

# Planact's Social Facilitation Role in The Research Project: "Governing the Future City: A Comparative Analysis of Governance Innovations in Large Scale Urban Developments in Shanghai, London, and Johannesburg".

PREPARED BY: PLANACT 2018

# ACRONYMS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 20TPT  | 20 Priority Township Programmes                                    |
| ANC    | African National Congress  |
| ANCYL  | ANC Youth League   |
| B-BBEE | Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment                             |
| BRT    | Bus Rapid Transit  |
| CBD    | Central Business District  |
| CDC    | Community Development  |
| COF    | Corridors of Freedom   |
| COJ    | City of Johannesburg   |
| DA     | Democratic Alliance  |
| EFF    | Economic Freedom Fighters  |
| ESRC   | Economic and Social Research Council                               |
| FEDUP  | Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor                             |
| GSEDF  | Greater Sophiatown Economic Development Forum                      |
| GDS    | Growth and Development Strategy                                    |
| IDP    | Integrated Development Plan  |
| ICRC   | Inner City Resource Centre   |
| JDA    | Johannesburg Development Agency                                    |
| MEC    | Member of the Elective Council                                     |
| MOU    | Memorandum of Understanding  |
| NGO    | Non-Governmental Organisation                                      |
| NHBRC  | National Home Builders Registration Council                        |
| NMT    | Non-motorised Transport  |
| SERI   | Socio-Economic Rights of South Africa                              |
| SAPS   | South African Police Services                                      |
| SDI    | Slum Dwellers International  |
| SACN   | South African Cities Network                                       |
| SA&CP  | South African Research Chair in Spatial Analysis and City Planning |
| TOD    | Transport Oriented Development                                     |

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

This report documents the activities undertaken by Planact as part of the overall research project, “Governing the future city: A comparative analysis of governance innovations in large scale urban developments in Shanghai, London, and Johannesburg.” The project, running from January 2016 to February 2018, had three primary partners, one in each of the locations: University College London, United Kingdom; the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Pudong Urban Planning and Design Institute in Xiang Luo, China. In China and South Africa, the primary partners were assisted by consultants, community researchers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to undertake aspects of the overall research project. To this effect, Planact partnered with the University of the Witwatersrand to provide social facilitation.

The project is based on in-depth case studies of three large-scale developments in the three different contexts. It was aimed at understanding how large-scale urban development projects, which are key vehicles for delivering residents’ needs in many cities, as well as focal points for delivering urban economic growth, generate social innovation in cities, in relation to community organisation, governance practices and development management. Through building this understanding, it was intended to then evaluate what kind of urban political future could have been put in place through the new ways in which communities were organising support for one another in the face of the significant changes these developments have brought to their neighbourhoods. This research project was awarded grant funding by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in the United Kingdom, and was implemented over a period of 24 months, from January 2016 to January 2018.

The case study chosen for Johannesburg focused on the City’s “Corridors of Freedom” (COF) project. The COF is an ambitious mega project, with a long-term time horizon that is based on corridor- and transit-oriented developments planned along existing transport arteries. They are intended to consist of high-density accommodation, office buildings and retail/leisure developments. Its emphasis is on “re-stitching” the City and transforming movement, as well as social and economic activities, in order to improve liveability, urban efficiency, social cohesion and economic inclusivity and sustainability (COJ, 2017). The COF project officially started in 2013, but has been linked to efforts by the City since 2006, to align Johannesburg’s spatial planning and investment in public infrastructure (Todes, 2012). Although still in the early stages, the project has received significant investment by the City over a number of years, and therefore provides the research team with a very opportune basis for analysis.



## 2 PLANACT

Planact is a non-governmental development organisation committed to holistic development for the poor, focusing on the areas of integrated human settlements and participatory governance. This is done through social facilitation, capacity development, research and advocacy, and networking. Planact was established in 1985 as a voluntary association of professionals who came together to assist community organisations to advocate for alternative development plans to those of the apartheid regime. The aim was to facilitate a civic voice in the policy development process during the transition to democracy in 1994.

Planact was formally registered as a Section 21 Company (not-for-profit) in March 1994.

Planact's programmes have evolved since 1985, from promoting social and political change during the apartheid period, to empowering communities on participatory governance in the post-apartheid era. Planact has remained rooted in disadvantaged communities and works to support and mobilise community processes that enhance good governance at a local level, to improve people's habitable environment in ways that alleviate poverty. Planact's programmes and operations are centred on the premise that participatory governance is the central pillar to effective service delivery and fundamental to development. This research project falls within Planact's scope of participatory governance work.

Planact's Participatory Governance Programme focuses on developing the capacity of low-income communities to effectively voice their needs in local government planning and development processes. It promotes the involvement of communities in influencing policy formulation and implementation of local government processes, such as the

Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Municipal Budget, for the purposes of improving basic services delivery. The Participatory Governance Programme has brought about positive results by building residents' capacity to become active participants in local governance and development processes, rather than passive observers of these processes. However, within the context of the Corridors of Freedom (COF), participatory governance has been marked by a number of challenges:

- The City of Johannesburg is not engaging as it should;
- The form and nature of the City's engagement is unclear; and
- The nature of future engagement across corridors is a contested space.

The activities undertaken by Planact in this project were aimed at understanding how public participation for the COF was undertaken in Johannesburg and to what extent the COF have contributed to the shaping of social innovation and economic growth in Johannesburg, in relation to community organisation, governance practices and development management. The project provided Planact with the opportunity of exploring the challenges experienced by Planact in their participatory governance programme.

Traditionally Planact has worked in poor, marginalised and under-resourced areas, and so this project provided the chance for Planact to extend its reach by working within formal, well-established urban areas. This project also offered opportunities to engage with communities from a wide geographic area, across different income groups, socio-economic barriers, levels of education and varied development priorities.



# 3

## THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg is the most populated city in South Africa, and is the provincial capital of Gauteng, the wealthiest province in the country (World Population Review, 2018). South Africa's finance and industrial sectors are based in Johannesburg, making it the "economic engine room" of South Africa (PASGR, 2016). Johannesburg is therefore viewed as a city of economic opportunity and has consequently attracted large numbers of work seekers (from other provinces and other countries), giving it the name of a "city of migrants" (Harrison, et al. 2014).

The current population of Johannesburg is estimated to be around 4.94 million, making it the biggest metro by population size in South Africa (COJ, 2016). Furthermore, the projected population growth rates forecast a doubling of the city's population in fewer than 35 years, with significant implications for the provision of services, as well as the economy of the City. The population is made up mostly of young male work seekers, with 33% of the population between the ages of 14 and 35 (COJ, 2016).

The City's unemployment rate has increased in recent years (about 25%), while youth unemployment is estimated at more than 30% (HSRC, 2018). Added to this, the poverty rate (number of households classified as poor and having a monthly household expenditure of below R2 500 as the cut off) is very high – at 37% (COJ, 2016) – making Johannesburg (with a Gini coefficient of 0.65) one of the most inequitable cities in South Africa (COJ, 2016). The City was originally developed around its mineral resources, but its economy has expanded and diversified, and is now dominated by finance, high-end services, retail and trade (HSRC, 2018). The informal economy has

grown significantly (HSRC, 2018), and therefore plays an important part in urban development in the City. These economic changes have contributed to changes in the spatial form of the City, leading to the growth of an intricate network of decentralised economic nodes. Additionally, apartheid spatial planning has left Johannesburg with sprawling, low-density, segregated areas without viable public transport systems and a heavy dependence on the minibus taxi industry (Harrison, et al. 2014).

Professor Shlomo Angel, of New York University, identified Johannesburg as one of the few cities in the world experiencing real densification (Angel, et al. 2012), due to the demand for jobs and services. Johannesburg's residential sector has expanded and densified through both formal and informal means, with 17.4% of households in Johannesburg living in shacks in informal settlements and backyard accommodation in 2011 (Harrison, et al. 2014). Previously, white middle-class suburbs were gradually desegregating with a growing black middle class moving into these areas, while historically black townships have remained almost exclusively black, with new black enclaves emerging in the inner City (Harrison, 2013). Generally, poor communities live on the edge of the City, away from economic, social and educational opportunities, and therefore spend a disproportionately high share of their disposable income (and time) on transport (COJ, undated). The growing complexity of the urban form, linked to a growing population and densification, has reinforced the importance of the transport sector and investments in public transport (including a Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) system, and a rapid rail system, Gautrain) (Harrison, et al. 2014).



# 4

## UNDERSTANDING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROCESS IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The South African Constitution is underpinned by principles of good governance and highlights the importance of public participation, as an essential element of successful good local governance. The White Paper on Local Government, the Municipal Structures Act (1998), the Municipal Systems Act (2000) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) set out the legal requirements for public participation for municipalities. In terms of these requirements, municipalities are obliged to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in issues that affect them. This obligation extends to the way in which a municipality operates and functions (Salga, 2013).

The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality manages the local governance of Johannesburg and is divided into seven regions, the latter further split into 130 wards (COJ, 2016). Metropolitan municipalities are responsible for planning, service provision, regulation and revenue management (RSA, 1996) and have to work with other spheres of government (both national and provincial) for the delivery of key mandates, such as housing, transport, education, health, energy generation, water infrastructure, etc. The City is obligated to take into account the interests and concerns of the residents when it draws up by-laws or policy, and when it implements new programmes. The municipality is also bound to communicating its activities with community members (Salga, 2013).

The ward committee<sup>1</sup> is regarded as the statutory structure recognised by the municipal council, as its consultative body and communication channel on matters affecting the ward, including, but not limited to:

- representing the community on the compilation and implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP);<sup>2</sup>
- ensuring constructive and harmonious interaction between the municipality and the community;
- attending to all matters that affect and benefit the community;
- acting in the best interest of the community; and
- ensuring active participation of the community in the municipality's budgetary process.

<sup>1</sup>The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998, requires municipalities to develop mechanisms to consult communities and community organisations in performing their functions. These structures are commonly known as Ward Committees, and provide a vital link between Ward Councillors, the community and the municipality.

<sup>2</sup>An IDP is recognised as the business plan for the municipality and determines projects that a municipality undertakes in a given financial year. IDPs must be representative of the needs and aspirations of all interest groups in each of the wards. It is a five-year plan that local government is required to compile to determine the development needs of the municipality.

Even though most municipalities use Ward Committees as their preferred public participation method, it is only one of the methods used to ensure public participation and community involvement in a municipality. Communities may also participate in: municipal oversight and audit committee meetings; through direct advice and support from their respective Ward Councillors and proportional representative councillors; interest groups within a community; learning forums; residents' associations; submitting or writing oral recommendations; representations and complaints; petitions; protests, and through traditional leadership structures.

The public participation model for local government in South Africa is detailed, advanced and covers almost all of the requirements for effective public participation. In practice, local municipalities often do not implement the processes as set out in this model. Participation is dependent on the quality and skills of the councillors and those whose interests they serve. It has also been argued that public participation does not have a fundamental influence on decisions made and policy outcomes (Peens, 2015). Generally, government officials do not give public participation the attention it deserves, as it is seen as time consuming, expensive and frustrating and is open to criticism (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). Ward committees have been extensively criticised for being ineffective, partisan, supporting nepotism and being unresponsive to community needs.





# 5

## SPATIAL PLANNING FOR THE COJ: THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The City of Johannesburg has developed numerous spatial and economic policies over the last 20 years. One of the most defining is its first Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) in 2006, which offers a 30–40-year turnaround strategy. At the time, there were numerous strategies, including, “Joburg 2030”, the Human Development Strategy (HDS), the Integrated Transport Plan, and the City Safety Strategy (COJ, 2011). The GDS recognises the problem of a sprawling urban footprint and provides the opportunity to consolidate all these plans and programmes into a single cross-city strategy, which would seek to align Johannesburg’s spatial planning and investment in public infrastructure (Todes, 2012).

The GDS serves as the conceptual foundation for the five-year Integrated Development Plans (IDP) for the City. The 2006 GDS was refined, utilising subsequent data and research findings to form the basis for the Johannesburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy (Joburg 2040 GDS) (COJ, 2011). The 2040 GDS, launched in 2011, defines Johannesburg’s vision for the next 30 years, as a vibrant, equitable, diverse “World Class African City of the Future” (Toffa, 2014).

The GDS has four main outcomes to achieve by 2040:

- Outcome 1: Improved quality of life and development-driven resilience for all
- Outcome 2: Provision of a resilient, liveable, sustainable urban environment underpinned by infrastructure supportive of a low-carbon economy
- Outcome 3: An inclusive, job-intensive, resilient and competitive economy
- Outcome 4: A leading metropolitan government that proactively contributes to and builds a sustainable, socially inclusive, locally integrated and globally competitive Gauteng City Region (GCR) (COJ, 2011)

The GDS logic continued previous discussions by the City on transit-oriented development (TOD) and the development of Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) systems, and led to the emergence of capital investment priority areas (CIPAs), which later informed the COF (PASGR, 2016).



# 6

## THE CORRIDORS OF FREEDOM (COF) PROGRAMME IN JOHANNESBURG

In his 2013 State of the City Address, Mayor Mpho Parks Tau introduced the Corridors of Freedom<sup>3</sup>, describing it as “the launch of one of the largest public transportation development programmes in the history of South Africa,” (COJ, undated). Tau introduced the idea of “re stitching [the] City to create a promising future,” by connecting people and places in new ways through high-density precinct developments and efficient public transport (PASGR, 2016). To achieve this overall vision of a restructured urban space, the City committed to concentrating capital funding and a range of interventions over the medium to long term. The intention was to use this strategic public investment in demarcated zones to “crowd-in” private investment and to form public-private partnerships. The intended outcome of the investments is to encourage mixed-use developments linked to convenient public transport and high levels of pedestrianisation, with the aim of stimulating retail hubs (PASGR, 2016). This is based on the hope that the corridors will encourage high population densities along the BRT routes (Erasmus, 2013).

The corridors are also planned to link economic hubs with the City’s poorer communities by connecting people living on the urban periphery with economic opportunities in the central City (PASGR, 2016). The focal node of the development is structured around the City centre, spreading outward to the North for the Louis Botha Corridor, to the South West, for the Empire Perth Corridor and to the South for the Turffontein Corridor. Building on the previous phase of investments into the BRT system, eight corridors were identified as part of the long-term COF framework, with three being implemented at this stage. These are: Soweto, Empire-Perth (linking Soweto to the Central Business District (CBD)), Louis Botha Corridor linking the CBD to Alexandra and Sandton, and the Turffontein Node, which is close to the CBD and is serviced by an existing Metrobus and rail link (PASGR, 2016) (see Figure 1).

Each corridor is supported by a Strategic Area Framework, which articulates the desired spatial responses to the intent of the COF vision. It provides development guidelines and parameters, such as housing typologies, development controls, densities and land-use mix, as well as the projects and programmes required to realise this spatial vision (PASGR, 2016). In formulating these frameworks, the City also considered the regional and local links, as well as the connectivity of the area, economic development, residential densification, social clustering and innovation

(such as the City’s green agenda, integration and smart city concepts) (COJ, 2017).

In the inner-city and Turffontein, the focus for public investment has been on housing and transport to encourage the use of existing bus and rail services. In the Empire-Perth Corridor the critical need for public investment has been in electricity upgrades, and along the Louis Botha Corridor public investment is needed to acquire land on which to build the supporting public infrastructure required (PASGR, 2016) to make the corridor viable.

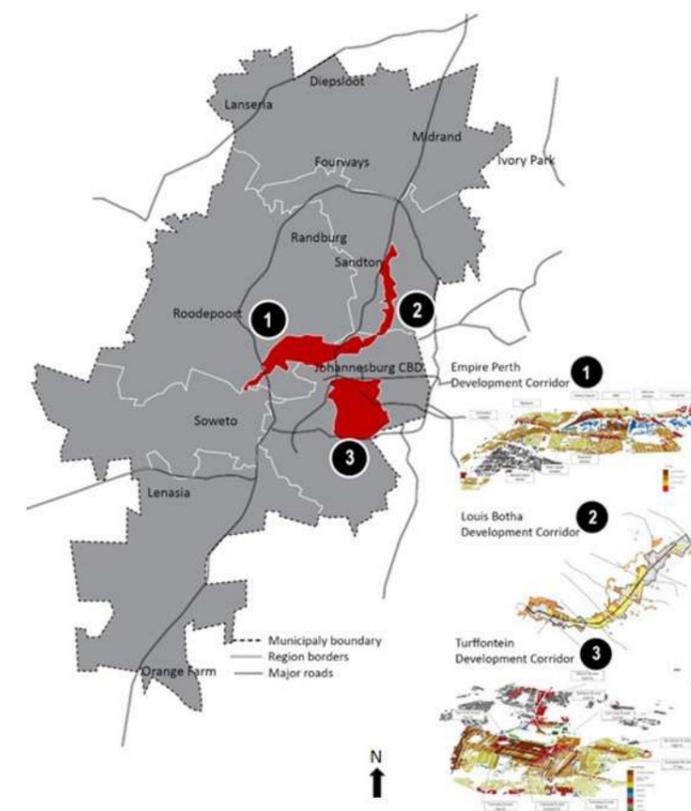


Figure 1: Corridors of Freedom: Medium-term scope (COJ, 2014)

<sup>3</sup>With the change in the local government’s political leadership in Johannesburg in 2016, the COF programme has become known as the Transit Corridors Programme. However, for the purposes of this report, we have retained the original naming convention



# 7

## CORRIDORS OF FREEDOM FORMAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The City initiated an extensive public participation process in August 2011, when the revised Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) 2040 outreach process was launched. A nine-week process of extensive engagement on the GDS was undertaken, including weekly thematic discussions with stakeholders, ward-level engagement and participation, a conference with leading global, regional and local experts, a City Lekgotla<sup>4</sup>, and a final GDS Stakeholders' Summit. It was aimed at including all stakeholders, using wide-ranging stakeholder and community consultation processes (including social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs) to drive the development of an inspiring, visionary and implementable local government strategy with a shared sense of ownership. The Joburg 2040 GDS also served as the conceptual foundation for the five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (GDS, 2011).

As noted previously, the COF concept was enhanced by taking the principles and objectives of the GDS 2040 and transforming them into spatial and tangible interventions. According to former Mayor, Parks Tau, these interventions were "aimed at revitalising the city and its infrastructure to build on Johannesburg's existing reputation as a world-class city," (Tau 2016). As the plans for the corridors had to be done very quickly and under enormous pressure, the broader community and other sectors (e.g. private developers and individual land owners), were not sufficiently engaged in all aspects of the programme (Peens, 2015). An official in an interview admitted that, driven by this pressure, the City planned everything and then realised that it had not consulted. Public participation was very much an after-thought for the development of the actual COFs, with the lack of consultation being justified by the fact that the COF were based on the outcomes of the GDS consultation processes.

Once the City had completed the technical planning process (including defining the corridor areas), a tender was put out by the COJ to develop strategies for the development of the key corridors in early 2013. Proposals were received in March 2013. A multi-disciplinary consultant team, with expertise and competency in development planning, was appointed and started work in May 2013. The consultants' brief was to implement four phases, starting with strategic analysis and synthesis. Draft Strategic Area Frameworks (with requirements to hold focus group meetings with key stakeholders) were then to be prepared. In many cases, the public felt that this was just a "box ticking session" and some expressed their dissatisfaction through statements, such as, "I am concerned about the statement that this

plan will be at the Council in November [2013] ... if this is the timeframe then all the planning has already been done and then I am not certain why I am sitting here?" (COJ, 2013f: 15 in Peens: 2015).

Once the Strategic Area Frameworks (SAF) were finalised, development proposals, including 3D models and architectural renderings for marketing and promoting the proposals were to be produced. The final phase was an implementation strategy for the COF. This was all done in just over six months, with the policy being submitted to council for approval in November 2013 (Peens, 2015). In July 2013, meetings were held amongst City officials, as well as with officials from other relevant City departments, such as Social Development, City Transformation and Community Development, to discuss issues pertaining to the Strategic Area Frameworks.

In August 2013, the first external briefing meeting was held between City officials and Councillors whose wards were affected by the Corridors of Freedom (COJ minutes of meetings). General public meetings presenting the SAFs were held in September and October 2013, with advertisements for the sessions being placed in local newspapers and on the consultant's website. Ward Councillors were also informed about the meetings and asked to notify their wards. Attendance was mixed and there was a lack of diversity at the meetings. Generally, these were high-level presentations given by technical experts sharing information in a lecture style. Little time was allocated to the question-and-answer session, and the proceedings of the meetings were closely controlled by the project team. Participants were not able to influence the corridor routes because they had already been decided based on the existing and proposed BRT routes. Residents also did not have any influence over where and how social housing would be implemented or on the design guidelines. The public therefore did not participate in the foundational aspects of the COF. As mentioned, participants thus felt that participation was a compliance-led exercise, with all the major decisions already having been made (Peens, 2015).

After these information sessions, concerned residents got together to reduce the level and extent of densification. This was mainly achieved through the work of the more detailed focus group sessions after a new, more open process had been demanded and implemented in specific areas able to resort to more powerful and influential residents' associations (such as Norwood, Orange Grove and Houghton on the Louis Botha Corridor, as well as Melville on the Empire-Perth Corridor). Groups met and

<sup>4</sup>A meeting place for village assemblies, court cases and meetings of village leaders; a conference or business meeting. Word origin from Sotho and Tswana lekgotla, courtyard or court.

sent in technical reports and response letters (Peens, 2015).

The SAFs were formally approved in October 2014, after which implementation began. City officials engaged the public between 2014 and 2016, and focused on particular projects within the COFs. However, some communities were not aware that the projects were linked to the COF.

2017 saw more public participation, as the City began establishing Special Development Zones (SDZs) to fast-track development applications within specific sections of the Louis Botha and the Empire-Perth Development Corridors. The Development Planning Department of the City of Johannesburg hosted a series of public engagement sessions between 13th and 25th February 2017. Protocol regarding the communication of the participation session was published on the City's COF website, as well as in The Star newspaper. Emails and flyers were distributed throughout the communities that were to be affected by the developments. A notice was put on the consultant's website and the consultation meetings were advertised in local newspapers. Ward Councillors were also asked to inform their wards of the meetings within their communities (COJ, 2017).

The consultant-led public participation sessions started with a presentation of proposals already developed. During these sessions, communities engaged with the consultants on the SDZ mechanism and how densification

could be expected to roll out. Participants provided written comments reflecting what they liked and disliked, and on aspects that they thought were overlooked/not addressed in the project. These sessions were accompanied by a week-long exhibition of the proposal at the Spark Gallery in Orange Grove. Approximately 137 people attended the public participation session, which took place on the first day followed by a week-long exhibition where people from the area could come back and ask more specific questions, discuss and leave their comments.

Through the Orange Grove process, it became clear that participants felt that the previous round of public participation conducted for the Strategic Area Framework (SAF) was lacking. Most participants were overwhelmed by the complexity of the proposal and questioned the possible immediate impact it could have on their neighbourhoods and communities. There were approximately 124 people who attended the Brixton and Empire-Perth Public Participation sessions and then, similarly to the Orange Grove interaction, they also held a week-long exhibition where people from the area could come back and ask more specific questions, discuss and leave their comments. At both sessions residents raised concerns about densification, crime, and housing, and expressed insecurities about the potential impact on property values of current property owners along the corridors. After the sessions, several residents' associations submitted documentation raising specific concerns (COJ, 2017).

# 8

## PLANACT'S COF ACTIVITY PLAN/PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Drawing on the knowledge and experience acquired over three decades of social facilitation, Planact developed a particular methodology for implementing the research project within the selected corridors. Although Planact developed the project activity plan in sequential form, many of the activities ran concurrently.

church groups, etc.).

Importantly, field visits of all the COFs were undertaken by Planact staff, where photos were taken and a physical verification process was undertaken of the different types of activities (economic, social, housing) along the corridors and observations recorded (see Figure 2).

### 8.1. Pre-Planning Phase

The purpose of the pre-planning phase was to develop an activity plan and background knowledge on the selected corridors, and to identify key stakeholders. This involved Planact undertaking a desktop study of the COF and participation processes, and included reviewing and compiling relevant literature from the Wits University Library, COJ and international sources. Media articles on the COF were reviewed and maps of the corridors obtained. All wards that fell within the corridors were identified and a list was made of all the relevant Ward Councillors and their contact details. The lists of the identified stakeholders were then categorised according to their interest in the corridor (such as business, residential, social amenities,

This phase also included reviewing criteria for the specific project sites that would constitute the precise cases where in depth work would take place. The criteria included: income groups, level of development, racial composition, forms of organisation amongst others (more detail is provided in Section 9). A motivation document was developed to that effect. This phase was followed by engagement with stakeholders.

### 8.2. Data Collection and Engagement with Stakeholders

From the pre-planning phase, three case study communities were chosen: Orlando East/Noordgesig,

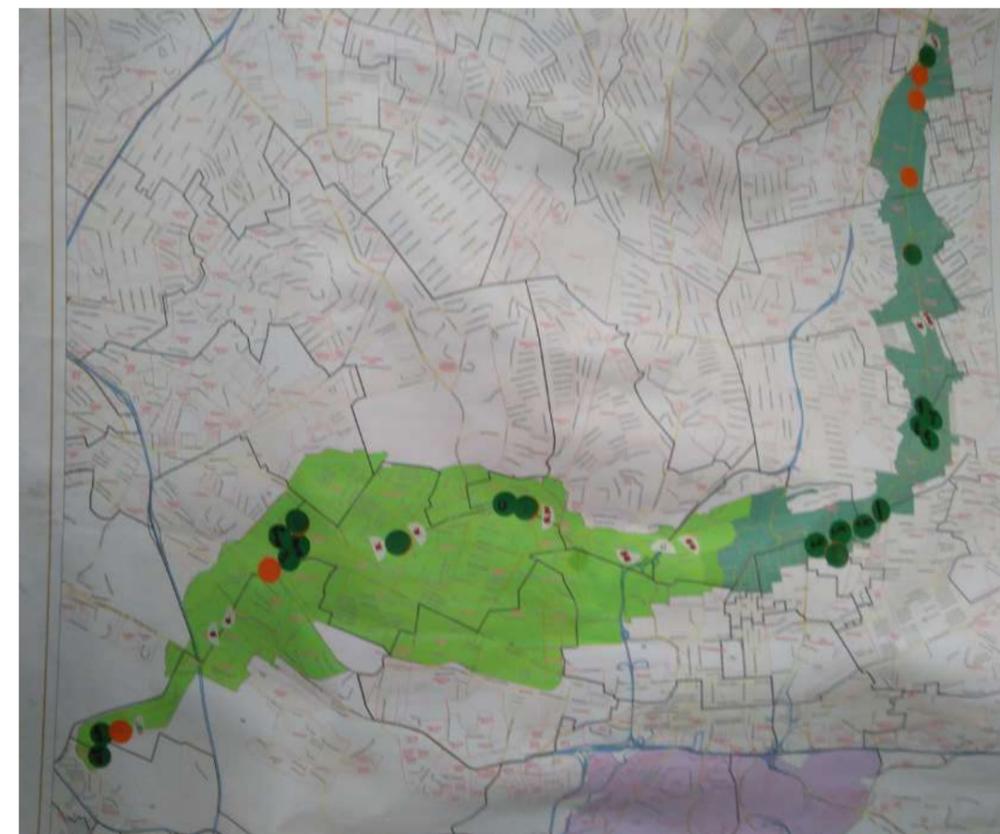


Figure 2: Working document of land use analysis in the COFs (source: Planact, 2017)

the Greater Sophiatown area and Marlboro/Alexandra. The purpose of this phase was to engage with different stakeholders from these areas, in order to garner a clear sense of their issues, challenges and context, as well as their interactions with the COF. The stakeholders included relevant municipal officials and departments responsible for the COF project, Ward Councillors whose wards fall within the corridors, community stakeholders and other interest groups in the COF project.

A number of methods were used to engage with the different community stakeholders. Planact staff members met with the senior officials at the City of Johannesburg, and were provided with useful mapping information regarding the COF, including a database of different stakeholders/participants in the COF public participation process. Planact used the database provided by the municipality to complement our own findings and identify and mobilise additional organisations and interest groups. Planact emailed and phoned identified stakeholders to schedule interviews. An ethics code and consent form were submitted and signed by all those interviewed. One-on-one interviews were conducted with 30 identified stakeholders from different categories across the three corridors. An interview guide was jointly developed by Wits and Planact to guide the interviews, and was based on work that colleagues had completed in the other two case studies (London and Shanghai), but were adapted to fit the local context. The purpose of this phase was to develop an instrument to gather information on the selected sites within the COF (social rapid survey questionnaire), to identify the needs of the community, existing community structures, level of public participation, etc. This protocol guided the research to be conducted. The key questions featured in the questionnaire included the following; what are the main development needs of this community? Is there any structure or committee in the community that represents your development challenges and interests in municipal forums? Does the municipality consult with your community on matters regarding the development of your area? What do they consult about (e.g. IDP, budget, new projects, housing)? Have you heard of the Corridors of Freedom Project implemented by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan? What is your attitude towards the corridors? How would you rate the level of participation of residents in the COF and what are your aspirations about your neighbourhood amongst others? The interviews were all recorded and saved in the project file. This information gathered has been used to develop this report and various communication briefs as described in the section below.

Through the interview process it became clear that many of those interviewed were uninformed about the COF in its overall intention, and as such Planact produced a short information sheet, which was shared with those interviewed. The interviews therefore also became

information sharing sessions. Relationships were established through the interviews, and this served as useful inroads into the corridor communities for Planact. The interviews were transcribed and the content has been used to pull into the themes (see Section 10).

Planact conducted three focus group meetings – in Orlando East/Noordgesig, in the Greater Sophiatown area and in Marlboro/Alexandra. The focus groups were intended to consolidate, extend and challenge ideas and information that were collected during the interviews. It was jointly decided to theme the focus group sessions based on key issues that had come out of the interview process. The focus group discussions affirmed and disproved some of the information gathered during the interviews. Planact produced information pamphlets from each of the focus groups (Appendix I). The specific outcomes of the focus groups are discussed in Section 10 and common issues derived from the focus groups have also been pulled into the themes' section.

### 8.3. Capacity Building

The purpose of this phase was to mobilise communities that were not structured to engage with the COF project. It was also to find out if community members were aware of the COF, whether they had participated in making their inputs in the process, and to establish how the COF had impacted on their lives.

A variety of methods were used to make people aware of the COF. Planning meetings were held with community stakeholders in each project site to discuss the COF. Local community-based organisations were used to convene these meetings, such as the Community Development Committee (CDC) in Orlando East/Noordgesig, as well as the Greater Sophiatown Economic Development Forum (GSEDF). COF consultative meetings were convened by Planact, and senior municipal officials were invited to these meetings to share with the invited community members on the background, progress and reflection of public participation on COF. In these consultative meetings community members also had an opportunity to share their experiences of the COF. Unfortunately, communities could not make any meaningful input into the process as the officials' public participation process had already closed. However, since there are localised projects that are still being implemented by the municipality, this information has been useful for affected communities to understand the linkages between the local projects and the vision of the COF. Planact will continue to provide mentorship and support community stakeholders during the process of localised projects implementation by the municipality. The following phase included collection of data and information from different community stakeholders.

By organising a number of site visits (both for local and

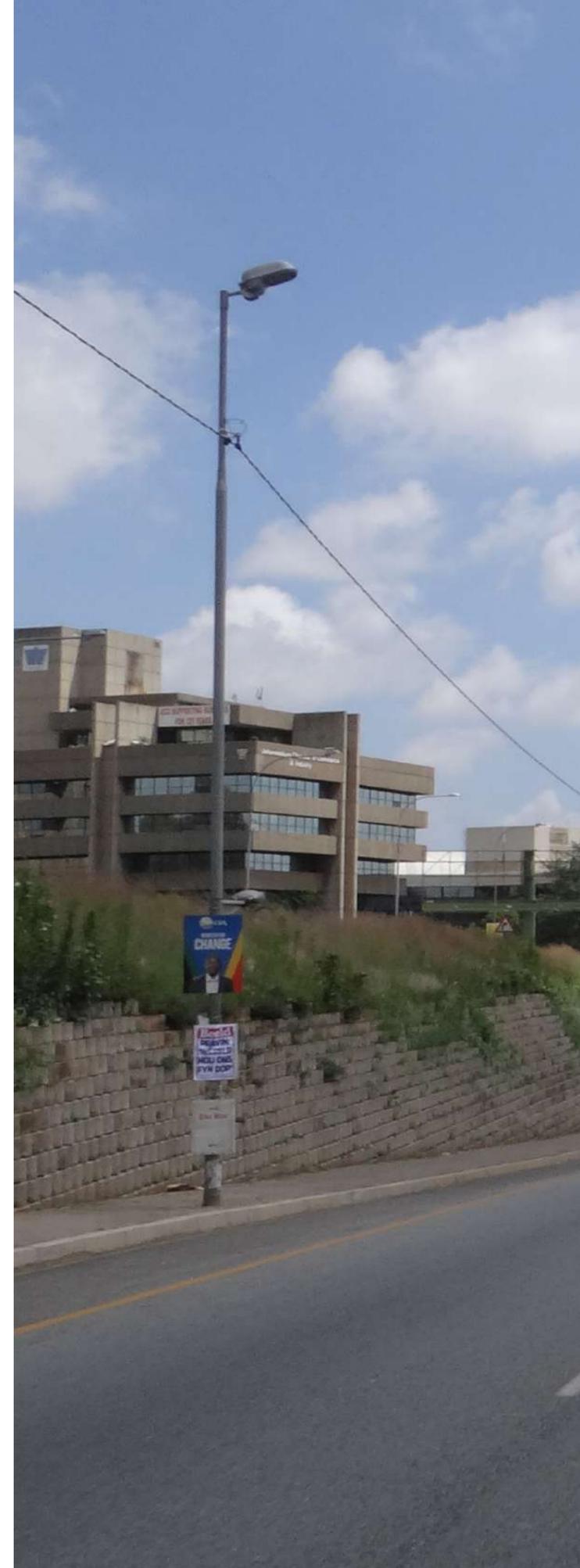
international research partners), and by providing access to local stakeholder discussions for the research team, Planact also played its part in capacity building.

### 8.4. Monitoring/Project Planning Meetings

Throughout the project, the teams from Wits, and Planact met on a regular basis to make certain that the project activities complied with the project contract. The senior programme coordinator was responsible for this activity. Monthly meetings were held with the Programme Manager and the COF team from Planact to discuss the upcoming project activities and to make sure that any deviation from the project contract be attended to timeously and remedial action to be put in place. These were helpful in making sure that the objectives of the project were met despite time and capacity constraints within the organisation. A number of documents were also prepared to assist with monitoring and project management: monthly reports, making sure that attendance registers were signed properly in each meeting, that all interviews were properly recorded and filed appropriately, factsheets that summarised the project update and process were developed, and a project file was opened and safely stored at the senior project coordinators office. Planact's communications officer played a major role in ensuring that all documentation was recorded properly. The teams in the three countries also met on a number of occasions in Johannesburg and in London to exchange progress reports, learn from each other and ensure the comparability of the research work that was being undertaken.

### 8.5. Project Outputs

The project had a number of outputs throughout its lifetime: project information briefs about the COFs, which were easy-to read information packs for community members; transcriptions of interviews and focus group discussions, and maps of the areas. Planact also developed project factsheets, brochures, reproduced COF maps and used some of the information from the website of the municipality. The purpose of these documents was twofold. First, it was aimed at providing additional information for community members about COF developments taking place in their broader area, with the objective of creating a more comprehensive view. Secondly, given the focus on three segments of the COF, the documents (such as the brochures and information sheets), also served to start developing a dialogue across different parts of the COF landscape. As such, despite the different contextual realities and dynamics in each of these three selected areas, the aim was to point towards a mutual learning process and highlight the possibilities of interconnectedness linked to the COF process.





# 9

## CASE STUDY CORRIDORS

The process of identifying the corridors was undertaken in conjunction with Wits. Planact developed criteria to select the preferred corridors and specific sections within each corridor that would be covered by the research. The preferred sites had varying characteristics to enable comparison and to enrich the research. The following criteria were used to select the preferred corridors:

- a. Geographic and economic context
- b. Infrastructure
- c. Typology of income groups
- d. Racial composition
- e. Land-use character
- f. Density of the neighbourhood
- g. Levels of organisation
- h. Migration factor

Some of the inner-city corridors had greater potential for redevelopment and attracting private sector investment. However, given the focus on transformation within the COF, prioritising precincts or interventions was not solely determined by factors, such as the economic return on investment, but also included considerations, such as social inclusivity and inclusive economic growth and participation. From the start Planact took a decision to focus on the poorer sections/communities of the corridors. Initially, the three corridor areas selected were Louis Botha (from Alexandra to the CBD), Empire-Perth (from the CBD to the western suburbs of Westbury/Sophiatown, and ending in Soweto) (see Figure 3) and Turffontein, to gain an overall understanding of the dynamics and socio-economic realities across the corridors' landscape. It should be noted that the COF transect a number of different communities along their length, and it was intended that these communities should all be brought into conversation with each other.

However, early on in the project implementation a collective decision between the local partners was taken to drop the Turffontein Corridor and replace it with the Soweto Corridor (which forms part of the bottom end of the Empire-Perth Corridor). Given the timeframes and resource constraints, it was thought that undertaking the research project in three new, different, vast areas was asking too much of Planact. Wits also felt that it would be interesting to explore the development of the Soweto leg after the attention of the World Cup, and the fact that it had a longer history with the COF concept. Also, Planact had implemented their Community Development Committee (CDC) model of engagement in the wards of the Soweto Corridor and this meant that Planact would

have an already established foothold in one community. The following sections provide some details of the study sites.

### 9.1. Louis Botha Development Corridor

The Louis Botha Development Corridor is located to the north-east of the inner city, between the CBD and northern parts of the City, around Alexandra. The Louis Botha Corridor runs from Hillbrow/Parktown, through Yeoville, upper Houghton, Orange Grove, Balfour Park, Bramley, and through to Alexandra and Marlboro. The corridor, as a whole, is well connected to existing key nodes in the City, including Midrand to the north (a key growth and employment node), the Modderfontein/Greenstone area (a significant future growth opportunity for the City) and Sandton (one of the key economic nodes to the north of the City).

The Louis Botha Corridor has been identified by the City as one of the priority development areas and integration zones. The detailed planning of the Louis Botha Corridor consists of Balfour, Patterson Park and Orange Grove. The Louis Botha Corridor is also one of the three major corridors in which the municipality envisages coupling the Rea Vaya BRT infrastructure development with bulk infrastructure investment, as well as the improvement of the public realm. Current social infrastructure that is incorporated into the Louis Botha Corridor is identified by the City: Orchards Clinic; Esselen Street Clinic; 4th Street Clinic; Thoko Ngoma Clinic; Upgraded Recreation Centre; a new swimming pool and sporting facilities; a new library; storm water upgrades, including day lighting of the river; upgraded and new parks; relocation of depots; private housing; public art and new Non-Motorised Transport (NMT); pedestrian and cycle lanes; BRT stations; NMT links to BRT stations and mixed-use, and social housing development (Marlboro South). This corridor was 50% complete by June 2015. The infrastructural developments along Louis Botha Avenue have arguably brought about the biggest changes in the area. The whole length of Louis Botha has been resurfaced in preparation for a bus rapid transit (BRT) route. In addition to the road works, bus stations, clinics, pedestrian bridges, parks, new housing developments and urban precincts are being constructed (Planact, 2016).

In some of the identified key locations in the corridor, such as Balfour Park, land-use patterns support the

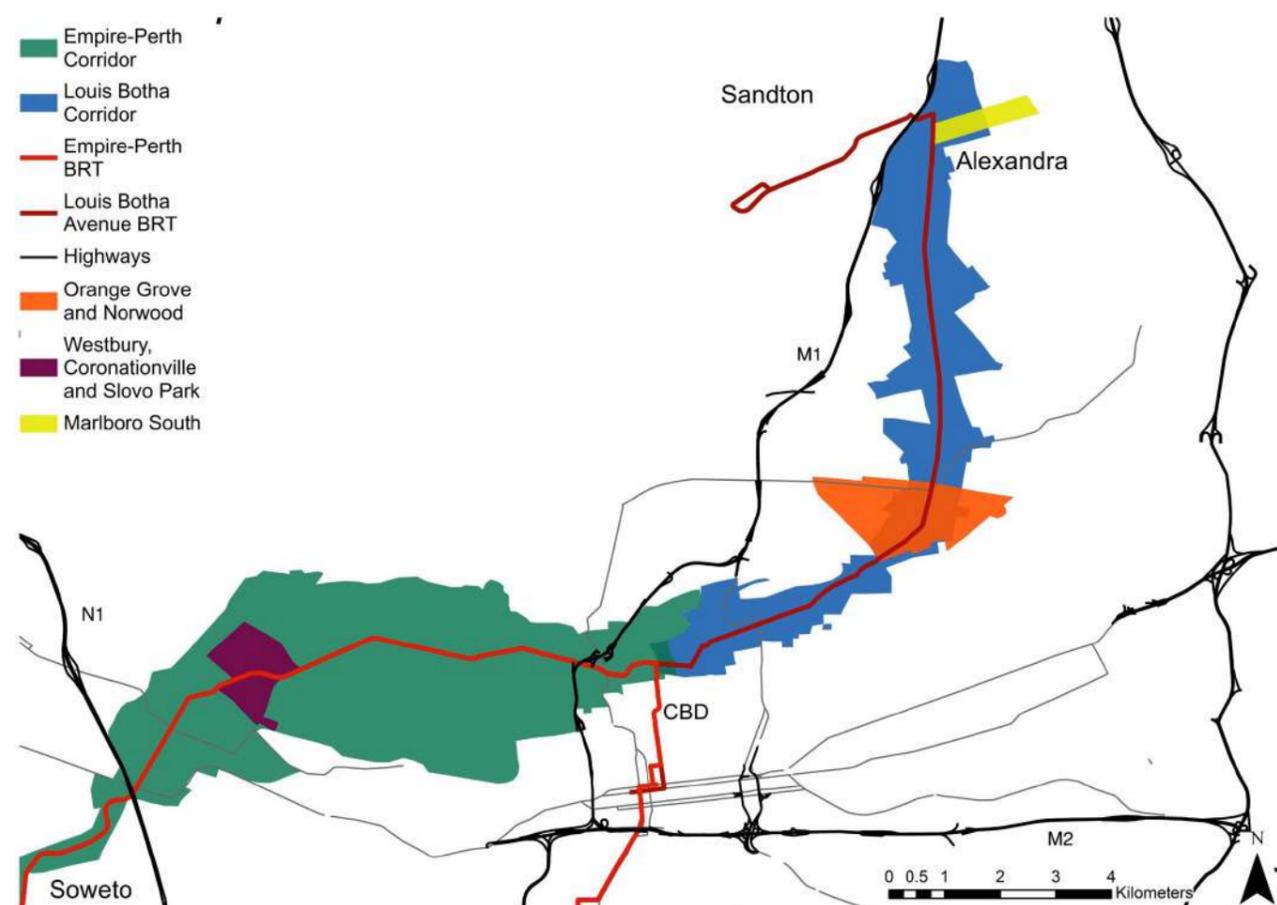


Figure 3: Three research sites along the COFs (Source: Appelbaum, 2017)

COF's principle of active edges and vertical mixed-use development. In Balfour Park, there are old commercial buildings with active and porous edges on the ground floor. The Balfour Park Shopping Centre serves as a strong economic node. One of the major concerns that presents a threat to the visual appearance of the area and the environment's quality, is the conversion of old houses into commercial or retail use (Planact, 2016). Gated communities along Louis Botha present a challenge as they hamper effective traffic flow, which is generally a two-lane road system. Unmanaged taxis and trolley-pullers also add to this problem. The latter two groups are already in the system and offer an opportunity of relatively stable income for some households (COJ, 2015).

The Louis Botha Corridor has the most diverse population of the chosen sites. The areas that would be affected by the incoming corridor would be the township of Alexandra, the middle income area of Orange Grove and the affluent suburbs of Houghton, Oaklands and Norwood. This corridor is also home to an extremely high number of immigrants who reside along the Louis Botha trunk route in decaying, medium-rise buildings. The introduction

of a large-scale development project such as the COF would have the highest impact in an area that contains a mixed population such as this one does, truly testing the corridor's claim of being a holistic outreach programme (Planact, 2016).

According to the Growth Trends and Development Indicators Report (2011), Alexandra Township has the highest number of private households (estimated at 47 000) and backyard shacks in the municipality. Other densified residential areas in the City, such as Hillbrow, Berea and Joubert Park, are also the highest in the marginalised regions served by the Louis Botha Corridor. Even though Alexandra is ranked the highest in terms of the number of private households, Hillbrow still remains the most densified residential area in the City, with 15 700 households in flats in effectively one square kilometre. Berea has a mix of both high-rise buildings and single residential dwellings. Housing demand in marginalised areas continues to grow at a faster rate than supply, as people from farther places move to these areas in search of economic and social opportunities. Migrants and immigrants prefer these areas because of their proximity

to places of economic importance, and the affordable rents and less regulated access to land (Planact, 2016).

In areas such as Balfour Park, one of the four key locations, higher density developments already exist, but the challenges are that current interventions promote the townhouse developments, which are closed off from the street and have no relation to the public realm. This is a major concern since it contradicts the COF's idea of spatial and social integration and high-density development. As a strength and opportunity for further development, Balfour Park already has commercial buildings with porous and active edges on the ground floor supporting the principle of mixed-used and active edges (Planact, 2016).

## 9.2. Empire-Perth Development Corridor

The Empire-Perth Development Corridor is located in Region B of the City of Johannesburg, to the west of the CBD, and runs from Hillbrow in the inner city to Thokoza Park in Soweto. The Corridor serves suburbs, such as Parktown, Auckland Park, Brixton, Cottesloe, Melville, Crosby, Coronationville, Hursthill, Parktown, Richmond, Rossmore, Westdene and Westbury. The Empire-Perth Corridor, commenced through the construction of BRT Phase 1B, has been operational since 2013. Empire-Perth has also been identified as one of the priority development areas and integration zones. Its detailed plan includes Westbury, Pennyville, Westdene Dam, Milpark Node, Brixton Social Cluster and the Knowledge Precinct around the universities (Wits and the University of Johannesburg) (Planact, 2016).

On a metropolitan scale, the Empire-Perth Corridor is a threshold between the traditionally marginalised south and the relatively better resourced north in terms of access to economic and social opportunities. Areas to the west and southwest, such as Bosmont, Claremont and Industria, are dominated by coloured populations. Areas to the southeast are dominated by black populations. Brixton and Mayfair West, which also form part of the Empire-Perth Corridor Development, are demographically diverse in addition to also being the most transient area amongst the chosen sites due to the high number of students in the area. The white population is relatively dominant in the north western suburbs such as Melville and Westdene (Planact 2016).

Since October 2013, after its construction and the beginning of the operational phase, the City of Johannesburg has focused on improving bulk infrastructure and public facilities, to achieve the goal of increasing the level of development and population density along the Empire-Perth Corridor. There have been major spatial changes on the area since the implementation of the BRT (Rea Vaya). The implementation has included interventions

such as safer pedestrian crossing zones, the construction of cycle ways, as well as the upgrading of already existing infrastructure, such as libraries, clinics, parks and sports fields. Specific social infrastructure that is currently integrated into the Empire-Perth Corridor comprise the Westbury public upgrade; Westbury sport facilities; Sophiatown clinic; Westdene dam redevelopment; upgrading of the Walter Sisulu Memorial Park; Milpark precinct development; Brixton precinct upgrade; Brixton library; Brixton recreational centre; Brixton public park; skywalk; cycle paths and footways; social housing; storm water; Bosmont wetlands rehab; Claremont clinic; Coronationville swimming pool; Newclare swimming pool; Westbury clinic, and the Westbury pedestrian bridge (COJ, 2014) (See Figure 4).

The Empire-Perth Development Corridor is mostly geared towards students and relatively low- to middle-income earners. Brixton is dominated by single-storey residential units, most of which are rented out to students, and present opportunities for densification and intensification due to the influx of students living communally in housing, in backyard accommodation and in flats. According to the City of Johannesburg (2016), the private sector is showing strong market interest in response to student housing along the Empire-Perth Corridor. This will contribute to the goal of densification. Some of these suburbs, including Brixton, already have a combination of land-uses that may be complementary to the COF, such as the retail and social amenities along High Street. The latter has a fairly extensive retail strip made up of houses turned into businesses (commercial, retail and some light industry). Although the façade of this retail strip is in decline, the BRT route has the potential to start a regeneration process in the area (Planact, 2016).

## 9.3. Soweto Development Corridor

Orlando East and Noordgesig are remnants of apartheid-era planning, with neighbourhoods and communities divided along racial lines through the use of transport infrastructure (in particular the Soweto Highway). Historically, Orlando East was created for black Africans and Noordgesig for the coloured community. Post-1994, Orlando East was demarcated into two main wards, 30 and 31, and part of ward 29, which includes the neighbouring Noordgesig and Diepkloof areas. The population of Orlando East, estimated to be comprised of approximately 65 000 people, has remained predominantly black, with 1% coloured and all of the country's official languages are spoken in the area, with the main ones being Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, Venda and Tsonga (Census 2011). Orlando East has a rich history of political struggle and played a big role in the national liberation movement. Despite the planned developments, there are numerous challenges facing the broader area, including high unemployment, crime,

housing, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS, poverty and integration issues (Planact, 2016).

The Orlando East-Noordgesig node is one of the main connecting hubs of the Empire-Perth Corridor in Soweto. In 2009, the City of Johannesburg implemented the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transport system, with two major arteries running through Noordgesig (New Canada–Main Road) and the Soweto Highway (M70). According to residents, these roads create a barrier between the two communities hindering integration. In 2013, the City of Johannesburg added the COF to this BRT trunk route (Planact, 2016).

Areas south of the Empire-Perth Development Corridor have incurred significant changes in land-use patterns in the last decade. These include the establishment of retail centres in Soweto; namely the Bara Complex, Dobsonville Mall, Jabulani Mall, Maponya Mall and Protea Mall. Undoubtedly, this economic investment has had a great impact on the retail economy of the township and the living standards of communities but the economic system needs to be further diversified through the incorporation of administrative services, offices, places of leisure and industrial developments, in order to meet the objectives of Transit-Oriented Development. Specific social infrastructure that is currently integrated into the Soweto Corridor is the Noordgesig Clinic, Noordgesig Recreational Centre, Pennyville social housing, the Pennyville sport

fields, Pennyville Multi-Purpose Centre and the Pennyville public environment upgrade (Planact, 2016).

As accounted for by the Growth Trends and Development Indicators Report (2011), Orlando East, Diepsloot and Dobsonville are among marginalised residential areas with the highest number of private households, after Alexandra and Ivory Park. The oldest suburbs in Soweto, such as Zola and Orlando East, constitute the highest number of backyard dwellings. However, the main concern in these areas has been the inadequacy of existing social infrastructure, open spaces and services to accommodate these growing populations. In terms of densities marginalised areas have the highest concentration of households and backyard dwellings. However, there are other development programmes, such as the 20 Priority Township Programmes (20PTP), aimed at addressing the issue of backyard shacks through regeneration (Planact, 2016).

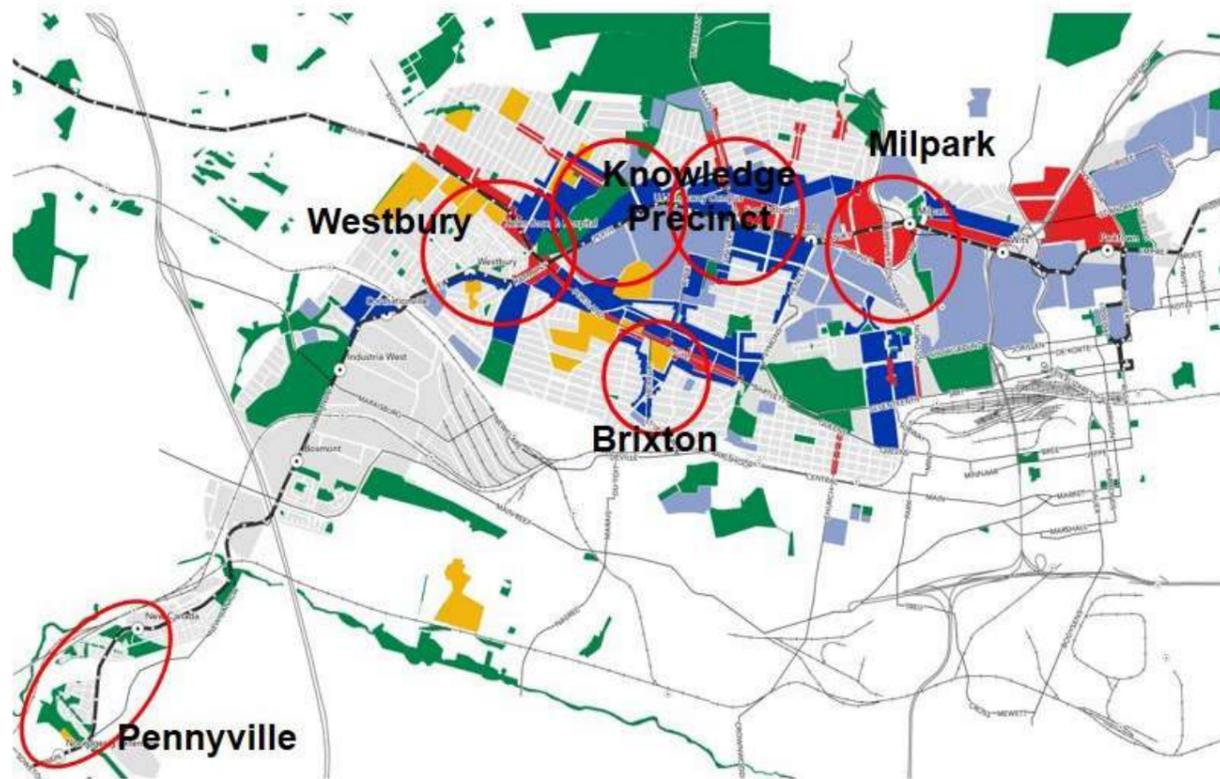


Figure 4: City of Johannesburg – Empire-Perth Corridor (COJ, 2014)

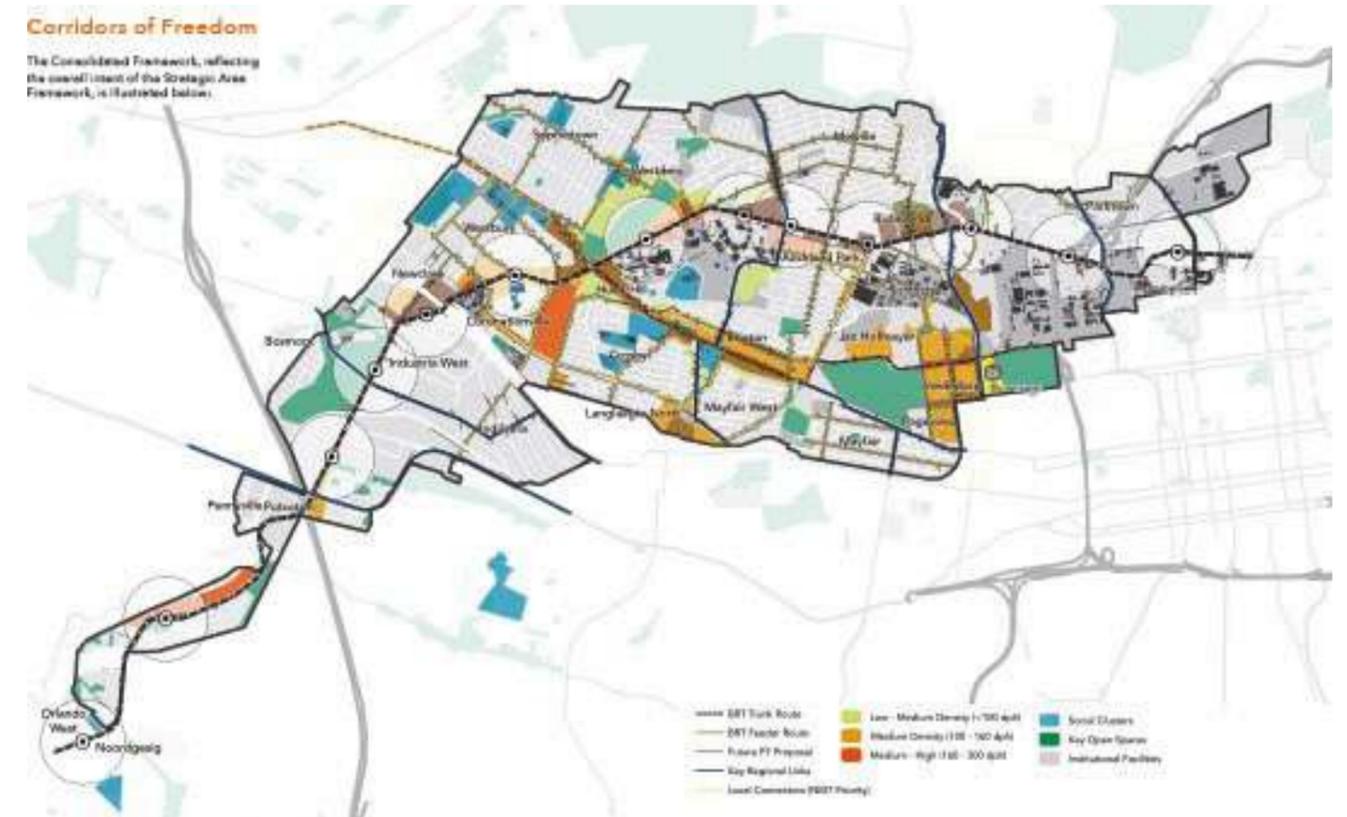


Figure 5: Corridor developments in the greater Soweto area (Exchange Lofts, n.d.)





# 10

## OUTCOMES OF THE AREA BASED FOCUS GROUPS

The numerous communities along the corridors have had to adapt to the changes made, first, by the construction phase, and secondly, by the reconfiguration of space. In some sections of the corridors, these changes have permanently altered mobility, access and movement patterns.

### 10.1. Soweto Corridor (Orlando East/Noordgesig/Pennyville)

The first focus group took place on 1 June 2017 in Orlando East. In attendance were the following stakeholders: Noordgesig Skills Centre, Ward Committee members (Wards 29, 30 and 31), Orlando East/Noordgesig Environmental Forum, Orlando East Task Team, Community Development Committee, African National Congress (ANC), Pan African Congress and SANCO.

The theme of this focus group was, “The impact of large scale urban spatial developments on communities: The case of Orlando East/Noordgesig communities in Soweto”. Participants felt that COF work-related projects have led to the integration of communities through the creation of meeting points, such as buses, crèches, schools and clinics. The Rea Vaya has created integration of Noordgesig, Orlando East and Pennyville, with other parts of the City, but has at the same time segregated the Orlando East and Noordgesig community through the physical barrier of the bus system. The Rea Vaya has improved the safety of public transport and tokens are secure and convenient for travel. The bus routes do also encourage positive community relations as everyone uses the same routes. However, Rea Vaya is not accessible to people with disabilities, e.g. wheelchair-bound and through the placement of the system in the middle of the road it has led to much traffic confusion in the area. This has caused many road accident deaths, as well as the killing of some pedestrians, particularly school children as there is a concentration of schools around the station. For these reasons it was felt that there was inadequate public participation prior to developing this transit-oriented development. The community felt that the projects were already pre-planned and that they had not been able to provide inputs into any of the upgrades and felt that some were a waste of money, like the building of another clinic. Some of the upgrades had also led to forms of community exclusion given that they are no longer able to use the Orlando Stadium sports facilities. The change of administration in the COJ has also brought uncertainty over the objectives, continuity and improvement of the COF.

### 10.2. Greater Sophiatown (Westbury, Bosmont, Sophiatown)

The second focus group took place on 23 September 2017. The Greater Sophiatown Economic Development Forum (GSEDF), which is made up of different community organisations, was in attendance. The GSEDF has been very active in petitioning for particular development within the area and is generally very active in the community. In light of their community activism in this area, the theme of this focus group was: “Reclaiming the ‘new space’: Knowledge dissemination, economic opportunities and the reclamation of radically changed neighbourhoods in the Knowledge Precinct.” Participants in the focus group discussion understood the transit-oriented development project as a form of spatial transformation in a historically disadvantaged group. However, they felt that there had been a lack of consultation on project developments leading to misdirected development funds and construction problems (such as with the storm water drainage systems), which could have been avoided if there was prior community consultation. Concerns were also raised around the approach used to communicate the benefits of the spatial development to the residents.

### 10.3. Louis Botha (Alexandra and Marlboro)

The third focus group was for the Louis Botha Corridor, and took place in Alexandra on 20th September 2017. Alexandra was selected for the reason that it is on the end of the Louis Botha Corridor development and because many Alexandra community members had been excluded from the Louis Botha Corridor process, as most of the meetings had happened in Orange Grove. Participation had therefore been costly for them, and as such many had chosen not to participate. The following stakeholders attended: Art of Magic, Kasi Shoe-doctor, Alexandra Youth Tournament, university students, Alexandra Business Connect, informal traders and Alex FM.

The theme of this focus group was framed around: “Life after the changes: Community adaptation in a changed spatial environment”. The majority of residents felt “left out” of developments affecting their communities and have only seen the results after implementation, at which point they just had to accept the changes. Some participants benefitted from the COF implementation through job opportunities in the construction industry and, as such,

felt that they had benefitted from the developments along the corridors. Participants agreed that the COF have brought about economic opportunities but that they need to get organised if they are to make use of them. Among the participants that attended there were sentiments that the community is opposed to COF developments because of a lack of information. In terms of affecting business there was a perception within the group that the taxi industry is anti-competition and anti-development and that this provides big challenges for the extension of the corridors into Alexandra. They also felt that the taxi industry supports many families and is an important factor in generating means of livelihoods within the community and as such it also needs to be respected. Furthermore, there were ideological concerns expressed: that the Rea Vaya bus system feeds into the capitalist system with a few people making lots of money and not many jobs being created. In addition, some respondents expressed anxieties over travel times potentially being affected, since the BRT operates on fixed time schedules. Currently, taxis solve transportation problems in Alex because they are affordable, easily accessible, flexible and have no time restrictions. Participants recognised that they had to embrace development, integrate and find opportunities, e.g., supply bicycles for the bicycle lane at the new bridge as a tourist opportunity, and that they should consider and look at the bigger picture of what the City is trying to achieve and not only focus on immediate “bread and butter” issues.

#### 10.4. The Inter-Community Dialogue

To consolidate the research process and bring about integration of the various communities impacted by the COF, a final inter-community dialogue was planned. The theme was “Inter-Community Dialogue about Public Participation on Corridors of Freedom”. It was aimed at consolidating the findings on public participation across all communities with which Planact had engaged since the inception of the project; sharing experiences, providing mutual learning across the corridors and (arguably most important), promoting collective engagement on similar thematic issues across the communities.

This inter-community dialogue brought together over 50 participants from across the City of Johannesburg. Participants included residents from Orlando East and Noordgesig, Pennyville; Alexandra; Orange Grove; Greater Sophiatown; NGOs such as the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI); the South African Cities Network (SACN); the Inner City Resource Centre (ICRC); Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor (FEDUP); Action Aid South Africa; local radio stations Alex FM and Kofifi FM, and the University of Witwatersrand.

Recommendations made at the inter-community dialogue included forming an action steering committee, comprising different community representatives to drive key thematic areas affecting communities along the corridors. Another suggestion was to establish a task team to investigate the effectiveness of different engagement strategies, such as litigation or petitions. Community members committed themselves to gathering data about their communities and use it to lobby government on a shared issue. Planact committed to host a follow-up meeting with the targeted government stakeholders to present the shared recommendations on public participation from the research and the inter-community dialogue held on 27th October 2017. Planact also committed to sharing the findings of the final report with City officials. The group expressed disappointment about the fact that no City officials attended the dialogue and that they would need to be engaged on the outcomes, if the process was to continue with the new administration.





# 11

## THEMES EMERGING FROM PLANACT'S FACILITATION PROCESSES

Common across all of the corridor research sites are the changes that the COF has brought: these changes are both positive and negative and are discussed below in terms of the themes that came out of the interviews, focus groups and consultative meetings.

### 11.1. Accessibility, Mobility and Inclusion

Generally, across the corridors, it was felt that the construction phase of the BRT had made life more difficult for residents living within the corridor areas because of the interruptions in traffic flow, increased traffic congestion due to the reduction in lanes, lane closures, dysfunctional traffic lights, and the presence of construction equipment. It has also caused traffic confusion and accidents as cars make illegal, unsafe U-turns, since it has taken time for drivers to understand how the bus lanes and robots (traffic lights) work. In some corridor areas, such as Orlando East and Noordgesig, where the COF/BRT trunk route is along a busy road with a great number of social facilities (such as the clinic and schools), mobility has been impacted since the construction, with unconfirmed reports of pedestrians having been killed and injured. Apparently, there have also been numerous pedestrian casualties as bus drivers drive dangerously, taxis jump red robots and people cross the road to get to the BRT. Communities across the corridors have requested pedestrian bridges to deal with this issue. Some communities, such as Westbury, have succeeded in getting these bridges, but not in Orlando, where school children have been hurt or killed crossing the BRT lanes.

One male participant at Orlando FG reported: "The COF, the BRT issue has impacted negatively on the relationship between the two [suburbs]. Our kids can no longer cross easily into Noordgesig, from Orlando to Noordgesig, it is a very serious barrier, it is a carnage road [sic] where a number of casualties are being reported on a daily basis, this COF, I may call them 'corridors of impediment'."

One of the residents of Bosmont had the following to share about the appropriateness of the BRT to the Johannesburg context and its unintended ill-effects:

*"In fact, [I] think the whole idea is a good one. Implementation thereof has been rotten, because if you take something from England and you've got [to] use that which works for them in the same manner and kind of budgets that it commands. Because I see South Africa takes everything from*

*the United Kingdom and tries to implement it here but we don't empower the project with the right kind of financial back up. Uhm, who puts a bus station in the middle of the road? It's silly. I mean you paint the red lane but you only make it for Rea Vaya buses. How does that alleviate the traffic congestion in the morning? It doesn't! In England, the red lane is for buses and taxis. So if they bring that in South Africa, I tell you now, people will get to work much quicker, because the buses and taxis will be in one lane. And then the normal commuters can then commute to wherever they are going to much quicker."*

Evident throughout the discussions around the areas where the Rea Vaya is running was a concern that a transportation mess has been created through the implementation of a bus route, which has had little consideration of the surrounding urban fabric or the existing road networks' ability to handle the changes.

Importantly, across the corridors, in all the sessions, the difficulties that disabled people experience in accessing the BRT was raised. This is because the BRT system has been constructed in the middle of the road. Disabled people therefore first have to cross a busy intersection to get to the station. Once at the station, the turnstiles and cashier points hinder them. It is only once in the bus that the disabled are properly catered for with all buses having a dedicated space for wheelchair users.

Social service provision has also been impacted across the corridors by the lack of access. Bramley Police Station has reported that crime levels have increased since the BRT system was built because access to crime scenes and people needing help has been hindered. Firefighters are concerned, because should there be a fire, or they need quick access to an area, it is difficult to get across the bus lane and this can only be done in certain sections, meaning they are unable to respond timeously. It is also difficult for ambulances to access those who have been hurt. Accessibility was a significant theme in the Louis Botha and Empire-Perth FG discussions as the new bus lanes have changed the routes in the areas, which has resulted in longer travel times detrimentally affecting emergencies and peak traffic hours. The lack of accessibility has caused much frustration and anger within the affected communities.

A participant from November 2016 meeting noted that, aside from the problems that the emergency services were experiencing, the construction was forcing him to drive illegally: "The ... fire trucks, the police cannot get in

[during] emergencies, 9th Street for example, going south you are not allowed to turn right. My attitude is and I can't do it here, take me to court, I will turn right where I can turn right and the same thing with 12th, which is my street. It is illegal to turn right going south." There was a question of how the COF define accessibility, with many stakeholders expressing the fact that the development was costing more in terms of access to spaces, parking and linking roads, than it was creating benefits with the bus route. Those interviewed recognised that, by discouraging people from using the commuter mini-buses and private cars, the City is forcing mobility changes along the corridors. The Louis Botha respondents felt that public transport users have been favoured over private users. Residents noted that the buses are privileged but that private road users living in the area are disadvantaged. Residents were concerned that these changes would force them out of their neighbourhoods. Discussions in the focus groups raised the point that businesses along the routes will be replaced by businesses that do not need customers in cars, as there will be fewer parking bays and access is difficult. This also prevents people living in the proposed flats from having private cars.

For Slum Dwellers International (SDI), the COF process did not engage with how poor people are going to be affected by the process and included in the development. SDI argued that the COF are, in fact, working against poor people gaining access to the City. SDI sees the corridors being about developing trendy, expensive places (art galleries and restaurants), and not about providing affordable housing in the City, or catering for the needs of the poor. SDI acknowledges that cheap, safe and reliable transport is critical for connecting outer parts of the City (where poor people live mainly) to the inner City, but they felt that it should be done in a way that does not displace poor people. A participant in the November 2016 Planact meeting echoed these sentiments, "I think what he is trying to say is [that] the corridors of freedom ignore the poor, the poorest of the poor, the City of Johannesburg has 181 informal settlements. The corridors are designed for working middle class and it doesn't take into consideration the poor ... the corridors of freedom don't take the upgradeability of the informal settlements in to their process."

With the upgrading of recreational spaces linked to the corridor, like the Westdene Dam and other projects, there has been some integration and access across communities. However, neighbouring communities often do not know of upgraded facilities, such as soccer fields, which could be used across wards. Those interviewed indicated that cross-sharing of facilities and maintenance needs to be encouraged by improved marketing of the upgraded spaces. Some communities have developed park runs in their areas, but neighbouring communities are unaware of this.

There are also some important improvements in accessibility as a result of the COF. Some of the older areas, like Coronation, have good public facilities and children come from other areas to get into these schools. The BRT system has helped these children access better public facilities across wards. The BRT/Rea Vaya system and the Non-Motorised Transport linked upgrades have made the corridor areas more accessible and, with increased visibility, people are no longer afraid to come into inner City areas.

In addition, most of the people interviewed acknowledged that the BRT has made a difference for people travelling into the City or across the City. It has lowered travelling times for commuters across the City. For low-income households, the BRT remains unaffordable but it has provided an affordable, reliable alternative means of transport for many households. The Rea Vaya stations are generally clean and well maintained, and this has brought about a sense of pride in the City. Interviewees across the corridors noted that it was important for visitors to South Africa to see a public transport system that works well. The Gautrain, Rea Vaya, bus and taxi systems all need to work together. SDI shared that:

*"In terms of the transport, the Rea Vaya, I think that is [a] very [good idea]. It doesn't come without its problems but the strength is connecting the outer parts of the city efficiently as possible to the inner city. I know a lot of people who use it because it is cheap, [but] it is not always reliable."*

In Yeoville and Marlboro, people were also concerned about inclusivity. In Yeoville, unconfirmed reports noted that the affluent Upper Houghton area was not interested in integration with the lower income neighbourhood of Yeoville, and as a result there was a high wall built between the two suburbs. This raised the question: "Who is the actual development for?" The COF use the tagline "Live Work Play", yet the lack of inclusion apparently made it clear to some participants that the City is being selective about who it wants in those areas.

## 11.2. Consequences of the COF Transport Interventions

There were a set of unintended consequences related to the transport interventions in the COF. Amongst them was an unresolved question around the manner in which the various modes of transit would relate to each other. From the consultative meetings, it was understood that, as our cities become more congested, using public transport requires a mind-set change for South Africans who prefer driving their own cars. The general feeling in the focus groups, consultative meetings and interviews was that

public transport needs to be improved in Johannesburg, but that the current solution has not been fully thought through. Respondents across the corridors felt that there is a problem between the interlinkages of different routes and modes of transport. A participant at the November 2016 Planact meeting described the issue in concrete terms:

*"Simply look at transport. There is a semi-developed taxi process that runs along a certain line, it doesn't cover everything. The Rea Vaya will come from Orlando West, Noordgesig along Commando Road, through Industria, Bosmont, Corry – it is a specific line. If you live in Cederberg you have to walk about 40 minutes to get onto the Rea Vaya; there is no other access to it. But remember you are in Region B and Region C; people have migrated from Bosmont, Newclare, Riverlea, Corry, Westbury into the adjoining previously white areas, which is Region C. So there is no transport, there is a huge area there, where there is no transport at all."*

A participant at the November 2016 Planact meeting agreed, "I think that for the station in Westbury on Field Road, the reason why it is not being used really by the Westbury people because ..., you also have Putco travelling the same route and taxis and the metrobus ..." and as a consequence some routes are over-served causing congestion, "you must see it in the mornings and the afternoons, it's chaos. ... I think very little planning went into that because you have from Steytler and Fuel, it bottlenecks just close to where the Rea Vaya station, it bottlenecks there then you have all these buses, Putco standing there from 5.30 or so and you have people queueing now and then there is a bottleneck ...".

The taxi association stated that; "... [if] they [the City] don't allow us to use the roads that are made for the bus, Louis Botha is going to be crazy. They will leave one lane open and they will say [that the] public use this lane for cars and taxis it's going to be craziness, what's going to happen then? Those are the kind of things that they should be thinking about before."

Across the corridors it was feared that the lack of consultation between the different transport stakeholders would lead to increased frustration and violence, with the communities being caught in the middle. The over servicing and congestion has also led to forms of fairly anti-social behaviour. A participant at the November 2016 Planact meeting described the situation as:

*"... a breeding ground [for trouble] the way they planned the building [of the infrastructure], they've cut people off from where they are, where they have quick access to public transport, that's where the taxis, the Rea Vaya sometimes drive in between*

*here, and you ask yourself even Putco buses, too many kids being killed by these, that's why [the community has] put illegal speed bumps. Putco now comes through the township because they don't want to stand in traffic and they drive like the devil is chasing them down there. You've got kids going to school, you must see it in the morning, this massive bus, met die klein pad, now this road is so small, now the people are driving on the pavement."*

Another participant at the November 2016 Planact meeting argued that the interventions were sowing division:

"The lack of social cohesion, which is being created by the island in the middle of Louis Botha Avenue, is a great problem. I would like to see it being removed. I do not see that it serves a valid purpose despite what BRT says and BRT interface that we had with the community was technical and unacceptable, unavailable to the average person. I'm sure that goes to the whole community all the way down. They talk of us instead with us. And you are not going to be able to turn right here. Our agreement is, we don't care, we would actually prefer to see instead of BRT a TRT, which the taxi ..., let the taxi run. Take the buses off, they are causing problems, this is just a bit out of the box. Our taxi issues through Orange Grove in our areas and probably through Melville and other places and through your other suburbs, I live one block away from Louis Botha Avenue and it is a horror show."

In addition, the City did not include the taxi associations when planning an integrated transport system that responds to commuters' needs. If this had been done, taxis could have worked with the buses, with a single ticket that could have been used for the trains, the buses and the taxis. They had this to share:

*"If they [the City] explained it and said you know this corridors of freedom and they want to integrate transport, you know that is great. There could be taxis that are with the buses, with one ticket you can use the taxis and the buses and the train. For commuters that is great in terms of movement, because currently we don't have any integrated transport systems and that is a problem."*

Echoing the sentiments of the taxi association, the SDI agreed with the concept of the corridors, but they were not sure of the detailed planning and implementation. They noted that, "I think it is linkages that it is intended to form, efficiently. Like bring the city and people closer together. Whether that happens is another question."

The taxi associations felt that this would have been a more viable solution for commuters. The Taxi Association also raised the concern that Louis Botha Avenue is already a very busy road with no room to expand. It has only two

lanes each way. It foresees major transport problems along this route with the proposed increased densification, as the BRT system uses one lane in each direction leaving only one lane for both cars and taxis.

The Ratepayers Associations in Norwood and Orange Grove remembered that, in order to get development at scale, the City engaged with developers and consultants, particularly around the densified residential models for Louis Botha. Technical experts were employed to explain the implications of housing models at the public participation sessions that were held. If issues were raised by the residents, the consultants said, "We are here only to explain the housing models, not to deal with issues. Speak to the City if you have concerns." So the technical experts acted as gatekeepers for the City, diverting concerns by saying "that's not my job". The consequence was that residents felt that developers do not consider the needs of the community, as they are motivated by profits. The government encourages private sector funds so it focuses on the developers rather than on the residents. The general feeling amongst the group was that developers are allowed carte blanche.

In Marlboro, the businesses in the area were consulted about the developments; however, the poor community that surrounds those businesses was not included in the discussions. Marlboro is a place of contrast, with thriving light industries and retailers, and squalid living conditions where poor people live in abandoned industrial shells and public facilities. The consultation exercises of the City mainly reached the business owners, leaving the poor dwellers excluded from the conversations.

### 11.3. Safety and Security

Safety and security concerns about the BRT were raised throughout the corridors. Residents were concerned about the location of the bus stations in the middle of the road in terms of safety as it means that people have to cross a section of the road before getting to the bus station. This situation has been made worse by the fact that the passenger-crossing traffic lights are often not respected by drivers. The minibus taxis have a reputation for not complying with traffic laws in Johannesburg, further heightening the fear for commuters.

In the Orlando East focus group, the following comments were made: "It's not safe, because the way it was designed is not conducive to other drivers, because it is in the middle lane. Now when it's open sometimes, it is open for the buses to turn, so the other driver, when he sees the green [light] he will go through, that is why sometimes we find there is an accident here."

In terms of the corridors themselves it was felt that insufficient security was provided. Existing security is used

to protect properties, not individuals. If anything happens, and residents and businesses ask for help, the security guards apparently tells them, "that is not my department, I am not part of that structure. My job is to make sure that they don't steal the computer box there or something at the station". It was felt that Rea Vaya and the relevant government departments do not care about the safety of community members who are being mugged on their way to the station.

The areas across the corridors have different experiences of crime and security, and this is related to the extent of private security available and the quality of local policing. The capabilities of police stations are often dependent on the quality and involvement of the leadership in the station. Ward 74 Councillor, David Fisher, indicated that the Bramley Police Station is run by a career policeman who cares about the community, and therefore policing in the area is very good. He runs a WhatsApp group and is very motivated to deal with crime in the area. Private security firms (such as ADT and Chubb) also have a strong presence there. However, in other wards, where there is not a strong private security companies and SAPS presence, these are more affected by crime. Many of the areas within the corridors have taken security into their own hands. In Norwood and Orange Grove, private security is very good and people feel safe. The security officers escort women who walk home late at night after work. If there is a problem, the private security firms respond quickly. In Bosmont, there are community patrollers who look after the community, help reduce crime and keep children off the streets and away from drugs. As a result, there is a huge difference in the level of security services between corridors, dependent on the quality of policing in the area, income levels that can afford private security and community involvement. During consultation meetings, community members in Sophiatown and Westbury accused their police officers of being corrupt and working with the drug lords and gangs in the area.

A female participant at the Orlando focus group commented on the situation in her area:

*"On numerous occasions communities have been raising that, marching to the police station, to the relevant authorities, this is what we are experiencing, the crime is so high in our communities, we identify criminals, we identify people that are doing wrong things towards communities, but now the officials are not doing their part so it is very difficult for us. You see now I could say even the Rea Vaya is not safe because their plans was that it would operate for 24 hours, that was the original plan, but it is not, [it] operates until 9pm, that's the latest. Hence rather than knocking off early, people [who] are working in supermarkets, [and are] closing very late, they resort to the taxis, even in the taxis it's not safe".*

There are problems with drugs and gangsterism along the Empire-Perth Corridor in Westbury, Sophiatown, and in Newclare. For communities living in these areas, the most pressing concerns that affect their daily lives are crime, violence, drugs, and the safety of their children. This is why the focus group meetings were delayed in this area. When it was first scheduled, the MMC for Safety called a meeting at the same time. Because this meeting was more urgent, people attended this meeting instead. Community members indicated that there are non-governmental organisations (NGOS) and non-profit organisations (NPOs) working in the area to deal with these issues, but it is not enough. The Westbury Action Group marched to the local police station in 2016 to call for a crime-free, drug-free area with adequate housing and jobs. This group meets twice a month, and has representatives from the different sections of the community from Westbury and the surrounding areas. They also meet with people from local or provincial government on a monthly basis to raise issues. The group has organised a WhatsApp platform and so it is able to mobilise and inform the community about safety issues quickly and effectively. Social support is critical for the general safety and security of a community where drugs have taken hold.

Many of the communities believe that they require more social support in their areas, such as better policing, mobile police stations, hospice centres, drug rehabilitation centres, as well as sports and educational facilities to prevent children from becoming involved with drugs and crime. Sports are popular with children and many soccer stars emerge from areas such as Westbury, Claremont and Newclare. In the focus group and consultative meetings, stakeholders from the NPOs indicated that young children need to be shown a different way of life to keep them safe. They also need to be educated about drugs. One of the community leaders interviewed said that youngsters in Westbury think that the gangs are "cool". She said the youngsters know the different gangs' names and they think violence is normal. In her opinion, violence only breeds violence. She mentioned an incident that had recently been in the news, about a young child who had been caught in the crossfire of gang violence in the area and died. She stressed that education and communication is key for children in communities to avoid drugs and prostitution. She noted that messages and discussions on local radio stations are important and that collaborating with the universities is a useful resource for getting social support.

Better lighting through maintaining street lights was raised across the corridors as a major issue. In Westbury, community members indicated that the City built a new 24-hour clinic but people do not go there at night, because they do not feel safe as the lighting is so poor around the clinic. Business owners, in particular, along the corridors felt that CCTV cameras, known as "Eyes in the Sky", should

have been considered as part of the COF to monitor the routes and public spaces. They noted that safety aspects are implemented in other major City projects, such as for the Gautrain.

Most residents expressed concerns about how the increase in densities will impact on crime and safety in their areas. In Louis Botha – people are saying, "No, no, no, you are starting to build another Hillbrow and another Yeoville here, once you bring people, you are going to lower our value".

Some communities raised concerns about tourists or outsiders using the Rea Vaya service through their area. They were worried about people being robbed and giving their area a bad reputation. Community members therefore requested more visible policing along the routes. Community members indicated that the City promised 24-hour security along the corridors. There is 24-hour security inside the stations but the security arrangement is not extended outside of the station.

All those consulted expressed the view that law and by-law enforcement is critical in order to respect each other, and to contribute to law and order. People felt that plans need to go through City Council and that building standards need to be enforced. Building use also needs to be constantly monitored to maintain standards, especially along the corridor areas. In Orange Grove, the construction of a church was started without a proper licence or consent from neighbours to the consternation of the community. Generally, it was felt that the City is not able to enforce by-laws, or that it has been selective regarding enforcement.

### 11.4. Housing Need, Services, Affordability and Densities

From the discussions and interviews, it was clear that densification across the corridors is meeting different housing needs and providing affordable housing solutions in the City. Densities are varied across the corridors and residents are either acknowledging that densification is inevitable or objecting in order to have densities reduced. It is also recognised that increased densities are needed to make the COF work efficiently. However, at the extremity of the Louis Botha Corridor, Alexandra, despite being low rise, it has extremely high densities. Residents are therefore calling for a reduction in densities. This is in contrast with areas on the other extremity of the Louis Botha Corridor, where the Ward Councillor notes the existence of many upmarket suburbs, with big houses located on stands with large gardens. In the plans shown to the residents, some of the properties will have to be subdivided or have rental accommodation added to make them affordable. This is however a challenge as expropriation is the last resort of the City and the residents were

strongly opposed to the plans. Across the corridor areas, participants believe that local plans need to be developed in discussion with residents in accordance with the local context and housing needs so that appropriate housing models can be developed that are suited to the required densities and levels of income of those living and working in the area. The general feeling regarding housing within the COF, with increased residential densities along the corridor routes, is that it can be successful if implemented correctly. However, most participants in the research process mentioned that the City does not have a good reputation for the management of resources. Participants indicated that densification must be monitored, security needs to be maintained, open spaces and parks need to be in good condition, proper lighting and street furniture must be provided, and consideration must be given to the disabled.

Within each area, there were different responses to housing needs. Understandably, the main issues emerging from the Alexandra interviews and the focus group, was the need for housing and related services linked to a reduction in densities, as a participant explained, “The problem in Alex[andra] is the lack of space”. This is because of its prime location within the City and its close proximity to job opportunities. Those interviewed indicated that the Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP) has attempted to deal with the lack of adequate housing. The ARP built new RDP settlements in Tsutsumani and River Park to relocate people but, as soon as people left to move into their new homes, others moved into the places they vacated. Councillors suggested that the City should move one block at a time and close off the block that has been cleared out. Participants noted that development transforming all of Alexandra, not just specific areas, was needed. Those interviewed indicated that people in Alex want a government-subsidised house on their own plot of land so that they can remain in Alexandra. These expectations are unrealistic as the RDP model of a single house on a piece of land takes up too much space and accommodates an insufficient number of people. Participants also mentioned deep dissatisfaction with current processes, by alleging corruption in the housing subsidy allocation process, with outsiders allocated new houses, while those who have been in Alexandra for a long time are overlooked. The allocation of subsidy housing therefore causes tension within communities in Alexandra.

Rental housing was also discussed in the interviews and during the consultative sessions. In Alexandra, the point was made that people are mostly unemployed and cannot afford high rentals that are the norm in inner-city redevelopments. Lower income communities are therefore forced to sub-let in backyards and shacks. As a result, sub-renting has become an important means of earning an income. There is also a great deal of demand and high turnover in residents: in Alexandra, people speak of going

to bed living next door to one neighbour and waking up the next morning to a new neighbour, with people constantly moving into the area to find employment. Informal rental therefore provides affordable accommodation for people across the corridors as formal rental models are mostly too expensive. Rental housing models were also regarded as problematic in the Empire-Perth Corridor, as a result of a culture of non-payment in areas such as Westbury and Soweto. These housing problems were recognised in the consultative meeting as a failure by government and the housing system to find housing solutions that are adapted to local demographics and incomes of people in the area. The recommendation made was to look at what is currently being applied and see how the supply responds to the particular housing needs of those living in the area. A participant at the Planact November 2016 meeting remarked:

*“When you look at the housing, [and] the densities of the housing, it seems to be social housing and it’s happening all over but it’s still not affordable, but the cheapest unit you can obtain is R1 500, a bachelor unit, and that’s not affordable compared to what people are paying now, their livelihoods. So the upgrading, especially say in Orange Grove, the Patterson Park area, is not going to be affordable, so they still keep excluding the poor from opportunity.”*

Across the corridor areas, overcrowding has led to an overloading of services. Residents noted that Alexandra was built for 70 000 people and it now has over 500 000 people living in the area, putting significant pressure on the existing infrastructure. Participants across the corridors questioned whether the City had factored in the upgrading of bulk infrastructure to their densification models, as infrastructure across the corridors is already stretched to its limits. Participants repeatedly indicated throughout the project process that the City needed to focus on providing good basic services. In the consultative meeting, the non-payment of services, illegal connections and electricity theft was raised. It was acknowledged that these are difficult issues to deal with as some of the participants noted that they did not think City Power or Eskom were dealing with the issue adequately. The feeling is that illegal connections are easy to see but are ignored by the authorities. It was felt that this jeopardises the rest of the community’s access to electricity, leading to frequent power outages.

Those who were interviewed and took part in the consultative meetings mentioned that there is no open land left along the corridor areas. This means that densification is inevitable. However, most people felt that the densification process needs to be properly managed and that by-laws need to be enforced if people are going to live close together. The Ward Councillor reported that the Residents Association in the Orange



Grove and Norwood area is not opposed to densification, they just want it to be controlled in line with planning by-laws. Where households have been sub-divided or built backyard cottages, these have often been done without plans and approval from neighbours. The Ward Councillor stressed that the needs of individuals must be balanced with the needs of the community. Community leaders from the Greater Sophiatown Socio-Economic Development Forum (GSEDF) raised concerns that the remaining open pockets of land were being awarded to private developers rather than being developed for the public good.

There was conflict in Orange Grove and Norwood given that, in order to make the corridors work, housing models need to be directed to middle- and low-income earners, who will use the public transport provided. Residents were afraid that this would turn the area into another high-rise slum area like Hillbrow or Yeoville, and force them out of their homes. The Residents’ Association has, through costly technical and legal processes, managed to get the City to change its models for densification for the area, by putting flats along the corridor. Those interviewed also reported changes in the Empire-Perth area, with many of the existing residential properties being converted and used for student accommodation. Residents interviewed indicated that the landlords do not stay in the area, so they do not have an interest in what happens in the community.

The demographics in the established, wealthier suburbs are changing, and with that, the character of the suburbs is also changing, with less ownership and more rental accommodation being provided. This is causing tension between the older, propertied residents and the new, more transient tenants, who are less concerned about the long term wellbeing of the area. It was clear throughout the project process that community fears and changes are difficult to manage across wards and across income groups. These experiences can be shared so that communities can learn from them and prepare for inevitable changes.

In some of the well located, established corridor areas, where older residents are retired and need additional income, they have been happy to rent out space to new people, to either live in or to use it for trading. Those interviewed saw this as a “win-win” situation for both tenants and property owners. In many well-located areas, it is not only housing that is important, but also the provision of economic opportunities. Stakeholders interviewed in Soweto indicated that, in Orlando, there are some yards that accommodate up to 20 shacks. The pull factor that leads to such overcrowding is that Orlando has public transport that attracts people to stay there.

Many residents interviewed believe that home ownership is critical for participation because, if people are transient,



they are not interested in building a better life in a particular place. It is just regarded as a stepping stone to another location. Communities need people to have a vested interest in the outcome of change.

Issues of foreign migrants dominating areas that are neglected, and the increasing informal settlements close to the COF were raised in the interviews and in the focus groups. In Planact's interview with SDI, it indicated that they found it difficult to engage with the City about informal settlements, because people living in informal settlements generally do not want to be relocated, but would rather have their standard of living improved where they are. This includes unblocking sewerage drains and providing clean water and safe electricity. SDI calls for small interventions that have big impacts on the lives of the poor. SDI also questions whether the BRT/COF is really meant for the people living there, or whether it will lead to people being displaced. This fear of gentrification is not unfounded, as places such as Maboneng in Johannesburg have been cited as examples of the negative effects of gentrification, where poor city dwellers have been displaced by new developments in the name of urban regeneration.

## 11.5. Economic Development

The COFs have been extensively publicised by the City of Johannesburg (COJ), with one particular tagline

explaining that "business opportunities will also increase within at least a 500 m radius and property values will go up," (COJ, 2015). From the interviews and consultative meetings, the indications are that this has not happened, as some businesses have so far been negatively affected, and there have been unconfirmed reports that property prices along the corridors have generally fallen.

Restricted access has impacted business operations along the corridors. Businesses interviewed mentioned that they were not consulted about alternative access points during and after the construction process. Businesses along the Louis Botha BRT route can only be accessed from one side, so people have to drive further and find complicated routes to get to work while customers have chosen to shop elsewhere. Business owners also said that it was difficult to give customers directions on how to get to their business because of the complicated routes that now need to be followed to navigate around the bus system. Motor vehicle related businesses, like panel beaters and spare parts shops near the Bramley Police Station, were cut off completely from their customers and their businesses were badly affected by the construction of the Rea Vaya. The Councillor in Orlando East complained that the BRT route around Orlando Stadium resulted in shops in the area closing down as people could not cross the road to get to the shops. This was confirmed in the interviews and focus groups, where interviewees and stakeholders said that, in Orlando East, some of the businesses

along the BRT route had closed down. The BRT route is congested due to the presence of the clinic, the stadium and everything else that happens along that route pushing people to find alternatives. The informal traders along the BRT route in Orlando have also been badly affected. They were provided with an alternative site from which to trade, but it is located far away from the main axis. The informal traders indicated that they now have shade from trees and that it is a pleasant area but without passing foot traffic they are not selling much.

Formal big businesses at strategic pick-up and drop-off zones, such as the stations, have benefited from the COF. The McDonald's at Campus Square on the Empire-Perth Corridor, and shops within the Balfour Park Shopping Centre on the Louis Botha Corridor have reported a significant increase in trade, but business has dropped dramatically for traders between stops. However, the Yeoville Micro-Traders indicated in their interviews that the new signage for their stalls, and their location within an 800 metre radius of the BRT system has improved their businesses. This means that the placement of the BRT stations has important implications for business, and this needs to be negotiated with the community so that all sectors, not just big businesses, benefit. The general feeling amongst participants was that big businesses are able to cope with change but the small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs) need to be supported. For instance, the Doll House Roadhouse on Louis Botha Corridor, which relied on motor vehicle access, has shut down after decades of business. Its entrance was closed during the BRT construction and customers had to access the premises from the other side, only after performing a dangerous U-turn in the middle of the road. The Doll House had many aged customers who no longer felt safe coming to the roadhouse because of the risky access: "I can't be making a U-turn, I'm too old to do that. I will be hit by a taxi or something," one interviewee said.

The Taxi Association also stated that the taxi industry has been badly affected by the introduction of the COF, mainly because of the impact that the construction has had on their routes and travelling times. In the last community consultative meeting held by Planact and Wits University, it was acknowledged that many people were employed in the construction industry through the implementation of the BRT. Stakeholders acknowledged that, in South Africa where unemployment is high, big urban developments present opportunities for communities but also cause conflict, as they come with expectations. Stakeholders noted that community members make demands and, as one community leader commented, "One of the challenges with the implementation of the COF is that many viewed it as a 'get rich quick' scheme and so you see the new contractors driving nice cars, but then they don't have money to finish things properly. The community sees this and sees how corners get cut." The awarding of tenders

to friends and sub-contractors rather than to people with the necessary skills is seen as a general problem across the COF, linked sub-projects. Concerns about the quality of construction were raised and examples cited where the lifting of the paving after the first rains, and the building of the clinic in Orange Grove and Norwood had to be halted because of structural cracks. Those attending the consultative meeting felt that the community should be involved in the choice of contractors so that they can be held accountable. In Westbury and Bosmont, the community kept a close watch on contractors and raised concerns with them. At one point, the contractors left a huge mound of sand at an intersection that obstructed the view of drivers and caused accidents. The community asked them to move the mound of sand or they would do it themselves. In this way, the community was able to hold the contractors accountable.

Participants noted that the tendering process needs to be fair and transparent, with contractors using local people for unskilled labour. Participants also raised concerns about how companies progress through the levels in order to qualify for tenders. In the Louis Botha Corridor, the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) stopped implementation because of a lack of access to jobs for young people. The ANCYL got the broader community involved, including other political parties and religious organisations. Through co-ordinating with others, they managed to get local people employed on the contract and ensured that the construction company contributed to the community. In Westbury and Bosmont, community leaders indicated that when opportunities arose for employment, they struggled to find young people who wanted to do the work because of drug problems in the area. Concerns have also been raised about getting the youth to participate in community development. Some of those interviewed said that, even though the COF presented many jobs and economic opportunities, the youth were not interested in volunteering because they wanted to be paid for working.

In Soweto, those interviewed said that some local people who were part of the public participation process benefitted from jobs, but that these jobs were linked to knowing the councillors who acted as gatekeepers of information.

In the Alexandra focus group, there was a young man who had been working as a construction worker in the process, and believed that it had created opportunities, but that nepotism led to councillors' friends getting these jobs. For community members of Alexandra, the COF was viewed positively in terms of immediate job creation, but not for the changes it might bring to the area. The BRT station, currently being built at the top of Corlett Drive, has involved local SMMEs, which shows that the City has listened to objections raised and is trying to include local businesses in the construction process.

Stakeholders at the focus group and consultative meetings were interested in finding out more about the COF, to see whether there were opportunities for them. People interviewed, such as the ANC Youth League members and youngsters eager to get ahead, indicated that they learnt a lot about business by participating in City and JDA meetings. They learnt technical aspects about the CIDB, National Home Builders Regulatory Council, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE), vendor numbers and compliance so that they can participate in the processes and prepare for business opportunities. Participation for them has been about getting access to information, which can be used for their benefit.

The Ward Councillor indicated that in places like Orange Grove and Norwood, private developers have already submitted rezoning applications particularly for the model with shops on the ground floor and flats above. This view was also expressed by others interviewed in the area, who felt that the vision of the COF was communicated well to developers, as the City needs them to buy into its plans. Along Louis Botha Avenue, developers have seen the opportunity to develop mixed-use developments and, in Empire-Perth, developers are looking at student accommodation. Residents noted that developers are interested in middle class areas, where there is less risk for development. Residents in Alexandra questioned how the City was going to attract private investment to

underprivileged places like Alexandra.

Community leaders in Sophiatown, Bosmont and Westbury noted that, in their area, the new developments linked to the COF have created new business opportunities. For instance, when the new clinic was built, people quickly set up stalls selling tea and fat cakes. People coming to the clinic buy from these traders while waiting to be seen. Also, at the new pedestrian bridge and park, there are new places to buy drinks, which are busy on Fridays and pay-day weekends. They have observed that people come to drink and relax, and walk around the area. The upgraded park has brought opportunities for new businesses in the area. In Westbury and Bosmont, some of those interviewed saw the proximity to the universities as an opportunity to become a knowledge precinct by hosting conferences and selling food to students. In Orlando, residents have started bed-and-breakfast establishments, linked to tourism in Soweto. Participants in the consultative meeting acknowledged the fact that permanent jobs have also been created in the implementation of the COF, such as security services, ticketing and cleaning at the stations.

The provision of Wi-Fi along the route has also presented opportunities for access to information and to make contacts. This does help business enterprise, but in a limited way. Those interviewed in Alexandra indicated that the cell phone networks have been upgraded, which

has made a difference, as people are more contactable if business opportunities arise. In the consultative meetings, Alexandra participants suggested that communities should do skills and business audits in their area so that, when opportunities are presented, the community can recommend people in the neighbourhood. Communication and building networks were therefore raised as important tools for business development.

## 11.6. Environment and Heritage

In the consultative meeting and during individual interviews, heritage and environment were raised as important issues as they instil a sense of pride within communities. All of the corridor areas felt a sense of pride in their community and that each one of them had a unique and rich history, and that this should not be destroyed in the development process. This was evident in the interviews in Orlando where it was stated that Orlando East is “the mother of all townships in Soweto”. According to residents, Orlando is popular amongst tourists because many famous people come from Orlando, including soccer stars. They listed things like the Orlando Stadium, Orlando Pirates, Orlando High School (where the famous mathematician, Dr Khambule, used to teach), the Mpanzas and where the first black woman journalist, Sophie Mosimane (popularly known as Sophie Tema) came.

Those interviewed felt that the City had planned routes on a purely technical basis, without taking note of heritage sites along the way. The Doll House was listed as an important heritage building along the Louis Botha Corridor, which closed down as a direct consequence of the COF construction and the negative impact it caused for customers trying to access the roadhouse. The manager of the Doll House recalled that it was the first eating place on the road between Pretoria and Johannesburg. It had a long history in the community with people recounting how their grandparents, or even great-grandparents, met at the Doll House. People from all over the world came to take photos of the Doll House because of the many happy memories that were made there. The manager of the Doll House said that, “The city did not care and the project was carried out regardless of what history/sense of place was destroyed in the process”. He felt that when people do not identify with their area, they move away and that, in the long run, the COF will cause this to happen. Some of those interviewed noted that their communities were losing their identity through the implementation of big projects that attract franchises, like McDonald’s. Small businesses and community structures, like crèches and churches, were being replaced by big businesses. In the consultative meeting, the point was made that heritage sites, such as the Doll House, need to be revived and that the management and ongoing sustainable use of these sites needs to be investigated.

People in Yeoville felt that tourism value was being ignored and that links should have been made to the Pan African Market in Yeoville. There was a sense that the area has great potential, and that opportunities had been lost through lack of consultation. Yeoville is seen as unique, as it includes people from all over Africa, and is seen as an artist’s place; they feel that that these aspects have not been captured in the corridor development.

In Sophiatown, there is a Heritage Organisation and even a Heritage Centre in place. When interviewed, the Heritage Tour Operators indicated that they take people on walking tours through the area and therefore appreciate the new paving done as part of the COF upgrade. The paving also enables members of the community to walk safely on the pavements, rather than in the roads. Sophiatown is famous for people, such as Enoch Sontonga and Dr Xuma, from the ANC. The Tour Operators indicated that the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) has been working with them to record the history of Sophiatown. The intention is to capture all the stories about Johannesburg. They highlighted that this project is a positive result of the COF, but they also indicated that the bicycle lanes are not used at all because South Africa does not have a bicycle culture. They also mentioned that students from the universities have done research in Sophiatown capturing the stories and local histories. While this has been positive, because of the proximity of both Wits University and the University of Johannesburg (UJ), many of the suburbs along the Knowledge Precinct are being developed as student accommodation. This is changing their nature, conflicting with previous land uses and existing heritage.

From the interviews and focus group sessions, it was felt that parks across the City have great potential but have not been well maintained, and have become areas for drugs, drinking and crime. Participants indicated that park management needs to be done in consultation with the community so that the community takes ownership of the open spaces. In the consultation session, community leaders from the Greater Sophiatown Economic Development Forum (GSEDF) indicated that JDA built a park in the community and that,

*“it looked beautiful but it is terrible now and they say we don’t care; we don’t appreciate what is being done for us. But there was no plan or involvement from the community about how that park was used or how it is going to be maintained. The JDA also built beautiful beach volleyball courts for us. Have you ever heard of anyone from Sophiatown or Westbury playing beach volleyball? It’s ridiculous. We play netball and football. It has made us come to a point where we, as the community, say ‘nothing for us, without us’.”*

This quote highlights the point that the City needs to consult with communities to provide facilities that are in line with



their identity, rather than what the City perceives they need. Those interviewed indicated that many of the older areas have been fully developed and that there is no space for further densification. Community members feel strongly that, as the densities grow, the green environment and the few open spaces need to be preserved and maintained. The point was made that education for preserving the environment, such as recycling, is needed as communities must take care of their area. Rivers are generally filthy, filled with plastic and sewerage overflows. The problem is exacerbated by people from elsewhere illegally dumping their waste in these open spaces. A participant at the Planact November 2016 meeting described the situation:

*“And that’s why you have problems with illegal dumping because now people from Sophiatown and Westdene come dump their rubbish in between the two soccer fields. We’ve watched these people, they hire a bakkie [pickup truck], they come and drop their dirt, and those ous [colloquial term for men] don’t live in Westbury, they’re not from Westbury and the rubble is just dropped there because it is an open space, we’ve asked them to close the two grounds there...”*

In terms of the COF project, the poor maintenance of storm water drains by the City has led to problems given that, since the implementation of the BRT, certain areas flood as water is not draining properly. Once more, it was felt that this problem could have been avoided if the community had been consulted.

### 11.7. Community Views of Mega Development Projects

What stood out from the interviews in the Louis Botha Corridor was the difference in perceptions and expectations about the COF amongst the different income groups. Higher income groups viewed the project as a necessary process in dealing with increased urbanisation while lower income groups viewed the COF as just another project that does not concern them. A more cynical view came from some community members who viewed the COF as a political monument because they believe that the routes are planned for the benefit of certain political organisations. Generally, people appreciate the investment by the City in the COF except for those interviewed in Orlando East who said that the BRT was more expensive than taxis and that the BRT route has caused traffic congestion and has impacted negatively on informal traders. Despite assurances from the City, residents are also generally fearful of big development projects and what they may mean for their property values. All those interviewed said they would have preferred to have been properly engaged about whether the COF sub-projects were necessary in their areas.

Those interviewed acknowledged that mega development projects do create significant job opportunities, both while they are being implemented in the construction sector and over the long term for security, ticket collectors, cleaners at the station, and maintenance staff. Given the potential widespread benefits, selection processes for these jobs need to be transparent. All communities felt that people from the areas should be employed to work on jobs in their areas.

Across the corridors, participants maintained that the biggest challenge to new development is the City’s inability to maintain existing infrastructure, particularly around water, storm-water drains and electricity provision. This has caused tensions in communities between long-term residents, who are used to high standards of service provision and new residents coming into the area. With the implementation of the corridors, communities have experienced floods (such as in Norwood and Patterson Park, and in the Frank Brown Park, off Empire Road, and in Westbury) and the water drainage does not seem to be adequate in many of the areas or the flood lines have not been properly maintained. Community leaders interviewed indicated that if they had been properly consulted before the implementation of the COF, community members could have provided information about flooding and water drainage in the area. The Sophiatown/Westbury area is an old part of Johannesburg, and the City does not have its original plans, therefore contractors did not know where the underground pipes were located. When construction started, the contractors would dig and hit pipes that would crack. If the City had asked the community first, they could have told them where the pipes were, to prevent problems during the construction period.

Some of the community members that were interviewed argued that the implementation and maintenance of new projects poses risks for their community in the future due to shoddy service delivery. For instance, the new clinic in the Louis Botha Corridor has structural problems with its foundation and construction has been put on hold while the problem is being solved. This has led to a general distrust and loss of confidence in the construction firms implementing these new projects as poor management leads to burst pipes, wasted resources, services being cut and dangerous situations created through the piling of rubble. Community leaders noted that contractors on the project were never around to be held accountable. During the construction phase, it would take three to four hours before a burst water pipe was attended to after community members reported it. This demonstrated that there was no co-ordination between the service providers within the City.

In Alexandra, there is mostly apathy or indifference about the COF project, as community members do not feel that it is going to change their day-to-day lives for the better. It is



felt that the City needs to get the basic issues right before embarking on ambitious projects. The City needs to fix potholes, street markings, road signs, pavements, storm water drainage, robots, electricity connections, street lights, burst water pipes and unblock sewerage drains whilst looking at ways to create jobs before it embarks on these large scale programmes.

### 11.8. Means of Public Participation across the Corridors

All the communities engaged had existing community leadership structures constituted in different ways, with some being registered entities and others being informal or politically aligned organisations. Participation across the wards varied. If the councillor is seen as “just a paycheque collector” who does not pass information on, then the community starts using other avenues. In most of the wards, the formal public participation process is viewed sceptically by community members, with many seeing it as a process for self-enrichment for the politically connected, rather than for the benefit of the community as a whole. It was evident throughout the project that community members form their own forums for participation or participate through apolitical organisations, such as the residents’ associations. This context became important with regards to the way communities found out and engaged with the COFs: Over

half of the people interviewed were aware of the COF; this was largely because many of the respondents had some kind of relationship with the City or the political parties, i.e. were former ward committee members, or belonged to community structures or political parties. However, the feeling was that the COF information was only available to those who actively participated in the formal structures of the City. It was also speculated that information was often guarded in order to benefit from jobs and opportunities. A focus group participant in Orlando East reinforced this perspective: “Information in this country depends on which political party you belong to. Let’s not shy away from that, information here comes to only what political party you belong to, otherwise they’ll always say community, community but that’s not how it happens.”

.. At the consultative meeting, the point was made that if the community is not brought into the development process, it leads to conflicts and delays, and as such public participation is seen as very important. Community members indicated that public participation is designed to deepen democracy and allows the community to keep people accountable, and as such have a good understanding about what participation means for communities. What became evident through the facilitation process was that different communities and stakeholders across the corridors use different means of engagement with the City, as some methods were more successful than others.

In the Louis Botha Corridor in Alexandra, the Ward Councillor calls for municipal meetings but those interviewed felt that there was no public participation around the COF. Community members would rather spend R11 to catch a taxi, to listen to people speaking about the corridor in Orange Grove/Norwood. Participation in Alexandra happens at the community centres. There are meetings once a week with the municipal officials, where community members talk about things that have happened recently in the community, such as violence against women, but nothing seems to be achieved. In Alexandra, there is also an organisation called the Land and Property Resident Owners (LPORO), which has an office at the Thusong Centre, and which meets weekly. It has a long history in Alex from the time “when stands were being sold for R5 each,” (Alex Community member). When the ANC was in charge of the City, officials would regularly address the community on current issues. Since the change in political leadership, this has not happened in Alexandra, and this has caused miscommunication. Most people in Alexandra do not know about the COF, nor do they see how it will benefit them. Some people have jobs on the project and the Taxi Association has been informed, but the information has not filtered down to the general population. Participation in Alex is ad hoc, and not well organised. There are also areas where people deliberately do not engage with the project and generally the community is apathetic to new developments, because they do not see the benefit (as not much has changed for them). Similarly, an ANC Ward Councillor at the Orlando focus group lamented:

*“Another thing is what we should also be realising, our people need to become observant of a lot of things, when we have IDP projects – you know the IDP is about you and these are things that you need to [do]; there [are] so [few] people going to IDP meetings where there’s IDPs and this is where you come in as the communities.”*

*There is also what is called this service delivery charter, where each and everybody in the community has to be consulted. If any change has to be done, if they are coming with a project, if those changes are being done, they need to consult before they do the changes. And these are things that our people are not [engaging with]. You see information is important, information is free but you cannot get information if you don’t attend certain meetings.”*

Along the Empire-Perth Corridor, the Westbury Action Group and the Local Action Drug Committee are voluntary groups that operate within the larger Westbury area. The Westbury Action Group initiated the park and the pedestrian bridge as part of the COF, and was involved with the development of the new 24-hour clinic. Another

community organisation, the Sophiatown Policing Forum, meets once a month to talk mainly about crime in the area, and how the members of the community can help each other. When needed, the Forum asks for the relevant City officials to answer questions and solve problems. Officials also use the Forum to talk about projects like the Sophiatown Extreme Park makeover. Despite these useful interactions between the community and the City, one respondent noted that there is a need for soccer grounds, netball courts and a swimming pool, rather than that which has been provided by the City. The Greater Sophiatown Local Socio-Economic Development Forum (GSLSEDF) was formed to deal with development in the area as the community felt that it was being marginalised. The GSLSEDF has submitted a petition listing all of their concerns about projects in the area, to all the MECs with whom they have engaged. However, they have had little response and the group has signalled that their next step is to protest.

In Coronation, there are Community Policing Forums (CPFs), but now there is also an interior committee, a voluntary committee made up of unemployed people who get a stipend from the community. This committee meets weekly. If contractors come into the area, they have to meet with the committee and explain the contract. The committee then sees where local labour can be employed. Members of the committee have different roles. Some are in charge of informing the community, while others are business people who help with things like printing pamphlets. CPF meetings with the Station Commander are held every month. The committee also liaises with the Ward Councillor. From the interviews with different community groupings in the Empire-Perth Corridor, these communities are organised and committed, and have been able to call City officials to account for and influence projects in their areas. Action by the community is important for participation. Sophiatown and Westbury residents have taken charge of their area and demonstrate high levels of initiative and active citizenship. If the clinic looks unclean, they pick up litter; if they want the park to be safe for children to play in it, they monitor it; if they have an issue, they raise it.

In Soweto, the municipality engages communities annually on issues of electricity, rent, rates and taxes. According to most respondents, the municipality listens but does not act. There is also an Informal Traders Committee, which meets once a month. The general sentiment amongst those interviewed was that the community is not interested in volunteering. The attitude is apparently summed up by “we don’t benefit from that so there is no point”.

A respondent in the focus group at Orlando offered a cynical reading of participation:

*“... [F]or public participation, people will come and*

*address the public, the communities, whatever, communities take out their views, unfortunately the powers that be don’t even want to hear what was said by those people ... So sometimes I don’t see the reason for me to go and participate because I know that somebody is not going to listen to me, because I am down there at the ground.”*

In one instance, the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), the Democratic Alliance (DA) and religious organisations have come together to object to aspects of the implementation of the COF, and formed new coalitions. They did not feel aligned to the older, established residents’ associations that, they thought, did not have the interests of young people at heart. According to some constituencies, participation in residents’ association meetings and CPF meetings have become places for people to bring their grievances, rather than forums to positively influence development. For this group, youth empowerment through employment opportunities and skills development are important issues. These groupings believe that they are able to stop projects (like the clinic) when the City or JDA carried on with their plans after objections had been raised. For instance, they stopped the construction of the clinic because the construction company did not hire anyone from the region. The grouping has also raised concerns around the tender processes for the Rea Vaya project, and they are prepared to stop this going ahead too, unless the process is more inclusive.

The nature of public participation by the City also varies across income groups. According to some of the respondents, the City seems to put more effort into public participation in the more affluent areas, as they know that this is where most objections come from. Councillors in these areas call mass meetings and organise professional inputs. The Norwood and Orange Grove residents’ associations appointed its own teams to raise formal objections or to call on skills from within the community. A team of City officials attended the Norwood public meeting to discuss their objections and handle questions from the community at large. Both Orange Grove and Norwood Residents Associations went a step further by engaging through legal methods, getting court orders, getting legal opinions on the Town Planning Ordinances for the City and acting as the third affected party. In contrast, Orlando and Alexandra did not have presentations and did not have the means and personnel to engage so deeply. The underlying conclusion drawn was that if communities understand the issues and know how to engage with authorities, then outcomes can be influenced.

## 11.9. Community View of Participation by the COJ and its Agencies in the COF

Generally, it was expressed that all the major decisions about the COF were already made by the COJ and its agencies, by the time the City came to engage with affected communities. Those interviewed felt that City officials only met with communities when necessary because “we are not being asked, we are being told”. The general feeling is that the COJ and the JDA are not open to real engagement and that meetings are held to fulfil their minimum public participation requirements. A major concern for most of the respondents was the feeling that the community was being “forced” to accept the initiatives that had evidently previously been planned and decided upon. One key example was along Louis Botha Avenue, where with no consultation, the City erected a fence to stop people from crossing the road. A participant at the November 2016 meeting stated that, “One of the issues was the fence they put up along Louis Botha Avenue, which was the dumbest thing they have ever done. That has cost us as taxpayers a vast amount of money by separating our communities.” The erection of the fence greatly impacted on accessibility and mobility. The Taxi Association applied to have the fence removed, as people could not access taxis. The fence was subsequently vandalised so that people could cross the road to reach taxis. For those interviewed, this showed that the City did not consider ways that buses and taxis could work together to give commuters a choice of transport.

As a result of this, much anger is directed towards the City and the JDA. Community members have become suspicious of signing attendance registers and having their names recorded in these meetings because, in the past, this has been used to make them complicit in the discussions and decisions taken. Throughout the corridor areas, the view is held that the City holds meetings regardless of attendance, and often only to share information rather than to take on feedback, and then say that public participation has taken place.

Participants expressed concerns that the City used consultants for these processes and, in doing so, were able to keep communities at arm’s length. When participants asked questions the consultants responded by saying “that’s not our job, talk to the City”. The City therefore made it difficult for ordinary community members to engage with them.

Participants felt that, in trying to manage tensions in Orange Grove, the City created conflicts of interest because it employed Blue Rhino, which was part of the Residents’ Association, as consultants. Appointed consultants throughout the COF spoke English during consultation meetings and used technical language to describe concepts in a presentation format. In the greater Sophiatown area, community leaders indicated that community members are predominantly Afrikaans

speaking, and therefore did not understand what was being said when they were consulted, both from a language and conceptual point of view. In other parts of the corridor, like in Alexandra and Soweto, English is the third or fourth language in use. Again, through using technical language and by not having translators, it was felt that the City was excluding most citizens from participating effectively.

Respondents believed that the COJ had managed the tensions between social inclusion and achieving development at scale, under resource constraints, by breaking the COF project down into smaller pieces and then discussing only the local projects linked to the COF with the community involved. In Alexandra for instance, the City spoke about a new sports field. This, however, meant that the community struggled to relate this specific sub-project to the bigger picture. They did not ask the harder questions or delay the process by dealing with real issues like densities. By keeping communities apart and holding public participation sessions within the different communities, and focusing on smaller components of the overall plan, it was perceived that the City was also able to manage tensions between the different social groups and to limit the objections to the City's plans.

It was only when the contractors and the City needed help in implementation that they started engaging. At one site in Westbury, contractors could not get access for heavy equipment and had to ask a crèche owner if they could use his gate to move the children out of the way. They then established a relationship and the City asked the children to sing the national anthem at the opening of the clinic.

In some areas, the JDA has managed to establish a good relationship with the community, and has worked in collaboration to develop the Heritage Route. They trained over 100 local people to do paving, curbs and steel shooting as part of this process.

Across the City, there has been uneven engagement with various constituencies. The taxi industry seems to have been singled out for special treatment. However, there is still dissatisfaction with the manner in which engagement took place. As a major player in the transport sector, the taxi industry was invited to a BRT information meeting, but it was only when the taxi members physically saw the construction, did they find out what was actually going on. Initially, the City told the taxi industry that the COF are about transformation and empowerment. The City said the project was going to affect a lot of people, but was

unable to give the Taxi Association details about what this would mean for the residents. Once construction started, representatives from the Taxi Association went to see a senior planner at the City of Johannesburg, to ask about the corridor plans. He showed them the plans and admitted that stakeholders were not consulted adequately due to tight timeframes and pressure to deliver.

The Taxi Association stated that its major concern was that the City decided on trunk routes without assessing how many people use taxis and knowing how many taxis operate on those routes. It noted that the City did not do surveys; it just planned the routes on maps and did not factor in how many people would be adversely impacted by this decision. The Taxi Association indicated that there are currently about 700 taxis operating on the Louis Botha route. Each taxi, with two drivers and the taxi owner, supports three households and so the impact is widespread. They further indicated that business was heavily affected by the construction of the corridors: takings decreased considerably because there were many delays on the route during construction, including stops, road diversions and traffic congestion. As taxi owners and drivers depend on this income, they are unhappy about this project.

In future, the taxi associations felt that it needed to be consulted from the beginning of all new big developments, to avoid a crisis. Tensions arise when the City wants to use certain roads as trunk routes even though there are already taxis operating on these routes. Taxi drivers feel that leaders and management do not communicate with them in a language they can understand. These are the conversations that the City should have had with stakeholders before implementation. Transport issues are very important in Alexandra because of traffic congestion, particularly in the Selbourne area where taxis and buses congregate. The main roads need to be widened and cleared of shops and houses. Although space has been allocated for buses to reach the area, there are still no buses on this route. Many people in Alexandra do not have private cars and when the taxi industry is on strike, people cannot go to work and children cannot get to school. The expansion of public transport, including internal routes, for people in Alexandra is important. Taxis run for 24 hours but the BRT only runs until a certain time at night. From the focus group in Alexandra, as well as interviews with community members, it is clear that the City needs to engage with all stakeholders before implementing the Alexandra leg of the COF.

The City has been alive to some of the issues raised by the taxi industry. There are now monthly transport consultation meetings between the City and the taxi associations about the project. However, the taxi association feels that it is too late for consultations because important decisions that cannot be changed were made without their input. Going forward, the taxi association has drawn

up a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the City, highlighting its concerns and outlining how it would like to be engaged on projects in the future. This MoU has not yet been signed but it outlines the terms of appointment of a technical team by the City to represent the concerns of the taxi industry. The technical team includes engineers, accountants and attorneys. The taxi associations and the umbrella structures meet regularly with the technical team to make sure that the taxi associations are engaging with the City in the right way, about the right things. The technical team advises the taxi association to ensure their concerns are addressed, but is paid by the City. The taxi association trusts and feels that it can talk openly with the technical team.

Other residents and organisations were also not happy with the public participation process. At the Planact report-back meeting in November 2016, "A lot of people felt that the COF was a good initiative. However, throughout the corridors it was felt that there wasn't enough time taken for the planning of the corridors and by planning and consulting properly, a lot of the frustration around the process could have been avoided." The Ward Councillor for Orange Grove and Norwood made the point that the COF is a multi-faceted plan, with the transit-orientated development as its base. It therefore impacts on the communities in which it is implemented, causing stress and anxiety. In order to minimise impacts, the City needs to ensure that the inconvenience of construction is not exacerbated by additional problems in these areas, such as traffic lights not working, or power outages or workmen not putting up the proper safety barriers. In areas where upgrades have already happened, those interviewed indicated that communication about maintenance and upkeep of the upgraded facilities should have been done as part of the process. Community members also mentioned that, because big developments require co-ordinated implementation across the various departments and agencies of the City, communities often do not know who to approach if they are experiencing problems, and if they had been properly informed upfront about who was responsible for what, lots of problems could have been dealt with quicker and more efficiently.

It was evident throughout the facilitation processes that, although public participation for mega projects happens across wards, the issues raised are very different. In the affluent areas, like Orange Grove and Norwood, the issues are about reducing planned densities, maintaining standards and enforcing planning by-laws; for Balfour Park it is mainly about business; for Alex it is about adequate housing; for Westbury and Sophiatown it is about drugs and gangsterism, and for Soweto it is about preserving heritage, creating employment and rebuilding a sense of community. For the knowledge precinct along Empire-Perth, it is about students. The COF therefore recognises the different meanings for the different areas.





Throughout the facilitation process, it became evident that new methods of engagement by City officials and departments are required. The City needs to use local media and radio stations, and in poorer, less resourced communities, the City needs to do more door-to-door campaigns so that it gets to know the real needs of the community. The City is also accused of not giving feedback after the initial information session, so people do not know what will be implemented and whether their suggestions have been incorporated.

### 11.10. Negotiating the Politics of Mega Projects

Stakeholders across the corridors expressed the view that the COF was pursued at all costs. The previous mayor apparently decided that this project would go ahead and

subsequently put enormous pressure on the planners to deliver. The attitude was to proceed and deal with the consequences later. The COF process ran parallel to the municipal process for IDPs and then superseded what came out of the IDP process (which is what communities really wanted).

A participant at the Planact meeting November 2016 commented that, “When you come in and you want to do things that the community doesn’t need or you come in and do things that are superficial and make you look good as a politician, it’s window dressing, and that is not acceptable.”

Those interviewed generally agreed that good public transport is needed, but it is the way the City implemented it that has been questioned.

During the construction phase, there was inadequate consultation with business owners along the routes and

there was no acknowledgement of the inconveniences and frustrations residents experienced. This meant that the City has alienated many constituencies in the process of implementing the project. Some members interviewed expressed the view that the City only considers political and militant threats to burn or put a stop to projects through protest action.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) are opposed to the projects and referred to the COF as “lipstick on a pig”. They see the COF as a waste of money, spent on buses that do not help the poorest of the poor.

Concerns were raised throughout the facilitation process about the fact that Ward Councillors are politically aligned. Even if councillors are effective, they may not receive votes if they do not belong to a specific party given that people will vote for a party rather than a person. The Ward Councillor and committee process is also seen as being politically driven, with jobs being given to the politically connected. Community members expressed the view that the ANC political engine runs on the fuel of transactional politics. Without jobs and tenders being given, projects get stopped. Community members inferred that the party is a driver of corruption.

People interviewed indicated that ward committee meetings sometimes deteriorate into mud-slinging matches between political parties, rather than focusing on the issues at hand because of the politics of the City. Meetings become personal and people insult each other. Particularly now that there has been a change in leadership, people are not working together at ward level and this impacts on participation. Petty party politics are holding up community development and effective public participation therefore the City needs to review how it engages with its citizens.

Communities are generally sceptical about new developments in their area. They view development as political point scoring exercises because, as soon as elections are about to happen, councillors and politicians tell them about the new developments coming to their area. In Westbury, this has led to community members questioning the need for every new development.

Interviewed community leaders acknowledged that if councillors are politically connected to a project, they will make an effort to advertise meetings and do things the proper way. This includes advertising meetings on the radio and putting advertisements in the local newspaper. If the councillor is not interested, then the meeting happens at the last minute, no one knows about it and, as a result, attendance is poor.

The political consequences of large scale urban developments are not well understood. Councillors are

struggling to justify expenditure on the projects. The COF project was conceptualised by ANC Mayor, Parks Tau, never expecting that the ANC would not be in charge of the City after the 2016 local elections. The City thought it had time to implement the project, as mega projects have long-term time horizons of between 20 and 30 years. For these longer term projects, communities must be on board to support these projects through to final implementation. Different political factions may have dissimilar priorities as to how to spend the budget for the City. This is evident in the fact that the new mayor, Herman Mashaba (from the DA), now refers to the COF, by their technical description of Transit Corridors.

Residents are aware of these politics and it raises anxieties, with one Orlando East focus group participant commenting: “My concern is if another political formation takes power, they’ll want to demolish what the previous one did and reuse the money to rename, it’s a lot of money. So I don’t know, my, I just wish it’s not political when the stations are named or when these corridors are implemented.”

It is also important to understand to what extent the province has bought into the COF programme. Currently, this is in doubt because the province has endorsed a “mega-human settlement” programme, which promotes the development of new towns located along the urban edges. This has reintroduced tensions between the City and the Province (PASGR, 2016), since the corridors are seeking to promote densification and infill not urban sprawl. The province is still run by the ANC, while the City is run by a DA and EFF alliance, which exacerbates the difficulties of finding common ground. Politics remains a huge impediment for development resulting in the need for a careful negotiation.



# 12

## LESSONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Currently, communities are largely dependent on how informed and how proactive their Ward Councillors are. In areas where the Ward Councillor arranges meetings, takes up issues raised, and reports back, communities are better informed and more involved. In other areas, the Ward Councillors act as gate-keepers to information so that they can manipulate processes and get jobs for comrades, rather than for the benefit of the entire community.

Throughout the public participation process on the COF, the language used has been highly technical and in English. For many communities across the corridors, this has made participation difficult. The suggestion was that members from the community, such as school teachers, should be used to translate or interpret at public participation meetings, so that community members can participate more effectively.

Participation in mega projects is generally for the more privileged communities, for households who have access to the Internet, with smartphones and computers, and who can do research. They also are generally English-speaking, able to hire professionals and lawyers to assist in shaping and pushing their agendas. New ways of engaging, educating and having conversations about issues should be encouraged. Local newspapers and radio stations should be used; door-to-door information sessions should be conducted. Most suburbs have their own Facebook page on which information can be posted. Planact found it shocking how little, poorer, under-resourced communities knew about the COF, even though it had been implemented in their communities.

Public participation across large areas is failing, and a new mechanism is needed. There are many stakeholders, each with their own expectations and contexts. The process to date has been less about navigating the different needs and expectations, and more focused on getting things done. In areas where communities take ownership, report issues and are accountable, things work better with the City. Where residents do not feel a civic responsibility, then things are neglected. It is important that the Ward Councillor builds relationships with all the key departments (water, electricity, refuse removal and traffic) in the City, so if there is a problem in an area, the Ward Councillor knows who to contact and knows who to hold accountable.

Timing of public participation interventions within a community is also very important as it can make it very difficult to engage with communities. In Westbury, the attitude was that the COF was completed and the bridge and bus station were already there, so there was nothing to talk about. It is hard to make communities focus on an issue that they do not feel is as pressing. In Westbury, there is real anger and frustration about the drug problem, with gangsterism and drug lords targeting people, people being too scared to speak out, and the Sophiatown SAPS seemingly being paid off by the drug lords. Communities have their own priorities and they are important to them, but these concerns may not be the City's priority.

For the most part, public participation did not affect the outcomes of the COF – it was only when the City was threatened with litigation or protest action that it acted. Otherwise it went ahead regardless of suggestions. In South Africa, development projects are often overwhelmed by many other problems that need to be solved at the same time, such as unemployment, drugs, crime, youth, housing, maintenance and service delivery, and by how many constituencies with different issues need to be appeased, so that development often gets side-tracked. There is also the constant balance of having to satisfy the needs of the "haves" (with high standards and expectations) and the "have nots" (with different expectations), which is always a political process.



# 13

## REFLECTIONS FOR PLANACT AS AN ORGANISATION

This research project in which Planact played the social facilitation role afforded the organisation many opportunities and forced it out of its traditional role of working only with one community. The project is very complex and impacts on a very wide range of communities while focusing on many different aspects of development with very different issues being raised between the communities, and has, as such, provided many opportunities for reflection. Much of this project has been about “fear of change” for communities, but it was generally felt that the COF have been successful.

### 13.1. Reflections for Planact on Working with Partners on the Project

Planact had previously worked with Wits University on a community development project in Diepsloot. With this urban development project, Wits approached Planact to conduct social facilitation. This partnership brought together positive strengths and synergies between the two, as the partners were able to plan and implement the project successfully. Planact brought strong social facilitation, networking and community event coordination skills to mobilise and enrich the project.

Planact was able to engage with community radio stations, Kofifi FM and Alex FM, and community media such as Orlando Urban News. They also created a blog with the intention of continuing conversations amongst the stakeholders. However, this has not worked as well as was hoped. Quarterly, Planact featured articles on the COF project in their newsletter, which is placed on the website and distributed to stakeholders. Planact also produced brochures with summaries from the focus groups. Pictures and video clips from in-depth interviews and consultative meetings also document their journey of engagements. Planact also used Twitter and Facebook to share instant project activities while on site.

In July 2017, Sharon Hayward from the London Tenants Federation visited Johannesburg and met with Planact and Wits University to share experiences about the project. She indicated that she learnt a lot from this engagement and that the work around community participation was impressive.

### 13.2. Reflections on the Participation Processes

Planact used the focus groups and the one-on-one

interviews as opportunities to educate people about the COF. By educating community members, they were subsequently able to engage on the issues around this City-led initiative.

Working in new areas, Planact acknowledged that community dynamics are different, and as such the organisation needs to be able to accommodate them in facilitation sessions. In the formal urban environment, communities are more aware of the issues and have access to resources and so are less dependent on organisations like Planact. However, communities expressed the view that they benefitted from having access to people from other communities and being able to share their experiences.

It was a challenge to set up new relationships in communities in which Planact had previously not worked, and it took much longer than Planact expected. It was also difficult to get people interested in the topic of COF, as they either did not understand how it affected them or they thought that there was no point as plans had just gone ahead anyway. The perception was that the COF does not deal with basic issues making it therefore less relevant to communities.

For Planact, this project presented the opportunity to work outside the formal public participation processes (like ward committees) as it cuts across different wards and regions, and the process did not fall within a formal public participation process. It was more about helping communities to build engagement processes for their own development.

Through the facilitation process, Planact learnt that different communities organise themselves differently. For example, in Norwood/Orange Grove, the residents' associations had the capacity and legal power to lobby the City to change height restrictions of buildings.

Planact has also learnt that in situations where communities are organised, the City is willing to partner and avail resources, as with the Alexandra Taxi Association. The Greater Sophiatown Development Forum is able to convene a public meeting and invite the JDA to come and account for the projects that are implemented in their area.

Throughout this process, Planact was able to pull in those communities along the corridors that had initially been left out of the decision making process. Planact then used this opportunity to inform communities about the COF, what the corridors are about, what they hope to achieve and how they are expected to impact on the different

areas. They also brought different communities along the corridors together to share their experiences.

### 13.3. Reflections on Mega Projects

What Planact has learnt is that mega projects from elsewhere in the world cannot be “copied and pasted” into the local context. They also learnt that existing politics and power structures can make or break the implementation of a project in an area. In Westbury, the community distrust the City. As a result, the community has set up its own community policing forum, economic development and clean up forums.

One of the objectives of the COF is to usher in a new era of access to opportunity, and a choice for residents to work, stay and play within the same space. However, through this social facilitation process, Planact has also identified that some people have been displaced, especially the poor and the marginalised.

The public participation in the COF project supersedes legally mandated processes for community participation such as the IDP where communities' real needs and concerns were addressed.

For Planact, this project highlighted the importance, yet

insignificance of public participation when it comes to mega projects. Communities, especially in South Africa, often have bigger, more pressing problems than being concerned about mega projects that are implemented over a long period of time. In a context of mistrust and corruption, these projects get questioned. Who actually benefits? Could the money have been better spent elsewhere? Who are the corridors meant for?

The GDS 2040 called into focus the need for urban development in line with urbanisation. The COF were, in many ways, delivering on a conceptual issue rather than a pressing need. This has been the first time that this has happened and so people need to change mind-sets to deal with it. Long-term projects are difficult to work with because what is undertaken now will only bring about change by 2040. It can be demoralising, because there is very little one can offer in the present. In informal settlement work, change can be quick – like Spring Valley where Planact got water provided for the community. Public participation requires huge efforts, often with uncertain results. The COJ needs to communicate and get communities to understand the long term vision for the City, or else each time there is a political change, these projects and aims will be questioned, and investments in mega projects will be jeopardised.



## CONCLUSION

Change is inevitable. What remains to be seen is whether the change brought about by the COF will benefit communities along the corridors and whether they will lead, as feared, to the displacement of many people currently living along these corridors.

Conceptually, the COF are about re-stitching the City. The City has sold it as a project that will bring people from different cultures, race groups and with different socio-economic backgrounds together. It is seen as an opportunity to learn from each other's cultures, show off each other's communities, invest in different communities, and create feelings of pride. Communities remain sceptical whether this can be achieved. Given how the COF have been implemented, communities also remain sceptical about how much influence they can have over mega projects. From a community perspective, there have been some successes like the bridge and the park in Westbury where community members took charge, in Orange Grove and Norwood where the Residents Association successfully litigated the City to reduce densities, in Orlando where the community stopped the building of another clinic or by the Taxi Association negotiating through their own technical team to defend their livelihood.

But these are still local communities, fighting local issues. The COF presented the opportunity for communities to engage across these issues, across the City and to begin "re-stitching" the City. This is still to happen. Communities

are less open to development being imposed on them rather than with them. The urban environment is getting more complex therefore community action is needed to get things done and hold the City accountable. These present opportunities for changing the participation space in Johannesburg.

In Planact's opinion, the actual implementation of the COF did not contribute to a more open, responsive and democratic governance because the City placed value on engineers and implementation rather than on social inclusion. The COJ did not give social integration the same attention as it did for transport integration. It is felt that re-stitching a city as well as communities should happen through focusing on people rather than solely prioritising the physical developments.

Consultative meetings, through this project process, have attempted to bring social innovation by facilitating engagement across the corridor areas, across different income groups and by bringing in stakeholders from all sectors. These conversations have enabled the sharing of lessons learnt, various means of engaging and shared skills and resources, so that other communities (especially in under-resourced communities where mega projects are yet to be implemented, such as Alexandra) can better engage in the process and ensure that their needs are met and not ignored at the expense of delivering mega projects.



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