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Cable Car World 2024:

The future of public transport hangs by a cable

Insights and facts about mobility on the plus-one level

Whether referred to as gondolas, aerial tramways, or cable cars, these modes of transport are typically associated with mountainous regions and are a common sight in the Alps. However, cable cars are increasingly making their way into the world's (mega)cities. Commuting to work, school, university, or the supermarket by cable car? There are many reasons to believe that cable cars will soon be an integral part of public transport networks, just like buses and trains.

Urban cable cars offer a valuable addition to the urban mobility mix, particularly in specific geographical and socioeconomic contexts. They are not a one-size-fits-all solution but provide unique advantages that can effectively complement existing transport networks by operating on the so-called Plus-One level.

Cost and speed of implementation

Urban cable cars are often more cost-effective compared to other public transport infrastructures. While the capital and construction costs of cable cars vary widely depending on the project, they are generally similar to those of tram systems and about one-tenth the cost of subways. The construction period for many cable car projects is only about twelve to eighteen months, significantly shorter than the construction time for rail infrastructures.

Mobility and accessibility

Cable cars are particularly suitable for areas with spatial barriers such as topographical obstacles or existing ground-based infrastructures where traditional road or rail transport would be challenging or costly to implement. By providing direct aerial connections, they offer substantial time savings in congested urban areas. In La Paz, Bolivia, for example, cable cars have reduced travel times from over an hour by car to just ten to seventeen minutes.



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Environmental impact

Cable cars are environmentally friendly, producing no emissions during operation and contributing to improved air quality in cities. They require minimal land use, as they only need stations and supports, without extensive ground infrastructure along the route.

Safety and reliability

Cable cars are among the safest and most reliable modes of transport, with very low accident rates compared to buses and trams. They operate exclusively on the Plus-One level, not sharing their path with other traffic participants. The technology is mature, tested, and highly reliable.

Capacity and frequency

The frequency of cable cars, especially circulating cable cars, can be as low as every thirty seconds or even less. Modern systems can transport up to 8,000 passengers per hour in each direction.