

URBANIZATION & TRAFFIC IN NAIROBI

Posted on May 5, 2021 by martabuges



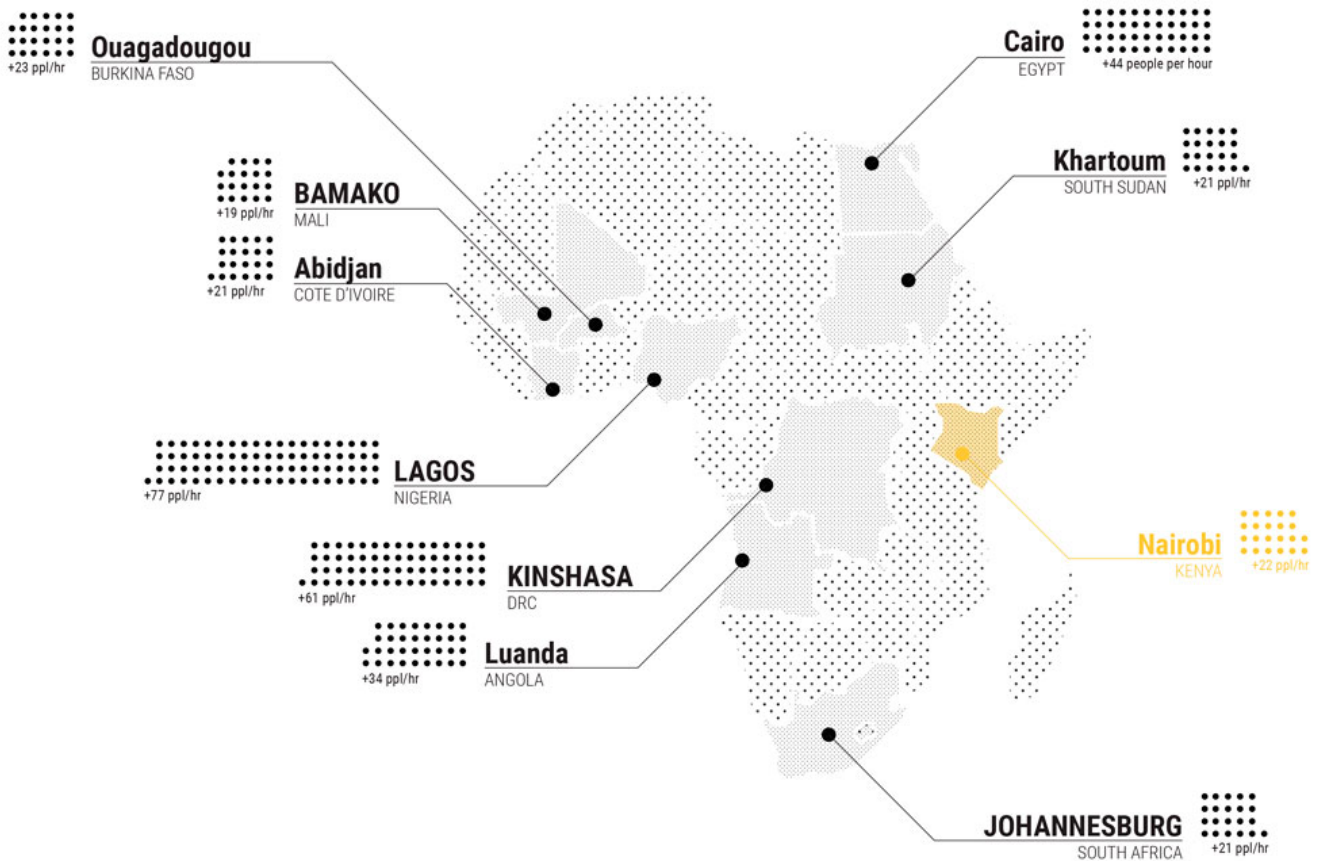
Categories: [africanCities](#), [Civic Data Design Lab](#), [Data](#), [Middle Density](#), [Territory and mobility](#)

Tags: [African Cities](#), [African Public Realm](#), [Data](#), [Housing](#), [Kenya](#), [Local Awareness](#), [Nairobi](#), [Population](#), [Territory&Mobility](#), [Traffic](#), [Transportation](#), [Transportation Systems](#), [Urban growth](#), [Urban infrastructure](#)

urbanNext Lexicon

More than 50% of the world's population currently lives in cities. By 2050, this figure is expected to climb to 68%. Africa is experiencing one of the highest rates of urbanization across the globe. Though most of the continent's population is rural, with only 40% living in cities, the number of urban dwellers is increasing faster than any other region on the planet.

AFRICA'S FASTEST-GROWING CITIES POPULATION GROWTH PER HOUR, 2010-2030



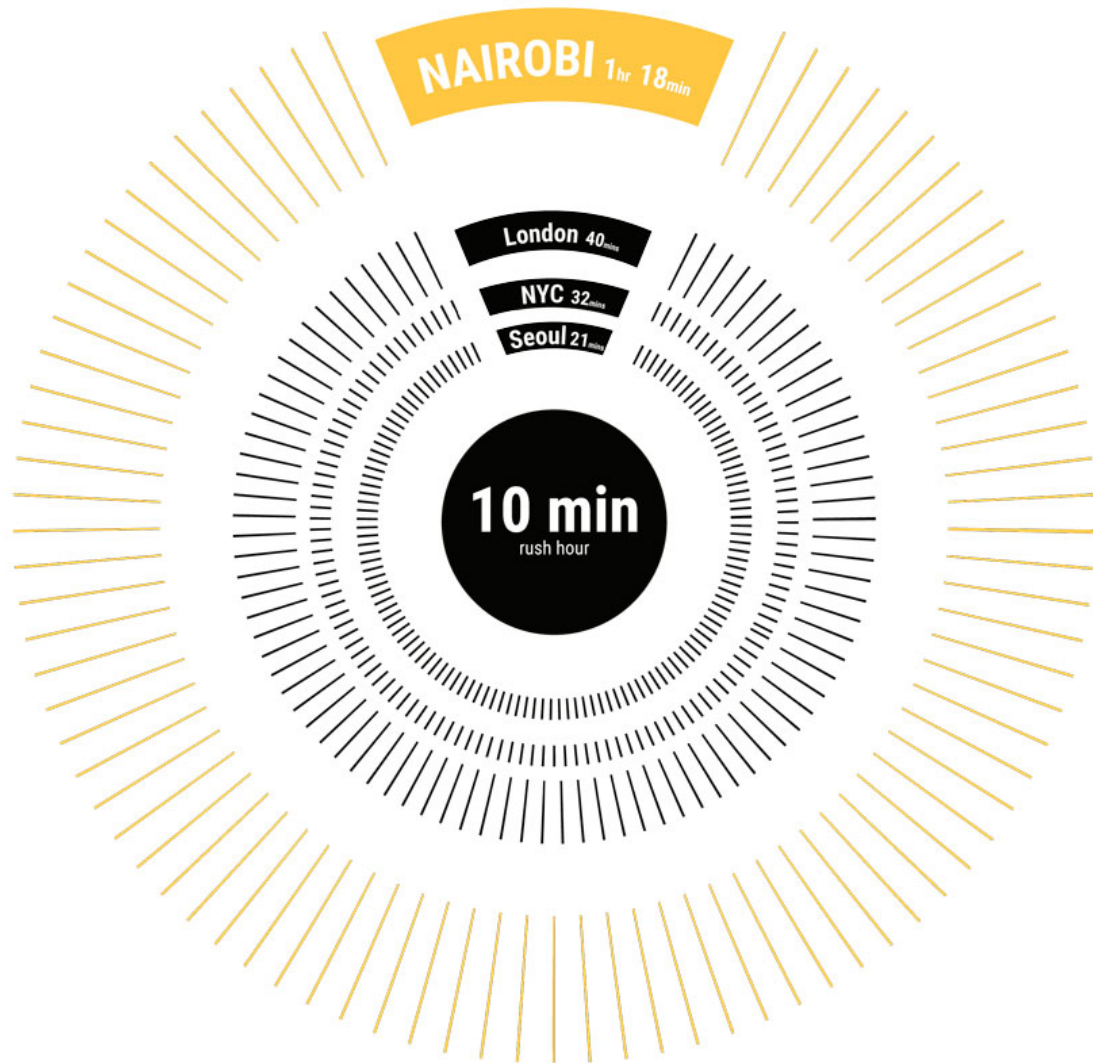
UN WORLD URBANIZATION PROSPECTS (2014)

Figure 1

One of the consequences of such rapid urbanization in African cities is the increase of urban traffic. People who relocate to Nairobi are met with some of the most brutal traffic jams on the continent. Part of the problem is due to outdated and poorly maintained roads: potholes, crumbling asphalt, and, ironically, road repair equipment, can render lanes on major arterial roads unusable. Traffic in Nairobi is made worse by the sheer number of cars on the road, which has grown exponentially since Uber and other ride-sharing apps hit the roadways. With close to 15% of Nairobi's population spending an average of four hours in traffic to commute to work, the gridlock is unsustainable.

urbanNext Lexicon

Urbanization & Traffic in Nairobi
<https://urbannext.net/urbanization-traffic-in-nairobi/>




SALON, GULYANY (2019), *MOBILITY, POVERTY AND GENDER: TRAVEL 'CHOICES' OF SLUM RESIDENTS IN NAIROBI*
SANTOS G. (2008), *LONDON CONGESTION CHARGING - BROOKINGS-WHARTON PAPERS ON URBAN AFFAIR*
TLC TAXI TRIP DATA (2013)
KT CORPORATION DATA (2017)

ISSN : 2575-5374

Figure 2

urbanNext Lexicon




--- Ksh / ride

PEDESTRIAN

60 mins

- 1 person

Walking is the single largest mode of transportation in Nairobi: a growing number of the city's workers walk to work in order to avoid the daily traffic scramble. 62% of low income commuters prefer walking due to the cost of public transit.




50 Ksh / ride

MATATU

40 mins

S 10 passengers
 M 20 passengers
 L 30 passengers

Matatus are semi-formal buses that enable transit across the city. Over 1/3 of people in Nairobi take matatus to or from work. The matatus, known for expressive interior design with vivid colors and videos, are often the fastest way to get around the city.




190 Ksh / ride

BODA BODA

13 mins

- 1 adult passenger
- 2 adult passengers
- 2 adult passengers + 1 child

Boda bodas are small motorcycles or mopeds that can weave through traffic and make it across the city in record time. Mostly operated independently, boda bodas will wait near high traffic areas to get commuters in and out of key areas.



380 Ksh / ride

RIDEHAILER

40 mins

- 1-4 adult passengers

Taxi hailing companies such as Uber, Taxify and Little Cab play an important role within the city mobility picture. Demand for ridehailing services in the growing middle class in Nairobi is making the taxi business very attractive to investors.

COST

\$ = 20 Ksh
 \$ 0.20 = 20 Ksh

TIME

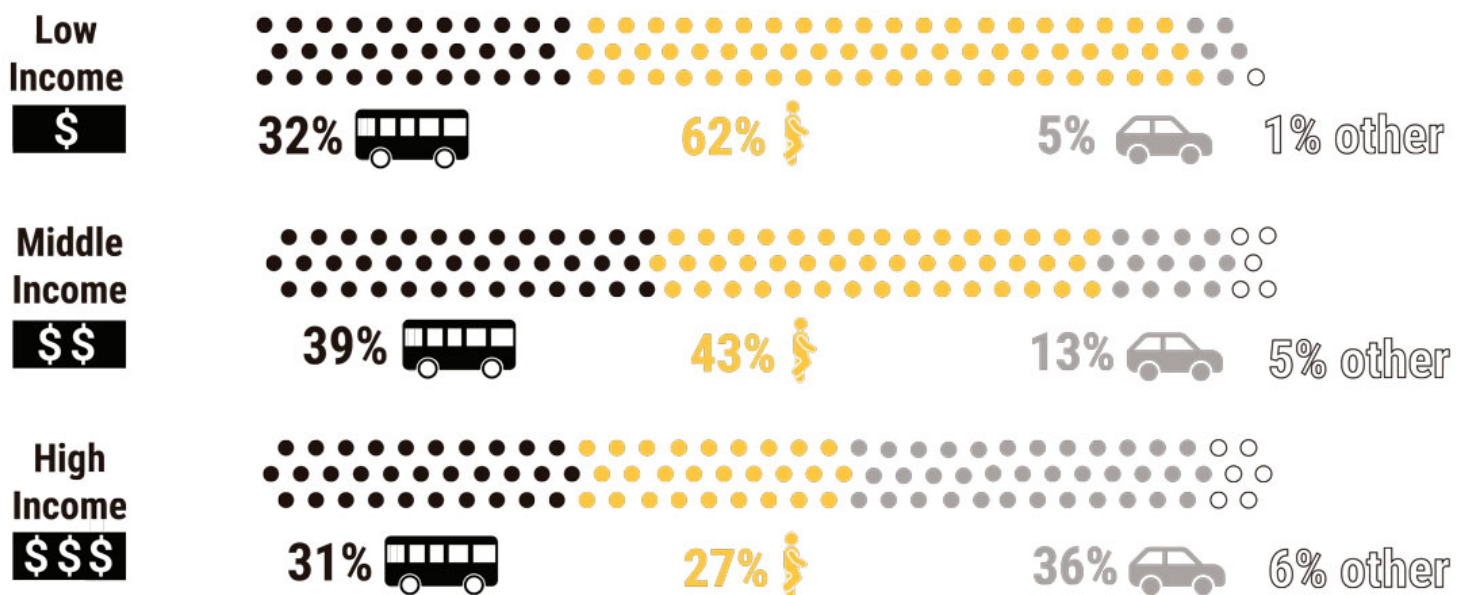


CAPACITY

• = 1 Passenger

Figure 3: How much does it cost to get around Nairobi?

The traffic problem is starkly visible when we compare commute times in Nairobi to those in other high-density urban areas (see Figure 2). A 10-kilometer commute in Seoul takes just 21 minutes. In New York, a commuter can cover the same distance in 32 minutes, and in London in 40. In Nairobi, a commute of 10 kilometers takes 1 hour and 18 minutes, nearly double the London figure.



KAYI, C. (2007), *Exploring policy options and strategies in enhancing the safety of non-motorized transport modes in African cities: the case of Nairobi City*

Figure 4: Nairobians' transit options by income level

To combat the city's traffic, the Nairobi city government has announced many efforts, including car-free days, bans on buses (matatus) and cars in the city center, and the construction of bicycle routes and pedestrian paths, but many of these plans are decades-long.

urbanNext Lexicon

Urbanization & Traffic in Nairobi
<https://urbannext.net/urbanization-traffic-in-nairobi/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Urbanization & Traffic in Nairobi
<https://urbannext.net/urbanization-traffic-in-nairobi/>

ISSN : 2575-5374