



Getting there

The summer of 2015 saw the launch of the “Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040: Our Vision,” taking the unusual step of putting the needs of its citizens at the very heart of its strategy. **Rafael Cuesta** heads the Greater Manchester innovation team, working jointly on developing an agenda for intelligent mobility to challenge the ‘old’ way of doing things; and through innovation help address the challenges Greater Manchester faces. He describes Manchester’s approach on the Smart City Concept to *Thinking Cities*

Can you tell us about your view on the Smart City Concept and how it will be applied in Greater Manchester?

We believe that, in the UK context, the impact that technology and innovation has on society, behaviours and culture is significant. Therefore, through developing our approach to ‘Intelligent Mobility’ we believe that a Smart City is one which helps deliver our emerging Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (Greater Manchester’s new SUMP) through

encouraging social, behavioural and cultural changes in our citizens that are aligned with our social, economic and environmental objectives. But it is more than this; it is also about empowering the citizen to make a positive contribution to city life.

Which role does the transport sector play in this concept?

Through our work on the 2040 Vision, we have identified a number of areas in which innovation and technology can help support delivery of our

wider transport outcomes. Hence, it is not about simply following new technological developments for the sake of it, but harnessing new tools and techniques to deliver our vision of “World class connections that support long-term sustainable economic growth and access to opportunity for all”. The five key areas where we believe that technology can best support improvements to our transport system are highlighted below:

We will therefore embrace the use of innovation and technology



MediaCityUK, Salford

A smart city is one which helps through encouraging social, behavioural and cultural changes in our citizens



The five key areas where technology can best support improvements to Greater Manchester's transport system

to improve the capacity, efficiency, resilience, sustainability and safety of our transport network and to provide a highly customer-focused transport system that meets with varying needs of our residents, businesses and visitors.

Innovative technology plays an important role in your smart city concept: what kinds of actions have been taken so far to make Manchester smarter?

We have introduced the "Get me There" smart card in Greater Manchester opening the door for further innovation on payment systems and smart mobility. There has been major investment to get the back office up and running, as well as the infrastructure it requires, and to date, we have rolled out to more than 500,000 concessionary pass holders across Greater Manchester and more than 60,000 smart journeys are



Manchester Metrolink

now taking place every week. Later on this year the scheme is set to roll out onto buses across the region. We have also invested in a new multi-modal, real-time and open data journey planning API, that will enable mobility app developers provide our citizens with an improved customer experience of public transport. For

example, in addition to our own journey planning app, citizens will enjoy the use of global mobility apps, such as Moovit and CityMapper, which have a strong motivation to sustain a high level of User Experience and Satisfaction with their apps.

Furthermore, we have embarked on a feasibility study to develop an

By incubating innovation in Greater Manchester we hope to face our challenges in new creative ways and create scalable solutions that can be exported to other cities across Europe and the World

integrated and enduring design approach and framework to city-centre way-finding. This will combine the best of digital with well thought-out information design practice and physical interventions to make our city more legible, and therefore, conducive to walking and cycling.

Manchester has a comparatively young population. Has this aspect been taken into consideration in the city concept?

Crucially, we are also investing in our young people and business start-ups.

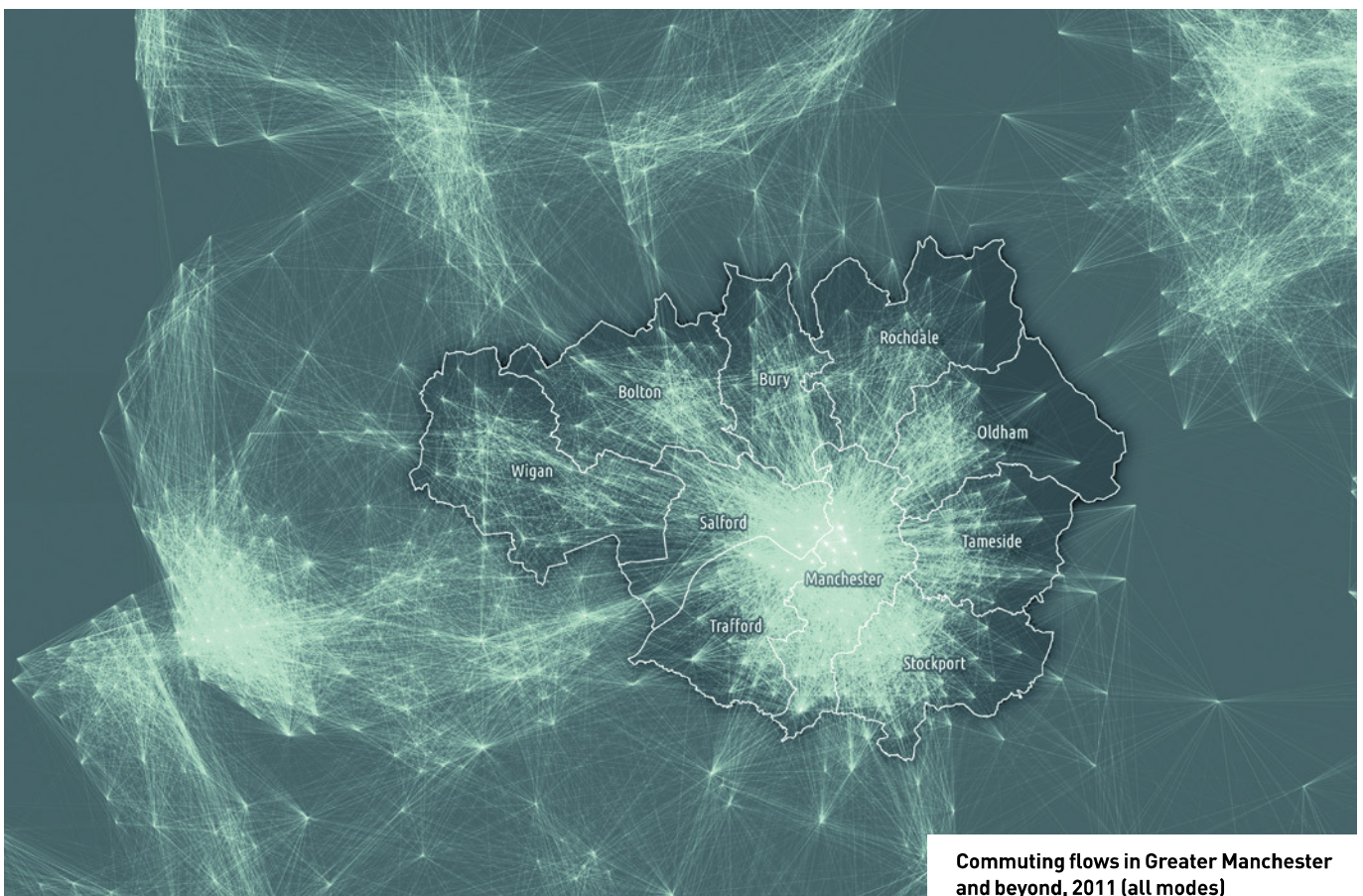
Through partnership we have established a number of incubator and accelerators, including SpacePortX, Barclays Manchester Accelerator, and The Landing in MediaCity. We are directly engaged with all three organisations – providing thought leadership on what ‘smart city’ solutions and ‘use cases’ would really help Manchester’s transport sector and be aligned with many city SUMPs across Europe.

By incubating innovation in Greater Manchester, through setting challenges that are focused on the

specific transport problems we face in Greater Manchester, we hope to tackle them in new, creative ways and create scalable solutions that can be exported to other cities across Europe and the World. CityMapper, a London-based SME, is a good example of this. We want to create more “CityMapper” Intelligent Mobility businesses in Manchester.

Which role do cities play regarding the implementation of the Smart Cities Concept?

European Cities are a very important



Commuting flows in Greater Manchester and beyond, 2011 (all modes)

Manchester's Albert Square and Town Hall: it's all about citizen engagement, from the top



market for our entrepreneurs to expand their scalable solutions into. Therefore, an on-going commitment to the Open Data agenda is critical. But the Smart City concept is not only about technology – the human scale is an essential part of the smart city. Good quality spaces, attention to the public realm, and an emphasis in creating streets at the human scale, with improved air quality, safety and improved quality of experience for their people is fundamental in the cities of the future. European cities need to embrace this to increase their liveability rating and become exemplar worldwide.

Should citizens be involved in the decision-making process of implementing measurements?

People have a crucial role in developing the smart city by taking advantage of the talent and activities of self-decisive, independent and aware citizens. Ultimately the Smart City concept is about people and enabling

them to achieve a high quality of life. To make this happen it is indispensable to involve stakeholders in a process of co-creation to ensure they can actively participate in decision making. In addition to our more traditional methods, we are seeking to achieve this by making use of intelligent platforms that enable citizen input through a range of digital and visualisation tools and gamification that allows us to engage citizens in a dialogue about city projects, services and policies.

Can you tell us about the lessons learned during the process of developing and implementing the Smart City Concept? What's your advice for other cities striving to become smart cities?

It's all about being customer centric. In order to address the needs and aspirations of our citizens we need to work in partnerships with all sectors. It's about working together and creating an environment of trust

and collaboration that allows us to formalise a common vision and a dynamic programme of interventions. In Greater Manchester, we have a wealth of talent in transport service delivery, advanced manufacturing, and digital and creative industries and are therefore well-placed to become a leader in transport innovation. We are up for the challenge! 🚗

FYI

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For more information about the "Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040: Our Vision" visit: <http://www.tfgm.com/2040/Pages/default.aspx>