

Review of International Urban Transportation Policy Frameworks, Strategies and Governance Models

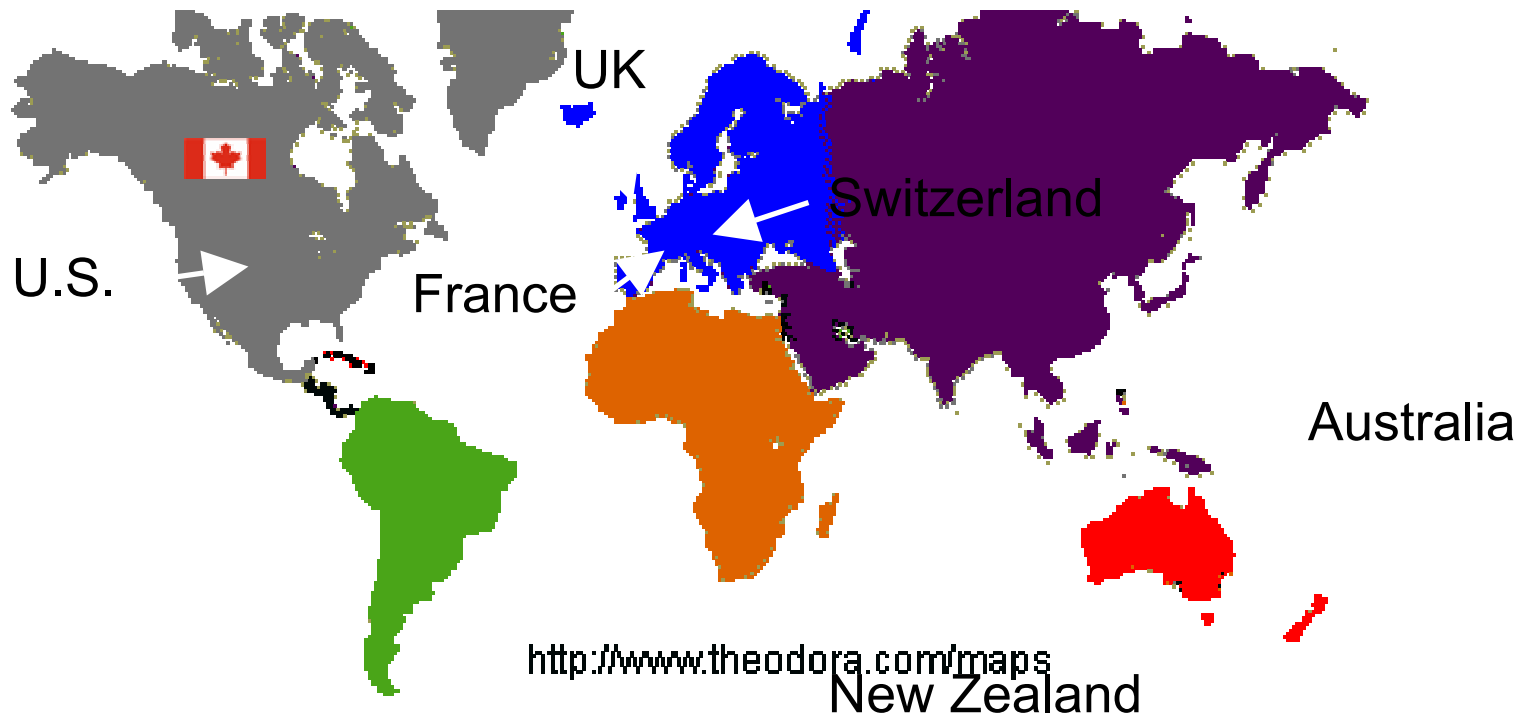
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- Commissioned by Transport Canada -



What did we do?

Compared and contrasted the urban transportation governance environment in six countries, largely through interviews with public officials and practitioners



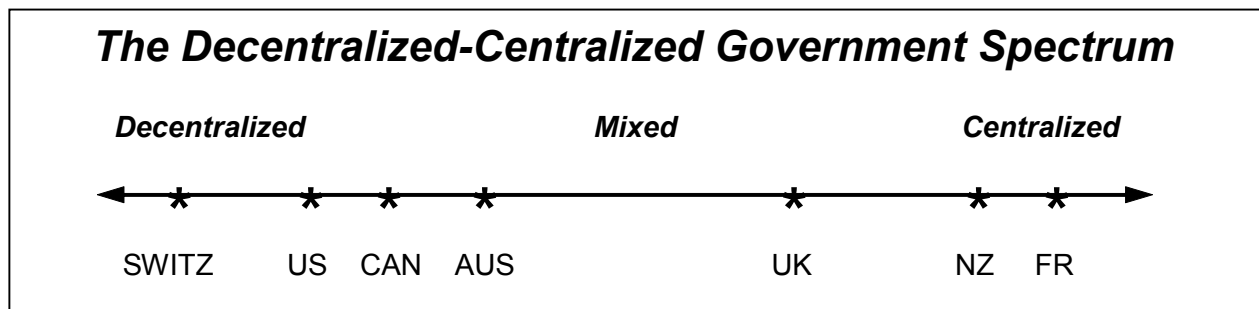
Topics

- What are the governance trends in urban transportation across these western democracies?
- What are the policy frameworks and strategies that national government's use to guide decision-making with respect to urban transportation?
- How is urban transportation funded, and by whom?



Government Structures and Country Context

- All six surveyed countries are prosperous nations with diverse economies and well-developed urban transportation networks
- Canada, along with the US and Australia, fit (generally) in the middle of a political-structure spectrum of the survey countries
 - France, the UK, and New Zealand have centralized government structures
 - Switzerland has perhaps one of the most decentralized government structures of all Western countries



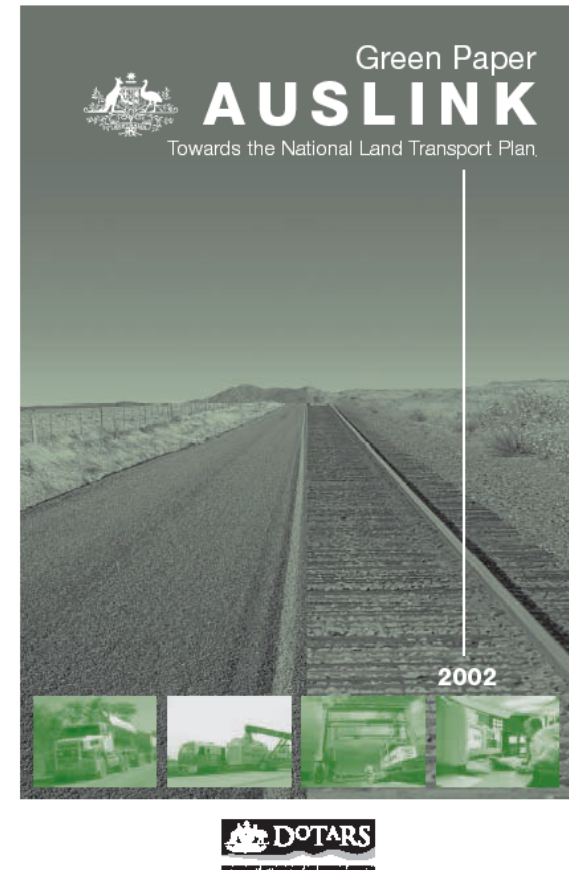
Country Context (continued)

- Australia is most similar to Canada in terms of economic geography
 - Both countries have a small number of urban concentrations, and continue to grow in population due to significant immigration.
- The United States and the UK both have well-developed national urban transportation programs
 - The UK has a comprehensive program while the US program focuses on infrastructure funding. Switzerland has the least-comprehensive urban transportation policy framework of the surveyed countries.
 - New Zealand, France and Australia are more similar to Canada in this regard, with active, but not interventionist, national roles in urban transportation.



National Urban Transportation Policy Frameworks & Strategies

- All six surveyed countries have published frameworks for urban transportation policy
- The significance and implications of these strategies differ considerably
 - E.g. UK's 10-year Transport Strategy vs. Switzerland's transport department's mandate
- This difference reflects the role of the national government, as well as the scale of investment need



Process Leading to Strategy Development

- Some strategies resulted from political mandates and/or government reorganization
 - Switzerland, New Zealand, UK
- Other countries have ongoing programs that were renewed/rejuvenated with a new transport strategy
 - US, Australia



Impacts of New Transport Policy Frameworks

- US TEA-21 has had a large impact on related policy areas
 - Sustainability - *Clean Air Act*, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Program, significant funding for transit & non-motorized modes
 - 'Fire-walled' revenues for transportation projects
- New Zealand's strategy led to a new transport governance structure for Auckland (ARTA)
- UK: More £££



Urban Transportation & Sustainability Policy

- All strategies are focused on sustainability
- National legislation states:
 - US *“economically sound, provides the foundation for the nation to compete in the global economy, and will move people and goods in an energy efficient manner”*
 - UK *“to tackle congestion and pollution by improving all types of transport in ways that increase choice...create prosperity and a better environment”*
 - Switzerland - support ecological, economic, and social sustainability and guarantee sustainable mobility
- EU sustainability objectives also influence urban transport in Europe



Governance Models

- The urban transportation governance model employed by each survey country reflects:
 - Political and administrative structures
 - Cultural nuances and national preferences
 - E.g. role of the private sector in U.S. & UK
 - E.g. Role of the States and Territories in Australia
 - Crown agencies in New Zealand



Land Use Planning & National Transportation Policy

- UK is a leader
 - Planning Policy Guidance legislation
 - Integration of transport infrastructure funding with local land use plans
- US
 - Integrated with funding programs
 - MPO's
- New Zealand
 - Recent establishment of Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA)



Inter-Jurisdictional Tensions

- Australia
 - Differences between national and State/Territory objectives leads to competing and conflicting initiatives
- UK
 - Transport *for* London a useful case study
- Those countries with autonomous regional transport agencies/authorities are often able to avoid cross-governmental problems



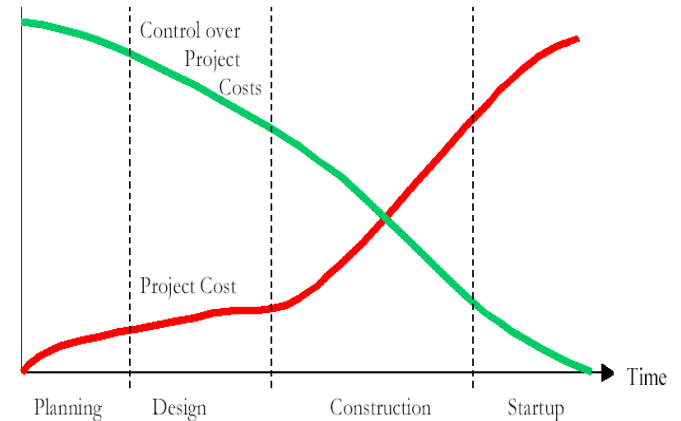
Financing Urban Transportation

Specific Observations:

- The national governments in Switzerland, Australia and the UK use general government revenues to fund urban transportation needs
- The US and New Zealand use the fuel tax
- France employs a payroll tax

General Observations:

- Funding decisions usually made by multiple levels of government, through:
 - Inter-governmental partnerships (e.g. NZ)
 - Lower tiers of government submissions:
 - Project proposals, grant programs (United States)
 - Transportation budgets and/or plans (e.g. United Kingdom)



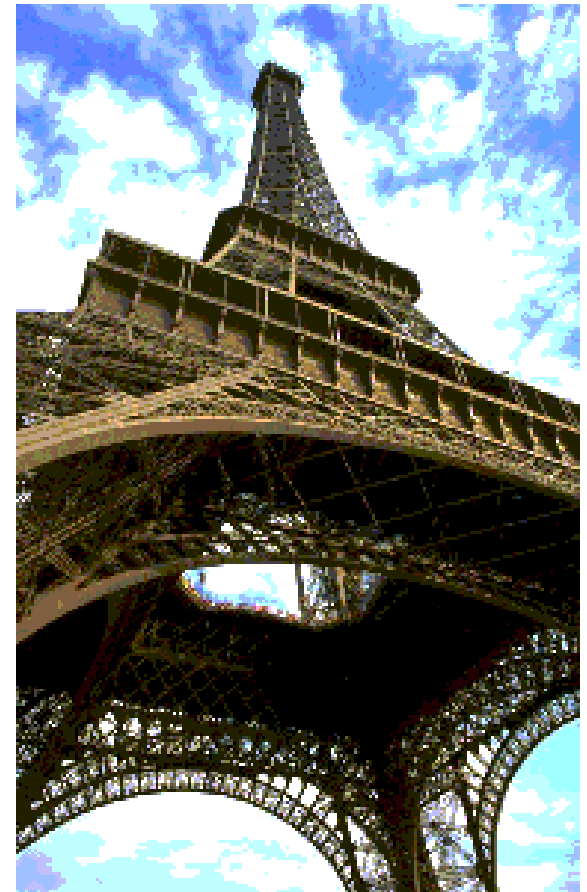
Financing Urban Transportation (con't)

- National governments in five of the six surveyed countries provide funding for active transportation
- Most national governments provide funding for both transportation demand management (TDM) and intelligent transportation system (ITS) initiatives
- European national governments take responsibility (in terms of government financial support) for urban freight, goods movement and inter-modal activities
 - The EU undertakes a significant amount of transport research and development on behalf of member countries
- Capital infrastructure costs (road and transit-based) are generally shared among levels of government



Financing Urban Transportation (con't)

- Large cities are often dealt with outside of normal government funding schemes
 - London, Paris, Auckland, Toronto/Montreal/Vancouver
- France's innovative 'transport tax' is allocated directly to local transport authorities
 - 1% - 2.5% of total payroll
 - Paris levies €1.5 billion (\$2.5 billion) annually
 - Can be used for capital or operating expenditures



Conditionality - Policy Leverage & Spending Criteria

- US - New Starts
- UK & France - planning/urban development criteria
- Funding in most countries flows with many strings attached
 - Criteria are met before funding flows rather than performance measures that are evaluated after project funding approved



Urban Transportation as a National Priority

- Issue registers much higher in importance with voters in densely urbanized countries.
 - In the UK, ridiculing poorly run public transport services has been a national pastime for a number of years.
 - US traffic congestion and its air quality impacts are major issues for residents in urban and suburban America.
- Similar to the Canadian political environment, though rising in importance, transportation is not a 'top 5' issue in Australasia.



Strategy Process Summary

- Some countries have successfully moved through the transport policy making process:
 - vision statement/catalyst stage - political, technical
 - public consultation and publication of strategy/policy framework document
 - implementation of legislation/funding/policy programs



Findings

1. The high-level transportation agenda is consistent among all six countries
2. Urban transportation infrastructure has been unable to meet demand



Findings (continued)

- 3. The property tax base funds local authorities' urban transportation needs**
- 4. All federal governments provide some level of capital funding to local authorities**
- 5. The land use-transportation link is common but the application varies**



Findings (continued)

6. Sustainability is linked to transportation policy in all jurisdictions
7. Successful national transportation policy is founded in understanding local needs

