THE ROLE OF TRANSPORT IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO DISABLED YOUTH: THE CASE OF CAPE TOWN

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Dedication

The authors hereby dedicate this presentation to the memory of Marlene's son, Adam George, who passed away in August, just short of his 16th birthday. Adam, who experienced severe physical challenges, is an inspiration to us all.

Presentation Outline

1. Introduction

2. Access to Transport

3. Cape Town and Its Transport

4. Methodology

5. Results

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

- Over the past few decades, governments have promoted greater equity through the provision of universal access to all.

- Planners have recognised need for greater community access to local activities.
    - *In developing world, persons with disabilities have limited access to mainstream activities*
    - *Research shows that the arts can provide key opportunities to persons with disabilities*

- It is vital that services provide disabled youth with safe, reliable transport to/from activities.

- Based on the premise that exposure to the arts facilitates social inclusion, this paper begins to explore ways to connect these youth.

Access to Transport

- Whilst transport is central to social inclusion,
  - *Many CT townships do not have reliable transport → limiting their opportunities.*
  - *Access for disabled persons is non-existent.*
  - *For arts to be all-inclusive, it is imperative that access is provided to all, without exception.*
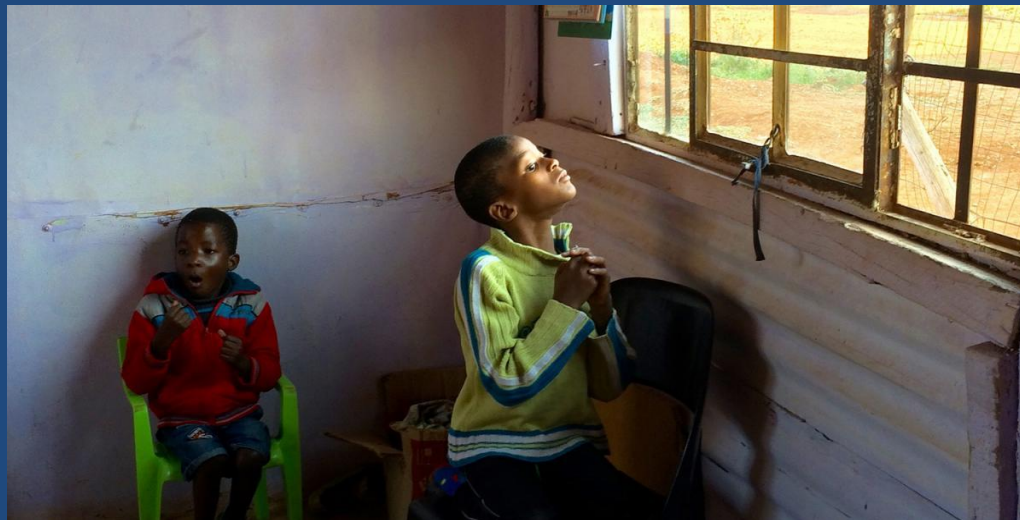
Map and Scenes of Cape Town
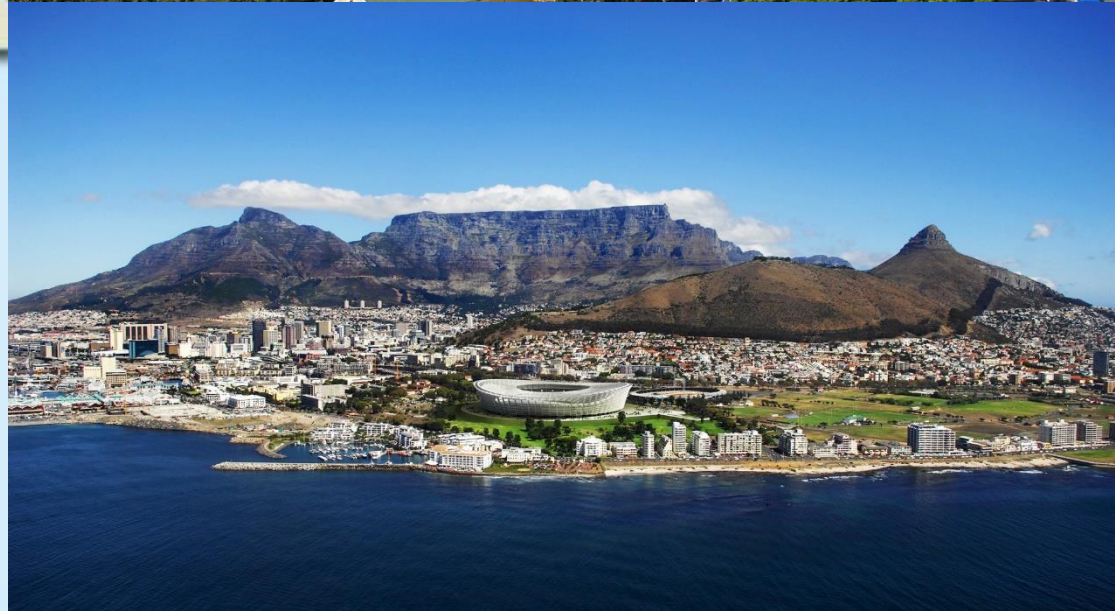
Cape Town and Its Transport

- **Urban Characteristics**
  - *Legislative capital, port, tourist destination*
  - *Population: 3.7 million*
  - *Public transport is most common mode*
    - *about 54% of all urban trips*
    - *rail (62%), minibus taxi (24%), bus (14%)*
  - *Poor coordination between modes*
  - *Car use continues to grow*
  - *Persons with disabilities: 7% of all residents*

Cape Town Public Transport

Minibus Taxi
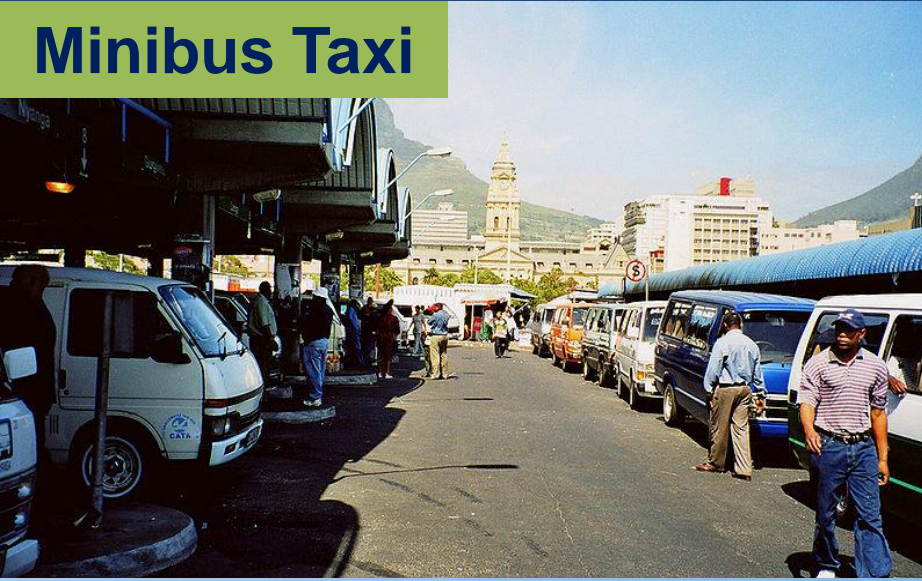
Paratransit

Conventional Bus

Suburban Rail

Cape Town MyCiti Bus - 2017

- If we differentiate between travel by disabled adults and travel by disabled youth
  - *Over half of all youth trips are on foot and one-third by car (hired or otherwise)*
  - *Over one-third of adult trips are by car and more than 40% are by public transport*
- If we compare school trips by disabled youth with school trips by all students
  - *Fewer disabled youth travel by car (with family) and more travel by specialized school bus*

- In Cape Town, there is a commitment to improve transport for the disabled
  - *South Africa first country to ratify the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*
  - *Universal Access Policy – approach to planning, provision, regulation of equal access schemes*
  - *Specialised "Dial-a-Ride" system - largely caters to a small no. of employed persons with disabilities*
- However, youth with disabilities do not benefit from this commitment--what can be done?

Fully Accessible My Citi Minibuses

Methodology

- In examining travel patterns, the study considered the following objectives:

  - *Depict the travelling experience of those attending a performance*

  - *Describe options for youth with disabilities*

  - *Identify factors influencing travel by these youth*

- A purposive sampling strategy employed registers of attendance

- Data collection consisted of the following:
  - *Focus groups and an in-depth interview*
  - *Open-ended questions to prompt responses from focus group and interview participants*
  - *Document analysis of local government and Artscape Universal Access & Design Team*
- Triangulation of data provides an enhanced understanding of how interactions with transport encourage disabled youth

Results

- Focus group findings
  - *Transport was the primary challenge identified*
  - *Both public and private transport issues*

- Public transport
  - *Difficult for disabled youth to access systems (e.g., access stop/route, enter vehicles)*
  - *Youth require assistance from friends/family*
  - *Systems don't take diverse needs into account (e.g., hours of operation do not match need)*

- *Some deaf respondents access school buses*
- Private transport
  - *There were barriers to accessing private modes, especially for black and coloured students*
  - *In general, limited access to these for youth*
- Interview with Black Woman with Disabilities
  - *Disabled are often denied access to minibus taxis (by drivers) and/or pay double fares*
  - *Often not enough room in public transport vehicles, or on rail platforms in townships*

- Document Analysis
  - *Universal Access Policy for Cape Town (2014) passed to provide better access <u>for all</u>*
  - *Thus far, this effort has*
    - identified roles that rail and bus must play
    - stressed importance of working with existing modes
  - *My CitiBus has access-friendly vehicles, but new routes unable to adequately cover townships.*
  - *Government has not worked with minibus owners to address access issues voiced in focus groups.*

MyCiti Bus Routes in Khayelitsha
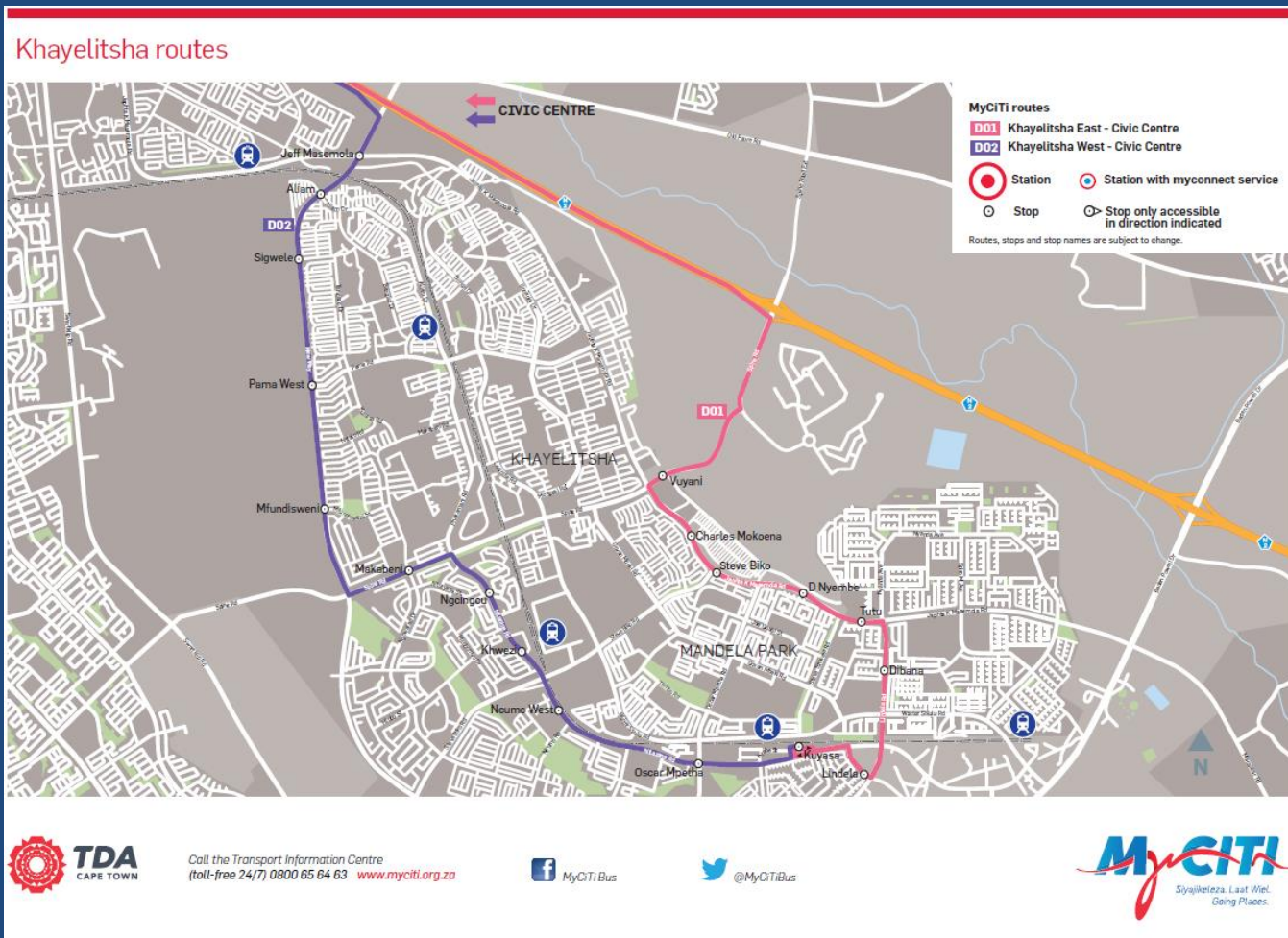
Note: In townships such as Khayelitsha, My Citi Bus Routes (blue and red lines) leave large community areas without nearby service.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Despite Cape Town's challenges as a city
  - *Responsibility to provide access to all*
  - *Commitments must be kept (e.g., system enhancements) for benefits to be realised*
- Disabled youth are prevented from accessing opportunities due to barriers
  - *Cost*
  - *Distance*
  - *Inaccesible transport facilities*

- Regardless, Cape Town must implement measures that facilitate the inclusion of disabled youth in mainstream activities

- There is a need for cultural institutions to reach out and empower disabled youth to attend and participate in arts activities

- Gov't must ensure that transport services are inclusive of disabled youth through changes/ adjustments to existing modes

- This paper recommends the following:
  - *Development/adoption of the National Learners Transport Policy, featuring inclusion and subsidised transport for disabled students*

  - *More funding for institutions providing flexible transport to persons with disabilities*

  - *Increased funding in support of My CitiBus-minibus taxi integration (some areas)*

  - *Opening of dialogue with minibus taxi owners serving disadvantaged areas to improve access (e.g., need for training, enhanced funding)*

Thank you!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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