



## The Multi-modal Urban Region: A Concept to Combine Environmental and Economic Goals

### Introduction

Environmental sustainability is seldom, if ever, the main goal of urban development. Other goals, such as improving local economic performance or social equity are often just as high, if not higher, on the political agenda. This means that in order to give environmental sustainability in urban development a chance, it needs to be combined with other objectives. A crucial question in this respect is how to combine economic and environmental objectives. This chapter addresses this issue by first considering the available evidence on the relationship between urban form and economic performance on one hand, and urban form and environmental sustainability on the other. In both cases the focus is on transport and land use features of cities. In the second part of the chapter a conceptual framework is introduced to help develop transport and land use policies that build upon this evidence. The main idea is that of the ‘multi-modal urban region’, or of an urban region where land use and transport policies are directed at matching the competitive advantages of each transport mode (the supply of mobility) to the spatial characteristics of different urban activities (the demand for mobility). Trends and plans in the Netherlands are used to illustrate and support this argument. Central to the discussion are not so much methods for the *evaluation* of policy