Editorial

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On March 11 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a pandemic (WHO, 2020). Since then social distancing has been imposed as a measure to contain Covid-19. It shook urban mobility as some governments prohibited unnecessary travels and some passengers, to maintain distance between each other, shifted to micro-mobility solution modes (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 2021). As a result, the use of bicycles increased, leading to investments in cycling infrastructures (European Commission, 2021).

This issue of the *Municipal Engineer*, the first of four editions this year, includes six papers. One of them addresses a less studied cycling infrastructure aspect, the surface roughness and its influence on cyclists' velocity choices (Toljic *et al.*, 2021). Seven surfaces were considered, namely smooth and rough asphalt, painted cycle lanes, concrete, large and small cobblestones and gravel. First, the authors identified the critical factors with the greatest impact on the cyclists' velocity choice (by carrying out an online survey), then the identified factors were compared to the different surfaces. Surface roughness was measured by utilising a smartphone's built-in accelerometer affixed to a bicycle and speed measurements were taken by a radar gun. Those two measurements were combined, thus leading to conclude that the velocity tends to decrease when the surface roughness increases. However, a closer look at the results reveals that other factors have a stronger influence.

Two other papers issued are related to urban mobility. In the second, Zhang *et al.*, (2021) propose a real-time hybrid control strategy that is designed to shorten the passenger's waiting time caused by large schedule deviations. The control strategy allows buses to skip stops, to shorten the interval between the relevant bus and the bus in front. The strategy also requires buses to hold at the stop for some time, to maintain a proper headway. In order to determine the proper skipping stops and holding times, an objective formulation for minimising the total cost of a transit system is established. While Liang *et al.*, (2021) discuss the influence that the location of a bus stop has on traffic flow and passenger satisfaction when they are near to a signalised intersection, concluding that maximum benefits can be obtained if the bus stops are located both prior

to and immediately following the signalised intersection. Improvements in the quality of public transport will be crucial for winning back the passengers that stay at home (working/learning) or shifted to another mean of transport (i.e. a car).

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of more resilient infrastructures in cities. The *Municipal Engineer* has a forthcoming themed issue regarding this topic (abstracts due 31 March). Readers are invited to submit their contributions. Note that over recent years the journal impact factor has been increasing and that the most recent articles are published Ahead of Print on Journal's Virtual Library homepage. This allows the community quicker access to fresh content. Besides, readers are invited to join the editorial panel for this journal. Any interested person in embracing this challenge should contact the Editorial Coordinator Rebecca Rivers at rebecca.rivers@icepublishing.com.

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