

YET ANOTHER PIECE OF THE PUZZLE - ARE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEMS INFLUENCING SPATIAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA?

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to develop the narrative on a less canvassed aspect of public transport in South Africa, that is, its role in driving urban spatial change. The paper will be a reflection of the author's experiences in the Cities Support Program (CSP) of the National Treasury, a program intended to catalyse spatial transformation within South Africa's largest urban areas. It will provide an overview of the Theory of Change (ToC) applied by the CSP to influence spatial change, report on the support and interactions with city public transport departments for 5 years, provide an overview of the results of technical reviews of their transport plans and systems, and importantly how they related with wider spatial planning frameworks such as the BEPP, SDF, and as well as budgets. There is evidence of a practice that is shifting and acknowledges the need to implement public transport systems that are explicit and central to the spatial change agenda. However, apart from the broader challenge to the viability of the ToC underlying spatial change, it will emerge the institutional reality at a local and national level means issues of spatial change are still largely peripheral to public transport practice. Further, entrenched ways of working and a failure to properly define how to effect this change has meant these efforts do not provide clear results.