



People waiting for trains at KL Sentral station. — Filepic

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Citycism

Rail riders on the rise in KL

Additional effort is needed, however, to entice more people to use trains

MANY young working adults today are opting for public transport as most are keen to reduce their carbon footprint.

The majority of them also say it is expensive to own a car in current economic times.

One of the quickest ways to save Mother Earth and build financial resilience is to get rid of the car, because car ownership is more than just the monthly repayment.

You must consider petrol costs, car insurance premiums, maintenance costs and road tax, among other factors.

Based on a conversation with several university students researching public transportation, there is a significant increase in ridership among young people on the Klang Valley's integrated rail lines – KTM Komuter, Light Rail Transit (LRT), Express Rail Link (ERL), Sunway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) – over single-occupant vehicles.

Young people who switch to public transport are conscious about how daily choices may affect the environment and their financial future.

On why they used public transport as their main mode of travel, most said it connected passengers to their destination, service intervals were optimal and it helped them save more of their earnings.

As we are in the midst of a rail renaiss-

sance, it is time the government provided cheaper fares to coax more people out of their cars and onto trains, which will result in less of the exhaust fumes that make our air worse to breathe.

The majority of Malaysians hope that the government's Madani economic framework will offer a travel card that will reduce the cost of public transport, and in turn lead to renewed traction in rail travel.

One way to convince Malaysians to use Klang Valley's integrated rail network is to initiate partnerships with food and beverage outlets to offer incentives such as free drinks or sandwiches at cafes along their route.

Businesses close to a transit station will see an economic boom while the riders will be rewarded for supporting public transport.

If weaved into the Madani economic framework, it will be a good initiative to wean people off of fossil fuel-powered vehicles.

An accountant with a multi-national firm said he was delighted to see more young adults choosing public transport.

Many users see public transport as an essential service while others want to con-

tribute towards a better environment.

When I was in Osaka, Japan, sometime ago, I noticed that the people were conscious about how their choices might affect the environment and would walk to destinations within the city or use the train.

I used the train with other media practitioners during my stay in Japan and found it most efficient and reliable.

We need to emulate the Japanese people's lifestyle in the use of public transit as it will help contribute to environmental conservation and help tackle climate change.

On my days off, I take the LRT to Kuala Lumpur.

I notice fellow commuters leaving their cars in the parking lots and taking the LRT, as they are able to sit, relax or catch up on the news via free WiFi, which is a much more practical way of spending time while commuting.

It would be challenging for the government to induce an even greater change to public transit.

But to get people to consider choosing Klang Valley's integrated rail service, there is a pressing need to offer a high quality of service and reduced fares.