

*Young Leader*

*Ridwan Kamil*

# *Creative Solutions* FOR A YOUNG CITY



**A**rchitect, lecturer and social activist **Ridwan Kamil** appears to be perfectly suited for his role as mayor of Bandung, a young city where 60% of its population is under 40 years of age. Just 44 years old himself, he has come up with several creative solutions to tackle rapid urbanisation in one of Indonesia's fastest growing cities. In this interview with CLC's Lim Swee Keng at the WORLD CITIES SUMMIT held in June 2014, Ridwan Kamil talks about challenges facing Bandung including the provision of a sustainable transport infrastructure and to need to keep its citizens happy.

Ridwan Kamil on...

● **Bandung's Transformation Over the Years**

Bandung is a city of 2.5 million in West Java, Indonesia. It's a metropolitan city with a cool climate. This is the reason why people love Bandung. As a metropolis, we face many issues, but there are many opportunities as well. For instance, we are the second most popular tourist destination in Indonesia – with six million tourists visiting the city annually. In the last couple of years, this has dramatically changed the landscape of Bandung.

Bandung also has more than 80 universities and colleges with 60% of its population under 40 years old. This means it's a city with a high percentage of educated young people. They are the key drivers of Bandung's creative economy and it's our vision that this creative economy becomes the generator that powers the city. Bandung is now one of the best performing economies in the country with almost 9% GDP

growth, outperforming the national GDP growth rate of 5.8%. This has put more pressure on the existing public transport infrastructure, so it is important to plan for the future growth of Bandung.

● **Bandung’s Current Challenges**

The key challenge is to provide infrastructure to support new economic opportunities. A proposal to build a monorail system to meet Bandung’s growing transport needs is being prepared. We are also proposing a cable car network as a means of public transportation because the city is hilly. This is part of our master plan called “Bandung Urban Mobility Projects”. It’s how we envision people will move around the city in the future.

Apart from the monorail and cable car, we are also providing bike-sharing and bike-renting options for intercity commuting. To complement this, we are building Bandung’s Skywalk – a series of bridges that will criss-cross the city and create better connectivity for people.

● **Urban Mobility within Bandung**

When we talk about mobility, it’s not always about moving people by machine or cars. Whether it’s public or private transportation, there are other options. That’s why we are giving people a range of options to move around in Bandung. We have some

challenges to face as only 20% of the population currently use public transport with 80% still choosing to use cars or motorbikes. Our target is to flip this situation around such that 80% use public transport, with the remaining using cars or motorbikes.

One way to do this is to make walking a more attractive option. We have started to do this by upgrading pedestrian paths everywhere in the city. We have the Skywalk, which is raised above the street level, to allow people to walk in the city without having to stop at traffic intersections. So by simply giving people more options to move within the city, I think we can create a more sustainable and liveable Bandung.

● **New Ways of Making Bandung More Liveable**

We are currently experimenting on a new concept called “Happiness Projects.” Happiness Projects have been devised to address short-term goals while we wait for big projects, that may takes years to complete, to come on-stream. For instance, we created Bandung Fun Days as a part of the Happiness Projects. So Mondays in Bandung are now a Free Bus Day; Tuesday is No Smoking Day; Wednesday is Sundanese Day for wearing



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traditional outfits and speaking the local language; Thursday is English Day; Friday is Bike To Work Day and Saturday is Festival Day, with one of 30 culinary festivals spread out over the whole city.

Liveable cities are not always about economic measures and standards but also about happiness because an advanced society is a happy society.

Watch the full interview with Mayor Kamil at the WORLD CITIES SUMMIT 2014:



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WikH\\_FUYB-c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WikH_FUYB-c)