LECTURE SUMMARY

THE NEXT 30 YEARS: PLANNING CITIES BEYOND MOBILITY?

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Questioning the current goals and means of urban mobility planning
- Exploring the potential of an alternative urban mobility planning paradigm, aiming to plan cities 'beyond mobility'
- Understanding why cities should be planned beyond mobility, and how they could
- Reflecting on the implications for planning research, practice, and education of such an alternative approach

SUMMARY OF THE LECTURE

The negative environmental, social, and economic side-effects of the individual motorized transport-centred urban planning paradigm have been repeatedly denounced (Berger et al., 2014; Curtis, 2020). This criticism inspired an alternative, sustainable mobility centred urban planning paradigm (Banister, 2008), which has been attempting to shift to a different pathway for the past thirty years (Holden et al., 2019).

While the outcome of this struggle is still undecided, an even more fundamental shift seems to be taking place on the ground, advancing a radically expanded set of diverse urban mobility planning goals and means, reaching much further than economic efficiency or even just environmental sustainability. Expanded goals include the likes of social cohesion and inclusivity, human physical and mental health, and biodiversity enhancement (Moreno et al, 2021; Glazener& Khreis, 2019; Apfelbeck et al., 2020). Expanded means most notably hinge around the notion that urban streets should be planned not as channels of movement but as multi-purpose public spaces and natural ecosystems (Von Schönfeld & Bertolini, 2017; Bertolini, 2020).

This discussion, forward-looking lecture explores this apparent development, its potentials, and its challenges.

It first reviews the multiple, diverse reasons for shifting away from mobility centred urban planning. Current developments and debates increasingly stress that urban mobility is a problem with multiple impacts, and more efficient cars and vans or alternative transport alone are not enough to cope with this multiplicity.

Second, the lecture highlights what might be the emerging components of an urban planning paradigm beyond mobility. I propose to label these complementary components 'convivial streets', 'accessibility by proximity', 'diffused transit-oriented development (TOD)', 'the car as an option', and 'avoid, shift, and improve freight'.

Third, the lecture contends that an experimental, alternative narrative-driven approach is essential to build on potentials and cope with challenges. While a vision might provide direction, a lot remains uncertain, and fierce resistance should be expected. Experimentation is seen as necessary because, while we might have some ideas about where to go and how to get there, much remains unknown or controversial and can be discovered and negotiated only by trying it out.

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