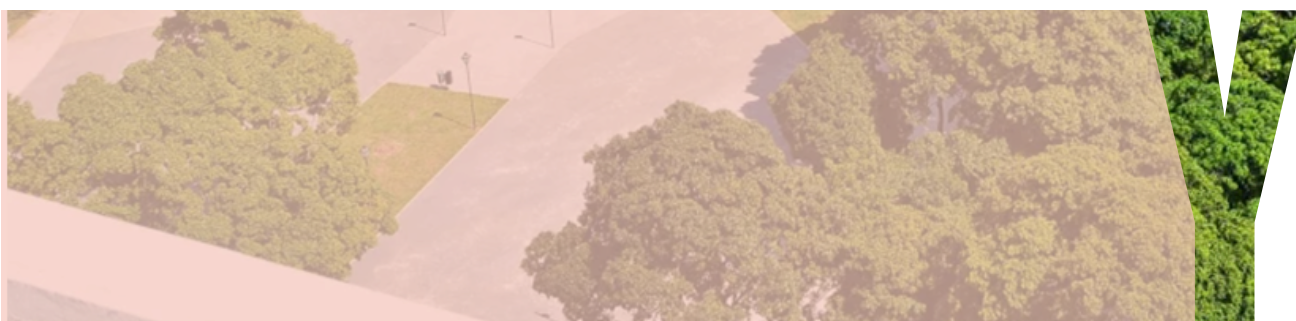
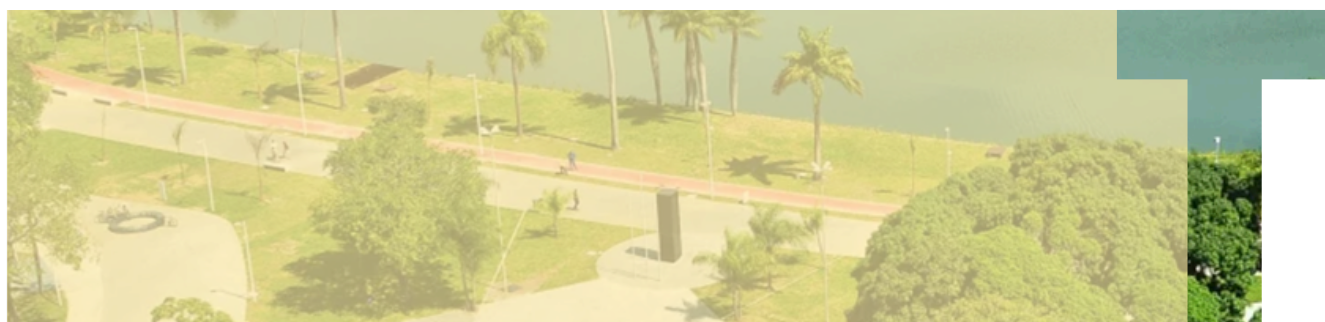
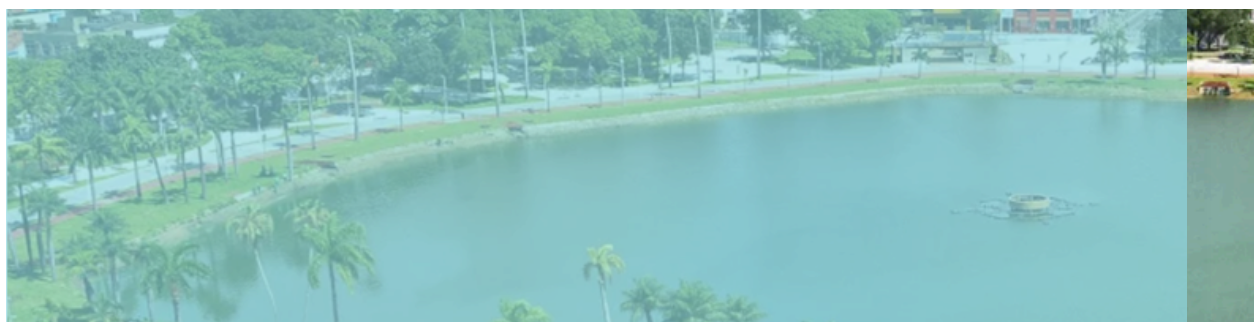


JOÃO PESSOA, BRAZIL



CITY FEATURES



João Pessoa is a Brazilian municipality and the capital of the state of Paraíba. With an estimated population of 833,932 (2022), the city is the eighth most populous city in the northeast region. Along with 10 other cities, it forms the metropolitan region of João Pessoa. It is known as “Sun’s Door” because the municipality is located at the Ponta do Seixas, the eastern-most point of the Americas. The city is considered one of the greenest cities in the world, because it maintains 31.47% of arboreal vegetation and preserved areas of the Atlantic Forest. Additionally, there are 47.11 m² of green space per inhabitant. The city’s economy is mainly driven by the services sector, responsible for a little over 50% of all the wealth produced, followed by the industrial sector

Population¹833,932
(2022)Land area¹210.044
km²

Average temperature

27°C

TRANSPORT FEATURES

Status quo and urban mobility trends

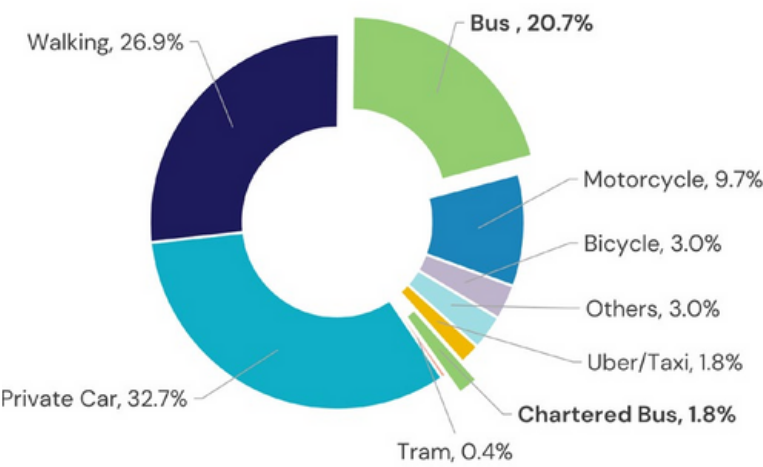
João Pessoa has a sprawling and dispersed urban growth model, across different areas of the city and with low population densities. The result is a socially segregated city, which negatively impact the environment, transportation and people’s quality of life. Seeking to reverse this situation, the municipality approved the Urban Mobility Plan (PlanMob, 2022), which aligned with the city’s Master Plan and adopted the concept of Sustainable Transport Oriented Development (DOTS). This focuses on the integration between urban mobility and land use, establishing guidelines to avoid dispersed urban growth and promote the efficient use of urban infrastructure, bringing housing areas and employment opportunities closer together by encouraging mixed land use near public transport corridors and hubs.



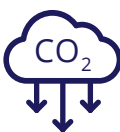
¹ IBGE, 2022

TRANSPORT FEATURES

Modal Split²



GHG Emission Levels³



Total GHG emissions
1,503,674 tCO_{2eq}
From road transport
481,398 tCO_{2eq}

Air Pollutant Levels



PM 2.5	NO ₂
—	—
PM 10	SO ₂
—	—

In João Pessoa, Brazil, the modal split shows a high reliance on private cars (32.7%), followed by walking (26.9%) and buses (20.7%). Motorcycles account for 9.7%, while bicycles, taxis, ride-hailing, and chartered transport have smaller shares. Despite public and active transport options, road transport remains a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, totaling 481,398 tCO_{2eq} out of the city's 1,503,674 tCO_{2eq} emissions in 2022.

Bus Trips Features



Number of bus trips⁴
927,670 (2024)



Average distance
30 km



Average time
80 min



Trips by purpose
39%
25%
7%
5%
5%
5%
14%



Trips by gender⁵
40%
60%

Work
Study
Health
Recreation
Shopping
Payments
Others



Average cost per travel by bus
R\$ 5.20

The majority of public transport users are between 18 and 39 years old, which aligns with the city's relatively young demographic. Work is the primary reason for bus transport usage, accounting for 40.9% of total trips.

According to the Diagnostic Report of the Master Plan for Urban Mobility, over 50% of bus trips by individuals from low-income families are for work and study purposes. The report also highlights that the percentage of bus trips taken for educational purposes increases with income.

The most popular destinations for bus passengers are the city center, southeast, and south regions, as these areas offer more job opportunities and services.

2 Executive Superintendence of Urban Mobility, João Pessoa
3 SEEG Municípios, 2019
4 SEMOB João Pessoa
5 Data refers to all kinds of collective transport (Bus, Tram, Ferry, and Chartered Bus)

BUS SYSTEMS OUTLOOK

Fleet and Infrastructure⁶



Number of buses
503

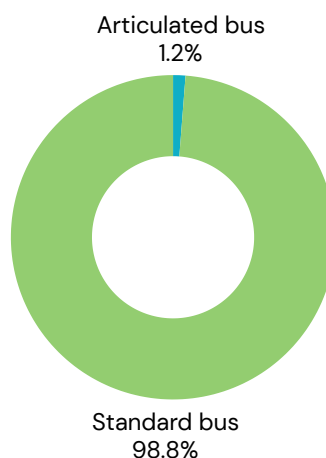


Number of routes
80



1,985 bus stops
3 bus depots

Buses by fleet type



Buses by fuel type



In João Pessoa, Brazil, the city's bus fleet consists of 503 buses, primarily standard models. Most of these buses (482 units) are standard vehicles, measuring up to 12 meters in length and accommodating 70 to 80 passengers. The fleet runs exclusively on diesel fuel. The city's bus garages are covered and equipped with maintenance docks for vehicle servicing. Only a few articulated buses are currently in operation.

Quality of Service⁷

The city's bus network is relatively convenient, serving a variety of origins, destinations, and travel purposes, with coverage extending to more peripheral and underserved areas. Public transportation reaches the entire municipal boundary, ensuring broad accessibility. However, bus travel can be slower compared to other modes, particularly during peak hours when buses tend to become overcrowded. The city has 22.13 km of exclusive bus lanes, and SEMOB is investing in fleet renewal, bus shelters, and road network improvements to enhance the overall system. The bus fare system operates on a time-based integration, making it accessible for most of the population. Overcrowding during peak hours affects comfort. On a positive note, the fleet is fully accessible, catering to women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Legislation guarantees women's safety when embarking and disembarking after 8 p.m.



© Arquivo/Secom, Prefeitura de João Pessoa

6 SEVIST/DION/SEMOB João Pessoa

7 SEGEO/SEMOB João Pessoa

Existing Business Model ⁸

A

Model A: Vertically integrated, private operator in BRT/integrated system

B

Model B: Divided responsibilities in BRT/integrated system

C

Model C: Large, more formal, private operator in traditional service

D

Model D: Small, informal, private operator in traditional service

E

Model E: Government-run system

C

The bus system of João Pessoa is operated by six companies divided into two consortiums. The consortium started its operation in 2011 with a 20-year term. The Executive Secretary of Urban Mobility (SEMOB) of the city government is in charge of the organization, coordination, control, grant and supervision of the services of the city's transport system. The SEMOB is also responsible for determining the operational characteristics of each line, such as itinerary, terminals, timetables, fleets and fares.



© Arquivo/Secom, Prefeitura de João Pessoa

Opportunities and Challenges to Scaling E-Bus Fleets



Opportunities

The city is open to new investments in the area of electric bus fleets, recognizing the growing trend toward sustainability.



Challenges

The main challenges to adopting and expanding electric bus fleets are the high costs involved and the need for public funding to implement the system.

⁸ Based on Accelerating a market transition in Latin America: New business models for electric bus deployment, P4G, Zebra and Dalberg, 2020

OVERALL FRAMEWORK

Policy

The municipality and state are collaborating on the implementation of five bus terminals and improvements to road corridors. The city is also focused on incorporating electric vehicles (EVs) into its bus fleet. While there are no specific targets or official agreements for the adoption of electric buses, the city is open to following the trend of transportation electrification. National, regional, and local policies are aligned with this trend, supporting the transition to electric vehicles. In terms of mobility planning, the city's plans are integrated with its master plans, and strategies are being adopted to facilitate the transition to electric vehicles. Additionally, the city has the DESPOLUIR program, which regularly monitors toxic gas emissions from buses to promote sustainable mobility and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Financing

The city of João Pessoa is set to benefit from the federal government's Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), which will finance the procurement of 60 electric buses. This initiative is expected to significantly boost the electrification of urban mobility and promote more sustainable transportation. To support these efforts, the city is also implementing the "Technical Assistance for the BR Corridors System and Integration Terminal Development" project. This project includes integration terminals for four road corridors, and those developed in partnership with the state government. This initiative is supported by the French Development Agency (AFD).

Impact

The urban mobility restructuring project aims to reduce nearly 40,000 tons of CO2 annually by 2038 by improving public transport. There are ongoing sustainable mobility and electrification projects, though their maturity level is unspecified. Key stakeholders include the managing agency, concessionaires, and class entities. To ensure an inclusive transition, the city engages with society, universities, and various organizations, particularly for vulnerable communities. While no specific measures exist yet to support workers affected by electrification, the city maintains open dialogue with the public, including minorities and vulnerable groups, in sustainable mobility planning.



© Arquivo/Secom, Prefeitura de João Pessoa

TUMI E-bus Mission City Network – Profile

JOÃO PESSOA, BRAZIL



Acknowledgements

Author:

Leticia Borges (ICLEI SAMS)
Pablo Souza (Consultant ICLEI)

Contributors:

Victor Gomes Bezerra de Melo, Francisco José Bezerra de Alcântara, Cinthyonara Targino Pereira (SEMOB-JP)

Editors:

Ana Maria Cruz Ochoa (ICLEI World Secretariat)
Tu My Tran (ICLEI World Secretariat)

Design:

Andreina Garcia Grisanti, Olga Tokareva, Laura López (ICLEI World Secretariat)

Disclaimer

ICLEI developed this profile in consultation with project cities but can not guarantee the accuracy of the information and therefore can not be held responsible for any consequences of its use.

The publication should be cited in full as:
“ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (2025). TUMI E-bus Mission City Network – Profile: Joao Pessoa, Brazil. Bonn, Germany”.

Publisher

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability.
e.V. © 2025 Kaiser-Friedrich-Straße 7, 53113
Bonn, Germany All rights reserved

About the TUMI E-Bus Mission

Funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), a core group of organizations supports cities in their transition toward electric bus deployment.

For more information please contact:
tumi-network@iclei.org or visit
<https://sustainablemobility.iclei.org/tumi/>

Contact

ICLEI

Local Governments for Sustainability e.V.
Kaiser-Friedrich-Str. 7
53113 Bonn | Germany
Tel. +49-228 / 97 62 99-00
Fax +49-228 / 97 62 99-01
Website: www.iclei.org
<https://sustainablemobility.iclei.org/>

