

THEORIES AND PRACTICE OF URBAN TRANSITION: MELBOURNE'S 'WICKED' TRANSPORT PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

Research Question

How do we provide transport for a future Melbourne mega-city, cognisant of the current decision making framework.

For decades transport has been a political football; this trend is set to continue. How do we better understand and interpret transport decisions to achieve 'better' Future City outcomes?



Figure 1: Melbourne's anticipated population growth

Methodology

Melbourne is experiencing the biggest urban transformation since the Gold Rush. The research will investigate the disconnect between population growth and transport planning practice/policy.

The research involves the interaction of three themes:

1. Analysis of transport planning decision making through the application of the Melbourne case study (theories and practice of urban transition)
2. Analysis of social, economic and environmental trends
3. Application of 'wicked problems' framework to transport proposals and future transport supply to address strong population growth

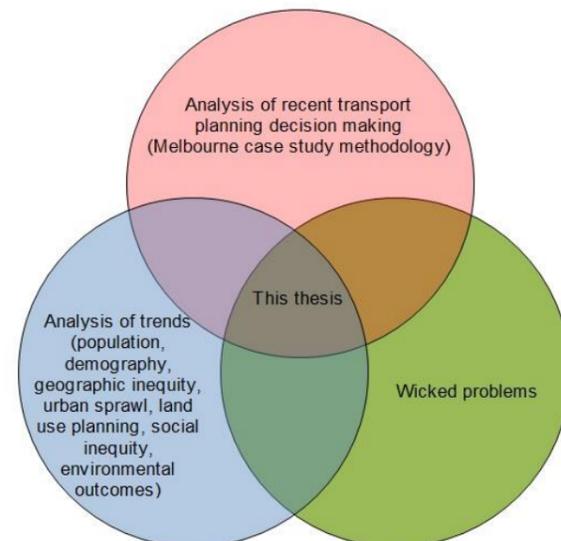


Figure 2: Proposed Masters' Thesis Methodology

Anticipated impacts

Applying the wicked planning framework to the Melbourne case study, this research proposal aims to provide an insight into Melbourne's transport planning and fill a gap in the knowledge about decision making in the context of unprecedented population growth. This will build an understanding of the implications for transport systems as models of future urban life.



Figure 3: Melbourne Case Study – East West Link



Figure 4: Melbourne Case Study – Melbourne Metro

Timeline

Commenced October 2016, expected completion March 2018.

The 'wicked' framework

Many of society's pressing problems are characterised by high levels of complexity and inevitability become political. Technical analyses alone, which cannot consider social values and deliberation, fail to provide an adequate decision-making framework.

Wicked problems, in contrast to tame problems, are policy problems that cannot be fully described. The term 'wicked' in a meaning akin to that of malignant (in contrast to benign) or vicious (like a circle) or tricky (like a leprechaun) or aggressive (like a lion, in contrast to the docility of lamb).

Wicked problems have no correct/false answers and no solutions in the sense of definitive and objective answers. The types of issues planners deal with are inherently wicked – they are societal problems that are inherently different from the tame problems encountered by scientists and engineers.

Key message

Transport planning in Melbourne is complex and decisions will need to be made within a 'wicked' planning context to achieve better outcomes.

Further information

<http://www.ecoinnovationlab.com/>

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