

TRUST IN THE PROCESS: INTER-ACTOR TRUST FOR COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSPORT – LAND USE PLANNING

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ABSTRACT

Inter-actor trust (or the absence of it) plays an important role in complex planning processes. The concept of trust has received much attention in management science, but surprisingly little in planning literature despite the growing similarities between the two and its increasing importance in ensuring coordination between multiple, heterogeneous actors in delivering developments. This paper aims to explore the role of trust on coordination in transport oriented developments processes, based on literature research and two empirical case studies, the Dutch Stedenbaan programme and the *Big Move* and *Places to Grow* plans in Toronto Canada. The results of the research suggest that in both planning contexts trust is an important element in achieving successful outcomes. This said, both institutional contexts have pronounced impacts on the ability for trust to take root. Trust was often identified at a personal level which can bridge institutional differences between organisations, but that can be hindered by a history of distrust between organisations. As in any successful relationship the building of trust between stakeholders seems dependent on a commitment to building a good relationship early and openness throughout. Breaks in trust, so long they are not fatal, can lead to a stronger trust relationship in the long term.

Keywords: Trust, Regional Planning, Transport-Land Use Integration

1. Introduction

The transformation of the city from a simple mono-centric urban area to a poly-centric network city region with a number of specialised centres has increased the necessity to adequately connect these centres to a mass (public) transit network and ensure that spreading urban development is concentrated in areas with good accessibility. This requires coordination between the fields of transportation and land-use planning at a regional scale in consensus oriented governance networks (Klijn, 2008; Kickert *et al.* 1997). These networks can be seen as structured relationships between public and private actors that have an

influence on policy in a specific area (Berardo, 2009). The coordination in a network can take on a number of different forms; from modest coordinator where priorities of separate actors are merely combined to moderate coordination where a shared conceptual framework is produced or a high degree of coordination where visions are shared, resources are shared and policy instruments are discussed (Sager & Ravlum, 2004). Many modern planning processes, from infrastructure projects (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007) to education (Klijn, 2008) or more complex regional scale planning issues such as Transit Oriented Development, take place in policy networks.

In such networks the resources of multiple actors, public and private are necessary to lead to a successful outcome, but often the definition of the problem and a 'successful outcome' differ between parties. Planning professionals have had to deal with this increasing complexity of planning across scales and traditional institutional boundaries with multiple actors involved. Although the need and necessity of planning through governance networks as inclusive form of planning where power was shared with civil society and private actors in an effort to restore confidence in planning, has been widely acknowledged (Woltjer, 2000; Beauregard, 2002; Swain & Tait, 2007; Laurian, 2009), planning in networks has proven to be a challenge for planners. In many cases there is no one actor who has the power and means to plan and implement projects on their own where the process is aimed at achieving benefits from the cooperation of governmental and non-governmental actors. Moreover, policy networks do not work in isolation, but rather within an institutional context, which influences their functioning.

In these processes based on interdependency planning professionals have increasingly had to rely on communicative strategies to plan and implement projects and programmes (Cars *et al.* 2002; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003). This has not proved easy. Delays, partially implemented programmes and constant disputes about project necessity, goals and the implementation strategy have resulted.

The concept of trust receives considerable attention in management and organisational science as a way to coordinate the actions of independent actors within a network structure. In planning research the concept has come up with increasing frequency as beneficial for the ability of planning to achieve acceptable outcomes (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006, 2007; Klijn, 2008; Laurian, 2009). Inter-actor trust (or the absence of it) seems to play a pivotal role in planning through policy networks. It can be seen as means to deliver cooperation between various actors which is in turn a requirement for coordination in complex planning processes. With little empirical evidence in planning the questions: 'to what extent is inter-actor trust important?' and 'how can this trust be created and maintained?' demand further attention. These questions are central in this paper. They are dealt with by exploring the role of inter-actor trust on coordination in regional transit oriented development (TOD) planning processes. Firstly, this paper aims to develop a better understanding of the relationship between inter-actor trust between and cooperation between stakeholders when planning in policy networks. Further, this paper attempts to offer a better understanding of the mechanisms that influence the development of trust in planning processes. In a number of urban regions regional programmes are being developed to implement the high-density, transit oriented development and high quality transport connections which are trademarks of TOD (Carthope, 1993) at a number of nodes in the transportation network. Research related to such programmes suggests the necessity of involving multiple actors in different sectors at

the regional and local levels (Newman, 2009, Curtis *et al.*, 2009) as well as the number of regions implementing such programmes suggests that the policy network concept, and thus trust, will become more relevant in the future.

The paper is organized in three parts and is based on the research of Switzer (2010). Below we will continue with defining the concept of trust in planning, analyze how it functions and elaborate on the influence of institutional structures on the importance and formation of trust between stakeholders. Afterwards, in the empirical part, the two cases that have been examined for this research are the *Stedenbaan* programme in the *Zuidvleugel* region of the Randstad in the Netherlands and the *Big Move* and *Places to Grow* plans in the Toronto metropolitan region in Canada, will be introduced. We will examine the role of inter-actor trust in the planning processes. The last part discusses the relationship between trust between stakeholders and cooperation between these stakeholders when planning in policy networks and explores the factors that influence the creation and maintenance of trust.

2. Definition of Trust

Literature relating to trust presents several characteristics of trust including: reciprocity where positive experiences feed back to build trust, asymmetry whereby trust can be more easily destroyed than created especially in the beginning of the process and confirmatory nature whereby actors are more inclined to believe information that confirms than refutes preconceptions (Laurian, 2009, Edelenbos & Klijck, 2007, Earle, 2004). In addition there are three different conceptual models of trust which are ontologically distinct from each other. Firstly, we distinguish *rational-personal trust*. This form of trust the focus is the individual (Laurian, 2009). The formation of trust is related economic research and is generally a state of mind where an actor lets himself be vulnerable for another with the expectation of positive behaviour from another (Rousseau *et al.*, 1998:395). Trust is here a rational choice. A form of cost benefit analysis is carried out to determine the net benefits of trusting and being trustworthy. It is of primary importance that the interests of an actor are served by being by considering the interests of another (Hardin, 2002:4). A second model is *social-cultural trust*. As the name suggests, this form of trust is more abstract and is not directly connected to an individual, but rather with abstract systems (Swain & Tait, 2007; Giddens, 1990; Zucker, 1986). Knowledge of social values, norms and ethical and social behavioural codes is important in the formation of trust influenced through social and cultural contexts (Kramer & Tyler, 1996; Seligman, 1997). Shared values make individuals and institutions more predictable even when one does not have any specific information about an individual. This then makes it easier to take actions which are consistent with the values of others (Braithwaite, 1998; Kramer *et al.* 1996). Cultural institutions, discussed below, are closely related to this form of trust. For Laurian (2009) is the link quite clear. She states that the social structures of institutional contexts (social relations, shared values, social similarities, agreement over goals and a sense of identity) are directly linked to the presence of social trust.

A third type of trust, *general-personal trust*, also exists at the personal level. Here deeper personal relations rather than a simple econometric assessment are the root cause of the trust. Trust comes into being through personal knowledge about another actor and thereby the expectation that the other will fulfil his promises. Distrust is the result of a lack of

this knowledge. According to Laurian (2009) this process rests on two pillars: characteristics of the other actor and observed behaviour. These observations consist of information on the motives of the other party, dedication, honesty, competency, conflicts of interest and power position. The creation of this sort of trust is closely related to the concept of social capital and is suggested to be supported by Habermasian ideal speech (comprehensibility, honesty, sincerity, legitimacy, equal status, inclusivity, openness and transparency (Habermas, 1984; Innes, 1996; Kumar & Paddison, 2000; Laurian, 2009).

3. Importance of Trust

Moving from these theoretical concepts to the relevance for planning in policy networks, there are a number of benefits of trust in the planning process. To start, it is a replacement for information. Trust is a way to plan in the face of increasing complexity where it is not possible to possess complete knowledge, make accurate predictions and eliminate all risks (Van Ark & Edelenbos, 2005). Sabatier *et al.* (2005) go further and suggest that it is essential for reaching decisions when visions collide. In planning with multiple stakeholders where absolute knowledge is impossible with actors across territorial levels and sectors disputed visions and uncertainty are bound to arise. In addition, a number of research studies (Tomkins, 2001; Klijn & Edelenbos, 2007) suggest that in planning processes where trust between stakeholders exists better and more innovative solutions can be delivered. Sydow (1998) makes the direct link with trust clear by stating that trust is a much better coordination mechanism in complex multi-actor process. Van Ark & Edelenbos (2005) state that parties that trust each other will be willing to be vulnerable for other parties more quickly than when trust does not exist which can make it easier to reach agreements than when actors remain defensive. Furthermore, stakeholders who trust the other actors and believe in the legitimacy of the planning process will comply with decisions made in the group setting regardless if their demands are fully met (Laurian, 2009). Actors will be more willing to discuss conflicts with others rather than breaking off the planning process. Trust results in more resilient planning processes. Of course it is worth noting here that a party cannot repeatedly be disadvantaged without damaging trust.

4. Creation and maintenance of trust

Given the suggestion that trust is important in planning it is important to consider how it can be created and maintained. Trust is something that does not simply exist, but rather the result of a process that unfolds over the long term (Zucker, 1986). Research suggests that trust is higher in denser networks where actors exchange more information about each other (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). Edelenbos & Klijn (2007) found that decreased communication between actors led to problems in the planning process and to problems with trust between actors and thus in the planning process. In the long term Van Ark & Edelenbos (2005) suggest that governance networks have a tendency to revert back to a desire for stability and security in the form of hard contracts rather than softer agreements what can undermine established trust.

Bryson & Crosby (1992) speak of a central actor who can function as a catalyst for the creation of trust. Van Ark & Edelenbos (2005) found that a civil servant in one case was essential in reaching the agreement through the creation of a shared vision and supporting communication. Van Ark & Edelenbos (2005) suggest that a manager can improve the reciprocity of relations between stakeholders, ensure that rules for the interaction are established and respected and stabilisation of interaction patterns. Laurian (2009) suggests that neutral intermediaries or managers can prevent distrust and encourage communication. Problems with an overdependence on interpersonal trust are highlighted when one actor leaves the planning process and is replaced. Interviews suggest the importance of this connection which needs to be built not only to ensure continuity, but to ensure that the actions of the organisation do not go against or compromise the trust that has been built up. According to Edelenbos & Klijn (2007) rules are of vital importance and determine how conflicts are dealt with, how information is exchanged, how benefits are distributed and how parties can leave the planning process. Considering that regulations play a vital role in determining the contributions of actors and how interactions occur coupled with the importance of cooperative action throughout the planning process it seems clear that a cooperative formulation of rules involving all actors will be beneficial to trust between the actors and prevent situations where one actor feels disadvantaged by a regulatory structure that he did not have any say in.

The role of contracts and other hard agreements is disputed in literature. Some authors (Nootboom, 1998; Volery & Mensik, 1998) argue that contracts are a sign of distrust planning. Further, it has been said that trust is a placeholder for contracts and that one replaces the other. Alternatively, others (Woolthuis, 1999:57, Van Ark en Edelenbos, 2005) believe that trust and contracts complement each other and that trust can improve compliance to contracts. Conversely, contracts or written agreements are seen as effective in ensuring compliance with verbal (trust based) agreements (Van Ark & Edelenbos, 2005). They embody the trust between the actors. Important here is that contracts must be used to confirm what has been agreed and not used defensively.

Institutional factors also play a role in the development of trust. Institutions introduce the rules of the game. In planning institutions play an important role in determining the form that planning ultimately takes on and is rooted in society and in form of the state. Janssen-Jansen (2004) defines institutions as rules, norms and structures that form social capital in society and simplifies and expedites complex interactions. It is generally accepted that there are formal and informal institutions (Salet, 2000; Janssen-Jansen, 2004). Formal institutions are procedures, laws, organisations, bodies and rules that govern society (Janssen-Jansen, 2004). On the other hand informal institutions are general patterns of integrated social values, norms and procedures in the form of guidelines and image forming (Chrisholm, 1989). Edelenbos & Klijn (2007) suggest that institutional practices within organisations can prevent the formation of trust. On the other hand it is certainly possible that they can benefit the development of trust

Janssen-Jansen (2004) suggests that there are three sorts of institutions present at the regional level. These are:

- 1) Cultural-sociological institutions – these are soft institutions and include values, norms, ideals and beliefs.

- 2) Administrative-financial institutions – these concern territorial governance and policy and more importantly how they connect with the private functional spheres. These are generally formal institutions such as legal structures. Financial aspects are also of importance here and include taxation structures, subsidy flows and financial relations between.
- 3) Functional-economic – these are existing functional connections that often take the form of economic institutions that join the government and the market. An example here is the labour market. These are primarily private actors with a public task.

These institutions do not exist separately, but influence one another. For example: cultural institutions shape administrative-financial institutions while these institutions combined with the cultural sub-structure impact the shape and formation of functional institutions which also impact the other structures. Cultural institutions develop slowly and are path very dependent. These structures exist at the level of the society, but also in spatial regions as well as within organisations, companies and public bodies.

Based on this theoretical review, it would seem that general-personal trust is the most plausible definition of inter-actor trust. For the purposes of this research, this is considered to be the definition of inter-actor trust. . Rational-personal trust suggests that one party trusts another because it is in the interests of that party to behave in a trustworthy fashion. That cooperation serves the interests of the actors is a condition for the creation of general-personal trust.. Social-cultural trust is closely related to cultural institutions within the organisations participating in the planning process. The type of governance, action space and organisational goals have an impact on the culture within an organisation. Historical relations with other parties also affect this. What is referred to as social-cultural trust is an indicator of how compatible the institutions in two organisations are which can facilitate or hinder the formation of general-personal trust between individual actors.

5. Inter-actor trust in planning practice, a case study

In accordance with the stated goal of studying the impact of trust on coordination in the planning process, two programmes that aim to concentrate property development at various nodal points well served by public transport across an urban region were analysed by first conducting a policy and historical analysis followed by interviews with stakeholders involved in the making and implementation of the plans in both regions. In addition, interviews were carried out at two site/station area locations in each region.

The first programme, Stedenbaan, is located in the *Zuidvleugel* region of the western Netherlands and the second is the combined transport – land-use programme developed in the Toronto urban region in Canada. Both programmes were begun in the last 10 years and are now in or entering the implementation phase. These two cases were selected because they are, within the population of Western democracies, most different. In terms of planning traditions, organisation of public transportation and government systems (see Table 1) they differ considerably. However, they are regions that are attempting to implement regional TOD programmes and exemplify the aforementioned complexities of policy networks. The plans must be implemented both at a regional and local (site/station area) level, require coordination between transportation and spatial planners at multiple levels and are

dependent on the support of property developers and rail operators and managers and involve some form of public private partnership. Given the dissimilarities between the cases, it is expected that the findings will not be dependent on institutional arrangements or other specificities of the particular cases, but most likely to the theoretical population as a whole

Table 1: Comparison of key factors in Toronto and the *Zuidvleugel*

Characteristic		Stedenbaan	Toronto
Form of government		Unitary parliamentary democracy	Federal parliamentary democracy
Surface area region (km ²)		3403	7100
Population region (000s)		3847	5500
Density region(person/km ²)		1130	775
Spatial form		polycentric - clearly discernable urban areas	Developing polycentric, few urban areas outside the central area
Public Transport		Concessions (private operators)	Mixed, primarily public ownership and operation
Financing of Public Transport		Centralised (structured consultation for major investments MIRT)	Shared (infrastructure investments shared between levels)
Local Financial independence		Largely dependent on central government	Independent, but limited in scope
Relative Strength of Local Government		Moderate	Weak
Relative Local Planning Autonomy		Broad (only priorities set by national government/province, they are interpreted locally)	Limited (priorities set by province/regional government, plans must be approved)
Origin of programme		Regional/Sub-regional governments	Provincial government
Actors involved in programme	Super-regional	3	3
	Regional	1	2
	Sub regional	5	12
	Local	17	21
	Site/station area	many	many
Site/station areas		36	25
Size – site/station areas (km ²)		1.13	0.75

Background: Stedenbaan

The Zuidvleugel, the urbanized area in the South of the Dutch Randstad, with The Hague and Rotterdam as important cores, has developed in the past 40 years into multi-centered urban network with the main train network as the backbone. The Stedenbaan programme aims to strengthen this backbone, by concentrating spatial development at station locations along the main train line and to increase the frequency of the local train services and improve transport to and from stations (stations are shown in Figure 1).

The Netherlands, with its decentral administrative institutional structure, spatial constraints and historically rooted culture of cooperation and negotiation, is fertile ground for the development of policy networks. Stedenbaan best resembles moderate coordination in the network. The priorities of the actors are set individually, but there is a shared conceptual framework. The programme involves a number of different actors at all levels and in a number of policy areas. Stedenbaan is the product of a cooperative partnership between

various governments and the Dutch Railways company (NS, exploitation) and ProRail (infrastructure provider)¹ and has, therefore, no clear 'owner'.

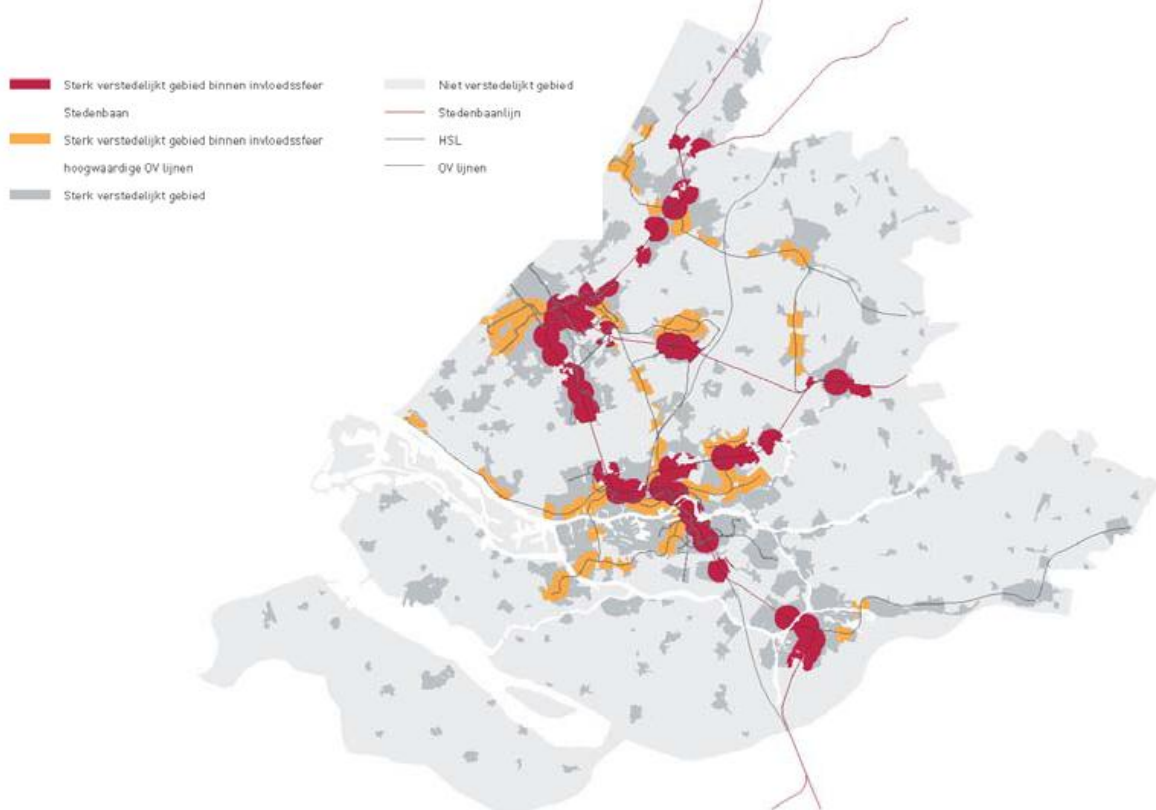


Figure 1: Urban areas around Stedenbaan stations (red), around high quality public transport (yellow) (source: Atelier Zuidvleugel, 2007)

Currently there are three different groups that have different tasks within the process where politicians and civil servants come together to deal with issues and make decisions. The coordination of the process on a daily basis is organised by the *Projectbureau Stedenbaan* which is staffed by all Stedenbaan partners. Given that Stedenbaan in itself does not have any power, coordination at all levels is essential as the partners must use their powers to implement the programme (Figure 2 shows the agreements and coordination in the programme). To support the development of the station areas the *Kennisnetwerk Stedenbaan* was established in 2009 to bring government actors, transport companies and private parties to discuss issues relating to Stedenbaan.

The realisation of Stedenbaan is dependent on a number of financial programmes. Despite the fact that the programme includes no new rail lines (only improvements in connections and capacity) investment in infrastructure is still needed. To upgrade the line between The Hague and Rotterdam, it is hoped that financing will be allocated in the Ministry of Transport and Water Management (MV&W) in the Programme High Frequency Rail Transport (Programma Hoogfrequentie Spoorvervoer, PHS).

¹ Both are independent organisations owned by the Ministry of Finance expected to generate profit whose responsibilities are set out by the Ministry of Transport and Water Management (MV&W)

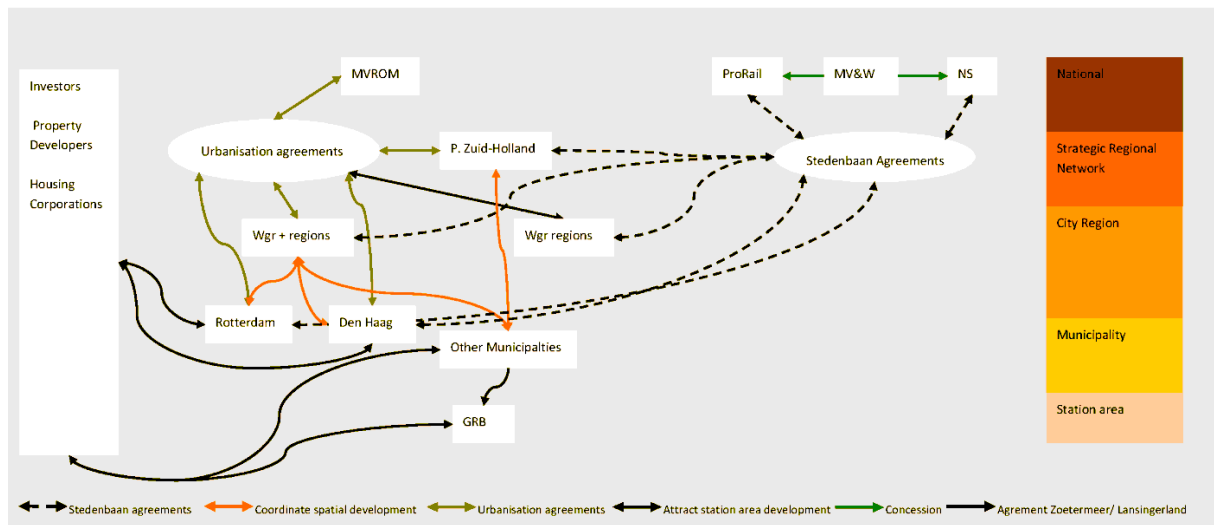


Figure 2: Structure diagram Stedenbaan

Background: Toronto

Since the 1970s, a number of centres have developed in regional areas, increasing the policentricity of the region, but often the public transport connections to these nodes was not planned or when planned, not realised because of changing priorities and financial limitations. (Filion & McSpeuren, 2007; Filion, 2009). The current programme of regional TOD in Toronto came into being in the form of two partially coordinated plans from the provincial government to limit growth outside the developed area, develop urban centres and to connect these centres with high quality public transport in the Toronto urban area or Greater Golden Horseshoe as it is known. The area will continue to experience considerable growth for the foreseeable future and the *Places to Grow* plan (MPIR, 2006) to concentrate 40 % of expected growth in 24 high density urban growth centres (see Figure 3).

On the transportation front, the *Big Move* (Metrolinx, 2008), regional transportation plan developed by the provincially created regional transportation authority, Metrolinx deals with connecting the growth centres. The goals of the plan are harmonised with the growth plan. It identifies 51 links in the network that must be improved in order to deal with the expected growth up to 2031 are identified (see Figure 3). The government of Ontario has made \$11.5 billion available to deal with the top infrastructure priorities. Metrolinx is expected to develop strategies to generate funds to finance the rest of the programme. The primary goal of Metrolinx is coordination and investment and must work with existing, largely independent, public transport agencies to achieve its ambitions.

The strategic TOD plans are anchored in provincial law and policy (see Figure 4). The spatial component of the policy programme is the *Places to Grow* plan and is policy within the framework of the *Places to Grow Act* (2005). This Growth Secretariat is tasked with ensuring that the province was in state to deal with future developments. In terms of transportation, Metrolinx as a regional transportation authority with the mission to create a transportation plan for the urban area, facilitate regional integration of transport systems and coordinate infrastructure investment.

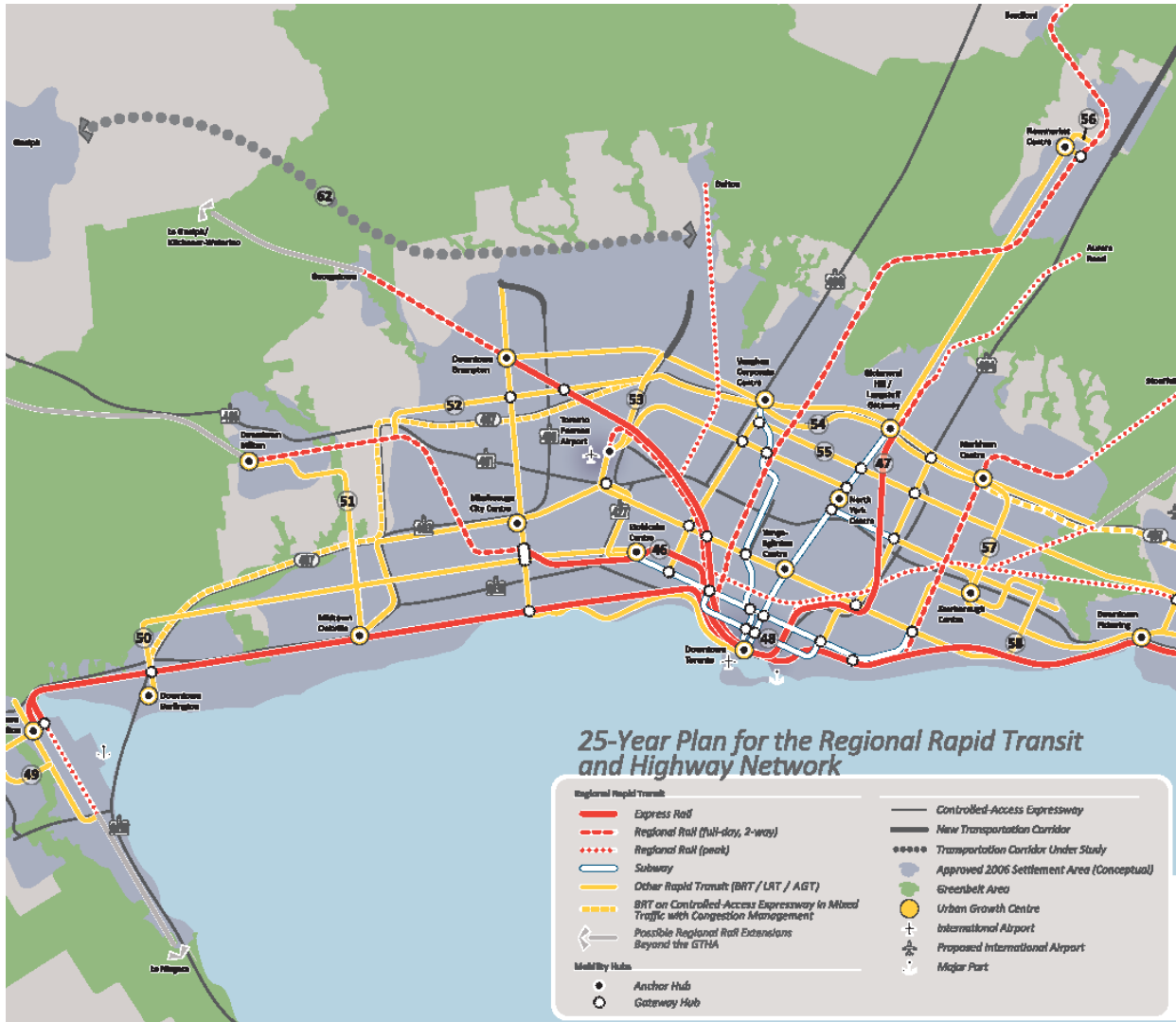


Figure 3 - Big Move plan for regional public transport and the two UGCs (Source: Metrolinx, 2008)

Despite the intensive policy integration there is no overarching organisation that is responsible for the whole regional TOD programme. The development of the growth centres is considered to be a local responsibility that is supported by the policy of the province and the regional municipalities. Toronto is an independent single level municipality responsible for its own public transport and planning. In suburban areas outside the city of Toronto are organised in Regional municipalities some of which are responsible for public transport. The municipality implements much of the land use planning/ transport policy of higher order government. Regional municipalities and the provincial government must approve plans before they come in to force (Makuch *et al.* 2004: 164). The public transport network is something that is directed at a regional level through Metrolinx. In terms of how the goals of the transportation plan are implemented, local transport companies such as the TTC are responsible for their own developments and implementation.

Ontario and the Toronto region have a long history of urban expansion where individual municipalities and actors have been primarily concerned with urban expansion within their own territory. The absence of pressure to cooperate from the provincial government for many years combined with a culturally rooted belief in the legal and

institutional frameworks has meant that there was until recently little need or desire to work outside the hierarchical structures of the planning system. The degree of coordination in Toronto is lower than in The Netherlands. Despite the stated goals, there is no real shared conceptual framework and actors have taken the provinces policy into consideration, but operate entirely according to their own goals.

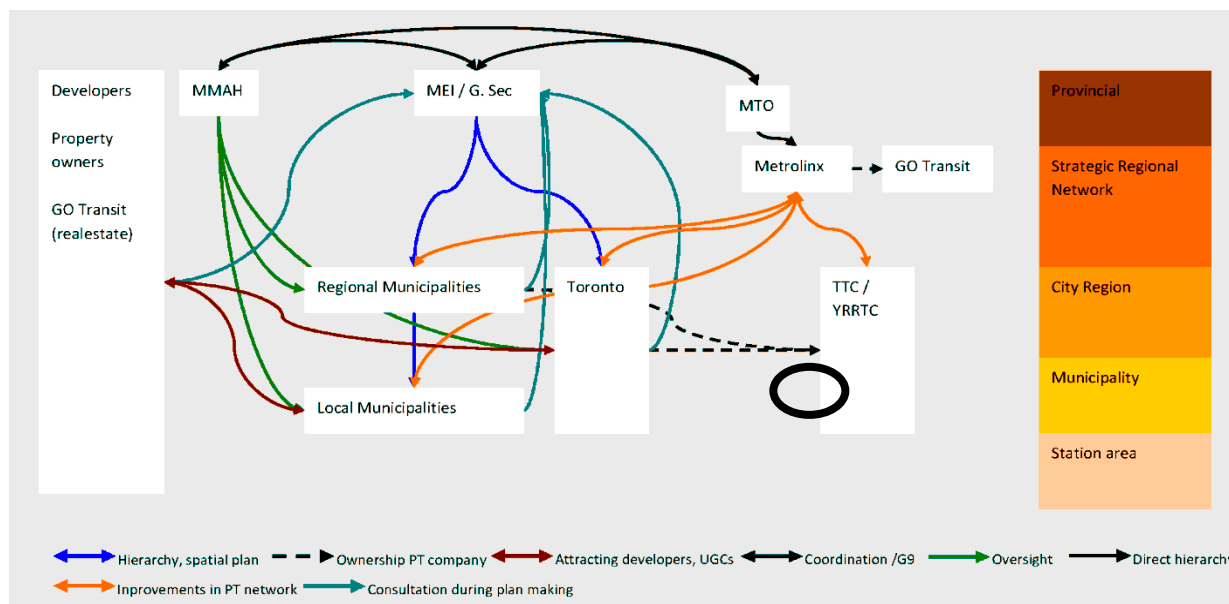


Figure 4 Connections between actors in the planning process

6. Importance of Trust: Stedenbaan

There are few tools available to the project bureau to oblige the different stakeholders to implement the programme. Many participants believed that trust plays an integral role in this process as it can ensure that parties want to make agreements with each other and that they are prepared to abide by them. For instance, since there is no way to know for sure that the government parties will implement the intensification programme or that the NS will increase the frequency of train service, the parties must trust that the other will deliver without available information that indicates that that will occur.

A participant that has significant experience in area development emphasised trust as a way to improve efficiency in the planning process. In her experience it is extremely costly and time-consuming if stakeholders constantly have to check that the others live up to their obligations as laid out in legal contracts rather than on the basis of a trust relationship trusting that this is the case. This is not to suggest that naivety is expected, but that there needs to be a balance between controlling the actions of others and trusting that they will deliver.

Trust is also something that is seen to make it possible to take the risk to make one vulnerable for possible damaging actions of the others and do not always need to protect their own interests. This was seen, for instance, as important in the decision of the NS to share information about passengers at each of the stations along the rail network. This brought risks with it as the NS is a commercial company. Only after a time of relationship building and discussions was it possible to reach an agreement where the NS stated: ‘we

won't give you all of the [ridership] information, but we will give you some of it, but only if you sign a declaration that it won't be used further or made public.' The respondent found this an example of how a mutually acceptable solution could be found.

This discussion suggests that trust is an important factor in planning partnerships at a regional level. This trust seems to be important in the beginning of the planning process and during the implementation of the plans. Trust plays a role as a replacement for information which makes it easier/possible to take risks that serve the goals of the partnership but are not in the immediate, but rather long term, interests of individual parties. Increased efficiency is also an outcome as parties do not have to devote valuable resources to protecting their interests and they can share sensitive information which advances the goals of the partnership.

7. Creation and Maintenance of Trust: Stedenbaan

Trust is inherently a human characteristic whether one speaks of trust between organisations or people it is always an issue of the perceptions of individuals. In this respect is it not surprising that many of the actors in the Stedenbaan process mentioned that the development of trust is a long term undertaking. One respondent stated that 'trust is built slowly, but destroyed quickly'. Many of the processes described refer directly and indirectly to the time-consuming nature of trust creation. In interviews it was said that an investment of time in the beginning of a cooperative partnership was essential for the subsequent success of the process, but that the importance of it was often underestimated.

Communication & Openness

Both communication and openness were seen as important for the creation of trust between actors in the planning process. One participant stated: 'it is not only sending information, but also being open for signals and listening' as well as 'being open to discussing motives and understanding the interests of the other.'

The way that information is shared is also of considerable importance especially when it relates to decisions that have an impact on the success chances for the project. It was stated not sharing that information in a timely manner with the result that others learn about it through media or other circuits can lead to suspicion and distrust especially when it confirms prejudices. This was illustrated in the announcement of the preferences of the NS and ProRail for the PHS investment. These parties found that other rail corridors in the country were more in need of investment than the corridor between The Hague and Rotterdam. The Stedenbaan actors were not consulted prior to the announcement which damaged the trust relationship.

In addition to the importance of the actions of individuals in building trust, it was also emphasised that getting to know counterparts in other organisations and building a trust relationship benefits the working relationship when different actors work together in various partnerships. One civil servant described how study tours and informal dinners were beneficial in building this sort of relationship with his colleagues. He stated that: 'after a number of years the network between professionals in the region has developed to the point

that you begin to trust each other.’ This relationship was beneficial when difficult issues must be discussed. The flow of sensitive information between these colleagues makes it possible to strategically deal with political differences before they lead to major conflicts. Despite the mobility of civil servants between various governments, the building of personal trust was suggested to improve the relationship between the institutions. In this case when a colleague leaves it usually leads to a dip in the level of trust, but that relations improve as a new trust relationship is built. The trust that existed between the two actors seems to have been institutionalised in the cultural institutions within the respective organisations which makes it easier for trust to develop between new actors. This is similar to the social-cultural trust previously discussed. This discussion suggests the importance of the ideal speech situations for building trust. Openness, honesty and equality facilitated the creation of trust between actors in the Stedenbaan process. When actors did not act in such a way, trust was damaged.

Internal Coordination

One respondent with knowledge of the NS organisation suggested the importance of coordination within stakeholder organisations. He stated that it was ‘very important that everyone in Utrecht sing the same tune, and sings the same tune’ and that they strive to achieve the stated goals. It was mentioned that at one point there were actors in the central NS organisation concerned that the regions would attain too much power within the organisation or that Stedenbaan would have a negative impact on the long term goals of the NS who tried to persuade others that Stedenbaan was not in the interests of the company.

Delivering on promises

Since many municipalities were not involved in drawing up the initial Stedenbaan partnership, it is essential during the implementation phase that they are convinced that Stedenbaan is in their own interest – which means, for instance, that the frequency increase will come and that the NS will deliver on their commitment and that they take Stedenbaan seriously. A representative of the regional office of the NS spoke of repeatedly going to talk to municipalities when asked to build confidence/trust there in Stedenbaan and the NS. In another case the NS arranged to ‘bring stakeholders to Germany to see the new [trains], the aldermen could sit behind the controls. We wanted to convince them that it is our train’ Further cost sharing agreements between the NS and the governments have solidified the agreements

Breach of trust

The previously mentioned announcement of the PHS investment preferences of the NS and ProRail resulted in a breach of trust with the government actors involved in Stedenbaan, which ultimately proved to be positive for the relationship. A number of interviewees believed that the relations between the NS and the government actors had improved since this event. This was attributed to the realisation of the NS that Stedenbaan was extremely important for

the *Zuidvleugel* governments and that they needed to repair the damaged trust and that if repeated such problems could be fatal. In terms of concrete results this had led to a more transparent and open decision making process with regard to the required number of passengers for the frequency to go ahead as well as the number of passengers along the primary rail line. One respondent stated that “at NS and ProRail there are regional and central organisations. In the regional organisation people knew how sensitive this was, but at the central level [where decisions are made] they are less sensitive for regional interests. The priority list came from Utrecht and was directed at the National government and the Ministry [MV&W]. ”

Contracts and agreements

In one interview it was suggested that there are two reasons that parties do not enter into binding contracts: that they do not want to do anything and want to avoid making a decision, or that actors trust each other enough that they will live up to their responsibilities and do not want to force others to commit to deadlines which may or may not be met given the flexible nature in such a network of actors. On the basis of interviews with those involved in *Stedenbaan* it seems that there is a general consensus that the second statement better embodies the reason for the lack of binding contracts and institutionalisation in legally binding planning policy. One respondent found this gradual approach beneficial given the previous reluctance of the NS to make binding commitments. He said that the NS has made concrete commitments without feeling that it has. Actors reported that agreements made on the basis of a trust relationship were more enforceable than when this is not the case. Instead of only being able to fall back on legal processes, the failure to deliver on contractual obligations when the agreement was made in a trust relationship can be enforced by informal moral appeals.

Influential actors

In the implementation stage of *Stedenbaan* there is a realisation that municipalities have not committed to the spatial development that is needed to deliver the frequency increase. In terms of action space and the interests they are independent and ultimately responsible to the residents. They must also incorporate the goals of higher governments into their plans. A number of municipalities have not given the *Stedenbaan* locations a high priority relative to other areas. In one case it was stated that *Stedenbaan* “is an agreement between my alderman and a number of others, but the municipalities were not involved. They weren’t involved in decision making. It is a challenge to go there and say ‘we have this ambition’ and they say ‘ya, that is your ambition.’”

Many participants stated or suggested that the institutional differences between the NS and the public sector actors posed difficulties for the development of trust in the process. Despite the existence of the regional offices of the NS, the organisation remains centralised with all major decisions being taken in the main office in Utrecht. Cultural differences led to problems early in the *Stedenbaan* process. Government actors were eager to have the NS commit to a date for the frequency increase. This led to a shock in the NS who expected to

commit only when it became apparent that the spatial development was being realised. Previous experiences where the NS invested in building a new stations and the property development and connecting infrastructure was delayed were found to be influential here. Such situations lead not only to lower revenues, but result in fewer passenger kilometres which is one of the priorities for the NS in the concession (MV&W, 2005). Many government actors have complained about how reserved the NS is with providing information about the number of passengers and the prospects for the frequency increase. The NS must bid on a concession and was concerned that information would become public and damage their position.

8. Importance of trust: Toronto

On the regional level within organisations such as Metrolinx that deal with multiple stakeholders regularly in complex situations trust was considered important. According to actors in Metrolinx, their first task is communicative, namely convincing actors and building trust from others that they do not aim to replace actors, but simply want to facilitate better coordination. These actors recognised that the building of social capital would not only prove effective in the short term, but yield long term benefits. In terms of land use planning, the provincial government has recognised the importance of trust between actors as the municipalities and developers are needed to reach the goals of the growth plan. This was illustrated in the statement that ‘trust is important, but I don’t think it’s there. They’re just looking at how they can make a profit.’ One actor believed that, despite the fact that trust was not the only factor that leads to effective cooperation, when trust is absent parties tend to focus on their specific negotiating positions and short term interests.

As an example, one regional planner emphasised the shortage in demand for office development in the whole region as well as in areas outside the central urban areas. At present, all parties have been given the same density goals to achieve. It is not expected that the provincial government will involve itself in the politically risky task of establishing priorities for the developments, thus the coordination, if it comes, must originate from bottom up. Municipalities must trust each other enough that they will be willing to support the development of an area outside their jurisdiction with the expectation that they will enjoy benefits later when development within their borders is on the agenda. One concern is that municipalities will be pressured to approve office developments outside the growth centres – something which will ultimately undermine the goals of the coordination programme, but will serve the short term financial goals of municipalities.

Despite the positivity about trust among some actors others were more sceptical. In one case it was found that ‘trust almost implies a sort of personal relationship and I don’t think that’s the way that the system’s set up to run.’ This suggests that much of the suspicion about the value of trust arises from fears of misuse. At the strategic network level it is a question of the youth of the programme which means that few actors have directly been confronted with the complex multi-actor network planning. In more traditional areas of the planning system much of the scepticism originates from beliefs about the role of planning and the function of the planning system. Still, in the system of planning in Ontario the province is dependent on the lower order governments to implement its plans. Despite the fact that the province has considerable influence on the plans of lower government, it is

recognised in the region that this alone will not lead to successful development of the growth centres. According to interviewees there is still sufficient flexibility in the system that if lower governments interests are not served by the planning goals of the province they can avoid implementing them.

In a number of cases the settlement of conflicts or making difficult decisions was discussed. One strategy was the use of a negotiator to settle conflicts. In another case an actor found that when different actors work together 'most of the time it's not an issue of not trusting and quite frankly there are different opinions they can be negotiated or they have to be referred higher up the chain to get a final decision.' These solutions were found to be positive, but it was noted that in the case of the intermediary the decision was still interpreted differently by the different parties. These solutions seem based on achieving consensus in one case, but without trust in each other the parties still interpret the decision differently which can ultimately lead to the same situation in the future. In the case of referring the situation to the provincial government, horizontal regional cooperation is not advanced and the dependence on the hierarchy is reinforced.

9. Creation and maintenance of trust: Toronto

In general a number of the same processes active in the creation and functioning of trust were mentioned in the Toronto region as were mentioned in The Netherlands. Many of the responses about the creation and function of trust in planning were derived from indirect examples and answers rather than direct responses to questions about trust creation. For many the concept of trust was not something that is regularly thought about.

Communication & Openness

Since the province of Ontario took on an active role in regional planning once again, there is, according to interviewees, an incentive for regional actors to communicate and cooperate. This has taken the form of a change in the administrative institutional structure – namely that official plans must conform to regional plans and all plans must conform to the provincial planning policy. Many respondents mentioned that there was no regular communication between actors involved in the growth centres vertically with other government levels, horizontally with governments in other jurisdictions and horizontally between land use and transport planners. Until recently, the board of directors was made up of regional parties which brought these parties into contact. This is no longer the case which has led to less communication. Some actors voiced suspicions and concerns about the motives, actions and sincerity of other actors which suggest a lack of communication. One actor suggested that a lack of communication can lead to suspicions about the motives of other actors which can ultimately shift focus from the goals of the partnership/cooperation and cultivate distrust.

In an interview about the creation of the growth plan, early in the planning process, one respondent noted that openness was important. The communicative open approach of the provincial government by not starting with a top down plan, but rather examining existing plans for growth centres in the region look for examples of good practice and harmonise priorities and reduce the number of development nodes. During the implementation stage,

openness and respect were also mentioned. Actors that were active at the strategic regional level were able to relate trust to understanding the interests and needs of other parties. In interviews with Metrolinx, respondents found it important that this respect and openness were translated into actions. The submission of an area plan to municipalities where Metrolinx is active was used as an example. Despite the fact that this is not required, it is still done to build trust with municipalities. Coordination at the strategic level seems to have improved, especially between Metrolinx and the Growth Secretariat. A number of actors have mentioned how a number of previous employees of the secretariat work at Metrolinx. Again the personal relationships between actors in both organisations certainly make communication easier.

Fulfilling promises

Given the historic absence of the provincial government in the area of regional planning during the past 30 years, it is essential that the provincial government be seen as prepared to invest in its goals in order to overcome distrust. A respondent involved in the making of the growth plan saw fulfilling promises as essential to realising the goals of the growth plan and convincing municipalities to buy into the plan. Systematically making clear through actions is seen as the only way to build trust and bridge the gap of distrust. This is not only important for the elimination of distrust, but also eventually building trust between parties. Recent funding cuts and the unstable financial situation will certainly impact the level of trust in the region.

Even in the case when funding is available, the historical policy and financial instability in the province lead to distrust. Several parties expressed concerns themselves or suggested that other parties are concerned about how provincial funding announcements will translate in to funding for specific projects and whether the government intends to deliver on its promises. The current economic crisis has heightened concerns With announcements of spending cuts in late March 2010 this seems to be occurring (Goddard *et al.*, 2010).

Historical relations

In the Toronto region the historical relations between stakeholders is extremely important. These can be considered cultural institutions within a specific organisation. The negative impacts of this were made clear in a discussion about the impact on negotiations. When negotiations begin with the knowledge that the other party will not deviate from their negotiating position, the atmosphere is from the first instant negative and discussions begin from a basis of distrust. It was stated that 'you can't trust them. They have ulterior motives in everything they do and it's important. Going into a negotiation or a relationship you're constantly on guard and you don't want to give up anything, because you don't get the same thing in return.'

Contracts

The making of contracts or in the case of government parties MOUs² was found by a number of respondents to be related to building trust between stakeholders. Interviewees found that it was necessary to translate agreements between parties into a more binding form. In one case an actor spoke of a party that did not want to sign a MOU which led to strains in the relationship. On the other hand a respondent emphasised that MOUs without the basis of a trust relationship will lead to different interpretations and statements such as 'we didn't mean it in that way.'. One actor suggested a trend towards a more defensive litigious planning system where actors are more intent than ever to defend their interests which hinders trust development and the quality of solutions.

Influential actors

The priorities and interests of a number of actors have had a substantial influence on the development of trust. The two largest transit agencies in the region were most often mentioned by respondents.

In a number of cases actors expressed distrust with respect to the goals of GO Transit as an organisation and the interests in encouraging development at its stations. Throughout the region GO Transit has extensive parking facilities around its stations. GO Transit emphasised that the parking facilities are needed to attract passengers for the trains. This leads to problems with municipalities that want to develop on the stations lands. Despite the emphasis on this sort of development in the GO 2020 plan there is suspicion about how seriously GO is about encouraging development. The distrust here is caused by the goals of GO Transit as a regional train company whose passengers travel to the stations by car which does not consider itself to have an active role in property development at its stations.

Many interviewees outside the Municipality of Toronto mentioned difficulties in working with the TTC. It was often attributed to culture within the organisation and a belief, because a long and successful history, that their practices were the most effective. This has led to reluctance to consider problems from another perspective. The TTC is largely dependent on fares to fund its operations and it is seen as defensive proposals to change fare systems and further regional integration. From interviews there is no one cause that is identified by respondents as to why regional cooperation is so difficult, but the goal of the company: providing good public transit in Toronto before considering regional expansion, a cultural belief that their practices are the most effective and historically rooted independence explain most of the problems.

² A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a contract between government parties where the details of a partnership are laid out including the splitting of costs.

10. Discussion

To what extent is inter-actor trust important in network planning processes?

When planning in policy networks, the role of trust is clear. It is important to make clear that Stedenbaan is a better example of a policy network with a higher degree of coordination. Given this, it is not surprising that the importance of trust in planning was confirmed by a larger group of respondents than in Toronto. The interdependence that is a characteristic of the policy network is visible in several cases in Toronto where organisations are working outside the traditional hierarchical structure. These actors (Metrolinx, Growth Secretariat, YRRTC and regional municipalities) were more inclined to recognise the importance of inter-actor trust. At the level of the area developments responses were more mixed. Some believed that trust was important, while others had faith that the administrative-financial structures in the planning system and self interest on the part of developers would be enough to deliver the desired development.

There were many similarities in answers to the question about how trust can benefit the planning process. In Toronto the building of trust is seen as something that a can have a direct positive effect on a distrust between actors and eventually reduce it, making cooperation more efficient. In Stedenbaan a similar situation was observed between government parties and the NS. Although distrust was not so extreme, or possibly non-existent, the gradual development of a trust relationship between the organisations has had clear positive effects for the planning process. In agreement with theory, both cases confirm that trust functions as a replacement for information and facilitates risk taking without complete certainty about the outcomes. In the Stedenbaan case the building of social capital/trust makes the partnership more resilient. In Toronto there is no example comparable to the PHS situation, but actors did recognise that the building of trust could make cooperation easier in the future. The impacts of trust on contracts (and the decisions of intermediaries in Toronto) in both regions is similar, namely that trust makes it possible to implement what is agreed upon. In The Netherlands, and to a lesser extent in Ontario, personal trust was found to be effective in resolving differences and potential conflicts between stakeholder organisations. In both areas, trust facilitates trust in information provided by others. The case of Toronto illustrates that trust is an instrument in cooperative partnerships and not a goal in itself. It can also undermine the goals of coordination between transport and land-use planning, as was seen in a response in Toronto. This is somewhat different to the statement of Edelenbos & Klijn (2007) that trust can lead to blind belief in others which can be detrimental to the goals of the partnership when actors trust each other blindly. The development of trust can have an impact on cultural institutions within organisations where a form of what can be described as social-cultural conditions between organisations can come into being which means that a certain level of trust can exist between stakeholders who have no personal relationship.

How can inter-actor trust be created and maintained?

To answer this question, the conditions for trust must first be considered. In both cases communication and satisfying of interests is necessary. Having confidence in the participants

in the process (in their competence for example) as well as in their organisation and the chances for the programme/plan to be successful facilitate the creation of trust. In keeping with the characteristic of confirmation the opposite can occur. Trust between individuals can make it easier to trust the information delivered by another or their organisation.

Respondents in both cases confirm the importance of building social capital for the development of trust between stakeholders. They found that openness, delivering on promises and competence (related to confidence in a person) are important. In both areas contracts were seen as an instrument that must be used to confirm agreements based on a trust relationship. Examples from Stedenbaan point to how they work to strengthen a trust that exists, while in Toronto examples pointed to the problems that arise when contracts are not based on a trust relationship. Referring decisions to an intermediary functions similarly to a contract. When they make a decision to resolve a conflict between parties that do not trust each other, the decisions is interpreted differently or not accepted. Carrying out research with all involved parties seems to be important for the development of confidence in the value in success chances of a programme or project, other parties and the information on which the research is based as well as the development of trust between stakeholders. Finally, an interesting method to reaffirm trust between parties is a breach of trust. This is very unpredictable, but in the case of Stedenbaan it proved an opportunity for actors to reaffirm the importance of the partnership and eventually improved relations.

Institutional arrangements were found to be influential in creating and maintaining trust. Administrative institutions and their development can force parties to come into contact with each other as was seen in the institutional changes in both countries which made cooperation compulsory. At the level of the particular organisations involved in the planning process, there are a number of institutional structures in all three categories that influence cooperation with other organisations. Administrative-financial institutions within organisations determine the goals of the institutional actor and their financial independence. This is something that was influential in trust formation in both countries primarily within municipalities and public transport companies. Cultural institutions within the organisations lead to different opinions and viewpoints among actors which can lead to conflict or facilitate cooperation and the development of trust between actors. The response of many actors in the Toronto region and some in the *Zuidvleugel* of 'we are this sort of organisation and we don't do that' is the result of a combination of administrative-financial and cultural institutions. What is described as social-cultural trust is a measure of the compatibility of the institutional structures. These influence the formation of general-personal trust and the cooperation.

11. Conclusions

This paper has shown that trust is an essential element to deliver cooperation between the multiple actors involved in a complex network planning process. Cooperation, in turn, is necessary to deliver the coordination between actions that is required to deliver the desired outcomes given the independence of the actors and a lack of clear hierarchy. There are a number of processes that lead to the creation and maintenance of inter-actor trust. Some are actions of individuals such as openness and being trustworthy, while others are related to the process, such as early involvement of key actors, ensuring that processes support openness and communication and the intelligent use of contracts. A breach of trust is a surprising way

to ultimately increase trust. Planning in policy networks is central in this research. The extent to which such a network exists is influenced by institutions. The structure of administrative-financial/cultural institutions in Ontario means that there is no history of cooperative partnerships between actors outside the institutional hierarchy. Institutions and individuals are often not oriented towards this method of governance. Still the new reality requires this network approach. It seems impossible that the institutional structure can be adapted to deliver the desired outcomes without a strict hierarchy that would be unacceptable in a liberal democracy. Governance in policy networks will continue to increase in importance together with coordination methods, such as trust. Institutions play also a role in the creation of trust. Changes in these structures can stimulate cooperation and ultimately trust in between stakeholders. Cultural institutions within organisations are difficult to change and exhibit path dependency, but develop gradually and can be influenced by relationships between individuals.

Research on trust in planning is far from complete. The interaction between trust and institutional structures within organisations as well as in the broader society are important and there has been little research conducted in this area. It seems that culture within an institution can change through the experiences of individuals which in turn can impact harder institutional structures or that the reverse can occur. This work suggests the need for further research into the causality of the relationships between factors that are seen to lead to the creation of trust and trust forming. Quantitative analysis including the techniques of network analysis could deliver useful results here.

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