



A New Zealand Academy of Applied Research Limited (NZAAR) International Event Series:  
**“Natural and Built Environment, Cities, Sustainability and Advanced Engineering”**

# Reclaiming the Streets

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# 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

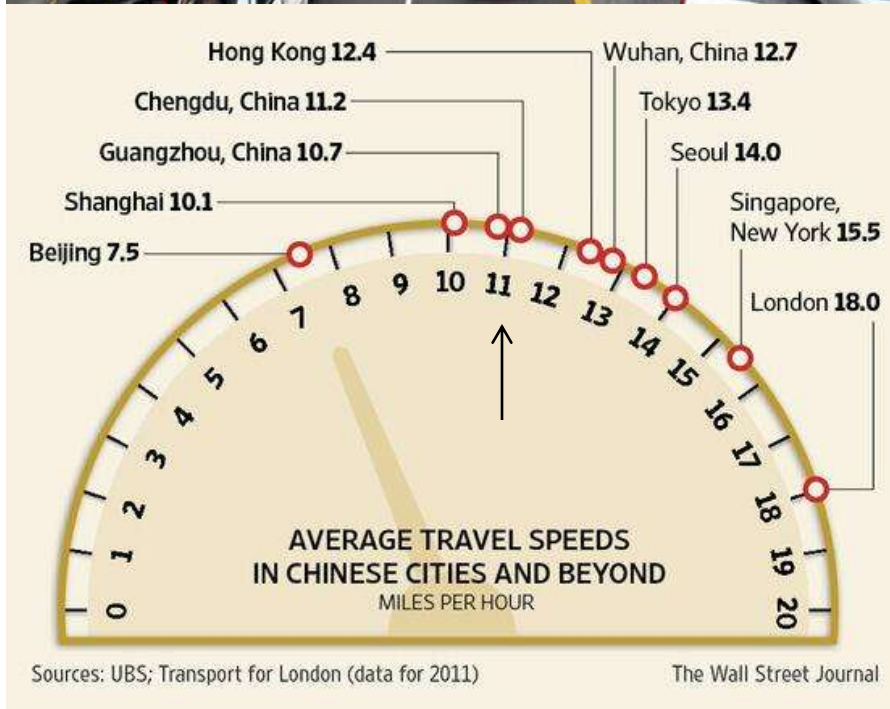


# Streets AFTER cars



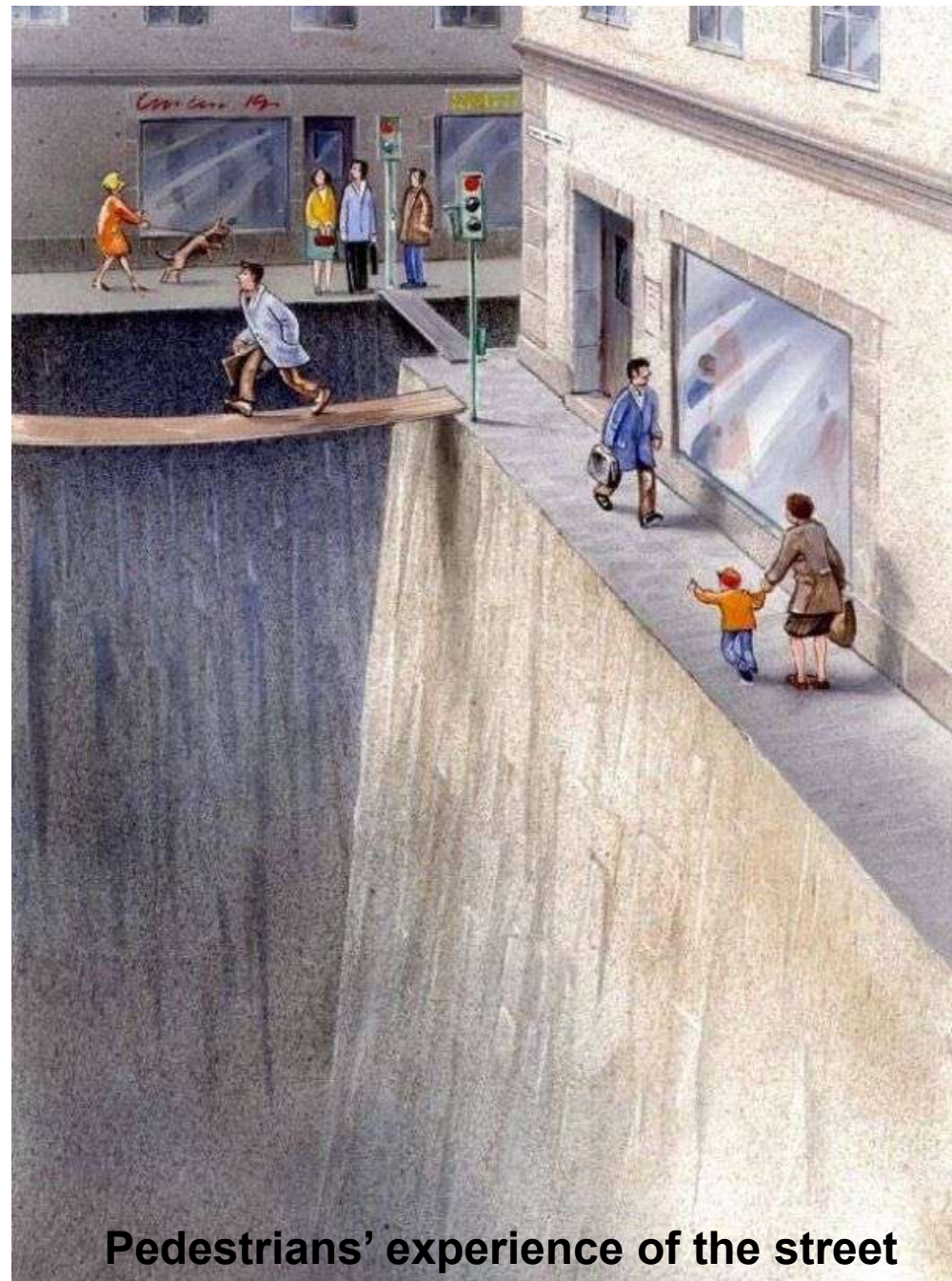
National Conference on Street and Highway Safety conference (1924), with it's biggest players all represented the auto industry, recommended to **prioritized private motor vehicles over all other transit modes.**

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.



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

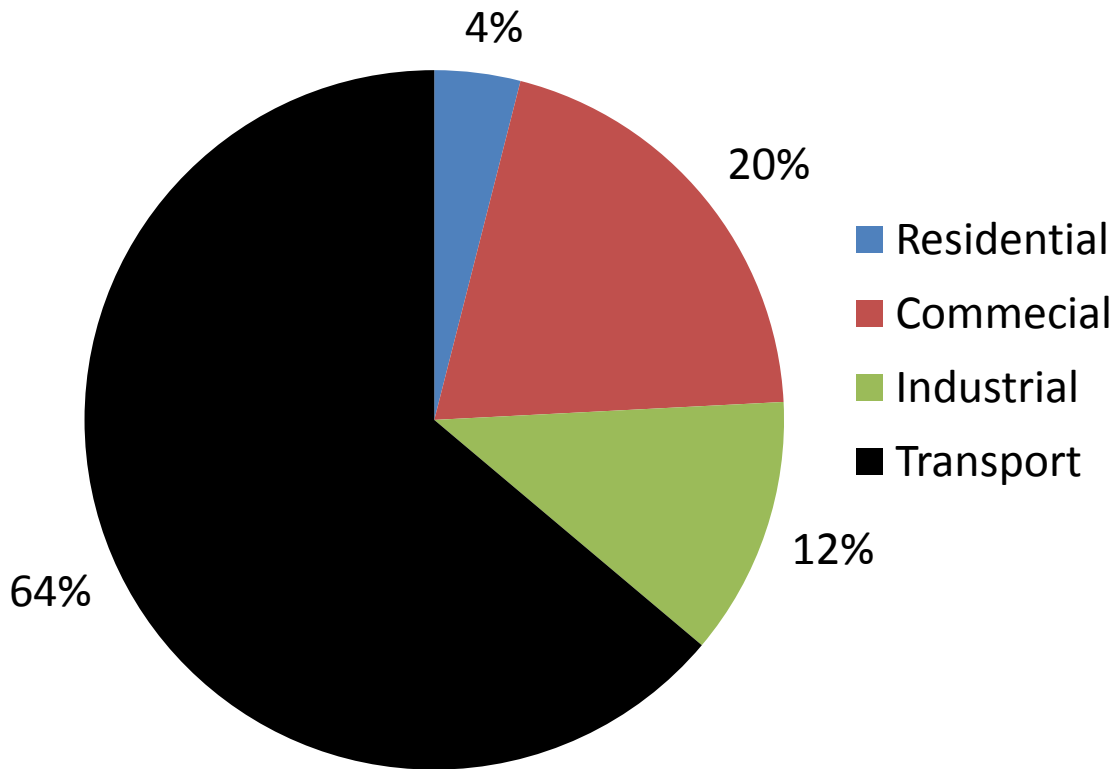
**“The real battle is for people’s minds, and this mental model of what a street is for”**



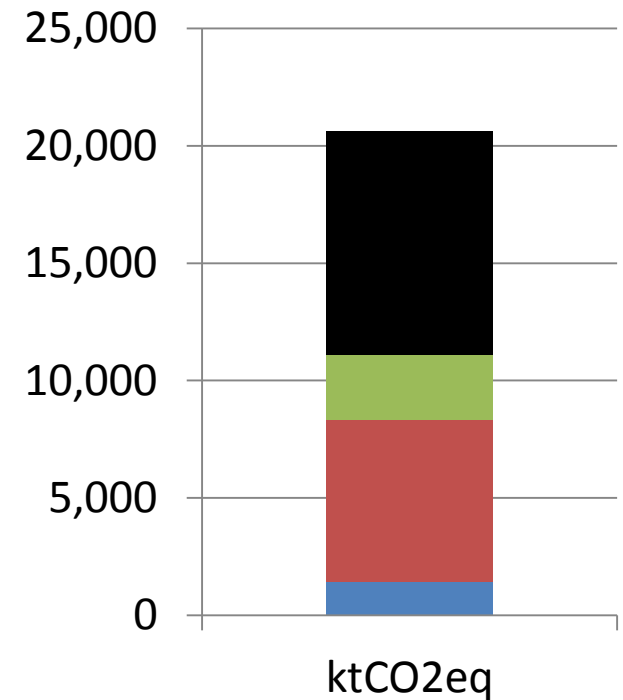
**Pedestrians' experience of the street**

# High Transport Energy in Kuala Lumpur

Final Energy Demand (year 2010)



Greenhouse Gas Emissions (year 2010)

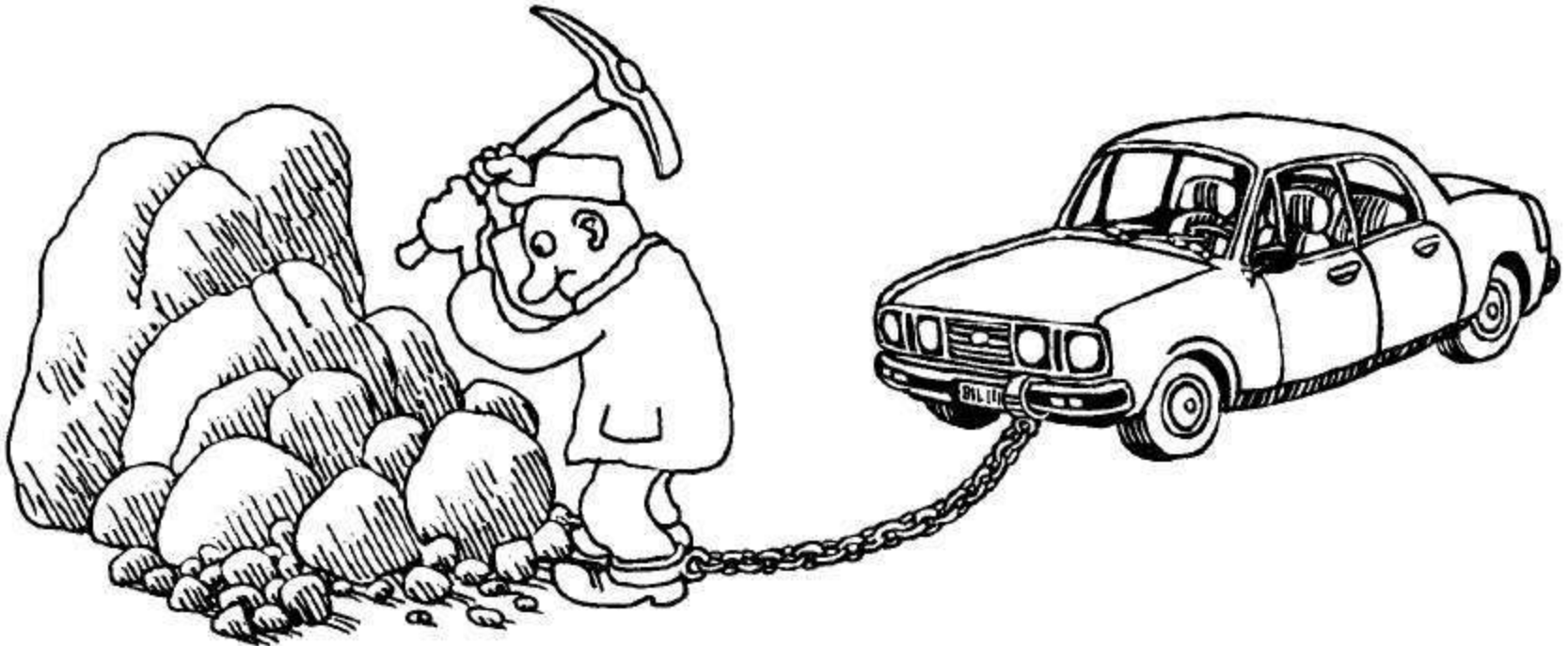


**Total energy: 5,194 ktoe**

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, likely a freeway, filled with cars. The traffic is dense, filling most of the lanes, which suggests a traffic jam or slow-moving traffic. The highway curves slightly to the right in the distance. On the left side of the highway, there are some structures, possibly a rest area or a service station, with a large building and some trees. The overall scene is in black and white, giving it a somber or serious tone.

**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/](http://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/health/2014/11/28/are-we-concerned-about-expanding-waistlines-in-malaysia/)

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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](http://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....

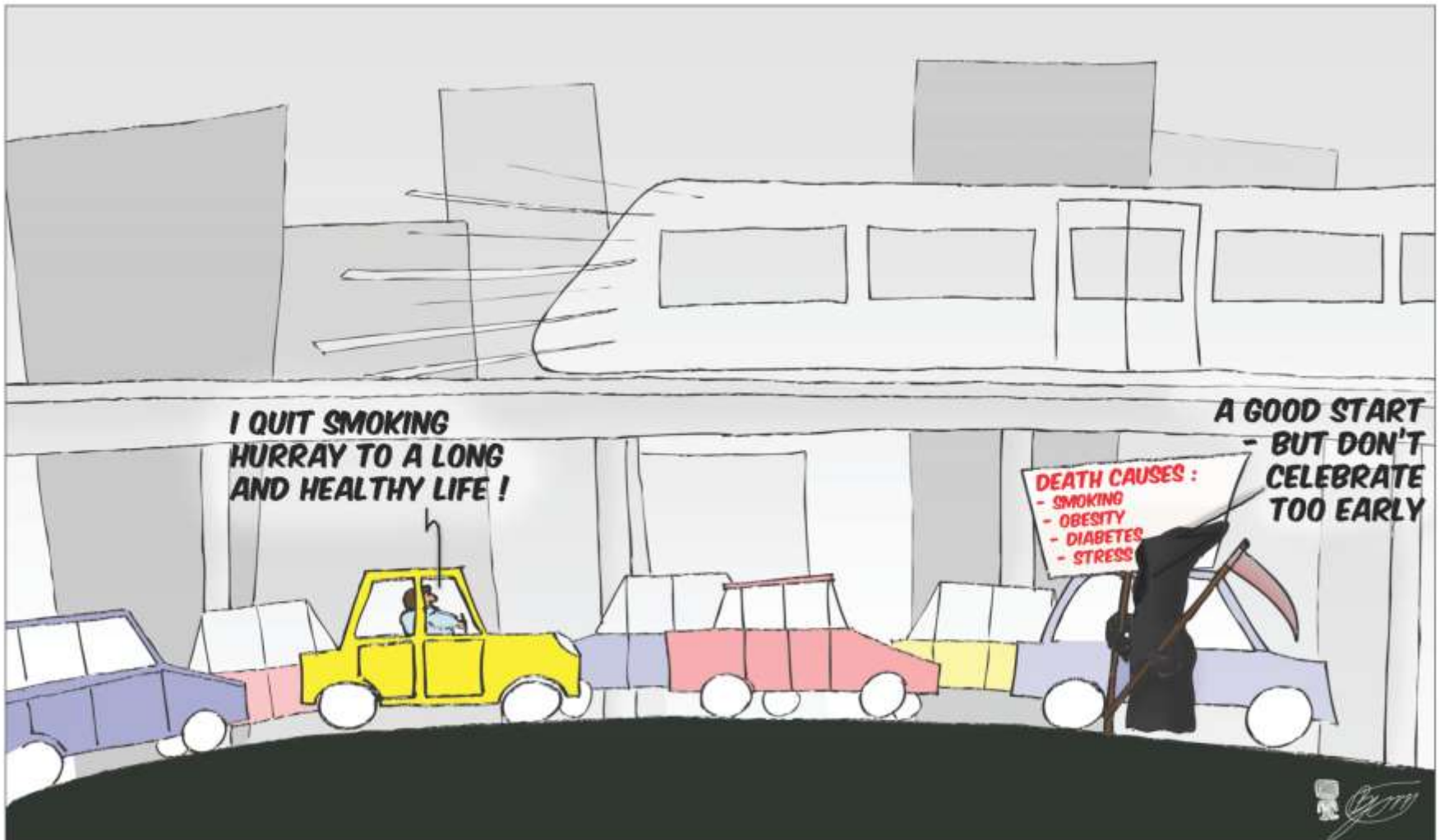


The Malaysian Health Ministry of Health says there is an **epidemic** of non-communicable diseases (NCD), including diabetes.

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



# Slow Traffic, Faster Death



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?



# 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**



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