

Transit, or mass transportation is public transportation for the carriage of passengers and their incidental baggage, operating on established routes and fixed schedules, and serving prescribed stops at prescribed rates of fare. Para-transit encompasses diverse forms of public transportation that fill the niche between private transportation and transit, e.g. maxi-taxi, taxis, PH, rental cars, dial-a-ride, private school vans, etc. Only the PTSC operates on fixed schedules, serving prescribed stops.

For scheduled service, the maximum desirable wait time should be 15 to 20 minutes, while greater than 60 minutes would be considered unattractive to all potential riders.

Served area (km²) is the area the transit system is required to serve. Population of the served area (persons) refers to residential population in the transit service area. The goal should be to achieve high area coverage (80-100%) by street transit. A major failing of public transportation is its inability to provide adequate and attractive collection and distribution services in lower density areas.

Para-transit provides at least 95% of the service to riders in TnT, meaning that the vast majority of captive public transportation users are subjected to unscheduled, unpredictable service because they have no choice. Is it therefore surprising that the aspiration of every individual is his own auto?

A comparison of public transport versus auto trips includes the following:

- Lower parking and operating costs for transit;
- Less need for additional road capacity for transit;
- Less need for parking facilities
- Privacy on transit vehicle is limited;

- Transit affects users ability to get to places;
- Riders have more contact with different types of people in a confined space;
- Time while riding is available for other activities; and,
- A greater variety of destinations are available by auto.

Public transportation offers a choice between modes of travel, including as follows:

- As a form of mobility insurance. It can be available when other forms of transport are not.
- Unusual occurrences – when other persons using the car; or the automobile is being repaired;
- For emergency evacuation
- For recreation travel – a novelty of the system
- Gives youth, elderly, and disabled freedom of movement – for health care, and other access

As part of an appropriate public transportation policy, the following should be recognized:

- For mobility to be sustainable, transport should be understood as a mechanism to maximise access and not as a mechanism to just move vehicles themselves;
- Public transportation is the only form of transport available to all citizens;
- Transportation planning cannot determine the transport policies of Government; it can only recommend which transport options best achieve the specifically established goals and objectives that result from the application of government policies.

Public transport administration also has to manage demand in the middle of the day, during weekends, evenings, and night: shopping areas / centres, special events, tourist locations, airport, housing communities, schools, recreation areas, medical facilities, incidents and emergencies.

There must be integration of transit services provided by the different transit operators. Lack of integration among multiple transit operators has serious consequences. While passengers are most directly affected, the operators also incur inefficient operations and losses; ultimately, the entire urbanized regions suffer indirectly but significantly from such conditions. There are many different obstacles to achievement of full integration of transit systems. They can be classified into several categories: historic; political/legal (including legal restrictions on areas and types of services), and organizational.

The public transport system includes the following sub-modes:

- Competitive public services on all routes operated by the different transit operators;
- Contracted school services operated by private bus / van and maxi operators;
- Contracted public services in low volume periods / areas operated by private bus / van and maxi operators; and,
- Contracted services for the disabled and physically challenged operated by private bus / van and maxi operators.

The Public Transport Service Act Chapter 48:02 says “ Section 8. (1) Subject to this Act, it shall be the duty of the Corporation to carry on the business of operating public service vehicles under this Act, so as to ensure the provision of a safe, adequate, economic and efficient public transportation system, adapted to the needs of the country ... (3)... the powers conferred by subsection (1) are ... to hold inquiries and conduct studies respecting economy and efficiency in the transport service. (4) Nothing in subsection (3) shall apply to the carrying of passengers by road in a hiring car (within the meaning of the Motor Vehicles and Road

Traffic Act) adapted to carry less than six passengers and used for plying or standing for hire in the street, or to the carriage of goods by any other person for hire or reward or otherwise, but the Corporation may, in its discretion, authorize any person to operate public service vehicles of any special class or description upon such terms and conditions, including payment of any such fee thereof as may be prescribed, in any area or district where the Corporation on economic or any other grounds does not consider it suitable or expedient to operate its own service.”

So, in the absence of a Transit Authority or Administrator, what is preventing the PTSC investing in the skills and other resources required to do (a) appropriate transit demand and location studies and marketing; (b) the integration and management of all transit and associated activities; and, (c) trip scheduling and maximization of service coverage areas?

e-mail: info@ccost.org