

Summary of Transcript

Validation of drivers and scenarios with a transport expert at the University of Cape Town

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1. Role of the interviewee

The interviewee is located in the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Cape Town and specialised in transport studies. They research many areas such as transport planning as a discipline, minibus taxi operations, the interface between public transport operations and land use systems and behaviour change.

2. Drivers of transport development

The interviewee was shown the 10 main drivers identified through the research. They were asked to discuss their importance and list any drivers they felt were missing or should be excluded.

Missing drivers:

- Informality of public transport services and the degree to which the economy is more informal - this will impact the kind of services which are offered. On this point, one of the things that interests the interviewee is regulation, not through formal legislative processes like the issuing of operating licences, but self regulation by communities and operators, especially if there are high levels of informality. This relates to community agency.
- Capacity of government to undertake planning and to implement plans. This is beyond political will, but the ability of the government to enact on things. Cape Town is relatively well resourced, they have the capacity to do things like design and implement and contract a MyCiti service, but many municipalities in South Africa just do not have that kind of capacity.

Drivers of significance:

Combination of factors

The interviewee noted that the combination of different factors, mode integration, institutional relations, funding and railway decline, all speak to the prospects of the City being able to assume a whole set of responsibilities for public transport functions that would enable the local government to produce a better multimodal system. They noted that rail devolution would allow the City to finally potentially hold the rail operator to some kind of account through a service level agreement. They can plan services, they can integrate the road-based and the rail-based services to allow for integrated ticketing systems. Funding will enable them to potentially create a much better integrated public transport network that reverses the rail decline. This

question of consolidating public transport functions at the level of the metropolitan government is potentially a game changer.

Trust

The trust driver is also key. The interviewee reflected on certain programmes that existed between the minibuss industry and local government which allowed for forced interaction between them and for these historically conflictual parties to actually align towards a common goal in a mutually beneficial way. It disrupted that historically antagonistic relationship and started to create trust. Positive steps towards public transport improvement does require this kind of of constructive working relationship between actors.

3. Scenarios

The interviewee was told the names of the scenarios and asked to describe what they thought the characteristics of each scenario was, before being shown the descriptions derived from the research.

Current scenario

- It's institutionally fragmented. National competencies deal with rail, provincial competencies deal with bus contracting and operating licences and municipal competencies deal with transport planning. It's really not particularly conducive which leads then to uncoordinated public transport services that are uncompetitive when it comes to attracting choice passengers.
- The ridership for public transport is either stagnant or declining.
- Climate mitigation is heading in the wrong direction.
- It's not particularly safe from both a crime and a security perspective.
- The benefit of operating subsidies is highly skewed. Often the people that need the greatest support don't receive any because they depend on minibuss taxis, which get no subsidisation.
- Long inter-peak periods where very little is happening, but it's costing a fortune to keep those drivers and buses going.

Business as usual scenario

- Public transport continues to stagnate and decline.
- Soon as people have the resources to switch over to private car use, they do so.

- The wealthier half of the population is dependent on car and the focus is on the needs of cars so that the basic structure of the city is not transformed in any way to make it more conducive to public transport operations.
- The distances are still long, so the costs in time and money on public transport users remains high.
- Emissions continue.
- There is a poor road safety record.
- No resolve of institutional fragmentation and siloed planning.

Integration scenario

- Devolution of public transport planning and regulation functions which enables coordinated multimodal network planning
- Integrated timetables
- Integrated service spans
- Integrated ticketing systems.
- Public transport service more car competitive, so it attracts choice passengers, which brings in revenue.
- It creates better alternatives as developers recognise the potential of public transport interchanges and precincts.
- The structure of the City starts to change. We get more TOD (transit orientated development) type development
- The City is safer and more secure.
- Designated lanes and signalling for buses and minibus taxis would also be important.

Active travel scenario

- Cost of motorised transport is really high - so the cost of electricity or petrol and diesel is a strong incentive for people to use active travel modes.
- A higher density of development and greater mix of land uses.
- There's better resourcing and better attention to NMT infrastructure.
- Consequently, fatality rates go down and it becomes safer.
- Security also improves because there are more eyes on the street, more security personnel.

4. Defining fairness, equity/ spatial justice

The interviewee was asked to define what they thought spatial justice/equity/fairness is.

- A more unfair system is when the inhabitants of the City have varied different travel times to a basket of standard activities that they need to participate in. This is defined by very unequal costs of travelling to those opportunities, very unequal temporal windows of opportunity to travel. The service bands are short, so if you need to travel in the evening for instance, there aren't services available to you. And at the other end, a fairer, more just system would be one where everybody in the City is able to reach this basket of key activities that they need to participate in within a defined threshold of of travel time and cost. It's a world in which transport services are available over extended periods of the 24 hour cycle so that it is possible to undertake trips in in the off-peaks and and off-peak travel is not just for the wealthy.