

# Towards a more liveable Greater KL

KENNY YAP/THE EDGE

Projects by the Malaysian government and its partners, such as AECOM, ensure the capital and its surrounding suburbs become even better places to live and work.

AECOM is one of the world's largest engineering firms with a reputation and global reach that is unrivalled in the industry. With a pool of 87,000 employees, this Fortune 500 firm designs, builds, finances and operates (known as the DBFO model) infrastructure assets for governments, businesses and organisations in more than 150 countries. With a client base of 25,000, AECOM made revenue of about US\$17.4 billion last year.

The company has been in Malaysia for 40 years, but has grown rapidly in the past four years when its employee headcount surged from around 50 to 800. This was largely driven by its involvement in several projects in the government's Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

Premier global infrastructure firm AECOM expects Greater KL to reach the top tier of liveability as transformational projects by the government have started to materialise.

Having been involved in some of the world's most iconic projects — the One World Trade Centre in New York; Cross Rail, a high-frequency, high-capacity railway in London; Colombo South Container Terminal in Sri Lanka; Taizhou Yangtze Bridge in China and Singapore's stretch of the high-speed rail infrastructure that connects the island city with Kuala Lumpur — AECOM is well aware of the importance of large multifaceted projects and their specific challenges.

"Growing populations and rising urbanisation makes it increasingly important for cities to be sustainable and liveable. Cities are where people live, work and play. Making this urban space safer, healthier, and more accessible within its existing framework can be a very complex challenge without obvious or easily achievable solutions," says Feisal Noor, AECOM vice-president of Buildings + Places for Malaysia.

"Big, bold ideas and a paradigm shift from the conventional way of thinking are needed to overcome such complex challenges. This is what AECOM does best. We leverage the expertise of our large pool of employees around the world, many with years of innovation and hands-on experience in different industries, to anticipate and solve the most complex challenges faced by our clients," says Feisal.

## Towards a more liveable city

AECOM was appointed as delivery partner for Phase 1 of the River of Life (RoL) project in 2012, project lead consultants for the Klang Valley MRT's architectural design in 2013, and more recently, as reference design consultant for the high-speed rail (HSR) infrastructure that connects Iskandar Puteri Station to the international border of Malaysia and Singapore.

Launched in August, Phase 1 of RoL has already enhanced the quality of life for the people in the city, says Scott Dunn, AECOM vice-president and director of Development for Malaysia. "The river was in a totally different place five years ago, when we were appointed to draw up the master plan for RoL. Now, Phase 1 of the RoL has completely transformed this part of the river and people are engaging with it in new ways. Urban social spaces that are accessible, interesting, comfortable and sustainable, like RoL, are a fundamental characteristic of great, liveable cities," says Dunn.

Rejuvenating the Klang and Gombak river corridors is also expected to enhance the value of the surrounding real estate. "Projects like the RoL take years to complete and require a wide range of technical and project management skills as multiple stakeholders are involved and new issues are invariably uncovered during its transformational process.

"It is important to note that delivering such a project successfully goes beyond the essential improvements of water quality. It is about placemaking — creating an urban space that serves current and future user needs, drives economic growth, and addresses socioeconomic disparities. If you look at the big picture, the ETP is a big bold gesture by the government to transform and elevate the lives of all Malaysian people," says Feisal.

## A regional transit point

Both Feisal and Dunn foresee a bright future for Greater KL once the RoL and the integrated rail network in the Klang Valley are completed, as this will improve Malaysia's connectivity internally and with other regional countries. World-class infrastructure and a revitalised downtown centred on a rejuvenated River of Life will ensure Kuala Lumpur moves higher up the rankings of global cities.

The HSR, Klang Valley MRT, the Johor Baru-Singapore Rapid Transit System (RTS) and the East Coast Rail Link are anchor



Scott Dunn, VP Strategy & Growth SEA



Feisal Noor, VP Building & Places

projects that will link townships and states within and to Greater KL. These transit systems are expected to open a new chapter for public transport, the delivery of cargo, further develop towns and boost the country's economic growth.

"Greater KL is already a strategic transit point for companies with regional operations. Reducing the travel time between Kuala Lumpur and regional cities creates even more possibilities for individuals and businesses to use this city in brand new

ways. With world-class infrastructure and an affordable cost of doing business, Greater KL will become a truly liveable city that surpasses its peers," says Dunn.

He adds that the government's commitment to rail infrastructure has spurred the growth and development of AECOM's team in Malaysia, which now numbers over 800 professionals. "Our local professionals benefited from a knowledge transfer by collaborating with international rail experts found in the wider AECOM group.

"Over time, the Malaysian office grew as a centre of excellence for rail infrastructure delivery with our involvement in the KVMRT (Line 1 and Line 2), the HSR and the RTS. Now, the skills acquired by our employees are exported out of Malaysia and they are able to advise our rail project teams in Thailand and Vietnam," says Dunn.

About 95% of AECOM's over 800 employees are Malaysians. To develop their skills, AECOM provides them with a holistic knowledge platform and resources, including an online education portal known as AECOM University.

"Our best practices, technical subjects, project management systems and compliance studies are available online. AECOM University has courses developed internally and with external universities and our employees can use this platform to enhance their capabilities. We also organise events where our global experts can share their experiences with the local team," says Feisal.

"I have worked around the world and find that multinational companies are generally impressed with the quality of Malaysian talent. Malaysian employees are multicultural and multilingual. These are valued attributes, but most importantly, Malaysians are highly adaptable and able to adjust in any situation. This enables us to rise up to the challenges posed by complex problems and come up with big and bold ideas and solutions to build a better world."

**AECOM**

- World iconic projects such as **One World Trade Centre** in America
- A global engineering firm with more than **87,000** employees
- FORTUNE 500** COMPANY
- Build and manage infrastructure assets for governments and businesses in more than **150** countries

WHY GREATER KL	BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY
Regional <b>transit point</b>	<b>Knowledge sharing &amp; transfer</b> in Rail Infrastructure
<b>Government's strong commitment</b> to rail infrastructure	<b>95% local employees</b> in AECOM Malaysia
<b>Affordable cost of doing business</b>	<b>AECOM University</b> as internal resource & training for employees
<b>Multicultural and multilingual talent</b>	<b>Contribute</b> to projects under the Economic Transformation Programme

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