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The Spatial Form of Post-Apartheid Cape Town

A Thesis
Presented for the
Masters of Science
Degree
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father, Larry Trail, for all the encouragement and help he gave me through the years. He will be deeply missed.

Abstract

This thesis deals with the urban form of Cape Town, South Africa in the years following the end of apartheid. The apartheid government created a city that was racially segregated, and over the last twelve years the new democratic government has passed much legislation in an attempt to correct the distorted layout. The national and local policies call for compact sustainable cities that reintegrate the historically disadvantaged people and help bring them out of poverty. To see how effective the policies were in directing growth, I tracked development trends in Cape Town by using GIS to map the results of studies done by the Cape Metropolitan Council. I discovered that private development has continued to locate in the wealthier, white areas and that the apartheid layout has actually become more entrenched. The poorer residents are still stuck in segregated townships or unsafe informal settlements with little change to their quality of life. The implementation of the various policies was hindered by the neo-liberal economic policy adopted by the national government, which essentially underfinanced all government programs. The goal of redirecting development in order to correct the apartheid layout lost priority to the need to create general economic growth through foreign investment. The growing unrest among individuals who have not benefited from democracy will continue to put pressure on the government. It is unclear how the South African government will deal with this need for balancing social change and economic growth in the future.

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1) Introduction

South Africa, a country located at the southern tip of Africa, is a dynamic and interesting place. It has one of the strongest economies in Africa and contains a unique blend of developed and developing worlds at once. The relatively peaceful transition to a liberal democracy in 1994 was an inspirational story compared to the conflicts in surrounding countries. Nelson Mandela and F. W. De Klerk, who were instrumental in the negotiations, won a joint Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. With the start of the new democratic government, all sanction from other countries was dropped and South Africa began to reconnect with the world.

The previous government had created an oppressive state that enforced the segregation of all races in order to maintain white supremacy. The country was divided into the racial groups; white, coloured, black and Indian/Asian. Anyone who was not designated as being of pure European descent was considered a person of color and left severely disadvantaged by poor housing, lack of access to education and job discrimination. The new government inherited the legacy of inequality and all the problems that went with it. A good measure of the inequality is the Gini Coefficient¹, which indicates the distribution of wealth among individuals in a society. Based on information from the World Bank in 2000, South Africa's Gini coefficient of .578 shows a high level of inequality that stems from its long history of apartheid policies (UNDP).

¹ The Gini coefficient is calculated based on the Lorenz curve and is often used to show income inequality. It ranges from 0 to 1 with 0 representing perfect equality and 1 representing perfect inequality.

Now, it is estimated that 50% of the population, or 24 million people, live below the poverty line.

Many new policies have been created in the past twelve years of democracy that are meant to correct these inherited imbalances. These national policies were joined to local initiatives that also worked to combat the entrenched inequalities. My core question is: how effective are the national and local policies in directing development to overcome the segregated layout of the city created by the apartheid government? Do the policies actually become implemented and, if so, to what degree? These are intriguing questions considering the recent transition to democracy. How effective is the new government in directing growth and overcoming past inequalities? If the original policies turn out to be ineffective, then new ones need to be created that are able to remedy the previous constraints. Policy studies are essential to this process and I wish to contribute to the growing body of this literature focused on South Africa. In order to gauge the effectiveness of urban policy over time I will focus in on the municipal level, Cape Town in particular, to assess the progress made in changing the spatial legacy of apartheid.

Cape Town (Figure 1, p3), is the focus of this thesis. It is the historical mother city of South Africa, located in the southwestern part of the country between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It has a unique natural environment that makes it a prime spot for international tourism and a diverse economy that could attract global markets. In this way Cape Town has an advantage over many other South African cities. However Cape Town's potential and prosperity are offset by the spatial legacy of apartheid. Many citizens find themselves segregated in the urban periphery or in unsafe informal

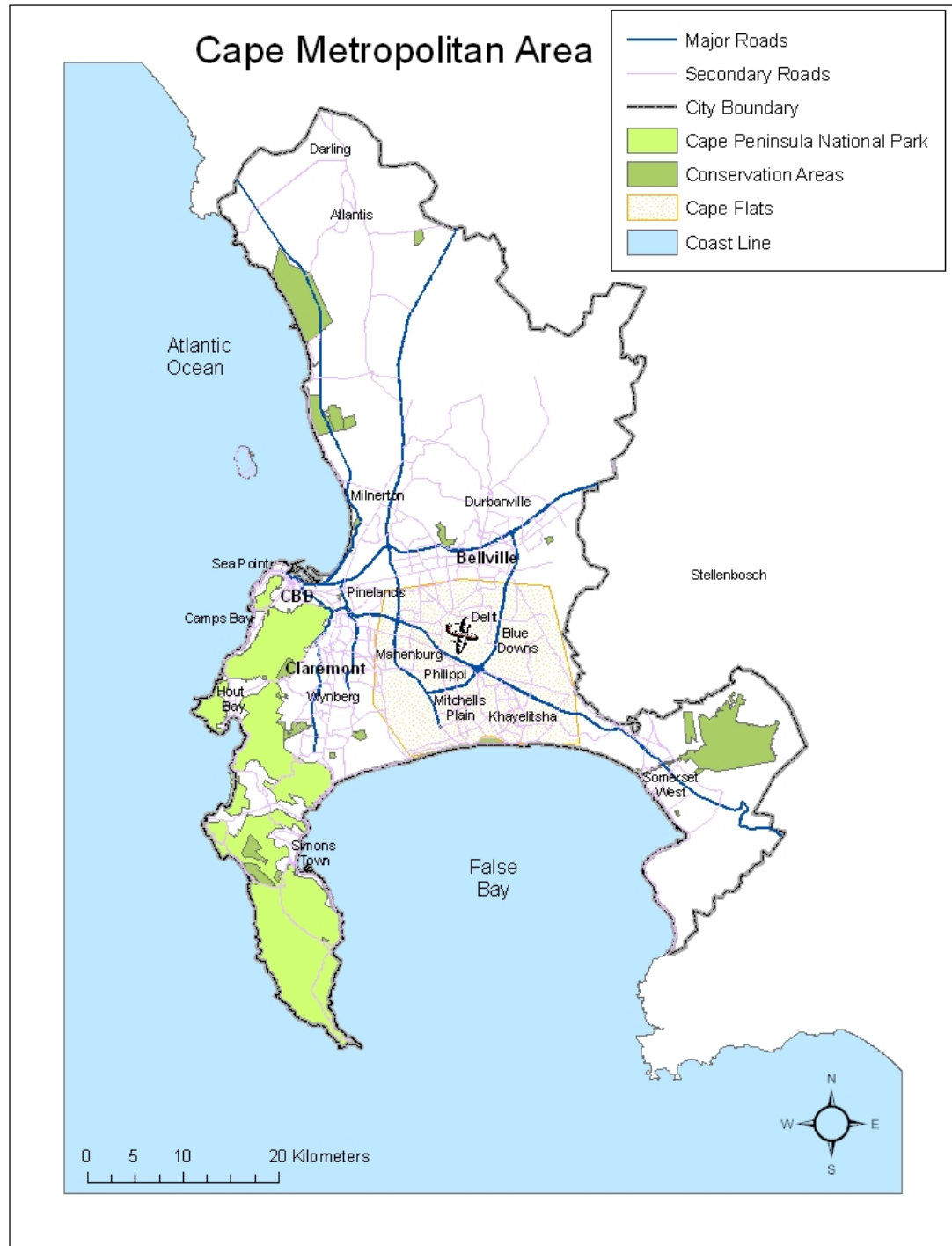


Figure 1: Map 1: Cape Metropolitan Area

settlements. Cape Town is struggling to find a way to remedy the past and bring the poor up out of their appalling conditions through national and local policies.

Research Design

My interest in South Africa began while I was working as an intern at a planning and urban design office in Cape Town. The landscape of the city seemed a strange mesh of two cities that shared space but were totally separate. On one side were gated houses and high-speed freeways, and on the other were informal shacks and people on foot. The only interaction between the two involved horns honking as pedestrians darted between cars on the freeway. How could citizens of a newly democratic city lead such completely different lives? I was fortunate enough to have Cecil Madell, a community planner, as my guide to this new environment. He had been born into a segregated coloured township in Cape Town, but his children can now go to a previously white school. He dreams of something better for his country and I was greatly influenced by our many long conversations on the topic. Living with Cecil and his family made me want to understand what had created this strange urban geography and how it was changing.

My first step was to become familiar with Cape Town's history and development in order to better understand the current situation. The history of apartheid and its development will be covered in the first section. Next, I looked for current legislation within in South Africa that applied to development and gained an overall understanding

of it. This includes policies passed at the national or local level since 1994.² In order to supplement this information I conducted several interviews of people who understand or are involved in the development process (For a list of interviews, see Appendix A). I then explored the great amount of literature on the topic.

In order to answer my question, I have used Geographic Information System (GIS), or specifically ArcGIS 9. I used the maps to compare the ideal growth versus the actual growth and determine the degree to which the key principles of national and local policies are being implemented. The ideal growth in this context means that development follows the recommendations in the urban policies. For example if a policy calls for settlements to be more compact and closer to economic nodes, then that is what gets built. The main sources of my data were the South African census in 1996 and 2001, reports commissioned by the Cape Metropolitan Council, and resources acquired at MCA planning offices in Cape Town (For details on the creation of the maps in this thesis see Appendix B).

The finalized maps are a tool, which I use to analyze the effectiveness of the legislation and comment on its future implications. The maps are meant to be general reference to capture large trends, and should not be used to pinpoint occurrences at a street level. Cape Town is far too big a place to show accuracy at that level and still show the entire Cape Metropolitan Area. Also the issues discussed in this thesis are complex, which makes a chronological timeline difficult. I have tried to minimize the disruptions in the timeline in my narrative, but often such disruptions were unavoidable.

² I skipped the provincial level because in Cape Town no provincial legislation has had a major impact on urban form.

Apartheid in South Africa

Although apartheid is not the focus of this thesis, no discussion of Cape Town and geography would be complete without an understanding of it. I will therefore briefly cover the beginnings of apartheid thought and the laws that evolved from it.

In 1909, a national convention was held between the white Dutch descendants, the Afrikaans, and the white British descendants in order to create a union between the various colonies that composed South Africa (Mason 153). These two groups had different cultures and languages, but they shared a European heritage and they worked together to keep the white minority in power after the colonial powers left. When the Union became official in May of 1910, the majority of the population almost 6 million people were left with no bill of rights and no ability to vote (Mason 155). The racial discrimination to come was clear from the very beginning.

Apartheid is probably the only widely known Afrikaans word and it means apartness (Western, Divided City 712). The roots of it lay in the early beliefs of supremacy among the founders of the state. The black population was viewed as being “still children, just emerging from barbarism” who would be unable to conform to Western culture (Giliomee and Schlemmer 6). The ideology of apartheid was based on the belief that God created many different nations of people, and a person can only reach their full potential within their own nation, or ethnic group (Giliomee and Schlemmer 44). This belief stressed the biological differences between races and therefore the separate needs of each. It promoted apartheid as the best way to avoid conflict between the races and ensure the continued survival and unspoken supremacy of the whites

(Giliomee and Schlemmer 53). It was believed that apartheid could “be justified on Christian, ethical and scientific grounds” (Giliomee and Schlemmer 54).

As mentioned in the introduction, the residents of South Africa were divided into different racial categories based on physical appearance. The white category was reserved for people of pure European descent and the black category was for people native to Africa. The coloured category was reserved for the people of mixed race descent. The Indian/Asian category was for immigrants that had moved to the region looking for work during the British colonial years. The classification given to people determined their status within the society.

The first far-reaching segregation legislation was the Native Land Act of 1913. This act divided the country into land that could be owned by blacks and land that was reserved for whites only. After the reserves were doubled in size in 1936, the result of this legislation was “13 percent of the population owning 87 percent of the land” (Berrisford 218). The land reserved for the blacks was remote and inadequate, and it effectively disenfranchised all that did not live within it. In 1923, the Native Urban Areas Act was passed in order to gain more control over the blacks living in cities and/or trying to migrate to them (Mason 175).

It was not until 1948 that the National Party (NP), the biggest advocates of apartheid, came into power. The Group Areas Act soon followed, which mandated the residential segregation of all cities into specific race zones (Berrisford 219). This legislation caused massive restructuring in many South African cities. In Cape Town, for example, a significant portion of the coloured population was living in the same residential areas as the whites and was forcibly removed to newly built housing

developments (Giliomee and Schlemmer 86). For the next thirty years the creation of these racially divided residential townships proceeded steadily.

Over the years, the government continued to pass more legislation that curtailed the freedom of the majority of the population. With the creation of Bantustan homelands in 1959, the black population lost all rights to citizenship and was no longer recognized as South Africans (Mason 214). This also allowed for the creation of influx laws in the major cities of the country. Influx controls were meant to allow in just the right amount of coloured and black laborers needed by the white businesses and no more. The apartheid government believed that unless blacks were serving the whites in some way, they should be living in the homelands (Giliomee and Schlemmer 70). All residents were issued a dehumanizing identification booklet that specified where they were allowed to be at all times. These restrictions enabled the government to keep a tight control over all the people within the country.

Apartheid continued like this until its slow demise due to resistance movements, which caused great civil unrest. An untold number of people were killed by the army, especially in black townships, as the government tried to maintain control. It soon became clear that the apartheid government could not afford its armed presence in the segregated areas throughout the country, so a new path had to be chosen. By the time negotiations to dismantle apartheid were taking place in the early 1990's much damage had already been done to the cities of South Africa. I will now focus on Cape Town's early development and the progression of its change through apartheid.

Historical Development of Cape Town

The Dutch East India Company originally settled Cape Town in 1652 to have a convenient supply and refueling point between the East Indies and Holland (Gay 4). The Dutch settlers at first traded with the local Khoi-San population, but soon pushed them from their land (Mason 29). Because of this, the original layout of the city was influenced by a need for defense and unavoidable prominent physical features (Dewer, Structure & Form 5). With time, two main roads were created to go inland from the main settlement. (Figure 2, p10) Both Voortrekker Road and Main Road reached fertile farmland and later small settlements, such as Paarl and Simon's Town (Dewer, Structure & Form 10). In 1795, the British took over the colony and the population began to increase as immigration was encouraged. By the 1870s there were 15,000 people of European descent living in the Cape Town area out of a total population of 28,000 (Dewer, Structure & Form 14).

From the beginning Cape Town has been a sprawling city (CMC, Moving Ahead 34). In the late 19th century, rail lines were laid near Voortrekker and Main Roads, which increased the ease of commuting to the CBD. The wealthier residences were moving down Main Road to areas such as Constantia and Wynberg. The growing population on this spine of the city led to the creation of commercial and industrial activity there. Voortrekker Road did not attract the same kind of development and remained merely a route to Paarl for a long time. Development tended to cluster around certain points along the main transportation routes creating nodes of activity (Dewer, Structure & Form 17-19). Two main nodes evolved with time and are still centers of employment and retail today. Along Voortrekker Road, Bellville became the important midpoint between the

Urban Development in 1790

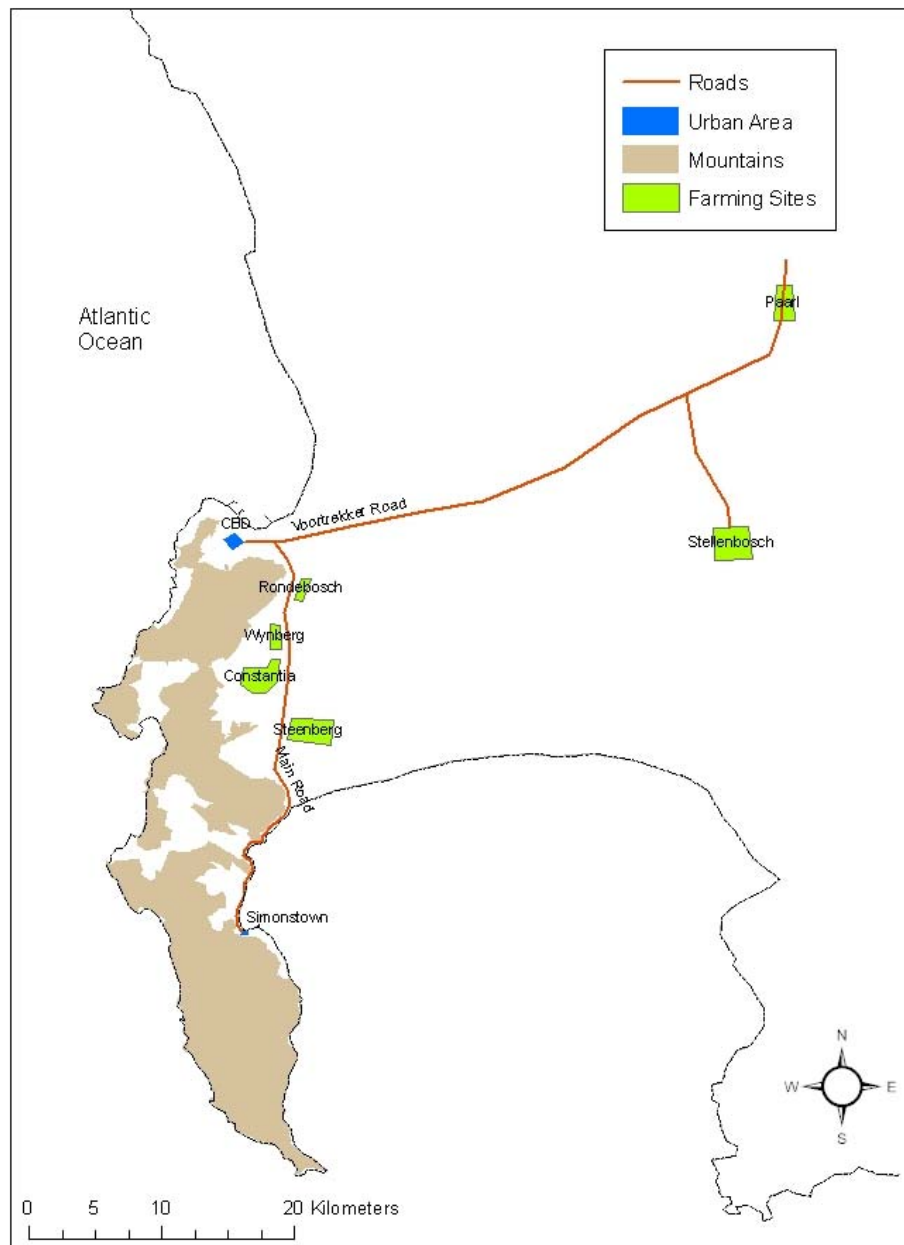


Figure 2: Map 2: Cape Town in 1790

CBD and Stellenbosch. On Main Road, the Claremont/Wynberg region was the center of economic opportunity. The CBD with two main spines extending inward toward the east and south has remained the base form of Cape Town through the years.

In the early 1900s an outbreak of the bubonic plague in the poorer overcrowded inner city areas caused quite a scare. The wealthier whites called for the physical separation of the coloured and black populations for their being supposed disease carriers (Giliomee and Schlemmer 10). Although segregation had been present in South Africa since the beginning of colonialization, it was at this point that it started to become increasingly formalized in its enforcement. Government officials traveled abroad looking for solutions to their perceived racial problems. Over the years, they were influenced by international planning ideas, such as Garden Cities, Neighborhood Units and New Towns, which were growing popular in parts of Europe and the United States. The ideas were brought back to South Africa and modified in order to justify and operationalize segregation.

Garden Cities

The first segregated townships were built between 1919 and 1922 based on the ideas of Ebenezer Howard (Dewar, Structure & Form 42). The Garden Cities concept had been developed by Howard in Britain in reaction to the Industrial Revolution and had become quite influential. His utopian city was supposed to bring together the benefits of the city and the country with none of the problems. Howard wanted Garden Cities to be “a remedy for the depopulation of our country districts and for the overcrowding of our

large cities” (Howard 143). The Garden City was going to be 1,000 acres designed in a circular form and sit in the middle of 5,000 acres of farmland (Howard 14). The population was set at 30,000 and it was supposed to be a self-contained walkable city. Each ring of the circle had a set-aside purpose so that there was clear separation of land uses (Howard 16). Each garden city was to be connected by a rail line to other garden cities that formed a belt around a major city such as London.

The early 1900s saw a dramatic increase in Cape Town’s population in part due to the refugees from the Anglo-Boer War (Dewar, Structure & Form 30). This increase, plus the health epidemics, led to the adaptation of Howard’s ideas to fit the city’s needs. In a short time span, three different developments were built to house the different races of Cape Town. The first and largest garden city was called Pinelands and it was built for the white municipal workers. Pinelands was shaped in a circular form and surrounded by a ring of railroad tracks. Maitland Garden Village was quickly constructed on one side of Pinelands to house coloureds, and Langa was built on the other side for blacks (Dewar, Structure & Form 42). These were not self-contained towns because they had no industry and very little retail activity. They were built on the Cape Flats outside of current development and surrounded on all sides by roads, train tracks, and/or open space. The purpose was to create inwardly facing communities of a single race. Dewar wrote that in South Africa Howard’s vision of a new society was simplified to little more than a housing program (Structure & Form 45).

Neighborhood Units

Another very influential international planning concept was the Neighborhood Unit model created by Clarence Perry in the United States. Perry's theories, which were published in the late 1920s, promoted the belief that cities were detrimental to stable family life. High-speed highways were cutting up residential areas in the city and inadvertently creating disconnected islands that could be unsafe for children (Perry 30). The hidden benefit, in Perry's opinion, was that these highways were creating bounded neighborhoods that were insulated enough to provide the framework for a model community if structured appropriately (Perry 34).

A Neighborhood Unit should provide four basic functions for its residents, which are "school, playgrounds, shops...and residential environment" (Perry 45). The retail aspect was to be clustered together on the edge in order to keep this disruptive land use separate. On top of being surrounded by major highways, a unit should discourage through traffic on its interior streets by never placing them directly opposite other street openings (Perry 85). The Neighborhood Unit model is supposed to create a small community environment in a large city setting.

An inherent flaw in the Neighborhood Unit model was the belief that social relationships could be created by good neighborhood design (Behrens 21). The city planners in South Africa, however, gave this little thought because the spatial layout of the Neighborhood Unit fit so well with the apartheid government's need for social control. The units could be easily segregated and an ideal community size could be maintained, which helped reduce illegal migrants (Dewar, Structure & Form 54). The neighborhood was cut off by arterial roads and had very few entrances in order to

discourage through traffic. These entrances could be blocked easily and any civil unrest within the unit could be controlled (Watson, Conflicting Rationalities). Because of all of the benefits, many townships like Bridgetown and Silvertown were built on the Cape Flats using neighborhood unit concepts (Dewer, Structure & Form 58).

In 1952, the Group Areas Act, as mentioned before, legally required the segregation of each race within a municipality into separate neighborhoods. In the early 1960s this policy gained momentum in Cape Town. At this time older developments such as District 6 near the CBD and Claremont were cleared of all coloured residents because these areas had been declared white (Dewer, Structure & Form 75). The forcibly displaced families were moved into new townships that were built based on the Neighborhood Unit concept located increasingly further out into the Cape Flats. There were, however, not nearly enough houses to accommodate all of the displaced people. Informal settlements began to form rapidly on the Cape Flats and by the 1970s there was an estimated 200,000 squatters (Dewer, Structure & Form 76).

In the late 1970s a large influx of blacks to the area expanded the informal settlements. Through the years Cape Town had always had a policy, which gave preference to coloured workers over blacks in the job market (Western, Africa is Coming 624). There were even times in the city's history when housing for blacks was not built at all. Before this time, Cape Town had never experienced this type of black influx because there were no Bantustan homelands located near the city. Cape Town did not feel the same pressure as other cities like Durban that was surrounded by the homelands of Kwa Zulu and Transkei. However, the extreme poverty of the mostly rural Eastern Cape made the economic vitality in Cape Town tempting and many blacks came to the

city even before the influx laws were dropped (Western, Africa is Coming 625). The government found the answer to this problem of growing informal settlements in Great Britain's New Town Movement.

New Town Movement

The New Town Movement influenced some of the last townships constructed in Cape Town. In the early 1950s, London was experiencing a severe housing shortage due in part to the families formed after the return of the soldiers from World War II (Schaffer 15). New Towns were meant to act as an overspill for large metropolitan areas, but they needed to attract industry to be viable. New Towns were supposed to be located in the country and contain a limited population. Their purpose was "to provide a complete urban environment including housing, employment and recreation" (Llewelyn-Davies 102). Unlike the neighborhood unit's focus on inward communities, these towns were supposed to provide freedom of movement and choice (Llewelyn-Davies 105). The good road system that connected the entire town assumed that the majority of families would chose to use private transport.

Three large townships were built using the New Town concept in Cape Town. In the 1970s two large housing projects were constructed a significant distance from the city for the coloured population. Mitchells Plain was located about twenty-five kilometers south of the city, while Atlantis was constructed forty-five kilometers north (Dewer, Structure & Form 76). Both were meant to include industry, but neither one, especially Mitchells Plain, attracted enough industry to be self-contained (Dewer, Structure & Form

79). High-speed roads segmented these townships so that pedestrian movement was very limited.

The third new town, Khayelitsha, was build next to Mitchells Plain in the 1980s with a substantial open space buffer separating the two. The buffer, which is still intact, effectively discouraged interaction between the two separate populations that had much in common otherwise. Khayelitsha was meant to accommodate the increasing number of blacks that were moving to the city since influx laws had been abolished. This township was built on the far southeastern edge of the city and was unable to attract any stable form of employment (Dewer, Structure & Form 85). All of these New Town townships were built on the flawed assumption that the residents would own a car and have a stable income (Watson, Conflicting Rationalities). Neither of these necessities ever panned out for the majority of the residents who are still trapped in these townships.

In the end, all of the Garden Cities, Neighborhood Units and New Towns were simply “dormitory” suburbs referred to as residential townships. They were all composed of low quality rental housing owned by the local authorities. The industry that was supposed to make all of these places independent never really materialized, which left commuting long distances to work as the only option for most people. In the end, the popular international ideas that guided these various developments actually only created slightly different facades for mass segregated housing.

The Beginning of the New ANC Government

Legacy of Apartheid

In 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison in Cape Town and serious negotiations began between the apartheid government and the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC had been formed in 1912 with the goal of founding an African nation, but had spent most of its existence as an exiled liberation movement (Mare 42). Its members now took a leading role in the negotiations with their president F. W. De Klerk. The agreement that was finally made led to a relatively peaceful and free democratic election in 1994. The ANC won the majority in most of the country and Mandela became the new president, but the new government had to walk a thin line between change and continuity. It was clear that the vast majority of the population needed help to overcome the inequalities of the past. This had to be done, however, while maintaining the economy and preventing capital flight. It was a precarious time and the problems they were left with were not easily solved.

The consequences of apartheid planning can clearly be seen in Cape Town. The city, which reportedly had once been the most integrated city in South Africa, was now the most segregated of all (Haferburg, Ambiguous Restructuring 69). Many issues faced the new government, but among the worst was the entrenched apartheid layout of its oldest city. The World Bank described the situation as “the most extreme form of spatial distortions which, one could arguable say, has not been observed in any other place in modern history” (World Bank 5).

The result of the apartheid-driven laws was a city that can be characterized by low-density sprawl and separation of land uses (Dewer, Compact City 211). The majority of Cape Town's poor residents are living on the urban periphery in residential townships. This means that the poorest people who can least afford it have to commute long distances to employment centers each day. Often women are the hardest hit by the spatial layout. Women workers commute as much as three hours a day to work and back, before returning home to deal with housework and childcare (Todes 112). This puts a great deal of stress and burden on households that are already faced with poverty.

The unequal distribution of jobs and homes causes a one-way flow of rush-hour traffic, which creates much congestion, especially when it has to funnel through the narrow strip between Table Mountain and the bay. More importantly the government has to subsidize the bus system an unsustainable \$482 per commuter per year (Dewer, Compact City 213). The railway system is also suffering from the one-way flow and its infrastructure is deteriorating from lack of investment over the last thirty years (Tofie Interview). It is estimated that at peak times in the day the trains are running at 140% capacity (CMC, Public Space 5). The transportation system can never function properly because of the unidirectional flow and the low densities (Figure 3, p19).

The neighborhood designs, originally created to facilitate social control, had the unexpected side effect of producing isolated areas, which became virtually ungovernable. Many townships with a history of apartheid disruption tactics such as, refusing to pay rent and resisting the local authorities, became bastions of common crime. Manenburg, a working class coloured township, for instance, is plagued by gang violence and drug smuggling (Robins 99). The public spaces, such as plazas and sidewalks, are dangerous



Figure 3: Train and Train Station at Peak Hour

and impede local economic growth. A business is highly unlikely to be established in a place where bullets are liable to come through the windows and customers fear being attacked. Since city officials have had a hard time reestablishing order in places like this, the residents are often left on their own to deal with the problems. This once again puts unneeded stress on the poor families who can afford it the least.

The spatial layout of the city also exacerbates many of the socio-economic problems that are legacies of the policies of apartheid. The per capita monthly income map based on the 1996 census (Figure 4, p20) shows an uneven distribution of wealth throughout the Cape Metropolitan Area. The majority of the wealth is contained in the predominantly white, historic spines of the city. The wealthiest people live in mansions alongside Table Mountain in places like Sea Point and Camps Bay. The Cape Flats have very low monthly income rates. When everyone living in a neighborhood is poor, it becomes much harder to maintain the infrastructure because very little extra income or advanced skills are present in the community. Many of the open spaces left for the public in townships often devolved into dust bowls and garbage dumps (Schoonraad 224).

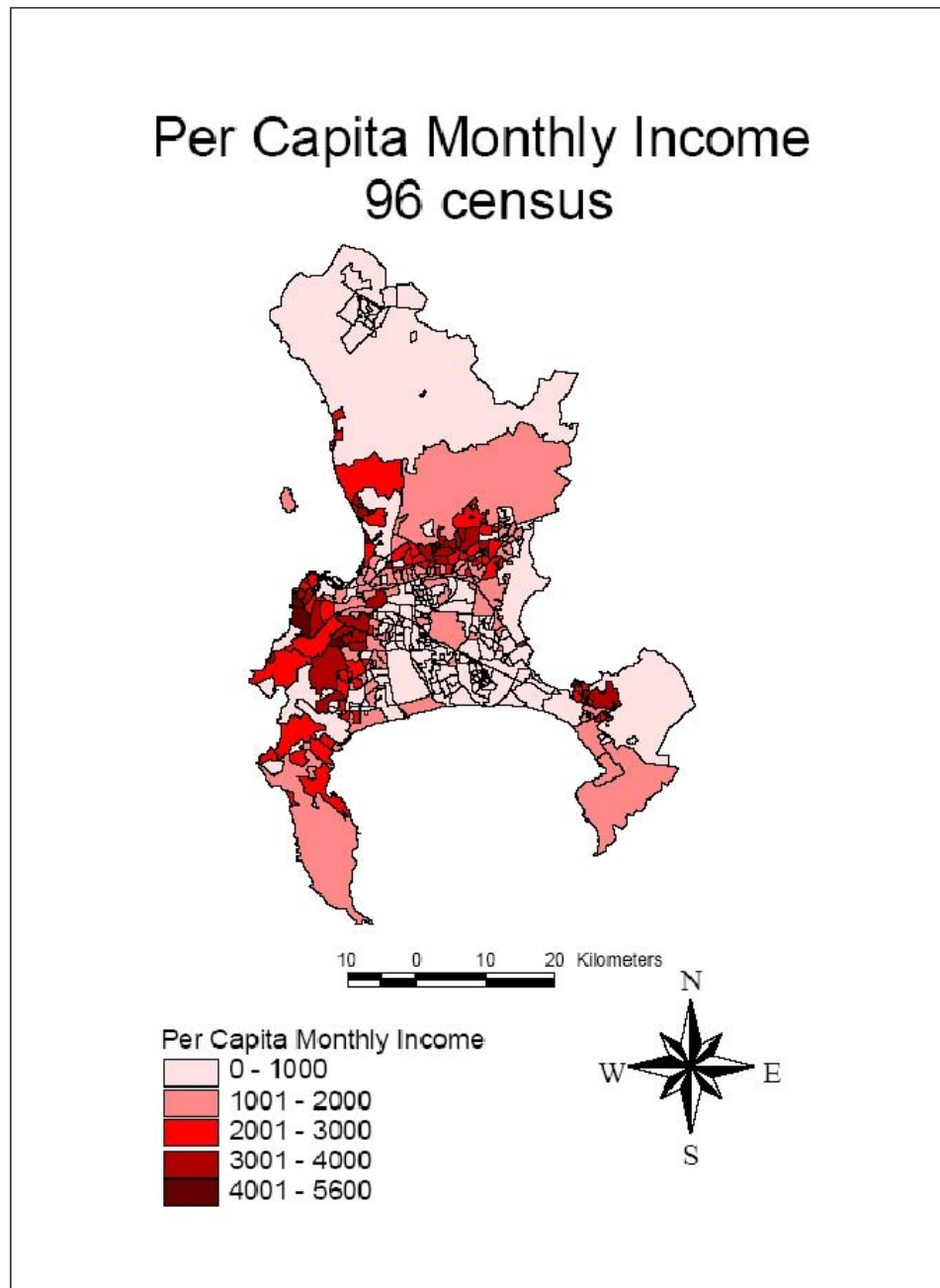


Figure 4: Map 3: Median Household Income in South African Rand

Typically, the neighborhoods in Cape Town continue to be dominated by one population group (Haferburg, Ambiguous Reconstructing 73). Segregation has a negative effect on the poor black and coloured populations. The concentration of poverty results in the creation of “a set of mutually reinforcing and self-feeding spirals of decline” (Massey and Denton 2). This lack of integration creates an unequal access to employment, education, and services. Segregation leads to social isolation where residents learn to adapt to their own harsh environments, and children begin to expect a life of poverty and joblessness (Massey and Denton 139). Finally, “upward social mobility” is connected with the ability to move into increasingly better neighborhoods, but segregated groups rarely have this option (Espino 151).

The effects of segregation on Cape Town are clear. Unemployment has been growing steadily through the last decade, but it is black workers who have been affected the hardest. Up to 35% of that ethnic group is unemployed compared to only 5% of the white population (Miriam 161). Within the segregated townships, the poor blacks do not have access to the informal social networks that help the white population find jobs (Massey and Denton 125). The previous education system left many adults illiterate and children today still do not have decent schools (Chisholm 269).³

There is also a massive housing shortage problem throughout the Cape Metropolitan Area. The overcrowding and poor living conditions in townships are

³ The people benefiting from the status quo have a tendency to take advantage of it, which often makes the problem worse. A good example is the outsourcing of basic services such as water and electricity to private companies which “demonstrate the predilection of the private sector and political elite to exploit these opportunities for short-term profiteering aims” (Pieterse, Untangling 21).

worsening due to the continued influx of people from the countryside. It is estimated that almost 900,000 people could be living in Khayelitsha alone and many of them are located in informal settlements or backyard shacks (Keating 2). This is unsustainable because informal settlements are particularly vulnerable to floods and fire since they are often located on marginal land. Just one fire in January of 2005 left 700 people without shelter from the informal settlement of Joe Slovo (Mathys 3). It is clear that many people live on a precarious edge in more ways than one.

The ANC's Ideals

Although the problems seemed overwhelming, the ANC began the new democracy with high ideals. The constitution that was finally passed in 1996, includes an extensive Bill of Rights, such as the right to equality, free speech and freedom of religion. The constitution promises everyone “the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being” (RSA Constitution, sec 24). To accomplish this, the constitution also gives everyone the right to adequate housing, which the state must take reasonable steps to provide (RSA Constitution, sec 26). Many of these rights, including housing, had roots in the ANC's Freedom Charter of 1955. This document stated the freedoms that the people were willing to fight and die for in the struggle against apartheid. It states that “all people shall have the right to live where they choose, be

decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security” (African National Congress).⁴

Planners under the new government were excited about the opportunity to create a new South Africa. Once again, they turned to international planning ideas for inspiration on ways to remedy the apartheid layout. The international push at the time was to build sustainable compact cities and focus development within corridors and nodes. These ideas allowed more mixed use and higher densities that could potentially bring more people closer to economic opportunities. Planners were optimistic about their ability to guide Cape Town into a future of greater stability and equality using these ideas.

Sustainable development has many definitions depending on what source is being referenced and in what context. In some definitions of sustainability, the emphasis is placed on the need to preserve the physical environment in order to improve human life (Mchunu 181). Other definitions focus more on sociological issues such as residential mobility and equal access to all destinations in the city (Vanderschuren & Galaria 265). The simplest definition, which was created by the World Commission on Environment and Development under the United Nations, is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 43).

City planners believe that sustainability within an urban area can be achieved through the implementation of compact city principles. A compact city encourages high-density mixed use that can “enhance quality of urban space, socio-cultural cohesion,

⁴ Because of this historical promise and its inclusion in the new constitution, poor people feel entitled to a house provided by the government.

safety and security” (Irurah & Boshoff 249). Many advantages are linked to the creation of compact cities including better public transport and shorter commuting distances (Vanderschuren & Galaria 267). It protects the surrounding land from sprawl and allows for more efficient service provision. This concept evolved out of the New Urbanism movement beginning in the 1980s, which was a reaction against repetitive sprawl by designing walkable, traditional neighborhoods.

Elements often used to create compact cities include activity corridors and nodes, urban edges and quality green space. An activity corridor “is a linear zone of development flanking a public transport route” extending on either side “a maximum of ten to twelve minutes walking distance” (CMC, Public Housing 13). The idea of corridors, both mature existing ones and those newly proposed, were meant to improve the connectivity of a city and bring private investment to poorer areas. Urban nodes have a high concentration of people and are “normally a place of high accessibility, usually at an important modal interchange or road intersection” (CMC, Metropolitan SDF Sec 5.2). The large amounts of traffic and people make nodes a good place for local business and for informal street vendors. Urban edges demarcate a line that development should not extend past in order to protect surrounding agriculture and natural areas. Well-maintained green space needs to be located throughout the urban fabric so that it is convenient to all residents.⁵

⁵ Several of these elements were incorporated into national policies and local plans. I will discuss them in further detail in the next chapter

Political Reality

Although the planning ideals are set high, the political climate of the world is not very supportive. Part of the problem is the pervasiveness of neo-liberal policies that are found worldwide and promoted by international organizations such as the World Bank. In theory, a liberal democracy will only function properly when public policy deals with “social goals that the market cannot meet” (Bond, Dor, & Himlin 188). Neo-liberal policies, on the other hand, encourage governments to strive toward attracting international investment by cutting taxes and leaving much of the management of the economy to private entrepreneurs (Rapley 76). This hits developing countries the hardest due to the large percentage of their populations living in poverty. The privatization of services once offered by the government leads to many poor people being cut off because of their inability to pay.

South Africa adopted neo-liberal policies in 1996 in an attempt to create annual GDP growth as suggested by the World Bank (Bond, Dor & Himlin 190). During the 1994 campaign Nelson Mandela and the ANC strongly supported the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) as the best way to overcome the past inequalities. The RDP was meant to bring about socio-economic change by building houses, redistributing land, creating jobs, and establishing lifelines to the disadvantaged population (Mason 254). It was, however, an ambitious platform based on promises the ANC had made while fighting for liberation from apartheid.

Many of the RDP policies were dropped from the ANC agenda when the World Bank officials argued that South Africa could not afford to pay for the resources it promised (Bond, Dorsey, & Guliwe 409). It was becoming apparent that South Africa

was in need of sustainable economic growth rates in order to continue alleviating poverty. The RDP was replaced by a new national macro-economic strategy called the Growth, Employment and Redistribution or GEAR. This policy was meant to stimulate the economy by cutting government spending and promoting private investment (Bond, Confronting Fragmentation 44). ANC supporters were shocked by this policy because it automatically imposed severe financial constraints on all government projects. GEAR was, however, supposed to help South Africa compete globally and that was how it was justified. With the government taking a backseat, private developers became very important in the goal to redress the apartheid layout.

With the realities and the ideals in mind, the ANC began to pass legislation that was meant to influence the direction of new development. Obviously, the apartheid layout was entrenched in the city and infrastructure is hard to change overnight. The majority of the people were insufficiently educated and trapped on the urban periphery or in undeveloped rural areas. Many people were finally free citizens, but they still did not have a home or a job. The next section covers the national and local legislation passed in the last twelve years of democracy meant to direct development.

2) National and Local Policies

National Policies that Influence Development Trends

Development Facilitation Act (DFA)

The ideas for the Development Facilitation Act were based on the Reconstruction and Development Program before it was seriously altered by GEAR in 1996 (Clarissa). The RDP called for the fast tracking of any development project that would work to abolish the apartheid geography of the cities, and the DFA was the law that was passed to accomplish this goal (Watson, Change & Continuity 83).

The DFA, passed in 1995, was supposed to help the government facilitate development projects and service delivery. The first chapter lays out the general principles or “performance criteria” of how development should proceed in post-apartheid South Africa (Watson, Change & Continuity 83). It called for all new developments to be sustainable and integrated in ways that would improve the lives of residents. There should be a push to bring people closer to employment opportunities and stop urban sprawl (RSA, Development Ch I, 3, c). The government is responsible to “meet the basic needs of all citizens in an affordable way” (RSA, Development Ch I, h, iv). Essentially, no city is to overextend itself financially, but there must be a continuous effort to improve the lives of its poorest citizens. It is believed that this method will lead to a stable national economy, which will over time incorporate all the citizens of South

Africa and bring them out of poverty. The act also established a Development and Planning Commission and provincial tribunals that were supposed to oversee and direct development trends on a national and local level (RSA, Development Ch II).

Housing Act, 1997

The Housing Act of 1997 was meant to lay the groundwork for the creation of a “sustainable housing development process” (RSA, Housing Act preamble). The act calls for housing provided to the poor to be financially and socially sustainable and based on integrated principles (RSA, Housing Act Part 1, 2c). It describes the specific functions of all levels of government in the housing process in an attempt to rectify some of the issues of limited capacity.⁶ The national and provincial government set goals for delivery and work at building the capacity of municipalities so that each city can handle its own housing policy implementation. If a municipality is defunct in its duties, it is the provincial government’s responsibility to take over the process (RSA, Housing Act Part 3, 7f). It is the municipalities’ responsibility to organize and direct the development of housing and surrounding land use within their borders (RSA, Housing Act Part 4, 1h). This act has been amended through the years, but it has been the basis for much of the low-income housing built in the country until very recently.

⁶ Many departments within municipal governments simply lack personnel with the proper skills, which leaves them without the capacity to accomplish their set goals (Atkinson 127). This problem is worsened by the fact that many council members are appointed on political favors not merit (Atkinson 134).

The Housing Act of 1997 still uses the National Housing Subsidy Scheme that was created in 1994 along with an earlier housing act. A subsidy is a one-time capital grant of varying amount depending on income available to a household for the construction of a home. The maximum amount that a household can receive is 16,000 Rand or 2,500 US Dollars. These grants are financed through a yearly allocation of the national budget and distributed to the nine provincial housing boards (Behrens & Wilkinson 155). Generally, subsidies are lumped together and linked to a certain project so as to achieve economies of scale.

Since 1994, over a million houses have been built in South Africa for the poor. The houses are called RDP houses because people associated them with the Reconstruction and Development Program of the ANC government. This is an amazing feat considering many countries in the world are doing little to remedy their poverty situations. Each house is a four-walled simple structure with electricity and running water. It is detached and located on a small plot that residents often surround with a simple fence. Although these homes are by no means luxurious, they are a distinct improvement over the informal settlements.

National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP)

The current president, Thabo Mbeki, and his cabinet produced the National Spatial Development Perspective in 2003 in order to better direct all forms of government investment into development that would rectify the apartheid layout (RSA, National Spatial 3). It was based on “the premise that the reconstruction and development of

South African society should include the reconfiguration of apartheid spatial relations” (RSA, National Spatial 4). Instead of investing in infrastructure in areas that had no economic potential, the government should invest in the education of the people so that they could move to where the opportunities exist. Future development should be channeled into activity corridors and nodes in growing areas in order to help people overcome the inequalities of the past (RSA, National Spatial 22). The theory is by strengthening already strong diversified markets such as Cape Town and encouraging growth to take place there, sustainable development will naturally ensue (RSA, National Spatial 26).

Current Critique of National Policies

South African scholars have pointed out some potential problems with the national policies over the years. Many argue that the policies have been poorly thought through and, for many reasons, hard to implement.

Although compact city ideas make up the basis of the DFA, there is much argument over the appropriateness of these ideas in a South African context (Todes 110). The compact city theory is poorly equipped to deal with extreme poverty and inequality, but these are issues that need to be faced when applying it to developing countries (Pieterse, Untangling 10). In Cape Town, the poor cannot afford the high property values of the city, which immediately impedes the applicability of concentration policies (Mchunu 185). The government would have to be willing to heavily subsidize any

project that brought poor people closer to city centers. With GEAR as an economic policy, it seems unlikely that would happen.

A further problem with the compact city idea is the lack of local capacity. Although the principles stated in chapter I of the DFA call for compaction, “there is little understanding at the level of local government of the meaning of urban compaction...or about how they can be achieved” (Dewer, Compact City 213). The DFA overall has seemed to have little effect on the actual development occurring in Cape Town. Therefore, even though the DFA’s principles were good in theory, there is much argument over its ability to be implemented.

Many problems of the cities, including the continuation of the apartheid layout, have been blamed on the project-linked capital subsidy that builds low-income housing. The housing subsidy per family is quite small and comes with minimum standards for plot size, house size and infrastructure, which leave little left for the purchase of land (Huchzermeyer, Ambiguous Reconstructing 120). This often means low cost housing is built on land that was bought under the apartheid government for township construction (Huchzermeyer, Confronting Fragmentation 212). For example, Khayelitsha was not completed until 1998, which was four years after apartheid ended. The subsidy system also inadvertently puts equally poor families into the same area, which furthers the economic separation of the city (Kuhn Interview).

There are also concerns as to the sustainability of low-income housing in South Africa, even though the idea of sustainable development has been repeatedly stressed. Since the housing backlog is estimated at 3 million people across the country, the government chose the fast track delivery system, which could invest the least amount of

money per house (Irurah and Boshoff 253). Although this gains politicians support in the short term, the end result is a “matchbox typology replicated over tens or hundreds of hectares in a single project” (Figure 5, p32) that does not consider the need for a sense of place or good urban design (Irurah and Boshoff 254). The RDP houses are worth considerably less on the secondary market than the amount of the original subsidy (Huchzermeyer, Confronting Fragmentation 219). This is a problem because it means the houses are not acting as a stepping-stone out of poverty for which they were intended. It is argued that while sustainable policies were written in the housing policy, they are not being implemented properly (Irurah and Boshoff 256).

On a less concrete level, one of the main problems with national policies is the form in which new policy is created and handed down. The constitution emphasized the role of three cooperative and equal spheres of government, which means no sphere has



Figure 5: RDP Housing in Western Cape

absolute authority over another one. This system avoids the top-down hierarchy that was associated with the apartheid government, but has not been the most effective. It is the responsibility of the national government to set policy direction, but it is left to the municipal government to implement spatial plans. Therefore, the ability of the national government to enforce policies is lacking, and the ability of the municipal government to implement plans is crippled (Cullinan Interview). Because neither one has full authority over an area, it is difficult to enforce the policies and easy to place blame on another sphere of government.

Another problem arising is continual policy changes, which makes implementation harder because of the changing goals (Smit Interview). Each time the national government sends down a new policy, provincial and local government have to try to realign their programs, which is a time-consuming task. Since many municipalities already lack the capacity to handle their government requirements, frequent national policy change puts an extra burden on them. It generally takes a year or two to get in line with a policy and by then it could have changed. This creates lots of inefficiencies in the spheres of government.

I now turn to the local policy initiatives that have taken place in Cape Town since 1994. A closer inspection of them will provide the final piece of policy impacting development in the city.

Local Policies that Influence Development Trends

The Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework

The Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (MSDF), which was released in 1996, was designed to guide the development of Cape Town for the next twenty years. The six principles that guided the creation of this document were “management for sustainability, creating quality urban environments, containing sprawl, residential intensification, urban integration and redressing imbalances” (CMC, MSDF Handbook 5). From those principles the planning strategies that were selected to improve the city were activity nodes, corridors, open space systems, and an urban edge (Figure 6, p35). The plan incorporates many compact city ideas because progressively thinking planners wanted to promote spatial forms different from those created under apartheid (Turok & Watson 129).

The theory, developed by a team of local planners, was to promote growth in the three already established nodes of Cape Town CBD, Bellville, and Claremont with activity corridors connecting them. The fourth node was to be developed in Philippi East, which is next to Mitchell’s Plain and Khayelitsha (CMC, Metropolitan SDF sec 3.2.1). The idea was to stimulate growth in the Cape Flats so as to bring jobs closer to the masses of disadvantaged people. The fourth node would connect with the other three in a loop to better integrate the city. The Philippi Node was “earmarked for higher-order public investment, which will then serve as a catalyst for private sector investment” (CMC, MSDF Handbook 9).

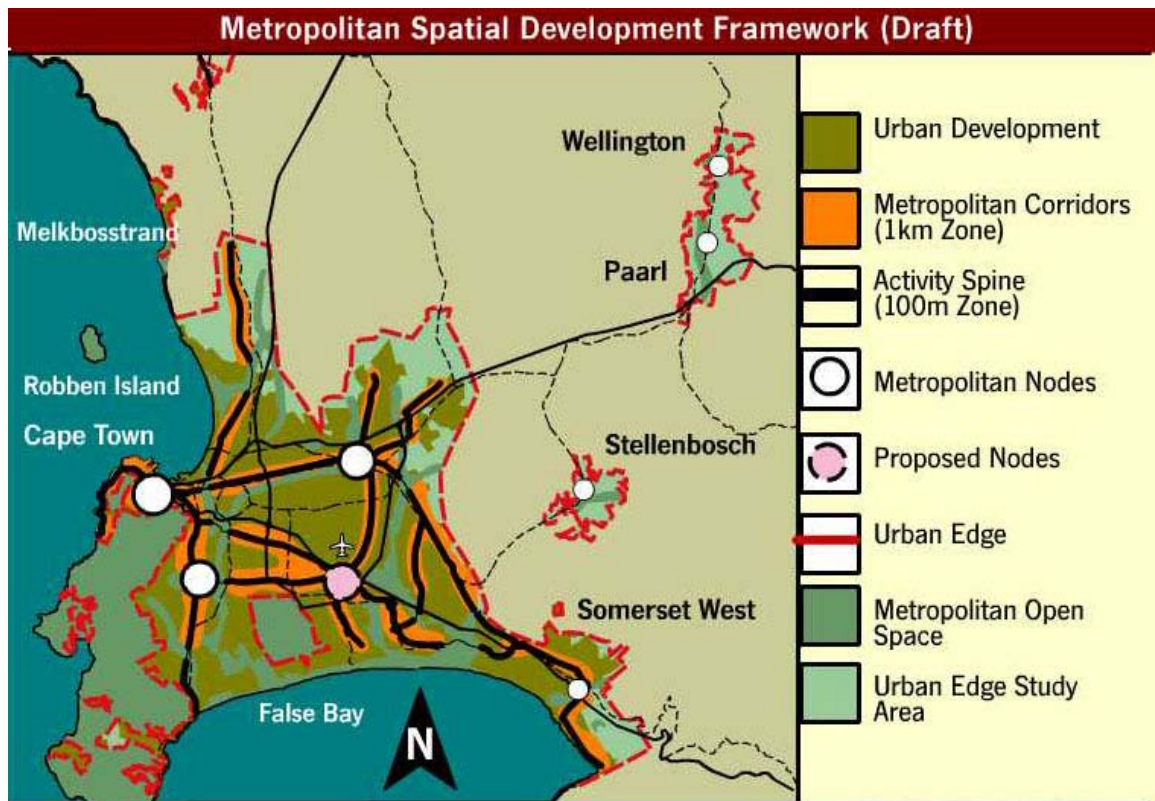


Figure 6: Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework

The urban edge is a very important component of the plan because it protects the surrounding agricultural land and prevents further sprawl. The surrounding land includes some very valuable wine land in the Western Cape and is, therefore, worth protecting. The urban edge would in theory prevent new low-income housing from being built far from the city centers where economic opportunity is scarce. The necessity of an urban edge has been widely accepted by officials, but there is little agreement as to where exactly it should be located (Turok & Watson 129). The maps found within the MSDF were meant to be conceptual, so they were merely to be a guide for local authorities, and not a definitive marker of place (CMC, Metropolitan SDF Sec 1.6).

Most everyone involved also accepted the need for an open space system within the city. Metropolitan Open Space System (MOSS) was supposed to be a network of open spaces “complimenting (sic) the built fabric by providing urban environment with variety, character, a sense of visual relief, open space enjoyment, recreation and general amenity” (CMC, MSDF Handbook 16). Vacant urban land left over from old township buffer zones or underutilized areas were designated to be included in MOSS (CMC, Metropolitan SDF 3.1.6). The detailed selection of areas, however, had to be established at a local authority level and, like the designation of urban edge few were ever decided upon.

The Municipal Spatial Development Framework

The Municipal Spatial Development Framework (Muni-SDF) came about in 1999 after acceptance of the MSDF seemed doubtful. This plan, written primarily by David Dewer with help from colleagues at the University of Cape Town Planning Department, called for many of the same elements as the first, but it was less specific as to where development should locate. For instance, the idea of the proposed Philippi Node was ruled out in the Muni-SDF. The plan was meant to be a framework “based on logical argument for decision making and strategic public sector investment which will help to achieve greater equity and integration” over time (CMC, Municipal SDF Exe Sum). It is not meant to create a plan for every lot in the city, but to provide officials with a guide to future decisions.

Sprawl was to be contained by encouraging the development of underused land within the city instead of greenfield sites (CMC, Municipal SDF 17). The idea was to create a compact city that was convenient to people who traveled by foot, which is a large portion of the population. Theoretically there should be a grid of central points in the urban fabric, where people could easily walk to the store or a bus stop (CMC, Municipal SDF 21). A grid laid over the city and adjusted to geographic reality gives a good representation of the equal distribution of these in Cape Town (CMC, Municipal SDF 25). The interchanges are good places for the connection of various modes of transportation. Also because of the large quantity of foot traffic at the interchanges they would be ideal places for economic activities and social services. Instead of four major nodes as in the MSDF, there would be small nodes throughout.

The plan goes on to describe how different urban aspects such as green space, social facilities, and economic infrastructure play a role in the improving city. It lists the kind of benefits each neighborhood should contain in order to improve the quality of life for its residents. It promoted the ideas of activity corridors and interconnected open space much like the MSDF. Overall the plan is attempting to create new patterns of opportunity within the city in order to overcome the apartheid past. The authors saw the Muni-SDF as “a sincere attempt to move beyond planning, beyond individual opinion into positions that can be defended in terms of logical rationale for the public good” (CMC, Municipal SDF Exe Sum).

Current Critique of Local Policies

The MSDF suggested a set of solutions to make Cape Town a better place in twenty years, but little was ever really implemented. The proposed urban node that was supposed to receive great investment money, for instance, never really panned out. Only 273 million Rand was ever privately invested in Phillipi East, while across town Century City, a giant shopping center, received 1.6 billion Rand from private developers (Marks & Bezzoli 44). It is fairly clear that private investment never got behind the proposed ideas of the MSDF, and private investors are the ones who have more money to direct development in Cape Town.

The activity corridors also experienced similar implementation issues. The Wetton-Lansdowne Corridor was the only one that ever saw any investment money (Haferburg, Urban Forum 33). It was an ambitious project and the fact that it had some

success shows that there was a strong political commitment and national funding behind it. However, a study done on the conditions of the informal settlement Phola Park located on this corridor showed that the investments had no impact on the settlement (Haferburg, Urban Forum 42). Now, the national money that was flowing to endorse the corridor programs has stopped coming and, therefore, any progress made has been halted (Vanderschuren & Galaria 271).

In other parts of the city, the idea of corridors has been totally ignored because local authorities tend to focus on any new development as a new form of tax revenue. A good example of this is the mega development mentioned earlier called Century City, which includes massive retail, office space, entertainment park and residential sections. This development “sits smack in the void between two activity corridors, Koeberg Road and Voortrekker Road, contributing neither much needed investment nor economic or transport linkages into either” (Marks & Bezzoli 33). The city officials did not try to enforce the proposed activity corridors because any new potential tax revenue is sought after enthusiastically.⁷

One of the main complaints about the MSDF is that it gives no concrete suggestions as to how to pay for this grand vision (Turok & Watson 130). Another problem was that many of the city metropolitan planners believed that the MSDF spelled out too specifically where development should go by designating nodes and corridors (Watson, Change & Continuity 121). This made local authorities nervous that it would usurp their decision-making powers. Others “found it difficult to relate to the four spatial

⁷ Cape Town paid 44 million Rand for the construction of an off-ramp leading to Century City (Marks & Bezzoli 39).

concepts (nodes, corridors, edges, and open space system) which, planners claimed, were intended to address the problems” (Watson, Change & Continuity 65). It was unclear to many how these concepts could have a beneficial impact on the living standards of the citizens of Cape Town. This all slowed its acceptance among local government officials, and after several party turnovers, the plan eventually lost momentum and was put on a shelf.

The Muni-SDF set out to create a new land management system, but it was never able to become official policy (CMC 1999a, 73). The plan, like the MSDF, lost political momentum and was eventually shelved. Some believed the plan was too idealistic and therefore, overly ambitious in its prescribed solutions. Both the Muni-SDF and the MSDF were trying to bring economic opportunities to parts of the city that were lacking. That means the stress was less on the reintegration of people within the city as in the national policies. The plans were a different perspective on how the spatial relations of the city could be remedied.

The Muni-SDF, however, was not a total loss because some elements were eventually implemented. The People’s Places’ program it proposed in order to create good public spaces in highly used pedestrian areas around the city was picked up and become the Dignified Places program (Watson Interview). This program takes deserted hard surfaces throughout the city and turns them into quality public spaces that can be used by the local community and add a sense of place (CMC, Dignified City 8). The idea is to make the public spaces a livable place or outdoor living room considering many of the poor people live in seriously overcrowded conditions (CMC, Public Space 6). The

areas are meant to be easily accessible and to give the poorer Cape Town residents a sense of dignity in their neighborhood (Figure 7, p42). Manenburg Play Park is an example of one of the many plazas that have already been completed within this project and many more are still in the works (CMC, Dignified City 16). The project enjoys a great deal of political support and has become an important part of housing, transport and economic development projects (CMC, Public Space 10).

There are reasons why this one project has experienced so much success while many of the other suggestions of the local plans have been ignored. These places are improved by simple additions such as new pavement, low walls, and strategic tree planting (CMC, Dignified City 18). While these elements do create a better public space for the local residents, none of them are extremely expensive or complex. The city can appear to be working toward a better community for all without really redistributing much wealth. Also one single project does not take very long to complete so in a short amount of time people can feel like something has been accomplished. This sense of accomplishment is beneficial to employees of the government and local residents.



Figure 7: Example of Dignified Place

3) Analysis of Developmental Trends in Cape Town

With the strengths and weaknesses of the national and local policies in mind, it is time to turn to actual development on the ground. The first section looks into the socio-economic factors that were created by apartheid and should be changing with its demise. Next is the analysis of private development and the direction it is taking. Finally, the location of informal settlements tracks the reintegration of the most disadvantaged of Cape Town's citizens. Together these three sections should illustrate the overall trend of development, and then I will return to the policies.

Socio-Economic Factors

Cape Town is a growing city with an estimated 2005 population of 2,969,458 (SACN). There has been a fairly rapid increase in the population since the early 1980s and the lifting of the influx restrictions. Since 1985, the population has grown by over one million and the majority of the growth is occurring among those in the poorest income bracket (Dewar, Structure & Form 88). It is estimated that Cape Town will grow by some one million more people in the next twenty years as well (CMC, MSDF Review 11). If that many people propel the outward sprawl development pattern, conditions in Cape Town could continue to get worse. One million more people living out on the periphery of town would be a massive strain on the transportation and city service

systems. It is, therefore, important that Cape Town's development pattern become more sustainable in the near future.

The population is not distributed evenly throughout the city. It is clear from the density map based on the 2001 census (Figure 8, p45) that densities are highest in the southeast section of the city or the Cape Flats. This is caused mostly to the many informal settlements and overcrowded townships, which are located in the area. The location of Cape Peninsula National Park and the mostly rural land of the northern section can explain some of the lowest densities. The low-density blocks in the Cape Flats can be attributed to the international airport and the large urban agriculture site next to Mitchells Plain.

When the density map is compared to the predominant population group map (Figure 9, p46), it becomes clear that the majority of the people living in the crowded Cape Flats are black or coloured. The white residents still live along the historical developed spines of the city, around Table Mountain and along the Atlantic Coast. Cape Town has seen little integration over the past twelve years so the historic group areas are still relatively intact.

New Development through New Lot Creation

Since the GEAR economic policy effectively cut most public spending that could change the apartheid layout, private development was supposed to lead the way. It is therefore essential to look at the direction private development has taken over the last several years to see if it has followed the policies and plans laid out by the government.

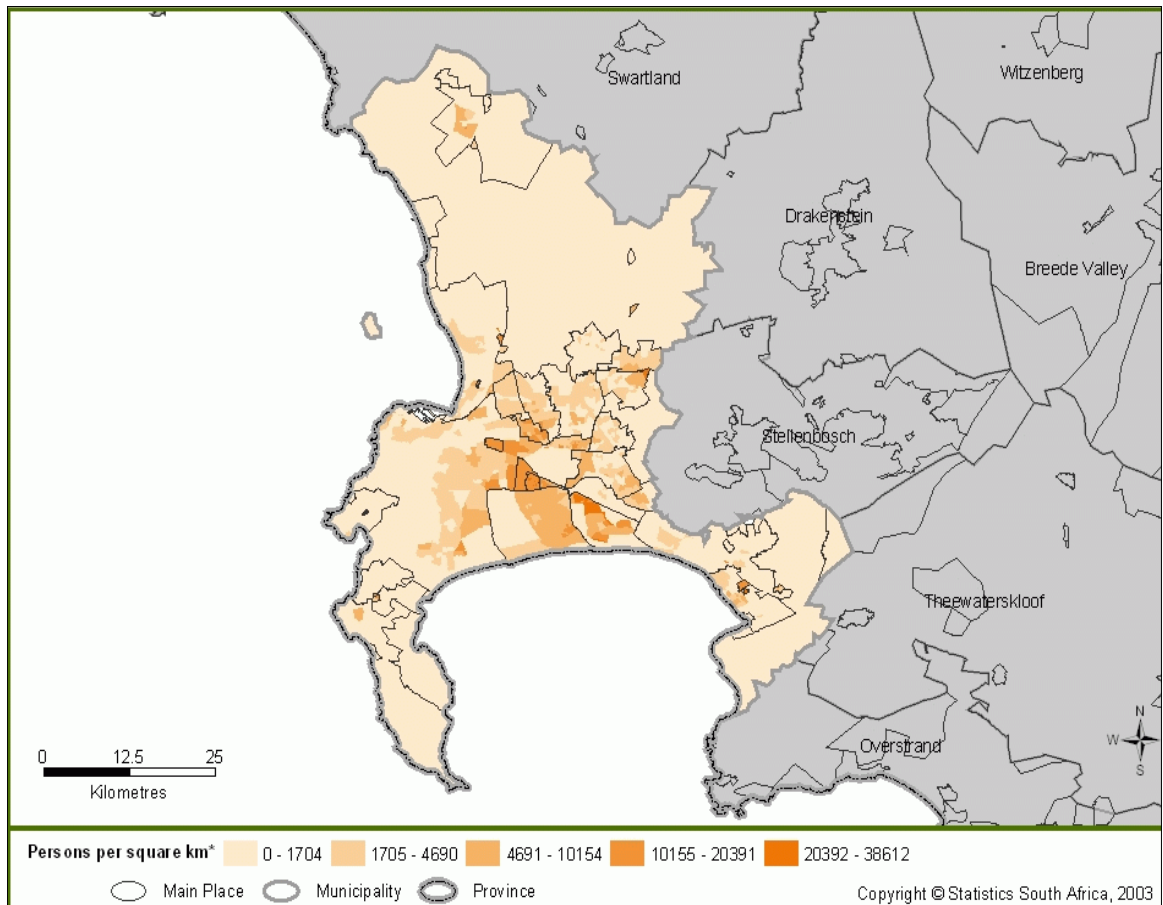


Figure 8: Map 5: Population Density of CMA

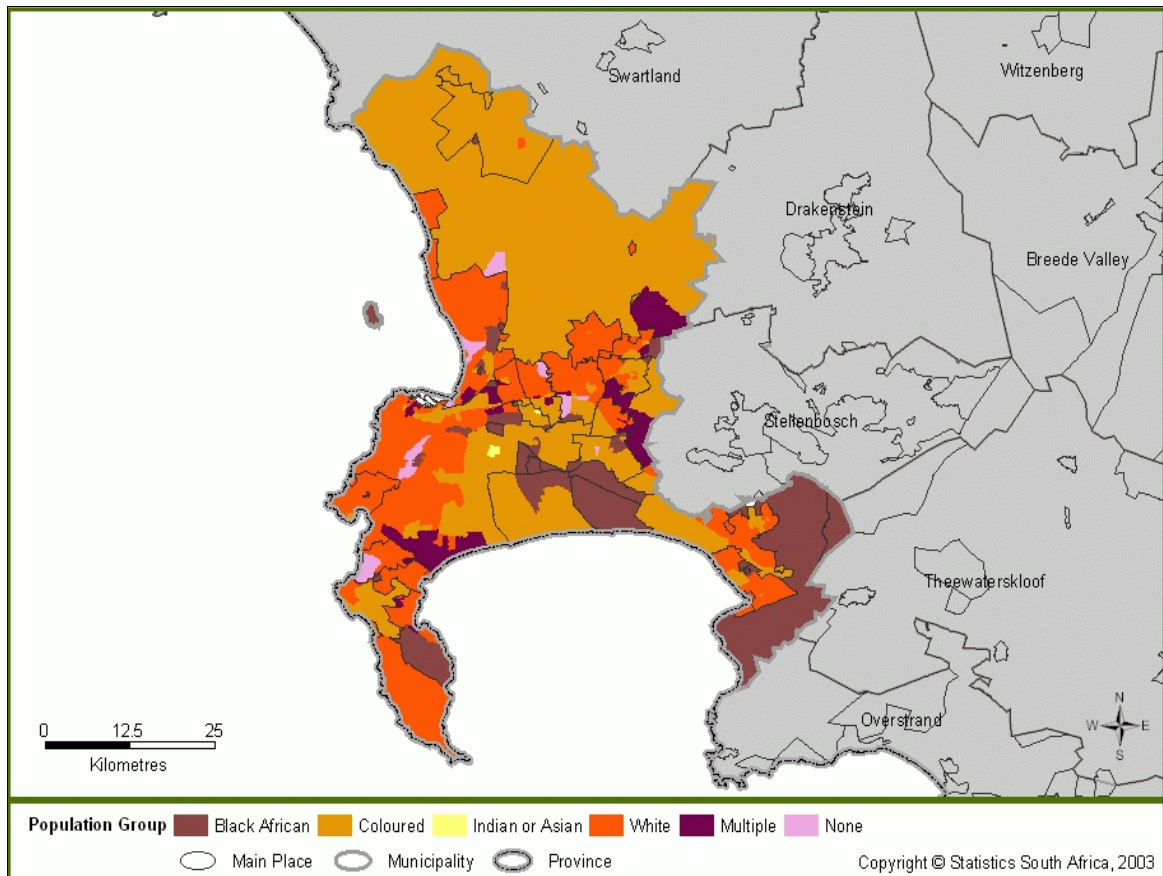


Figure 9: Map 6: Predominant Population Group in CMA

In 2000, the metropolitan council of Cape Town compiled a study that showed the location of new lot creation over the past ten years (CMC, New Erven). These data were then also used to predict the creation of lots in the city into the near future. It is assumed that new lots are created so that new development can take place in that location. Considering that the national and local plans were centered on the facilitation and direction of development, this study becomes a useful tool of analysis. With this in mind, the next couple of maps used these data to show the increase in lot creation in order to find overall development trends through the years. The data from the report were imported into ArcGIS and mapped in order to see the major changes.

The first map shows the increase in lots from 1992 to 1999 and also the number of lots created in 1992 (Figure 10, p48). It is clear that the majority of new development is taking place in the north in areas like Milnerton and Durbanville. There is even a significant creation of lots in Atlantis, which is forty-five kilometers north of the CBD. Overall, the Cape Flats have seen a significant decrease in lot creation since 1992. In 1992, housing in parts of Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain were still being constructed and, therefore, lot creation was high. There is one large increase in the Cape Flats since then, and that is mostly caused by the creation of low-income housing under the local housing department's Integrated Service Land Project.

The next map shows the increase in lots from 1999 to 2004 and also the number of lots created in 1999 (Figure 11, p49). Overall, more private development takes place during this time than occurred during the early 1990s. This can be mostly attributed to the increasing confidence in the stability of the new South African government. The development is still focusing predominantly in the northern suburbs of Milnerton and

Lot Creation in the CMA from 1992-1999

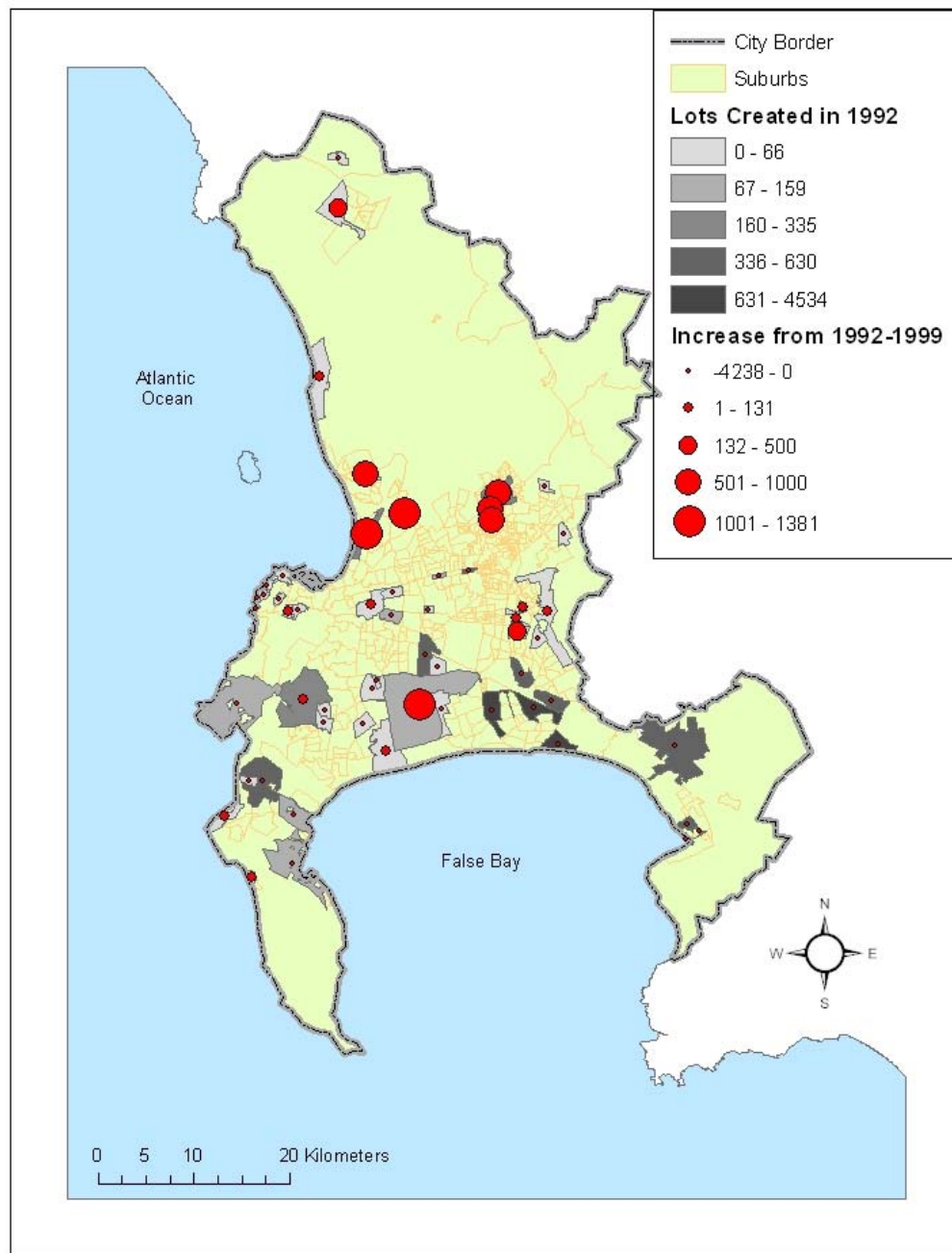


Figure 10: Map 7: New Lots Created from 1992-1999

Lot Creation in the CMA from 1999-2004

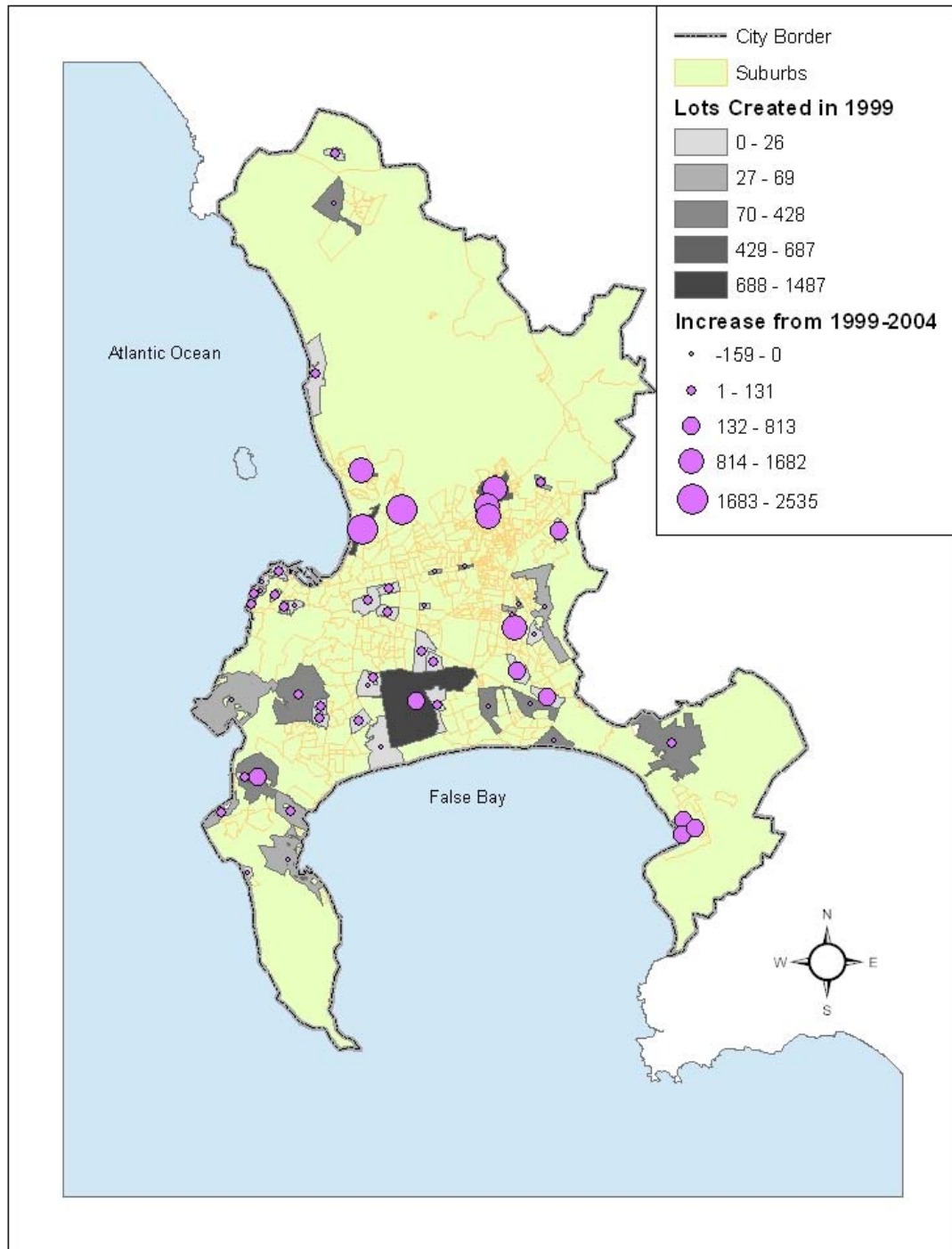


Figure 11: Map 8: New Lots Created from 1999-2004

Durbanville. There is even growth in Darling, which is one of the most remote settlements from the CBD, being located north of Atlantis. Some growth is taking place in the Claremont/Wynberg node as recommended in the MSDF, but it is negligible when compared to that in the north.

To the southeast, Somerset West shows up as an area beginning to receive increased private investment. This distant suburb has a stronger connection with cities like Stellenbosch, which is part of the thriving local wine district, than to the Cape Town CBD. Somerset West is outside the Cape Flats and although it does have its share of informal settlements, it is still seen as an enclave of affluence. Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain, both areas in desperate need, actually experienced negative growth in new development over the previous years.

The development trend over the last several years has clearly shown that private investment money is more likely to flow to the north, which goes against local and national policy recommendations. There are many reasons for this trend. Land is plentiful in the northern sections of the CMA as opposed to other areas. There is quite a bit of rural land left to develop within the city boundary. There is also a perception of safety and security from unwanted elements, which improves housing values in the area. The majority of new developments have been private walled enclaves that offer separation from the harsh realities of the city. Even the new retail environments, such as Century City located near Milnerton, are enclosed and only assessable by private automobile. The north therefore offers a sheltered reality for wealthy people unwilling to face the everyday hardships of many citizens.

The area is also located within a historically white area and therefore has better infrastructure to build on. This is a major plus considering most developers are looking for well located greenfield sites to develop instead of building within older developed areas. The Cape Flats has been essentially marked off limits by the banks that are unwilling to invest in places that are composed of former townships (CMC, MSDF Review 29). Therefore, bank loans are easier to procure for development within the northern section of the city. The CBD is also no longer seen as a viable place to locate because of its worsening image. Development is being pushed out of these older centers because they are perceived as litter-filled places lacking security and parking (Turok & Watson 122). The north is seen as being free of these problems, as well as relatively free of, vagrants and street peddlers, and is, therefore, an ideal place for new development.

Growth of Informal Settlements

In 1999 the Cape Metropolitan Council released a report on the growth of informal settlements from 1993 to 1998. The count was done using aerial photography and GIS. The total number of shacks located within informal settlements in the CMA was 28,300 in 1993 and 72,140 in 1998 (CMC, Informal Settlement 2). This study was not able to count the number of shacks located in backyards, which is also a growing phenomenon in the city as well (Figure 12, p52). It is estimated that there are some 22,000 backyard shacks located throughout the area (CMC, MSDF Reveiw 71). Based on a smaller ranged count of shacks done in 2000, the number of shacks continues to grow although not as quickly as in previous years. It was already up to 90,000 shacks in



Figure 12: Backyard Shacks in Township

2000 when the last count was done (CMC, MSDF Review 74). Tracking the locational trend of informal settlements is a good way to find the location of the poorest people in Cape Town.

The growth of informal settlements can be attributed to many different factors. Some growth is due to the in-migration of former farm workers in the area that have been evicted as farms were sold for development. Other people have come from the surrounding impoverished provinces, and others are just local families looking for their own home (Ross 634). There is also a relatively large immigration population, legal and illegal, from other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Botswana and Zimbabwe, locating in Cape Town (Western, Africa is Coming 635). One South African author, Rian Malan, described the settlement process “as if a distant dam had broken, allowing a mass of desperate and hopeful humanity to come flooding over the mountains and spread out across the Cape Flats” (Western, Africa is Coming 627).

Whatever the reason for the new resident’s arrival, the majority of them end up living in appalling conditions. They typically live in a shack that is about 3 meters square, which is made of mismatched discarded building materials. There is usually four and sometimes up to six people living in this cramped shack (Browning 2). This overcrowding and lack of basic infrastructure, such as sewer lines, makes communicable diseases a great problem within the settlements. In more ways than one, the informal settlements are not sustainable and offer a low quality of living (Figure 13, p54).

The general view of informal settlements is that they will have a negative impact on surrounding property values and safety (Saff 449). For this reason, informal settlements find much resistance in nicer neighborhoods and usually have a hard time



Figure 13: Informal Settlement

establishing there. Even though studies have been done to show that there is no significant effect on property values in neighboring districts, the perception of people is stronger than fact (Saff 461). For this reason informal settlements typically end up in the poorer areas of town where people do not have the power or political influence to run them off.

The following map shows the general location of all informal settlements in the CMA in 1998 (Figure 14, p 56). The settlements are clearly spread all over the city, but the majority of them are located in the Cape Flats. There are no settlements along the historical spines of the city or near the CBD. The level of development and property values excludes the formation of settlements in these areas. Many of the shacks are located along the edge of the N2 highway, which runs from the CBD to False Bay. In order to get a better idea of the magnitude of the increase the next two maps focus in on the Cape Flats.

The first map shows the shack count within the settlements in 1993 (Figure 15, p57). With a closer look, it becomes clear that these settlements do not take up much land, but the densities are often very high. The highest concentrations are located in the north section of Khayelitsha. This area called Site C was actually set aside for the creation of informal settlements during the construction of the township in the mid 1980s.⁸ Many of the other settlements are forming near the International Airport, which many city officials find very inconvenient considering that is the first thing tourists see when they arrive in Cape Town.

⁸ That of course is not the only informal settlement in Khayelitsha, but merely the only one on land purposefully set aside for shacks.

Location of Informal Settlements 1998

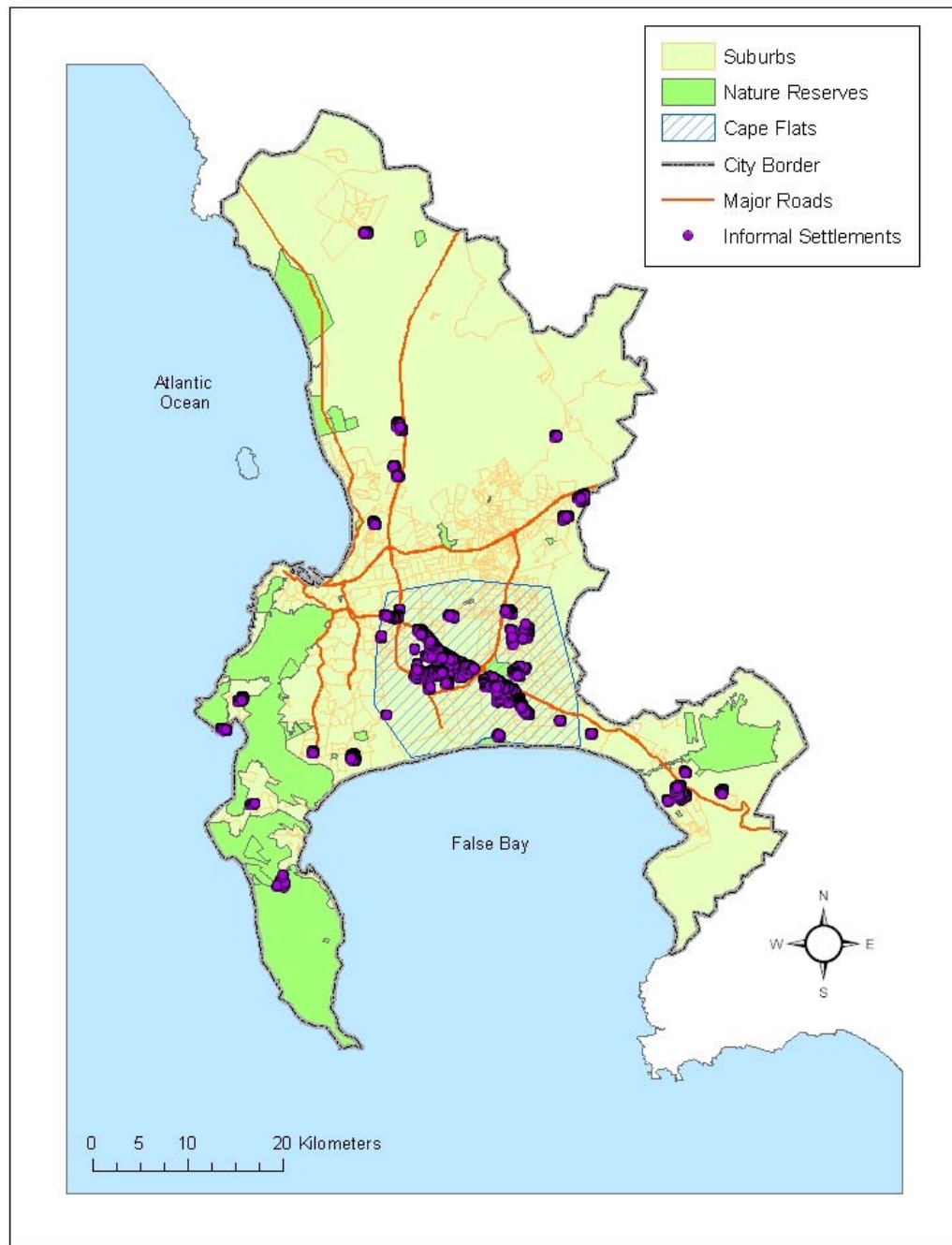


Figure 14: Map 9: Location of Informal Settlements in CMA

Informal Settlements in the Cape Flats, 1993

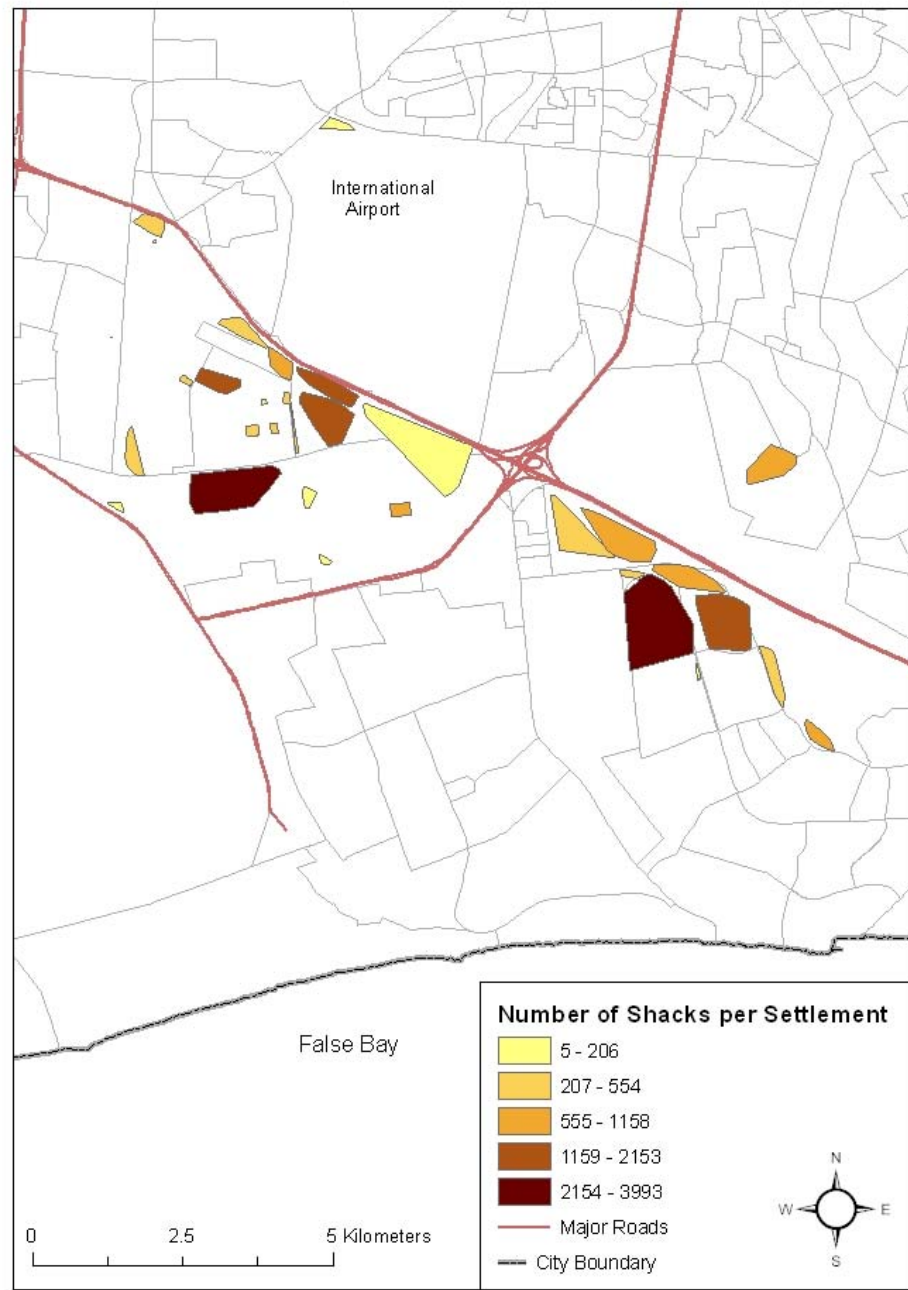


Figure 15: Map 10: Cape Flats Shack Density 1993

Going to the next map (Figure 16, p59), which shows the shack count in 1998, it becomes clear that the problem is worsening. New settlements are forming throughout the area, especially to the east of the airport. These settlements are partly due to the new low-income housing that was built in that area, which opened up roads to previously unused land. Most of the settlements have increased in density since 1993. The Brown's Farm settlement alone jumped from 2,785 to 7,481 shacks in just five years (CMC, Informal Settlements 12). Only one settlement was actually eliminated during those years, although a few others had a significant decline in numbers due to government housing schemes. The residents in a settlement in Ottery, which is near the developed Claremont/Wynberg node, were relocated because of their proximity to wealthier citizens (CMC, Informal Settlements 28).

Even though many low-income houses were built during this period, the overall number of shacks continued to grow. Some people believe that there is no way to be rid of informal settlements because there will be a continuous flow of new poor families from within and outside the region seeking shelter (Kuhn Interview). The theory is each time a family is placed in a low-income house; a new family will replace them in the informal settlements. The growing housing backlog regardless of the creation of low-income developments lends truth to this statement. It could potentially cause real problems in the future unless better allowances are made to incorporate and even upgrade informal settlements themselves.

Overall, the perception of the negative effect of informal settlements has continued to regulate the majority of settlements to the impoverished Cape Flats. In this way, the settlements can be pushed out of site and out of mind of the wealthier residents.

Informal Settlements in the Cape Flats, 1998

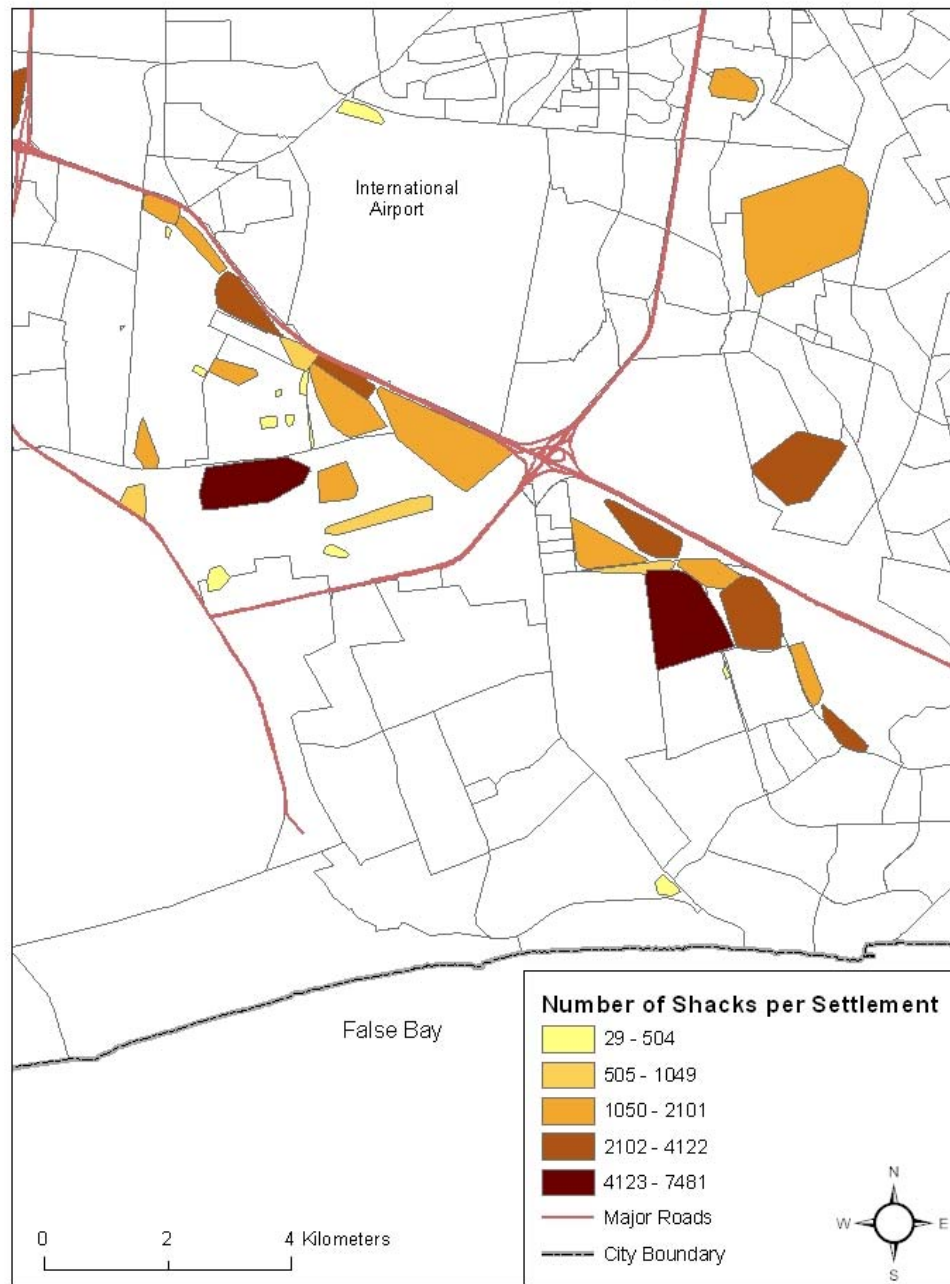


Figure 16: Map 11: Cape Flats Shack Density 1998

This area has some of the lowest rates of development and therefore an inherent lack of opportunity. As the numbers of poor people grow, this becomes more and more of a problem.

Possible Explanations for Lack of Implementation

Cape Town's failure may be in part due to its two conflicting goals at the city level. It is trying to become a competitive and attractive international city. At the same time there is a push to overcome past inequalities and help the poor of the city. Both of these conflicting directions have their partisans, which slow the progress made in either way. In the end, however the side with more money generally wins.

The implementation of compact city policies, which would help the poor, has many opponents. There is a wealthy element of the city that is enjoying the status quo and would lobby against correcting the inefficiencies (Pieterse, From Divided 24). For example, the wealthy resident does not want low-income housing to be built near his or her home for fear it might negatively impact house values. The outcome of correcting some inequalities could potentially be the "reduction the quality of life and convenience of the wealthy and high consumer" (Pieterse, Unraveling 128). The elite's influence is particularly strong in Cape Town due to the tendency of the Cape coloured population to side with the white elite out of fear of the massive amounts of new blacks flooding the area (Western, Africa is Coming 622). Considering the coloured population makes up a significant portion of the population in the Cape Metropolitan Area, this adds strength to the already powerful.

Dangerous townships have made the residents of Cape Town doubt the ability of the local authority to successfully police the city. This has led to the privatization of public space in areas where residents can afford to pay for the added protection. Cape Town's growing security industry and "fortified architecture of fear" in wealthier areas closely resembles Mike Davis's description of Los Angeles in his book City of Quartz (Robins 88). High walls with security gates and bars surround houses of wealthier residents and high-end shops. The private security industry is filling the gap of the "retreating neo-liberal state" in wealthy areas while the rest of the population is being left to deal with crime on their own (Robins 97). A dualistic social geography, which began in apartheid, has continued to get worse and the "differentiation of levels of unemployment and poverty as well as in the incidence of informal and criminal activities" can clearly be seen (Wilkinson 221).

The policies lose even more strength because implementation is guided more by private developers than planners (Schoonraad 225). For example, a report funded by the city showed "that there are only two private sector, industrial investments currently underway on the Cape Flats" regardless of the push by the city to direct development there (CMC, MSDF Review 29). To explain this, the nature of planning must be examined. South African planners have tried to distance themselves from the draconian planning of the apartheid past, which strictly regulated how cities were built. Current planners do not, therefore, have the authority that is needed to direct development and create compact cities (Mchunu 184). One local planner joked in a policy meeting that Cape Town needed a benign dictator if it was going to change the current development patterns.

As Cape Town becomes more of a global city, tourism is going to become increasingly important to the local economy. The wealthy newcomers do not want to deal with social issues because the rich “that buy holiday homes here do not want to live in Africa, but rather want to live in a sunny suburb that somehow reflects the life of Europe” (Oelofse 267). Taking a drive around Table Mountain and seeing all the large mansions clinging to the side of cliffs makes this all too clear. Often the city council is more concerned with making Cape Town an attractive place than helping the poor, and in this way the marginalized people become liabilities instead of citizens (Klopper 226). Homeless people are often run out of the CBD because it is striving to be a safe connection between Table Mountain and the new Victoria & Alfred Waterfront mall. In many situations, like this example, it seems the poor are ignored until they infringe upon the wealthier touristy areas.

In many ways the City Council is disconnected from the needs of the marginalized poor. In 2003 a convention center was constructed in Khayelitsha with an adjacent wooden lookout platform on top of a sand dune. It was supposed to be a tourist destination, but a year after construction was completed it had still not opened to the public and no convention had ever met there (Cecil Madell personal communication). The residents of Khayelitsha have begun to dismantle the wooden platform at night and steal the boards in order to build their shacks (Figure 17, 62). Some parts of the stairs have just been set on fire in frustration. Even though the center has yet to see its official opening day, most of the platform is already gone. Khayelitsha is not in need of tourist attractions, but it does need solid homes and stable jobs as the vandalism of this center shows.



Figure 17: Convention Center Lookout in Khayelitsha

Much of the problems in Cape Town can be attributed to the wider national problems of South Africa. In the end, GEAR did not even perform as it was supposed to when first suggested. It claimed that 176,000 jobs would be created by this new policy when actually 71,000 jobs were lost within the first year of implementation (Bond, Elite Transition 51). The new policies allowed a handful of middle-class blacks to join up with the established elites and make lots of money leaving the majority of people behind (Alexander 64). The reintegration of disadvantaged people into the economy, therefore, never really occurred.

Even the new housing policies were heavily influenced by neo-liberal policies. The first democratic housing minister in South Africa was Joe Slovo, who was actually also the chairperson of the Communist Party that was aligned with the ANC. The World

Bank suggested the housing subsidies be much lower than Slovo originally wanted. The reasoning being that the lower subsidies would encourage the inclusion of private bank loans in all housing projects (Bond, Talk Left 15). To everyone's surprise, Slovo went with the suggestion even though it meant the subsidies was now too low to build a well-located sustainable house. The sad reality is that most poor families are unable to procure a bank loan of any kind so the second part of the funding has never materialized. For Slovo's contribution to South African society, an informal settlement in Cape Town was named after him.

In this political setting it would be virtually impossible for the national and local policies on development to have much impact. The barriers that have been put in place by the world economy are hard to overcome. Governments must be responsive to international markets and so it was not too surprising when the ANC-led democracy adopted market-friendly policies. Sadly, it meant breaking the promises it had extended to many of the poorest people in the nation.

The lack of implementation of the national and local policies has accumulated to cause the beginnings of civil unrest among the poorer populations. Many people are still living in the same segregated informal settlement where they were in 1994. It is the lack of the promised proper house and better life that has led to 881 protests around the country, with over 50 becoming violent (Wines 10). In Cape Town alone, the housing backlog is estimated at a staggering 220,000 units and growing (CMC, Public Housing 1). Slum dwellers in the area have repeatedly barricaded roads with burning tires only to be suppressed by police firing rubber bullets (Mtyala 3). The photographs of the protests have an uncanny resemblance to the ones taken during the resistance movements in the

1980s. When asked about the situation, one slum dweller said, “We expected better from the ANC, because they lived with us in the bush” (Morrison 8).

A Glimpse into New National Policy

In reaction to the growing housing protests, a new housing policy called Breaking New Ground came out in September 2004 (RSA, Breaking New 11). The current national Minister of Housing, Lindiwe Sisulu, said the goal of this comprehensive housing plan is to build sustainable human settlements that would eradicate shacks by 2014 (Thamm). The official definition of these settlements is “well managed entities in which economic growth and social development are in balance with the carrying capacity of the natural systems on which they depend for their existence and result in sustainable development, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and equality” (RSA, Breaking New 11). The first pilot project out of nine of this policy, the N2 Gateway Project, is currently under construction in Cape Town.

The project is located off the N2 highway near the International Airport. Once completed, it will consist of a variety of housing choices, including walkup townhouses, instead of single homes on a single lot. Much thought has been put into designing meaningful and useful public spaces. The entire development is trying to rid itself of the stigma of low-income housing and create an atmosphere for which residents can be proud. The city is making a massive investment in this one development and promoting it as the new direction of low-income housing. However, money that was supposed to

come from the provincial and national government to help finance the project never materialized (Van Gass).

The entire project was also derived without a single interaction with its current or future residents (Kuhn Interview). The people living in the informal settlements in the area were not informed about the project until it went public. The construction directly impacts their lives, but they had little time to deal with pressing issues such as relocation. Also, none of the designers ever asked the future inhabitants what they would like to see present in their new community. This critical lack of public interaction leads to distrust between the designers and the residents. It is also skipping what is considered a vital step in current planning circles. Now because of the lack of communication, the city has discovered that the majority of residents chosen to live in the rental housing cannot afford to pay for it (Thamm).

Another issue that most are unaware of as of yet is the relocation of many people to Delft (Kuhn Interview). The new housing will be unable to fit all of the people that currently live in shacks at the location. The density is simply too high to replicate in the formal housing style that is planned. Delft is a low-income housing development located on the periphery of the city. This supposedly sustainable project is still building housing for people in unsustainable locations. Cape Town's Housing department will sell this option to the families by allowing them to own the houses in Delft and simply rent the houses in N2 Gateway. This is a curious option considering the government has been trying to get rid of all its rental stock over the past several years in favor of residential ownership (Smit Interview). This will be the first rental housing built in Cape Town since 1979 (Thamm).

While the N2 Gateway Project is more promising than most affordable developments, it still seems to be missing some critical elements. In order to bring true opportunity to the Cape Flats, the government is going to have to find a better way to encourage public and private partnerships. Without the help of private investment, it is clear that the government is fighting a losing battle. The outlook is currently not good for the N2 Gateway project. Construction has yet to be completed over a year after it began and the City Council of Cape Town has shifted responsibility to the provincial government (Van Gass). Even when construction is completed, there will be two-thirds fewer units than were originally promised due to budget cuts and unexpected expenses (Thamm). The promising goal of eradicating shacks by 2014 seems to have been over optimistic.

4) Conclusion

Apartheid policies distorted the layout of Cape Town in a way that is hard to repair. The scars from this era can still be seen in the open space buffers that separate the citizens in this otherwise cosmopolitan city. International planning ideas were sought out and altered in order to meet the goals of a repressive government. The finished product was a sprawling city in which people of color were severely disadvantaged by inferior geographic locations. In many ways, the twelve years of democracy have done little to improve the situation.

In the ideal world that the national and local policies attempted to create, Cape Town would be a very different place. People living in informal settlements would be able to move into decent housing along urban corridors where they could easily get to employment. Private businesses would be locating within Khayelitsha and other poor areas in order to take advantage of the large labor force already there thus easing the pressure on the transportation system. With each progressive year, the city would become more compact and sustainable as disadvantaged individuals used the government's help to step out of poverty. The policies that elegantly call for these improvements are present, but the implementation is severely lacking.

The reality of the global economy altered the way the ANC members viewed their responsibilities within the new government. They were confronted with the argument that free markets and free trade would bring about the greatest social and economic change. Instead of creating a command economy to redistribute wealth throughout the

society, the new government focused on general economic prosperity. This strategy has worked for many countries in Asia, such as China and Singapore that have used foreign capital to create economic growth. Therefore, the model for neo-liberal policies stimulating growth had already been created on the world scene.

The new economic growth was supposed to provide more money for the government to fix the spatial problems in the future. The desire to attract foreign capital changed the priorities of the government and left many citizens disillusioned. The situation is well depicted by the South African political cartoonist Zapiro (Shapiro 54). The man in the cartoon (Figure 18, p70) asking for pocket change from Thabo Mbeki stands for the people asking their government for lifelines now. Mbeki's response of "change takes time" illustrates the response the government has adopted. The government predicts that eventually the larger markets will trickle wealth down to all individuals in the society, but the question is will it happen quick enough for those in need.

The ANC's desire for a vibrant economy is reasonable considering the government does not currently have enough money to implement its extensive list of social goals. The apartheid government simply left so many disadvantaged areas that even though there has been much government investment throughout the country, no significant improvement has occurred in any one place. Therefore, gaining foreign capital through neo-liberal policies seemed like the best idea for the continued improvement of the country. Unfortunately, the market-driven policies created by this decision exacerbated the inequalities and only uplifted a selected few throughout the society.



Figure 18: Zapiro Cartoon

Essentially the neo-liberal policies provided a continuation of apartheid accentuating the importance of social class. The new markets are going to naturally locate in the rich white areas because it provides a better investment and security for their money. New development discriminates not against individuals of color but those that cannot afford a private automobile. The new democratic government does not build new low-income houses on segregated land necessarily because of racism, but because it is cheaper. Market-based segregation is in full swing in South Africa because market logic is benefiting all those that have wealth and further marginalizing the individuals who have none.

Economic policy, however, cannot be solely blamed for the continued division within the society. Residential segregation is a difficult thing to overcome for any country, and it should be noted that there is many factors in place that promote its continuation. Social, institutional and economic issues make even the best desegregation policy hard to implement as has been clearly demonstrated by the various attempts within the United States. The civil rights movement took place in the 1960s, but the major cities, like Detroit, are still racially segregated. This is not a process, therefore, that can take place overnight.

There are still lingering racisms and stereotypes that make integration hard. Studies show that whites in the US typically will not buy or rent property in an integrated neighborhood (Boger 391). The same is true in South Africa because the citizens have years of government-encouraged prejudices to overcome. New subdivisions often have deed restrictions on lot size and quality that prevent lower-income houses from ever being added. Segregation is also ingrained in the institutions of banking and insurance

companies. Poorer areas will be redlined so that homeowners and businesses cannot acquire loans or insurance policies that could potentially help people move up economically. All of these subtle factors and more make attempts to integrate a population a difficult task for any government. These factors should not, however, be seen as an insurmountable obstacle or blamed entirely for the lack of progress.

In any case, continuing segregation in South Africa is dangerous considering the history the country and its citizens are trying to overcome. It seems to be further ingraining racial differences in the minds of people and negatively impacting a new generation of South Africans. The future direction of urban policies that will attempt to overcome this situation is still in question. The countrywide housing protests of last year made government officials question their policies in their speeches, but little change occurred. It does not bode well that the new housing policy's pilot project is underfunded and still not complete.

For the time being, the spatial legacy of apartheid found within Cape Town will continue, but the picture is not totally bleak. The South African government is striving to create a more equal society by building homes for the poor. They have already built over a million homes for the poor. Few countries of South Africa's size can match this record. At this time, however, the urban policies are still reacting to the apartheid past. Hopefully someday race will take on less importance and the causes of poverty can be dealt with directly.

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Map Sources

Map 1: GIS shapefiles from MCA Planning Office, Cape Town; August 2005.

Map 2: Based on data from: Dewar, David., et al. The Structure and Form of Metropolitan Cape Town: Its Origins, Influences, and Performance. Working Paper No. 42, November 1990.

Map 3: Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC). Socio-Economic Characteristics of Suburbs: New City of Cape Town. Information Services Department CMC, 1996.

Map 4: Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC). Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework: A Guide for Spatial Development in the Cape Metropolitan Functional Region. Technical Report, April 1996.

Map 5 & 6: Statistics South Africa Census 2001. Digital Census Atlas © 2003.
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Map 7 & 8: Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC). Analysis of New Erven Created in the City of Cape Town. Information Services Department CMC, November 2000.
& GIS shapefiles from MCA Planning Office, Cape Town; August 2005.

Map 9, 10, & 11: Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC). Trends in Informal Settlements in the Cape Metropolitan Area. Housing Department CMC, May 1999.
& GIS shapefiles from MCA Planning Office, Cape Town; August 2005

Appendices

Appendix A

Name	Profession	Date
Matthew Cullinan	Urban Planner	August 2, 2005
Jens Kuhn	Researcher for Department of Housing	August 5, 2005
Cecil Madell	Urban Planner	Informal Conversations June- August 2005
Warren Smit	Development Action Group	August 4, 2005
Zaida Tofie	Transportation Planner	July 28, 2005
Vanessa Watson	Urban Planning Professor at University of Cape Town	August 2, 2005

Appendix B

Map 1: This map was made using shapefiles from MCA planning office in Cape Town. It is a simple suburb layer combined with a roads network layer. The names and symbols were added on top.

Map 2: This map was made using some shapefiles from MCA Planning office in Cape Town and some shapefiles I created in ArcCatalog. The information is based on maps from David Dewer's The Structure and Form of Metropolitan Cape Town: Its Origins, Influences, and Performance.

Map 3: Pulled straight from a Cape Metropolitan Council report.

Map 4: Pulled straight from MSDF companion CD.

Map 5 & 6: Pulled straight from Internet South African statistics site.

Map 7 & 8: In order to create this map, I created an Excel spreadsheet version of the Cape Metropolitan Council report. I then saved it as a DBF file and imported into my GIS document. I used the suburbs shapefile again along with a coastline and city boundary layer. I joined the Excel file to the suburbs layer using the suburb's name as the key field. Once they were joined I used graduated symbols in order to show the increase from 1992 to 1999 and then a separate map for 1999 to 2004. I used manual

classification for the symbol breaks. I did this because the large number of negative numbers, or decreases in development, was skewing the numbers down. I wanted the larger circles to represent positive development in an area.

Map 9: This map was created using the same suburb and coastline shapefiles as the previous maps. The shack points are also from MCA planning office, but they are based on a study done by the Cape Metropolitan Council for which I have a paper version. There is actually a point for each individual shack, but I meant for this map to be merely a general representation of the location of settlements. The dots are in no way proportional to the actual size of the settlements.

Map 10 & 11: These next two maps were created using the base map in figure 8. I had a point layer for the shacks in 1993 and one for the shacks in 1998. I followed the same steps to create both maps. In order to project the number of shacks into graduated colors, I first had to summarize the data. Each shack was a point connected with the name of the informal settlement for which it belonged. I summarized the points into a table that gave me the number of shacks in each settlement, but no longer had any locational data. I then took the point layer and ran it through a program that converts many similar points into polygons. This left me with a polygon for each settlement. I then attached the table with the shack count to the newly created polygons and used graduated color to represent the number of shacks. Since it was hard to read in the full extent view, I zoomed into the area that contained the majority of settlements. Using the two maps, I was then able to give a good representation of the increase in settlements.

Vita

Elizabeth Rebekah Trail was born in Murfreesboro, TN on September 21, 1981. She graduated from Riverdale High School in 2000 and received her B.A. in political science from the University of Tennessee in 2003. Elizabeth is currently working on her Masters degree in Geography with a concentration in urban geography.