

TRANSPORTATION CONCESSIONS: ELIXIR TO SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF THE MARGINALISED

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ABSTRACT

Major development of public transport last occurred with the development of the Gautrain Rapid Rail Network before 2009. Both rail and bus operations have shrunk in South Africa whilst the demand for public transport should be growing due to the growing population and developments. Whilst the funds to subsidise public transport continue to shrink it is imperative for government to enable the development and growth of other alternative services that may not necessarily rely on government subsidies. There is room for government to invite applicants to bid for concessions in both passenger and goods rail sector. PRASA continues to shrink with economically viable routes now closed whilst the public can only opt for the minibus taxi industry. The Transnet rail infrastructure is also under utilised with some lines are mothballed whilst there is room to utilise them for both passenger and goods. The congested urban roads create a mature environment for monorail as viable alternative mass transit system that is more economical and faster to deploy than the heavy rail. In addition to all the above, NLTA provides for commercial service contracts that contracting authorities may facilitate to enable unsubsidised but reliable services. With all the mentioned services comes the empowerment of the historically disadvantaged, development of new skills and major job creation in the transport sector whilst reducing carbon emission footprint the South African transport sector contributes to the country's current position.