

Transport Governance for Sustainable Cities

practices, processes and cultures

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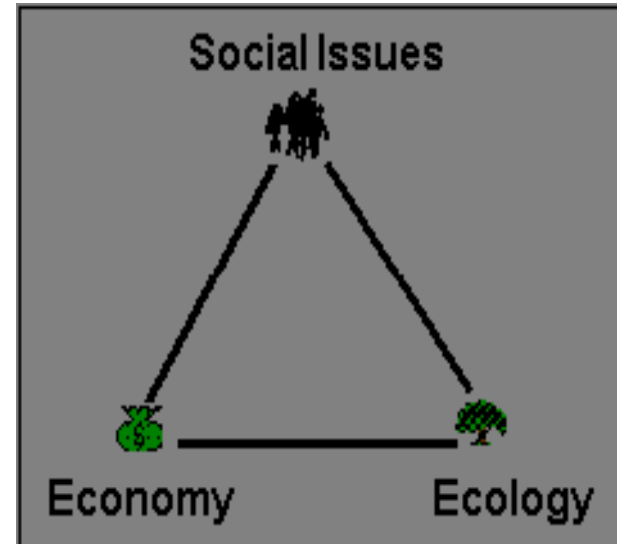
Global
Urban
Research
Unit

Presentation outline

- Sustainable cities: the role of transportation
- *A new Sustainable Mobility Paradigm?*
- From *government* to *governance*; and why governing is more critical now
- Knowledge types for Sustainable mobility
- How do we integrate different forms of knowledge?
- Moving Forward
- Conclusions

Sustainable cities and transportation

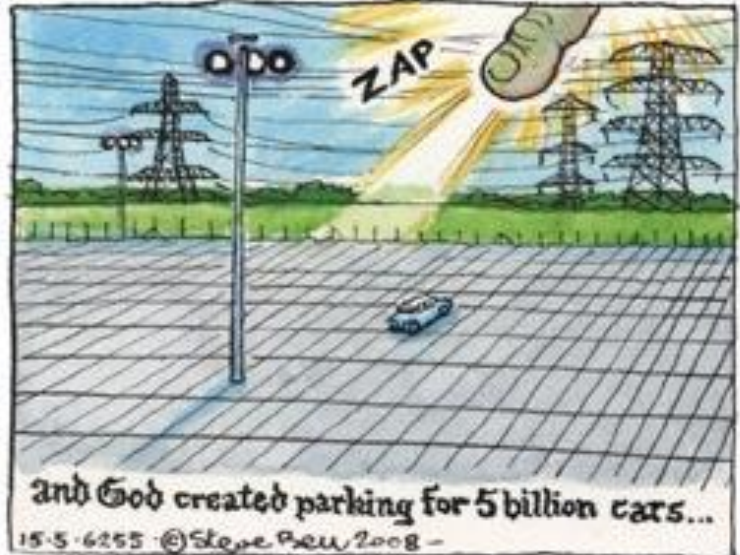
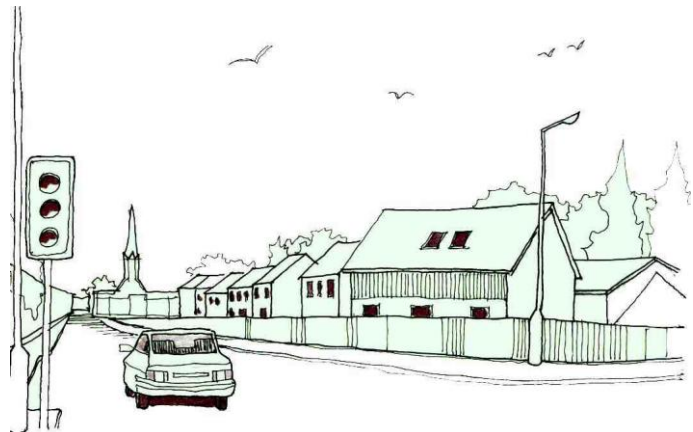
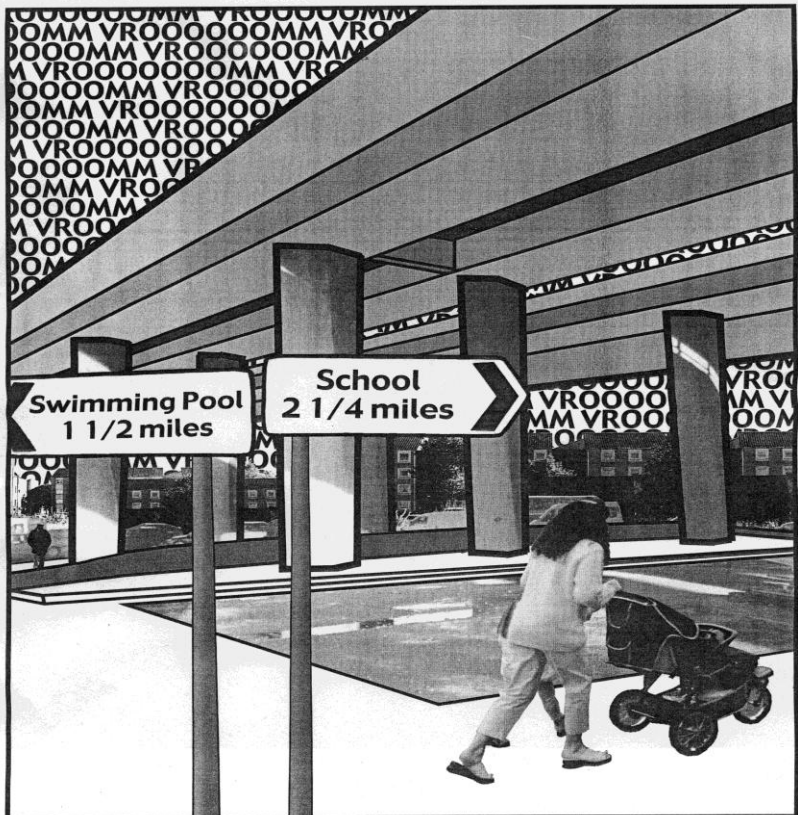
- Sustainability has economic, ecological and socio-cultural dimensions
- Transportation is critically implicated in all of these
- In many contexts certain dimensions tend to become prioritised
- Partly this is political but it also results from established methods and techniques
- Close attention to all dimensions of sustainability suggests we may be able to avoid this: but this requires advocacy?



From '*predict and provide*'....

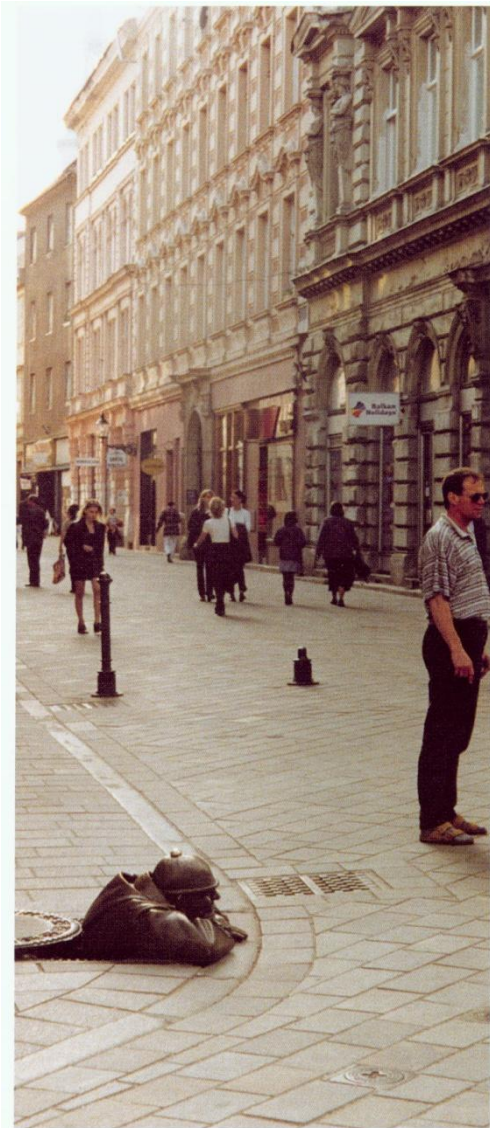
- The last 20 years have seen a crisis in the 'traditionalist' approach to transport planning in many places: why?
 - Disconnection of transport policy from other policy goals e.g. environmental limits, spatial planning
 - Increasing evidence of the impact of transport policies in social, cultural and ecological terms
 - *In its own terms* judged deficient in 3 ways
 - It ignores the impact of policy decisions themselves (UK traffic growth 4-5 times that of Netherlands in last 20 years)
 - Relatedly, increases in supply release *latent demand*
 - *The Downs Thomson paradox* suggests increasing road capacity is self-defeating as it encourages 'triple convergence'

A problem of 'hypermobility'?



... To The Sustainable Mobility Paradigm? (Banister 2008)

- Unfettered urban travel demand cannot be met
- Attention needs to be on:
 - Making the best use of technology
 - Pricing to reflect the true costs of journeys
 - Attention to land use development and regulation
 - Targeted information giving and sharing



City Centre, Bratislava



Best
practice?



PHOTO 12.3. BOURKE STREET MALL. This tree-lined east-west mall lies in the core of Melbourne's largest retail district.

But such radical change rarely occurs evenly and quickly, why?

- Transport as a discipline dominated by practices of engineering and economics; what are the effects?
 - UK BCA, valuing user times, appraisal methods
 - Bangkok Skytrain, inadvertent reinforcing of mobility poverty (Jensen & Richardson 2009)
- Policy in many places appears to change but analysis of what actually happens, of implementation, suggests that change is rarely very large
- The lesson is that practices are often taken for granted and bias becomes systemic
- ‘political’ processes (and pet schemes) dominate ‘technical’ ones although these are often deficient in any case, see above
- Counter-intuitive solutions require a degree of ‘selling’ and convincing work, while intuitive ones often also require evidence mobilised to say why they are unlikely to succeed
- And often ‘solutions’ are imported from another context which don’t work

So, we remain
with an *'uneven
politics of time
and space'* (Urry)



Government to governance and its increased importance (UN Habitat 2009)

- A relative decline in the role of formal government in the management of social and economic relationships
- The involvement of non-governmental actors in a range of state functions at a variety of spatial scales
- A change from *hierarchical* forms of government structures to more flexible forms of partnership and *networking*
- A shift from provision by formal government structures to sharing of responsibilities and service provision between the state and civil society
- The devolution and decentralisation of governmental responsibilities to regional and local governments

The implications of a governance model for transport planning

- SMP targets behavioural change which is most successful when target groups are engaged
- And citizens themselves are often demanding a greater say
- Principal implications are for the 'soft infrastructure' of planning; the practices and skills of practitioners such as communication, but do these exist in the transport professions?

Lets start again...?

- Appraisal methods are very helpful but they are only ever one input in to the process
- And, under a governance model, we need the inputs of businesses, investors, and people: without support sustainable mobility policies are less likely to succeed
- What other forms of knowledge are significant?
- How then do we design a process that can arrive at good solutions, *for our place?*

What sort of information might we need? (after Healey 2007)

- Knowledge about a place (who lives and works there, what is it like to do so, what are their mobility needs and desires)
- Knowledge about conditions and how they might change (models, urban-regional dynamics, etc)
- Knowledge about what works in other places, best practices etc

Knowledge about place

- Particular social groups: who do we want to benefit most, what intervention works best for them?
- Particular environmental challenges, why?
- The needs of particular economic sectors?
- The need to preserve cultural assets?
- Certain local issues that may not be apparent to outsiders:
 - religious customs, the historical favouring of a relevant industry (Malaysia's car industry for example), the status attributed locally to usage of certain modes etc.
- i.e. we need to talk to 'citizen experts' who have 'lay' and 'local' or 'situated' knowledge: such knowledge may be implicit, that is unarticulated to others
- How do we get this: participatory processes from early on and throughout the process
- Note, as with all participatory methods, if this is not difficult to do then you are not doing it properly!

Knowledge about dynamics

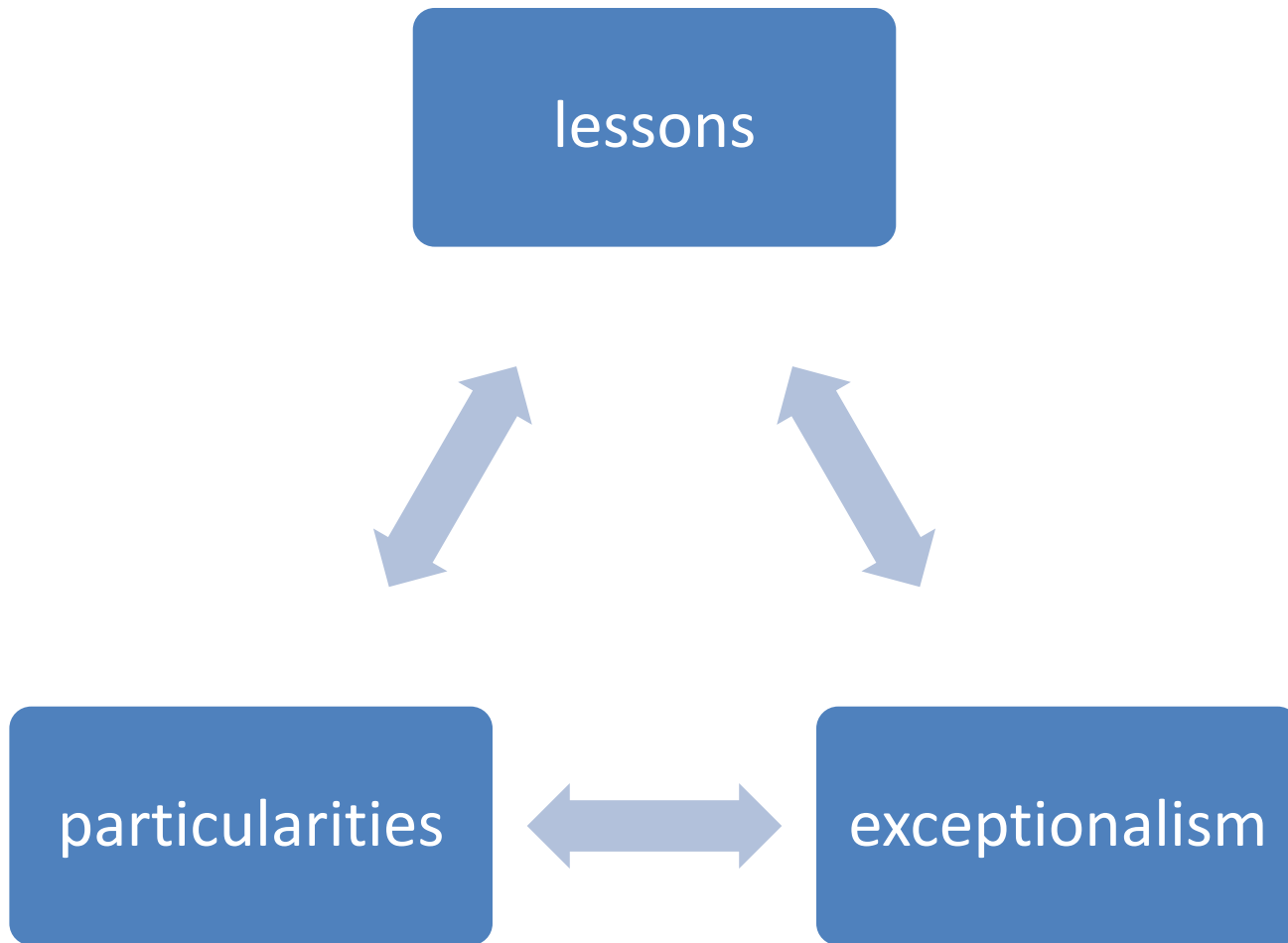
- Much of this will be 'expert' knowledge
- Transport has a wide range of models which can be useful
- Other info will be the realm of planning; of geography; of economics; of futurists; such as changes to employment structures and locational demands, demographic change and its demands etc

Knowledge about what works



- Best practice is everywhere these days fuelled by better information technology
- It is helpful but places, and thus context, are different: *learn from*, rather than *transfer*
- One place's congestion is another's free-flowing network
- Slavish adherence to global best practice is dangerous
- We need to think about lessons in the context of the particularities of our place...
- While also avoiding 'terminal uniqueness' and the argument of exceptionalism

Knowledge about 'what works' or *'should we all follow Bogota?!'*



How to integrate knowledge forms

- This is very hard!
- Many authors advocate attention to *processes* rather than hard and fast *models*
- Such approaches are often labelled as deliberative, collaborative, or participatory
- Commissioning and transparent sharing of 'data' among lay and expert groups throughout the decision/ policy-making process is the key message

Issues for deliberative transport policy/ decision making (Vigar 2006)

- People have knowledge and are interested!
- The inherently multi-scalar nature of infrastructure and the distribution of impacts make deliberation of costs and benefits complex
- Such complexity makes consensus difficult but also, given the frequent crossing of political boundaries, justifies intervention at multiple scales
- Perhaps due to these impact complexities there is a resort to personal anecdote over other forms of 'evidence' or knowledge
- perhaps related to the abstract nature of strategic transport policy, and the intuitive solution offered by a scheme, there is a drift to discussion of schemes
- Many 'myths' perpetuate the transport field and these are hard to unpack and require technical and communicative skills
- Such process management and associated facilitatory skills are often rare among transport planners?

Moving forward

(based on Banister 2008; Winslott-Hiselius 2009 et al)

- Consider a wide array of ‘knowledges’
- Give information- accentuate the positive impacts
- Involve people in decision-taking and policy-making to encourage ownership and commitment
- Use all forms of the media to sell your strategy
- Consider pilot projects and phased implementation to demonstrate positive effects
- Be consistent within and across policy sectors
- Be adaptable and be seen to be adaptable:
compromise on details can secure implementation

Conclusions

- Transport policy too often fails
- Implementation deficits are rife and 'pet schemes' tend to dominate
- Such schemes are determined thru political more than technical evidence, and there are systematic deficiencies in both
- Attention in transport often goes to refinement of technical processes, but to what practical end?
- For reasons of good science, of good governance, but also in response to increasingly educated and vocal publics, we need to change our approach to policy and decision making
- This will be hard but there are examples to guide us here too! (which we should learn from but adhere to slavishly!!)