

ISI

Institute Sultan Iskandar

JB Central - the Living City

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- 1 **This** is a city of the 21st Century.
.....a dynamic financial centre, servicing commerce at the crossroads of Asia and gateway into Malaysia.
- 2 Is it likely that international conventioners and business tycoons will find inspiration and excitement in the dark and winding alleys of Johor Bahru?
- 3 Will they find there way around in this confusion of streets and lack of urban structure?
- 4 The city has a fascinating past and cultures worth preserving.
- 5 The first flag planted on Bukit Timbalan in 1855, declared the city of Iskandar Puteri.
- 6 There were a few fishermen's huts on the foreshore - Sungai Seggett, believe it or not, was a busy harbour. Today, it's a sewer.
- 7 In 1866, the settlement became Johor Bahru.
- 8 Despite its ad hoc nature, Johor Bahru today has the substance to be Malaysia's Vision 2020 showplace.
- 9 Johor Bahru has become Malaysia's most strategically placed city in the future of the growth triangle - the regional alliance of Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.
- 10 There are enough significant projects within Johor to maintain its strong position as a growth state - it's currently running two percentage points faster than the national average.
- 11 Johor Bahru would like to be a city with style - and purpose.

- 12 Indeed, as a gateway City in such a strategic location, one could argue that it has a **national responsibility** to present the best possible image of Malaysia.
- 13 The most searching study ever of Johor Bahru's central business precincts has delivered a plan for **re-birth**.
- 14 The Institute Sultan Iskandar of Urban Habitat and Highrise was asked by the Government of Johor to coordinate the study.
- 15 Private enterprise not only funded the work, but will join with the public sector to ensure that the planning dream can become a reality.
- 16 As Institute Sultan Iskandar Chairman, Tan Sri Sallehuddin Mohamed says :-
- 17 **(NOTE - THIS INTERVIEW IS RECORDED IN BAHASA -NO NEED FOR TRANSLATION)**
"Everyone wins - the State gains valuable research which is essential to meet our rapid economic expansion - and the private sector finances and builds the projects."
- 18 Johor Bahru's time has come.
- 19 A continuation of past planning, road building and individual development will simply add to its problems.
- 20 A cosmetic face-lift, simply to improve the city's appearance would be futile.
- 21 The planning team has been required to look carefully at the constraints and opportunities.
- 22 They have been able to stand back and look at the big picture of Johor Bahru and are now suggesting some broad strategies which will give the city a new beginning.

CAPTIONS ON SCREEN (NO NEED TO TRANSLATE OR READ)

"Optimise land and infrastructure"

"A tropical city of environmental quality"

"Rational land use pattern"

"Guidelines for City Centre"

"Income and wealth enhancement"

- 23 Their objectives could be summarised as:-
- 24 •To develop the Central District comprehensively to optimise the use of land and infrastructure systems.
 - 25 •To develop a tropical city with features and forms, plus environmental quality to match the city's enhanced role.
 - 26 •To promote a rational land use development pattern.
 - 27 •To formulate guidelines for the development of the city centre.
 - 28 •To contribute towards the enhancement of income and wealth to residents and the State.
- 29 A huge challenge - but it is no more or less than the visionary challenges set for the whole of Malaysia by the Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, under his VISION 2020 PLAN.
- 30 The new master plan incorporates an urban design strategy for the Central business core of Johor Bahru - the area bounded by the new inner ring road.
- 31 With it came the economic rationale which shows that major re-development can be funded and sustained through private-public partnerships.
- 32 Following adoption and incorporation into the city's statutory town planning schemes, the strategies of the master plan **can** be implemented with confidence and authority.
- 33 The master plan aims to reclaim the centre of town - making it more accessible and exciting.
- 34 It's part of the State's vision - expressed by Menteri Besar of Johor, Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman.....
- 35 *"....we want to remain at the frontier nationally and also globally....."*
- 36 *".....we want to ensure there is continuous prosperity, economically speaking and at the same time bring about more rational kind of development."*
- 37 *"For example, we can't leave Johor Bahru city centre as it is...we have to do something about it."*
- 38 *"It is not just a physical development. It has to be in terms of its functions, its rule, whether it is friendly to the community, friendly to the pedestrian and what kind of beauty will be imputed into the process of redevelopment."*

- 39 *"It is an attempt to reconstruct Johor Bahru itself, redevelop Johor Bahru, while keeping account of its strong historical tradition but at the same time bring about beautification as well as enhancing quality of life."*
- 40 The priorities of the new plan are to enhance Johor Bahru's status as a base for commerce, industry, tourism and conventioning.
- 41 Above all - it must be a living city - a 24-hour a day cosmopolitan centre, full of local colour and local people. It must have shopping and cultural excitement.
- 42 It must also provide a range of living opportunities for locals and visitors.
- 43 Few would disagree that Johor Bahru is choking on its own traffic, compounded by the channelling of most of the vehicles from Singapore direct into the downtown streets.
- 44 Greater use of public transport must be encouraged. The existing railway corridor through the city will take on a more useful role as a high capacity public transport spine and a high quality light rail system is proposed, connecting metropolitan Johor Bahru, the Larkin Bus terminal, the central district and Singapore.
- 45 The new image for Johor Bahru begins at the Causeway, where a proposed relocation of Malaysian customs and immigration.
- 46 An impressive arrival, with far less congestion, is then achieved by an elevated bridge, which passes over the railway and foreshore parkland.
- 47 The existing site is put to better use as extensive landscaped parkland connecting the old City across Jalan Ibrahim and over the railway down to the waterfront.
- 48 To the right and left, a continuous water-edge park, provided through private-public ventures, has the potential to be one of the best in the world.
- 49 This is where Johor presents its cultures and its food in a tree covered outdoor environment.
- 50 Sungai Seggett can be covered, allowing Jalan Wong Ah Fook to become a park-like City Walk which guides pedestrians north to a new gateway precinct.
- 51 City Walk has pedestrian priority, with essential east west links to car parks and adjacent high density residential areas.
- 52 This northern gateway replaces the spaghetti junction of roads at the meeting of Jalan Wong Ah Fook and Jalan Tun Abdul Razak.

- 53 It's an elegant amphitheatre of buildings enclosing a major central park.
- 54 High quality, high technology office buildings will be located here, along with retail and major pedestrian and open space corridors connecting with surrounding areas.
- 55 To the west of the commercial core, but inseparable from it, is the State Secretariat, the historic palace, the mosque, mausoleum and the Sultanah Aminah Hospital.
- 56 A cultural sub-district is suggested, in which these attractions become features of a shopping, entertainment and accommodation precinct, all connected by monorail.
- 57 The old city, despite its problems of traffic congestion and unsympathetic new developments presents a vitality which tourists find fascinating. It's an atmosphere essential to the international essence of the city. Its architectural scale and character must be retained or re-created.
- 58 All of the concepts which have emerged from the study are achievable.
- 59 How investors, developers, local organisations and the end -users - the people of Johor Bahru and their visitors - respond to the new master plan, will determine whether the city will be successful in rediscovering its soul.
- 60 Implementation - no matter how long it takes, needs boldness, a global vision and enthusiasm.
- 61 The Vision needs to be adopted by all as the future's blueprint.
- 62 There is little doubt that change is inevitable in Johor Bahru - normal growth pressures will force that.
- 63 If change is inevitable - let it be momentous change - the kind of change which is written into history.

END