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Research Article

Formulating Strategic Mission and Vision Pillars for Sustainable Urban Transportation Through Comparative Analysis of International Transportation Strategies: A Case Study of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization

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Abstract

Developing a clear strategic vision is essential for transportation organizations aiming to effectively address contemporary urban mobility challenges, including traffic congestion, air pollution, safety concerns, unequal access to transportation services, and rapid technological change, all of which highlight the need for long-term and adaptive strategic planning. This study seeks to identify the key mission and vision pillars for the future development of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization through a qualitative comparative approach based on strategic benchmarking and content analysis of transportation policy documents from fifteen cities and countries across different regions. Mission statements, vision statements, and organizational values were systematically examined using thematic coding to extract recurring strategic priorities and orientations. The findings indicate that, despite contextual differences, transportation organizations consistently emphasize environmental sustainability, safety, accessibility and social equity, quality of life, operational efficiency, resilience, stakeholder engagement, and technological innovation, reflecting a broader shift from infrastructure-centric planning toward integrated, people-oriented, and sustainability-driven approaches. Based on this comparative analysis, five strategic pillars are proposed for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization, namely environmental sustainability, equitable accessibility, safety and public health, smart mobility and innovation, and efficient and resilient transportation systems, which together provide a foundation for future mission and vision development and support alignment with contemporary international transportation planning practices.

Keywords:*Strategic Vision, Comparative Studies, Urban Transportation, Sustainable Transportation, Urban Traffic Management*

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1- Introduction

Urban transportation is widely recognized as one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable urban development, playing a critical role in enhancing citizens' quality of life, supporting economic productivity, promoting social equity, and protecting the environment. Rapid urbanization, growing travel demand, increasing dependence on private vehicles, and the intensification of challenges such as air pollution, traffic congestion, safety concerns, and the deterioration of urban spaces have highlighted the urgent need to reconsider existing urban transportation policies and management approaches. In response to these challenges, transportation and traffic authorities are increasingly required to adopt forward-looking strategies and comprehensive strategic planning frameworks capable of addressing both current and future urban mobility needs [1-7].

Strategic vision represents a core component of strategic planning and serves as a guiding framework for directing organizations toward their long-term objectives. The development of an effective vision requires a thorough understanding of current conditions, awareness of emerging global trends, and the ability to learn from successful experiences while adapting them to local contexts. In this regard, comparative studies and benchmarking have emerged as valuable and systematic tools that enable organizations to identify best practices, learn from leading international experiences, and extract common factors contributing to organizational success. By examining and comparing the missions, visions, values, and strategic priorities of transportation agencies across different countries, these approaches facilitate the identification of key guiding principles and strategic priorities for future development [8-11].

As the capital city of Iran and one of the largest metropolitan areas in the region, Tehran faces a wide range of physical, social, environmental, and transportation-related challenges. Persistent air pollution, severe traffic congestion, road safety concerns, inequalities in access to transportation services, and the growing impacts of climate change have intensified the need for a transportation system that is sustainable, safe, efficient, and smart. Achieving such a system requires a clear, coherent, and future-oriented strategic vision grounded in both local realities and successful international experiences.

Accordingly, this study seeks to explore pathways for achieving the strategic vision of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization through a comparative analysis approach. To this end, strategic urban transportation documents from selected countries representing different continents are reviewed and analyzed, with particular attention given to their mission statements, vision statements, and core organizational values. The primary focus is to identify recurring themes, strategic pillars, and guiding principles that have contributed to the success of urban transportation systems worldwide. The findings of this research are expected to provide a scientific and practical foundation for the development and enhancement of the strategic vision of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization, while also supporting efforts aimed at improving urban quality of life and advancing sustainable urban development.

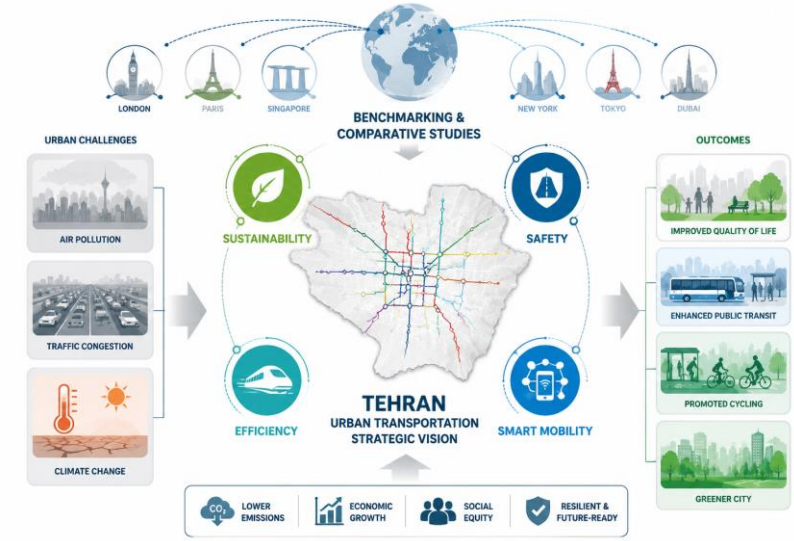

Fig 1. Conceptual framework illustrating the integration of strategic vision, international benchmarking, and sustainable urban mobility goals for Tehran's transportation system.

2- Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Framework

2-1- Strategic Planning in Urban Transportation

Strategic planning in urban transportation refers to a systematic process through which long-term policies, objectives, and action plans are formulated and implemented to improve the performance and sustainability of urban mobility systems. This process encompasses the identification of strategic goals, assessment of internal and external environments, evaluation of available resources and constraints, and selection of appropriate strategies for achieving desired outcomes. Within this framework, the existence of a clear and forward-looking strategic vision is essential for guiding organizations toward their long-term aspirations. Strategic planning has become increasingly important in urban transportation management due to the growing complexity of contemporary challenges, including traffic congestion, environmental pollution, safety concerns, and the need to improve the overall efficiency and resilience of transportation networks [9, 12, 13].

2-2- Strategic Vision, Mission, and Organizational Values

A strategic vision represents an organization's desired future state and provides a long-term direction for its development and decision-making processes. An effective vision should be grounded in a comprehensive understanding of future urban needs, emerging technological developments, and global mobility trends. In contrast, a mission statement defines the fundamental purpose of an organization by clarifying what it does, whom it serves, and the objectives it seeks to achieve. Complementing these elements are organizational values, which constitute the guiding principles and beliefs that shape organizational behavior, culture, and decision-making. Within transportation organizations, values commonly emphasize safety, sustainability, operational efficiency, accessibility, customer orientation, and social responsibility [10, 14-16].

2-3- The Role of Strategic Vision in Guiding Transportation Organizations

A strategic vision serves as a powerful management tool that enables organizations to align their resources, capabilities, and activities around a shared set of long-term objectives. In the context of urban transportation, a strategic vision should extend beyond addressing current operational challenges and provide guidance for responding to future developments, including demographic changes, climate-related risks, technological innovations, and evolving mobility demands. Previous studies indicate that a well-defined strategic vision contributes significantly to organizational integration, enhanced coordination among stakeholders, improved operational efficiency, cost reduction, and increased public satisfaction with transportation services [9, 17, 18]. Consequently, strategic visioning is increasingly viewed as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable and adaptive urban transportation systems.

2-4- Comparative Studies and Their Contribution to Transportation Policy Development

Comparative studies constitute an important research methodology that involves the systematic examination and comparison of systems, processes, policies, and institutional arrangements across different contexts. Such studies facilitate the identification of successful practices, innovative solutions, and transferable lessons that can be adapted to local conditions. Within the field of urban transportation, comparative analysis provides valuable insights into how different countries and cities address common mobility challenges and develop effective transportation policies. By examining international experiences, policymakers and transportation planners can gain access to evidence-based knowledge that supports strategic decision-making, infrastructure development, and service improvement initiatives. Consequently, comparative studies have become an indispensable tool for transportation policy formulation and urban mobility planning [19-21].

2-5- The Concept of Benchmarking and Its Types

Benchmarking refers to the systematic process of identifying, studying, and adapting best practices from leading organizations and industries with the objective of improving organizational performance. In urban transportation organizations, benchmarking has proven to be a highly effective approach for enhancing existing

systems and aligning organizational practices with internationally recognized standards. In the present study, strategic benchmarking is employed as a method for comparing organizational missions, visions, strategic priorities, and performance indicators across transportation agencies worldwide.

Benchmarking can be classified according to different criteria, one of which is the nature of the comparison undertaken. Based on this perspective, benchmarking is commonly categorized into internal, competitive, functional, and generic benchmarking. Internal benchmarking involves comparing different units or departments within the same organization to identify superior internal practices and is generally less costly and easier to implement than other forms. Competitive benchmarking focuses on comparing organizational performance with direct competitors to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. Functional benchmarking examines similar functions or processes across non-competing organizations, enabling the transfer of knowledge and best practices. Generic benchmarking adopts the broadest perspective by identifying outstanding processes regardless of industry boundaries, thereby facilitating organizational learning from a diverse range of sectors [22-23].

Another widely recognized classification is based on the content or focus of benchmarking activities. From this perspective, benchmarking may be process-oriented, performance-oriented, or strategic in nature. Process benchmarking seeks to identify and improve organizational processes by studying superior operational practices. Performance benchmarking focuses on measurable outcomes such as service quality, productivity, efficiency, or customer satisfaction. Strategic benchmarking, which constitutes the focus of this study, aims to evaluate and enhance an organization's strategic position by comparing its long-term goals, policies, and strategic orientations with those of leading organizations. Through this approach, organizations can assess their strategic direction against international standards and successful practices, thereby strengthening their vision and improving their capacity to achieve long-term objectives.

Benchmarking serves a dual purpose: competition and continuous improvement. In its competitive dimension, benchmarking is employed to gain strategic advantages over competitors. In its developmental dimension, the primary objective is the ongoing enhancement of organizational performance and capabilities. As a management practice, benchmarking is generally viewed as a cyclical and continuous process, closely resembling Deming's Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle. The benchmarking process typically consists of six major stages: planning, search and identification of benchmark partners, data collection, analysis, implementation of improvements, and monitoring. These stages enable organizations to identify appropriate benchmarking approaches, establish relevant performance indicators, select suitable models for comparison, and pursue sustained organizational improvement [22-23].

2-6- Strategic Benchmarking and the Development of Mission and Vision Statements

Strategic benchmarking provides organizations with opportunities to learn from successful experiences and proven practices implemented in advanced cities and countries. Through systematic comparison and analysis, organizations can strengthen and refine their mission and vision statements while ensuring alignment with international developments and emerging trends. In the context of this research, strategic benchmarking serves as a framework for examining transportation-related missions, visions, and organizational priorities across different countries. The insights generated through this comparative process are expected to contribute to the formulation and enhancement of the mission and vision statements of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization. By drawing upon international experiences and globally recognized best practices, the organization can establish a more coherent and future-oriented framework for guiding the development of Tehran's urban transportation system.

2-7- Conceptual Framework of the Research

The conceptual framework of this study is founded upon the principles of comparative analysis and strategic benchmarking as mechanisms for improving and advancing Tehran's urban transportation system. The research seeks to identify key guiding pillars, recurring themes, and critical success factors that can contribute to the development of an effective strategic vision and organizational strategy for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization. To achieve this objective, a structured comparative process has been designed and implemented.

The first stage of the research involves establishing criteria for selecting countries and case studies suitable for comparison. These criteria provide a systematic basis for identifying appropriate benchmark cases and ensuring meaningful comparisons across different contexts. Given the objectives of the study, urban transportation systems constitute the primary field of investigation. Furthermore, geographical diversity has been incorporated into the selection process to ensure representation from different continents and to capture a broad range of transportation experiences and policy approaches.

The second stage focuses on the application of two principal categories of selection criteria: technical and general criteria. From a technical perspective, strategic documents describing the current status and future vision of urban transportation systems are selected for analysis. In cases where national transportation strategies are examined, particular emphasis is placed on urban transportation components and policies. From a general perspective, the accessibility and availability of reliable information are considered critical selection criteria, as access to accurate and comprehensive data is a prerequisite for effective benchmarking and comparative analysis.

Based on these criteria, the benchmarking process is conducted to identify recurring factors, strategic priorities, and guiding principles that characterize successful transportation organizations and urban mobility systems worldwide. The resulting insights provide an evidence-based foundation for developing the mission, vision, and strategic orientation of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization. Ultimately, the conceptual framework supports the identification of internationally recognized best practices that can facilitate continuous improvement, strengthen organizational effectiveness, and contribute to the creation of a sustainable, efficient, safe, and intelligent urban transportation system.

3- Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative comparative research design based on strategic benchmarking and content analysis. The primary objective is to identify the key strategic pillars, recurring themes, and critical success factors reflected in the mission and vision statements of leading transportation authorities worldwide and to evaluate their applicability to the strategic development of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

3-1- Research Design

The research was conducted in four sequential stages: (1) selection of benchmark cases, (2) collection of strategic transportation documents, (3) qualitative content analysis and thematic coding, and (4) synthesis and interpretation of findings for application to Tehran's transportation context.

Strategic benchmarking was selected as the principal methodological approach because it enables organizations to compare their strategic orientations with internationally recognized best practices and identify transferable lessons for organizational improvement.

3-2- Selection of Case Studies

The selection of benchmark cases was performed using purposive sampling. The objective was not to achieve statistical representativeness but rather to identify transportation organizations that have demonstrated successful strategic planning practices and have published comprehensive transportation strategies, mission statements, and vision documents.

The selection process was guided by five criteria:

1. Availability of official transportation strategy documents.
2. Recognition as a leading city or country in transportation planning and management.
3. Diversity of transportation approaches and governance structures.
4. Geographical representation from different continents.
5. Accessibility and reliability of publicly available information.

Based on these criteria, fifteen cities and countries were selected, including Sydney, Shanghai, Tokyo, Seoul, Singapore, Russia, South Africa, Berlin, Paris, Barcelona, London, the United States, New York, Vancouver, and Chile.

The selected cases represent a broad range of economic, cultural, institutional, and geographical contexts, thereby increasing the robustness and comprehensiveness of the comparative analysis.

3-3- Data Collection

The primary data source consisted of official strategic transportation documents, transportation master plans, long-term mobility strategies, organizational mission statements, vision statements, and policy documents published by governmental agencies and transportation authorities.

Documents were collected from official governmental websites, transportation authority publications, strategic planning reports, and related policy documents published between 2017 and 2025. Only documents containing explicit strategic directions, mission statements, vision statements, or organizational values were included in the analysis.

A total of fifteen strategic transportation cases were reviewed and examined.

3-4- Content Analysis and Coding Procedure

The study employed qualitative content analysis to systematically identify recurring themes and strategic priorities within the selected documents.

The coding procedure consisted of four stages:

Stage 1: Familiarization

All mission statements, vision statements, and organizational values were carefully reviewed multiple times to gain an overall understanding of their strategic orientation.

Stage 2: Open Coding

Key concepts, phrases, and strategic priorities were identified and assigned preliminary codes. Examples of initial codes included sustainable mobility, environmental protection, safety, public transport development, accessibility, equity, innovation, resilience, quality of life, and stakeholder engagement.

Stage 3: Axial Coding

Conceptually similar codes were grouped into broader thematic categories. For example, terms such as carbon neutrality, climate action, emission reduction, and environmental protection were consolidated under the theme "Environmental Sustainability and Air Quality."

Similarly, concepts such as inclusion, affordability, equal access, and mobility justice were categorized under "Accessibility and Equity."

Stage 4: Theme Development

The final coding framework resulted in ten major thematic categories:

- Environmental Sustainability and Air Quality
- Economic Development
- Social Development
- Smart Mobility and Technology
- Safety
- Security
- Public Health and Quality of Life
- Accessibility and Equity
- Efficiency, Reliability, Quality and Resilience
- Stakeholder Collaboration

These themes formed the analytical basis for the comparative matrices presented in Tables 2 and 3.

3-5- Reliability and Validity

To enhance analytical reliability, the coding process was conducted iteratively. Following the initial coding phase, all coded materials were reviewed again after a two-week interval to verify consistency and reduce subjective interpretation. To strengthen validity, the coding categories were derived directly from the content of official strategic documents rather than predetermined theoretical assumptions. Furthermore, the inclusion of

benchmark cases from multiple continents increased the diversity of perspectives and reduced the risk of geographical bias.

3-6- Comparative Analysis Framework

Following thematic coding, a comparative analysis matrix was developed to identify common patterns, recurring priorities, and strategic convergences among the selected transportation organizations. The frequency and distribution of themes across mission and vision statements were subsequently examined to identify dominant strategic orientations and emerging trends in contemporary transportation planning. The resulting themes were then interpreted in relation to the challenges and strategic needs of Tehran's transportation system. This final step enabled the identification of transferable strategic lessons and the formulation of recommendations for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

3-7- Rationale for Selection of Benchmark Cases

The selection of benchmark cases in this study was based on the principle of strategic diversity and international best-practice representation. The objective was not to identify a single ideal transportation model, but rather to examine a broad range of successful transportation systems operating under different geographical, economic, institutional, and socio-cultural conditions. Each selected city or country represents a distinctive experience in transportation planning and management. For example, Singapore and Seoul are internationally recognized for their advanced smart mobility systems and technology-driven transportation management. London, Paris, and Berlin provide valuable examples of sustainable urban mobility policies, environmental responsibility, and multimodal transportation integration. Tokyo demonstrates the effective operation of high-capacity public transportation systems, while Vancouver and Chile offer important experiences regarding accessibility, social equity, and quality-of-life-oriented transportation planning. Similarly, Shanghai represents large-scale metropolitan transportation development, and South Africa provides insights into the relationship between transportation systems and socio-economic development objectives.

The inclusion of benchmark cases from multiple continents was intended to increase the comprehensiveness of the analysis and minimize geographical bias. Furthermore, the diversity of the selected cases enabled the identification of strategic themes that transcend local contexts and repeatedly appear in successful transportation organizations worldwide. The comparative analysis therefore focuses on identifying common strategic orientations rather than replicating specific transportation policies. This distinction is particularly important because transportation strategies are strongly influenced by local institutional arrangements, economic conditions, demographic characteristics, and urban development patterns. Consequently, the objective of this research is to extract transferable strategic principles that can be adapted to the specific circumstances of Tehran rather than directly importing transportation policies from other cities. Given the multidimensional transportation challenges currently facing Tehran, including traffic congestion, environmental pollution, safety concerns, accessibility inequalities, and the growing need for technological innovation, a multi-case benchmarking approach was considered more appropriate than reliance on a single benchmark city. This approach provides a broader evidence base for identifying strategic priorities and developing a future-oriented vision for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

4- Comparative Assessment of the Mission, Vision, and Values of International Urban Transportation Organizations

4-1- Comparative Analysis of Strategic Transportation Documents

To ensure a comprehensive and globally representative analysis, at least one strategic transportation document from each continent was selected and reviewed. The selected cases include cities and countries that are widely recognized for their advanced transportation planning practices, innovative mobility policies, and long-term strategic approaches to urban transportation development. The comparative analysis incorporates a diverse range of case studies selected from different continents to ensure broad geographical representation and the inclusion of various urban transportation planning experiences. The selected cases comprise Sydney from Australia; Shanghai, Tokyo, Seoul, Singapore, and Russia from Asia; South Africa from the African continent; Berlin, Paris, Barcelona, and London from Europe; the United States of America, Vancouver, and New York from North America; and Chile from South America. The inclusion of these cases provides a comprehensive basis for examining strategic transportation policies, mission and vision statements, organizational values, and long-term mobility objectives

across different socio-economic and institutional contexts. The selection of these cases was intended to capture a broad spectrum of geographical, cultural, economic, and institutional contexts. Such diversity provides valuable opportunities for identifying both universal and context-specific factors that contribute to the success of urban transportation systems. The strategic documents associated with these cities and countries were subsequently examined to identify their mission statements, vision frameworks, organizational values, strategic priorities, and long-term mobility objectives. The following figure illustrates the geographical distribution of the selected cities and countries included in the comparative study.

Figure 2. Geographical Distribution of the Selected Cities and Countries Included in the Comparative Study

The following section first presents the tables summarizing the mission statements, vision statements, and organizational values of the selected transportation organizations. Subsequently, matrices of common themes and recurring concepts extracted from these mission and vision statements are developed and analyzed to identify the key guiding principles and strategic priorities shared among successful urban transportation systems.

Table 1. Mission, Vision, and Core Organizational Values of the Agencies Responsible for Strategic Transportation Planning in the Selected Countries

City/Country	Mission Statement	Vision Statement	Organizational Values
Sydney, Australia [24]	Regardless of the role we perform, caring for our communities, environment, and people lies at the heart of everything we do.	Our vision is a sustainable future in which everyone plays their part in responding to the climate emergency.	Our values are shaped by our people and guide our everyday behaviors while reflecting the best of who we are. We care deeply about our community and strive to be our best every day. We act with integrity to serve the interests of the city and our colleagues. We achieve the best outcomes when we listen to others and work collaboratively as a team. We celebrate diversity and foster an environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We encourage curiosity and embrace new ideas and innovative thinking. We continuously challenge ourselves to identify the best solutions for our city and organization.
Shanghai, China [25]	To ensure that all residents, from the urban core to suburban areas, have access to a reliable and sustainable transportation system that supports economic growth and enhances quality of life.	By 2050, Shanghai aims to complete its transformation into an outstanding global city distinguished by innovation, humanity, and sustainability, while strengthening its position as a modern international socialist metropolis with global influence. With all key development indicators reaching world-leading standards, Shanghai aspires to contribute to China's transformation into a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful modern socialist nation, while supporting the realization of national rejuvenation.	Commitment to a better future Collaboration and stakeholder engagement Sustainable development Excellence and global leadership Respect for national heritage and cultural identity Informed and data-driven decision-making
Tokyo, Japan [26]	The Tokyo Metropolitan Transportation Authority was established to provide essential public transportation services to the residents of Tokyo, with a strong emphasis on safety and security, thereby supporting urban activities and the daily lives of its citizens.	To become a globally recognized model of sustainable, inclusive, and technologically advanced urban transportation by 2050.	Safety and security Innovation and continuous improvement Environmental responsibility Equity and inclusiveness Teamwork and collaboration

Seoul, South Korea [27]	To advance urban policies and enhance the quality of life of Seoul's citizens through scientific research and professional expertise.	A livable Seoul where mobility and urban life can be sustained without dependence on private automobiles.	Safety Diversity Equity and fairness Sustainability Sharing and inclusiveness Collaboration and stakeholder participation
Singapore [28]	Connecting people to places while enhancing the overall travel experience	A people-centered transportation system.	Teamwork Resilience Caring and service orientation Excellence and leadership Safety Progress and continuous improvement Integrity
Russia [29]	To create conditions that contribute to improving citizens' quality of life and public health, fostering economic growth and competitiveness, strengthening national security and defense capabilities, and expanding access to safe, reliable, and high-quality transportation services.	A modern, efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation system that supports economic growth, enhances social welfare, strengthens national security, and ensures the territorial integrity and connectivity of the Russian Federation.	National security and resilience Economic competitiveness Environmental sustainability Safety Reliability Quality and service excellence
South Africa [30]	The Department of Transport seeks to provide leadership in the development of integrated and efficient transportation systems through the establishment of sustainable policy and regulatory frameworks, as well as implementable models that support national socio-economic development strategies.	Transportation as the heartbeat of South Africa's economic growth and social development.	Upholding fairness and equity in all operations Striving to provide affordable and high-quality transportation services for all citizens Encouraging innovation within the transportation sector Ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective oversight in all activities Promoting sustainability, financial viability, and accessibility
Berlin, Germany [31]	To plan, manage, and develop Berlin's transportation system in a sustainable, environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically efficient manner, while prioritizing the needs of citizens and addressing the challenges associated with urban growth and climate change.	To become a global leader in sustainable urban transportation by 2030, where public transport, cycling, and walking constitute the dominant modes of mobility; clean and zero-emission transportation becomes the norm; streets are safer and more inclusive; and innovation and technology are effectively utilized to optimize traffic flow and enhance the user experience.	Environmental sustainability Social equity and justice Safety Transparency Efficiency Public participation and stakeholder engagement Innovation
Paris, France [32]	To plan, coordinate, and regulate transportation in Paris in a manner that is sustainable, inclusive, and efficient, while contributing to the overall quality of life and urban vitality of the city.	Paris envisions a sustainable, carbon-neutral, inclusive, accessible, and safe transportation system for all residents, workers, and visitors. This vision seeks to address both current and future mobility challenges by providing a high-quality, multimodal	Environmental responsibility Equity and social inclusion Safety and public health Innovation

		transportation network that preserves the environment and ensures a balanced and equitable use of public space.	
Barcelona, Spain [33]	The mission of the Barcelona City Council is to lead the city's response to global challenges by delivering effective solutions for its residents and promoting shared and sustainable development.	To transform urban mobility toward a transportation model that is more sustainable, safer, healthier, more equitable, and smarter.	Sustainability Equity and accessibility Safety and public health Innovation
London, United Kingdom [34]	To deliver a world-class, safe, and sustainable transportation system that meets the needs of London and supports the city's continued growth and development.	The central vision of the Mayor's Transport Strategy is to create a future London that is not only home to a larger population but also a better place for all its residents to live, work, and thrive.	Health and well-being Sustainability and environmental responsibility Equity and social inclusion Efficiency and effectiveness Innovation Future-oriented thinking
United States of America [35]	To provide a world-class transportation system that serves the American people and economy through the safe, efficient, sustainable, and equitable movement of people and goods.	To build a safe, equitable, sustainable, and modern transportation system that achieves zero transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries, fosters an inclusive and resilient economy, reduces inequalities, and plays a central role in addressing the climate crisis.	Excellence Trust Equity and fairness Empathy Visionary thinking and innovation
New York, United States of America [36]	To maintain and expand a reliable, sustainable, and integrated transportation system that prioritizes safety, efficiency, and equity. This mission includes modernizing transportation infrastructure, fostering innovation, and collaborating with stakeholders to meet growing mobility demands while reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions.	A multimodal, equitable, resilient, and adaptable transportation network that supports economic growth, minimizes environmental impacts, enhances regional connectivity, ensures accessibility for all residents, and remains responsive to future challenges.	Sustainability Safety Resilience and adaptability Fiscal responsibility and transparency Accountability and responsiveness
Vancouver, Canada [37]	To build a city that values its people, environment, and opportunities for living, working, and thriving. In the transportation sector, this mission is pursued through the development and maintenance of city-owned infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, and public spaces; guiding urban development through land-use and urban design policies; managing street use through regulations and pricing mechanisms; collaborating with external agencies on issues beyond municipal	By 2040, Vancouver envisions a city where an intelligent and efficient transportation system supports a vibrant economy while remaining accessible and affordable for everyone. It is a city where healthy residents live in safe, accessible, and dynamic communities, and where the natural environment is enhanced to secure a healthy future for both people and the planet.	Responsiveness to the needs of citizens and colleagues Commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes Fair, impartial, and thoughtful decision-making Transparency, honesty, and accountability Leadership by example and excellence in public service Continuous learning, improvement, and professional growth

	jurisdiction; empowering residents to make sustainable transportation choices; and providing leadership at both local and global levels.		
Chile [38]	To develop an equitable, efficient, sustainable, and safe transportation and communication system that enhances the quality of life of citizens. The mission also focuses on reducing transportation and communication gaps across the country, with particular emphasis on improving accessibility in different regions.	By 2050, Chile aims to establish transportation and urban development systems that minimize negative environmental impacts, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, while enabling sustainable and equitable mobility across cities. These systems prioritize the use of more efficient and low-emission vehicles, promote high quality of life, support sustainable economic development, and ensure adequate levels of accessibility and safety for all residents, regardless of income, age, gender, or personal conditions.	Efficiency Innovation Equity Sustainability

4-2- Common Themes in the Mission and Vision Statements of the Selected Case Studies

This section aims to identify and extract the most significant and frequently recurring thematic areas reflected in the mission and vision statements of the organizations responsible for developing strategic transportation documents. The analysis is conducted through a systematic content analysis of the relevant strategic documents and a comparative examination of mission and vision statements formulated by transportation authorities across different countries. The extracted themes represent the core strategic priorities emphasized by these organizations in the field of urban transportation, including issues such as sustainability, safety, accessibility, equity, efficiency, innovation, and environmental responsibility. These dimensions were identified by coding and categorizing similar conceptual statements and consolidating them into unified thematic groups. Tables 2 and 3 present the compiled list of these recurring themes and conceptual domains derived from the analyzed mission and vision statements. These tables provide a structured overview of the shared strategic orientations observed across different urban transportation systems and serve as a basis for further comparative interpretation and synthesis.

To improve methodological transparency and facilitate the interpretation of the thematic matrices presented in Tables 2 and 3, the operational definitions of the coding categories are provided in Table 4. These definitions were developed during the thematic coding process and served as the analytical framework for classifying concepts extracted from the reviewed mission and vision statements. The coding framework ensured consistency in identifying and grouping similar concepts across different strategic transportation documents.

Table 2. Extracted Common Themes from Mission Statements of the Organizations Included in the Comparative Study

Mission Statements / City/Country	Environmental sustainability & air quality	Economic development	Social development	Smart mobility & technology use	Safety	Security	Public health & quality of life	Accessibility & equity	Efficiency, reliability, quality & resilience	Stakeholder collaboration
Sydney	*						*			
Shanghai	*	*				*	*		*	
Tokyo						*	*			
Seoul							*			
Singapore								*	*	
Russia							*		*	
South Africa	*	*	*						*	
Berlin	*	*	*					*	*	
Paris	*	*	*				*	*	*	
Barcelona	*	*	*							
London	*	*	*							
United States	*	*				*	*	*	*	
New York	*	*		*		*		*	*	*
Vancouver	*	*							*	*
Chile	*	*				*	*	*	*	

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates the explicit presence of the corresponding theme within the mission statement of the reviewed transportation organization. Theme identification was based on qualitative content analysis and thematic coding of official strategic transportation documents.

Table 3. Thematic Analysis of Vision Statements of the Transportation Organizations in the Comparative Study

Vision Statements / City/Country	Environmental Sustainability & Air Quality	People-Centered, Clean & Public Transport Focus	Economic Development	Social Development	Innovation, Smart Mobility & Technology	Safety	Security	Public Health & Quality of Life	Accessibility & Equity	Multimodal Transport, Efficiency, Reliability, Quality & Resilience
Sydney	*									
Shanghai	*		*	*						
Tokyo	*				*				*	
Seoul		*								
Singapore		*								
Russia	*				*	*	*			
South Africa			*	*						*
Berlin	*	*			*	*			*	
Paris	*					*			*	*
Barcelona	*				*	*		*	*	
London								*		
United States	*		*			*			*	
New York	*		*					*	*	*
Vancouver	*		*		*	*		*	*	*
Chile	*		*				*	*	*	

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates the explicit presence of the corresponding theme within the vision statement of the reviewed transportation organization. Themes were identified through systematic qualitative coding and thematic categorization of the selected strategic transportation documents.

Table 4. Definitions of the Extracted Themes Used in the Coding Framework

Theme	Definition
Environmental Sustainability and Air Quality	Policies related to emission reduction, climate action, environmental protection and sustainable mobility
Economic Development	Transportation contributions to productivity, competitiveness and economic growth
Social Development	Social inclusion, community wellbeing and social cohesion
Smart Mobility and Technology	Intelligent transportation systems, digitalization and innovation
Safety	Reduction of crashes, injuries and transportation risks
Security	Protection of infrastructure and transportation users
Public Health and Quality of Life	Health impacts, livability and wellbeing
Accessibility and Equity	Equal access to transportation services and mobility opportunities
Efficiency, Reliability, Quality and Resilience	Service performance, reliability and system adaptability
Stakeholder Collaboration	Participation, partnerships and institutional cooperation

The analysis of Tables 2 and 3 indicates a significant conceptual convergence in the strategic transportation discourse of leading metropolitan areas and countries around several fundamental themes, reflecting a systematic transition from infrastructure-centered approaches toward more human-centered, sustainable, and data-driven paradigms in transportation governance. In this regard, sustainability emerges as the core and overarching theme, not only in its environmental dimension related to emissions reduction and air quality improvement, but also as a broader construct encompassing social, economic, and institutional resilience, thereby functioning as an organizing principle for other strategic objectives.

At the mission level, the dominant emphasis is placed on enhancing the efficiency, reliability, and safety of urban transportation systems, alongside improving public health and overall quality of life. This reflects a performance-oriented and welfare-driven orientation among transportation authorities. In contrast, vision statements place stronger emphasis on equity, accessibility, and the reduction of spatial and social disparities, highlighting a forward-looking commitment to inclusive and fair mobility systems. Furthermore, the increasing prominence of innovation, smart mobility, and multimodal integration indicates that technological transformation and system interoperability are considered essential enablers for achieving long-term sustainability and efficiency.

Accordingly, the prevailing paradigm across the analyzed documents can be interpreted as a dual strategic orientation that simultaneously seeks to ensure operational efficiency in the present while advancing equity, sustainability, and inclusiveness for the future. This integrated perspective provides a robust conceptual foundation for defining guiding principles and strategic pillars for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

4-3- Discussion of Comparative Findings

The comparative analysis reveals a notable convergence among transportation organizations across different geographical and institutional contexts. Despite substantial differences in governance structures, economic conditions, and urban development patterns, the reviewed organizations demonstrate a remarkably similar understanding of the fundamental objectives of contemporary transportation systems.

One of the most significant findings is the central role of sustainability within both mission and vision statements. Sustainability is no longer treated solely as an environmental objective but rather as a multidimensional framework encompassing environmental protection, economic efficiency, social inclusion, and long-term organizational resilience. This finding is consistent with contemporary transportation literature, which increasingly emphasizes the integration of environmental, social, and economic considerations within transportation planning and policy development.

The results further indicate that transportation authorities are progressively shifting from infrastructure-oriented approaches toward people-centered mobility strategies. While traditional transportation planning primarily focused on increasing network capacity and improving traffic flow, contemporary transportation strategies place greater emphasis on accessibility, quality of life, public health, and user experience. The frequent appearance of concepts such as equity, inclusiveness, livability, and accessibility within the reviewed documents reflects this transformation.

Another important observation concerns the growing role of technological innovation in transportation governance. Smart mobility, digitalization, intelligent transportation systems, and data-driven decision-making have emerged as recurring strategic priorities among many benchmark cases. This trend suggests that technological advancement is increasingly viewed not merely as an operational tool but as a strategic enabler capable of improving system efficiency, safety, sustainability, and customer satisfaction.

The analysis also highlights the increasing importance of resilience within transportation planning. Several organizations explicitly emphasize the need to develop transportation systems capable of adapting to future uncertainties, including climate change, demographic transitions, technological disruptions, and evolving mobility patterns. This finding reflects a broader shift toward adaptive and future-oriented transportation governance.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate a strong relationship between transportation policy and broader urban development objectives. Transportation systems are increasingly expected to contribute not only to mobility provision but also to economic competitiveness, environmental quality, social cohesion, public health, and urban livability. Consequently, transportation planning is becoming more integrated with wider sustainability and urban development agendas.

Overall, the findings suggest that successful transportation organizations increasingly pursue an integrated strategic approach that balances efficiency, sustainability, accessibility, safety, innovation, and resilience. This integrated perspective provides valuable insights for transportation authorities seeking to formulate future-oriented mission and vision statements capable of responding to the complex challenges of contemporary urban mobility.

4-4- Transferability of International Findings to Tehran's Transportation Context

One of the primary objectives of comparative transportation studies is not merely to identify successful international experiences but also to determine the extent to which these experiences can inform local planning and policy development. Although the selected benchmark cases differ from Tehran in terms of governance structures, economic conditions, demographic characteristics, and urban development patterns, many of the transportation challenges addressed by these cities are conceptually similar to those currently facing Tehran.

These common challenges include traffic congestion, air pollution, increasing travel demand, unequal accessibility to transportation services, road safety concerns, environmental degradation, and the need for technological modernization of transportation systems. Consequently, the strategic priorities identified through the comparative analysis provide valuable insights that can support the formulation of future transportation policies and organizational strategies within the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

The comparative findings demonstrate that successful transportation authorities consistently emphasize sustainability, accessibility, safety, efficiency, innovation, and quality of life as core strategic priorities. These themes correspond closely with the major transportation challenges currently confronting Tehran.

Environmental Sustainability and Air Quality

Environmental sustainability emerged as the most frequently recurring theme across both mission and vision statements. This finding is particularly relevant to Tehran, where air pollution remains one of the most significant urban challenges affecting public health and quality of life.

Experiences from cities such as London, Paris, Berlin, Vancouver, and Santiago demonstrate the importance of integrating transportation planning with environmental objectives through measures such as emission reduction strategies, promotion of public transportation, expansion of active transportation modes, and support for low-emission vehicles. The adoption of similar strategic priorities could contribute significantly to improving environmental conditions in Tehran.

Accessibility and Social Equity

The analysis revealed a strong emphasis on equitable access to transportation services and inclusive mobility systems. Many transportation organizations explicitly recognize accessibility as a prerequisite for social justice and urban cohesion.

This finding is particularly relevant for Tehran, where differences in transportation accessibility exist among various districts and socioeconomic groups. Lessons from Vancouver, Chile, Seoul, and Paris suggest that transportation policies should prioritize equitable distribution of mobility opportunities and ensure that all residents benefit from efficient and affordable transportation services.

Safety and Public Health

Road safety and public health were identified as major strategic priorities across the reviewed documents. Several transportation organizations have adopted ambitious goals aimed at reducing traffic-related fatalities and injuries while simultaneously encouraging healthier travel behaviors.

For Tehran, where traffic accidents and transportation-related health impacts remain important concerns, these experiences highlight the importance of integrating safety objectives into long-term transportation planning and promoting walking, cycling, and public transportation as healthier travel alternatives.

Smart Mobility and Technological Innovation

The increasing importance of intelligent transportation systems, digital technologies, and data-driven decision-making was evident throughout the comparative analysis. Cities such as Singapore, Seoul, Shanghai, and Tokyo have successfully utilized technological innovation to improve traffic management, optimize transportation services, and enhance user experiences.

Given Tehran's growing technological capacity and existing intelligent transportation infrastructure, the expansion of smart mobility initiatives represents a practical and achievable strategic direction for future transportation development.

Efficiency, Reliability, and System Resilience

The findings indicate that efficient, reliable, and resilient transportation systems are considered essential components of sustainable urban development. Transportation organizations increasingly focus on improving service quality, minimizing disruptions, and enhancing system adaptability in response to future uncertainties.

For Tehran, strengthening transportation resilience and improving operational efficiency can contribute to reducing congestion, enhancing service reliability, and improving overall user satisfaction.

Strategic Implications for Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization

Based on the comparative analysis, five strategic pillars are proposed for the future development of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization:

1. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Responsiveness.
2. Equitable and Accessible Mobility for All Citizens.
3. Safety-Oriented and Health-Promoting Transportation Systems.
4. Smart Mobility and Data-Driven Transportation Management.
5. Efficient, Integrated, and Resilient Transportation Networks.

These pillars are directly derived from internationally observed best practices while remaining compatible with Tehran's local transportation challenges and development priorities. Therefore, they provide a practical foundation for the formulation of future mission statements, vision statements, and strategic plans for the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

5- Conclusion and Practical Recommendations

This study employed a comparative analysis and strategic benchmarking approach to examine the mission statements, vision statements, and organizational values of transportation authorities from fifteen cities and countries across different continents. The objective was to identify common strategic priorities and derive a set of guiding pillars that could support the future development of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization. The findings reveal a significant convergence among leading transportation organizations worldwide around several key strategic themes. Environmental sustainability, accessibility and social equity, safety, public health, operational efficiency, resilience, stakeholder engagement, and technological innovation emerged as the most frequently emphasized priorities within both mission and vision statements. These findings indicate that contemporary transportation planning has evolved beyond the traditional objective of mobility provision and increasingly focuses on creating sustainable, people-centered, and resilient urban environments. The comparative assessment further demonstrates that successful transportation organizations pursue a balanced approach that simultaneously addresses environmental, social, economic, and technological dimensions of urban mobility. Sustainability functions as the overarching strategic framework within which other objectives such as safety, accessibility, quality of life, and innovation are integrated. From the perspective of Tehran, the identified strategic themes are highly relevant to existing transportation challenges, including severe traffic congestion, air pollution, unequal accessibility to transportation services, traffic safety concerns, and the growing need for intelligent transportation solutions. Therefore, the findings of this study provide a valuable evidence-based foundation for revising and strengthening the strategic direction of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization.

Based on the findings of the comparative analysis and strategic benchmarking, several strategic recommendations can be proposed for the future development of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization. First, environmental sustainability should be established as the central principle guiding the organization's mission, vision, and long-term strategic direction. Transportation policies should prioritize greenhouse gas emission reduction, air quality improvement, energy efficiency, and the promotion of environmentally sustainable mobility options. In addition, strengthening public transportation and enhancing multimodal integration should be considered a key strategic priority. Greater coordination and connectivity among metro, bus, taxi, cycling, and pedestrian networks can facilitate the development of a seamless and efficient transportation system while reducing dependence on private vehicles.

Furthermore, international experiences highlight the growing importance of smart mobility and data-driven transportation management. Accordingly, the organization should expand the application of intelligent transportation systems, real-time data analytics, and digital technologies to improve traffic management, demand forecasting, service optimization, and performance monitoring. Alongside technological advancement, equity and accessibility should remain fundamental principles of transportation planning. Future policies should ensure equitable access to transportation services across all districts of Tehran, with particular attention given to low-income communities, peripheral urban areas, older adults, women, children, and persons with disabilities.

Safety and public health should also be recognized as core organizational values. Long-term strategies aimed at reducing traffic-related fatalities and injuries should be integrated into transportation planning, while active mobility options such as walking and cycling should be promoted to support healthier travel behaviors and improve overall public health outcomes. In addition, transportation planning should incorporate resilience as a strategic objective. Given the increasing uncertainties

associated with climate change, economic fluctuations, technological disruptions, and demographic transformations, strengthening the adaptability and robustness of transportation systems will be essential for addressing future challenges.

Finally, stakeholder engagement should be institutionalized as a critical component of transportation governance. International best practices demonstrate that successful transportation policies are strongly supported by meaningful participation from a wide range of stakeholders. Therefore, the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization should establish participatory planning mechanisms that actively involve citizens, transportation operators, academic institutions, private-sector organizations, and governmental agencies in decision-making processes. Such an approach can enhance policy effectiveness, strengthen public trust, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of transportation development in Tehran.

Proposed Strategic Vision Pillars for Tehran

Based on the findings of this research, five strategic vision pillars are proposed for the future strategic framework of the Tehran Municipality Transportation and Traffic Organization:

1. Sustainable and Environmentally Responsible Mobility.
2. Safe and Health-Oriented Transportation Systems.
3. Equitable and Accessible Mobility for All Citizens.
4. Smart, Innovative, and Data-Driven Transportation Management.
5. Efficient, Integrated, and Resilient Urban Transportation Networks.

These pillars collectively provide a comprehensive framework for the formulation of future mission statements, vision statements, and strategic plans. Furthermore, they align Tehran's transportation development trajectory with internationally recognized best practices while remaining responsive to local needs and challenges.

Limitations and Future Research

The present study focused primarily on mission statements, vision statements, and strategic transportation documents. Future studies may expand the analysis by incorporating performance indicators, governance structures, funding mechanisms, implementation outcomes, and stakeholder perspectives. Additionally, future research could employ quantitative techniques and expert-based approaches such as Delphi analysis, AHP, or fuzzy decision-making methods to prioritize the identified strategic pillars and evaluate their applicability within the context of Tehran.

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