IMPACTS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE ON URBAN TRANSPORT POLICY IN ROME: AN UPDATE

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Abstract

In the late 1990s, innovation in the institutional arrangements boosted a new collaborative transport planning approach in the city of Rome. The creation of an integrated planning agency (STA) helped the transition from the level of theoretical and ideologically driven planning, traditionally anchored to the high volatility of the political arena, to the level of practical implementation and administrative stability. Today, after some 5 years of operation, such experience is producing significant results – including the long-awaited adoption and implementation of the New Master Plan and the consequent novelty of land use development around public transport nodes – and is ready to step forward to comply with the recent legislation reforming the organisation of local public transport systems.

The Context

Rome's metropolitan area, which includes the municipality itself plus 119 other small municipalities, has experienced in the last decade a significant suburban sprawl, with a growing share of population leaving the centre to live in the surrounding areas. The economic activities, predominately based on services, including transport, hotels, and public establishments, are generally concentrated within and around the historical centre, an area in which most government, leisure, and tourism activities take place.

This concentration of activities has resulted in an insufficiently developed radial transport system that has severely hampered the use of public transport. The metropolitan area of Rome has in fact shown, over the past three decades, a noticeable imbalance between the demand and the supply of mobility. In the last 35 years there has been a threefold leap in terms of kilometres travelled due to the increased length of trips and number of circulating vehicles (+ 650%). This growth has not been matched by a parallel development of the public transport system that has only recorded a 90% increase (in terms of kilometres travelled) during the same time period. Consequently, the public transport modal share, holding 56% of total motorised trips in 1964, has witnessed a dramatic decrease, and today is only accountable for 34% of motorised trips. Unfortunately it is the same fate for the walking mode, which has considerably declined following the reported rise of distances travelled.

This dominance of the private car is particularly difficult to manage given the urban fabric of Rome that was not designed to host the automobile. The roads are narrow, uneven, and do not form a grid pattern. Furthermore, the city lacks adequate ring roads so that even transiting across town often requires trips traversing the central areas. Not surprisingly, these conditions have resulted in high levels of congestion and pollution, particularly severe in a city with such a high concentration of artistic values and population.

Such unsustainable environment is the result of decades, mostly the 1960s and 1970s, and partly the 1980s, of irrational urban growth that was caused by the combination of several elements:

- economic boom;
- population increase;

- lack of organic planning;
- influence of the automotive industry;
- scarce environmental concern;
- lack of political stability.

With specific reference to urban planning, this article examines the twofold changes that have reshaped Rome's land use trends during the 1990s:

1. the **changing planning approach**, which has successfully helped Rome complete the transition from dysfunctional practices to integrated and co-operative land use and transport planning;
2. the **changing institutional setting**, which is currently adding the last pieces to the puzzle of Rome's planning organisation.

The Changing Planning Approach

Urban planning in Rome has traditionally been based upon a clear separation between the work of the land use and transport department. This, in conjunction with the state of isolation from the wider provincial and regional context in which municipal planning was confined, has led to the erratic urban development sketched above. In this sense, Rome's last Master Plan (PRG - Piano Regolatore Generale, 1962) is often quoted as having been responsible for the present car-friendly environment, in that it laid down the city's urban planning for the next four decades.

The Plan envisaged land use developments for a projected population of 5 million. However, the actual results did not live up to the expectations, rendering the termination of the urban highway program necessary when only 20% of the planned highways had been completed (as opposed to the development of 98% of the planned residential areas). The result was a monocentric city in which disjointed concentrations of residential areas sprung around the main road corridors, leaving low density voids in between. Consequently, the city has been deprived of the structural benefits induced by the development of a compact urban form along the principal rail/metro routes and is still very much dependent on car use.

Such incongruent line of action was further thrown off balance by the low population growth, which, by the year 1997, had only reached 2.8 million (therefore, a territory developed for 5 million people is today inhabited by less then 3 million).

In the early 1990s, the present city government (in office since 1993 and currently serving its third straight term) decided to break the isolation and rigidity in which the planning process had fallen. In particular, the administration sought to achieve three major goals:

1. integrate the municipal planning with that of the other territorial entities;
2. narrow down the separation between the strategic phase and the implementation phase;
3. incorporate mobility and environmental issues into the urban re-qualification plan.

In particular, the ultimate goal was to achieve the so-called “co-planning” together with the Province and the Region giving more power to the already existing Conference for Metropolitan Planning. By the intentions of the municipality, such an arrangement would guarantee a better appraisal of plan-dimensions (i.e. determination of real settlement capacities) and would allow a better definition of urban standards (including possible service concessions to private operators).

The starting point of such integrated land use and transport strategy can be traced back to the vision of the new Rome government, which was well expressed by Walter Tocci, then Vice-Major of the town and councillor with specific responsibility for mobility policy. This strategy was based on one crucial statement: the “iron cure”, the rail program sponsored in those years, was not only seen as a transport development programme, but also as way to frame the future land use developments along the main transport axis. The aim was to exploit the railway network capacity to foster polycentric development at the urban and metropolitan scale. On the other hand, the main goal of the transport policy was clearly individualised in the need to reduce congestion of the central area. This was to be pursued in the short term with transport regulatory measures that would make the use of the private car more expensive.

This common vision, introduced in the mid 1990s, generated an intense debate within the various planning boards of the city. Two similar but slightly different approaches divided the opinions:

- a transport driven approach presented in the study named "the Gates of Rome", which proposed the development of poles (gates) along Rome's beltway (GRA) at the main points of intersection with the railways, thus creating a sort of medieval crown surrounding the city and functioning as a market and modal exchange place;
- a land use sensitive approach, which was firstly described in the Plan of Certitudes and named "the Green Wheel" and that, while sympathising with the concept of gates, asserted the necessity to undertake the parallel development of all the urban zones within the GRA strategically located near transport axis intersections, which had historically been neglected by the old master plan and held the potential to act as access nodes to the public transport network.

The Transport and Mobility Department (Dipartimento VII) elaborated the former approach, while the Land Use Department (Dipartimento VI) designed for the latter.

The land use latter approach has overtime found consensus upon the consideration that it doesn't require new developments in fringe areas at the edge of the city (at the intersections with GRA). Instead it concentrates on filling the existing gaps in the inner urban areas, producing a more compact urban form. However, as will be illustrated in the next sections, the know how, technical and financial capabilities to implement an integrated land use and transport strategy are increasingly being concentrated in the new Mobility Planning Agency (STA), which is dominated by the transport culture.

Land Use Planning Results

In the light of these objectives, the first term (1993-1997) has seen the city government engaged in preparing the ground for the adoption of the long awaited new Master Plan.

Firstly, it worked towards the approval of a series of past due administrative and planning acts (i.e. zoning, local transport,

periphery re-qualification), which put an end to a situation of "suspended planning". Secondly, it presented a Poster-Plan outlining the administration's strategic goals: i) the *environmental system*, ii) the *mobility system*, and iii) the *settlement system*. Thirdly, it started a planning process that would eventually lead to the drafting of the new Master Plan. This phase has witnessed the adoption of the Plan of Certitudes (Piano delle Certezze) which represented the preparation of the Master Plan and articulated the city territory into three areas: i) the *open spaces*, ii) the *consolidated city*, and iii) the *transformation city*.

The second term (1997-2001) has seen the city work towards the design of the new Master Plan according to the principles of the subscribed co-planning approach. At the time of writing, the new Master Plan has been approved by the City Council and waits to be transferred into practice.

The three founding principles of the new Master Plan are:

1. The new **environmental system**. Building upon the Plan of Certitudes, the new Master Plan identifies an increased and more diffused portion of "open spaces" (which will further endow the park system) by extending the green areas within the *transformation city* and confirming the assets of the *historical city* and the *consolidated city*;
2. The **system of new centricities** (polycentric model), whereby the traditional monocentric structure, showing a pivotal multifunctional centre and a scattered monofunctional periphery, is turned into a polycentric system. The transformation city is exactly the area where the envisioned mixed-function, mobility, and environmental solutions will realise the sought new centricities, which in the future will interact with those of the historical and consolidated city in a system of "neighbouring centres". These are intended as transport, service and business poles capable of attracting customers and acting as inter-modal change locations. The underpinning idea is to create a number of versatile and compact nodes where people can park their cars, take the inbound public transportation, shop around and take advantage of the administrative services, with evident beneficial effects on the congested city centre;
3. The new **mobility system**, based upon the recognition that the city needs a more efficient and performing clean transport system

without reducing mobility. The pillars of this ambitious vision are: i) the integration between land use and transport development (i.e. localisation of services around public transport nodes, public transport network operating on high capacity rail and road corridors); ii) the re-equilibration between the public and private modes (i.e. leaner, faster, and more accessible public transport routes, more exchange nodes, more cycling and pedestrian routes); and iii) the improvement of the environmental conditions through reduction of acoustic and pollutant emissions (i.e. access restriction policies, more stringent norms).

The new Master Plan holds the additional merit of institutionalising several trademark elements that are still a novelty for the city:

- **planning integration**: the Plan is the result of the work of authorities at the different territorial levels. Region, Province, Municipality, Departments, and other relevant entities (i.e. Park Authority and others);
- **citizens' participation**: the complexity of the transformations envisaged by the Plan require the continuous verification of their compatibility with society at large. In this sense, citizens information and consultation has been placed atop the Plan's requirements;
- **transfer development rights** (perequazione): the Plan identified resorting to transfer development rights as a key instrument for the implementation of the future land use plans. As a matter of fact, this tool will be extensively employed in the course of action and has virtually replaced the compulsory purchase procedure (now enacted only in extraordinary situations);
- **compensations:** the Plan also identified the use of compensations as the other main tool to fulfil the requirements of the new scheme. The tool, which rewards land owners whose property is no longer considered "building area" despite the classification assigned by the old plans, together with transfer of development rights virtually extinguished the employment of expropriations (except in extraordinary cases).

Overview of Transport Planning Results

In order to achieve equilibrium between transport demand and supply the municipality has set a few clear goals:

1. reorganisation of the ancient road network to improve the circulation capacity;
2. guarantee proper accessibility to all city functions and vital centres;
3. discourage the individual mode of transportation.

To this end, the city government has passed the Urban Traffic General Plan (PGTU - Piano Generale del Traffico Urbano, 1999) to tackle the mounting problems of public transport, mobility and transport-related emission. The key elements of the PGTU are:

- update the road classification according the relative function (i.e. pedestrian, local traffic, main traffic);
- define transport demand wielding policies (i.e. controlled access zones, parking pricing, etc.).

In so doing, the administration has once again adopted a collaborative approach that brought the PGTU to be envisaged as an element of a broader plan comprehensive of the new Master Plan, the Integrated Mobility Programme (PRO.I.MO), the Urban Parking Plan (PUP) and the other local and regional plans.

The PGTU partitions the metropolitan area into four concentric areas in accordance with their modal repartition between public and private transport. The assumption is that such repartition is not constant but varies in function with the characteristics of the destination zone and the level of infrastructures; furthermore, the various city areas are unevenly served. Hence, the delineation of a model consisting in a central area and three concentric rings:

1. The **historical centre**: an area served almost exclusively by public transport, controlled and protected by restricted access zones (ZTL - Zona a Traffico Limitato) and parking pricing;
2. The **first ring**: an area bordering internally with the ZTL and externally with the railway ring. As it is densely populated and presents a great deal of business activity, the public transport mode should still prevail. In terms of regulations, parking pricing, new parking infrastructures and bus lanes should be adopted;
3. The **second ring**: an area presenting a rather low business density and high population density. Public and private transports are bound to cohabit. The model calls for the

introduction of public transport corridors linking this area with the previous two and the creation of interchange nodes;

4. The **third ring**: an area covering the rest of the urban settlement included within the outer highway ring borders (GRA). Business and residential density is low and public transport does not represent a good alternative to private modes. Suggested regulations include interchange nodes and measures promoting tangential trips.

To implement the illustrated planning framework, the administration has been heavily investing in:

- a public transport investment program aiming at exploiting the underused rail capacity with the opening of new metropolitan surface and underground lines, and the realisation of new tram lines (the “iron cure”);
- a program aimed at providing the city with a capillary system of parking spaces. The latter will support and complement the enforcement in 1996 of the ZTL in the historical centre. According to the PUP, Rome will be endowed with additional 50,000 parking units built in 510 different locations.

The massive program, partly financed by private investments, fits into the broader scheme calling for the creation of an inter-modal exchange system as most of the new units will be located in proximity of metro/light rail stations and market places.

Another practical result of the newly achieved co-ordination is the production of the Integrated Mobility Plan (PRO.I.MO - Programma Integrato della Mobilità, 2000). In fact, amid a persistent temporal divide keeping apart the presentation of the new Master Plan (Master Plan proposal in 1999, final document in 2002), STA has been able to intensify the consultation pace between its technical offices. This made it possible to integrate the PRO.I.MO approach and modelling forecasts with the land use prospects traced by the Master Plan and vice-versa. In this way, the final draft of the Master Plan has already been harmonised with the goals of the city’s Integrated Mobility Plan.

PROIMO sets priorities and timescale of the city transport measures, defining functions and structure of the public transport network, identifying interchange nodes and key accessibility locations within

the wider context of the metropolitan area. It maintains the foundation of the present transport policy, the ZTL, the pay parking system, and the interchange parking nodes at Metro terminus stations, and focuses on the three main city transport networks:

- the Metro system, which represents the backbone of the city transport system and which is projected to encompass 4 lines;
- the urban light rail system (the FR lines, formerly FM lines), which serves the metropolitan areas and intersects the Metro system de-facto creating a peripheral elongation of the Metro itself;
- the tram system, which has a twofold function: i) fast, frequent, and high capacity lines serving the greater transport arteries outside of the city centre, with numerous interchange nodes with the Metro; ii) low impact, low speed lines serving the historical centre;

PRO.I.MO represents an innovation also in that it anticipated the contents of the Urban Mobility Plan (PUM – Piano Urbano della Mobilità), which only recently has been instituted and rendered mandatory by the national government.

The Changing Institutional Setting

In the early 1990s, the integrated, collaborative planning approach advocated by the city administration clashed with an institutional setting that did not facilitate the desired co-planning process.

Land use and transport planning in Rome was the result of the involvement of a variety of institutions which were responsible according to the territorial administrative structure of the country. They are listed below.

Municipality of Rome:

- Department VI, Land Use Policies: responsible for land use planning and legal regulation of the administrative territory of Rome;
- Department VII, Transport and Mobility Policies: responsible for public transport policies and general mobility regulation.

Province of Rome:

- Responsible for the Provincial Territorial Co-ordination Plan.

Region of Lazio:

- Responsible for regional planning (Quadro Territoriale di Riferimento).

The real challenge was thence to make all these parties communicate and co-ordinate during the different planning phases. A number of initiatives, granted by mechanisms introduced by recent national laws, were initially implemented to initiate forms of co-ordination. In particular, the way from the formulation of the integrated land use and transport strategy to action and implementation was paved by the following crucial events:

- 1994: the Municipality of Rome, County of Rome, Region of Lazio and FS (National Railways) undersigned a “Program Agreement”. The aim of the agreement was to co-ordinate the actions of the different participants to open new metropolitan rail services and renovation of the main railways stations;
- 1995: the Municipality of Rome, the County of Rome and the Region of Lazio signed an “Agreement” for the establishment of a joint metropolitan planning office (co-planning);

However, the single act that turned around the planning arena was the 1995 creation of STA S.p.A. (Società Trasporti Automobilistici), entrusted to be the Mobility Agency of the City of Rome. STA, a private company owned by the municipality of Rome was established through a deliberation of the City Council.

Rome's Mobility Agency

The institution of STA was in line with the trend initiated back in the early nineties (in compliance with Law 142/90) aiming at decentralising relevant responsibilities in order to increase service quality and lower production costs. However it has to be noted that an integration-seeking initiative as endeavoured by the City of Rome was not part of a general movement based on a national trend, rather the forerunning initiative of the city administration. The major innovation resided in the full entrepreneurial autonomy granted to STA, while the city administration retained the role of political guidance and control over the objectives and instruments used by the mobility agency.

The competencies assigned to STA can be defined as follows:

- **service provision**: STA, with the management, is responsible for a wide spectrum of services, among them: i) 50.000 off-street parking places city wide, ii) 10.000 parking spaces dislocated in 26 exchange nodes, iii) system of traffic lights and street signals, iv) vehicle towing, and v) ZTL access permits issuing;
- **mobility planning**: mobility planning and regulation (i.e. development of traffic monitoring tools, development of traffic measures, parking infrastructures, etc.);
- **mobility management**: it involves building infrastructure and operating the instruments necessary for an effective implementation of the measures of mobility regulation. A noteworthy example is the ITS Integrated System (Sistema Telematico Integrato), which through a state of the art Control Centre supervises the various mobility sub-systems: traffic light system, VMS (variable message signs) system, automatic ZTL access gates, mobility monitoring video system, and data acquisition and processing centre.

In addition, STA has been endowed with a specific land use planning unit, Plans for Rome (Servizio Piani per Roma) delegated with the task of researching and designing for the new City Master Plan. Among the wide range of land use activities related to the preliminary studies for the Master Plan, this unit will develop a detailed land use database and a GIS system. At the same time STA has been acquiring increasing exposure to its strategic interest areas by undertaking a series of European and national projects. The goal is that of furthering expertise and knowledge of innovative practices and promoting the visibility of its initiatives.

Despite the fact that in the past the development of an effective integration between land use and transport planning in Rome has encountered barriers of different nature (eminently political and cultural), STA has today effectively become, at least in principle, a rare case of integrated land use and transport planning. It is nevertheless safe to argue that a strong political resistance has hampered the process of conjugating the two planning powers within one single agency. A long history of rigidly independent and badly communicating planning activity contributed to creating a culture that could not be overcome without going through serious debate. Recent personal interviews with managers from both sides revealed an increasing tendency to exchange information and foster co-planning activities. However, the process has been slow to take off due to the initial political resistance to centralise a great deal of planning power in one single agency and the inevitable difficulties encountered by STA itself in setting up an efficient consultation mechanism and continuous flow of information.

One of the difficulties in achieving co-ordination within STA has also been in part due to the organic growth of both employees and responsibilities. In 1997, STA began with only a handful of employees and at the end of 1999 boasts approximately 200 employees in a variety of activities. This growth has been difficult to manage within the structure, causing small independent working areas with few structured exchanges of ideas or developments. Most collaboration or exchanges were either initiated at the director level for selected objectives or very informally between technicians. The management structure at STA is now attempting to foster internal synergies, through established inter-area working groups and informative meetings on topic areas. The goal being to prevent the replication of

those very non co-ordinated dynamics that the establishment of STA sought to overcome.

In any case, this new collaborative form is today producing its effects (namely the preparatory study for the new Master Plan, delegated by the Land Use Policy Department, and PRO.I.MO, delegated by the Mobility and Transport Policy Department).

The Mobility Agency's Institutional Counterparts

As already pointed out, STA is a direct emanation of the City of Rome and officially the city's mobility agency. In this vein, STA operates in contact with a variety of other municipal institutions with whom occasional conflicts have given the frail boundaries between their respective spheres of responsibilities. These actors are:

- **Land Use Policy Department** and **Mobility and Transport Policy Department**: these departments define the land use and transport planning guidelines and concur in the actual planning. Whenever a study is delegated to STA (i.e. preliminary analysis for the Master Plan), the departments retain the right of final approval;
- **ATAC**: the (former) municipal public transport authority, whose activities bear great impacts on those of STA. The two companies are in a position of equilibrium and need to promote close co-operation;
- **Municipal Police**: being in charge of traffic and parking regulation, they are inherently a key variable for the successful outcome of the STA's initiatives (and vice-versa).

The following table offers a glimpse of the framework of decision-making supervising the planning in Rome. The table represents the actual power arrangement through the classical division of hierarchical levels of planning and control activities: strategic, tactical and operational level.

Strategic Level	**STA** activities at the strategic level include: ▪ definition and implementation of the City Mobility Plan; ▪ planning and co-ordination of Intelligent Transport System (ITS) projects which support mobility management; ▪ organisation of the traffic light system, paid on-street parking and public parking structures (including park & ride facilities); ▪ development and promotion of integrated mobility policies; ▪ programming interventions for the revitalisation of sections of the urban area; and

	▪ preliminary analysis for the new Master Plan. The STA's planning activity intersects the responsibilities of **ATAC** and of the **Municipal Police**.
Tactical Level	This level requires an intense degree of co-operation, but actually the co-ordination among the various powers still appears insufficient. The identification of fares, routes, timetables, etc., and the planning of street, parking, and traffic light networks, calls for the development of joint programs, respectively with the **ATAC** and the **Municipal Police**.
Operational Level	**STA** usually maintains the direct operation of its activities although it sometimes contracts them out (i.e. towing service). There is a clear need for tight co-ordination with the daily operations of the **Municipal Police** (something that to date has been difficult to achieve).

The building of smooth and regular relationships with several actors of the urban arena is probably the most important factor of success for the STA strategies. The following is a short description of the issues at stake, with reference to the most important external actors.

Municipal Police

One of the most controversial issues which is currently spurring debate in the city, is the role of the "auxiliary" police, instituted and controlled by STA to enforce the extensive pay parking system enacted over the last few years. The inflamed debate involves STA on the one side, and the municipal police on the other. The object of content can be summarised as follows:

- STA manages 26 off-street park-and-ride areas (soon to be expanded to 34), which represent a primary source of revenue for the STA's administrative and research activities (as determined by the city administration). In 1998, STA hired and trained a number of individuals to enforce the pay parking regulations, and has contracted out the towing service to private companies. The competencies assigned to the "auxiliary" police (now with a staff of 220 for the control of pay parking places, and 250 for the control of public transport reserved lanes) do not include any traffic patrolling duties, which are retained by the municipal police;
- the main source of friction resides in the claim that the auxiliary police are not legally entitled to perform any parking enforcement, as they are not public authorities. Opponents of the use of auxiliary police argue that these individuals should only monitor the parking places and delegate the actual fining to a municipal officer. The consequence being that parking tickets issued by these police are not binding. Conversely, STA claims that the only effective way of enforcing the pay parking system is

to organise a specific task force to ensure that violations are enforced. The issue, which spurred a number of civil law suits, has today died down after the national government has passed in 1999 and 2000 (Art. 68, Legge Finanziaria, 2000) a special provision granting the auxiliary police the authority to write tickets.

On a more operational level, STA and the municipal police are realising significant synergies in terms of traffic information. Both the STA and the municipal police are developing control centres and are in the process of defining how to co-operate. The current understanding is that this co-operation will take place on a real-time continuous level.

Mobility and Transport Policy Department

The Department VII of the City of Rome is directly involved in the development of STA. Many of the original STA directors were employed in the City of Rome administration prior to the creation of STA. The decision to create STA was based on the idea of developing a technical arm of the city of Rome but with the flexibility and competence of a private body. In this way, STA can provide technical engineering services, management of services (such as park and ride lots) and interface with operational private companies responsible for providing services or work. These responsibilities support the ultimate goal of the transportation department in making policy decisions. Although these policy decisions might be suggested by STA based upon its programming and planning activities or management of services, ultimately, the administration makes all the final decisions. Similarly, the STA's use of budget based upon services (such as parking) is conducted in co-operation with the City administration. Therefore, the relationship with the department is basically quite good. However, the transition was not without some difficult moments as some administration staff felt that STA was taking away their "raison d'être". These difficulties seem to have been overcome and now extensive collaboration exists both formally and informally.

Land Use Policy Department

By municipal decree, STA, through its section "Plans for Rome", has been contracted out by the Land Use Department to undertake a preliminary study that will eventually constitute the core of the new city Master Plan. During the preparation of the Master Plan, STA and the Land Use Department have been in constant contact, thus

producing a joint effort in the definition and appraisal of the planning measures contained therein.

ATAC

The relationship between ATAC and STA has been very complicated since the beginning. In other Italian cities, the public transportation companies often have responsibility for other mobility activities (not just bus or metro related). Therefore, the institutional relationships between the city administration and two mobility-related agencies are not straightforward. For a while, the two companies' synergies were supposed to be facilitated by the creation of "one" president, who was responsible for both companies. However, this organisational relationship has since changed and now each agency has its own organisational structure with the formal mandate to collaborate. This collaboration is further guaranteed by their co-involvement in both local projects (such as the development of the mobility plan for the city of Rome) and in EU projects (CAPITALS, CAPITALS PLUS, PROGRESS, MIRACLES, etc.).

Today, in the light of the current reform of local public transport system, the relationship between STA and ATAC is going to be redesigned. The next section examines the details of the latest institutional changes.

Overview of Recent Institutional Developments

Rome's local public transport (LPT) system has been reformed in 1997 by National Law 422/1997 and locally in 1998 by the relative receiving Lazio Regional Law 30/1998. While the right of initiating LPT services (right of initiative) remained authority based, the main change concerned the transition from a monopolistic LPT management to a system of public tendering procedures.

Prior to the reform, LPT operations were run in concession regimes (National Law 142/1990) at the initiative of the local authority, namely the Municipality of Rome. The municipal exclusive operator, ATAC, operated in concession tram and bus services, while ACOTRAL, a consortium owned by the Municipality of Rome and other regional authorities, operated in concession metro and light-rail services jointly with regional bus services. In the early 1990s, the ACOTRAL consortium became COTRAL, a joint effort of the five

regional Provinces, which was awarded via direct concession the operation of all sub-urban road transport service along with Rome's two metro lines and three sub-urban light-rail lines. The two companies merged in 1993 and formed the ATAC/COTRAL group, which produced urban bus/tram services (ATAC), and metro, sub-urban rail, and regional bus services (COTRAL).

With relation to the decision making process, the Region was to set the minimum LPT tariffs and the Municipality was to accordingly adopt urban service tariffs, while lines, routes, and timetables were to be defined in the concession act. However, in Rome the two monopolistic operators, ATAC and COTRAL, controlled most of the decision making, with the exception of strategic targets and social goals that were defined by the Municipality of Rome. The latter was also in charge of the wider urban mobility planning, although this was not yet integrated with LPT planning. The Lazio Region, together with the other local entities, public and private operators, and stakeholders associations, were annually engaged in the monitoring of: the regional and local LPT real costs, the LPT regularity and efficiency; and the LPT operational and economic coefficients. Regional subsidies were remitted upon reporting of figures such as the estimated service budget, effective and standardised costs for the previous year, organisational measures, estimated service timetable, LPT costs for the previous year.

The 1997 legal and organisational reform stemmed from the admission that the national LPT arrangement was unsustainable and was leading to the failure of the system. Decades of frail legislation and poor management had created a system based upon a mix of service direct management and concessions, in which the evident lack of market competition and financial liability was leading the LPT system to a state of financial disorder. In response, the national reform sought to attain a few clear objectives:

- improve the offer of local public services and prepare the essential conditions to ensure efficiency at low cost while maintaining the universal and regular character of the performance and pursuing adequate qualitative and quantitative standards;
- strengthen the role of local authorities concerning LPT planning, control, and regulation;

- promote an LPT market based upon competition and the principles of cost-effectiveness, transparency, and equity, through the establishment of tendering procedures in conformity with the European and national legislation on public bids;
- promote the involvement of private capital for infrastructure investments.

The adoption of the reforming law has meant a radical re-design of Rome's LPT system. The old LPT operator, ATAC, has been transformed into two shareholding companies:

- TRAMBUS S.p.A., a transport operator partly owned by private capital, which will start bidding for LPT services as of 2003 (when tendering will effectively be mandatory);
- ATAC S.p.A., the LPT system planning, regulating, and monitoring agency. The company will thus be responsible for the organisation and management of the local tendering procedures.

Similarly, COTRAL was transformed into two shareholding companies:

- MET.RO S.p.A., the Metro and urban light-rail service operator;
- COTRAL S.p.A., the regional bus lines operator.

The reformed LPT system has inevitably had consequences for STA. The new, enhanced planning and regulating role of ATAC shows in fact considerable overlaps with that currently held by the Mobility Agency (with the exclusion of LPT operations).

After years of operation, today the STA has consolidated its position and credibility in the municipal institutional arena. It has: i) a clear mission, the improvement of mobility and accordingly the quality of life; ii) its own cash flow, mainly coming from parking charges; iii) a staff that has overtime learned to appreciate and share a common mission and goals; and iv) a recognised visibility at the European level.

These considerations acquire particular relevance in view of the proposed incorporation of STA into ATAC. It is crucial that such expertise and cultural background be preserved and conveyed into the new unified mobility agency. To this end, the year 2002/3 is going

to be extremely important in that it will shape the future of LPT and planning in Rome. In particular:

- ATAC, TRAMBUS, MET.RO, and COTRAL will be involved in the definition of: i) staff turnover and related training activities; ii) internal organisational issues; and iii) mutual relationships;
- STA will have to find the most suitable position in the new organisational arrangement. At present, the prevailing perception is that STA should become an internal division of ATAC and will continue to perform the current activities of integrated planning and service management.

Conclusions

1. The creation of an integrated planning agency has sought to help movement from the level of theoretical and ideologically driven planning – which usually suffers from the high volatility of political debates – to the level of practical implementation and administrative stability. Because the urban strategies are now a company mission, it is possible to establish a virtuous circle between improvement of mobility in the urban area (the STA main goal) and financial viability of STA itself. This will further aid consolidation of the initial strategy with new and growing investment in public transport, transport management systems etc. When this virtuous circle is established and, above all, clearly perceived by the citizens, the company activity and mission should be more deeply shared by the layman and its actions approved on grounds relatively independent from political ideologies and factions which compete in the municipal elections. In this way a basic condition for any sustainable urban strategy – its durability on a sufficient span of time – can be achieved and the urban land use and transport strategy may become a community value;
2. The experience of the STA shows that a mere physical proximity of a city's land use and transport-planning bodies is not enough to achieve the desired degree of integration. Such an arrangement must be further supported by a set of internal policies tending to the acquisition of a "company mentality" based upon a common vision, mutual co-operation, and a flow of constant communication.

3. Overtime, this heritage has been consolidated within STA. The challenge lies today in the capacity to instill such trademark in the proposed new Mobility Agency (ATAC-STA merger);
4. As underlined by the New Master Plan, communication with and participation of citizens is of the most importance. This has to be improved through better relationships with the local and national media, neighbourhood associations and interest groups. Citizens' attention is generally (and understandably) turned onto the most visible policies, i.e. parking control and car towing. The next challenge would be to also increase sensitivity towards wider land use and transport planning/regulation issues, which bear an impact on the city's quality of mobility and life at large.

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