



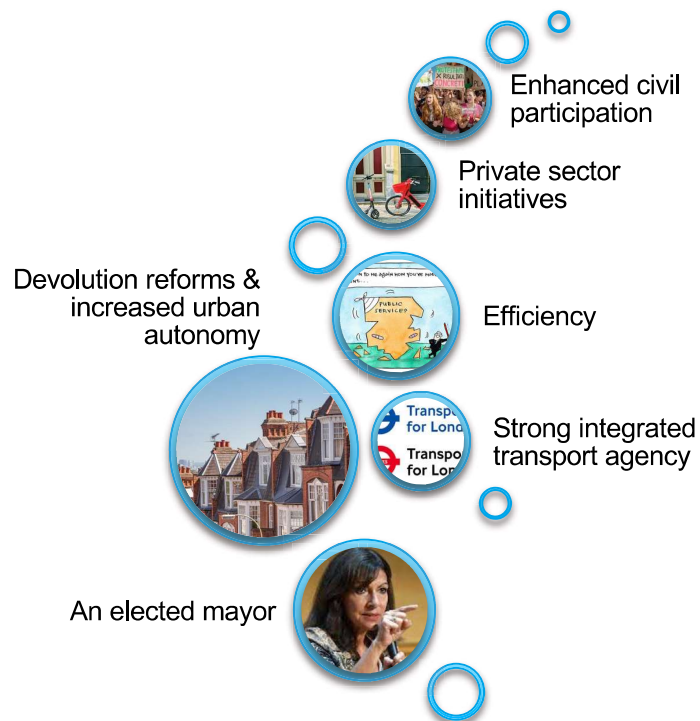
Lesson 1: Governance capacity building to support the creation of cities' 'transition pathways'



1

**Some definitions, key
concepts and historical
background**

Let's begin with a definition of governance in the context of urban mobility:

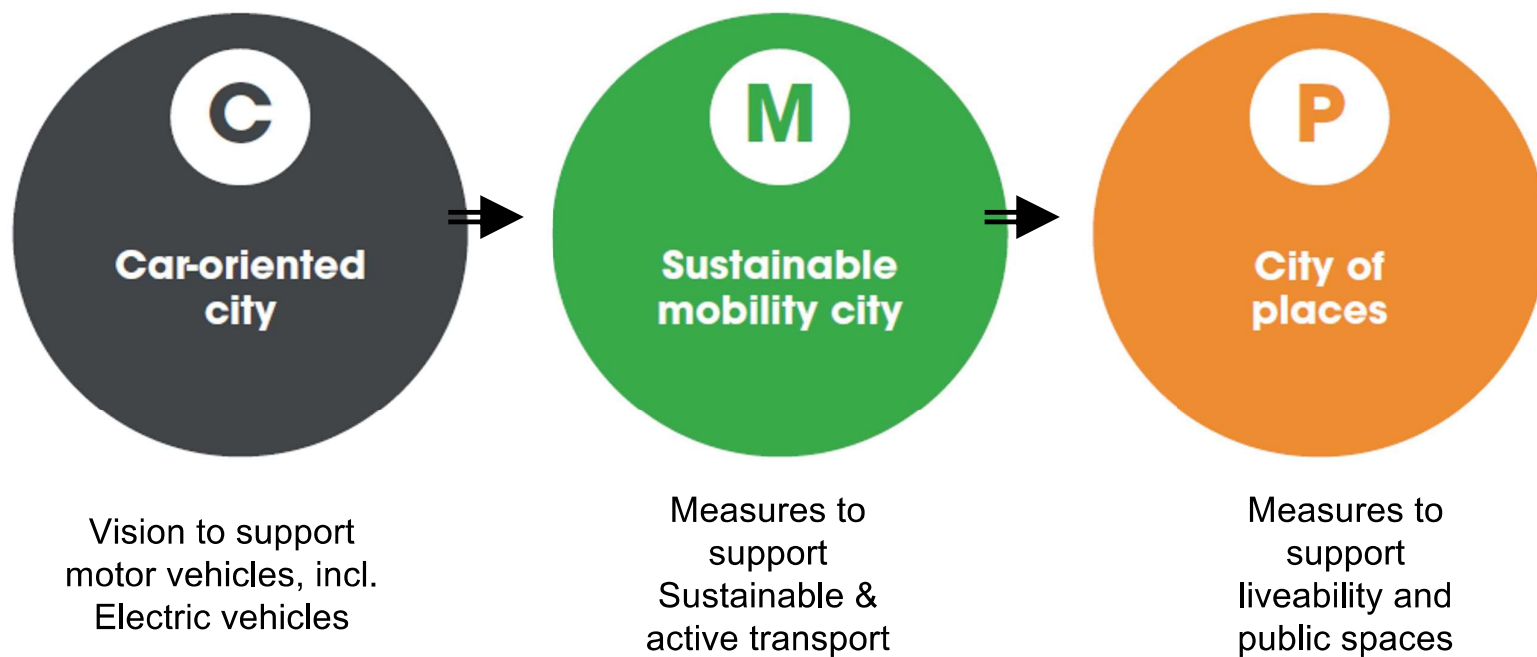


- A number of **structures and processes** through which public authorities seek to govern urban mobility – to set priorities, select preferred modes of intervention, assess results.
- **A working definition:**
 - “A process of coordinating actors, social groups and institutions to attain clear goals that are discussed and defined collectively in fragmented, uncertain environments” (Le Galès, 1998, p. 495).
- **What does it mean for cities in Europe?**

The active role of cities in promoting an ambitious urban mobility agenda in their respective national settings and at EU level:

- A large number of European cities have a long history of sustainable urban mobility planning (since the 1990s) (Banister, 2005; Banister & Hickman 2015), and have shifted attention towards enhanced liveability (Anciaes, Jones, 2020).
- Hundreds of them have adopted a SUMP or a similar mobility plan since it was introduced by the EU Commission in 2013 ([SUMP-UP project, 2018](#)), including a growing number of small & medium size cities.
- Cities and networks of cities (Eurocities, Polis, ICLEI Europe, etc.) actively push for an ambitious urban agenda in mobility at the EU level (Halpern, Ray, 2022, [findings from MORE project](#))
- Some 100 cities have recently been selected under the European Commission smart and carbon neutral cities mission, to become carbon neutral by 2030

City visions change over time, with a similar trend (Findings from the H2020 CREATE project):



@ adapted from the H2020 CREATE Project, Jones 2018

Yet in doing so, city governments face a number of challenges:

- City governments in Europe operate in a rapidly changing institutional, organizational, political and regulatory settings:
 - **State transformation**: devolution or regionalization reforms in a number of countries in Europe (and beyond, UCLG, 2017).
 - Deregulation and privatization reforms: growing **role of the private sector** in transport and mobility.
 - Institutional reforms at city level to address social demands for **enhanced participation** in decision-making and implementation.
 - Regular **changes in the political outlook** – as expected in any democratic systems.
- As a result:
 - **Enhanced degrees of local autonomy** at city level to prioritize what problems require attention and action.
 - **But in a context of multi-level governance** (Peters and Pierre, 2012), city governments compete or cooperate with other levels of governments to set priorities and select a preferred course for action.

2

**A governance perspective
on long-term transition
planning: what are we
looking at?**

A governance perspective on long-term transition planning:

- **Context specific transition pathways** - Capacities to reconcile diverging interests and foster change through:
 1. **Context** where the policy takes place – Spatial, economic, technological, cultural etc. and their impact on transport systems
 2. The **type of problem** it tries to solve – Motivations to act, a combination of triggers & drivers
 3. Levels of **institutional autonomy** – to set priorities, allocate resources and evaluate results.
 4. What **results** it achieves in terms of transformative change over time

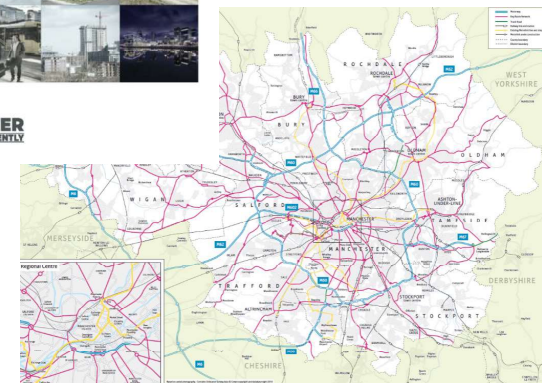
➤ Let's go through each point successively.

1. Context in which long-term transition planning takes place:

- A city's long-term vision for sustainable mobility planning is strongly rooted in its spatial, economic, social features.
- In other words, **it is context specific**.
 - Is there a dominant industry? Ex. Tourism, petrochemicals, logistics.
 - To what extent are urban and mobility goals and policies aligned with one another? Ex. Urban sprawl, Green belt to be protected, etc.
 - What is the current modal split, and are there significant differences according to age, gender, ethnic groups, income, etc.
 - Are there some major geographical features that characterize a city's location? Ex. Island / mountain.



GREATER MANCHESTER
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY



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When developing the « Places for everyone » joint development plan in 2020-2021, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and 9 out of 10 districts focused on ways of protecting the Green Belt by preventing unplanned developments.

2. Motivations to act: the role of external triggers

- ❖ A number of motivations may account for cities to develop a sustainable urban mobility agenda.
- ❖ This includes a range of so-called triggers, such as:
 - Road traffic externalities - ex. Congestion, safety
 - Economic growth and enhanced accessibility - ex. Oil prices, maintain competitiveness of the local industry or a strategic infrastructure
 - Spatial growth, urban planning and housing demand - ex. Unplanned developments outside the urban core / brownfields developments.
 - Climate change, environmental protection and health - ex. Air quality, COVID-19 pandemic, etc.
- !/? Yet such external pressure may not always lead to change within the mobility sector.

Drivers to support sustainable urban mobility transitions : what are they ?

- ❖ In order to enable change, specific drivers contribute to shaping that is, enabling or constraining, policy formulation.
- ❖ Most commonly identified drivers to unlock sustainable transition pathway transitions include:
 - Change in the regulatory transport framework (national / regional level) - ex. Speed limit can be reduced to 20 km/h on a selected number of streets
 - Organizational and administrative reforms - ex. Creation of an integrated transport authority or a regional transport authority
 - Political change - ex. Strong political leadership to speed up carbon zero ambition
 - Partnership to support joint actions with key stakeholders - ex. Business actors or NGOs
- !/? Some of these drivers may not always operate as enabling factors, but they could also constitute a major barrier. The most typical example is political change.

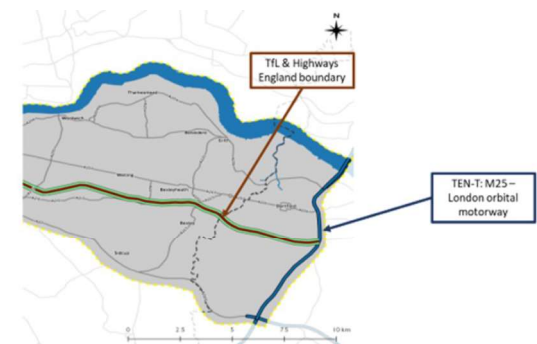
3. Levels of institutional autonomy: Governance Structures

- In order to improve their ability to govern their transition pathways, city governments may try to transform their governance structures as well as their governance processes (Pierre and Peters, 2018)

Governance structures:

This refers to the institutional and the organizational framework in which sustainable mobility goals are set in terms of rules, procedures, roles and the division of responsibilities within the whole decision-making process.

In practice, institutional and organizational capacity in transport & mobility are often divided between national, regional and city governments, to which one can add some significant differences between differences modes.



Ex. Shared authority and ownership over the urban road network : administrative boundary between Highways England & Transport for London

Levels of institutional autonomy: Governance Processes

Governance processes

This refers to the ability to overcome barriers stemming from governance structures and/or changes in the environment in order to draw on additional support.

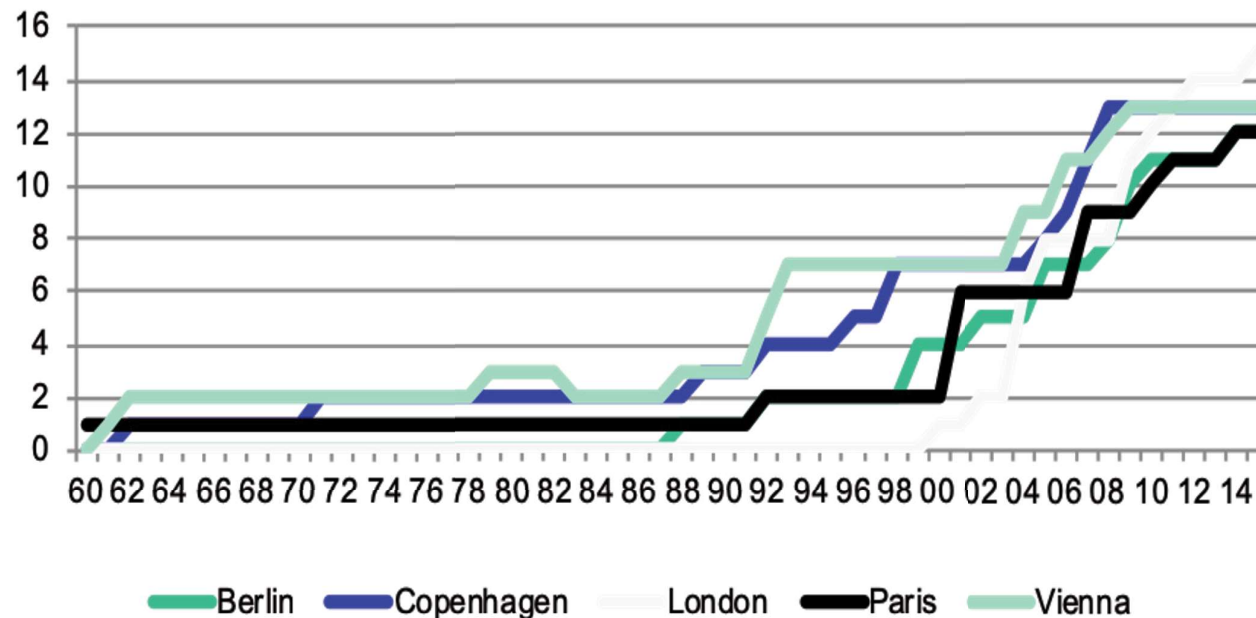
In practice, and due to the increasing involvement of non state actors in governance – businesses, civil society organizations, unions, etc. – city governments can seek to achieve public purposes by forging political alliances, developing partnerships with stakeholders within and beyond the public sector, and challenging other levels of government through litigation.



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Ex. In the early days of setting its sustainable mobility agenda, the City of Paris overcame financial barriers by setting a public private partnership with JC Decaux to develop the Velib system and institutional barriers by experimenting with a seasonal ban alongside the Seine River Bank.

4. Transformative change in a city's transport and mobility governance takes place over time and is cumulative (Findings from the H2020 CREATE project):



Since the late 1980s, a **cumulative process of capacity building in transport** by which :

- A change in governance (structures and processes) and in policy (content and resources)

This, in turn, accounts for transformative change, i.e. a shift away from the car oriented city towards a city of places.

Source: Halpern, Persico (2018), CREATE project.

3

To conclude Lesson 1

**“Learn from the past in order to prepare for the future”
Laurie Pickup, International Director @Vectos (part of SRL),
H2020 CREATE Project.**

Two puzzles to be addressed during Lesson 2:

- Is such a cumulative process also taking place beyond capital cities in Western Europe?
- What are the governance arrangements needed to produce & support context-specific pathways towards carbon neutral city vision?



**Before that, complete
assignment 1**