

Green Mobility Planning for Sustainable Growth in Expanding Urban Areas

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on sustainable transportation infrastructure planning for rapidly growing urban areas. Rapid urbanization has increased traffic congestion, pollution, fuel consumption, road accidents, and pressure on existing transport systems. The study highlights the need for integrated transport planning that includes public transport improvement, pedestrian facilities, cycling infrastructure, electric mobility, smart traffic management, and proper land-use coordination. The findings show that sustainable transport planning can reduce private vehicle dependency, improve mobility efficiency, lower environmental impact, and support inclusive urban development. Overall, sustainable transportation is essential for creating safe, efficient, green, and livable cities.

Keywords: *Sustainable Transportation, Urban Mobility, Infrastructure Planning.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable transportation infrastructure planning for rapidly growing urban areas has become an essential requirement for achieving balanced urban development, environmental protection, economic efficiency, and improved quality of life. Rapid urbanization has increased the pressure on existing transport systems, especially in developing and densely populated cities where population growth, migration, industrial expansion, commercial activities, and rising private vehicle ownership have created serious mobility challenges. As urban areas expand, the demand for safe, affordable, reliable, and efficient transport facilities also increases. However, in many cities, transportation infrastructure has not developed at the same pace as urban growth. This results in traffic congestion, longer travel time, air pollution, noise pollution, road accidents, fuel wastage, parking problems, and unequal access to mobility services. Sustainable transportation planning focuses on developing transport systems that meet present mobility needs without damaging the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It gives importance not only to road construction and vehicle movement but also to environmental sustainability, social inclusion, economic feasibility, public transport improvement, pedestrian safety, cycling facilities, smart traffic management, and integration between land use and transportation. In rapidly growing urban areas, transportation planning must move beyond traditional road-widening approaches because simply increasing road capacity often encourages more vehicle use and fails to solve congestion permanently. Instead, sustainable planning promotes a balanced transport network where public transport, non-motorized transport, shared mobility, and intelligent transportation systems work together. Public transport systems such as buses, metro rail, bus rapid transit, electric buses, and suburban rail play a major role in reducing dependence on private vehicles and lowering carbon emissions. Similarly, pedestrian pathways, cycle tracks, safe crossings, and barrier-free infrastructure are important for making cities accessible for all groups, including children, elderly people, women, persons with disabilities, and low-income populations. Sustainable transportation infrastructure also supports compact and mixed land-use development, where residential, commercial, educational, and employment areas are planned in a way that reduces unnecessary travel distance. Transit-oriented development is another important concept in

this context, as it encourages high-density development around public transport corridors and improves the efficiency of mobility systems. Environmental concerns are also central to sustainable transport planning because the transport sector is one of the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and urban air pollution. The use of cleaner fuels, electric mobility, green corridors, energy-efficient street lighting, and low-emission zones can help reduce the negative environmental impact of urban transport. At the same time, modern technology has created new possibilities for better transport planning through intelligent traffic signals, GPS-based vehicle tracking, real-time passenger information systems, smart parking solutions, digital ticketing, traffic data analysis, and integrated mobility platforms. These technologies can improve traffic flow, reduce waiting time, increase safety, and support evidence-based decision-making. Economic sustainability is also important because transport infrastructure requires large investment and long-term maintenance. Therefore, planning must consider cost-effective designs, proper resource allocation, public-private partnerships, and long-term financial viability. Social sustainability must also be ensured so that transportation services are not limited to privileged groups but are available to all sections of society. In rapidly growing urban areas, poor transport planning can increase inequality by isolating low-income communities from jobs, education, healthcare, and social opportunities. Therefore, sustainable transportation infrastructure planning should be inclusive, people-centered, and future-oriented. It must involve coordination among urban planners, engineers, policymakers, environmental experts, transport agencies, and local communities. Overall, sustainable transportation infrastructure planning is not only a technical requirement but also a strategic approach for creating livable, healthy, safe, and resilient cities. It helps urban areas manage growth effectively while reducing environmental damage, improving mobility, supporting economic development, and enhancing the daily life of citizens.

II. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Lis and Mądził (2026) had proposed a comprehensive framework for integrating Digital Twins (DT) with real-time traffic optimization systems to improve urban mobility management in smart cities. Using the Pobitno Roundabout in Rzeszów as a case study, the authors had developed a calibrated microsimulation model, validated through the GEH statistic, which had served as the foundation of the proposed Digital Twin. The study had extended beyond static scenario evaluation by introducing an Adaptive Inflow Metering (AIM) logic that had interacted with IoT sensor data. Although traditional geometric upgrades such as turbo-roundabouts had also been examined, the simulation findings had indicated that geometric modifications alone, without dynamic control mechanisms, might not have been sufficient under peak traffic conditions, resulting in LOS F. Therefore, the research had demonstrated that the Digital Twin framework enabled the testing of Software-in-the-Loop (SiL) solutions, in which Python-based algorithms had dynamically adjusted inflow parameters to prevent gridlock. The findings had ultimately confirmed that combining physical infrastructure improvements with digital real-time optimization strategies had been essential for achieving sustainable green transport objectives and reducing emissions at congested urban intersections.

Prasad et al. (2026) had reviewed the growing concern of CO₂ emissions and had emphasized that these emissions had significantly contributed to global warming, which had necessitated a transition toward electric vehicles (EVs) in the transportation sector. The authors had noted that, in line with global climate goals and national projections, Bhubaneswar, as a designated Smart City, had been envisioned as a green transportation hub by 2030. The study had highlighted that although EV ownership in Bhubaneswar had increased substantially, the growth had been constrained by inadequate charging infrastructure and poor distribution of charging facilities. It had been observed that existing national and state policies had lacked

a practical methodology for on-ground EV charging infrastructure development. Therefore, the authors had recommended digitized geospatial analysis to assess EV demand and charging requirements based on battery specifications and charging methods. A spatial allocation model had been proposed according to road density and activity zones. The study had ultimately presented a structured methodology for estimating EV demand and infrastructure needs for 2025 and 2030, supported by policy measures and intelligent technologies for robust urban EV infrastructure development.

Aydin et al. (2025) conducted a review on the transformation of transportation systems under the influences of urbanization, sustainability challenges, and digital technology advancements. They synthesized the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI), fuzzy logic, and multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) in transportation research. A comprehensive literature search had been performed in the Scopus database using specific AI, fuzzy, and MCDM keywords, and studies were screened according to explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, resulting in 73 eligible publications from 2006 to 2025. The review protocol included systematic data extraction on methodological approaches, application domains, and geographic distribution. Findings indicated the prevalence of hybrid fuzzy AHP and TOPSIS methods, widespread use of machine learning for prediction and optimization, and a predominant focus on logistics and infrastructure planning. Geographic analysis revealed a concentration of research activity in Asia, highlighting the need for broader international collaboration. The study also noted challenges related to methodological complexity, data limitations, and model interpretability, and it suggested future directions including reinforcement learning, real-time analytics, and big data-driven adaptive solutions, providing a critical reference for researchers and policymakers.

Monteiro et al. (2024) reviewed critical issues related to the development of sustainable urban environments, emphasizing the influence of transport and urban form on energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. They aimed to provide an overview of the state-of-the-art and to identify directions suggested by the literature for sustainable urban planning. The study synthesized current research and practices, highlighting the interdependence between urban design and transportation systems in achieving sustainability objectives. Key aspects of city planning and transport policies, such as urban form, urban sprawl, mixed land use, densification, infill, and public spaces, were examined for their effects on transport dynamics, including modal choices and energy use. Innovative planning approaches, including transit-oriented development, and technological advancements, such as electric mobility, were also analyzed for their potential contributions to sustainable urban transport. The authors concluded by emphasizing the need for holistic, adaptable strategies and underscored directions for future research and practical applications to develop cities that are environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.

Musa et al. (2023) examined the challenges of sustainable traffic management in smart cities, noting that previous research had given it limited attention due to its complex and heterogeneous nature. They aimed to address traffic-related issues by proposing a framework that integrated Internet of Things (IoT) and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications. The study employed a dual approach, treating traffic as both a modeling- and analysis-based problem and as a decision-making issue in line with prior research. Real-time traffic data, along with vehicle and road user information, were collected using AI sensors and ITS devices, and were processed through machine learning algorithms and cloud computing to support traffic management, decision-making policies, and future documentation. The framework was reported to enhance traffic forecasting, decongestion, alternative route suggestions, and urban transportation efficiency, while also promoting public transport and low-carbon zones to mitigate pollution, thereby contributing to sustainable and environmentally friendly urban mobility.

Abubakar and Alshammari (2023) examined the role of urban planning in fostering sustainable, low-carbon cities, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. They argued that sustainable cities require a balance between human socioeconomic activities and the natural environment, but noted a significant gap in literature regarding planning strategies in the Global South, where carbon emissions were projected to surpass 127% of those from developed economies by 2040. The authors reported that although various low-carbon schemes had been implemented in the GCC, their effectiveness was debated, with some critics perceiving them as greenwashing rather than genuine sustainability efforts. Through desktop research, they found that the UAE dominated half of the regional green building market and produced 82% of total renewables, while wastewater recycling averaged only 34%, ranging from 90% in the UAE to 13% in Kuwait. They further observed that urban population densities remained below UN-Habitat recommendations, low-carbon transportation was concentrated in capitals, and urban greening initiatives were gradually expanding. The study emphasized the need for integrating energy and water demand reduction into land-use planning and promoting sustainable public lifestyles.

Epicoco and Falagarrio (2022) examined transportation as a crucial activity for the socio-economic development of countries, while noting that it was also among the most energy-intensive and polluting sectors, with its environmental impact projected to rise in the future. They argued that this situation necessitated more efficient and sustainable management of the transportation sector. The study investigated the primary challenges in developing sustainable transportation systems, focusing on the European Union, and highlighted recent trends to identify key research areas that could mitigate environmental impacts. Following European Commission guidelines, three sub-themes were addressed: supply chain networks, intermodal freight transportation, and urban passenger transport. Each sub-theme was analyzed through a literature review in terms of needs, barriers, and emerging research trends. The authors reported contributions aimed at fulfilling identified needs and overcoming barriers as a basis for future research agendas. Their findings were considered applicable to industrialized countries seeking to reduce environmental impacts and also offered guidance for developing countries by showcasing best practices and adaptation limits.

Verma et al. (2021) had reviewed the growing transportation challenges in India and had observed that rapid population growth and increasing vehicular ownership had contributed to traffic congestion, pollution, and road accidents. The authors had emphasized that although the transportation sector had remained vital to the national economy, it had also emerged as a major contributor to climate change. They had noted that sustainable transportation policies had increasingly been framed in response to climate concerns, yet carbon emissions had continued to remain high despite international commitments. The study had further highlighted that India's urban transport policy had gradually shifted from a supply-oriented approach to a more demand-oriented and systems-based framework since independence. It had discussed the evolution of government policy interventions, identified key gaps and challenges in existing policies, and had suggested possible directions for improved policy formulation. The findings had indicated that most initiatives had not yet achieved their intended success, mainly due to inadequate monitoring, complex institutional arrangements, weak urban governance, irregular land-use zoning, and ineffective development and mobility planning.

Thondoo et al. (2020) examined the challenges faced by cities in developing countries due to increased motorization, urbanization, and population growth, emphasizing that urban transport planning could contribute to healthier cities, yet research on the alignment between policies and citizen needs in Africa had been limited. They adopted a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the correspondence between urban transport policies and self-reported citizen needs in Port Louis, Mauritius, employing logistic regression

models to identify associations between needs and demographic factors such as age, gender, and income. Three policy initiatives—the light metro rail system, bus modernization scheme, and road decongestion program—were analyzed alongside six identified citizen needs and transit preferences derived from 1,523 surveys. Findings suggested that citizens predominantly expressed needs for improved sidewalks, public and green spaces, pedestrianization, street-vendor centralization, and regulation of private vehicle entry. The study reported that existing policies addressed only half of these needs, mainly those voiced by lower-income groups, but largely neglected active travel modes, health, and social co-benefits, focusing instead on economic infrastructure. The authors concluded that citizen-centred approaches offered a valuable avenue for reforming urban transport planning towards more equitable and health-oriented cities in developing countries.

Wey (2019) argued that since the beginning of the twenty-first century, urban development worldwide had increasingly deviated from ideal designs and original plans, which, according to the study, had led to several urban problems such as congestion, severe air pollution, uncontrolled urban sprawl, and inappropriate low-density land development. These conditions were identified as “urban illnesses” that negatively affected urban life. The study noted that growth management concepts had emerged primarily to address such negative impacts. It was further reported that even numerous developed countries had failed to achieve their initial development strategy goals and had subsequently adopted more specific strategies incorporating three innovative growth constructs: smart growth, sustainable growth, and inclusive growth. The study indicated that these approaches were claimed to enhance urban quality of life if the development concept were substituted by a growth-oriented perspective. Consequently, the research suggested that contemporary urban actors, including practical planners and official decision-making units, could simultaneously pursue sustainable urban development and improved quality of life by following these innovative growth management principles.

Bamwesigye and Hlavackova (2019) emphasized that transportation had long been considered a critical link connecting various aspects of life globally, including the natural environment, social well-being, and economic development. They noted that safe, clean, sustainable, and equitable transport systems were often associated with thriving cities and urban centers. However, they reported that many transportation systems in urban areas were unsustainable and, in some cases, posed potential threats to environmental, social, and economic conditions for future generations. The authors argued that reversing such trends required collaboration among multiple stakeholders at regional, national, and international levels. Their review discussed diverse definitions of sustainable transport and examined aspects of smart transport for modern cities, including cycling and the role of women. They highlighted comparative case studies on women’s participation in bicycle transport in the Netherlands and Germany versus Kenya and Uganda, concluding that the concepts of smart cities and sustainable transport exhibited heterogeneous characteristics worldwide.

III. METHODOLOGY

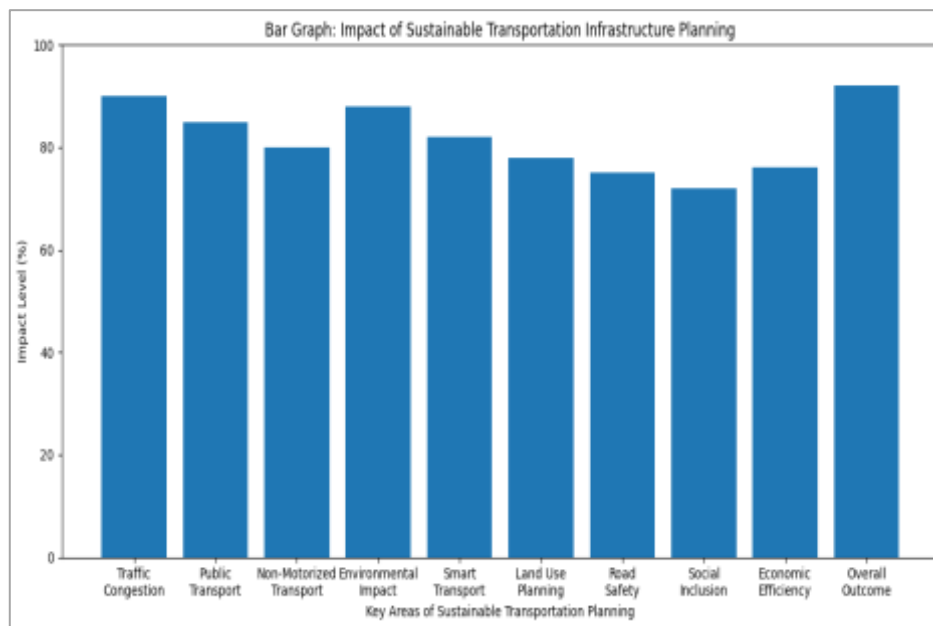
The methodology of this study was based on a descriptive and analytical research approach to examine sustainable transportation infrastructure planning in rapidly growing urban areas. First, the major transportation problems of urban areas were identified, including traffic congestion, increasing private vehicle use, air pollution, poor public transport, road safety issues, and limited pedestrian and cycling facilities. Secondary data were collected from research papers, government reports, urban transport policies, transport planning documents, and previous studies related to sustainable mobility and urban infrastructure development. The study also considered important transport indicators such as traffic volume, travel time, fuel consumption, public transport availability, pedestrian accessibility, road safety,

environmental impact, and economic efficiency. These indicators helped in understanding the present condition of urban transportation systems. A comparative analysis was carried out to evaluate the role of different sustainable transport measures, such as public transport improvement, electric mobility, non-motorized transport facilities, smart traffic management systems, and land-use transport integration. The collected information was analyzed through tabular presentation and graphical interpretation. Impact levels were assigned to different planning factors to show their importance in sustainable urban transportation development. The bar graph was used to compare the contribution of each factor in improving urban mobility. Finally, suitable planning strategies were suggested for rapidly growing urban areas. These strategies focused on reducing congestion, improving public transport, encouraging walking and cycling, promoting clean energy vehicles, using smart technology, and ensuring inclusive transport access for all citizens. Overall, the methodology helped in identifying key challenges and sustainable solutions for future urban transport planning.

IV. RESULT

S. No.	Key Area	Result / Finding	Impact on Urban Transportation
1	Traffic Congestion	Rapid urban growth increased the number of vehicles on roads, creating frequent congestion during peak hours.	Increased travel time, fuel consumption, and stress among commuters.
2	Public Transport	Efficient bus services, metro systems, electric buses, and BRT corridors were found to improve mass mobility.	Reduced dependency on private vehicles and improved travel efficiency.
3	Non-Motorized Transport	Footpaths, cycle tracks, pedestrian crossings, and safe walking zones were found essential for sustainable mobility.	Improved safety, reduced pollution, and encouraged healthy travel habits.
4	Environmental Impact	Transport-related emissions contributed to air pollution, noise pollution, and high fuel use in urban areas.	Created the need for electric mobility, green corridors, and cleaner transport systems.
5	Smart Transport Systems	Intelligent traffic signals, GPS tracking, smart parking, and real-time passenger information improved traffic control.	Reduced delays, improved route planning, and enhanced commuter convenience.
6	Land Use Planning	Poor connection between residential, commercial, and employment areas increased unnecessary travel distance.	Highlighted the need for integrated land-use and transport planning.
7	Road Safety	High traffic density and poor pedestrian facilities increased the risk of accidents.	Required safer crossings, speed control, signage, and dedicated walking/cycling spaces.
8	Social Inclusion	Low-income groups, elderly people, students, and disabled persons often faced limited transport access.	Created the need for affordable, accessible, and inclusive transport services.
9	Economic Efficiency	Congestion and poor transport management caused fuel wastage and productivity loss.	Sustainable planning helped reduce travel costs and improve economic productivity.
10	Overall Outcome	A balanced transport system combining public transport, walking, cycling, smart technology, and green infrastructure was found most effective.	Supported long-term sustainable, safe, and efficient urban development.

Bar Graph



The bar graph shows the impact level of different factors related to sustainable transportation infrastructure planning in rapidly growing urban areas. The highest impact is seen in the overall outcome at 92%, followed by traffic congestion at 90% and environmental impact at 88%. This indicates that sustainable planning can strongly reduce congestion, pollution, and urban transport problems. Public transport also shows a high impact level of 85%, proving its importance in reducing private vehicle dependency. Smart transport systems and non-motorized transport also contribute positively. Social inclusion has the lowest value at 72%, showing that more attention is needed for equal transport access.

V. CONCLUSION

Sustainable transportation infrastructure planning is essential for rapidly growing urban areas because it helps cities manage increasing population, traffic pressure, pollution, and mobility demand in an organized manner. The study concludes that traditional transport planning based only on road expansion is not sufficient for solving long-term urban transport problems. Instead, a balanced approach is required, including efficient public transport, pedestrian-friendly streets, cycle tracks, smart traffic systems, electric mobility, and proper land-use planning. The result shows that sustainable transportation planning can reduce congestion, improve road safety, lower fuel consumption, decrease air and noise pollution, and make urban travel more affordable and accessible. Public transport systems such as buses, metro services, and electric vehicles can reduce dependency on private vehicles. Similarly, walking and cycling facilities can support healthy and eco-friendly mobility. Overall, sustainable transportation infrastructure supports economic growth, environmental protection, and social inclusion. Therefore, rapidly growing urban areas should adopt integrated, technology-based, and people-centered transport planning to create safe, efficient, green, and livable cities for the future.

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