

TOWARDS A PROVINCIAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC AND NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT IN THE WESTERN CAPE

D Ribbonaar, C von der Heyden, E Hastings and M Moody

Pegasys Strategy and Development, 4th Floor, 4 Church Square, Spin Street, Cape Town 8001

Tel: 021 461 5476; Email: matthew@pegasys.co.za

ABSTRACT

1. BACKGROUND

The Western Cape Government is currently developing a Provincial Public Transport Institutional Framework (PPTIF) to guide public and non-motorised transport improvement in the non-Metro areas of the Province. The framework aims to address the critical barriers to improving the current unacceptable state of affairs. The framework incorporates innovative approaches to tackling the challenges faced by the sector. Once the framework has been completed, it will be implemented.

The PPTIF differs from the Provincial Land Transport Framework (PLTF). The primary reason for the PLTF is to serve as a strategic management tool for the provincial transport department and includes the vision, objectives and policies of the department; current public transport strategies and sector strategies as well as associated financial, monitoring and institutional arrangements.

The PPTIF develops aspects of the PLTF in more detail, developing an institutional framework for achieving the improvement to public and non-motorised transport envisioned by the Department. The PPTIF also introduces innovative mechanisms for reducing cost and enhancing capacity to implement, which will inform future versions of the Provincial Land Transport Framework (PLTF).

2. INTRODUCTION

The majority of people in the Western Cape rely on public and non-motorised transport for their mobility and yet public transport is often unsafe, insufficient, non-existent or unaffordable; while NMT users experience great risk and long distances, with a general lack of adequate and safe facilities.

This is supported by the data captured in the figures below. The figures include mode share data to work for both the non-Metro urban and rural areas of the Western Cape. In urban areas private vehicle use (46%) and walking (29%) are the main modes of transport, with the minibus taxi (16%) being the primary mode of public transport. In rural areas, walking is the main mode of transport (62%), with a

significant role for private vehicles (33%). Notably, the role of public transport in rural areas is much less significant than in the urban parts of the Western Cape.

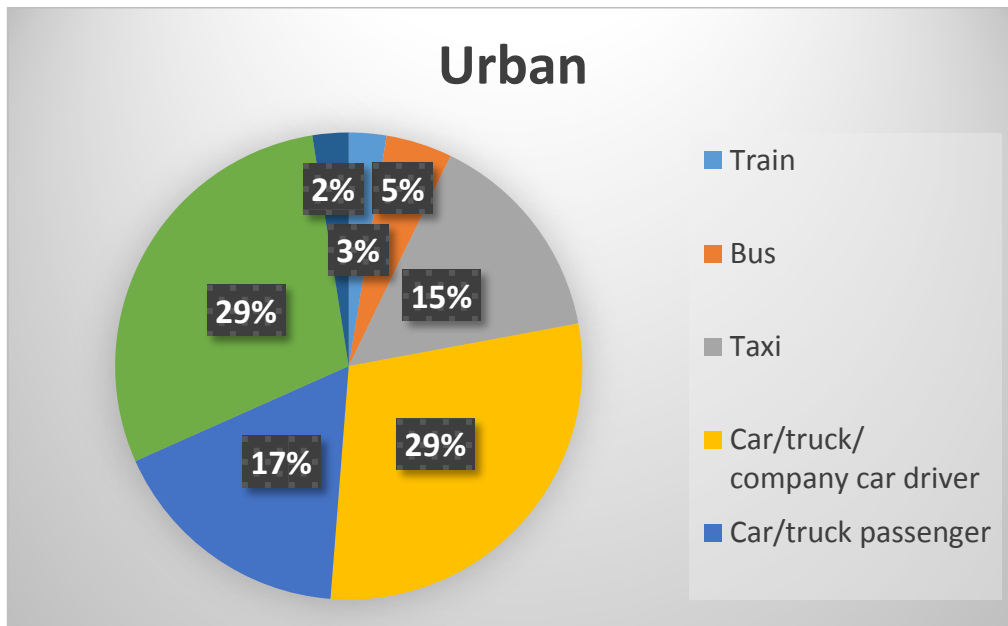


Figure 1 Urban Mode Share in the Western Cape
(Source: NHTS Western Cape, 2013)

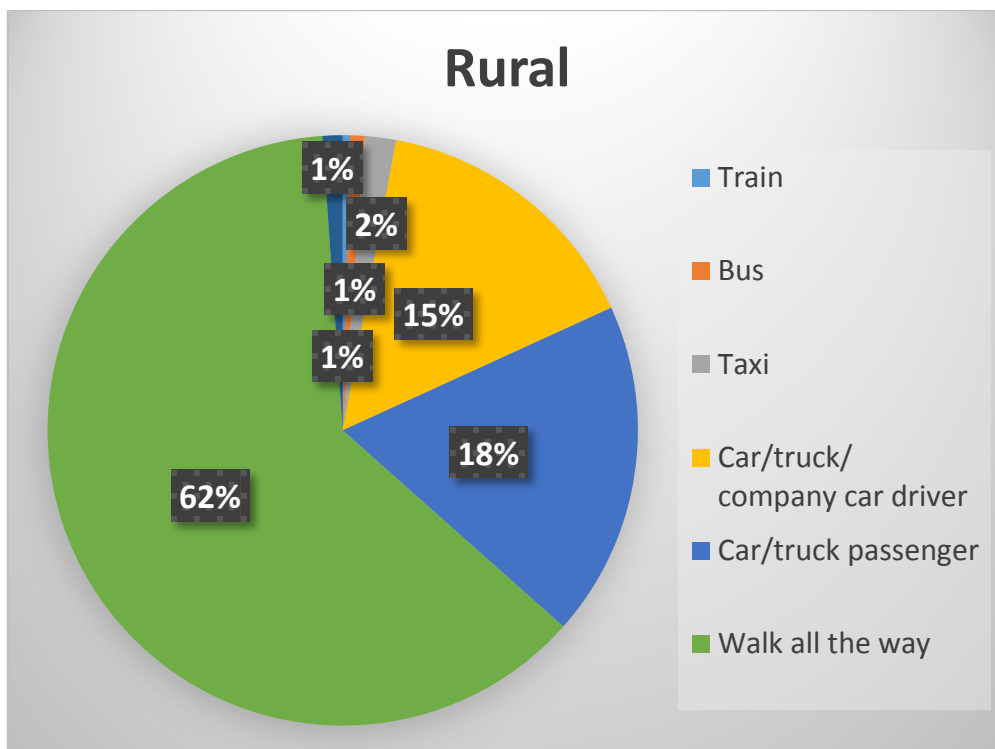


Figure 2 Rural Mode Share in the Western Cape
(Source: NHTS Western Cape, 2013)

The table below provides data on rates of dissatisfaction with minibus-taxi services in the non-Metro areas of the Western Cape. Key areas of concern include taxi fares (31.74%), crowding in taxis (31.52%), roadworthiness of taxis (30.94%), safety from accidents (30.46%) and the frequency and waiting times for taxis during both the peak and off-peak.

Table 1 MBT Dissatisfaction Rates in the Western Cape
(Source: NHTS Western Cape, 2013)

Attributes of MBTs	Non-Metro Dissatisfaction Rates (%)
The taxi fares	31,74
The level of crowding in the taxis	31,52
Roadworthiness of taxis	30,94
Safety from accidents	30,46
The frequency of taxis during peak period	28,92
The waiting time for taxis	28,68
The frequency of taxis during off-peak period	27,92
The taxi service overall	26,10
Security on the taxis	25,52
The facilities at the taxi ranks, e.g. toilets, offices	25,52

Both the City of Cape Town and the Municipality of George have received significant financial support from National Government through the public transport grant system and real progress has been made in these Municipalities toward improving public transport and enhancing access to opportunities. Outside of these centres of progress, little substantive development has occurred in the Western Cape. There are three primary reasons for this:

- **Integrated (Rapid) Public Transport Network (I[R]PTN) model** – National legislation and policy has focussed on the development and implementation of urban Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks in the 13 largest cities. The model which has emerged for these areas revolves around large scale infrastructure development and full scale formalisation of the Minibus-Taxi (MBT) industry. An appropriate public transport response for non-metro areas such as towns, villages and rural areas, have not reached a similar stage of development, with limited clarity on the appropriate way forward.
- **Capacity at the municipal level** –Outside of Cape Town and George, municipalities in the Western Cape have little to no capacity to perform municipal land transport functions (NLTA s11(c)), including the planning, implementation and management of integrated public transport networks. In addition, national legislation fails to take into account the difference in

capacity and resources between metros and local and district municipalities. To an extent, national policy and legislation should provide greater flexibility for context-specific institutional responses to local problems. Given the limited capacity of Local Municipalities, Provincial Governments should be permitted to enter into contracts for the provision of public transport services. Currently, this is forbidden by the NLTA.

- **Lack of funding** – There are limited funding streams available for public and non-motorised transport transformation in non-Metro areas. In addition, full scale public transport implementation across the Western Cape using conventional approaches is not affordable.
- In South Africa, the current institutional model and associated funding streams support public and non-motorised transport improvement in large cities, including the City of Cape Town and George. An institutional model is required which responds to the need for public and non-motorised transport improvement in other parts of the Western Cape. It is likely that a similar model is required in other parts of the country. The model will need to address the challenges described above by developing:
 - An institutional model which responds to the lack of capacity at local government level.
 - An approach to public and non-motorised transport improvement which reflects non-metro contexts, gradually increases the government capacity requirements and reduces or spreads cost.
 - Reducing the cost of improvement, by leveraging institutional economies of scale and implementing cost-effective public and non-motorised transport interventions.

3. ENVISAGED PUBLIC AND NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT NETWORKS

In response to these challenges, the Western Cape Government has initiated the development of a Provincial Public Transport Institutional Framework (PPTIF) for the transformation of public and non-motorised transport across the Province. A core component of the PPTIF is an incremental framework for public and non-motorised transport improvement and transformation. This approach aims to achieve tangible improvements in non-motorised transport and public transport service provision whilst progressively transforming the existing public transport industry and building government capacity to assume increasingly complex public and non-motorised transport functionality.

The incremental framework is built on a thorough understanding of the needs and drivers for public and non-motorised transport, which vary across the province based on socio-economic and spatial dynamics. Through this analysis five categories were developed to describe the differing contextual dynamics in the Western Cape.

The five categories are:

- **Urban Growth Areas** - These are the economic centres of the Province, with very high growth potential, dynamic economies, relatively high population density and the greatest volume of local public transport movement in the Province. This includes the Cape Metro Functional Region and the George-Mossel Bay region. These are the red circles in Figure 3 below.
- **Industrial Development Area** – Including parts of the Saldanha Bay Local Municipality and the Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) that is currently being developed there. This is an area of both National and Provincial importance, with high growth potential. This is the light blue circle in Figure 3.
- **High Value Agriculture** – High intensity agricultural areas, often including groups of smaller urban centres of medium growth potential. Amongst others this includes the Robertson-Ashton region, the Malmesbury-Moorreesburg region and the Caledon-Bredasdorp-Swellendam region. These are the green areas of the map, with urban settlements concentrated in the highlighted dark blue areas.
- **Extensive Agriculture** - Low intensity agricultural areas with low population and density levels, few significant urban centres and low to very low growth potential. This includes most of the Central Karoo and part of the northern West Coast District Municipality. These are the yellow areas of the maps.
- **Coastal Tourism Towns** – Urban coastal towns with significant tourism activity, coastal transport corridors connecting a string of closely located towns and villages and very high growth potential. These are the highlighted in purple in Figure 3.

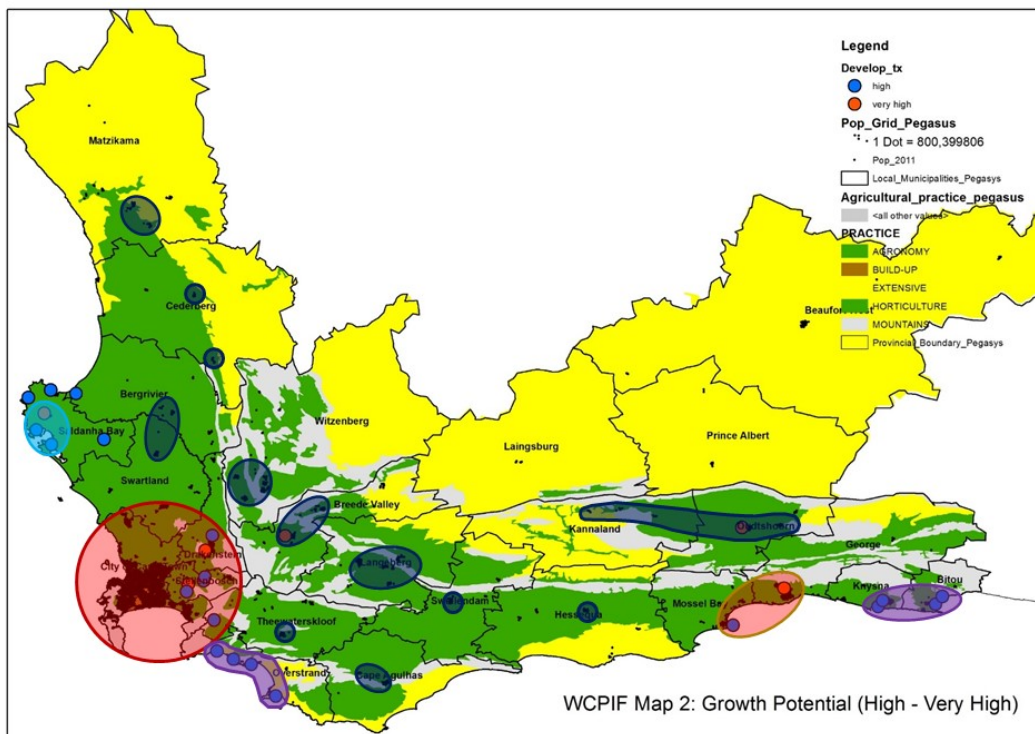


Figure 3: PPTIF Categories Mapped

4. INCREMENTAL FRAMEWORK

A core component of the PPTIF is the incremental framework. This framework is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather provides guideline for local transport improvement that must be refined based on local contextual realities.

Broadly the incremental framework includes three stages. Stage 1 focusses on getting the basics right and moving rapidly toward an immediate improvement in public and non-motorised transport, without significantly altering the business model of public transport operators or overburdening government. In Stage 2, government looks to begin contracting with and subsidising public transport operators for selected, context-appropriate routes. In Stage 3, public transport moves towards a more comprehensive, appropriate and context-specific level of formalisation and contracting.

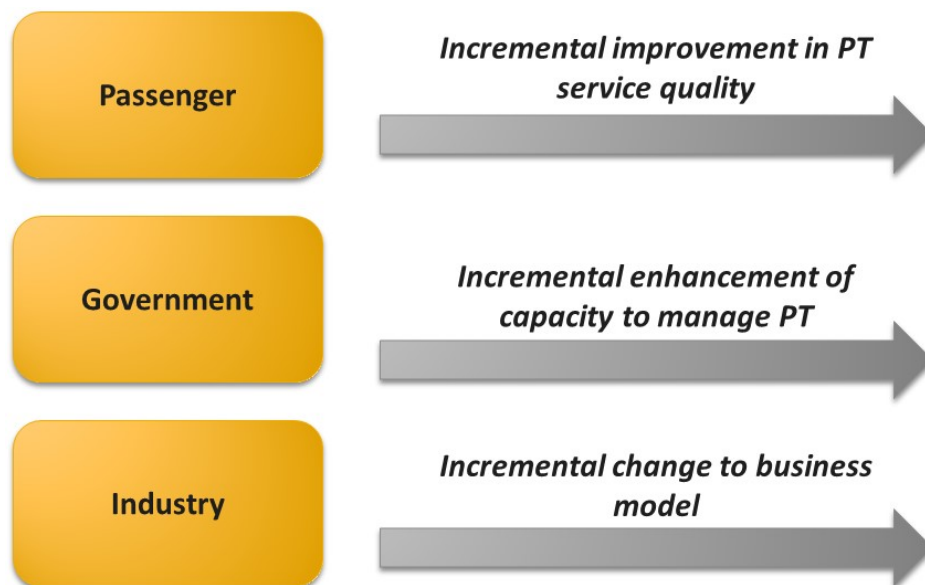


Figure 4: Incremental change

The transformation and improvement process includes three key stakeholders, namely: the passenger, government and the industry, as illustrated in Figure 4 above. The approach aims to achieve real improvement in passenger or user experience, while allowing government the space to progressively build up internal management capacity and the industry to adjust its business model overtime.

Critically, the incremental approach allows government to build up capacity over time. In other words, government is not rapidly overburdened with the management of complex IPTNs. Rather government progressively builds capacity to effectively engage with, regulate and enforce existing public transport operations and improve NMT, then the capacity to manage small contracts which incentivise industry self-organisation and, later, move toward the management of larger scale and more complex, context-appropriate IPTNs.

Each of the stages of the incremental approach has been described in more detail below.

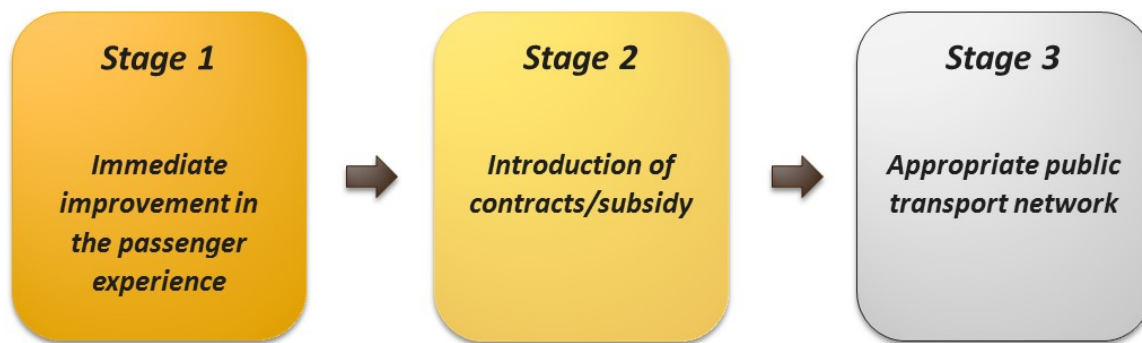


Figure 5: Staged incremental approach

4.1. Stage 1

The aim of Stage 1 is to begin to address some of the critical public and non-motorised transport issues in the Western Cape. To an extent, this approach builds on existing expertise and capacity within local government and begins a process of enhanced capacity development to manage increasingly complex transport networks. At the same time, Stage 1 does not impose a dramatic change to the business model of existing public transport operators and, overall, it allows for shorter term, lower impact, affordable responses which are suited to the local area.

More specifically, Stage 1 includes a strong focus on enhancing non-motorised transport and the regulation and enforcement of existing public transport operators, in conjunction with strengthened industry engagement. The aim here is to ‘get the basics rights’ before moving toward the implementation of expensive and complex integrated public transport networks.

- **Enhance non-motorised transport** – the provision of improved NMT infrastructure, enforcement of NMT rights and the NMT support programmes such as bicycle distribution and training.
- **Stakeholder engagement and industry transformation** – In the non-metro areas of the Western Cape public transport is largely provided by the minibus taxi industry. Currently, the level of engagement between municipalities and the industry varies through the province. The role of the industry is central to improving and transforming public transport in the Western Cape. As a result, Stage 1 includes a focus on building capacity in government to strategically and effectively engage the industry and co-create a dignified public transport system.
- **Enhanced regulation and enforcement** - As a first step towards improving the quality of public transport in the Western Cape, there is a need to dramatically enhance regulation and enforcement of public transport services. This is particularly relevant for the minibus taxi industry where problems of unsafe vehicles, poor driving practice and illegal operators are widespread and uncontrolled problems. Strengthening the regulatory entity, improving the database of operators, and enforcing licence conditions, is a pre-requisite for lasting improvement in the public transport systems.
- **Data management** – In the Western Cape, the quality and management of data on public and non-motorised transport is problematic. As a result, it is difficult to develop a detailed and accurate understanding of the current state of public and non-motorised transport in the Western Cape. The quality of

data processes, from collection to analysis, must be improved by developing enhanced capacity to managing data.

- **Driver training** - The aim of driver training is to improve the quality and, particularly, the safety of legal minibus taxi operations. Government will provide free driver training services to legal taxi operators either directly or through a service provider. This will form part of enhanced engagement and cooperation between the industry and government.
- **Basic public transport infrastructure** - In many parts of the Western Cape the waiting areas for public transport are insufficient and in need of improvement. Informal waiting areas and collection points proliferate, with no seating, shelter or facilities. As a part of Stage 1, government will prioritise critical infrastructure gaps through the provision of a limited number of new rank facilities, upgrades to existing facilities and the provision of basic shelter facilities at informal waiting/collection points.
- **Public transport facility management** - Government must ensure that public transport facilities are managed correctly. Facilities must be well-maintained, clean and secure. Where management is found to be insufficient, government will either perform this function in-house or contract for the provision of facility management services.

4.2. Stage 2

In Stage 2, government begins to introduce small subsidised service contracts with existing operators for the provision of higher quality public transport services. Through the use of contracting, government begins to incentivise self-organisation and consolidation within the industry. In Stage 2, the work streams established in Stage 1 are continued, with additional areas of focus include the introduction and management of subsidised contracts for public transport operators, small-scale ITS and AFC systems and managing data from these systems. Monitoring public transport operators becomes a priority.

- **Subsidised contracts** – The nature of these contracts will differ markedly by context. In urban areas with significant public transport movements, this will focus on the provision of contracted off-peak services in the urban core as a first step in the formalisation process. While in rural areas, the focus is on subsidising critical links between under-served communities and centres of opportunity. These will be net contracts, with operators continuing to collect their own fares.
- **Business development** - In order to support operators to bid for tenders, government will provide free business advisory services which will support industry on business matters and assist in preparing bid applications.
- **ITS / AFC** – Contracted operators will be provided with Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Automated Fare Collection (AFC) systems, improving both the quality of service provision, the ability of government to monitor operations and providing essential data for planning purposes.
- **Basic public transport infrastructure** - In terms of infrastructure, in Stage 2 government will ensure that sufficient sheltered stops are provided on contracted routes.
- **Vehicle quality initiatives** - In Stage 2, operators will continue to use existing vehicles if they are in a suitable condition. In order to address issues of vehicle quality and roadworthiness and the financial limits of the existing taxi-recap programme, government will provide an additional top-up to the taxi

scrapping allowance. This offer will be limited to all legal operators who are contracted to government. This initiative will require additional investigation and business planning to determine its viability,

- **Basic Branding** - All contracted vehicles will be branded as a mark of service excellence. Effective contract management is critical to ensuring that the brands association with quality service provision is maintained.
- **Commercial contract management** - From an institutional perspective, Stage 2 includes enhanced capacity on the part of government to manage public transport contracts. This includes the ability to identify and procure viable commercial operations. In areas with high tourism seasonality, such as Overstrand and Mossel Bay, this will include commercial tourism contracts. Cost and profit will be recovered from fares.

4.3. Stage 3

In Stage 3, the public transport priorities established in the previous two stages are consolidated and extended. Where appropriate and financially viable, the municipality moves towards implementing a context-appropriate IPTN network with gross contracts. The nature of this network will differ by context and area typology, e.g. Urban Growth Area vs. High Value Agriculture.

In Stage 3, government begins to contract for a broader range of services. At this point government may also move toward a gross contract regime and establish an integrated fare management system. This is only likely to be necessary in more urban contexts.

In Stage 3, government incrementally increases the spatial and temporal coverage of contracted public transport services, depending on the capacity of government to do so and the availability of sufficient funding. Again, the nature of the network will differ by context. In an urban area the range of contracted services provided would be substantially more comprehensive than those provided in smaller towns or rural areas. In addition, contracted services will differ markedly from those proposed in previous IPTN planning work in that they will be more focussed and contained. In particular, subsidised inter-town services will only be provided where there is a need to connect small, under-serviced communities with service centres. Government subsidy to connect two well-serviced centres will not be considered.

It is critical that by Stage 3 the role of non-motorised transport has been optimised. If adequately catered for, NMT has the potential to reduce public transport demand substantially and, therefore, reduce the scale of subsidised services required from government.

In addition, Stage 3 will incorporate the following principles:

- Use of existing vehicles where possible.
- Limited infrastructure upgrades.
- A mix of formalised, contracted services and continued operations by MBT operators.

5. TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

A core component of the PPTIF is the development of an institutional framework or model to facilitate the implementation of the incremental approach across the Western Cape. The institutional framework will address institutional and capacity constraints to progress, such as limited capacity at the local government level. This framework is currently in development. Through the PPTIF it is recognised that municipalities have limited capacity and, therefore, a core component of the framework is the exploration of the most appropriate role for the provincial government in supporting municipalities and driving public and non-motorised transport improvement and implementation in the non-Metro areas of the Western Cape. The NLTA allocates land transport responsibilities, with local government extended primary responsibility for the planning, implementation and management of integrated public transport networks and for entering into contracts with public transport operators. In the NLTA, the provincial sphere of government is tasked with supporting municipalities with limited capacity to perform their land transport mandate (s11(b)(v)). In addition, s12 of the NLTA provides for the joint performance or exercise of land transport functions between the provincial and local sphere. This is the legal basis for an enhanced role for provincial government in supporting public and non-motorised transport improvement at a local level.

The PPTIF project is ongoing. It is likely that the incremental framework presented above will continue to be refined and updated based on inputs from various stakeholders. In addition, these interventions are currently being costed to determine their financial viability and the associated funding requirements, and will be further refined based on the outcomes of this process. As mentioned above, an institutional and organisational model is also currently in development. Once these models have been refined and approved, the project will move into the implementation stage with the implementation of the institutional and organisational recommendations and targeted interventions in priority areas of the Western Cape.

6. CONCLUSION

The PPTIF was initiated to respond to the barriers to public and non-motorised transport improvement and transformation in the Western Cape. The aim of the PPTIF is to enable incremental improvement toward the achievement of an ultimate vision of dignified public and non-motorised transport across the Province, but doing so in incremental steps and with reasonable funding requirements.

The table below summarises how the PPTIF responds to the core challenges identified earlier.

PPTIF Approach	
<i>PT model</i>	Context appropriate responses, implemented over time in a staged manner.
<i>Government Capacity</i>	Leverage capacity of different spheres of government, build capacity over time in stages.
<i>Funding</i>	Incremental model is lower cost, while the institutional model introduces economies of scale and cost savings. The incremental model also addresses how funding can be sourced and channelled for non-Metros.

Table 2: PPTIF approach to problems

What is clear is that a different approach is required to improve and transform public and non-motorised transport in the non-Metro areas of the Western Cape. The technical public transport responses, institutional arrangements and funding streams developed for I(R)PTNs are simply not applicable to the differing contexts which exist across the Province. The PPTIF aims to develop appropriate technical, institutional, organisational and financial arrangements for these places; unlocking the change that is desperately required by the people of the Western Cape.