

UTHUNGULU



uThungulu District
Municipality

**Integrated Transport
Plan**

Close-out Report

ISSUE

uThungulu District Municipality
Integrated Transport Plan

Close-out Report

August 2005

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1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Start date:	January 2004
Planned completion date:	December 2004
Extended Completion date:	April 2005

1.1 Introduction

The Arup Consulting Engineers and UWP Consulting Joint Venture was appointed to prepare the Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for uThungulu District Municipality (uThungulu). For the purpose of proper project management and the provision of technical advice a Project Steering Committee (PSC) was established. All spheres of government were represented on the PSC and included representatives from the six Local Municipalities, Provincial Department of Transport as well as Department of Transport. The following organisations were represented:

- uThungulu District Municipality
- Local Municipalities
- National Department of Transport (DOT)
- Provincial Department of Transport (KZNDOT)

It should be noted that the ITP for uThungulu was a DoT motivated project due to the nature of the DM with both urban and rural components, aimed at the lessons that could be learnt from such a focus project for rollout in similar socio-demographic areas in the country.

2. PROJECT REVIEW AND MANAGEMENT

2.1 Terms of Reference

Scope of services

The original project Terms of Reference only included the preparation of the Public Transport Plan (PTP) for uThungulu. At the inception meeting held in January 2004 it was decided that the scope of services be changed to accommodate the preparation of an Integrated Transport Plan. This change in the TOR resulted in the extension in the project duration to allow for the completion of the entire ITP.

Time Frame

The project was scheduled to start in February 2004 with an initial date of completion the end of December 2004. The project programme however changed due to the inclusion of the ITP components. The date for completion was therefore changed to early 2005 pending the availability of additional information required for the compilation of the ITP.

Cost

The project cost were R1020 000-00 (inclusive of VAT and disbursements). The cost of the project was never an issue as the variations to the project scope, including the cost implications thereof, were agreed upon before the work commenced. The project was successfully completed within the approved budget.

2.2 Evolution Of Processes

The CPTR, which forms the basis of the ITP, did not include any Origin Destination information required to complete the needs assessment. The lack of Origin Destination

information required additional surveys at all the different ranks and thus resulted in a delay in completion of the ITP. The change in the Terms of Reference to prepare an ITP instead of a PTP also required collecting additional information on Freight and heavy vehicle movements especially within the uMhlathuze area.

As part of the public participation process it was decided to introduce an excursion for all the members of the PSC as well as additional representatives from DOT. This field trip had a small contribution towards the overall time requirement, but provided significant insight on the circumstances under which people, especially within the rural areas, have to travel and use Public Transport (PT) facilities in uThungulu.

2.3 Activities And Relationships Of The Project Team With The Steering Committee

2.3.1 Interfaces

The success of this project was largely dependant on the cooperation of all interested parties, i.e. Department of Transport, Provincial Department of Transport, the District Municipality, six local municipalities, PT industry and the project team. Continuous liaison amongst steering committee members ensured frequent feedback and input from all role players.

2.3.2 Performance

The overall performance of the steering committee was generally satisfactory but it should be said that all local municipalities were not always present at the meetings. Most of the members, however, were receptive to the requests of the project team and assisted as far as possible. Thanks are thus expressed to the Department of Transport, KwaZulu Natal Department of Transport, uThungulu District Municipality, Local Municipalities and all other role players. It is suggested that local municipalities should rather be visited on an individual basis during the unfolding processes of the project to ensure and allow proper input and feedback from the municipalities.

2.4 Training and Skills Transfer

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) was seen as a technical committee providing support to the consulting team. No additional training has been given to members of the steering committee.

The surveyors however, performing the duty of conducting much needed surveys for the CPTR and ITP, were trained by the project team before they commenced with the supervised surveys. These surveys generated a substantial amount of work and required a team effort.

The project team has built up extensive experience on a number of large public transport projects relating to the planning and execution of public transport data gathering. In this instance, temporary staff from the local areas, technical colleges, technicons and the university, were used to undertake the surveys. The minimum requirements to qualify as a surveyor were as follows:

- Minimum of grade 12
- Read and write in English
- Good communication skills to be able to explain the purpose of the surveys, and
- At the time, unemployed.

The local municipalities and ward councillors were tasked with nominating suitable candidates for the surveys. 148 local people were trained and engaged as surveyors.

The geographic distribution of the surveyors was as follows:

- KZ 281 – Mbonambi 25 surveyors
- KZ 282 - uMhlathuze 31 surveyors
- KZ 283 - Ntambanana 18 surveyors
- KZ 284 - Umlalazi 24 surveyors
- KZ 285 - Mtonjaneni 22 surveyors
- KZ 286 – Nkandla 22 surveyors
- On-board bus surveys 6 surveyors

The contact details of all surveyors have been kept in a database so that they can be re-engaged at some stage in the future if the need arises. The total remuneration to surveyors was in the region of approximately R 100 000,00. On a 12-hour shift a surveyor would typically receive R 30 for travel and R 180 for the surveys, or R 210 per day.

Each of the six groups of surveyors was trained within their local municipality at venues made available by the local councils. Every candidate underwent a one-day (paid) training session before commencement of the actual survey. The surveyors were briefed on the reasons for the study as background, and taught to complete the relevant forms correctly. At the end of the training, practical sessions or ‘dry-runs’ were undertaken to check if the surveyors fully understood the survey forms and the process of gathering the required data. The ‘dry-runs’ also gave the team the opportunity to select and allocate different candidates to different survey tasks that would best suite their aptitude, which in turn ensured productiveness of each surveyor.

3. TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT

3.1 Execution of the Assignment

The success of this assignment is very dependant on the availability of accurate data and information.

3.1.1 Data Needs

Typical data needs for the different plans included the following:

- Operating Licenses Strategy (OLS):
 - Availability of Minibus-Taxis in uThungulu.
 - PT vehicle trips per Public Transport Corridor.
 - The details related to PT routes operated from each facility.
 - Demand for PT based on passenger Origin Destination information.
 - Operating costs associated to the taxi industry.
- Rationalisation Plan (RatPlan):
 - Information with regard to bus contracts.
 - Validity of these contracts.
 - Information on bus subsidies.
 - Operating costs associated to the bus sector of public transport.
- Integrated Transport Plan (ITP):
 - Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) for each local municipality and uThungulu.
 - Spatial Development Frameworks for each of the local as well as for uThungulu.
 - Any earlier transport studies.
 - Any traffic counts.
 - Freight Information.
 - Agreed institutional arrangements associated to Public Transport.

3.2 Preparation of NLTTA Plans

This ITP is the first Integrated Transport Plan for uThungulu and therefore only complies with the minimum standards as required by the NLTTA. In order to comply with the requirements as specified in the NLTTA, the project team developed the OLS and RatPlan as part of the ITP and not as separate documents. The following comments with regard to the different plans should be noted for future reference.

3.2.1 Operating Licenses Strategy

Typically the following problems were encountered:

- No reporting on illegal operators amongst the minibus-taxi industry was made due to the information not being available due to fear of being fined for operating illegal by the taxi industry.
- Limited access to and cooperation from the Licensing Board regarding the permits issued.
- Gaps within the CPTR, especially regarding on-route surveys, needs to be addressed as part of the CPTR update. This was a problem because those routes, which had most passengers alighting and embarking away from rank facilities, were not captured. This information is required to determine the actual seat usage per trip, which can have an influence on sustainability of certain routes. It is suggested that the following solutions be used namely:
 - ◊ Intermediate survey points between major generator and attractor areas at major confluence points to get an indication of the maximum passenger load on these routes.
 - ◊ Sample on-board surveys on different routes and route types (long distance, urban and rural) and at different times (peak and off-peak) to get an indication of the extent of passenger turnover along these routes.

3.2.2 RatPlan

Due to the grouping of several public transport routes into public transport corridors the project team was not able link all the relevant information regarding current bus subsidies to these corridors and be able to prepare proposals that will have a significant impact of the current subsidy paid. Considering each route separately would result also a major investigation and would not be appropriate. An amicable solution should be found on further studies. The comments made in the RatPlan were thus very general in nature.

The municipality furthermore has very little knowledge on subsidised public transport and the implications of any policies and strategies made it extremely difficult for them to make such decisions. The fact is that subsidised services are not completely devolved to provinces or municipalities and the NLTTA gives the plans no power. Neither national nor the provinces that design the services and put them to tender are required to comply with the RatPlan. Unless some delegation of authority were to happen the RatPlan is rather pointless to the municipality although it would be useful for NDOT or the province. The province should be the authority required to produce the RatPlan in consultation with municipalities and their PTP.

3.2.3 Consultative Process

The project team experienced some problems with regard to the consultative process and especially communication between the team and public transport operators during the planning phase. Consultation during the planning phase however always proves to be minimal whilst consultation on implementation gets extensive responses from the public transport industry.

Local Authorities (LMs) were often not present at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and thus resulted in poor feedback from LMs on issues concerning the public transport industry in their area. It is suggested that local municipalities should rather be

visited on an individual basis during the unfolding processes of the project to ensure and allow proper input and feedback from the municipalities.

Regular feedback was given to LMs and other stakeholders at the monthly Steering Committee meetings and this was summarised in the minutes.

4. LESSONS LEARNT

4.1 Consultant's Point of View

4.1.1 Current Public Transport Record

The preparation of the PTP and ITP for uThungulu started with the compilation of the current Public Transport Record (CPTR) for uThungulu. The regulations provided by DoT regarding the collection of surveys were very broad and included household surveys. The layout of the survey forms together with the methodology to be used did not always cater for the information later required by the PTP and ITP.

The compilation of the ITP required more detailed information not acquired through the CPTR process and thus additional surveys were required as part of the ITP process and thus resulting in higher fees required to complete the ITP.

The conducting of 12-hour surveys at all the public transport facilities (formal and informal) is very time consuming and contribute substantially to the overall survey cost. At smaller informal rank and especially during off-peak periods the surveyors were not very busy and thus it would be more advantageous to limit surveys to trip production ranks for AM-surveys and trip attraction ranks for PM-surveys. This way survey costs would be reduced.

4.1.2 Technical Assessment of Services

The ITP needs to address several issues including utilisation, waiting time, cost, etc., and the guidelines not always provide the consultant with a uniform methodology for using and assessing the information. Guidelines needs to be developed that can be implemented by all consultants that will ensure consistency on reporting on these issues. An example is to develop acceptable waiting time criteria for urban, rural and deep rural areas in order to determine the current Level of Service provided. The CPTR process only focussed on the collection of PT related information and did not allow for surveys to collect information regarding private vehicles, freight movement or Non-motorised Transport such as pedestrian modes, learner transport, cycling and disabled persons. This should be included in the regulations and guidelines and should form part of the CPTR process prior to preparing the PTP or ITP.

The preparation of the ITP is aimed at addressing public transport inefficiencies within the local municipal areas. Project and proposals identified through the ITP will eventually form part of the IDP process in order to allow for funding through the IDP process. Local municipalities do not always have the capacity or capability to implement projects identified through the IDP and its processes and thus guidelines needs to be developed to assist Local Municipalities with the implementation of projects and proposal identified through the ITP process.

The prioritisation of these projects and proposals will certainly favour the public transport ranks and routes with the highest passenger volumes. This will result in further inequalities between the already well developed public transport facilities and services within the urban areas compared with the actual needs of people within the deep rural areas. DoT needs to provide guidance to the municipalities in prioritising these projects and proposals to benefit all. It is further suggested that the DOT are closer involved with the Department of Provincial and Local Government who allocates Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) funding. As is

the case with the Department of Water Affairs and forestry, this department agreed that approximately 72% of MIG funding be allocated to water services projects. A similar investigation is required from DOT to allow at least 20% allocation from MIG funding for PT projects. The total funding allocation to municipalities needs to be increased to ensure they take the responsibility for PT and related facilities.

The level of the cost analysis didn't correspond to the level and accuracy of information available. Although the cost analysis model was developed specifically for corridor analysis, the meaning of corridor in that instance and corridor as used to group a number of routes together, have different meanings. The model requires so many data entries that many are assumed, resulting in general indications as output. The model needs to be refined for the purposes of a PTP or ITP investigation.

4.1.3 Public Participation

Public participation was limited to several public workshops held with public transport-industry representatives. Due to the distances people has to travel to attend these public workshops very few attended each workshop. Feedback to people on the ground (minibus-taxi drivers) responsible for providing the services was lacking and information not always reached the wanted audience.

4.1.4 Funding

The ITP identified several projects to be implemented over the next few years. These projects however need substantial sources of funding. Not all will be funded through the IDP process and additional sources of funding needs to be identified. Again the prioritisation of these projects becomes important. See also 4.1.2 above.

4.1.5 Reporting

The outline of reporting needs to be agreed up front with the various role-players to ensure that no duplication of effort occurs. Often the report structure prevents the role-players from providing their input just because the report is not in the envisaged format.

4.2 District Municipality's View

The preparation of the ITP should be a consultative process. Project timeframes for these types of planning projects should be set realistically to complete and to allow for effective consultation. To ensure a consultative process project timeframes should rather be extended.

The buy-in from all stakeholders is very important to ensure alignment and acceptance of the final recommendations. Commitment from stakeholders to such a process is very important. The commitment from stakeholders was not always there throughout the process and this include Provincial Departments, Local Municipalities and Public Transport Stakeholders. A mechanism should be put in place to ensure commitment from all stakeholders. More time should be spent to create awareness amongst stakeholders during the planning stages of such initiatives to ensure commitment throughout the process, which might save time in later stages of implementations.

Awareness campaigns should be considered before such initiatives are being undertaken especially amongst the Taxi Industry. This will ensure better acceptance when surveys are undertaken and a better understanding amongst operators of the process.

Councillors that participate in the process should maybe be trained up front to understand the basic principles of transport planning. This will ensure a better understanding of the process and assist them to make more informed decisions on approval of such plans.

4.3 Provincial Department of Transport's View

A detailed term of reference is essential in order to call for tenders. The terms of reference should ideally include a detailed report format in order to ensure the information is provided in the format required. The pilot study has been imperative in drawing up standards and methodologies as templates for the remaining PTP studies in KZN.

The adoption of corridors is perhaps an over simplified generalization of the process. The recommendations are therefore broad and the Operating Licensing Board (OLB) would have difficulty in using the PTP to give detailed guidance for their decisions. Clearly, it appears that detailed corridor investigations are of greater worth than the PTP in a summarised or consolidated assessment, because corridor investigations allow for a more in-depth examination of the situation. Appropriate funding needs to be obtained to conduct these detailed studies and uniform Terms of Reference needs to be developed prior to conducting these detailed corridor studies.

The calculation of the sustainability of corridors requires more information than what is available from the CPTR. The cost model needs more detailed examination and testing in order to develop a simplified an affordable methodology to assess the sustainability of services on a corridor.

Passenger and trip numbers in the CPTR are prone to error due to the temporal variation of demand and the fact that not all services and passengers pass through ranks and not all trips passing through a rank are live trips. Guidelines need to address these issues in order to ensure there is uniformity in the definition of a live trip and that some indication is given as to the margin of error in passenger numbers.

There needs to be uniformity in the measure of utilisation. Some consultants have utilisation as total passengers over total trips. Others have total peak or valley passengers over total peak or valley trips. Others work it out only for the peak direction (inbound passengers over inbound trips) and ignore the movements in the opposite direction as positioning trips. Still others measure utilisation based on number of passengers over number of seats (a bus can therefore have >100% utilisation and not be overloaded). Others measure utilisation only in the peak period. All three measures are useful for different purposes and should thus all be used in the analysis of services. In the PTP though consultants tend to use only one measure and it is often not clear which measure is being used. Guidelines need to be developed for the measuring of utilisation indicating the terminology to be used and the conclusions that can be made. For example – the total passengers over total trips may show utilisation of 45%. This does not necessarily show that trips are underutilised. The utilisation in the peak direction could be 90% and 0% in the opposite direction. This indicates that the flow of passengers is tidal and indicates that more trip attractors need to be developed at the trip production end to improve contra-flow rider-ship in order to improve sustainability and reduce subsidy. Another example: a short urban bus route with a total peak utilisation of 60% in the peak direction would be unacceptable. On a long distance bus service this utilisation would be acceptable. This is because passengers on long distance bus trips cannot be expected to stand for long journeys. Utilisation should only be measured according to seated capacity for long distance services. As above the other measures of utilisation tell you different things. Too many conclusions are being made (not necessarily on this project) based on utilisation figures without clearly indicating what was measured.

More guidance needs to be given to municipalities on what policy decisions need to be made in the PTP. The PTP does not give clear indication of what type and extent of infrastructure and facilities the municipality requires to be provided at public transport termini and stops.

The PTP does not examine service integration issues, the need for interchanges and the effects on the passenger. There is a need to give guidance to municipalities and consultants on how this can be captured in the CPTR and addressed in the PTP. The gaps in the CPTR will have

to be reviewed prior to the commencing of new surveys as part of the CPTR update. The initial time-frame (annually) for review of the CPTR prescribed by the DoT are unrealistic and needs to be amended.

Without standards in place for PT-infrastructure, the allocation of funding for implementation may tend to be biased, either towards urban (more costly) or towards rural needs. The projects may need to be prioritised in respect of the vision, goals and objectives of the district, i.e. addressing the needs of the 'deep rural' areas where there is a desperate shortage.

4.4 National Department of Transport's View

The objective with this project was to assist in the preparation of an ITP in an area with strong rural and urban components, to determine how the preparation of an ITP and the planned implementation thereof would be rolled out based on such socio-demographics and economics.

4.4.1 Project Management

The intervention of DoT on municipal level lead to some challenges, which include:

- The transfer of funding directly to the municipality with the province not playing a role in the allocation thereof, although consulted and province been part of the Project Team (Procurement process of the municipality, but with ring-fenced grant funding).
- The preparation of the TOR was somewhat problematic as DoT put the Regulations with respect to the ITP forward as basic input, with province contributing much towards provincial objectives, focusing on the PTP. Input from uThungulu on what they requires from such a plan were not clear, as a result of this being the first round of planning according to the NLTTA, and capacity in uThungulu to deal with the above that was very limited. This lead to some re-focusing on what was actually required in order to prepare an ITP
- The process on preparing the ITP and good secretariat towards the project were positive contributions.

The programme gave direction in terms of the process although the milestones could not be reached in time, mainly due to the consultation process that could not be completed in time. The importance of the latter cannot be overemphasised, however, it should not influence negatively on programme (decision-making needs to be reached quicker) as this influence project delivery.

4.4.2 Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder participation was sometimes very shy. There need to be a streamlined approach to that would benefit the process as well as the project. The benefit of a good Chairperson, that especially knows the rural areas and council processes very well, were instrumental in taking the project forward. However, the participation of local municipalities and industry were not sufficient, and might influence negatively on implementing the plan, with the exception of the Mhlatuze area that contributed positively and strongly from an urban management perspective.

4.4.3 Technical

Bus subsidy and taxi operating license/permit information were not readily available, resulting in the OLS and RatPlan only relying on the CPTR and demand calculation details instead of detailed proposals in terms of licenses and subsidies because of technical planning that took into account current license and subsidy information.

Planning issues such as Non-Motorised Transport (NMT) and transport for persons with disabilities and learner's transport did not receive adequate attention. This forms part of the

regulation that was put forward, to concentrate more on accessibility apposed to mobility issues. Available national rural transport strategy information was not consulted to get background of governments objectives to influence the planning process.

Freight information and private transport information was not readily available to enable the development of a comprehensive ITP. These information needs to be taken into account in the next ITP review.

4.4.4 Capacity and Roles and Responsibilities

The debate continues in this municipal area on the division of roles and responsibilities, powers and functions of the district and the local municipalities in relation to transport. No dedicated institutional structures are in place to deal with transport as a sector function.

Transport at municipal level is very much focusing on the road infrastructure function, with Public Transport facilities such as taxi and bus ranks that are recognised, but the management thereof that is still a grey area. Services in relation to taxis (operating licenses) and buses (bus subsidies) are not well defined in terms of management practices or how to take this forward.

The role that province is playing in terms of the provincial road network, the Operating License Board (OLB), law enforcement and as the caretaker of bus subsidies is recognised.

The capacity to deal with transport infrastructure including facilities, management systems and its position regarding transport services need to be clearly defined. The role of the province in municipal transport-planning and service provision need to be clearly defined to ensure that municipal planning through the ITP and Provincial planning by means of the PLTF are aligned and influence each other positively.

As this is the first ITP for uThungulu, the gaps in the initial transport plan need to be identified for review purposes. It was learned during the process that detailed planning of nodal and corridor studies for the area had to be done initially in order to inform better strategies in terms of public, private and freight transport. Research on and integration of provincial and national strategies to influence the planning process is important.

4.4.5 Funding

The transport planning and implementation processes will require significant funding to implement the list of projects identified in the ITP. The municipality's strategy on how to obtain resources to ensure sufficient funding needs to be clear. Firstly, the project list, motivation and funding resources required need to feed into the municipal IDP process for budget purposes. The seeking of MIG and other grants from sector departments and other external resources would rely on Chapters 9 and 10 of the Regulations/ITP document and need to be clearly defined to fit into the IDP and in business plans for application of grants.

The ITP did not address the issue of addressing the spatial dispensation of the past, but rather emphasised on the current problems of service. There is a need to develop a long-term approach for the transport system within and to adjacent municipalities, in order to make sure that the less privileged and spatial dispensation issues are addressed.

It is proposed that a summary of the ITP be prepared for Council, the MEC and sector departments in order to get a quick understanding of the transport issues and requirements for the uThungulu area.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The ITP was the first statutory Transport related plan developed for uThungulu while there were a number of issues, as highlighted in this document.

These should not detract from the achievement that uThungulu has now a planning document that addresses public transport and other transport related issues on which further studies can be based.

The OLS, RatPlan and ITP that were developed should be seen as the first and should be built on in future and further developed in subsequent planning cycles, taking the recommendations and improvement of the plan into account.