Scale, Territory, and the Organisation of the State in Transport Planning in Melbourne, Australia, and Toronto, Canada

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Abstract: Transport planning is the set of state-led practices that seek to improve (using) mobility, with reference to an idealised future imaginary. A feature of these imaginations is how key actors delimit their understanding of neighbourhood, district, city, metropolis, or region according to predetermined boundaries, thus shaping the range of actions available to them. In this research, I characterise how scale is deployed in practices of transport planning, with a focus on the Melbourne (Australia) and Toronto (Canada) urban regions between 2000 and 2015. Using a framework developed from the post-Foucauldian governmentality literature, I draw upon core and ancillary transport planning documents, and semi-structured interviews with key planning actors, from each of the urban regions. The findings demonstrate how scale and territory are actively wielded in each city-region, forming a core feature of the arts of government of transport planning. Territory is a precondition of other features of the arts of government of planning, enabling techniques of forecasting and the construction of future imaginaries through the setting of boundaries around their analyses, and it works to influence and shape electoral rationalities, as decision-making in each city-region is conducted with reference to multiple political boundaries. Finally, in reshaping and extending the boundaries of the city-region, transport planning is also an act of rescaling, which may have broader socio-political implications. Transportation needs transformation, and in furthering our understanding of scale as a technology of power, this work can provide the new thinking spaces needed to face incipient social and environmental transformations.

Key words: transport; governmentality; planning; governance; territory

Introduction
In the context of a rapidly heating planet and uncertain social and technological futures, understanding the knowledge structures in which urban transport plans are produced is vital. The urban transport sector is one of the chief sources of greenhouse gas emissions, and the structure of transport networks is central to the ability to access the city. The last twenty years have seen changes in how the Melbourne region and the Toronto region imagine themselves in terms of their geographies and scale. Victoria’s The Victorian Transport Plan and Ontario’s The Big Move each presented a vision of the future of a city-region reshaped – Melbourne by addressing an increasingly prominent east-west divide, and Toronto along an increasingly prominent local-regional divide. Each of these regions demonstrate how scale is used in government to understand and produce urban transport futures. In this paper, I explore how planners of urban transport in each of these regions understood, wielded, and attempted to reshape their scalar geographies, and in doing so, how reorganisation of apparatuses of the state assisted or hindered this reshaping.

I first present an overview of the theoretical and methodological approach used in this study, which is informed by the post-Foucauldian governmentality's literature. Following this, I discuss the history and development of geographical scale in urban transport plans in both the Melbourne and Toronto regions.

Theoretical and Methodological Approach
This paper is a product of a broader research project exploring the arts of government of urban transport planning in the urbanised regions surrounding Melbourne, Australia, and Toronto, Canada. I use a framework developed from the post-Foucauldian governmentality literature, which seeks to characterise the forms of knowledge, technology, rationality, and subject formation, that enable and produce the regulation and structuring of society. I use thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with transport planners and an array of transport planning documents from each region.

There are numerous fronts on which Melbourne and Toronto are both comparable and also entirely different. At a superficial level, each city is on a large body of water, has an industrial past but is increasingly oriented towards the globalised service sector, and has an extensive legacy tram/streetcar network. Melbourne was selected as a case study site because it still orients its transport planning towards car dependence, whereas Toronto has historically been held up as an exemplar city for the provision of sustainable transport in relatively low-density cities (Mees, 1996, 2010). Despite quite car-oriented suburbs, there is nonetheless a concerted effort at the local and provincial level to change
direction. At the time of writing, Melbourne is continuing to build out a motorway network first planned in 1969 by constructing the 5km West Gate Tunnel, the 9km Mordialloc Freeway extension, the 25km North East Link, including expanding the Eastern Freeway to 22 lanes wide at some points, alongside an extensive network of new and upgraded suburban arterial roads. The Toronto region is upgrading most of their commuter network to 15-minute all-day service, is finishing the construction of the 19km Eglinton light rail, and is about to start construction of the 11km Finch West LRT, the 18km Hurontario LRT, and the 13km Hamilton LRT, and another 62 proposed transit projects across the Toronto region.

While there are differences between Australia and Canada, there are some similarities in governance frameworks due to a similar history of British colonialism, leading to similar organisation of the state. Both Australia and Canada are federal states that have limited involvement in urban transport planning. Both Victoria and Ontario are constituted sub-national entities with direct, day-to-day involvement in urban transport planning, and in both instances, local government is effectively an administrative extension of the sub-national entity, subject to the relevant legislations, and importantly, can be reorganised if the sub-national entity wishes to. While there are differences in the roles and geographical size of local government areas in each case, they are nonetheless comparable enough to consider in tandem.

There is an extensive body of literature that discusses the governance of urban transport planning. Of particular interest to this study are post-structuralist works that seek to tease out how practice/practitioners understand and are enmeshed within the worlds around them. Deploying Hajer’s (1995) conceptualisation of path dependence and institutional storylines, Carey Curtis, Nicholas Low, Brendan Gleeson, and others (Gleeson et al., 2003, Low et al., 2003, Low and Astle, 2009, Curtis and Low, 2012), demonstrate how these storylines in transport planning limit the available courses of action to practitioners and facilitate a practice that is “fixated on road building” (Low et al., 2003, p. 109). Alongside this is the observation that while people act rationally, there are multiple, competing rationalities, and that “often these rationalities inhibit innovative policy thinking” (Low et al., 2005, p. 392).

This research and paper draw on the related, but distinct, post-Foucauldian governmentality (McKee, 2009) literature to inform its methods and analysis. Where Hajer (1995) drew on notions of Foucauldian discourse analysis in their characterisation of environmental discourse politics, this research uses an approach with a stronger focus on government as a mode of power and has a more direct engagement with the role of actors in shaping their governable worlds. This approach uses a socially productive and relational conception of government as a power, which is “any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge that seeks to shape conduct” (Dean, 2010, p. 18). While chiefly the intent of this in Foucault’s earlier works was to decentre the role of the state, it also characterises the state as being multiple and not-necessarily internally coherent. It is a set of subjects with historically particular forms (Miller and Rose, 1990). The specific concern in this paper and research is in the arts of government of urban transport planning, which can be observed by illustrating the forms of knowledge, technology, rationality, and subjectivity that intersect in practices of government (Dean, 2010).

These arts of government, while not necessarily directly observable, can be inferred through documenting the key forms of knowledge, technology, rationality, and subject formation in practices that seek to regulate social behaviours. The approach for this research and paper was operationalised by Sturup (2010), who applied a post-Foucauldian governmentality approach to the study of three transport megaprojects in Australia. Drawing on this approach, I conducted semi-structured interviews with key actors in urban transport planning in Melbourne (17) and Toronto (27), however only selected interviews are included in this analysis. More interviews were required in Toronto for further contextualisation. Interviewees were asked to share their experiences of change and continuity in their practice of or interface with urban transport planning. A wide range of subjectivities for “urban transport planner” was accepted, as there is diversity in the practice of plan-making in terms of disciplinary background (i.e. very few planners were trained as planners) and employment and experience (i.e. local government planner vs travel demand modeller vs economist, etc). This project also includes a selection of core and ancillary urban transport (and land-use) plans. The starting point for document collation in each city-region was The Victorian Transport Plan and The Big Move in Melbourne and Toronto respectively. There is a broad literature that attempts to understand the concepts of scale and territory, some of which I sketch out here. Using Purcell’s observation that “scale is not an ontological entity with particular properties” (Purcell, 2006, p. 1928) as an entry point, I explore here some of the literature about the
organisation of political geographies and the importance of boundaries in urban transport planning. In Purcell’s argument, the organisation of the state at the local scale is intertwined with specific understandings of what is good, and in doing so, potentially excludes the understanding of problems that extend beyond the local. Tomàs (2012) argues similarly, showing how different actors come to associate particular conceptions of the good with different approaches to metropolitanisation in Montreal, Canada. Each of these papers positions scale as a strategy, and at their cores, these are relational understandings of geographical scale (Latour, 2005), which can be can also be positioned in the governmentality literature by way of the concept of territory.

Rather than strategy, this research understands territory in line with Elden’s (2007) characterisation as a “technological ensemble”. Elden (2007) frames territory as an explicitly political technique used to render the concept of space to make it amenable to government, as outlined in an earlier paragraph. Elaborating on this discussion, Elden (2010) points to the importance of technological development in allowing modern borders and boundaries to be more accurately demarcated, and conversely, the ability to count, and the question of what to count, is constrained within ensembles of territory. Hannah (2009) points to the mutual interdependence of territory and calculation through an exploration of the West German census boycotts, arguing that “the legibility of calculable territory underwrites both sovereign and governmental or biopolitical forms of intervention; but the legibility of territory itself depends upon the interventions necessary to mobilise information” (p. 70). In a different study on the German census, Marquadt (2015) highlights this interconnection of territory and calculation by exploring the non-counting of homeless populations in the German census, where it “reveals biopolitical routines of governmental knowledge production that intrinsically rely on a linking of people to geographical locations” (Marquadt, 2015, p. 311). An important tactic in maintaining this link between territory and calculation is geographical inscription. Rose-Redwood (2012) explores this through a case study of the development of urban-style, 911-compatible street addressing in rural areas of West Virginia, highlighting how the former non-specific rural box number indicators were replaced with geographically-specific street addresses, allowing greater compatibility firstly with emergency services, but more generally with other GPS-led services, like delivery and so on. Spatial and territorial fixity bounds populations, making them countable, and therefore also governable. The changing extent and intent of how population is bounded is one of the core inquiries of this paper.

Interviews and planning documents were initially analysed thematically through an inductive process, along the ontological nodes of knowledge, technology, rationality, and subject formation. This involved identifying where actions and interactions relied on these specific acts. Several core themes emerged, which included the importance of the politics and manifestations of geographical scale and the organisation of the state. Following this, thematic analysis focused on identifying this theme, and several others, throughout the interviews and core documents.

**How is Melbourne understood geographically?**

Over the course of the study period, the primary scale of urban transport planning in Melbourne has been the metropolitan. What this means specifically, however, sometimes varies within studies and between studies. Generally, urban transport planning has been led by departments or agencies of the State of Victoria, and these are often subject to reshuffles and reorganisations. After discussing how the metropolitan scale is imagined in Melbourne, I briefly turn my attention to how a scalar invention of an east-west divide was used to drive a set of transport projects. Finally, I will comment on the limited role of the municipalities in Melbourne’s urban transport planning.

Numerous plans and strategies for transport in the Melbourne region were produced during the study period of 2000-2015, by a variety of government departments and agencies. Many of these planned for a metropolitan scale, including the metropolitan strategy Melbourne 2030 (October 2002) (Department of Infrastructure, 2002) and its associated transport strategies Linking Melbourne (February 2004) (Department of Transport, 2004) and Meeting Our Transport Challenges (May 2006) (Department of Infrastructure, 2006); the updated metropolitan strategy Melbourne @ 5 Million (December 2008) (DTPLI, 2008a) and the associated Victorian Transport Plan (December 2008) (DTPLI, 2008b), the relatively free-standing Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail (December 2012) (Public Transport Victoria, 2012b), and Plan Melbourne (May 2014) (DTPLI, 2014) and Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 (March 2017) (DELWP, 2017), which each sought more explicitly include transport matters in the metropolitan strategy. What constitutes the metropolitan in metropolitan Melbourne is fairly stable throughout each of these documents.
Melbourne 2030 provides a definition of metropolitan Melbourne based on the borders of the thirty-one municipalities within metropolitan Melbourne (Department of Infrastructure, 2002). This is a commonly understood definition of what metropolitan Melbourne is meant to include. No clear definition for the inclusion of particular municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne is listed in Melbourne 2030, nor is this discussed in the Local Government Act 1989, the Planning and Environment Act 1986, or the Transport Integration Act 2010. Relative discontinuity of urban development does not seem to factor into whether a municipality is included in metropolitan Melbourne, as both Melton and Sunbury are included, and these were both separated by agricultural lands from the main part of urban Melbourne. Melbourne 2030 also points to a hydrogeographical definition of greater Melbourne, which is the limits of the catchments of Port Phillip and Western Port (Department of Infrastructure, 2002). This definition is internally inconsistent, as Geelong is excluded from metropolitan Melbourne despite being on the shores of Corio Bay, which is hydrologically part of the Port Phillip catchment.

Melbourne 2030 was the strategic plan that introduced the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) (Department of Infrastructure, 2002). Enabled by an amendment to the Planning and Environment Act 1986, the UGB placed a statutory limit to urban development around the fringes of the metropolitan area. Melbourne 2030 therefore defines metropolitan Melbourne as the area within the growth boundary as defined in Melbourne 2030. The urban growth boundary is established within the planning schemes of the local government areas defined in 46AA of the Planning and Environment Act as being metropolitan fringe councils, rather than through any specific legislative act, so changing the extent of the urban growth boundary does not require the passage of legislation. Planning responsibilities in growth areas at the suburban fringes are very much in the hands of the planning minister of the day, so what is or is not included in the UGB is quite flexible, and subject to the minister's discretion.

Many other plans do not specifically define metropolitan Melbourne in an outward-facing manner. Linking Melbourne was developed in support of Melbourne 2030 (Department of Transport, 2004), so it can be assumed the same three-part definition is used. It is much the same case for Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC), which uses the UGB as a de facto boundary for metropolitan Melbourne (Department of Infrastructure, 2006). Even in newer documents, this 31-LGA definition of metropolitan Melbourne persists. The Infrastructure Victoria 30 Year Strategy treats metropolitan Melbourne as one (admittedly heterogeneous) entity (Infrastructure Victoria, 2016), which includes Mornington Peninsula, but excludes Geelong.

The presentation of strategic plan content by way of local government area is in part a communicative tool, rather than a planning tool in and of itself. Melbourne is understood in much more granular ways in the documents and analyses that feed into the public-facing components of urban transport plans. Consider PTV's Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail (NDP-MR) as a starting point. This is a modally-specific infrastructure planning activity – but a transport plan nonetheless – whose focus was on the requirements of the railway network under future patronage forecasts. NDP-MR presents its future in terms of both the railway network and also as the UGB-delineated version of metropolitan Melbourne (Public Transport Victoria, 2012b). The specific plans though are developed from PTV’s earlier Metropolitan Public Transport Demand Forecast Report 2012 (MPTDFR), which reports on the results of a four-step model run of approximately 3000 travel zones across the metropolitan area, using the proprietary Zenith modelling framework (Public Transport Victoria, 2012a).

MPTDFR draws upon numerous datasets that estimate the future of metropolitan Melbourne. Among these is the Victoria in Future (VIF) series, which are population forecasts of the metropolitan area based on the five-yearly census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Metropolitan Melbourne is defined in these documents as the Melbourne Statistical Division and Melbourne Greater Capital City Statistical Area (GCCSA), drawn from the Australian Standard Geographical Classification and Australian Statistical Geography Standard respectively (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2012). The GCCSA uses employment and commuting patterns as proxies for the extent of a city (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). VIF produces estimates of future population using the ABS figures at the Statistical Local Area/Statistical Area 2 geographies – which are then repackaged as local government area growth forecasts.

A de facto local scale is present in many of these planning documents, but it appears to be more strongly manifest in land-use than transport. This is through the ever-evolving discussion around polycentricity in Melbourne, from Melbourne 2030's activity centres to Plan Melbourne’s 20-Minute Neighbourhoods. These are essentially transport discussions, but not spoken of in transport terms, and rarely with a
transport solution offered. *Melbourne 2030* included a Transit Cities policy (Department of Infrastructure, 2002), but sitting in a broader metropolitan strategy, this was more focused around concentrating development at existing transport hubs rather than the extension of transport infrastructure or services. *Plan Melbourne’s 20-Minute neighbourhood policy* was again more focused on directing land-use development to specific areas, rather than specifically planning for transport, despite having a transport chapter (DTPLI, 2014). These could alternatively be read as reducing the need for transport, but given that the transport-specific policies and projects in each of these plans were about building infrastructure and increasing service, it is unsurprising that these local scale interventions have not been successful (Day *et al.*, 2018).

Urban transport planning is also conducted at the local scale by the individual city councils throughout the metropolitan area. This has very minimal impact on the overall strategic direction of the metropolitan area in the short-term, but there are examples of local governments pushing boundaries within their remit that might challenge the dominant approach to planning. The three local councillors interviewed each indicated that a major role for council in transport planning was of advocacy. A former councillor for a western suburbs municipality indicated their initial optimism with being involved with the Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF). While the MTF has no formal powers to conduct transport planning, it does allow councillors and officers to develop informal networks that facilitate sharing of information and contacts at both state and local levels. The councillor’s push for change in metropolitan transport strategy via the MTF, though, was less effective: “my optimism that we’d be able to be more effective working together was a bit misplaced – they were able to ignore a large group of councils just as effectively as they ignored individual councils” (Western suburbs councillor).

There are nonetheless sometimes acts of resistance by local councils to change directions of transport planning in a scale they can influence. A transport department official indicated in interview that a local council refused to change local parking regulations to allow for permanent bus lanes along a major radial bus corridor, and then pointed the finger at that council for preventing the permanent bus lane from going ahead, despite the state having the authority to override the local council’s wishes. Similarly, a City of Melbourne councillor indicated their ongoing success at re-distributing street space to active and public modes of travel, despite concerns from the State government. Two particularly high-profile examples of local-state conflict are the Commons and the Nightingale developments in Brunswick. The Commons was proposed without the State-mandated minimum parking requirements and was approved without objections by Moreland City Council (Taylor, 2016). The Nightingale development, directly across the street from the Commons, was similarly approved by council without car parking, but overturned after objections by the State planning tribunal. It was subsequently reapproved after the developer incorporated onsite three parking spaces, still well below the mandated minimum (Moore and Doyon, 2018).

While the predominant scalar formation for urban transport planning in Melbourne is the metropolitan, over the study period, an east-west geographic divide was also often discussed in technical and planning documents, and by interviewees, for some of whom was a new way of understanding the city. *Northern Central City Corridor Strategy Draft (NCCSD)* (Department of Infrastructure, 2003) and *MOTC* (Department of Infrastructure, 2006) first began to elucidate the east-west divide across Melbourne, however, according to interviewees, this was in part a result of political promises to investigate the corridor (transport department executive; senior transport modeller). *MOTC* also instigated the *East-West Link Needs Assessment (EWLNA)* (Eddington, 2008), which further elucidated a major east-west transport division along the Maribyrnong River. Specificities of the scalar formations in each of these documents have been explored previously by Pittman *et al.* (2017).

While MOTC, EWLNA, and VTP each elucidated a conceptualisation of the “west” as an area in need of transport connections to the central city, there were also important moments of subject formation and political calculation going on behind the scenes. For three of the core actors involved in the EWLNA process, this was particularly eye-opening, especially the extent to which a transport disconnect was being produced in Melbourne’s west through high population growth rates. This perhaps is the product of previous discontinuities between transport and land-use planning, because as indicated earlier, there is a lot of thinking and planning conducted that seek to regulate and direct both factors – population growth in the west should not have come as a surprise. Further, the Premier’s decision to proceed with the eastern section of the East West Link, proposed but not prioritised in the EWLNA, was conducted with a specific electoral calculus in mind – specifically to wedge the Labor party in its inner-city contests with the Greens (transport department executive).
Melbourne is imagined and planned for as a region. Melbourne is very good at a sub-regional planning that involves particular project corridors. Local councils, though, are relatively constrained in what they are able to do. The definition of what is and is not metropolitan or regional or the city is important in government, as it places limits around what can (and cannot) be acted upon by the relevant parties. In attempting to govern the transport systems and networks and the travel patterns and behaviours of residents of Melbourne, it might be useful to understand what Melbourne is and is not, and will be and will not be. Planning for transport in Melbourne is very effective at a broader, regional scale, and the institutions of the state support and reinforce this. Creating a scalar structure that separated east from west was effective at driving projects favoured by the State government. Local governments are hamstrung in their efforts to pursue a bottom-up regionalisation through the MTF, but nonetheless exert influence where and while they can.

**Imagining the Region**

The Canadian city of Toronto is approximately 16,250km north-east of Melbourne, and it is here that a different story about re-scaling and re-territorialisation can be read. As is common in North American city-regions, the transit offering in the Toronto region is complex and distributed. The Toronto Transit Commission provides services to the urban core but is limited in its ability to serve the rapidly growing populations beyond its borders. The provincial GO Transit offers commuter services from the suburbs to downtown, and local services in the suburbs are through a patchwork of operators at either the City or Regional Municipality level. In the context of an increasing population, continued urban sprawl, and growing (road) travel demand, the Government of Ontario has made efforts to introduce ‘regional’ thinking into the planning and delivery of transit services through the establishment of a regional transport authority, Metrolinx. This provides an interesting contrast to the Melbourne example, because while Melbourne is relatively stable in its discursive scalar formations and how the apparatuses of the state are organised, Toronto represents an example of where there were active attempts to produce new territories.

The 2003 smart growth panel for southern Ontario produced a key document in the shaping of the Toronto region’s planning future for the next two decades, aptly named *Shape the Future*. The smart growth panel suggested, in response to historical and predicted population growth in the region, the placement of a growth boundary, the organisation of future growth within that boundary, and the prioritisation and integration of public transport across the region (Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, 2003). The *Greenbelt Plan*, introduced in 2005, formalised and strengthened the existing urban growth boundary by connecting and extending the lands protected in the Niagara escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). Following this, *Places to Grow* was introduced in 2006, which attempted to redirect growth into areas already urbanised and ensure this growth was transit-oriented (Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006). Finally, the Ontario legislated for the Greater Toronto Transport Authority, which ultimately became known as Metrolinx, who was tasked with producing regional transport plans for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Metrolinx published *the Big Move*, its first regional transport plan, in 2008 (Metrolinx, 2008). This was the beginning of an attempt at rescaling transport planning in the Toronto region.

The year before, 2007, also saw the provincial Ministry of Transportation and the City of Toronto each publish transport plans, albeit at different scales. The provincial *MoveOntario 2020* included upgrades to the regional GO railway network, and the municipal *Transit City* included seven locally focused light rail upgrades to some of the busier surface transit corridors in the City of Toronto. Other municipalities had their own plans too, including local light rail projects in Hamilton and Mississauga, and numerous bus rapid transit projects. The core problem, as identified in *Shape the Future*, was that none of these plans really spoke to each other in a meaningful way, which is what Metrolinx’s *The Big Move* sought to change. The content in *the Big Move* was not particularly surprising, because it built upon existing transport plans, including *MoveOntario 2020* and *Transit City*. It featured a suite of upgrades to GO Transit, and all seven of the *Transit City* projects, and numerous other projects from the suburban municipalities.

The *Big Move* made efforts towards regional transit network integration. The “absurdities” (provincial politician and cabinet member) of the regional networks were numerous. One such absurdity is that each operator had different fare structures and products available, which is still the case to this day. *The Big Move, Places to Grow, Shape the Future* and some of the interviewees recognise that this is a major barrier to transit usage across the region, particularly for people who need to use more than one transit network for a journey. While the Presto card has mostly been rolled out, fare integration remains
a challenge for the region. While regional transit integration remains an ideal for the province, interviewees suggest that they prefer to take a much more conciliatory approach, despite the province having the authority to direct the municipalities (and therefore the transit operators) to toe the line.

An explanation for the lack of progress in regional integration, and the production of a regional Toronto, might be found in how the province initially incorporated Metrolinx. As a crown agency, Metrolinx has a board of directors. In its first iteration, Metrolinx’s board of directors was composed of representatives from each of the constituent municipalities – four for Toronto and one for all others. What resulted in the Big Move, according to several interviewees, was a supra-local form of urban transport planning, which involved political bargaining between the municipalities as to the prioritisation of the projects their transport planning departments had produced. One such example is an interaction between the City of Toronto and the Regional Municipality of Durham:

Roger Anderson was the chair, was more focused on roads. It’s relatively low density. It didn’t really fit with the City of Toronto’s vision, but the City of Toronto said, okay, we disagree, if you want to use your money for roads, go wild, but we want the money for Transit City, and Durham said along the lines of, really, you want to build LRT and streetcars, that seems stupid. That was their mentality. You give us the roads, we’ll give you Transit City (Metrolinx board member).

The province viewed this as problematic and began to see the appointment of a board composed of local politicians as a mistake. A former senior political actor observed that local politicians were “not willing to put aside some of what they needed to compromise for the greater good” – in this case, the formation of a Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

As it stood, the structure of Metrolinx’s board meant that prioritisation processes were being influenced by political bargaining processes between local jurisdictions, with limited regard to the regional rescaling project underway. On May 14, 2009, an amendment to the Greater Toronto Transport Authority Act was passed that reconstituted the board of directors. These changes specifically ruled out national and provincial parliamentarians and local councillors as being eligible to sit on the board of directors, with the board now to be appointed by the provincial Ministry of Transportation. Some interviewees indicate that this allowed for a professionalisation of the board of directors, meaning that it could include actual transport knowledge, as well as experts in finance, design, customer experience, and other things. Somewhat cynically, though, a former senior ministerial adviser had this to offer about one of the new board appointments: “he was, by conditioning and training and predisposition, the ideal guy to know how to informally do what the government wanted, and yet make it seem as though it was an evidence-based decision”.

Urban transport planning in Toronto is well-developed at the local level, but not at the regional level, because of local cultural conditions that enable urban transport planning and transit delivery to be conducted by local governments. Attempts by Metrolinx to forge a GTHA through transport planning are ongoing, but still very early. They have done this through removing local voices from their board, but they are limited in their ability to do much more because most of the transport planning still emerges from the cities. While there is tacit support for this rescaling at the provincial level, it is lukewarm at best, and is actively resisted at the local level, especially by the City of Toronto and the TTC.

Discussion and Conclusions

The need to delimit our cities geographically is a core feature of the art of government of urban transport planning. There are two core characteristics of this, which I have demonstrated above: that geographic scale acts as an intermediary between the broader body of calculative practices (Miller, 2001), such as statistics and engineering, and the capacity to deliver services or construct infrastructure; and that geographic scale and the organisation of the state is also central to the ability of practices of government to conduct the transport conduct of proximate urban areas.

This paper is not arguing that the perceived scales and geographical disconnects in each of these regions are made up. There are real, everyday impacts of poor modal integration in Melbourne and of poor geographical integration in Toronto. The purpose was to explore how these scalar formations are known and talked about and acted upon, and how these formations produce particular outcomes that are usually political.

How these findings are then interpreted into practice is up to practitioners, but what it perhaps offers some insight into is how agencies and departments of the State are set up and what this means for the
possibilities of planning. While many actors indicated in interview the respect they had for project/plan/study leaders, such as Rod Eddington in the East-West Link Needs Assessment, it is nonetheless important to recognise that, like in Ontario, just because an agency or study is set up as arms’ length, does not mean that it will not be stacked with individuals who will provide a set of palatable answers. Arms’ length is still very much within reach. In both EWLNA and Metrolink, and the series of studies, projects, and plans that have flowed out from these, the study and agency was led by people that would produce a specifically problematised scale – namely an east-west division and a local-regional division. Perhaps practitioners of urban transport planning should try to be aware of the limits and possibilities endowed by the scalar and territorial formations they are working within.

In elucidating how scale is a feature of the arts of government or urban transport planning, I hope to allow perhaps the challenging of some of these approaches to and mentalities of rescaling. This might allow for practices of urban transport planning can be transformed in positive ways, especially in light of the aforementioned climate justice and social justice issues facing each of these cities.

References


