

## **Abstract**

This study examines policy decisions and investments in urban transportation in Kuala Lumpur over the past twenty years. Methodology and concepts in transportation planning are shown to have been influenced, and, in some cases, dictated by planning philosophy fashioned in advanced Western cities with little modification to accommodate local needs, priorities and constraints. During the 1960s and 1970s an emphasis on expensive highway construction to facilitate traffic flow, and a clear neglect of facilities for public transport resulted in a transportation system favourable to private users at the expense of public passengers. However, an examination of the city's long term transportation plan shows that the trend is now toward a nationalized, state-owned and controlled public transport enterprise. Many policy changes have taken place and a number of schemes have been only partially implemented. Overall, the planning approaches have been inappropriate. Private users who are in the minority are favoured at the expense of public passengers who are in the majority. The paper argues that heavy investment decisions have precluded low-cost solutions, and rigid regulation in the enterprises has wrongly been seen as better than liberalization and privatization.