



Standards for Cities



We've all heard of the International Organization for Standardization, or ISO, a body that promotes the adoption of standards in management, commerce and industry. Can similar standards be applied to cities? What are the key criteria for assessing a city's service delivery and quality of life?

In the latest CLC Lecture, the Centre featured Terry Hill, ISO President and former Chairman of Arup Group, and Rob Steele, ISO Secretary-General, who were in Singapore to introduce the latest ISO standard on cities.

[Read more](#)

Click the video above for the full lecture.



Terry Hill, ISO President and former Chairman of Arup Group, highlights the relevance of international standards in cities.



Rob Steele, ISO Secretary-General, shares the newly released ISO 37120 standard on city indicators, its uses and limitations.

What's Your Take?

Do you think quantitative standards like ISO can measure 'quality of life' across cities?

[Take the Poll](#)

Perspectives

Through the post-event feedback for the CLC lecture on "Of Standards and Cities", we posed the question "The new ISO 37120:2014 outlines key measurements for evaluating a city's service delivery and quality of life. Areas covered include: Economy, Education, Energy, Environment, Finance, Fire and emergency response, Governance, Health, Recreation, Safety, Shelter, Solid waste, Telecommunications and innovation, Transportation, Urban planning, Wastewater, Water and sanitation. What do you think are the top two to three areas that Singapore should focus on? And why?" We share quotes from our participants below:

Solid Waste and Education

Solid waste: Singapore does not have land for landfill, and our recycling rates are quite low despite the National Environmental Agency's efforts.

Education: turning young people into informed, educated and innovative citizens who can engage in critical discourse about life in Singapore and the world.

- Lau Ying Shan, Senior Engineer, PUB, Singapore's national water agency

Health, Recreation and Transportation

It should focus on all aspects mentioned, but more attention on:

- Health: air and noise pollution impact quality of life significantly and is especially of great concern for an aging population.
- Recreation: provide more blue-green public spaces at walking distance from homes and where families and friends can come together to recreate.
- Transportation: shift focus to become a more walkable and cycleable city, instead of remaining a car-centric city

- **Jair Smits, Sustainable Urban Development Specialist, Witteveen+Bos SouthEast Asia Pte Ltd**

"We Make No Exceptions"



Dominated by cycling lanes and tramways, Antwerp is a city of green spaces and elegant buildings and the second most populous city in Belgium. Yet, a visitor to the city would find it hard to reconcile genteel Antwerp with its position at the top of the cocaine charts.

Hear CLC's exclusive interview with His Excellency Bart De Wever, Mayor of Antwerp, as part of his visit to Singapore in October 2014. He shares how the city has taken bold steps to promote cycling as well as enforce a "war on drugs".

Achieving Active Mobility in Cities

Can we re-think urban transport so that walking and cycling become real mobility options that make our cities healthier, safer and more sociable? A new report - *Creating Healthy Places through Active Mobility* - prepared by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and CLC, presents these strategies.

The report points out that an emphasis on walking and cycling helps improve the liveability of urban areas by orienting design and development towards people, rather than automobiles. It addresses key challenges such as institutional frameworks, infrastructure designs, culture, behaviour and perceptions. It also provides suggestions to make Singapore more liveable, with lessons drawn from cities such as Amsterdam, Taipei, Copenhagen, Seoul and New York City.

This study is the result of extensive research that began in November 2013, which engaged participants from the private sector, government and civic groups through two workshops to discuss ideas on active mobility in Singapore.

The report was launched at ULI's 2014 Fall Meeting in New York City on 22 October.

View the full report [here](#).

Following the launch, Singapore's National Development Minister Khaw Boon Wan blogged on his support to promote cycling and walking in Singapore. Read the article [here](#).



Learning from Rotterdam and Copenhagen

Cycling as a mode of transport is prevalent in both Rotterdam and Copenhagen, well integrated in the overall urban and transport planning and widely accepted by the people. What were their success factors? The delegation from CLC's fifth leaders in urban governance programme (LUGP)* shares key learning points from each city, as part of the overseas study-trip component in the 3-week LUGP programme with the Centre.

From the Dutch: bold infrastructural changes

The Netherlands has a strong cycling culture although it was not always the case in the past. The 1950s and 1970s saw a proliferation of cars; houses were demolished to make roads and there were congestion, pollution and many accidents. Protests against road accidents and demand for anti-car policies in the 1970s pushed planners from car-based planning to "cycling-inclusive" planning.



Cycling-inclusive planning requires investment in all aspects, from cycling infrastructure, to enacting laws, to education and promotion. In Rotterdam, about 75% of people own bicycles and this cuts across all ages. Kids pick up cycling from a young age and they have cycling exams when they are 10 to 11 years old. The introduction of electric bikes has allowed the elderly to go further distances with ease.

Infrastructural provision requires integrated planning, not just adding cycling tracks, and these could include:

- Provision of cycle networks, with specific design guidelines to ensure safe intersections
- Redesign of carriage-ways to make space for cyclists and pedestrians such as the conversion of 5-lane to 2-lane roads; cycling tracks are level with roads, instead of raised
- Provision of ample bicycle parking spaces and bicycle shelters
- Availability of public rental bikes at low rates
- Rules to limit car speeds, such as 30km/hr zones in residential areas

From the Danes: a people-centric planning process



In a briefing by [Gehl Architects](#), the key message was "Sustainable cities are people cities". Urban spaces are platforms for engagement in cities and this is evident from the switch from "hardscapes" to "softscapes" (i.e., from street to urban space, from barrier to connection for pedestrians, from classical to experimental design, from passive to active recreation, etc.) Activities in urban spaces have significantly increased with more seats than car parking lots. The waterfront park in the inner harbour (Islands Brygge) is an example of this change; where the promenade has become a magnet and people come from as far as 20km away to walk around the area or swim in the harbour.

The [International Federation for Housing and Planning](#) supported this point through their briefing on "People for Cities". They shared that for planners to create cities that empower and are inclusive, productive, resilient, sustainable and liveable, they must build consensus. And this is largely through ground-up initiatives and strong community involvement. We highlight some key points from the presentation:

- Urban leaders (be it thought leaders or politicians) need to ask the right questions and to do the right things; we need intelligent and adaptive leadership and a good governance system to lead people.
- A city needs an urban vision and an urban perspective; we need to understand the urban and human scale to create using the human eye.
- Smart infrastructure can help create people-centric cities.

** LUGP is CLC's flagship capability development programme for officers likely to take up strategic positions in Singapore in the future. The 5th run, held from 8 September to 15 October 2014, brought 28 participants on a study trip to the Netherlands and Denmark to learn from their experience in successful urban development.*

"Go to the Root of the Problem"



CLC interviewed Arun Jain, urban designer and urban strategist and board member of International Federation for Housing and Planning, at the WORLD CITIES SUMMIT 2014, on the key challenge facing cities today.

In this video, Mr Jain shares that cities should find solutions to the root causes of problems so as to become more resilient. [Hear more](#)

Customise Your Solutions

[We] should chop a system down into different scales and study them in parts - national, regional, district, street, human scales, etc. - different scales require different tools and stakeholders to solve a problem.

- Prof. Edward Ng, Professor of Architecture, Chinese University of Hong Kong, shares his insights with CLC at the WORLD CITIES SUMMIT 2014, on how cities can be improved with urban climatology and sustainable architecture. [Hear more](#)



Medellín - A Better City through Mobility

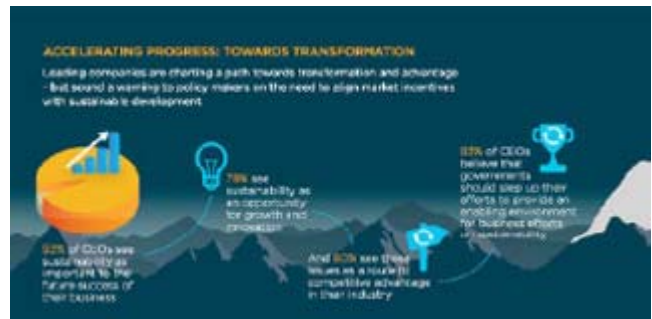


From its dark past of drugs and violence, Medellín today is Colombia's best example of remarkable recovery. The city's transformation in recent years has attracted global attention. The Urban Land Institute, City Group and Wall Street Journal declared Medellín "Innovative City of the Year" in 2013,

and it received a LEE KUAN YEW WORLD CITY PRIZE Special Mention in 2014.

Read the URBAN SOLUTIONS case study on page 67 [here](#).

The Seven Steps to Sustainability



As fast-growing economies continue to expand and urbanise over the coming decades, sustainability challenges will only become more intense. While governments seek to improve the living standards of their citizens through cleaner growth and smarter infrastructure, businesses need to step up and play a bigger role too. Peter Lacy and Ynse de Boer explain how this can be done.

Read the URBAN SOLUTIONS essay on page 91 [here](#).

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