WALKING AS THE MOST SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSPORT MODE

Karel Schmeidler

Department of Civil Engineering, Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice, Okružní 517/10, 370 01 České Budějovice, Czech Republic

ABSTRACT

Sustainable development of urban areas requires promoting economical transport modes such as walking, cycling, or public transport, particularly through building appropriate transport infrastructure. Urban pedestrianisation and walkability is a principal concept in sustainable planning and design. All over the world professionals try to design cities, neighbourhoods and places not around cars but for people. Walking, as pedestrian transportation became the main topic of multidisciplinary urban studies, projects and policies. To encourage walking the built environment must be adapted to the needs of users, of which the feeling of security is one of the most important. In every walkability measurement the safety is present. However, making cities socially and physically safe is one of the most important fundamentals of walkability, likeability, liveability and sustainability. The main objective of our research is to provide an essential contribution to systems knowledge of pedestrians' needs, thus stimulating structural and functional interventions, policy making and regulation to support the walking quality conditions across the Czech Republic. In urban planning, transport planning and traffic safety sciences a comprehensive, integrated systems approach is now needed. This attitude follows that path to determine pedestrians' needs with regard to the quality of physical and social environments, the transport system, and policymaking and implementation for a safe and healthy mobility of pedestrians. This study is conducted from 3 perspectives: transport and urban functionality, user´s perception, durability and future prospects. Special attention is given to the coherence and integration of these perspectives. The focus is on pedestrians' needs with regard to the strategic, tactical and operational levels of travel and sojourn decisions of pedestrians, particularly in city outskirts.