Localization of Transportation Management and Planning

Urban-Act Policy Brief Series No. 2

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In cooperation with the Department of the Interior and Local Government - Bureau of Local Government Development (DILG-BLGD)

The preparation of this policy note benefitted from a series of policy dialogues with national government partners Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Office of Transport Cooperatives (OTC), Climate Change Commission (CCC), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DepDev), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in May and June 2025. During said dialogues, voices of Urban-Act partner cities Antipolo, Bacolod City, and Tagbilaran were presented as key input to the policy recommendations.

The policy dialogues and preparation of policy briefs was coordinated by Urban-Act Project led by Francisco Dacumos III, with special advise and inputs from DILG-BLGD Director Anna Liza Bonagua, Arce Fajardo, and Anna Victoria Quibot.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current conditions of the Philippine transport system indicate recurring issues such as: (a) lack of an integrated and coordinated transport network; (b) overlapping and conflicting functions of transport agencies; (c) transport safety and security concerns; and (d) inadequate transport facilities particularly in conflict-affected and underdeveloped areas (NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017).

Through the National Transport Policy, the Philippine government aims to promote a people-oriented national transport system that is safe, secure, reliable, efficient, integrated, intermodal, affordable, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable, cognizant of mobility being a basic need. In this policy, local governments are required to take greater responsibility and accountability for mobility outcomes in their respective areas. However, there are policy gaps that need to be addressed with regard to the formulation of Local Transportation Management Plans (LTMPs), structuring Local Transportation Management Offices (TMOs), especially in cities, and financial and technical support for theimplementation of these plans.

The overarching objective of this policy brief is to help strengthen the enabling environment for climate-sensitive urban development. It highlights the importance of localization of transportation management and planning. Based on the result of the 10 June 2025 inter-agency dialogue and inputs from civil society organizations and transport coalitions, the following recommendations are put forward:

One, establishing inter-operable monitoring and evaluation systems and mechanisms for assessing outputs, outcomes and impacts of local transportation management;

Two, upgrading skills and capacities of local transportation management offices; and,

Three, strengthening vertical alignment of local transportation plans and the national transportation plan and coordination between local transportation management offices and concerned national government agencies.

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About the Urban-Act Project

The Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban Act) is an International Climate Initiative (IKI)-funded project that supports the transformation of cities towards low-carbon and resilient urban development in the Philippines, India, Thailand, China, and Indonesia. It contributes to the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Urban-Act aims to promote vertical coherence by ensuring the integration of national policies and frameworks on climate change and urban development into sub-national plans and programs for effective urban climate action.

With the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as the main project partner and policy advisor, Urban-Act works at the national level to update, strengthen, and further develop policies and frameworks for urban climate action through technical services and cross-sectoral and multi-level coordination.

The Project works with pilot cities, Antipolo (Rizal), Bacolod (Negros Occidental), and Tagbilaran (Bohol) to update urban plans to integrate climate change considerations, sustainable mobility, and Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) considerations. Concept notes will then be developed for intervention areas identified together with government partners and other stakeholders, with the aim of supporting access to financing for small- to large-scale projects.

Urban-Act Policy Workstream

This policy brief contributes to the Project's Output Area: Improved institutional environment for climate-sensitive urban development, specifically through policy instruments that aid the localization of policies for climate-sensitive urban development.

In formulating the following policy brief, the Project gathered voices from the ground through feedback from Urban-Act pilot cities. Paired with findings from a stock-taking exercise, national government representatives were able to articulate and prioritize actionable recommendations that utilize on-ground realities and experience on planning for and implementation of relevant national policies.

This model promotes dialogue and multi-level coordination between policy actors in order to facilitate the effective implementation of national policies and frameworks.

1. Introduction

The overarching objective of this policy brief is to help strengthen the enabling environment for climate-sensitive urban development. Among the specific policy objectives is the localization of transportation management and planning. The analysis of the problem is derived from stocktaking of the current enabling environment on national and local transportation management and planning, and joint policy analysis exercises with stakeholders from Antipolo City, Bacolod City, and Tagbilaran City from May to July 2024, and the corresponding Policy Analysis Report, and result of the inter-agency dialogue on the subject in Quezon City on 10 June 2025.

Methodology

A total of twenty-four (24) participants attended the one-day dialogue on the localization of transportation, planning, and management. Among them were 8 representatives from national government agencies, including the Department of Transportation (DOTr) - Office of Transportation Cooperatives (OTC), Planning Service and Public Transportation Modernization Program (PTPMP), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) - Bureau of Local Government Development (BLGD) and Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD); two (2) from the University of the Philippines – National Center for Transportation Studies (UP-NCTC); and eleven (11) from civil society organizations and development partners, namely: Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), Move As One Coalition, AltMobility, Clean Air Asia, Commuters 4 Change and GIZ.

Purpose of the policy brief

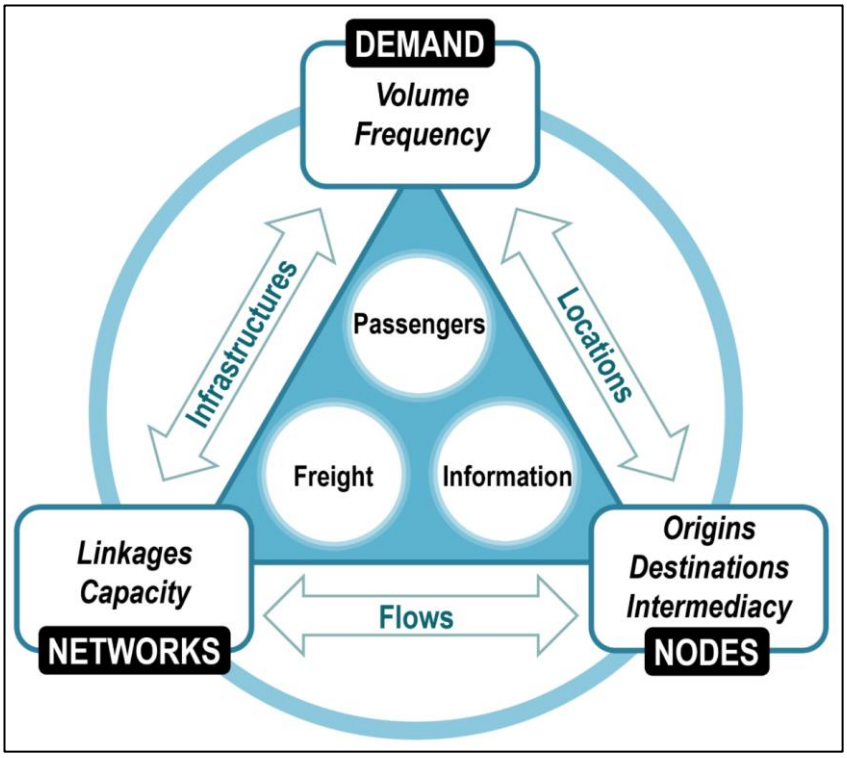
This policy brief is primarily addressed to DILG, DOTr, and local government units (LGUs), and, secondarily, to DOTr–attached agencies like the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Land Transportation Office (LTO) and Office of Transport Cooperatives (OTC), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The recommendations and rationales are also useful for the continuing advocacies and support of civil society organizations and coalitions, financing institutions, international development agencies, transport cooperatives, private companies involved in the transport sector, and small, medium, and large enterprises affected by problems of the transport sector.

10 June 2025 // Urban-Act Policy Dialogue 2: *Localization of Transport Planning and Management*

2. Overview and Importance of the Problem

A transport system can be conceptualized as a set of relationships between three elements: nodes, networks, and demand (Rodrigue, 2024). Demand pertains to the mobility of people, goods, and information. Nodes pertain to entry, transit, and exit points of the system, and networks pertain to the connectivity of places and the capacity of the system to handle passengers and cargo. Around these relationships are the function of locations (where demand is expressed from point of origin, transit, and destination), flows (or the amount of traffic within a network), and infrastructure (such as roads and terminals) that represent the physical reality of the network.

Figure 1. Concept of Transport System



Source: Rodrigue (2024)

Transport is fundamental to supporting economic growth, job creation, and connecting people to essential services and places of work and livelihoods.[1] Decisions of firms and households are influenced by the transport network (Collier & Venables, 2016). However, transport systems can also have large negative effects on the economic and social systems they serve (Boyce, n.d.). A people-oriented national transport system that is safe, secure, reliable, efficient, integrated, intermodal, affordable, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable ensures improved quality of life of the Filipino people (Sec. 2, Declaration of Policy, National Transport Policy).

[1] See: https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/transport/overview

For several decades, the Philippine transport system has grappled with the corollary functions of infrastructure (roads, bridges, and terminals) and accommodation of vehicles, more than strengthening the essential relationships between nodes, networks, and demand. As of 2023, there were 14.3 million registered vehicles (new and for renewal), 90 percent privately-owned (PSA, 2024). On average, each household owned two vehicles. Among these vehicles are 37,909 buses and 8.5 million motorcycles and tricycles. To accommodate these vehicles, the government has established a road network reaching 35,164.13 kilometers in 2023.

Table 1. Length of national road network, functional classification, and surface type, Philippines, as of 2023 (in kilometers)

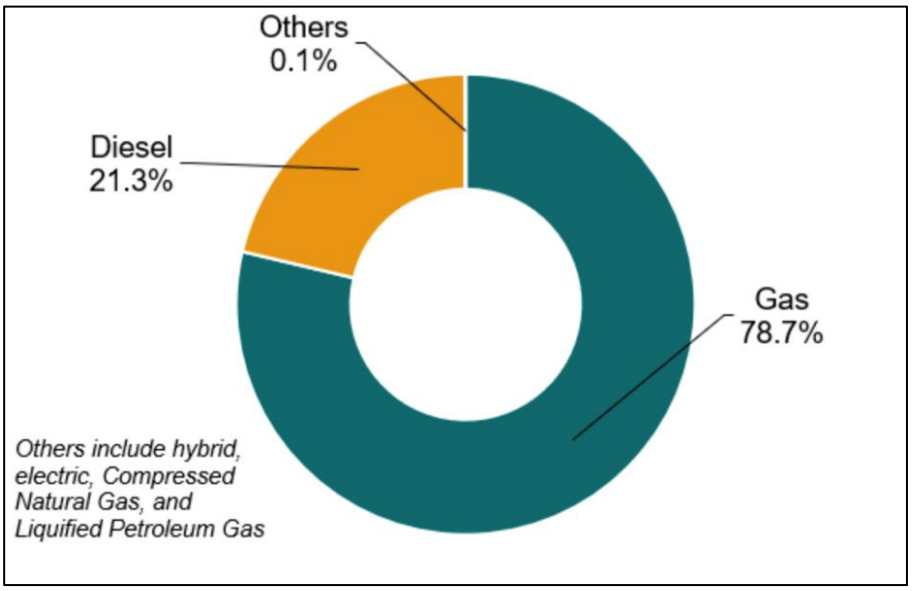
Functional Classification	Paved			Unpaved			Grand Total
	Concrete	Asphalt	Paved Total	Gravel	Earth	Unpaved Total	
All types	**22,337.26**	**12,459.96**	**34,797.22**	**342.02**	**24.89**	**366.91**	**35,164.13**
Primary	3,079.82	4,373.22	7,453.04	0.96	0.01	0.96	7,454.00
Secondary	10,378.50	4,939.08	15,317.58	110.64	4.32	114.96	15,432.54
Tertiary	8,878.94	3,147.67	12,026.61	230.43	20.56	250.99	12,277.59

Source: PSA, 2024

Public transportation (comprising public utility buses, jeepneys, and tricycles) serves 80 percent of ridership (UP CIDS, 2023). However, they use only 28% of road space (Delgra, n.d.). This raises a question of the utility of road infrastructures that are paid for by the government but are primarily used by private vehicles. Ninety percent of public utility jeeps (PUJs) are 15 years old and above (Delgra, n.d.), which contribute to air pollution, GHG emissions, and are susceptible to road accidents.

Private vehicles dominate Philippine roads. As of 2023, there were 14.27 million registered vehicles, almost 90% privately-owned and 78.7% gasoline-powered (PSA, 2024). On average, there were 2 private vehicles per household. In contrast, there were 32,700 registered public utility buses (Statista, 2024) and 240,000 registered public utility jeepneys (UP NCTS, 2025). Public utility buses (PUBs) and public utility jeepneys (PUJs) serve 68% of demand for mobility but uses only 28% of road space (Delgra/LTFRB, n.d.). Seventy-five percent of jeepneys are older than their useful life, exceeding 15 years and contributing 34% to national GHG emissions (UP NCTS, 2025).

Figure 2. Percent distribution of registered vehicles, by type of fuel used, as of 2022



Source: PSA, 2024

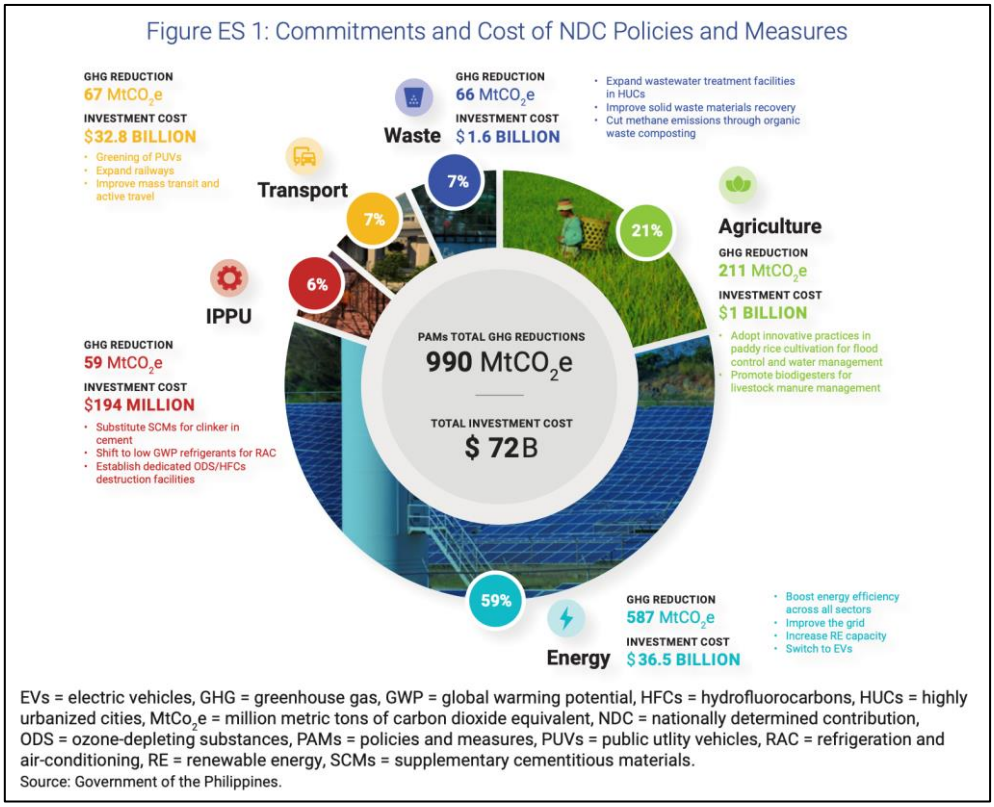
Transport contributes 20% of global GHG emissions.[2] Most emissions are contributed by urban transport, primarily from cars (Ardilla et al., 2024). Without immediate action, transport emissions could increase by 40% in 2030 and 60% by 2050 (International Transport Forum, n.d.). Reliance on oil for 92% of its energy, transportation is difficult to decarbonize without a radical change in the transportation system.

In 2020, the Philippines emitted a net total of 204 million metric tons of CO2e (mmtCO2e). **The energy sector, including energy in transport, is the largest source of emissions, followed by agriculture with 54 mmtCO2e and waste with 30 mmtCO2e (CCC-DENR, 2023).** It is important to note that 78.7% of 14.33 registered vehicles in 2023 use gasoline (PSA, 2024).

In 2021, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) submitted the Philippines' first NDC to the UNFCCC, committing to GHG emissions reduction and avoidance of 75% of 990 mmtCO2e for 2020 to 2030, of which 2.7% is unconditional and 72.29% is conditional. The total estimated cost is US $72 billion. Based on the estimated 37.9 mmtCO2e unconditional reductions target from 2023 to 2028, the transport sector accounts for 26.04 mmtCO2e, the largest share (68.7%) of NDC Policies, Activities and Measures (PAMs).

[2] See: https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/transport/overview

Figure 3. Commitments and Cost of NDC Policies and Measures



Source: CCC-DENR, 2023

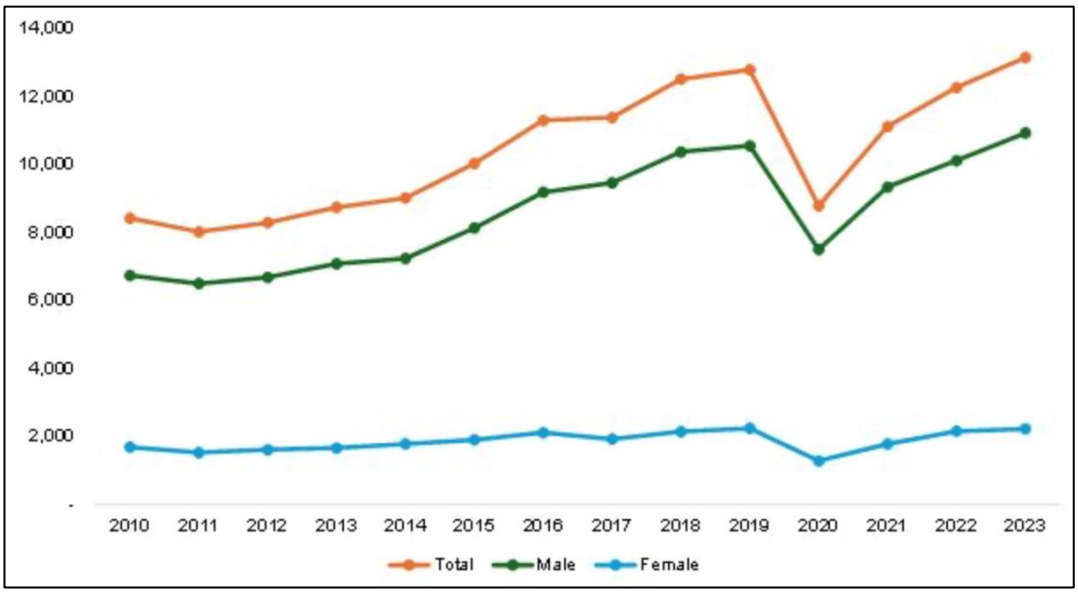
Expectations of benefits from transport systems are also saddled with risks to public safety and human lives. Globally, road crashes claim over 1.19 million lives every year, 92% of them in low and middle-income countries (WHO, 2023). More than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.

In the Philippines, 145,524 persons died of traffic accidents between 2010 and 2023, or an average of 10,395 deaths annually (PSA, 2025). Most of them are young, aged 20-24 years, and 80 percent are males. The highest number of registered deaths was 13,125 in 2023. Most of the traffic deaths also occur in relatively affluent regions such as Region II (17,780 deaths), Region IVA (14,763 deaths), Region 11 (12,862), Region 7 (9,139 deaths), Region 10 (8,984 deaths), and the National Capital Region (7,897 deaths). The Philippine National Police reported an increase in road accidents in 2024 and a 35% increase in road fatalities.[3]

Road accidents are usually due to reckless driving, motor vehicle condition, and poor road conditions.

[3] _____"LTO embarks on comprehensive data analysis for holistic gov't intervention on road accidents, road rage," Land Transportation Office, April 19, 2025. Retrieved from: https://lto.gov.ph/news/lto-embarks-on-comprehensive-data-analysis-for-holistic-govt-intervention-on-road-accidents-road-rage/

Figure 4. Number of Deaths due to land transportation accidents by sex, 2020-2023



Source: https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/vital-statistics/node/1684076211

Urban land transport in the Philippines is characterized by road-based modes and private sector dominance. It is dominated by road-based modes, which carry 98% of passenger transport and 60% of freight transport (ADB, 2021). The National Capital Region (Metro Manila) typifies the worst in urban transportation stress. As of 2022, it had 10.6 million registered vehicles, of which 95% were privately-owned (PSA, 2023). With traffic demand of 12.8 million trips per day and only 1 kilometer of road per 385 vehicles, the travel average is 10km per hour (ADB, 2021). Its 30 bridges accommodate 1.3 million vehicles per day or an average of 43,300 vehicles per bridge/day. The estimated economic loss due to traffic congestion is PHP 3.5 billion per day as of 2017, rising to PHP 5.4 billion/day by 2035 if no action is taken. It is not possible to keep on building roads just to accommodate mostly private vehicles without exacerbating the problem.

The Philippine transport system is beset by a confluence of problems, such as a lack of an integrated and coordinated transport network, overlapping and conflicting functions of transport agencies, transport safety and security concerns, and inadequate transport facilities, particularly in conflict-affected and underdeveloped areas (NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017). Road networks are concentrated in highly urbanized areas: in Metro Manila, 7.3km of roads per square kilometer; in Northern Mindanao, 1.2 km of roads per square kilometer (PIDS, 2010). As of 2020, more than half of the 2,931 establishments engaged in transport and logistics are concentrated in the National Capital Region (PSA Annual Survey of Philippine Business and Industry, 2020). So too are government subsidies for public transportation (financial assistance, tax exemption). Ninety-nine percent of the PHP 17.92 billion in subsidies in 2020 was deployed in the NCR. Four other regions received small subsidies: the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with PhP 2.49 million, Cordillera Administrative Region with PhP 0.62 million, Northern Mindanao with PhP 0.40 million, and MIMAROPA Region with PhP 0.26 million subsidies.

Cities and urban transport are critical frontiers for climate action. Urban transport is a significant contributor to GHG emissions, with most emissions coming from cars (Cities Alliance, 2019). Emerging cities are on a trajectory toward extreme urban crowding without deriving the benefits of urban accessibility (Kit et al., 2013). The basic function of urban and transport planning is to allocate space for public goods such as road networks, parks, schools, hospitals, workplaces, and housing (Bertaud, 2018). The spatial configuration of economic activities is dependent on transport infrastructure (Collier & Venables, 2016). However, there is often a gap between land use plans and transportation plans. The lack of coherence contributes to inefficient cities with housing situated far away from employment centers (Suzuki et al., 2013). While it is important to mobilize private sector participation in urban and transport planning and the financial and technical aspects of provision of services, it is incumbent on the government to allocate spaces for public goods (Bertaud, 2018). This is where land use planning and regulations play a critical role (Olivier et al., 2021).

3. Gaps and Challenges

There are no guidelines for the preparation of the Local Transportation Management Plan (LTMP). The LTMP is a mandated sectoral/thematic plan of the LGU. This mandate has been reiterated by the National Transport Policy (NTP) and its IRR (Sec. 7). Accordingly, the CDPs of LGUs should cover transport sector needs and, in urban areas, the CDPs should be regularly updated to account for new and significant land use and transport developments (Rule VI, Sec. 23, IRR of the National Transport Policy). There is supposed to be a Philippine Transportation System Master Plan (PTSMP) that shall guide implementing agencies and LGUs in their respective planning and programming exercises (Sec. 13, National Transport Policy). However, the PTSMP is yet to be formulated.

How do local governments avail of national government's commitment to set aside resources for local transport initiatives? Local government units need financial and technical support for LTMP implementation. They are required to take greater responsibility and accountability for mobility outcomes in their respective areas (Sec. 7, National Transport Policy). This responsibility and accountability need to be backed up with technical and financial resources. Section 8 of the National Transport Policy provides that the DOTr, DPWH, and DA, in coordination with the DOF and DBM, "shall set aside resources for local transport initiatives, including but not limited to the construction, improvement, and rehabilitation of intermodal transportation". The DOTr and DPWH are also mandated to extend assistance to LGUs to enhance their capacities and capabilities in the areas of transport planning, program/project implementation and monitoring, traffic engineering and management, and transport and land use integration (Sec. 37, NTP).

What are the criteria for operationalization of financial and technical support from the national government? Section 8 of the NTP also provides that "the resources of the national government shall be devoted mainly to facilities classified as 'national' based on their functional and strategic importance to the country as defined by existing laws, regulations and issuances or unless otherwise defined under Convergence Programs". Section 6.1, Rule II of the IRR of the NTP enumerates facilities classified as "national":

I. Roads classified as "national primary", "national secondary", "national tertiary", and "expressways" as may be defined by DPWH;
II. Heavy railways connecting provinces and regions;
III. Airports and seaports that serve as international and regional gateways;
IV. Radio frequency used by the aeronautical and maritime sectors;
V. Transport infrastructure, vehicles, and equipment in metropolitan areas and cities;
VI. Transport infrastructure aimed at spurring economic growth in priority areas identified as emerging growth corridors/centers in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS);

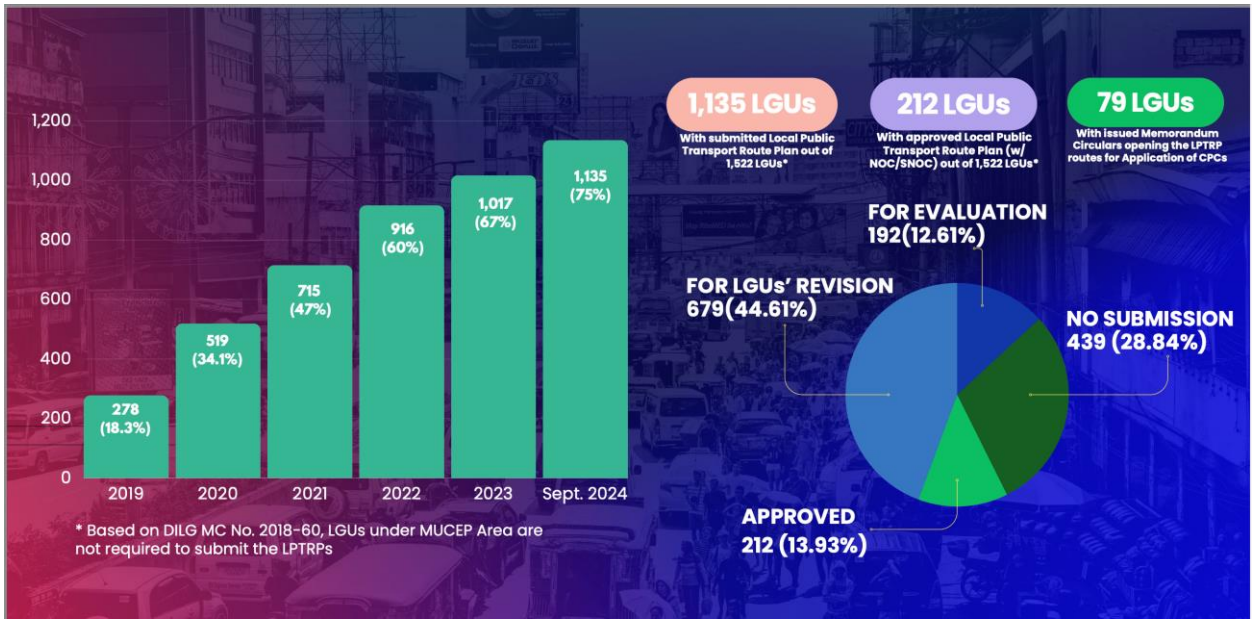
VII. Transport infrastructure that serves as a linkage between major economic sectors of the country (e.g., agriculture, industry, trade, tourism), or covering a major sphere of influence of two or more regions;
VIII. Facilities providing increased access to basic social and other development services in conflict-affected and underdeveloped areas; and,
IX. Other facilities as maybe declared nationally significant for purposes identified after diligent and conscientious study and deliberations by the appropriate body.

Still, there is a need to clarify what constitutes 'national' facilities and how transportation facilities located in or established by local governments may qualify for national government financial and technical support.

How can local governments and concerned national government agencies enhance coordination to mitigate problems arising from overlapping mandates and authorities towards the unified objective of the NTP? In most cities and municipalities, national roads also serve as the main artery that connects housing and settlements, places of work, and entertainment. These roads are managed by the Department of Public Highways (DPWH). Local governments are mandated to manage and maintain provincial, municipal, and barangay roads. Variances in standards of construction and maintenance impact on traffic and safety. On the other hand, franchises of public utility vehicles are under the authority of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), while franchises of tricycles are under the authority of local government units. Both vehicular systems interact on the same road space that is governed by the land use plan and zoning ordinance of the local government. Both also impact people's options for mobility, such as non-use of vehicles (walking) and bicycling.

LGUs are given jurisdiction over local public transportation routes and prepare Local Public Transportation Route Plans (DILG-DOTr JMC No. 001, s. 2017; DOTr—DILG-LTFRB JMC No. 02, s. 2024). The plan includes data on the route network, mode of service per route, number of units per mode of transport, frequency of dispatch, location of stops, and other transport facilities, and future developments. The DILG and DOTr have taken initiatives to assist LGUs in crafting the LPTRPs. The DILG has also provided several iterations through memorandum circulars (MC 2018-39, MC 2018-60, MC 2021-139), including information on training schedules and advisories to intensify efforts in preparing LPTRPs.

Figure 5. Status of LPTRPs as of November 2024



Source: UP NCTS (2025) - Public Transportation Modernization Program(PTMP) Forum: Financing Component in Focus 14 November 2024

After 8 years, since 2017, only 13% of LGUs have approved LPTRPs (212 out of 1,074 LPTRPs submitted).[4] A significant number of LGUs have not yet prepared or submitted their LPTRPs (17.2% in Luzon, 37% in Visayas, and 25.1% in Mindanao). The rate of approval is lowest in the Visayas (at 8% of LGUs).

Urban and transport planning needs to consider gender and disability in mobility choices. Even if some societies are evolving towards greater gender equality, most care responsibilities still rest on women, thus influencing their mobility choices (Sanchez de Madariaga & Abril, 2021). Mobility patterns remain largely different for women and men (Meloni et al., 2009) and differently abled persons owing to age and physical and physiological conditions. Given their time constraints from multiple burdens, women are disproportionately affected by the limited availability of transport and access to jobs and services (Dominguez Gonzales et al., 2020).

The National Transport Policy promotes inclusive mobility and accessibility through prioritization of people-mobility over vehicle mobility (Sec. 12.9, IRR of NTP). Mainstreaming of gender considerations is more explicit on the aspect of support facilities (also cited in Sec. 5, NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017). The ten (10) components and six (6) objectives of the Public Utility Vehicles Modernization Program (PUVMP) do not include gender considerations in the program.

[4] Note: LGUs in the National Capital Region (composed of the 16 cities of Caloocan, Muntilupa, Navotas, Pasay Pasig, Parañaque, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, and Valenzuela, and the municipality of Pateros, and including adjoining cities and municipalities in its adjoining provinces (Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna and Cavite that constitute the geographical coverage of the Metro Manila Urban Transport Integration Study Update and Capacity Enhancement Program (MUCEP). LPTRPs of these LGUs are under the responsibility of the DOTr.

4. Policy levers that local governments can use

There are several policy levers that local governments can use to strengthen local transportation management and planning.

a) **The National Transport Policy** emphasizes the development of a "**people-oriented national transport system** that is safe, secure, reliable, efficient, integrated, intermodal, affordable, cost- effective, and environmentally sustainable" (Sec. 2). LGUs are required to take greater responsibility and accountability for mobility outcomes in their respective areas (Sec. 7) and the CDPs of LGUs should cover transport sector needs and, in urban areas, the CDPs should be regularly updated to account for new and significant land use and transport developments (Rule VI, Sec. 23).

b) **NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017** provides that, pending passage of policies requiring legislative action, it is necessary that policy reforms, which can be administratively undertaken pursuant to existing laws, be adopted and implemented to respond to urgent transport demands and requirements of the national economy (NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017).

c) **The DOTr, DPWH, and DA are mandated to set aside resources for local transport initiatives (NTP Sec. 8)** and the DOTr and DPWH are mandated to extend assistance to LGUs to enhance their capacities and capabilities in the areas of transport planning, program/project implementation and monitoring, traffic engineering and management and transport and land use integration (NTP Sec. 37).

d) **The Public Transportation Modernization Program (PTMP)** aims to rationalize route networks and service planning, consolidate public utility vehicles, standardize technical requirements for PUVs, and provide fiscal and non-fiscal support and related support infrastructure, among others (DOTr DO 2023-022 - PTMP Guidelines).

e) **The National Transport Policy promotes collaboration and resource sharing between the national government and local governments.** Section 8.1, Rule II of the IRR provides that the "DOTr, DPWH, and DA, in coordination with the DOF and DBM, shall set aside resources for local transport initiatives, including but not limited to the construction, improvement, and rehabilitation of intermodal transportation such as rail, airports, seaports, greenways, non-motorized transport facilities, terminals, depots, farm-to-market roads (FMRs), road-to-RORO terminals, social ports and agriculture-related airports and ports including their access roads, as well as road connectivity to tourism, trade and industry centers, and other local roads, to the extent allowed by existing laws, rules, and regulations". The IRR further provides that the DOTr and DPWH will provide inputs on the criteria for the use of funds that are channeled directly to LGUs under the auspices of the DBM.

f) **The National Transport Policy supports local autonomy and promotes local government responsibility in local transportation management.** Section 7.1, Rule II of the IRR provides that "consistent with the principle of local autonomy under the Local Government Code, LGUs shall exercise primary responsibility for the financing, construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of provincial, city, municipal, and barangay transport facilities, including related services, unless such facilities or services are included in Convergence Programs or in a program or project of a national government agency", and to take greater responsibility and accountability for mobility outcomes in their respective jurisdictions. This includes possibility that infrastructure and facilities classified as "national" may be turned over to LGU or metropolitan authorities for operation and maintenance (Sec. 6.2, Rule II, IRR of NTP). The local transportation sector plan integrated into the CDP is just an initial step towards greater autonomy in local transportation management and planning (Sec. 7.1, Rule II, IRR of the NTP). LGUs are also enjoined to provide DOTr a copy of their updated CLUPs and transport and traffic management plans. Moreover, LGUs may allow certain fiscal mechanisms/instruments, such as local tax privileges or tax exemptions, to serve as incentives in transport infrastructure implementation (Sec. 8.5, Rule II, IRR).

g) **The National Transport Policy also promotes collaboration, strengthening of planning functions, and harmonization of transportation projects that cut across different LGUs.** Where no metropolitan authority exists, the "concerned national agency will develop mechanisms for ensuring coordination among relevant LGUs" (Sec. 6.1, Rule II, IRR). However, the IRR does not specify which national agency is responsible for developing the mechanisms.

h) **The National Transport Policy promotes integration of land use and transport planning.** "All government agencies and LGUs involved in the movement of people, goods, and services, and in the provision of transportation infrastructure, facilities, and services shall adopt an integrated approach to land use and urban transport planning" especially in urban areas (Sec. 23.1, Rule VI, IRR). CDPs of LGUs should cover transport sector needs. Strategies should focus on "accessibility, connectivity, TOD, improvement of public transport facilities and mixed-use development, and other related measures to minimize vehicle trips while maximizing the use of mass transportation" (Sec. 23.1, Rule VI, IRR) with highest priority to sustainability and mobility, including proper sidewalks and networks of bicycle lanes (Sec. 24.1, Rule VI, IRR).

i) **LGU has jurisdiction over local public transportation routes and plans.** This jurisdiction is emphasized in joint memorandum circulars (DILG-DOTr JMC No. 001, s. 2017; DOTr—DILG-LTFRB JMC No. 02, s. 2024) and DILG memorandum circulars (MC 2018-39, MC 2018-60, MC 2021-139).

5. Policy Recommendations

Taking stock of inputs from civil society organizations and coalitions and development partners, participants of the 10 June 2025 inter-agency dialogue put forward the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: For DILG and DOTr to establish an inter-operable monitoring and evaluation mechanism for assessing outputs, outcomes, and impacts of local transportation management

Rationale

a) DOTr is the central repository for all transport-related data (Sec. 14.3, Rule II, IRR of NTP). All related database systems shall be linked to this central repository; accessible to all government agencies, data repositories, research institutions, and members of the academe, particularly those involved in the collection and management of transport-related data (Sec. 14.1, Rule II, IRR of NTP).

b) The DOTr shall establish and maintain a database system for transport-related information (Sec. 14.1, Rule III, IRR of NTP).

c) The DOTr and DPWH shall extend technical assistance to LGUs on transport planning, program implementation, and monitoring, among others (Sec. 37, Rule VIII, IRR of NTP).

d) The NTP has no provision on transport sector M&E, but it has particular provisions on monitoring of airline and shipping operations (Sec. 20, Rule V), monitoring of structural health of transport infrastructure (Sec. 22.3, Rule V), and evaluation of road and bridge projects (Sec. 25.1, Rule VI).

e) The LPTRP includes data on route network, mode of service per route, number of units per mode of transport, frequency of dispatch, location of stops, and other transport facilities and future developments.

f) LGUs are enjoined to include the transport sector in the CDP and CLUP.

g) The LTMP is a mandated sector plan of the LGU, but there are no guidelines yet for the formulation of the LTMP, and the PTSMP is not yet in place.

h) In CDP preparation, the LGU uses the Rationalized Planning Indicator and Data Set (RaPIDS) as a basis for formulating the LDIs. However, transport sector indicators are not yet included in the LDIs except for infrastructure indicators.

i) GHG inventory, management, and reporting under the responsibility of sector agencies and coordinated by the CCC.

Practical Measures

a) DILG and DOTr to collaborate in developing an LGU-DILG-DOTr inter-operable M&E system for the transportation sector.

Exchange of information is often fragmented, complex, and highly influenced by technical and organizational problems (Gotsschalk & Solli-Saether, 2009). The challenge is how government organizations share and integrate information, even if information is derived from different sources with different operating systems and data structures. Integration could be a costly process that demands the creation of new structures and resources, not to mention legal requirements and barriers. The other and less costly option is interoperability.

Interoperability is the ability of organizations and systems to interact, share information and integrate processes and information by use of common standards (State Services Commission, 2017; Scholl & Klischewski, 2007; Archmann & Kudlacek, 2008; Gotsschalk & Solli-Saether, 2009). It is not an end but a means, a tool to solve problems of integration (Archman & Kudlacek, 2008). Neither is it an instant solution. It has to be planned, its reason for being agreed upon, and its development must undergo stages through a guided direction.

At least two elements of interoperability must be secured: **one**, semantic interoperability and common standards; and **two**, organizational interoperability.

- **Semantic Interoperability**

  Semantics are about meanings. In information systems, it pertains to the actual meaning of data found in one system and how it relates to data found in each of the other linked systems (Papazoglou and Ribbers, 2006). Achieving success in semantic interoperability means agreeing on and using common definitions. This process requires extensive promotion and dissemination of common definitions to concerned organizations and public audiences on shareable data such as routes, nodes, demand, mode of transport, capacity, frequency, and location of stops, among others.

  Archmann & Kudlacek (2008) suggest that semantic interoperability can be achieved with the use of existing technologies and applications related to data models, syntax,

accessibility, security, and privacy of data, as well as pre-existing common understanding of the meanings and use of data.

- **Organizational Interoperability**

  Organizational interoperability is the ability of two or more units (or organizations) to provide services to and accept services from the other units and use the exchange to operate effectively together (Legner & Lebreton, 2007). This involves the dynamics of transactions between and among different organizations. It is argued that transaction costs are lower when the degree of organizational (and systems) interoperability is high (Coase, 1937; Gotsschalk & Solli-Saether, 2009). One way of achieving organizational inter-operability is the value chain configuration, where organizations are seen as part of a chain of activities that add value to the final product and services (Porter, 1998). **In this configuration, LGU transportation management offices, DILG, and the DOTr form part of the value chain that feeds information to the central database of the DOTr and, vice versa, the database being accessible to other stakeholders.**

  Another way of achieving organizational inter-operability is the value shop configuration, where an organization creates value by solving unique problems for stakeholders, and where knowledge is the most important resource (Stabell & Fjeldstad, 1998). The value shop framework can be extended to a value network configuration where an organization that creates value connects clients and customers that are dependent on each other. **In this configuration, LGU M&E systems incorporate M&E on the local transportation sector and connect the same to the central database of the DOTr.**

  Both semantic and organizational inter-operability can be facilitated by the use of common tools and templates, including digitalization of the same.

b) DILG to support LGUs in integrating transportation sector indicators in the CDP through RAPIDs and CDP PRIMES

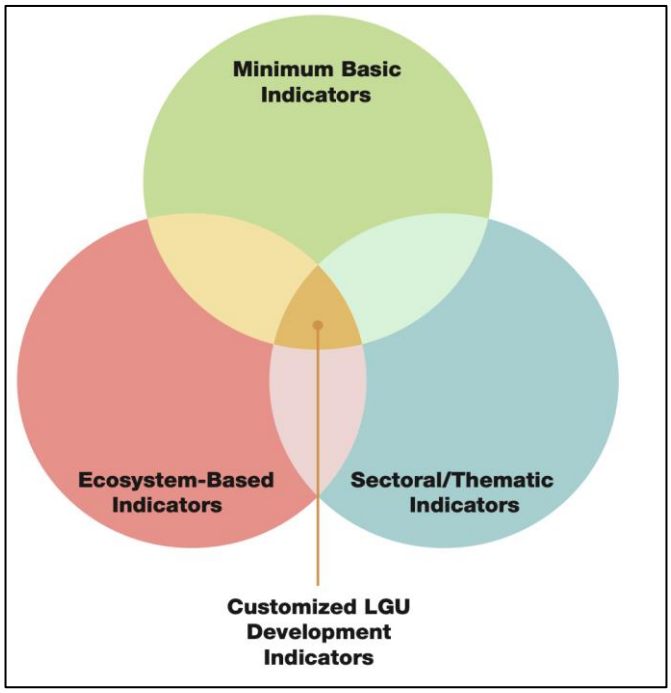
In formulating the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), the planning team of the LGU prepares the Local Development Indicator System (LDIS) is an output document in Step 3 (CDP Illustrative Guide).[5] The LDIS data set is used for identifying issues based on the LGU vision. The existing LDIS consists of a list of 156 indicators, which LGUs find difficult to comply with. Filling in data for the long list of indicators takes a lot of time and effort for data collection and identification of data sources.

In 2016, DILG introduced the Rationalized Planning Indicator and Data Set (RaPIDS) to support LGUs that have difficulty in completing the list of LDIS indicators. RaPIDS is coherent with the LDIS principles, which are based on the LGU's vision and success indicators. Its value addition is the updating of indicators to make them consistent with

[5] The document is prepared using RaPIDS Form 1d.

those required and accepted by NGAs and international institutions, new statutory requirements (such as mainstreaming of DRR and CCA), and thematic concerns that need to be articulated (such as gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity).

Figure 6. RaPIDS Indicator Composition



Source: CDP Illustrative Guide, 2016.

RaPIDS presents a customized list of indicators that include: (a) minimum basic indicators applicable to all LGUs; (b) ecosystem-based indicators from which the LGU can choose from depending on the actual lay of ecosystems; (c) area-characteristics-based indicators; and (d) sectoral/thematic indicators consistent with instruments used by the DILG and other NGAs and international institutions. The sectoral/thematic indicators link the CDP to the programs of NGAs and international organizations. Currently, some local transport sector indicators are subsumed under the infrastructure sub-headings of the Minimum Basic Indicators and Urban Ecosystem Indicators.

Table 2. Transport sector indicators in RaPIDS

Infrastructure Sub-Heading, Minimum Basic Indicators		**Infrastructure Sub-Heading, Urban Ecosystem Indicators**	
What is being measured	**Indicators**	**What is being measured**	**Indicators**
Current level of service	No. of PUVs operating in the locality	Social support	No. of transport terminals
Public roads	Road density (areas covered by roads to total land area)	Mobility	Average travel time in service roads

Public roads	Total length of roads in Km/total area of A&D land		
Public roads	Km of road per 100 persons		
Public roads	Percentage of paved roads		

Source: RaPIDS Indicators, 2022

Suggested Framework for Setting Indicators.

An indicator system is part and parcel of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. The national government has adopted the Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting framework (NEDA-DBM JMC 2015-01- Adoption of the National Evaluation Policy Framework of the Philippines; DBM National Budget Circular No. 565, s. 2016 – Adoption of the Results-Based Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Policy). This framework distinguishes outputs (as a direct result of inputs and activities), outcomes (an indirect result that indicates qualitative change from one state of being to another state of being), and impacts (or the wider effects on the economy, society, physical environment, and political institutions). All indicators, whether output or outcome, should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

Here lies the importance of the semantics of data that should be standardized and should indicate at least three dimensions: time, location, and quantity (of change). It is also important to note that an outcome is not delivered by or due to a single output. A desired outcome can be supported by more than one output.

Table 3. Examples of output and outcome indicators for the transport sector

Baseline Conditions (described in the Ecological Profile of the LGU)	Outputs		Outcomes	
	(what is to be measured) Target outputs	Indicators (actual outputs)	(What is to be measured) Desired outcome	Outcome indicators
• Existing number of public terminals • Existing number of PUBs with franchizes • Length of paved roads	• 5 public terminals with toilet facilities • 20 PUBs issued with franchizes • Additional 20 km of paved roads	• # of terminals with toilet facilities • # of PUBs with franchizes • Actual length of paved roads constructed	Improved access to transportation services and facilities	• No. of persons benefiting from PUV services • No. of persons benefiting from public terminals • Volume of passengers and cargo using the paved roads
• Length of paved and protected sidewalks	• 15 kilometers of paved and	• Km of paved and protected sidewalks	Enhanced mobility	• Length of sidewalks

Baseline Conditions (described in the Ecological Profile of the LGU)	Outputs		Outcomes	
	(what is to be measured) Target outputs	Indicators (actual outputs)	(What is to be measured) Desired outcome	Outcome indicators
• Length of bicycle lanes • Existing travel time per km in main thoroughfares	protected sidewalks • 20 kilometers of bicycle lanes • 20 km/hr travel time in main thoroughfares	• Km of bicycle lanes • Actual travel time of PUBs per km		• Length of bicycle lanes • Travel time when using public transport
Description of preferential access of PWDs, senior citizens and pregnant women to PUVs and public terminals	Local ordinance requiring PUBs and PUJs to allocate reserved seats for PWDs, senior citizens and pregnant women	• Local ordinance • % of PUBs and PUJs compliant to the local ordinance	Improved inclusivity of public transportation services and facilities	• 90% of PUBs and PUJs with reserved seats for PWDs, senior citizens and pregnant women • 90% of public terminals with reserved seats reserved seats for PWDs, senior citizens and pregnant women
Existing road safety conditions • # of road accidents/ year • # of road deaths/year • # of traffic violations/year	• Strict enforcement of traffic rules • # of road signs • # of intersections with traffic lights • Street light posts per kilometer	• % reduction of traffic violations • Actual # of road signs • Actual # of intersections with traffic lights • Actual density of light posts per km	Improved road safety	• 50% reduction of road deaths • 80% reduction of road accidents
• Existing GHG inventory of the local transport sector • % of old vehicles • % of modern PUVs • # of electric vehicles	• # of modern PUVs • % of public transport providers consolidated • Value of financing support for electric PUV modernization • LPTRP formulated	• # of modern PUVs with certificate of compliance • Actual % of public transport providers consolidated • Actual value of financing generated for electric PUV • Approved LPTRP	Environmentally sustainable local transportation system	• % reduction and avoidance of GHG emissions from baseline • % growth of electric PUVs

System and Mechanism

The DILG can introduce the Comprehensive Development Plan Recalibration, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation System (CDP PRIMES) as the primary system for M&E of the CDP and integrate M&E of the transportation sector accordingly. For vertical interoperability, the monitoring and evaluation templates of CDP PRIMES should also incorporate the data sets required by the DOTr.

LGUs can also use existing Project Monitoring Committees (PMCs) as the primary mechanism. The establishment of PMCs at the provincial and municipal levels had been mandated by Presidential Memorandum Order No. 175, s. 1988. Regional Project Monitoring Committees (RPMCs) under the RDC were mandated by Executive Order No. 376, s. 1989. In 1993, EO No. 93, s. 1993, amending EO No. 376, provided for the allocation of funds for the RPMCs.

In 2004, DILG Memorandum Circular 2004-78 mandated the reactivation of PMCs, designating the following as mandatory members: DILG official, 2 representatives of a civil society organization and people's organization, and 5 nominees of the Local Development Council (LDC), 4 of whom shall be appointed by the Local Chief Executive (LCE).

The DILG issued two more iterations of the PMC: (a) organization or reconstitution of sub-regional PMCs (DILG MC 2019-188); and (b) creation of Barangay Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (BPMEC) under the Barangay Development Council (DILG MC 2020-070).

At the local government level, the PMC is positioned to be the primary mechanism for M&E, including M&E of the transport sector. Data sets required by and useful for the DOTr should form part of the data sets in the M&E system used by the PMC.

Review of Local Transportation Management Plans

LGUs and the DILG can independently review LTMPs using CDP PRIMES. Where national government transport sector programs are involved, the DILG, DOTr, DPWH, and DBM can organize *ad hoc* review committees. Pending availability of LTMP guidelines and given the low level of approved LTRPs, the immediate purpose of the review shall be toward improving the capacity of LGUs to formulate and implement LTMPs and LTPRPs.

Recommendation 2: Upgrade skills and capacities of local transportation management offices

Rationale

This recommendation rests on the assumption that local transportation management capacity is not yet well defined, both at the institutional, organizational, and individual levels of capacity.

a) The appointment of a Local Transportation Management Officer is not mandatory in the Local Government Code.

b) It is not yet known how many LGUs have established full-fledged Local Transportation Management Offices (LTMOs). What is popularly known is the existence of Local Traffic Management Offices (LTMOs).

c) While LGUs have been mandated to prepare the Local Public Transportation Route Plan (LPTRP), the preparation of the plan is to be handled by the LPTRP Team, an ad hoc body designed by the LCE. As of November 2024, only 13% of LGUs have approved LPTRPs (UP NCTS, 2025).

d) LPTRPs are to be integrated into the CDP (Sec. 7.2, Rule II, IRR of the NTP). CDPs of LGUs should cover transport sector needs (Sec. 23.1, Rule VI, IRR of the NTP).

e) Initial data suggest that LGUs, except HUCs and big cities, do not have the financial and technical capacity for establishing LTM offices, Local Transportation Management Plans (LTMPs), and relevant programs and projects, except road clearing and traffic management.

f) Cities are mandated to establish transport and traffic management units with the following functions (Sec. 27, Rule VI, IRR of the NTP):

   I. Provide transportation sector inputs in the city's CDP, CLUP, and other relevant plans;
   II. Prepare the city's LPTRP;
   III. Plan and implement policies, projects, and programs that will improve the mobility of its citizens and visitors;
   IV. Coordinate with the DOTr, LTFRB, LTO, PNR, LRTA, PPA, MARINA, PCG, CAAP, other LGUs, and public transport operators in all aspects of public transport network development, as may be necessary; and,
   V. Discharge functions to LGUs that are mandated by the Local Government Code in the areas of transport planning, traffic engineering, and management.

g) The DOTr, DPWH, and DA, in coordination with the DOF and DBM, shall set aside resources for local transport initiatives (Section 8.1, Rule II, IRR of the NTP).

Practical Measures

a) The DILG and DOTr, with the support of the Office of Transport Cooperatives (OTC) and the UP National Center on Transportation Studies (UP NCTS) to conduct a baseline study on local transportation management (LTM) capacity of LGUs.

b) The study shall be in aid of developing LTM capacity development training modules for LGUs.

c) The study shall capture existing capacities at three levels, namely:

   I. Institutional capacities (such as availability of local ordinances and other relevant policies, such as road user' fees, taxation, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives).

   II. Organizational capacities (such as availability of transportation management structures, inclusive of organizational procedures, unit functions, job descriptions, and budgeting and expenditure management).

   III. Individual capacities (such as traffic management, traffic engineering, route planning, road safety, data management, monitoring and evaluation, etc.)

d) In parallel, the DILG is to coordinate with the DBM and Civil Service Commission for the establishment of Transportation Management Offices (TMOs) in cities (as provided for in Sec. 27 of the NTP).

Recommendation 3: Strengthening vertical alignment of local transportation plans and the national transportation plan, and coordination between local transportation management offices and concerned national government agencies

Rationale

a) The national government recognizes that the Philippine transport system is afflicted by several problems, including a lack of integrated and coordinated transport networks and overlapping and conflicting functions of transport agencies (NEDA Board Resolution No. 5, s. 2017).

b) Independent studies also indicate policy and governance gaps in the transport sector (Diokno-Sicat et al., 2020).

c) While transportation management structures, policies, programs, and projects are well-developed at the national level, there are significant deficits at the local government level. Deficits at the local level include the non-existence of full-fledged Local Transportation Management Offices (LTMOs), except in some major cities, and the absence of Local Transportation Management Plans (LTMPs). Even LPTRPs are not fully in place. As of November 2024, only 13% of LGUs have approved LPTRPs (UP NCTS, 2025).

Practical Measures

Vertical alignment of local sectoral and spatial development plans to regional and national sectoral and spatial development plans and global goals is a long-standing policy and practice. This is complemented by guidelines on the integration of planning, programming, budgeting, and expenditure management. Since 1998, the DILG has introduced the rationalized planning system for LGUs to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy in processes for the formulation of 22 NGA-mandated plans and 11 sectoral/thematic plans. In the CDP Guidelines, the Local Transportation Management Plan (LTMP) is a thematic/sectoral plan distinct from NGA-mandated plans. In the National Transport Policy, it is mandatory for cities to establish transport and traffic management units to take charge of preparing the Local Public Transportation Route Plan (LPTRP) and discharge functions in the areas of transport planning and traffic engineering, and management, among other functions (Sec. 27, Rule VI, IRR of the NTP).

One way of achieving vertical alignment is interoperability - the ability of organizations and systems to interact, share information, and integrate processes and information by use of

common standards. However, in the current institutional environment, some precursor actions must be undertaken:

One, establish the strategic framework of the national public transport system development as a guide for LGUs and other stakeholders. In the NTP, the Philippine Transport System Master Plan (PTSMP) is supposed to guide implementing agencies and LGUs in their respective planning and programming exercises (Sec. 13.2, Rule III, IRR of the NTP). However, the PTSMP is not yet formulated. The Department of Economy, Planning and Development (DEPDev) published the terms of reference (TOR) as early as 2017.[6] In November 2024, the DOTr announced plans to hire a consultant for the drafting of the PTSMP 2025-2055[7] and published the Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI).[8] The terms of reference emphasize alignment with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, National Climate Action Plan (NCCAP), and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and creation of a Transport Data Management System and Data Observatory. Apparently, the PTSMP will focus on the transport system plan more than the transport sector plan.

Two, pending the availability of the PTSMP, the DILG and DOTr should collaborate to prepare the guidelines for the formulation of the Local Transportation Management Plan (LTMP). The guidelines can build on the existing guidelines for LPTRP formulation, which are focused on the local public transportation route planning more than local transport sector planning. Existing guidelines - DILG-DOTr JMC No. 001, s. 2017 and DOTr—DILG-LTFRB JMC No. 02, s. 2024, can be upgraded to include not only public transportation route planning but, more comprehensively, a local transportation management plan (LTMP).

Three, in line with the mandatory institutional arrangements provided for in the NTP (Sec. 27), the DILG and DOTr should issue a joint memorandum circular (JMC) for city LGUs to establish the Local Transportation Management Office (LTMO). Anticipating future developments in the light of rapid urbanization, the JMC should also encourage provincial and municipal governments to establish their own TMOs.

Four, establish regional-level coordination mechanisms. Sec. 27 of the NTP provides that local transport and traffic management offices of cities shall coordinate with the DOTr, LTFRB, LTO, PNR, LRTA, PPA, MARINA, PCG, and CAAP. Most national agencies cited in the policy do not have local offices below the regional level. To avoid redundancy and additional costs in creating mechanisms, the DILG, DOTr, and LGUs can make use of the Regional Development Council (RDC) and its Secretariat, the Regional Office of the DEPDev, as a venue for coordination. One of the purposes for the creation of the RDC is administrative decentralization and strengthening of local government autonomy (EO 325, s. 1996). The DILG and DOTr are regular members of the RDC, together with other NGAs represented in the NEDA Board, Regional Directors of the DepEd, DSWD, and DOT, provincial governors, city

[6] See: https://depdev.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/PTSMP-TOR_01-Mar-2017.pdf
[7] See: https://southeastasiainfra.com/dotr-seeks-consultant-for-30-year-philippine-transport-plan/
[8] See: https://www.aiib.org/en/opportunities/business/project-procurement/_download/Philippines/REOI-for-PTSMP_Final.pdf

mayors, mayors of municipalities designated as provincial capitals, mayors of municipalities designated as regional centers, and private sector representatives.

Among other functions of the RDC are to:

- Integrate approved development plans of provinces and cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges, government-owned and controlled corporations, and special development authorities in the region into the regional development plan;

- Initiate and coordinate the development, funding, and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several agencies or LGUs; and,

- Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of development projects undertaken by government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities, government-owned and/or controlled corporations, and special development authorities in the region; and

The RDC has four (4) major sectoral committees, namely: Economic Development Sectoral Committee (EDSECOM), Social Development Committee (SDC), Infrastructure Development Committee (IDC), Committee on Development Administration and Communication (CODAC), and special committees that may be created. In some regions, RDCs have created the Regional Land Use Committee (RLUC).

The DILG and DOTr can initiate the creation of a transport sector technical working group (TWG) or sub-committee under the EDSECOM or the IDC. The TWG (or sub-committee) could be composed of representatives of the DILG (as chair or team leader), DOTr (through the LTFRB), provincial and city governments, private sector, local transport cooperative, and civil society.

Criteria for Vertical Alignment

With particular focus on cities as provided for in Sec. 27 of the NTP, the DILG and DOTr can jointly establish the minimum criteria for vertical alignment by tracing the availability or existence of the following elements:

Table 4. Sample criteria of vertical alignment

Essential Elements	City LGU	DOTr	What to align
Plans	LTMP and LPTRP	PTSMP and PUVMP	Goal and outcomes
Structures	LTMO, LPTRP Team	DOTr and attached agencies	Unit functions, job descriptions and job standards
Coordination Mechanism	Regional level TWG or Sub-Committee under an RDC Sectoral Committee		Plans, programs, financing and technical support, quality standards
Systems	CDP PRIMES	DOTr M&E system	Semantics of data and information
Policies	Local ordinances on taxation, incentives, road safety	National policies on taxation, incentives and road safety	Letter expression of policies
Programs	Transport sector PPAs	Transport sector PPAs	Goal and outcomes and infrastructure targets

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