SMART KONZA

What do we mean by smartness of an urban node and how smart is the Konza Technopolis?

In many African cities and estates, line infrastructure is often given a blind eye. Investors focus more in housing profitability, leaving out key utilities that help serve cities and estates. This luck of sufficient planning before commencements of projects has caused serious hiccups in cities, such as water shortages, sewer blockages, power blackouts and traffic congestion. Unlike many African urban cores, Konza Technopolis gives us fundamental lessons on the future of cities and towns.

Konza Technopolis, also known as called African Silicon Savannah, is a large technology hub planned by the government of Kenya, built 64 km south of Nairobi on the way to the port city of Mombasa. It is marketed as a key driver of Kenya's national development blueprint, known as Kenya Vision 2030.

So, what makes Konza Smart? Let's focus on the technopolis' transport network. I mean, who can loathe a functional, reliable, safe and fast transport network? With the technopolis expected to host a population of over 250,000, it is imperative to design a sufficient transport system. Sitting on a 4,000-acre space, the technopolis thrives to be the leading digital transformation hub in Kenya. What can beat digitizing how we move for a start?

One of the main features are the smart polls, containing cameras and Wi-Fi. These structures collect data for intelligence operations including traffic distributions & weather conditions and are also for security purposes. If you have an emergency or when you are lost or stranded, the polls have you covered. They have a button that when pressed, someone from the intelligence operations center answers the call. Wonderful right?!

Are you tired of traffic? Me too. The technopolis has designed bus lanes complete with waiting bays and intelligent transport systems that will serve all the residents. It gets even better. The common waste trucks that roam our cities will not be needed. All the wastes collected are sorted at the source, sucked through an underground tunnel to the collection point and recycled in the recycling chamber.

Walking along many urban roads in African cities, overhead internet cables, electric poles on walkways and frequent excavations to either put up or repair broken pipes are a norm. Should they be treated as so? These walking hindrances cause accidents and time wastage. In Konza technopolis, all those uncouth pictures of our cities are bygones. All cables are separated into two, dry and wet utilities, and fitted underground in a wide tunnel of 2.5m by 2.5m. This reduces walking hindrances and makes maintenance easy, a win-win solution.

I have a dream, that our cities will get smarter, that our air will get cleaner, that our roads will have less traffic, that our walkways will be more functional and that our future generations will have a cleaner, safer, biophilic and resilient urban nodes. I believe Konza Technopolis is a step in the right direction.

Author

Sam Rholex.