

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE PUBLIC
TRANSPORT SECTOR IN BULAWAYO**

By

Ndlovu Sehile (N0113269T)

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	
PO	
DATE	ACCESSION
30/11/14	131565

A dissertation submitted

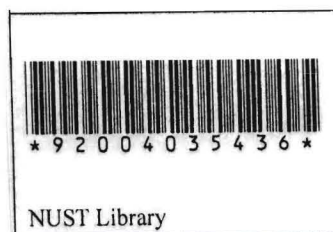
To the department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

Degree of Master of Urban Design

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

October, 2013



ABSTRACT

Transportation is a process that involves the movement of commuters, goods and services from a given point of origin to a specific destination. Public transport is an integral backbone of urban life and is one of the factors that determine the form and social development of a city. Urban public transport in Zimbabwe has changed over time from a period of monopoly provision during the era of the government owned Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO), to the era of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which saw the deregulation of the transport industry leading to the current scenario where it is wholly owned by private informal providers. This has brought its challenges to the sector. This study was carried out to assess the efficiency of the public transport sector in Bulawayo, by looking at the organization of public transport in the Central Business District (CBD) and on transport corridors such as Luveve Road and Gwanda Road. This research uses a descriptive approach methodology. Questionnaires were personally administered on commuter omnibus drivers, owners and commuters at various termini to gather information. Key informants like Bulawayo City Council officials, Zimbabwe Republic Police, Ministry of Transport Officials were interviewed. The research found out that the sector faces management challenges brought about by diverse ownership of vehicles, where there are numerous players, thus constraining coordination. The numbers of vehicles have increased by 62% over the past 7 years whilst economic activity has dwindled and the population reduced by 15% leading to a reduction in the numbers of customers. This has resulted in a mismatch between supply and demand where supply of vehicles is more than demand. The chase for the few customers has resulted in fierce competition amongst the operators with flouting of traffic regulations being the order of the day. These factors coupled with the ages of the vehicles where 71% of them are 15+ years old have led to the inefficient operations of the sector. It is therefore recommended that the public transport policy that was prepared by the city of Bulawayo be speedily implemented to form companies in which the various vehicle owners will be shareholders.