Understanding the potentials and challenges of subway developments for a new low carbon metropolis: A multi-scale approach

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A joint Tsinghua University-University of Cambridge team
Acknowledgements

• **Beijing team**: Weijia Wu, Wei Qu, Wenwen Han, Shuqi Mu, Xiao Rong
• **Cambridge team**: Steven Denman, Jamil Nur and Kaveh Jahanshahi
• **Local government support**: 北京市规划和自然资源委员会 Beijing Municipal Commission of Planning and Natural Resources (BMCPNR); 北京市交通委员会 Beijing Municipal Commission of Transportation (BMCT)
• **Funding support**: 北京京投集团 Beijing infrastructure Investment Company; 'Tsinghua University - Cambridge University Joint Research Initiative Fund in Sustainability and Future Emerging Technologies'
1. Background
2. Key questions
3. Conclusion
1. Background

Current situation
- Rapid growth of Beijing's subways.
  - At present, 19 lines are in operation with 574km track-kms and 345 stations; 11 million passengers on an average working day; The total planned track-km of subways will reach 998.5 km with 550 stations.
- Current share of subway travel is not that high.
  - In the Main Urban Area, subways only carry 16.2% of the total daily trips in 2018, but the share is growing.
Policy objectives

- **Build a polycentric urban structure** through the development of suburban new towns and decentralization of the Central City.
- **Integrate land use and rail transit through a TOD model** to achieve sustainable development and reduce urban congestion.
- **Increase land-use (residential & commercial) efficiency around subway stations** - at present subway station catchment areas (400m radius from operating stations) accommodate 15% of the total population and 22% of the employment.
1. Background

• Key questions
  • **Scope**: what is the appropriate spatial scope for developing and implementing an effective density and land-use strategy around subway stations in Beijing?
  • **Classification**: how to classify the variety of subway stations in terms of location, existing land-use pattern and network property?
  • **Social-economic impacts**: What are the social-economic impacts of enhancing TOD at different spatial levels?
  • **Urban form**: How would the urban form look like after increasing building density around the subway stations?

• Scale: In what range can the optimization of development intensity/land-use function be more effective?
• **Scope**: what is the appropriate spatial scope for developing and implementing an effective density and land-use strategy around subway stations in Beijing?
• **Classification**: how to classify the variety of subway stations in terms of location, existing land-use pattern and network property?
• **Social-economic impacts**: What are the social-economic impacts of enhancing TOD at different spatial levels?
• **Urban form**: How would the urban form look like after increasing building density around the subway stations?
2. Key Questions

2.1 Scope

- The total passenger flow throughput (both in and out) of Beijing subway stations are significantly correlated with surrounding employment, and they are also correlated with surrounding residential population and the FAR of commercial/office buildings in the catchment areas (400m radius).
2. Key Questions

- Subway station catchment area in Beijing: 400-800 meters radius

Example: Subway Line 4, a radial line that runs north-south through the Old City, the rest of the Central City and the new town of Daxing

According to movements data distilled from mobile phone traces (400m grid, China Unicom):

- Subway travel within a radius of 800 meters accounting for about 50% of the total, and the incidences of subway travel fall rapidly beyond 800 meters.
- It should be noted that 27.5% of the total subway trips originate from/destined for 2km away from the station, which involves access by bus, taxi and bicycle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radius (m)</th>
<th>Subway passenger (000 persons/day)</th>
<th>Share</th>
<th>Average subway passenger per non-zero grid (persons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;400</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-800</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800-1200</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200-1600</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-2000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Key Questions

2.2 Classification of stations

北京以现状站点分类——观察北京既有站点的聚类特征。

- Cluster analysis based on the following six key factors
  - Transfer capability (single line, two lines or more)
  - Centrality (average distance to all stations)
  - Total FAR (800m radius around the station)
  - Proportion of residential land (800m radius around the station)
  - Proportion of office land (800m radius around the station)
  - Proportion of retail land (800m radius around the station)

- 309个站点：6大类，15小类
  - 309 sites: 6 categories, 15 sub-categories
2. Key Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Main function</th>
<th>Living</th>
<th>Working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Urban</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner suburb</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer suburb</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1: Outer Suburb employment
2: Outer Suburb residential
3: Inner Suburb employment
4: Inner Suburb residential
5: Central Urban employment
6: Central Urban residential
7: City center station
8: Others (special stations in conservation areas, inside the Green Belt, Outward-facing transportation hubs)
2. Key Questions

2.3 Quantifying social-economic impacts through modelling spatial equilibrium recursively

A new model with distinctive roots in established urban models

**Recursive Spatial Equilibrium (RSE) Model**


**RSE Beijing model - What is new:**

- Model calibration and validation over multiple time periods to finetune and validate the model (see Wan & Jin, 2017; Ma & Jin, 2018): Model calibration for years 2000 and 2010, run model in prediction mode for 2016 and 2018 to validate it
- Recursive predictions of building stock constraints, locations of non-employed residents in the city region
- Transport supply and travel time assumptions to account for user adaptations
- Hicksian (rather than Marshallian) utility functions to account for the tendencies for residents to resist falls in consumer utility as housing rents rise in an affluent city region
2. Key Questions

- Model zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of model zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station zone</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-station zone</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianjin province</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebei province</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Jing-Jin-Ji</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Key Questions

- Base-year of 2018

- Jobs density
- Employed residents density
- Average wage
- Housing
- Business floorspace
- Average housing rents
- Average commute distance
2. Key Questions

• Future development assumptions for Greater Beijing to 2035

Assumptions are made according to the Masterplan of Beijing 2035 and observed trends in Tianjin and Hebei

• Average annual growth of jobs: 1.0%
• Average annual income growth (as a proxy for GDP): 5.1%
• Growth in floor space is assumed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual growth rate 2018-2035</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing (as one composite type)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianjin</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebei</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Key Questions

• A multi-scale analysis

City level
Focus on the city-wide effects on the size and spatial distribution of population, urban spatial structure and commuting patterns.

Subway line
Focus on the effect on job-housing balance and property rents along the subway line and the surrounding area.

Subway station
Focus on the spillover effects on property rents and local commuting patterns near selected subway stations.
2. Key Questions

S1: Baseline scenario – land use plan of Beijing 2035: no special interventions in station areas

S2: 全站点优先
Policy oriented growth in all stations (FAR +25%)

S3: 郊区站点优先
Policy oriented growth in suburban stations only (FAR +50~100%)

S4: 郊区特选站点优先
Policy oriented growth in selected suburban stations only (FAR +100~150%)

Scenarios S1\S2\S3\S4:
- Study area wide building stock growth remains constant
- New buildings are distributed differently among stations according to assumptions of each scenario
2. Key Questions

City level simulation

Change of commuting distance 2035 vs 2018

- S3 (Suburban station priority) will reduce local commuting distance by 5-15%
- S4 (Selected station priority) will reduce local commuting distance by 10-20%
2. Key Questions

Because the total amount of floor space is the same across the study area in all scenarios

- Increasing business floorspace development around the suburban stations will serve to attract jobs away from the Central City by 1-5% compared with the Baseline Scenario (S1).

- In the suburbs, concentrated development around selected stations can prevent the urban sprawl along the Sixth Ring Road in Beijing.

Change of population 2035 vs 2018
2. Key Questions

**Single line simulation**

S1: Baseline scenario
land use plan of Beijing 2035

S2: 平谷三站优先
Policy oriented growth in selected Pinggu stations (FAR +20%)

S2: 全线站点优先
Policy oriented growth in all Pinggu Line stations (FAR +20%)
2. Key Questions

Single line simulation

Enhanced station catchment development for the Pinggu line will:
- Boost jobs, residents and housing rents, although not all stations respond the same way;
- Relieve development pressures in the Central City;
- Reduce the average commuting distances, in particular for suburban locations along the subway/rail corridor.

Employed residence change (S1 vs 2018)      Employed worker change (S1 vs 2018)      Commuting distance change (S1 vs 2018) (from living to job)
2. Key Questions

Single line simulation

- S2 (Pinggu three stations) vs Baseline: the impact on Pinggu new town is particularly significant. In Pinggu, the number of employed residents increased by 5%, the number of jobs increased by nearly 10%, the commuting distance decreased by about 3%, and the housing rent increased by about 1.6%.

- S3 (All Pinggu Line all stations) vs Baseline: larger effects along the whole line, and the impact on Tongzhou municipal sub-center is the greatest among all stations, thus contributing to the city-level strategy to expand to the east.
2. Key Questions

Single station simulation

- 37 station sites which are suitable for development in the near future are selected by government as TOD pilot sites

S1: Baseline scenario
land use plan of Beijing 2035

S2: 开发强度提升:
FAR increase
( FAR +10%, +30%, +50%, +100%, pro rata from Baseline)

S3: 开发强度提升+就业优先:
FAR increase + job priority
( FAR +50%, additional business floorspace growth)
2. Key Questions

**Single station simulation**

S2-Baseline: Investigate the effects of **FAR boost** at selected TOD pilot sites

- FAR boost at pilot sites promotes the employment **growth in the immediate neighbors**, but would cause **displacement in other zones further away**.
- According to the location and social-economic situation, pilot station areas have different population and employment growth elasticities:
  - Employed workers: 0.91-1.15, Employed residents: 0.96-1.21

\[
E_r = \frac{(R_{s2} - R_{s1})}{R_{s1}} \times \frac{(H_{s2} - H_{s1})}{H_{s1}} \\
E_j = \frac{(J_{s2} - J_{s1})}{J_{s1}} \times \frac{(B_{s2} - B_{s1})}{B_{s1}}
\]

*E: elasticity, R: employed residents, J: jobs, H: housing floorspace, B: business floorspace, S1, S2: scenario Sa, S2*
2. Key Questions

**Single station simulation**

S3-S2 : Investigate the effects of land-use change (employment-oriented) at selected TOD pilot sites

Increasing business floorspace provision at pilot sites (aggregate growth constant) will:

- attract employment from the surrounding areas;
- increase housing rent in the surrounding areas;
- Increase average commuting distance at pilot sites but reduce commuting distance for the neighboring areas.

**Employed worker change (S2a vs S2)**

**Housing rent change (S2a vs S2)**

**Commuting distance change (S2a vs S2)**
2. Key Questions

2.4 Urban Form

Model-based scenario analysis suggests that, a 20% - 50% gross FAR increase based on the Baseline in the station catchment areas (to achieve an average gross FAR 1.2-1.4) would have a significant impact to attract residents from the Central City, facilitating a transition towards polycentricity, shortening average local commuting distances, and boosting land value in the suburban areas.

What does the urban form look like when the gross FAR is 1.2 to 1.4 in Beijing?
2. Key Questions

- Gross FAR = 1.2, for a suburb station providing mainly residential services.
2. Key Questions

- Benchmarking: Ganjiakou Station area in central city of Beijing. Gross FAR=1.22

- Urban scene with gross FAR 1.2 will be acceptable.

甘家口站

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>地类</th>
<th>建筑面积</th>
<th>用地面积</th>
<th>平均容积率</th>
<th>最大容积率</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>617046.3</td>
<td>647677.4</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>520001.2</td>
<td>158572.9</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>10746.69</td>
<td>12054.71</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1388.927</td>
<td>67434.38</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>7621.309</td>
<td>6211.866</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>1222332</td>
<td>699156.4</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>80331.79</td>
<td>64201.11</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>905.0904</td>
<td>1078.965</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>4149.167</td>
<td>20767.69</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>总计</td>
<td>2464522</td>
<td>200960</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Key Questions

- For a suburb station of the employment service type.
- Gross FAR = 1.4

Urban design of Cigezhuang station as a sample

- 400m内住宅容积率2.0，400-800m内住宅容积率1.6-1.8
- 轨道站紧邻商业办公容积率4.0，800m内其他商业办公容积率2.5-3.0
- 学校1.0-1.2，医院1.6。
2. Key Questions

- Benchmarking: Wudaokou Station area in the Central City of Beijing. Gross FAR=1.6
- Urban scene with gross FAR 1.4 will be better than Wudaokou.
Conclusions

• Recent mobile phone trace data shows that the main subway station catchment areas in Beijing range from 400m to 800m in radius.

• According to the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei RSE Model simulations, concentrated and boosted floorspace growth around suburban subway stations can help relieve the population pressure in the Central City, promote the balance of jobs and housing, shorten local commuting distances along the subway lines, and improve the land values in the suburbs.
Beijing does not have to adopt an ultra-high-density strategy as Tokyo or Hong Kong, and should consider an appropriate density given its particular context and growth aspirations. For subway station catchment areas (800 meters radius), a gross FAR of 1.2-1.4 not only can improve the land-use and infrastructure efficiency and promote sustainable travel, but also achieve a higher quality and more attractive cityscape.

It is expected that several suburban centers will emerge and mature in Beijing, the process of which may now be accelerated by the pandemic. An enhanced and tailored TOD strategy, together with efforts of reviving the tradition of low carbon travel (Beijing used to be a city of bicycles), can set up a new model for sustainability for cities facing similar development challenges in the developing world.

3. Conclusions (2)
Thanks

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