

MODAL INTEGRATION IN GREATER PRETORIA

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1. Introduction and general background

For many years, the City of Pretoria has been run by a transport system that is completely unco-ordinated. The system was characterised by a massive duplication of services. Rail transport at that time enjoyed government protection as entry to the transport industry was artificially made difficult for other modes of transport. Little was done to create a platform of providing a continuous transport service to the travelling public. The coming into existence of the national transport policy in 1996 presented an opportunity for various stakeholders to search for ways and means of integrating the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area's transport system. This paper is based on the processes undertaken by the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council (GPMC) in trying to create a suitable infrastructure to integrate the different transport modes in Pretoria.

2. A need to establish a Modal Integration Committee

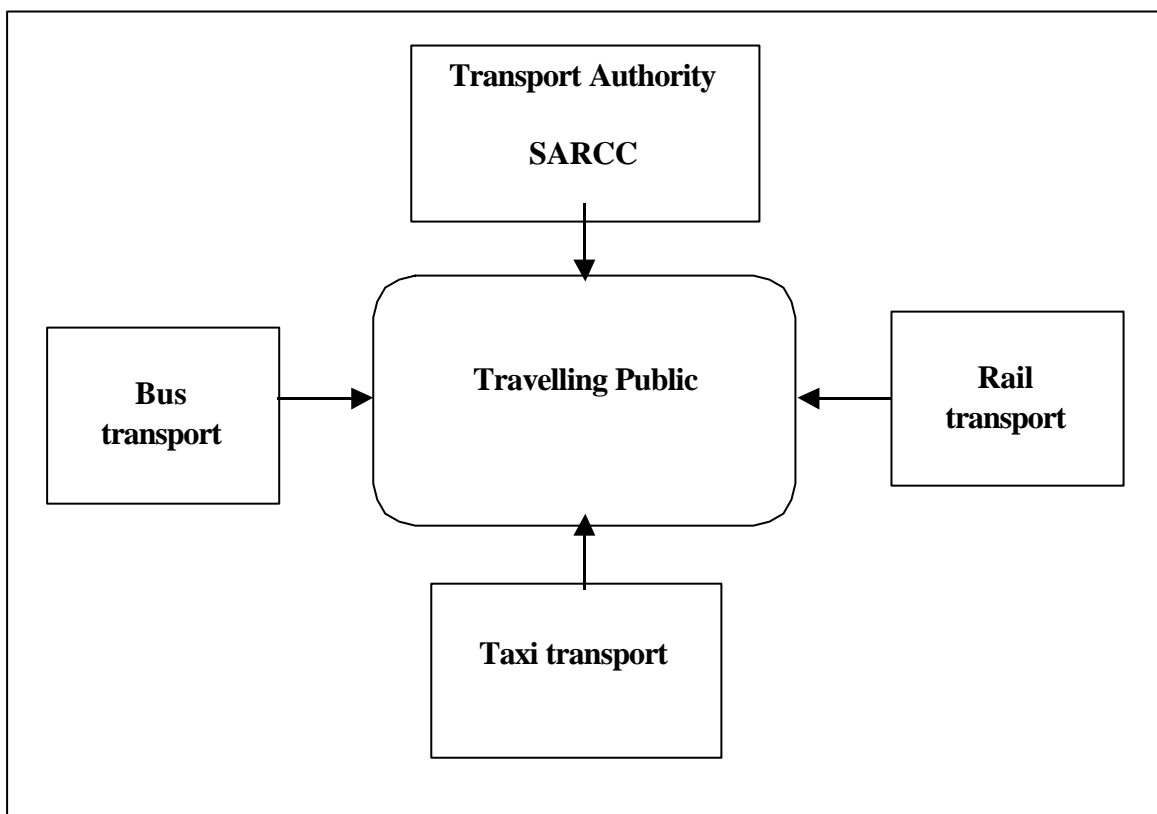
Rather than entering into destructive competition, the GPMC reckoned that it would be to the benefit of both the transport industry and the user if services are complemented where possible. This necessitated the establishment of a modal integration committee to cater for the transport needs of various segments of the travelling public. The rationale behind the establishment of the modal integration committee is to ensure that different modes strive to work together rather than working against each other. As part of its responsibilities, the committee ensures that it functions as a catalyst or facilitator striving to accomplish the government's transport goals and objectives.

Also what has been given attention in the establishment phase of the committee was that no transport system can operate in a vacuum. This simply means that there are important stakeholders that should form part of the system. In trying to follow this principle, various relevant stakeholders have been invited to be part of the modal integration committee. Most importantly, representatives of the travelling public have been drawn into the process as the whole marketing effort is directed at satisfying their transport needs.

The supply side is represented by different land transport modes including rail, bus and taxi. From the rail transport side, representatives of Metrorail and Mainline train services within the Pretoria area report on the developments taking place in their areas particularly with regard to aspects such as through ticketing, interchange facilities and communication network.

The transport authority is represented by the SARCC and the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council together with the three Transitional Local Councils, namely Centurion, Pretoria and Akasia. These authorities bring a variety of inputs into the committee. For example, the City Council of Pretoria could give input related to the transport system management within the city centre while the South African Rail Commuter Corporation would give an indication of which stations are earmarked for development. Some developments that have already taken place at the Local Council level is the construction of a modal transfer facility opposite Centurion Station. All these developments are reported at the modal integration committee.

A schematic representation of the modal integration representatives is shown below:



3. The travelling Public

Acknowledging the fact that the user of a service is important, it was deemed crucial that the established modal integration committee have representatives from the commuting public. These representatives are drawn from the already established passenger forum. The forum meets once a month on a Saturday morning to discuss issues pertaining to all modes of transport. The needs of people with special needs such as pensioners, students, people with disabilities etc are catered for in this forum.

4. Transport authorities

Transport authorities, in consultation with communities, have a duty to define passenger needs and affordable fare levels in order to identify potential target groups for support. Having defined and identified mobility needs, the metropolitan authority is in the better position to determine the demand for state supported services. The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, SARCC and the three Local councils play a critical role in overseeing the need for the possible intervention of both the provincial and national governments in

terms of subsidies. The transport authority needs the input of both the user and operator to decide on the development of infrastructure. For example, the bus operator should lay down its strategic plan and spell out potential areas of development such as the erection of new interchange facilities. In terms of rail infrastructure, Metrorail needs to define its long term objectives in terms of the development of new stations. The development of one mode's infrastructure has an impact on another mode, hence a need to have a modal integration committee.

5. Operators

The three transport modes operating within and outside Pretoria's transport areas are represented in the committee. These are the bus operators, rail transport and taxis.

5.1 Bus operators

Representatives from the bus industry are PUTCO, NORTH WEST STAR Elwierda and the Pretoria City Bus Company. Much has been discussed regarding aspects to be considered for the integration of the bus mode of transport with other modes. The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council has established a bus committee that looks at issues pertaining to the operations of buses. Representatives of this committee are also present in the modal integration committee. Various issues highlighted by members of this committee are amongst other things reporting on the status of terminal facilities, ablution, shelters, the provision of facilities for people with disabilities.

5.2 Rail transport

The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council has a rail co-ordinating committee that is comprised of officials from its Land Use and Public Transport division, Metrorail, the South African Rail Commuter Corporation, Intersite and the three local councils. This committee ensures that issues pertaining to the transportation of commuters by rail are given attention.

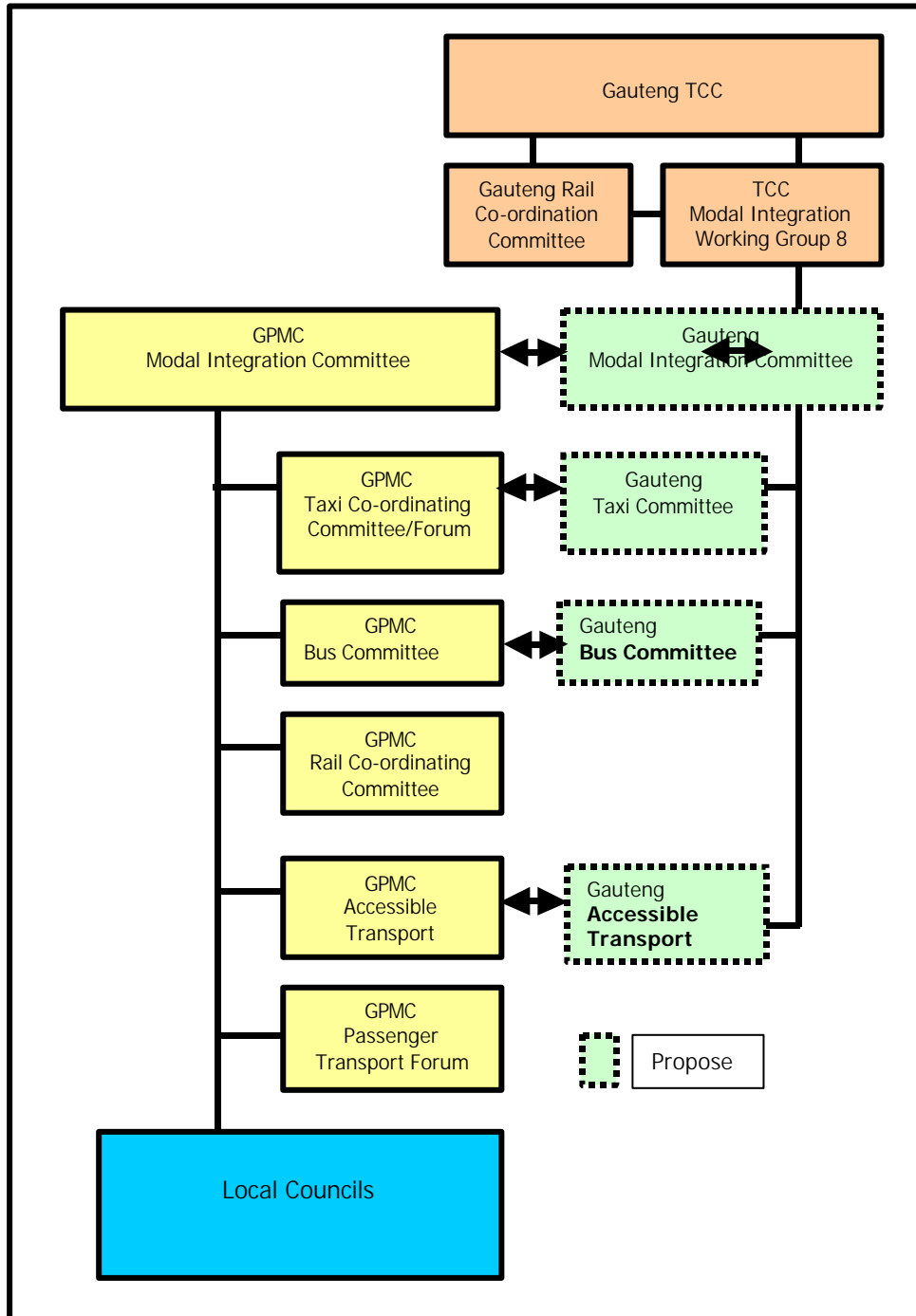
5.3 Taxis

The taxi industry is undergoing a profound change such as the conversion of permits to permissions, minibuses are being converted from 16 seater to 18 and 35 seaters. There is also possible integration of services with other modes such as rail and bus transport. Members of the taxi industry need to be informed about what the authorities' plans are with regard to providing a sustainable transport to the public. A modal integration committee is therefore the right platform for the dissemination of transport related information. Areas of fundamental importance for the committee are the establishment of ranks and the concerns raised by commuters.

Substantial progress has been made in the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area with regard to the establishment of various committees and institutions that need to give input to the modal integration committee.

A schematic representation of the proposed intermodal liaison and institutional structure of the GPMC is shown overleaf:

PROPOSED INTERMODAL LIAISON AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FOR THE GPMC



6 Benefits of Modal Integration

6. Benefits of Modal Integration

Among the benefits that can accrue to users because of the integration of modes are greater accessibility and mobility. Research findings show that passengers tend to choose a specific mode because of certain attributes they perceive as important throughout the travel value chain. Of major importance in the prospective passenger's decision making process with regard to a variety of transport modes is ensuring that there is accessibility, convenience, affordability and minimum side effects.

6.1 Benefits to both the authorities and the community

6.1.1 Alleviating congestion

Having the promotion of public transport as one of the national strategic objectives in South Africa, the adoption of modal integration would contribute to striving towards the achievement of this. If transport modes are well co-ordinated, which means that providing services that complement each other, this would help to lessen congestion particularly in the central business area of Pretoria.

Traffic congestion has a detrimental effect to commuters more especially when considering the value of working time spent on the roads during peak times. A lot of valuable time is wasted on our urban roads and this represents a great loss to both the authorities and industry. The introduction of modal integration would come as a relief as transport entities would strive to keep their travel time as short as possible and this could be done in various ways such as the introduction of express trains in the case of rail transport.

6.1.2 Minimising air and noise pollution

Air and noise pollution are national problems that need to be addressed. By integrating different transport modes, the opportunities are that air and noise pollution would be reduced. Research findings have proved that a polluted environment gives rise to various diseases such as tuberculosis (Wemyss,1996).

Modal integration would serve as a tool to reduce the unnecessary traffic flow into the city centre. For example, rather than having small vehicles undertaking linehaul functions, it would be more advantageous if such vehicles operate as feeder services.

6.1.3 Affording the user a continuous service

By integrating different transport modes would mean that users would benefit significantly in terms of reduced travel time. One of the key success factors in transport is to move traffic or shipment from point A to B at the least available time.

6.2 Benefits to operators

6.2.1 Benefits to rail transport

The adoption of a modal integration strategy would enable rail transport to optimally utilise its service capacity. The possibility of integrating the ticketing system would likely reduce fare evasion and thus improve cost recovery.

It is a known fact that rail transport is inflexible, and at times is seen to be inaccessible. This simply means that it needs the support of other modes to ensure that it provides a door to door service. With all the essential aspects needed for modal integration put in place, the quality of rail transport service would be substantially enhanced.

6.2.2 Benefits to bus transport

Modal integration would contribute towards the improvement of the efficient utilisation of vehicles. Working together with other transport modes would bring about synergy in striving to satisfy the user.

Bus transport would obtain improved patronage and fare income based on the reliability of service that is being efficiently rendered with effective modal linkages. It is envisaged that the infrastructure and other facilities would be improved since the support of modal integration would minimise the unnecessary inflow of private vehicles into the central business area.

6.2.3 Benefits to the taxi transport industry.

Moving towards the integration of various modes of transport means searching for ways and means of doing business with other operators. For the taxi industry, this means considering formalising their business entities and this would probably create room to improve their vehicle utilisation. This could also be an opportunity for the taxi industry to enhance their bargaining power in terms of acquiring spares at affordable prices.

7. Conclusions

The integration of different transport modes is a strategic must if an effective transport system is to be put in place. The establishment of modal integration committees at the metropolitan level should therefore be given attention. These committees serve as a communication channel linking the transport authorities with operators and the commuting public.

8. References

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- 8.4 Wemyss, N. 1996, Solving the Urban Transport Dilemma: The motor industry's approach. London: Pearson Professionals.

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ABBREVIATED CURRICULUM VITAE

JOHN MALULEKE

Hons B.Admin (business Economics + Transport + Economics) (UNISA)

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Full member of the South African Research Association.

John is married to Mary and have three children. He started working for the then South African Railways and Harbours in 1971. He held various grades in the passenger services division of Transnet until 1991 when he joined Transnet Housing as a Researcher.

John has a significant hands-on rail transportation experience which he gathered throughout his work life. He has been extensively involved in exploratory research studies that involved various modes of transport in the Northern Province. Part of his research investigations has been to assess the possibility of revitalising Commuter Rail Services between Pietersburg and Dikgale. John has also been involved in the establishment of the Modal Integration Committee for the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council. He is also currently involved in the Gauteng Spatial Development Initiative higher speed rail study.