

Improving Human Transportation in Montréal

Lessons from Medellín

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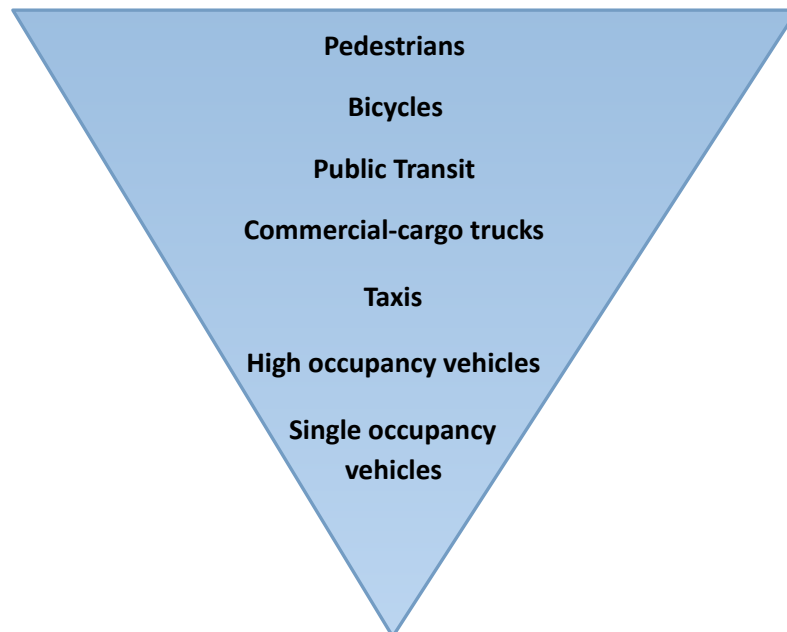
As former director of human mobility for the city of Medellín, Colombia, I would like to make a few recommendations for improving Montréal's non-motorized conditions in three broad categories. We need to take into consideration not just cyclists, but pedestrians in a broad sense: walkers, senior citizens, people with reduced mobility whether it be permanent or temporary, etc.

Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists will encourage more citizens to use these forms of transportation to commute - not just for recreational purposes - thereby reducing cars on the road and the burden on public transportation at peak hours.

1. Political:

Create incentives for cycling and walking as modes of transport and establish traffic management measures to reduce excessive use of private vehicles.

- Set priorities when planning and implementing mobility projects.



- Define a clear goal in terms of modal sharing for non-motorized transportation (What percentage of daily trips do we want to be made by cyclists and pedestrians?)
- Create incentives for cycling and walking as modes of transport and establish traffic management measures to reduce excessive use of private vehicles.

2. Infrastructure:

We need to understand that the only source of bike mobility is not the network of bike paths, in that order of ideas, promote the integration with the public transport system of the city (safe and comfortable bike parkings in Metro stations, train and bus stops) and identify natural barriers for cycling in the city (bridges, steep slopes, motorways) and establish ways to face them, are two ways for improving cycling conditions.

- Consider the bicycle as a vehicle and design under this provision
- Respect the pedestrian priority when planning and / or implement a mobility project
- Do not consider the network of bike paths as the only source of bike mobility
- Promote the integration with the public transport system of the city (safe and comfortable bike parkings in Metro stations, train and bus stops)
- Identify natural barriers for cycling in the city (bridges, steep slopes, motorways) and establish ways to face them
- Reduce conflicts between road actors considering road safety criteria when designing

3. Education and promotion:

We need to identify the current situation regarding the use of bicycles in the city, priority road space, air pollution, congestion and road mortality associated with incidents in order to generate a change in the paradigm of mobility. In that sense working with all stakeholders should be done taking into account the characteristics of each one of them.

- Education for cyclists: Aimed at frequent users and potential (beginners and experts). The goal is to teach driving skills, basic skills and traffic regulations.
- Education for children and young people: Teaching basic bike driving and basic elements of secure interaction with other road actors to school children.
- Sensitization to government representatives and workers: It is necessary that people who take decisions about mobility projects in the city understand the importance of planning taking into account cycling-inclusive criteria.
- Education for public transport drivers and individuals: seeking thereby avoid risky and aggressive behaviour towards users of non-motorized modes of transport.
- Education to businesspersons and private sector: encourage the commercial sector in the implementation of facilities for bicycle users. When businesspersons understand that having friendly spaces for cyclists generates economic benefits they not act reactively to the implementation of cycling infrastructure and takes the initiative to implement bike parkings and create incentives for this new audience.

- Education for cycling advocacy groups: These kind of citizen organizations that promote cycling are important in legitimizing promotion strategies, identifying infrastructure needs and improving road safety conditions. They also become multipliers of communication and education strategies. In that sense it is considered beneficial to provide them with tools and incentives to qualify their work and their projects.
- The transition to a transport model based on renewable energies generate options in which any person may have access to goods and services, safely and efficiently, regardless of the mode of transport they choose.
- The transition to the use of renewable energy will improve air quality and thus reduce one of the major risks associated with the practice of urban cycling.