

The State of the City

Roads and Transport

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PROBLEMS

- The Comprehensive Mobility Plan exists only on paper. The government keeps announcing projects that are not in the plan, and ignoring the ones that are.
- BBMP and BDA have been slow to develop Priority Corridors (BIG 10, Outer Ring Road), and redevelop key entry points to the city. As a result, vehicles don't choose to stay on arterial roads.
- Infrastructure development is extremely slow, and work-zone management is absent. Road surface quality is extremely poor - a standard design manual for public infrastructure is needed.
- Corruption is rampant. Kickbacks in public works are scaring away skilled contractors, and slowing down most works.
- There is over-emphasis on private vehicular movement in Budgets. Walkable footpaths exist only on a handful of streets. The bus fleet is less than half of what it should be.
- Transferring between buses is difficult and expensive. The TTMCs are in the wrong locations, and ticket prices impose a penalty on those switching buses.
- Parking policies and management exist only on paper.

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+ HOPEFUL SIGNS

- After the introduction of the Big10 system, BMTC understands that direction-orientation is vital for its financial performance. There is better logic now in deciding where to deploy new buses.
- After some initial reluctance in taking up such works, BBMP is now showing off its better roads as examples of its achievement. This should make it easier to push the city to adopt better designs for all roads.
- Cyclists and bus passengers are getting some of the attention that they need. Bus lanes are patchy, but the thinking behind them is in place. DULT is making efforts to bring some non-motorised solutions to the city, and also to advocate properly priced public parking.
- The government seems willing to take up commuter rail connectivity to nearby towns.
- BTP is the first fully-digital traffic police force in the country. Its second-generation control room has been operational fairly smoothly.
- Station access plans for Metro stations are being developed by BMLTA. Ideally, this should be done for the large bus terminals as well, and in collaboration with BBMP.

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X NOT GOOD ENOUGH

- Government has not yet acknowledged that public transport needs operational subsidy. A profitable BMTC should not be the goal. Instead, we should measure and improve level of service.
- There is virtually no effort to learn from other countries / cities on how to improve speed of construction in the roads sector. Technological advances seem to be nearly absent.
- The Budget for non-motorised transport needs to be 10x larger. There is a tendency to spend large monies for Metro and the roads, but not for NMT.
- A standard manual for infrastructure [Bangalore Street Design Manual], which covers roads, signals, junctions, under-passes, crosswalks, and much more is needed.
- The new designs for drains and underground cabling must be adopted on all roads. Soak pits are needed every 100 m to charge groundwater & prevent flooding.
- There is no routine data collection to understand changing patterns of mobility, nor a planning process to respond to growing needs.
- Priced public parking must be far more wide-spread.