ORGANISING SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY: TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIC SHIFTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN CAPE TOWN

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ABSTRACT

The last decade has presented numerous strategies to tackle urban mobility in our increasing urbanised societies, to move away from unsafe, environmental damaging, socially unjust transport systems. Strategic shifts in planning of urban mobility often come as policy recommendations. However, these policy recommendations must be tested and followed in practice, in order to fully comprehend their possibilities for actual transition to sustainable urban mobility. The purpose of this paper is to (1) describe strategic shifts for urban mobility in the City of Cape Town and to put them in a large international context of shifts in transport planning theory, in order (2) to propose a qualitative case study to understand how urban mobility frameworks are formed and embedded in practice. The study is proposed to follow the translation of urban mobility strategies into policy and practice at the municipal level. Contributions are intended towards transport studies by providing an empirical investigation of topical frameworks for urban mobility. The study also aims to contribute to municipalities and planners by illustrating the opportunities and difficulties in forming and embedding policies for sustainable urban mobility.

Keywords: Urban mobility, Cape Town, Municipal transport planning, Practice perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

The last decade has presented numerous strategies to tackle urban mobility in our growing urbanised societies, to move away from unsafe, environmental damaging and socially unjust transport systems. New ways to plan urban mobility have been suggested from researchers, governmental entities and NGOs, often as policy recommendations of strategic shifts. However, these policy recommendations must be tested and followed in practice, in order to fully comprehend their potential for actual transition to sustainable urban mobility.

Sustainable urban mobility is crucial to reach Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, yet multiple challenges remain to realise this transition, especially in developing countries (UN Habitat, 2021). Rapid urbanisation of metropolitan areas in southern Africa increases the pressure on existing transport systems and the demands on national and local governments for improvements and developments (Ammann & Förster, 2018). With the large dependence on paratransit and often unequal access to mobility opportunities, the development of sustainable urban mobility in such metropolitan areas confront partly different struggles than the introduction of sustainable urban mobility in developed countries – where the majority of the suggested strategic shifts are developed

(Randolph & Storper, 2022). Some examples include, planning through doughnut economy (Raworth, 2017), planning for well-being economy (Diener & Seligman, 2004), European Union's efforts with SUMP – sustainable urban mobility planning (Rupprecht Consult, 2019), Decision Making Under Deep Uncertainty (DMDU) (Lempert et al., 2021), and Triple access planning (TAP) (Lyons et al., 2021).

One example from southern Africa is the growing metropolitan area of Cape Town, where one crisis follows another – water shortage, power shortages, minibus taxi strikes, etc. Complexities related to transport and urban planning combined with natural geography, historical inequalities, cultural diversity, socioeconomic segregation, national economic decline and large informal transport sector make developments in metropolitan Cape Town a relevant case to study how strategic shifts toward sustainable urban mobility are translated into practice. Over the past five years, the City of Cape Town has shifted its strategic planning for urban mobility, largely inspired by TAP, deep uncertainty thinking, and incremental development. These strategic shifts are found in strategic documents for comprehensive development plans for transport planning at large - and for public transport specifically. City planning authorities are required, by South African land transport legislation, to produce (or update) transport plans for their jurisdictions on a five-year cycle. These statutory planning requirements include a Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan (CITP), comprising an Integrated Public Transport Network (IPTN) plan. In its most recent planning cycle, to fulfil its statutory obligations to produce a CITP and IPTN, the City of Cape Town planning authority adopted approaches to transport planning that was significantly different to previous cycles – which serves as the focus for this paper.

The aim is (1) to describe the strategic shifts in Cape Town and to put them in a large international context of shifts in transport planning theory, in order (2) to propose a qualitative case study to understand how urban mobility frameworks are formed and embedded in practice.

The qualitative case study, will focus on following how the strategic shifts in the Urban Mobility Directorate at the City of Cape Town were formed and are embedded in practice. The case is of interest, as the strategic shifts suggest the need to rethink both transport and urban planning practices on municipal level, as the influential frameworks (e.g. TAP) suggested closer interdependence between different planning areas. The case study proposed in this paper, aims to contribute to both research and practice on transport planning and sustainable transition of urban mobility, by scrutinising current urban mobility planning trends from a practice perspective. Investigating an on-going strategic shift helps shed light on embedding into practices for actors within municipal planning.

The rest of the paper is structured by, in the next section, presenting an overview of urban mobility in southern Africa – for contextual understanding – and literature on current transport planning regimes and theory. This is followed by a description of transport planning – focusing on public transport – in Cape Town, including the strategic shifts in recent years. Thereafter, the proposed qualitative study is presented, starting with the analytical framework of a practice perspective on public organising and research questions to guide the study. Thereafter, methodological considerations are presented including methods for the empirical investigation and its analysis. Lastly, conclusions are presented as suggested theoretical contributions and practical implications for carrying out the study.

2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

The literature overview covers, first, urban mobility in southern Africa to allow reflections on the empirical context and the current research gap in the area. Second, strategies for sustainable urban mobility planning are described, to map the current understanding and discussions within transport studies.

2.1 Development and Urban Mobility in Southern Africa

Rethinking the development of the built environment for a sustainable future is a global issue, where it is suggested that efforts are especially needed in the global south (Ammann & Förster, 2018). Africa has the fastest growing urbanisation globally, with estimates of $US 150 billion a year in needed infrastructural development, such as mobility, digital connectivity, electricity and water (African Development Bank, 2023). These investments in developing functioning urban systems are necessary to leverage from the urbanisation:

> "The African continent's increased urban population is a powerful asset for its overall urban transformation and can attain its full potential once cities are properly planned and adequately serviced." (UN-habitat, 2023, p.1)

Bridging the gaps between informal and formal systems, climate change, lack of natural resources, inequality, are just a few of the numerous problems attached to the urbanisation. At the core of this is urban mobility, which can be seen both as a hinder and enabler for sustainable urbanisation – being entangled with several of the SDGs (UN-habitat, 2021). Where car dependent, fossil fuel using mobility cause many of the current struggles in urban areas, but done right it can decrease congestion, improve connectivity and be a vehicle in uplifting vulnerable societies.

From the plethora of previous studies on urban mobility and public transport, it can be concluded that the global south in general, and especially southern Africa face increasing struggles in this area. Regardless of specific local contexts (which will be elaborated on in the case description), the urban mobility in most metropolitan areas consists of a mixture of private vehicles, informal paratransit, and various degrees of public transport in forms of BRT, bus, and rail. These public and private inter-organisational transport systems create complexities in organising, planning and developing, see for example Salazar Ferro et al. (2013) for comprehensive description of such complex transport systems. It can be concluded that most local governments in metropolitan areas are dependent on the private sector both in the current informal provision of transport (paratransit) and for capital investments for formalised transport systems (e.g. PPP).

2.2 Transport Planning Regimes and Strategies

Paddeu et al. (2024) identified three major topics in current transport planning; climate change mitigations, discussions on digital tools, and acknowledgement of uncertainties about the future. During the last decade, one dominating framework to address these has been Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (or SUMP), which goes beyond technological-rational focus on transporting from point A to B to a broader focus on mobility. It has been applied in national and local planning contexts, especially in European countries through the European Union's planning guidelines with a cyclical model of concrete phases and suggested activities (Rupprecht Consult, 2019).

Lately, these guidelines have been questioned for lacking organisational and institutional perspectives on dealing with potential complications, such as the need for local adaptions, and for assuming consensus must be reached (Svensson and Witzell, 2023). A developed approach has been suggested and tested in a few municipal contexts - focussing on accessibility. There has been a shift to a broader focus on accessibility for people and goods to reach each other and places, by connecting physical mobility, spatial proximity (land-use) and digital connectivity, Triple access planning (Lyons and Davidson, 2016). Within this, uncertainties for futures are also brought to the forefront of planning discussions (Lyons et al., 2021). Here, influence is also found from outside transport planning frameworks, such as Decision Making Under Deep Uncertainties (DMDU) (Lempert et al., 2021). In a similar vein, scenario-based planning is increasingly established in transport planning, a trend also in other planning contexts. Thereby, moving away from predicting one possible future and planning for it, to instead discuss and develop multiple potential scenarios and planning for the most sought after. These shifts are discussed as moving from a predict-and-provide paradigm to a decide-and-provide paradigm (Paddeu et al., 2024).

While these planning strategies and frameworks are not the only ones in current transport planning, they are of interest to explore further as topical examples of regime shifts influencing public organising beyond transport planning. They aim to influence urban planning and development more broadly - including the need to handle multiple organisational contexts and practices.

3. TRANSPORT PLANNING AT THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN

3.1 Description of the Current Transport System in Cape Town

Salazar Ferro et al. (2013) offers a retrospect of public transport planning in South Africa and specifically Cape Town, highlighting the major shifts in policy and implementation including a study of early versions of same policy streams discussed in this paper. The authors describe the shift during the early 2000s, when larger South African cities initiated public transport projects aiming for citywide formalised BRT systems and rail. Completely replacing paratransit operations. During this phase, the first versions of CITP and IPTN were developed in larger municipalities. Salazar Ferro and colleagues in 2013 suggested difficulties in such a transformative change, in terms of, for example, extended negotiation with operators and budget constraints. The current and new versions of these policy documents in Cape Town (studied for this paper) show that strategies for public transport planning have moved away from complete coverage of public transport from formalised public systems to instead planning with the existing paratransit operations – hybrid forms of urban mobility.

The transport system in Cape Town is today characterised by a mixture of private vehicles, rail, bus, mini-bus taxis and walking. The last decade has seen a decline in rail transport, previously defined as ‘the backbone of the transport system in Cape Town’ (Salazar Ferro et al., 2013), increasing dependence on mini-bus taxis, conventional buses and the on-going expansion of MyCiTi buses. Non-motorised modes, walking and cycling, has historically had little attention in planning, but this is changing with the strategic shifts in the latest CITP. Private vehicles are in several ways still dominating the transport system, not in terms of percentage of passengers, but through increasing congestions (7th most congested city in the world (INRIX, 2024)), air and noise pollutions and previous infrastructure developments to accommodate predicted increasing car usage. In line with shifts worldwide, the strategic shifts of urban mobility in Cape Town work more-or-less explicitly against developments that encourage private vehicles – especially during peak hours.

Subsidised bus and rail are affordable alternatives, while minibus-taxis are seen as more accessible in terms of frequency and localisation (Wilkinson, 2008). The current transport system is described as having an imbalance between affordability and accessibility of the different modes. During 2024 there was a notable recovery of rail, increasing affordable transport opportunities. Moreover, the current IPTN and CITP, presenting the strategic shifts, describe aims to incorporate minibus-taxi into the transport system. But interviews identify a struggle with how to engage with them: “not speaking the same language”.

3.2 The Strategic Shifts in Transport Planning

The strategic shift formed and embedded in the CITP and the IPTN by the Urban Mobility Directorate can broadly be described as moving from a predict-and-provide to a decide-and-provide framework, including a ‘vision for access’ rather than mobility. See Table 1 for description of the different versions of the documents.

Document analysis and interviews with officials show that the inspiration for the shifts came in waves during a couple of years largely inspired by researchers being either embedded at the municipality or invited to present current planning strategies and frameworks for future thinking. In the first wave the officials got inspired by triple access planning and to some extend uncertainty in planning for unknown futures. Thereafter the DMDU was presented to the officials, which created a need to combine and draw solutions from different frameworks rather than relying on one. In this process incremental development was also identified as their implementation strategy.

While the documents describe how the officials in the end decided to combine and be inspired from the different frameworks, the interviews paint a detailed picture of how that was possible. The reorganisations and change of management are identified to play a large role in forming the strategic shifts by officials with outside inspiration.

3.3 The Municipal Organisation of Urban Mobility

Table 1 show how the organisational structure of transport planning at the City of Cape Town has changed several times during the last ten years. Different trends and solutions from other cities have been used as inspiration to form and re-form the planning and development of the urban areas. The organisational restructuring largely concurs with the establishment of new office every fifth year. However, the document study does not describe a coherent story of the restructuring from ‘Transport for Cape Town’ (inspired by ‘Transport for London’), via Transport and Urban Development Authority (TDA), to the Transport Directorate and currently the Urban Mobility Directorate. The current focus on accessibility is presented as a way to bridge transport and urban planning, organisationally, this was tested during the TDA period, bringing together transport planning, spatial planning and human settlement.

It can be concluded that the transport planning at the City is exposed to continuous reorganisation, which goes against suggestions of embedding strategic changes – it takes time to realising benefits from restructures. The findings here present partly a different story, several officials have moved between the different departments over the years, which has created a web of informal relationships that can bridge the gaps between the needed but difficult formal collaboration between the different functions.

The officials have initiated, formed and embedded the strategic shifts in the planning documents as well as being supporters and promoters of the frameworks at the City towards other Directorates. The officials are found to have been in a powerful position to promote their preferred planning strategies, this is not always the balance between officials and politicians at municipal level. A broad change of management (at Executive Director level) happened during 2020, where the Transport Authority ‘lost 125 years of experiences in transport planning' - but this also created space for creativity among the officials. Some indicate that the working climate shifted: 'dared to say what we thought'. Moreover, the officials being manager at branch level where now the ones with most experience, and thereby gained space to explore and put forward their ideas.

Table 1: Overview of CITP and IPTN over the last 10 years

	CITP			IPTN	
	Comprehensive integrated transport plan			Integrated public transport network plan	
Description of document	"A planning document that defines the strategic approach for all transport in the city. It outlines the plans and programmes for the delivery of an integrated, intermodal and interoperable transport system and its related road and rail network." (CITP, 2023, p. i)			"To develop an integrated network of public transport routes catering for current demand and future trends, including trunk routes and feeder routes. This forms the basis of future public planning, including corridor planning and local area planning." (CITP, 2023, p. i)	
Version	2013-2018	2018-2023	2023-2028	2014	2026
Vision	Provide better transport in an innovative and sustainable manner for the benefit of the citizens of and visitors to the City of Cape Town.	"An efficient, integrated transport system for all – implemented sustainably"	"All people have efficient access to a range of opportunities in a manner that is sustainable and provides dignity" (CITP, 2023, p. ii)	"Improve mobility and accessibility for all residents."	"All people enjoy equitable movement and access through a quality public transport system"
Problem statement	The high percentage of household income spent on access, specifically for lower income group being as high as 45 - 70%.	The City cannot deliver integrated, intermodal and interoperable transport in Cape Town without an effective rail component.	Unsatisfactory transport infrastructure and integration of services, combined with socio-economic and spatial attributes, leads to an inequitable and inefficient city.	Challenges in shifting modes to public transport and reducing traveling times. Challenges with rail maintenance and development.	What are the potential, plausible futures for safe, secure, sustainable and citizen centric Mobility for the city of Cape Town by 2050?
Organisational and institutional arrangements	Transport for Cape Town was established. In 2016 developed to Transport and Urban Development Authority (TDA): merging tranport, land use and human settlement.	TDA continued but was repealed in 2019, a new Transport Directorate was established, seperating from land-use and human settlement.	Renaming to Urban Mobility Directorate, similar functions as Transport Directorate.	Transport for Cape Town	Urban Mobility Directorate
Influential paradigm or frameworks	GAP analysis between current state and desired future of transport system. Modeling of land use and transport system, and prediction of future to establish plan.	Transport Oriented Development (TOD) as an approach to development that focuses land uses around a transit station or within a transit corridor	Recognition of access through Triple Access System. Incremental public transport reform, implementing in stages. Embrace uncertainties of the future.	"Transport Orientated Development" (TOD) as a process of focussing the development of housing, employment, activity sites and public services around existing or new railway stations.	"System thinking and future thinking" Planning by embracing uncertainty. Implementing through an incremental approach. Serving through a Triple Access System.
System integration	Focus on full integration of public transport system.	Develop and manage the integrated transport network and related facilities.	System of different transport modes collaborativly managed, encourging accessibility.	Fully integrated public transport network. Focus on MyCiTi, bus services and rail.	System of collaborating transport modes and accessibility tools.
Current key issues	Roll out wide BRT system, implement an integrated intermodal public transport system	Rail failure, hoping and planning for its recovery.	Aftermath of Covid, affecting public transport revenue. Challenging of integrating minibus taxis services.	Rail failure, BRT systems encourgement from national	Continuous rail failure, planning for alternatives in lack of recovery. Slow implementation of BRT system.

4. PROPOSITION OF STUDYING THE STRATEGIC SHIFTS IN PRACTICE

This section explicates the proposed qualitative study by presenting a framework for studying public organising from a practice perspective and suggested research questions. Thereafter, methodological considerations and approached are discussed.

4.1 Analytical Framework of Public Organising and a Practice Perspective

A sustainable future globally is a collective effort between policy incentives and social norms (Chapin et al., 2022). This puts pressure on the current form of organising and our practice of sustainable development. To construct desirable futures, we need to reimagine and transform how we organise change in society (Beckert, 2021). Efforts are necessary both in research and practice to adjust how to plan the urban towards sustainable development (Chapin et al., 2022). When exploring transport and urban planning in practice, dilemmas with current organising are found that hinder sustainable development (Metzger and Lindblad, 2020).

To follow the forming and embedding of strategic shifts in transport planning, organisation theory will be used, specifically focussing on translation strategic frameworks into policy and practice within public organising.

Both public and private actors increasingly carry out value-adding work in inter-organisational networks or systems. For the public sector this derives from increased outsourcing of public services and increasing complexity of government structures (Lundin et al., 2015). Having to work together to tackle complex issues such as sustainable transition, different institutional logics and practices will meet (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Furthermore, having private actors participate in forming and carrying out public service has been questioned due to the potentially competing goals of the actors (Fred, 2015). Although this public organising is widespread, including carrying out public services in projects and with systems of actors, there is little research on how projects and systems and formed and managed in southern Africa (Ika et al., 2021).

Moving towards more heterogeneous forms of governance creates collaboration between policymakers, landowners, public and private developers, planners, and suppliers to carry out public services of developing transport and urban systems (Zakhour & Metzger, 2018). Historically, planning has been researched as a planning or policy issue, neglecting the process of achieving the goals and visions. Due to the pressing need for long-term sustainability goals for development (Yigitcanlar & Teriman, 2015), an integrated approach is proposed to study such developments, which includes all stages of planning and development and their impact on the overarching goals (Yigitcanlar & Teriman, 2015). In other words, not to zoom-in on only policy development or planning, but to see how strategic shifts in these influence implementation processes.

Contemporary organising of planning and development of urban areas and transport include complex processes of multiple actors that often lead to a lack of formal structures (Zakhour & Metzger, 2018), which is why coordinating and collaborating depends on social interactions emerging from interdependencies. Inter-organisational interactions combining different social logics and cultures, which can create tensions but also stimulate creativity. By following the organisational practices, the work from different actors can be understood. To focus not only on plans and rules (e.g., contract clauses, governance authority, policy documents), but also on how they are carried out through repetitive practices (Feldman et al., 2021).

Developing urban areas with housing, infrastructure and transport include many stakeholders often with an initiating municipality, with political goals with the development (Hallin, Karrbom-Gustavsson, & Dobers, 2021). The private and public actors carrying out the development are not actively steered by governmental bodies; municipalities govern in an indirect way through policy frameworks (Zakhour & Metzger, 2018). The municipalities create settings without explicit governance structures; this leads to that many decisions are left to private actors (Barraket & Loosemore, 2018).

Following failure in development projects, Ika (2012) concludes four potential traps that must be considered; one-size-fits-all; accountability for results rather than delivery; lack of management capacity; and downplaying local contexts and cultural differences. George et al. (2016) identified an opportunity for studying sustainable development in southern Africa using organisational theory to scrutinise both existing theories and develop new theories from scarcely studied contexts.

4.2 Research Aim and Questions

Departing from the research gap on understanding local contexts and organising sustainable urban mobility planning strategies in practice, this study set out to explore the City of Cape Town efforts to shift their transport planning from predict-and-provide to decide-and-provide, through incorporating TAP, deep uncertainty and incrementalism in their planning policy. The case study will be used for the purpose of developing an understanding of *how* strategic shifts for sustainable urban mobility in metropolitan areas in southern Africa are formed and embedded in practice.

In doing so, the following research questions guide the investigations:

- What are the main strategic shifts in transport planning for the municipality?
- How has the organising of transport planning in the municipality influenced the forming and embedding of the strategic shifts?
- How do the strategic shifts influence the implementation of transport development?

4.3 Methodology and Research Approach

The study is suggested as a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006) following transport planning in the Urban Mobility Directorate at the City of Cape Town, forming and embedding of new strategic regimes for urban mobility planning, and its influence on interdependent departments. In line with the research questions, shaped from the literature review, specific interests are given to the translation of TAP, DMDU and incremental development into the forming of new transport planning policy documents (specifically, “Integrated Public Transport Network” (IPTN) and “Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan” (CITP)) and the influence on interdependent departments during the ongoing embedding of this new strategic regime. Here, a specific focus will be laid on spatial planning and transport implementation.

The research framing of following how strategic efforts (illustrated by the policy documents) are embedded into practice suggests an explorative study (Czarniawska, 2014), using qualitative methods to capture the nitty-gritty in planning practices during the on-going embedding (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011) to analyse formal and informal organising and institutional considerations. This is important, as a developed strategic document can only be effective if it actually influences the practices and institutions of those steered or influenced by it, in developing the transport system towards sustainable urban mobility. Moreover, to capture both the forming process, by tracing back in time, and the embedding, by observing, contributes to document an actual test of contemporary planning regimes that have not yet been empirically researched to a great extent. This will shed light on the adaptability of planning regimes to local contexts and practices (Svensson & Witzell, 2023).

The case setting of Cape Town municipal transport planning offers the possibility to explore a sustainable urban mobility planning regime in a local context. In line with Svensson and Witzell’s (2023) suggestion of the importance of following practical examples during the on-going shifts toward new urban mobility planning practices for sustainable development. Furthermore, Cape Town offers a unique planning context, being a melting pot of, for example, demanding natural geography, historical rigid and unequal planning strategies, on-going urbanisation and population growth and insufficient distribution of accessibility. Flyvbjerg (2006) use ‘extreme case’ to describe such a setting, and suggested their relevance for case studies due to the ability to activate numerous actors and actions otherwise difficult to notice and observe.

Within this case setting, the focus of the research study – the unit of observation – will be the formal and informal process carried out by the Urban Mobility directorate to form the IPTN and the CITP and their practices and interactions with interdependent actors in the embedding process. This will be analysed focusing on the organisational and institutional aspects, thereby the study is delimited to exclude technical evaluations, statistical generalisations and such. Instead, analytical generalisations are pursued (Czarniawska, 2014) aiming at problematising organising in the intersection between transport and urban planning.

As mentioned above, the research study relies on qualitative methods, including document studies, interviews, and field observations (Czarniawska, 2014). The latter, suggestively in the form of meeting observations, shadowing and workshop (Czarniawska, 2018). Document studies mainly include municipal documents within transport planning, spatial planning, and sustainability. Where the past and current IPTN and CITP (including relevant working documents) were the starting points and guided to other interdependent documents, such as presentations, internal development documents. Thereby documents are gathered through snowballing, and through suggestions during interviews and other contact with the municipality or researchers. Interviews are used to gather different actors' perspective on the forming process and their perceptions of working under the new planning regime. As interviews can only capture what is brought up between the interviewer and the respondent, internal validation is carried out through a workshop, discussing the preliminary findings, between the key actors involved in the forming process after all interviews are carried out and analysed. To enable a fuller description of the embedding of the new planning regime, observations and shadowing will follow, as these methods enable a researcher to notice and follow practices not visible in formal documents or described in interviews. With this type of material, it is therefore possible to draw conclusions on informal institutions and organising (Svensson and Witzell, 2023) that enables or hinders such strategic shifts.

4.4 Analysis of Empirical Material

Overall, the analysis will be informed by a practice perspective, following Giddens (1984) structuration theory on how people and their practices are situated in time and space, under mutual constitution of structure and agency and taking place under specific material conditions. This perspective directs the research to understand the doings and sayings of the forming and embedding process of the IPTN and the CITP rather than just the formal stage gate descriptions.

Following the early literature overview, the first empirical investigation was carried out between January and February 2025, through interviews and document studies. The focus is on tracing the forming process of the strategic shifts and the development of the ITPN and the CITP. This gains insights into the difficulties and possibilities in forming a new planning regime. In line with the abductive approach, the early interviews identified a need to include later stages in transport development, i.e., the implementation department - why interviews are planned to capture their perspective of the strategic shifts. A workshop for interview respondents to validate and discuss the findings.

The empirical investigations will then continue by following the on-going embedding of the regime shift and the translation to planning practices at the intersection between transport and urban planning. A focus will be to understand if and how practices have changed for different actors, as well as how relationships have developed. The analysis will feed into a discussion and problematisation of current urban mobility frameworks, including organising and institutional aspects with shifting planning regime for urban mobility.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper has presented on-going strategic shifts for transport planning at the City of Cape Town and proposed a qualitative study to develop an understanding of *how* strategic shifts for sustainable urban mobility in metropolitan areas in southern Africa are formed and embedded in practice. By presenting a literature overview on sustainable urban mobility theory and the City of Cape Town's strategic shifts towards accessibility in the transport system, the paper proposes a deep dive into the empirical context from a practice perspective on public organising. This to enable discussions of a highly topical issue – sustainable urban mobility - that needs attention and solutions now.

The proposed study aims to contribute to transport studies by scrutinizing current sustainability urban mobility frameworks through the empirical efforts at the City of Cape Town of turning policy into practice, i.e. discussion implications from policy shifts. Within this, the organisational and institutional context will be put in the limelight, including reorganisations that opened up space for creativity and shifted power balances.

Moreover, the proposed study will contribute to transport planning in southern Africa by describing struggles and opportunities with the explored strategic shifts, which will be beneficial both to other local government exploring sustainable urban mobility pathways and for the City of Cape Town to receive an external perspective of the processes of combining frameworks and applying it into updated policy documents.

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