Transformation of Public Transport operations from informal to formal services : An Examination of initiatives by the Western Cape Provincial Department of Transport to transform the minibus-taxi industry

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ABSTRACT: The paper explores initiatives by the South African Government to transform the minibus-taxi industry through formalisation, regulation and empowerment of operators. Examples of initiatives by the Western Cape Provincial Department of Transport and Public Works are explored, including registration of minibus-taxi associations, owners and their vehicles; formulation of a code of conduct for operators; training and empowerment of operators and drivers; formation of democratically elected structures to represent approximately 8000 minibus-taxi owners in regional and provincial structures; Legislation to regulate minibus-taxi operations; recapitalisation of ageing minibus-taxi vehicles. The example of inclusion of minibus-taxi operators in a public transport contract is examined.

RÉSUMÉ : La communication explore des initiatives prises par le Gouvernement sud-africain pour transformer l'industrie de taxi-minibus par la formalisation, la réglementation et la délégation des pouvoirs des opérateurs. Des exemples d'initiatives par le Département des Transports et des Travaux publics de la Province du Cap sont explorés, dont l'enregistrement d'associations de taxi-minibus, des propriétaires et leurs véhicules, la formulation d'un code de conduite pour les opérateurs, la formation et la délégation de pouvoirs des opérateurs et conducteurs, la formation de structures démocratiquement élues pour représenter approximativement 8000 propriétaires de taxi-minibus dans les structures régionales et provinciales, une législation pour réglementer l'exploitation des taxi-minibus, la recapitalisation des vieux véhicules utilisés comme taxi-minibus. L'exemple de l'inclusion d'opérateurs de taxi-minibus dans un contrat de transports publics est à l'étude.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Republic of South Africa has a population of some 40 million people. The country has shown remarkable resilience in picking itself up out of the turmoil that was caused by 40 years of Apartheid.

One of the remaining effects of Apartheid, however, is the settlement patterns characterized by inefficiencies and inequities. Their form and structure impose undue and unavoidable costs on all inhabitants, especially the poor. In many areas of the country, but especially in rural areas, people are trapped in dormitory townships, which were purposely designed by the Apartheid regime to keep a labour force 'on tap' but removed from social mixing and activities closer to economic centers. Land use planning was aimed at isolating people and entrenching the principles of separation of race groups. Throughout South Africa, in both rural and urban areas, there are still people who are unable to access even the most basic services and amenities, because of inadequate public transport and poverty.

In large urban areas, public transport is generally seen as unsafe, unreliable, inconvenient and offering little choice particularly for trips outside of working hours. This has resulted in ever-increasing reliance on and growth in private vehicle usage, with the inevitable increase in congestion, delays and environmental deterioration.

The minibus-taxi industry in South Africa, transports approximately 65% of daily commuters. This

market share has steadily increased over the last twenty years, as rail and bus services have deteriorated, despite large government subsidies. The unsubsidized minibus-taxi industry at first filled the gaps in mobility needs of people and became attractive to township dwellers in that it offered almost a door to door service to commuters. The minibus-taxi industry also represented a community-based industry that provided a service in defiance of the apartheid government. Thus, during the boycott of bus services during the 1980's, the minibus-industry grew at a remarkable pace. This growth in the number of minibus-taxis was further fuelled by an inadequate regulatory system, which to some extent was ignored by operators as a further statement of defiance against the government of the time.

With the coming of democracy to South Africa in 1994, the new government placed a high priority on improving the mobility and access to opportunities of all communities. The vital role that the minibus-taxi industry plays in the transport arena could not be ignored, but neither could the inadequacies and inefficiencies of minibus-taxi services and operations.

This paper describes how the post-apartheid government has approached the transformation and formalisation of the minibus-taxi industry. Initiatives by the Western Cape provincial government to incorporate the minibus-taxi industry into formalized, contracted public transport operations are explored in more detail.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Western Cape Province

The Western Cape province is home to some 4.5 million people, with 70% living and working in and around the City of Cape Town. A Provincial Parliament, governs the province with an Executive or Cabinet of 11 members, led by a Premier.

The province has an urbanization level of around 59%, and covers an area of approximately 120 000km^2 ,which represents 10% of the area of the Republic of South Africa. The province's share to the South African Gross Domestic Product is approximately 15%.

The province has a robust economy, with diverse and balanced primary activities – agriculture, fishing and forestry – plus an equally diverse range of manufacturing sub-sectors, a vibrant and rapidly growing tourism sector and an increasing array of future-oriented service industries.

With the completion of the Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town is set to become even more popular as a venue for international conferences and meetings of leaders. Cape Town is also the seat of South Africa's parliament and with its cultural diversity and colorful history is the favored domestic tourist destination.

The Western Cape's rural areas include South Africa's famous 'Garden Route' with its administrative center in George. Popular tourist attractions are offered in rural towns along the East coast such as Oudtshoorn (the Cango Caves), Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. Along the West Coast, the area between Saldanha to Vredenburg has become a new industrial hub, with the development of the vast Saldanha Steel Complex. Clanwilliam and Lamberts Bay, also along the West Coast, are agricultural and fishing centers. Closer to the City of Cape Town, idyllic 'Boland' towns are mostly shaped by wine and fruit farming and are also very popular tourist destinations.

2.2 Public Transport in the Western Cape

The Western Cape is generally well endowed with movement resources. There is an extensive main road network joining all the major centers and a relatively dense network of graveled roads joining rural settlements and farms. In the City of Cape Town, there is a well developed arterial road system and an established rail network. Road based public transport services are provided by a large fleet of buses and minibuses.

Although the infrastructure for public transport in the Western Cape is well established, public transport operations are characterized by inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. In the case of rail, the inefficient operation of services and deteriorating safety and security at stations and on carriages, have resulted in a steadily declining ridership. In preparing Current Public Transport Records for the City of Cape Town, morning peak boardings towards and from the Cape Town city center were surveyed in 1998, 2000 and 2002. The results confirmed this negative trend and are shown in Figure 1.
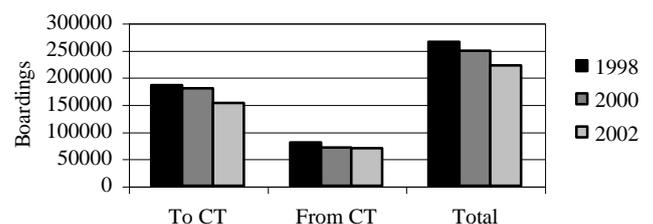

Figure 1. Cape Town Rail Boardings - Morning Peak

In comparison to the declining rail commuter numbers, the ridership on minibus-taxis has been steadily increasing. Table 1, below, which is sourced from Part 2 of the Cape Metropolitan Transport Plan, shows the shift in modal share between rail, bus and minibus between 1987 and 1998. This trend has continued and has been confirmed in surveys towards the 2002 current public transport record.

Table 1. Modal share in the City of Cape Town

	1987	1998	2000
Rail	65%	62%	62%
Bus	24%	18%	14%
Minibus	11%	20%	24%

In its White Paper on Western Cape Provincial Transport Policy (1997) the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works identifies inadequate and poor performance across a range of activities related to public transport, including operational and strategic planning, accident prevention, public transport planning and operations, policy coordination, law enforcement, funding and subsidization.

In 2001 the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works was restructured and a Public Transport Branch was formed. Under new political leadership, the Branch developed a *Provincial Vision for Public Transport and Five Year Strategic Delivery Programme*, which was made public in April 2003. A large focus of this strategic plan is on the transformation of scheduled and unscheduled services and the inclusion of the minibus-taxi industry in planned contracts. In order to get to the point where a very fragmented and volatile minibus-taxi industry can meaningfully participate in formal contracts, the province has focused on the empowerment and formalisation of the minibus-taxi industry. The next chapter introduces national and provincial initiatives towards this goal of transforming, formalizing and empowering the minibus-taxi industry.

3 TRANSFORMATION OF THE MINIBUS-TAXI INDUSTRY

3.1 The National Taxi Task Team

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the new government set out to address many of the past injustices and imbalances created through apartheid. In the case of access to mobility, the newly appointed Minister of Transport at the time, Mac Maharaj, realized that any solution to the problems facing public transport could not ignore the minibus-taxi industry, nor could it ignore the problems that existed in this volatile industry.

By 1995, violence between rival taxi groups over control of lucrative routes and areas, had spiraled out of control. Solutions had to be found, but those solutions had to be developed in close consultation with the minibus-taxi industry. The national Department of Transport established the National Taxi Task Team, (NTTT) consisting of 9 taxi industry representatives (1 from each province), 9 Government representatives (representing all three tiers of Government) and 9 specialist advisors. The mandate of the NTTT was to *investigate the issues affecting the taxi industry and formulate recommendations to the Minister of Transport to address them.*

The NTTT focused on three key areas in the process of transforming the taxi industry, namely Regulation and control; Formalisation and Training and Economic assistance. After a long process of consultation with stakeholders across the spectrum, the NTTT published its final recommendations on 6 August 1996.

These recommendations were presented to Parliament and were adopted by the national Cabinet as Government's plan of action for transforming the minibus-industry. All provinces, in consultation with the provincial taxi industries and communities set about implementing these recommendations. In the Western Cape, a Provincial Taxi Working Group was established by the provincial Department of Transport and Public Works to manage the implementation of the NTTT recommendations.

The following paragraphs provide details on key areas of implementation and the lessons learnt through the processes that were followed.

3.2 Registration of minibus-taxi operators

With the history of apartheid, it is understandable that there remains a high level of suspicion of Government by previously disenfranchised communities. In the case of the minibus-taxi industry, there was trust in the political office bearers who had made their mark in the struggle for liberation. There was, however, still a high level of mistrust of Government officials and Departments, despite changes at the highest levels of management.

It was partly for this reason, that the NTTT had recommended the establishment of offices of Provincial Taxi Registrars. The provincial Registrar is responsible for the registration of minibus-taxi associations, their members and the vehicles that these members operate. The Registrar also keeps a record of the routes or areas in which associations are legal-

ly permitted to operate. What is important, is that the Registrar is appointed by the Provincial Minister of Transport and is defined as an autonomous institution, not subject to the reporting lines of Government departments.

Prior to democratic election and the NTTT process, minibus-taxi operators had formed themselves into voluntary associations that were roughly organized along corridors or areas of trip origins. As an example; taxi owners that operate on the route between Khayelitsha and Cape Town are members of the Khayelitsha – Cape Town Taxi Association. These registered associations, or primary / route associations as they are also known, may further align themselves to larger area–based groupings or 'mother-bodies'. We find for instance that associations with routes that originate in Khayelitsha are all affiliated to Codeta, the Congress for Democratic Taxi Associations.

Before registering an association, the Provincial Registrar will check that the group applying for registration meets the minimum requirements for Registration as promulgated in national and provincial legislation. In the case of Western Cape provincial regulations, an association would have to have a minimum of 10 members, each of whom would have to have at least one legal operating license or permit linked to a roadworthy minibus. The provincial Registrar also checks that the registration of such a new association will not lead to conflict with any existing associations in the same area or along segments of the routes that are operated on.

The most important step before an association can be registered is the signing of a constitution and a code of conduct by all members of the applicant association. In order to ensure a level of consistency in the development of constitutions and codes of conduct, provincial Governments have promulgated standard minimum constitutions and codes of conduct. Associations may either adopt these standard ones or may chose to add to them. Such additions to the promulgated standard minimum constitutions and codes of conduct have to be submitted to the Registrar for approval. The principles contained in the standard minimum constitution and code of conduct may not be altered.

Once the Registrar is satisfied that the association meets all the criteria and members of the association have signed and submitted their constitution and code of conduct, the association is registered. In terms of the regulations, the association and each member then has to be supplied with a certificate of registration. Each vehicle is also to be supplied with a marking to be displayed in the vehicle at all times as proof of registration.

Once an association is registered and its members have signed its constitution and code of conduct, the Registrar's role is that of monitoring compliance with both the constitution and the code of conduct. To this effect, the Registrar has been given powers in terms of the National Land Transport Transition Act, Act 22 of 2000, to subpoena an association or its members if allegations of contravention of either the constitution or the code of conduct are brought to the attention of the office of the Registrar. The Registrar then has the powers to fine an association or a member or, in cases of serious violations, to de-register such associations or members. The effect of such de-registration would ultimately mean that the association and / or its members would lose their operating licenses.

In terms of the standard minimum constitution, associations have to hold annual general meetings, they have to prepare audited financial statements and they have to establish mechanisms for the management of grievances and internal disciplinary processes. Minutes of annual general meetings, special general meetings and disciplinary or grievance committee hearings have to be copied to the Registrar for his / her records. The Registrar is also the legislated body to which aggrieved members of associations may direct their appeals against findings of association disciplinary or grievance committees. The Registrar may also be approached by members of an association to supervise special actions in terms of the constitution, such as a vote of no-confidence in the elected executive committee.

Through the establishment of the offices of Provincial Registrars and the promulgation of supporting legislation, the minibus-taxi industry has therefore been given formal structures and mechanisms to manage the affairs of associations and its members in a transparent and equitable manner. These mechanisms allow for some measure of self-regulation, while preventing taxi operators from resorting to violence as a means of settling disputes and grievances.

3.3 Training and empowerment

Over the last few years, minibus-taxi operators and drivers have been afforded opportunities to participate in Government-funded training programmes to uplift the standard of operations and management of minibus-taxi businesses and associations.

In partnership with private sector companies, training in, for example, advanced driving techniques, fleet management, first aid, customer care and others have been geared towards improving the

image and financial viability of minibus-taxi businesses.

As part of Government's commitment to empower the minibus-taxi industry, the provincial Department of Transport has also funded the setting up of and administrative assistance to a provincial taxi office. The Taxi office is responsible for coordinating training initiatives in the industry and also provides administrative support to democratically elected regional and provincial taxi councils. The Taxi office is equipped with computers, faxes and all other requirements for the management of a business. The office also provides space and furniture for taxi council meetings and training sessions for up to 50 people.

As a means of fast tracking the development and empowerment of the industry, the Provincial Minister of Transport committed funds for the payment of out of pocket expenses and meeting allowances for members of the provincial taxi council. During the 2002/2003 financial year, roughly R2 million was set aside for this purpose.

When Western Cape Minister of Transport, Public Works and Property Management, Tasneem Essop led a delegation of provincial and city officials to Bogotá, Colombia, she decided to include 5 taxi industry leaders in that delegation. This initiative allowed the provincial taxi leaders to see first-hand the transformation that the informal bus sector in Bogotá had gone through in the establishment of the Transmilenio BRT system. This exposure to formal public transport companies, with roots similar to the current minibus-taxi industry in the Western Cape, went a long way towards the provincial minibus-taxi industry's giving their full backing for the provincial Government's vision for public transport and the proposed roll –out of the Klipfontein mobility strategy as Phase 1 of the implementation of that vision.

3.4 Election of representative structures

In order for Government to include the minibus-taxi industry in negotiations and training towards formal public transport contracts, it was important that the fragmentation and mistrust within the industry be addressed. Government could not meaningfully engage with 150+ individual associations in the province and needed to facilitate the formation of a unified taxi council that could represent the interests of all minibus-taxi operators in the province.

At the national level, it was also critical that Government had a mandated, democratic, representative body that could represent the views and fears of the industry on critical issues such as the proposed Recapitalisation programme and the requirements for re-skilling of drivers that would result from the implementation of the Recapitalisation programme.

During September 2001, the national Minister of Transport, supported by the nine provincial Ministers responsible for Transport, called a national consultative conference in Durban in the KwaZulu Natal province, with the objective of establishing a national representative body for the minibus-taxi industry. Close to seven hundred industry leaders from across the nine provinces were represented and over the two days of the conference, deliberated on issues such as the Recapitalisation programme and the minibus-taxi industry's response and contribution to the fight against HIV / Aids. The South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO) was formally constituted at the conference.

In the Western Cape at the time, the province's minibus-taxi industry was once again divided, with the Western Cape Taxi Council (WCTC) having effectively disbanded nearly two years after its formation. At the request of the industry representatives who attended the national conference in Durban, the Provincial Department of Transport and Public Works appointed an independent group, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) to supervise the election of a new provincial representative structure. By February 2002, the EISA could declare that elections at primary association AGM's or Special General Meetings, Regional and national level had been held in a free and transparent manner. The new Western Cape Provincial Taxi Council (WCPTC) was established.

3.5 Legislation

Prior to South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, transport legislation did not make provision for minibuses as legal public transport vehicles. The Road Transportation Act, Act 74 of 1977, made allowance only for metered taxis and buses. The first minibus-taxis were issued with radius permits that allowed operations much on the same principles as that of metered taxis, with operators charging a single fare for an individual or group of passengers. Operators were soon charging individual fares, although this was technically illegal. Commuters, however, were prepared to pay individual fares for the door to door services that the new minibuses offered. These services were at first much more economical and convenient that those of the Government owned bus services.

As the number of minibuses grew, however, competition for passengers and the most lucrative

routes increased. This competition for passengers and routes led to minibus-taxi owners forming themselves into voluntary associations as a protective measure to restrict competition on routes and areas that such groups would claim as their own. With the Road Transportation act making allowance for any third party to lodge objections against the issuing of a permit, associations soon started to formalize their representation at hearings of the Local Road Transportation Boards. In this way, associations and in particular the chairpersons or executive members, wielded great control over access to routes or the addition of vehicles to these routes. Turf wars between rival associations led to many deaths. What exacerbated the problem, was that the traffic authorities were in some cases powerless to enforce the loose agreements around control over routes. The reason for this, was that radius permits would authorize an operation from a rank within a defined radius – along any route. This meant that a radius permit which allowed an operation between the central City of Cape Town rank, within a 30km radius, could be used to transport persons along any route within the broader metropolitan area. The fact that the Police could not prosecute operators who infringed on 'boundary agreements' led to taxi associations taking the law into their own hands – and the sporadic taxi violence of the 1980's and 1990's.

In December 1996, the Western Cape promulgated its Western Cape Road Transportation Act Amendment Law, Law 8 of 1996. This piece of legislation, firstly made provision for a legal definition of a minibus-taxi service. Secondly, the new Act also required that associations and operators register themselves with the Provincial Taxi Registrar and that they sign a constitution and Code of Conduct. (See Chapter 3.2 above for more details in this regard).

The Provincial Minister for Transport and Public Works also promulgated a regulation, which required that all new permits would be issued for routes only and that taxis would be clearly marked to firstly identify them as legal operators and secondly to identify the route or network of routes on which they are allowed to operate on. Figure 2 shows the representation that appears as an annexure to the Regulation and depicts the marking system that all legal minibuses have to display in the Western Cape province. Figure 3, below that, shows one of the first minibuses that was marked in terms of the new Regulations
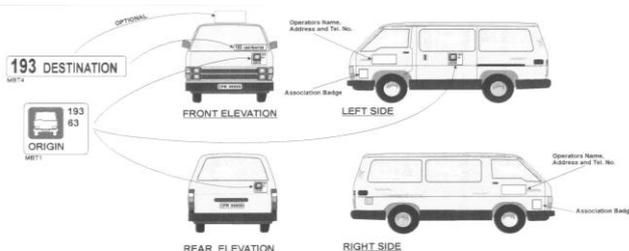

Figure 3. Minibus-taxi displaying the required decals

In terms of the new legislation, permit holders were required to convert their radius-based permits to route- or network-based permits. This provision was at first met with suspicion, but by the end of 2002, 95% of all radius-based permits had been converted to route based permits. With the promulgation of the National Land Transport Transition Act, Act 22 of 2000, this provision for conversion of radius permits was re-emphasized. The Act further requires that all permits be converted to Operating Licenses – with all operating licenses being route based. The act allows the National Minister of Transport to declare a date beyond which all permits that have not been converted to Operating Licenses, will be withdrawn.

3.6 Recapitalisation of the minibus-taxi fleet

The minibus-taxi industry managed to survive and grow, despite having to compete against bus and rail services that are heavily subsidized by Government. In trying to remain competitive, however, minibus-taxi operators neglected the recapitalisation of their fleet. In 1997, the industry spent only 35% of the required investment to replace the fleet. As a consequence of the continued under-spending on recapitalisation, the average fleet ages have continued to climb. These ageing taxis create safety hazards on the road.

In 1998, the South African Government announced its intention to assist the minibus-taxi industry in the recapitalisation of the ageing fleet. Five Government departments, under the leadership of the Department of Trade and Industry, formulated a strategy to replace the 16-seater minibuses, with purpose-designed public transport vehicles that will be manufactured in South Africa. The four other Government departments in this partnership are the departments of Transport, Finance, Minerals & En-

ergy, and the Department of Environment & Tourism

A proposal call was published for vehicle design- and manufacturers to present their ideas and business cases for the design and manufacture of 18 – and 35-seater midi buses. The National Land Transport Transition Act, Act 22 of 2000, stipulates that all current minibuses will have to be replaced by the proposed 18 and 35 seaters by a date to be announced by the Minister. It has recently been announced by the Department of Transport that that date will not be before October 2008. The Act also stipulates that the Minister will announce a date by which Operating Licenses will no longer be issued to 16-seater minibus-taxis.

In terms of the Recapitalisation programme, Government has committed to paying minibus-taxi owners a 'scrapping allowance' in exchange for their current vehicles. These scrapping allowances will be used as deposits towards the new Recap vehicles.

At the time of writing this paper, Government was poised to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the South African National Taxi Council on support for and roll-out of the Recapitalisation programme.

4   PROVINCE'S VISION FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Western Cape White Paper on Transport (1997) reinforced the principle that public transport must be given the highest priority. The White paper states that the adoption of a 'Public Transport First' policy, which gives preference to public transport over general traffic, is central to the intent of urban restructuring The same principle applies to the development of public transport in rural areas of the province.

During 2002, the Department of Transport and Public Works was restructured and a Public Transport Branch was established. With the upgrading of the province's institutional capacity for public transport planning and development and the provision of an increased level of funding, the Branch developed its Provincial Vision for Public Transport as a discussion document. The document also sets out a strategic delivery programme to give effect to the vision over a period of five years.

4.1   Key requirements for achieving the vision

In preparing the vision document and the strategic delivery programme, the Branch took stock of the key requirements that had to be recognized as pre-requisites for the implementation of the proposed programmes.

4.1.1   Safety, Security and Enforcement
The primary reason for commuters migrating away from rail services is generally known to be the real and perceived environments of personal safety on the trains and at stations. Similar considerations should be given to safety on buses and minibuses and ranks where these vehicles operate to and from.

In addition, the Branch realized that the successful transformation of minibus and bus services will not be achieved without an appropriate level of enforcement, both in quality and quantity on all modes and within the correct strategic approach.

4.1.2   Consultation and Communication
The Vision and Delivery Plan is an ambitious and far-reaching programme affecting all authorities, transport operators and communities. It is therefore essential that it achieves acceptance by all stakeholders – in particular the minibus-taxi industry and users of public transport. As part of the implementation programme for the Vision and Delivery plan, consultation and effective communication is therefore one of the key requirements for success

4.1.3   Institutional cooperation
In terms of the South African Constitution, the public transport function is described as a *concurrent* one, meaning that national- provincial and local government are concurrently responsible for the implementation of the public function. In drawing up the provincial Vision and Delivery Plan, the Branch identified the need for cooperation between the three spheres of Government, public transport operators and agencies such as the South African Rail Commuter Corporation and the South African National Roads Agency Ltd, as essential for ensuring that limited resources are not wasted through duplication of effort and working at cross purposes.

4.1.4   Sustainable passenger rail services
Management of rail operations and ownership of rail rolling stock have not been devolved to the provincial sphere of Government. The Western Cape, however, has a very extensive rail network, which covers the City of Cape Town and rural areas, but this asset is under-utilized. Lack of investment and the challenge to secure the system and its users from vandalism, crime and intimidation, has left the rail services in a state where it is perceived as unsafe, overcrowded and unacceptable by many. The National Department of Transport is in the process of developing a Rail Policy, which promotes the idea of devolving the management of the rail function to provincial level so that it may be fully integrated

with road-based bus and feeder services. If the Western Cape's target of attracting private car users into public transport is to be achieved, rail services will have to be improved drastically to form the backbone of the Cape Town public transport system.

4.1.5 Transformation of the minibus-taxi industry

The chapters above describe the history of the minibus-taxi industry and the important role that it currently plays in the Western Cape public transport system. The province has identified transformation of minibus-taxi services and the upliftment and empowerment of operators as a key priority to ensure that this vital industry is given a chance to meaningfully participate in the envisaged public transport system.

Without the inclusion of the minibus-taxi industry, Government runs the very real risk of having the minibus-taxi industry in a destructive competition scenario with contracted services. Such a scenario could be unacceptable to local communities and could lead to violence as minibus-taxi operators fight to retain their 'turf' and market.

4.1.6 Transformation of scheduled public transport services

To achieve meaningful participation by the minibus-taxi industry in formal, contracted services, it is essential that the current interim bus contract in the City of Cape Town be replaced and completely changed to allow for the inclusion of minibuses as feeder services (or long-haul services if justified) and minibus-operators as partners in such contracted entities.

4.1.7 Tourist, Courtesy, Staff and Metered Taxi Services

Once the minibus-taxi industry has been transformed to play a meaningful role in formal, scheduled services, non-scheduled public transport services to supplement such scheduled services are to be planned and provided. With Cape Town becoming ever more popular as a tourist destination, high quality unscheduled services that can be tailored to the needs of tourists and businesses in the area, have to be provided within a regulated environment.

4.1.8 Funding of Public Transport

The achievement of the province's Vision and Delivery Plan will require committed and sustainable funding. It is essential that all three spheres of Government make available the necessary funds either through own budgets or a range of user charges and public private partnerships.

It is also essential that Government spheres, through partnership / funding agreements, utilize their scarce resources in a manner that prevents duplication of effort and promotes efficiency and transparency.

5 THE KLIPFONTEIN CORRIDOR – PHASE 1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VISION

5.1 Lessons from Transmilenio; Bogotá

When Professor Jean Claude Ziv, Secretary General of Codatu perused a first draft of the province's Public Transport Vision and Delivery Plan in September 2002, he suggested that the Provincial Minister investigate or pay a visit to the Transmilenio operation in Bogotá, Colombia. Professor Ziv pointed out that the history of Bogotá's public transport system was similar to the current mix of bus and minibus operations in Cape Town and that there were many lessons that could be learnt from the transformation that Bogotá had gone through in establishing Transmilenio

After further consultation with Professor Ziv, her Cabinet coleagues and Colombian Government officials, Minister Tasneem Essop arranged to lead a delegation of provincial and City of Cape town officials and politicians, along with representatives of the bus and minibus-taxi industry to Bogotá. The delegation, which included 5 minibus-taxi industry leaders, left Cape Town on 21 November 2002.

The Group was hosted by Transmilenio, the Mayor of Bogotá and the Foundation for Livable Cities. During the course of the study tour, the delegation observed the integration of pedestrian and cycle facilities with the Bus Rapid Transit System that is operated by Transmilenio. One of the key lessons learnt, was that the BRT system is operated without subsidy and that the operational costs of Transmilenio itself is funded through the fares collected.

The minibus-taxi industry and bus industry representatives were given the opportunity to have a private question and advice session with one of the BRT operators, who had progressed from being a minibus operator to running one of the Transmilenio-contracted companies. This session proved very valuable and contributed greatly towards gaining the Western Cape minibus industry's support for the province's Vision and Delivery Plan and the Minister's proposal for implementing a first phase mobility strategy along Cape Town's Klipfontein corridor.

5.2 Klipfontein Road Mobility Strategy

The Klipfontein Corridor, in the South-East of the Cape Town metropolitan area, connects many of the poorest communities of Cape Town along a road that is steeped in history. From Khayelitsha at the South-

Eastern end to Mowbray and Cape Town towards the West, Klipfontein Road connects a complete cross-section of races, cultures and religions that Cape Town has to offer. See Figure 3 for a map of the area

This part of Cape Town has been neglected in the past, with development and investment being focused in the Northern suburbs and along the North-Western Corridor between Bellville and Cape Town. Klipfontein Road has always been identified by the City of Cape Town as a key public transport corridor. The road crosses three railway lines and has one of the highest levels of public transport usage.

Klipfontein Road therefore offered the Province and the City of Cape Town a perfect setting for implementing a pilot project or first phase of the implementation of the province's Public Transport Vision and Delivery Programme. Since the corridor is a very busy bus and minibus-taxi route, both industry representative bodies were in agreement that the corridor offered opportunities for the implementa-

transport commuters to a BRT system along the corridor.

In order to fast track the implementation of the project, Minister Essop and the City of Cape Town's executive Councillor responsible for public transport signed a historic agreement that led to the establishment of joint Province / City project team. This team was tasked with developing the business model for the project and for launching the required studies and investigations to prepare a final design. The province's Public Transport Branch set aside R10million with which to start design and construction before the end of March 2004.

The Klipfontein Project is a mobility strategy that includes aspects of public transport restructuring as well as social and economic upliftment of the communities. The key aspect of the public transport restructuring is the design of the proposed BRT system and supporting feeder services. Social and economic upliftment will be achieved through a variety of means, including the provision of public spaces and
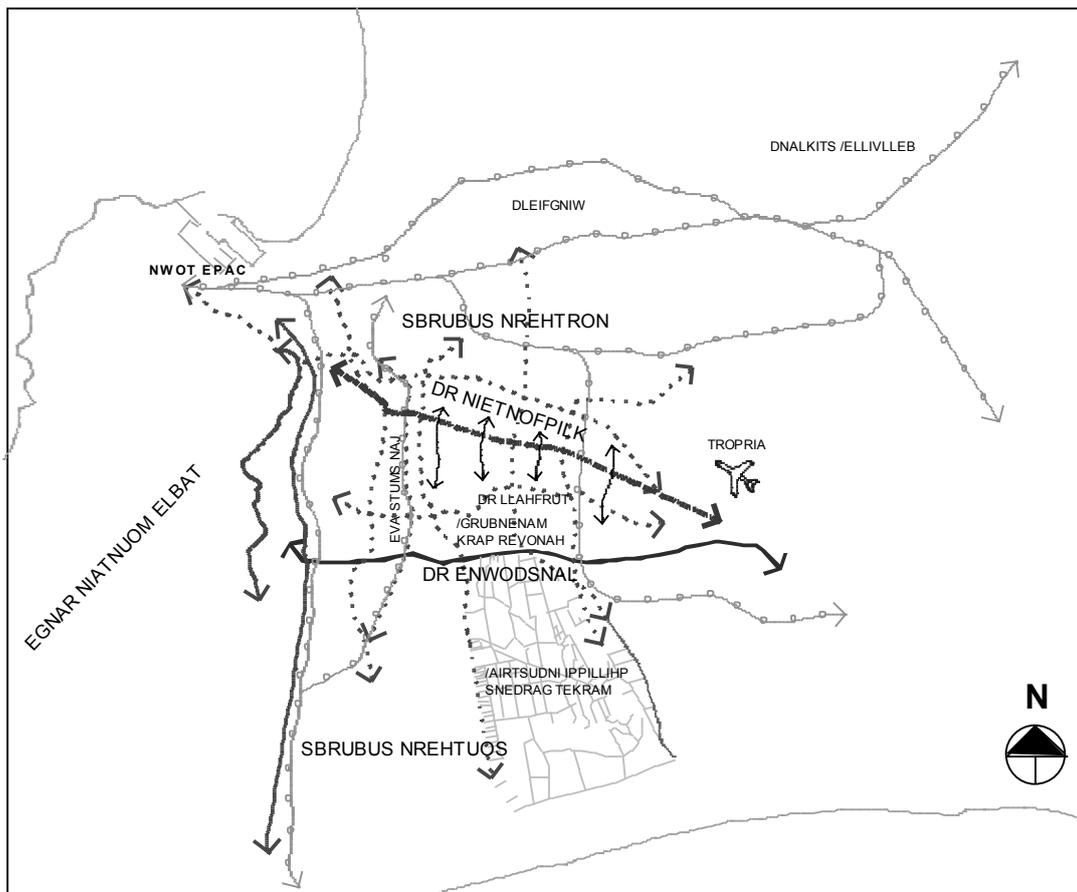

Figure 3. Klipfontein Road in the context of primary routes in Cape Town

tion of lessons learnt in Bogotá, and the recommendations made in the Provincial Vision and Delivery Programme. As observed in Bogotá, it is envisaged that existing communities along the Klipfontein Corridor will be served by feeder midi-buses that will

parks and, cycle and pedestrian pathways. Figure 4, overleaf shows a photograph of Old Klipfontein Road, a service road that runs parallel with Klipfontein Road. This service road is used mainly for parking, although informal traders also set up stalls along

etch of road, particularly over weekends. peak trading periods, pedestrian movements e road is very restricted and dangerous at times. Figure 5 shows an artist's impression of the proposed pedestrian and cycle pathways, which are to be constructed along this service road.

All infrastructure projects along the corridor will be designed to maximize job creation as a means of addressing the very high levels of unemployment in communities along the corridor. (Khayelitsha has an unemployment rate of 51%) As a first step towards the implementation of the projects, the provincial public transport branch has entered into a partnership with the Department of Labour to train unemployed locals in skills that will be required through the projects.

The Klipfontein mobility strategy has offered the Western Cape Government and the City of Cape Town an opportunity to implement its vision for public transport, while at the same time offering an opportunity to the minibus-taxi industry to meaningfully participate in what has now become the shared vision for a transformed public transport system in the Western Cape province.

Figure 4. View of the service road next to Klipfontein Rd

Figure 5. Artist's impression showing pedestrian and cycle pathways, with a BRT system along Klipfontein Rd

6 AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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