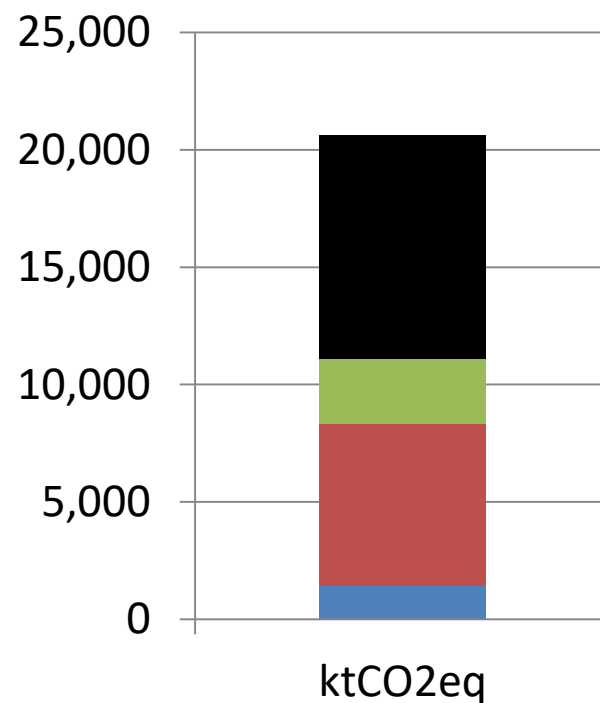
Pedestrians' experience of the street

High Transport Energy in Kuala Lumpur

Final Energy Demand (year 2010)



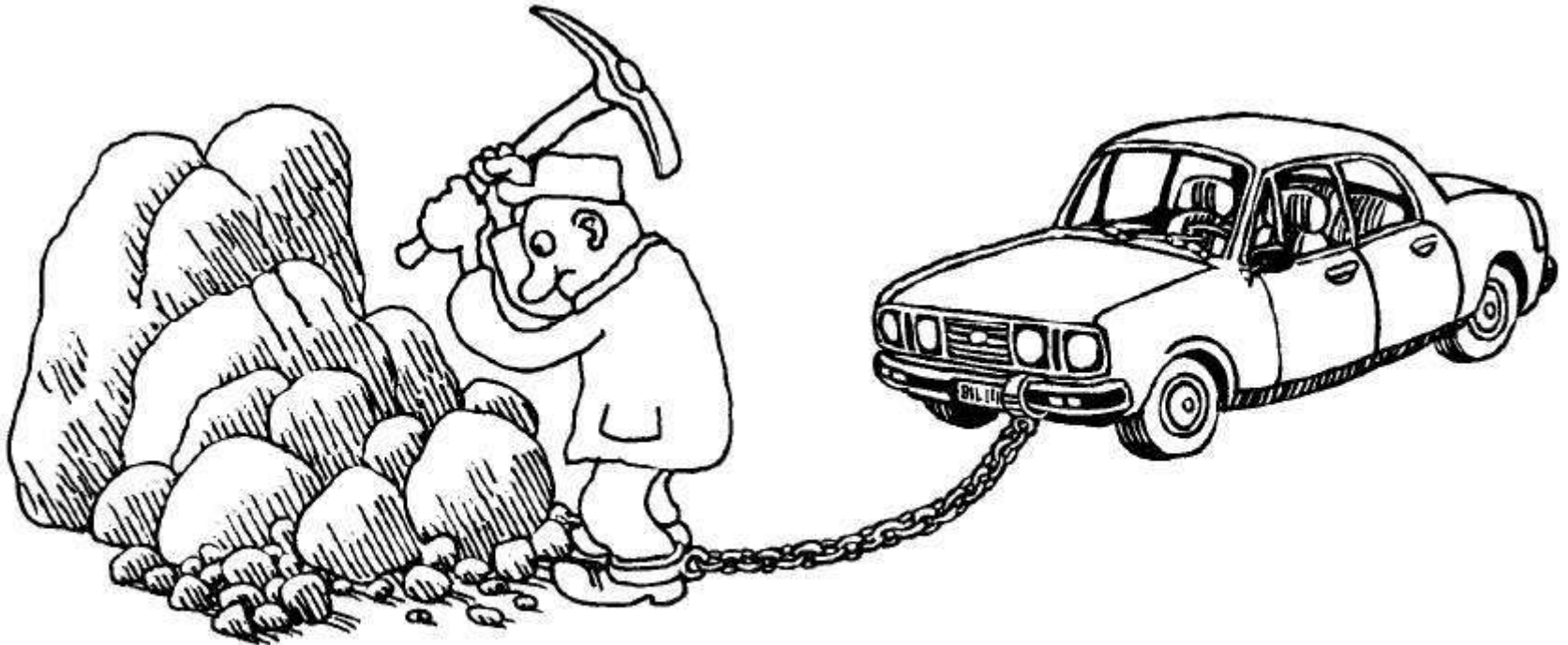
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (year 2010)



Total energy: 5,194 ktoe

from Petrol Products (3,627 ktoe), Coal (31 ktoe), Natural Gas (320) and Electricity (1,215 ktoe)

“Freedom” of the Car



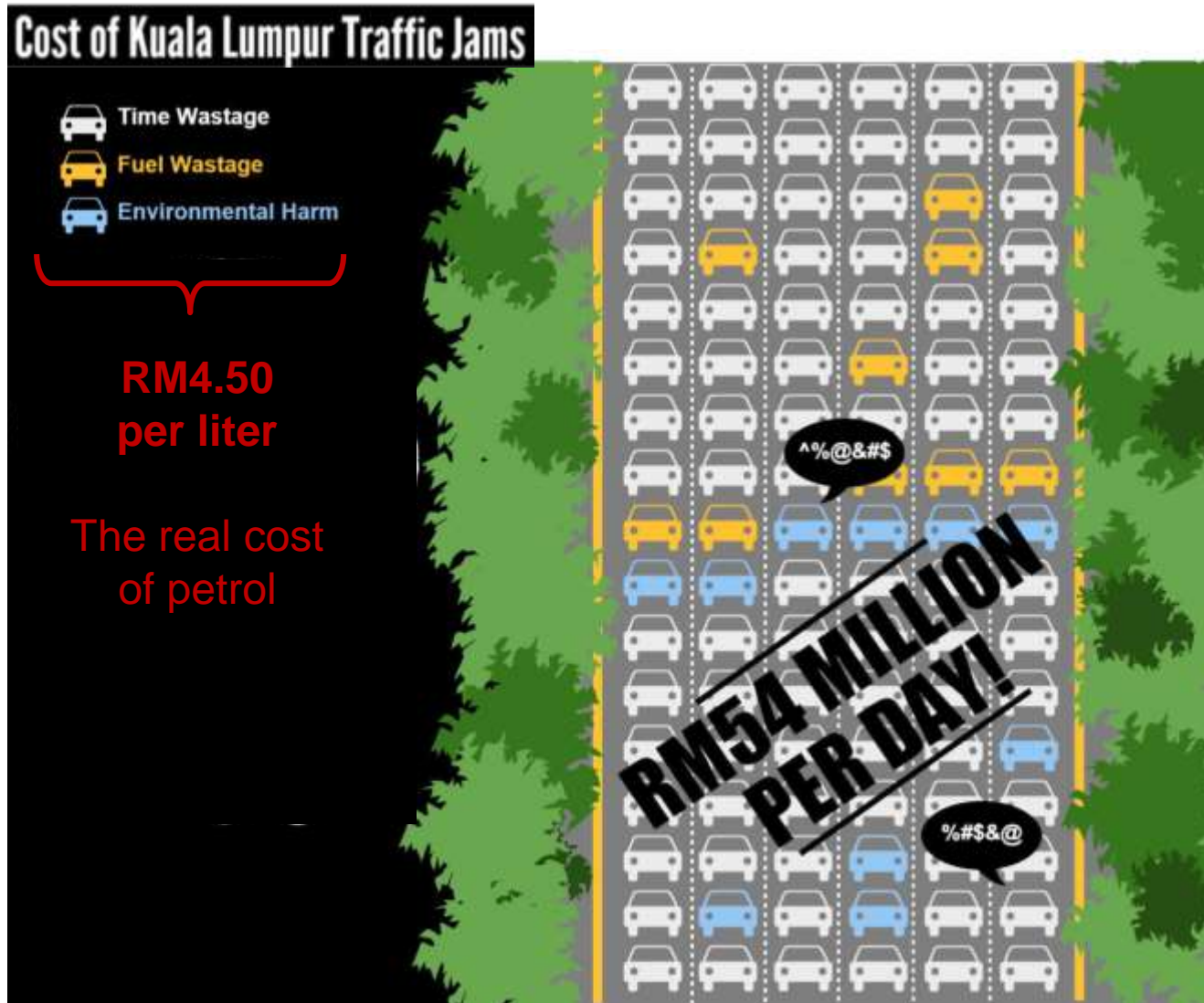
The average Danish car owner works more than one week per month in order to achieve the freedom a car provides.

Danish cartoon (1984) still relevant today

For example, 80% of bicyclists in Manila quote cost savings for choice of transport

1 million hours wasted per day

in the traffic congestions of greater Kuala Lumpur



Infographic by IEN Consultants

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a multi-lane highway. The road is filled with numerous cars, appearing as small white and dark shapes, indicating heavy traffic. The highway curves from the top left towards the bottom right. On the left side of the road, there are some industrial or commercial buildings, including a large warehouse-like structure. The surrounding area is mostly dark, suggesting trees or undeveloped land. Overlaid on the center of the image is a block of white, bold, sans-serif text.

**LET'S HAVE A MOMENT
OF SILENCE FOR ALL
THOSE WHO ARE STUCK IN
TRAFFIC ON THEIR WAY TO
THE GYM TO RIDE
STATIONARY BICYCLES.**

Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

according to The Lancet Medical journal, that also found 14% of the Malaysian population to be obese

Overweight prevalence (%)



Source: WHO Non-Communicable Diseases Country Profiles, 2011



Why is Malaysia the fattest nation in Asia?

1. Physically inactive lifestyles (less than 150 minutes of exercise per week)

More than half of Malaysian are physically inactive, whereas the global average is only 20%

2. High car ownership

80% of KL inhabitants use car for daily commute, hence, reducing walking

Malaysian's don't even like to drive
40% of Malaysians say that stress from traffic congestion is their primary frustration (Source: Frost & Sullivan)

Some answers in this article ([link](#))



By IEN Consultants, The Star, Dec 2016

Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

Local press coverage in The Star newspaper

← → ↺ www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/health/2014/11/28/are-we-concerned-about-expanding-waistlines-in-malaysia/

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BY M. JEGATHESAN

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FATTEST
IN
SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Our love of fat and carb-heavy dishes, coupled with a preference for a sedentary lifestyle, has earned Malaysia the nickname 'The Fattest Country in South-East Asia'.

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Malaysia, the fattest nation in Asia

International press coverage (February 2016)

← → ↺ www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/02/obesity-statistics-ring-alarm-bells-malaysia-160203131123319.html

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HEALTH


Obesity statistics ring alarm bells in Malaysia

Officials blame high-calorie diet and sedentary urban lifestyle as half the population is deemed overweight or obese.

[Stephanie Scawen](#) | 03 Feb 2016 17:51 GMT | Health, Asia Pacific, Malaysia

    Engagement: 1471



Obesity statistics ring alarm bells because....



The Malaysian Health Ministry of Health says there is an **epidemic** of non-communicable diseases (NCD), including diabetes.

(medical condition or disease that is non-infectious or non-transmissible)

Slow Traffic, Faster Death



Kuala Lumpur traffic. Cartoon by IEN Consultants, 2016

What can be done?

1. Make it easy and/or cheaper to run/bicycle/walk to work

- Implement shower/changing/locker facilities
- Implement bicycle parking
- Give incentives, e.g. "Bicycle & Makan"

2. Urban planning to improve alternative transport options

3. New technology

- electric bicycles
- travel apps (real-time schedules)
- self-driving cars?



Ongoing initiative

Kuala Lumpur Pedestrian and Bicycling Masterplan

KUALA LUMPUR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTERPLAN

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (SERIES 1)

19 September 2017

2017-2019 **Study period**
2019-2021 **Implementation**

Organised by:



In collaboration with:



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CENTRE for INNOVATIVE
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Concluding remarks

Reclaiming the Streets would:

1. Make cities more livable
2. Reduce energy consumption
3. Reduce noise pollution
4. Improve public health

People always tell me:

“You are going to die young from cycling in Kuala Lumpur!”

And I always answer:

“Wrong. Quite on the contrary, I’m adding 2-3 years to my life by getting exercise from bicycling”



Cycling with
colleagues
through KL
(2015)

Thank you



Commuting in Kuala Lumpur
(video [link](#))



Gregers Reimann

Managing director, IEN Consultants

gregers@ien-consultants.com | +60122755630

Singapore | Malaysia | China