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Good Intentions: The Production of Urban Public Space in eThekweni, South Africa

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During apartheid, the public realm was subject to an array of legislation stipulating who could use public space based on race. Post 1994, academics, planners, urban designers and architects have advocated the creation of accessible, memorable urban places in which social and political voices can be heard and in which opportunities for social inclusion could arise. How are these new urban spaces created?

Urban public spaces are not a stand-alone artefact, they are part of the delivery of a range of different urban landscapes, such as the state's large-scale infrastructure projects, township renewal programme, state-subsidised housing projects and the private sectors' creation of gated housing estates, shopping and leisure complexes and office parks.

A tentative typology of new urban landscapes in eThekweni Municipality, South Africa will be outlined, in order to identify the characteristics of these landscapes and the ways in which they contribute to city-building.

Keywords: Public space, Urban realm, Strategic spatial planning, Urban landscapes.

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Introduction

This paper focuses on the production of public urban space in contemporary South Africa in the city of Durban, also known as the eThekweni Municipality.¹ This paper uses as a starting point that public spaces are socially produced, form an integral part of the public realm and contribute to the possibility of a public life.

During the apartheid years, the public realm was subject to an array of legislation stipulating who - based on race - could use public space. The impact of social segregation and modernist land use zoning that shaped eThekweni during the apartheid years is prevalent. Post 1994, the South African Constitution (1996) sets the framework for a public life based on citizenship, respecting diversity and promoting tolerance. Given that urban public spaces are socially constructed, both as a physical product and through socially negotiated interactions, how then are urban public spaces conceptualised in policy and implemented on the ground in post 1994 South Africa?

The macro-scale policy approach to city-building and spatial planning, in particular, in South Africa is dominated by the compact city approach; the reality of what happens on the ground is much more messy and contradictory. In order to consider the nature of production of urban public spaces within its context of a wide range of city-building events, a typology of new urban landscapes is outlined and the production of the urban realm discussed in relation to the metropolitan Municipality of eThekweni.

Strategic spatial planning in South Africa

The morphology of South African cities has been shaped by the apartheid policies of the National Party government, in power from 1948 to 1994, and the application of imported modernist town planning principles (Dewar 2000). The racially-based segregation policies dovetailed with modernist planning notions of city-building: a central business district consisting of government operations, commerce and services surrounded by suburban areas and connected by a hierarchy of roads based on the primacy of the car, the separation of land uses into mono-functional zones - using buffers such as rivers, railway lines, industrial areas - was deployed through the Group Areas Act (RSA 1966) into racially-based spatial plans. Apartheid was managed and operationalised through legislation that constrained people's movement and choice of place to live and work based on categories of race. A comprehensive set of laws constrained public life: for example, the allocation and prohibition of the use of social facilities and public transport was based on race. At a micro-scale level, municipal by-laws curtailed social behaviour such as prohibiting the use of pavements by cafes and restaurants for the sale and consumption of alcohol in public places². These legal constraints on public life no longer exist, but the history leaves a strong imprint on the contemporary social production of space.

The compact city approach was posited as an approach to address the ills of the fragmented, segregated and inefficient South African city structure inherited from the apartheid years (Dewar 1984, 2000). Mabin (1995: 193) noted as early as 1995, 'If there is an emerging orthodoxy concerning the necessities of shaping South African cities to match the necessities of the post-modern, post-fordist phase, it is the idea of the compact city.'. The applicability of the compact city model in South Africa has been contested. The

¹ The city's geographic place names are Durban and Thekwini/eThekwini; whereas the political boundaries and local authority is referred to as the eThekwini Municipality. For the sake of consistency and brevity, 'eThekwini' will be used.

² Restaurant or cafés are still not allowed by law to serve alcohol on a public pavement in front of their establishment.



cultural and institutional obstacles to implementation in the South African context has been raised, as has the advantages of low density settlement patterns on the urban peripheries which accommodate a range of survivalist strategies (Schoonraad 2000, Todes 2003). Watson (2009) points out that the compact city approach needs more work in consideration of the very different contexts that exist in the South. She points out that Curitiba, a frequently-used exemplar of compact living, has had the advantage of sustained commitment and leadership from the local state and that these characteristics are not prevalent in all large cities of the South (Watson 2009).

In addition to, and overlapping with the above contestation, a substantial body of research has been concerned with the failure of spatial planning in post-apartheid South Africa. These concern the translation into implementation of spatial objectives and to direct market trends (Watson 2002, Todes 2008, Harrison, Todes and Watson 2008), the persistence of urban sprawl and the implications thereof (Dewar 2000, Breetzke 2009) and the withdrawal of the well-heeled into the exclusionary spaces of gated communities (Ballard 2005, Lemanski, Landman and Durrington 2008).

At national level the objectives of spatial restructuring is reflected in 'A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements' (2004) and 'The National Development Plan Vision for 2030' (National Planning Commission 2011). One of the key objectives of 'A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements' is the use of 'housing as an instrument for the development of sustainable human settlements in support of spatial restructuring' (2004: 6). In the 'National Development Plan Vision for 2030', strategic priority is given to large-scale infrastructure projects and to addressing the spatial impacts of the apartheid era. The latter is to be achieved by providing viable public transport, investment and job-creation close to existing dense townships and improving the livability of cities (National Planning Commission 2011).

Notwithstanding these critiques, strategic spatial planning is required from each municipality in South Africa and the concepts that underpin the compact city approach, specifically densification and mixed use corridors, continue to appear in strategic spatial plans. Public realm decisions are impacted upon by the application of these strategies in conjunction with substantial housing and infrastructure challenges, as will be outlined later in this paper.

Urban public space: a theoretical point of departure

South African academics, planners, urban designers and architects have advocated the creation of accessible, memorable urban places in which social and political voices can be heard and in which opportunities for social inclusion could arise (Dewar 2000, Southworth 2003, City of Cape Town 2003, Mammon and Paterson 2005).

Amin (2008) posits that urban public space is a site for *civitas* – for social life, not just as a possible site of interaction between strangers, but as a site for the intersecting dimensions of social life: the signals of how to behave and the materiality of the space in its surfaces, architecture and public art. It has enough flexibility; it can accommodate a level of the unexpected, the chance encounters and the spectacle that is urban life.

Amin argues that the engineering of public space is 'normatively ambivalent and ... has a role in shaping of public behaviour or indeed even a sense of the commons' (Amin 2008: 7), but it may or may not achieve this, depending on a whole array of factors. He disagrees with the fear of commodification of public space and argues that this has not 'displaced the inquisitiveness, enchantment and studied regard for others nostalgically reserved for the city of great public exhibitions, flanerier and public deliberation.' (Amin 2008: 7).



The term 'urban public space' may refer to pavements, suburban parks, nature reserves within the city, public squares, mass transport interchange points, pedestrianised roads, waterfront promenades. Urban spaces in which the right of admission could be exercised are referred to as privatised urban spaces, for example, shopping malls, art galleries, communal spaces in gated housing estates, casino complexes, foyer spaces in hotels and office complexes.

The term 'urban realm' has wider application. 'The public realm is comprised of, amongst other elements, public facilities, public spaces and institutions that provide venues to address critical issues such as health and healing, education and social development, collectively. It is also the venue for people to congregate and interact outside the confines of their private domains.' (Mammon and Paterson 2005: 2). In essence, it is the terrain we traverse between our domestic spaces and workplaces, spaces that we travel along or move through, meet in, relax in and where we encounter a broad spectrum of society; this constitutes the context for a public life.

Profile of the eThekweni Municipality

eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality is a port city in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal; it is the largest container port in Africa. It contributes 9% of the total economic output in South Africa. The city is 2297 km² in extent and houses approximately 3.5 million people (eThekweni Municipality 2012a). It is one of nine metropolitan municipalities in South Africa, and is expected to grow mainly through rural-to-urban migration.

In 2009, approximately 53% of the Municipality's working age population were employed; this includes people working in the formal (fourth-fifths) and informal (one-fifth) economic sectors (eThekweni Municipality 2012a). Youth unemployment is a key concern; only one in eight people within the 15 to 24 age group is employed (South African Cities Network 2011: 27). Poverty levels are high; in 2009 '41.8% of eThekweni's population were subject to conditions associated with poverty' (eThekweni Municipality 2012a: 19).

The city faces significant challenges; job creation under conditions of low economic growth, low skills levels and existing high levels of poverty is a key concern. In addition to this, the municipality has identified in its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for 2012/2013 the following key development challenges: addressing the housing and infrastructural services backlog, containing and managing high crime levels, containing and managing high levels of HIV/AIDs, dealing with environmental issues in order to ensure water quality and food security in the short term and climate change adaptation in the medium to long term, ensuring energy supply, upgrading ageing infrastructure and improving municipal efficiency (eThekweni Municipality 2012a).

Within the framework of the national mandate to deliver developmental local governance (RSA 1998a), the eThekweni Municipality's IDP reflects three approaches to city-building: firstly, the compact city approach; secondly, the competitive cities approach; and thirdly, environmental sustainability. As outlined previously, the compact city approach is reflected in mixed-use corridor planning, densification strategies and the delineation of an urban edge.

The competitive cities approach is clearly visible in the landscape transformations in eThekweni that preceded the World Cup in 2010. Rapid improvements to the urban public spaces were one of the outcomes of the large-scale investments such as the stadia and related transport interchanges. 'Post-2010 Durban hopes to be a successful (s)port city able to host future Olympic, Commonwealth and continental games.' (UN HABITAT 2010: 233). The current IDP is focused on infrastructure logistics, with the focus

on the port and freight relationship with the inland economic core (eThekweni Municipality 2012a) and on capturing the interests of investors and the tourist market.

The city's environmental department has been instrumental in communicating the environmental consequences of the city's current growth trajectory and, more broadly, the anticipated global impacts of climate change. The main environmental spatial plan takes the form of a Durban Metropolitan Open Space System (DMOSS), 75 000 Ha in extent, which focuses on protecting environmentally sensitive areas and biodiversity. This translates into stringent requirements for sub-divisional layouts to incorporate environmental buffers protecting streams, rivers and wetlands.

These three paradigms have had a direct impact on the morphology of the city, the public realm and on the types of urban public spaces that are prioritised or valued in the city.

Policy documents and plans in eThekweni Municipality

The national planning objectives cascade through provincial strategic plans to the municipal level of strategic plans, in the form of the eThekweni Municipality's Integrated Development Plan, which includes a Spatial Development Framework, a suite of sector plans, budgets and performance management requirements (RSA 1998).

In eThekweni, the Spatial Development Framework (eThekweni Municipality 2012b) aims to promote a compact city form through intensifying development along existing 'high accessibility routes and spines', implementing densification strategies in relation to new residential development and in-fill in existing residential areas, as well as limiting and containing the 'urban development footprint' (eThekweni Municipality 2012b: 106). The 'Urban Development Line' indicates the outer line to which urban development will be restricted and aims to 'promote a more convenient, efficient, equitable and sustainable settlement form' (eThekweni Municipality 2012b: 97). However, the political will to support this sustainability- and economically-driven concept is weak. Breetzke (2009) points out that existing bulk infrastructure in the core areas is underutilised, yet developers would much rather develop peripheral green-field sites than inner city brown-field sites. "In many cases the lack of political and senior management support has meant that there has, in many instances, been acquiescence to developers' demands rather than 'standing firm' in support of the SDP" (Breetzke 2009: 13).

The Spatial Development Framework promotes the creation of social facility clusters with shared public spaces in order improve the quality of the urban realm, especially in new housing developments (eThekweni Municipality 2012b). However, planning practitioners in pursuit of the benefits that a social facilities clustering could deliver, have been frustrated by the inability to implement such ideas. The provision of social facilities through line-function provincial and municipal departments with different funding streams, has often resulted in un-coordinated and dispersed location of schools, community halls and clinics (Breetzke 2012).

Explicit statements about urban public space are made in the eThekweni Housing Sector Plan. With reference to the negative impacts of a fragmented low-density morphology, this plan identifies, amongst others issues, 'underused public space, which contributes to security and urban quality issues.' (eThekweni 2012c: 51).

The plan posits that addressing fragmentation and low-density form could achieve spatial integration and an 'Increased probability of cosmopolitanism, diversity of class and diversity of urban form.' (eThekweni 2012c: 51). The plan advocates an increased emphasis on urban design: 'Wherever housing projects contribute to the densification of the city, there is a need to pay attention to urban design issues.'



Urban design ought to concentrate on public places, the interface of social facilities with the community, public transport stops and interchanges, and streetscapes.’ (eThekweni 2012c: 54). This statement notwithstanding, the densification strategy does not raise the potential impacts of densification, nor the significant role that urban space plays under conditions of intense urban activity.

From a practitioner’s perspective, the good intentions that are imbedded in the municipality’s plans are laudable but unrealistic in a municipality that struggles to maintain its sprawling urban fabric, bulk infrastructure and passive and active open spaces.

Whilst the goal of spatial restructuring runs clearly through macro-scale planning policy documents, the importance of the public realm and urban spaces is not articulated. Issues pertaining to urban spaces begin to be prioritised at the level of the Spatial Development Framework and at the more detailed sub-metropolitan Spatial Development Plans, albeit in broad terms.

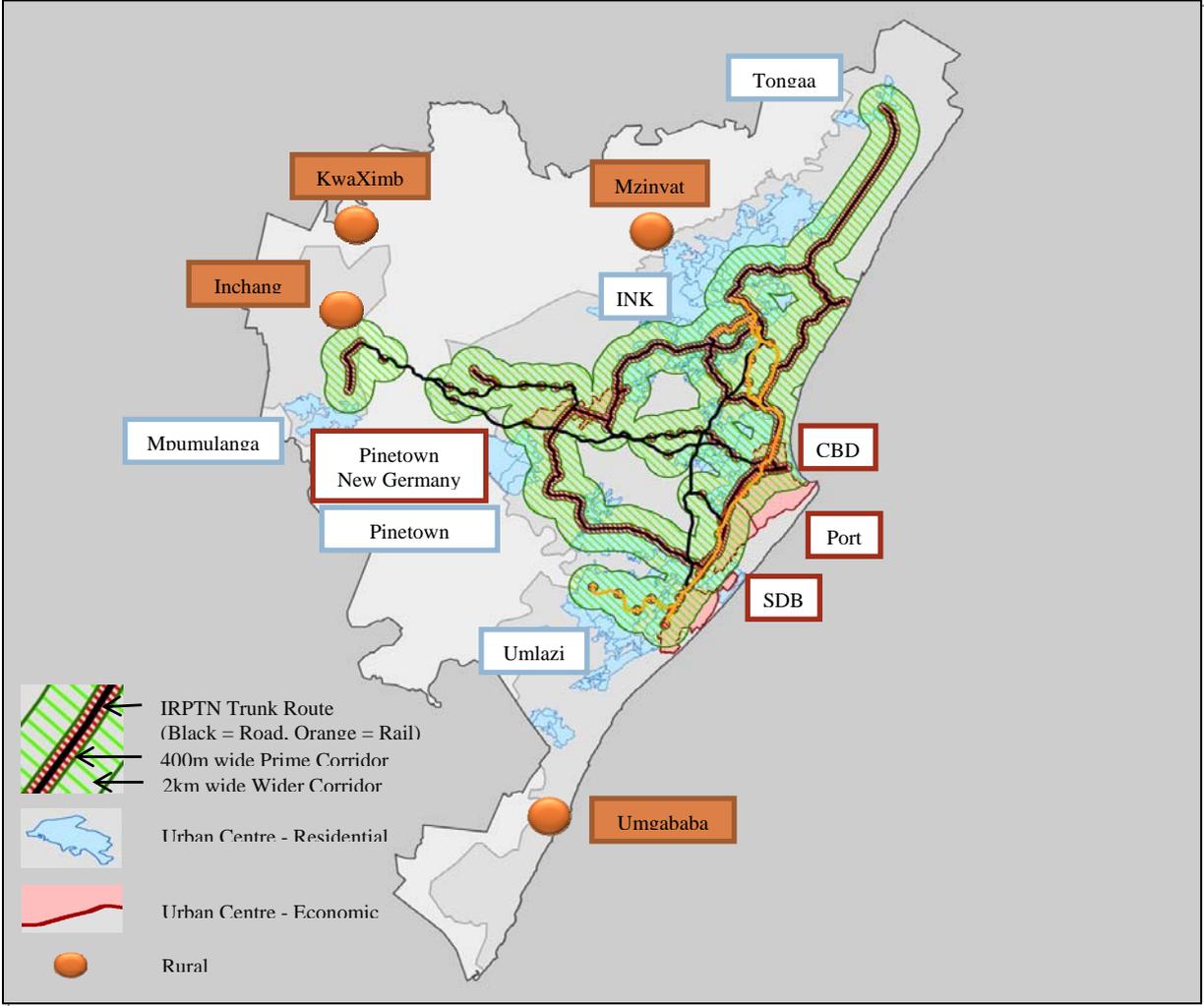


Figure 1. eThekweni metropolitan scale spatial strategies. The plan indicates corridor development in relation to existing nodes. Source: eThekweni Municipality 2012b.

Morphology

The term morphology is used here to denote the form - in intensity, impact, uses and presence - of the different landscapes of the city.

The very hilly topography of hills and sharply incised river valleys contributes to its fragmented spatial form. Two national routes create an inverted T-shape; the N2 connects the coastal settlement of the province, the N3 connects the city with the Gauteng conurbation. Figure 2 illustrates the settlement form in broad terms: the formal settlement is closely aligned to the major routes, which is flanked to the north and south with informal settlement, with dispersed traditional settlement on traditional land tenure beyond.

The city is poly-centric with a pronounced inner city core formed by the Central Business District (CBD), high-rise residential, commercial, retail land uses and higher order services. The inner city includes the beach front, its main tourist attraction, which is adjacent to the port and in close proximity to the extensive Southern Industrial Basin, the location of the bulk of the city's industrial activities.

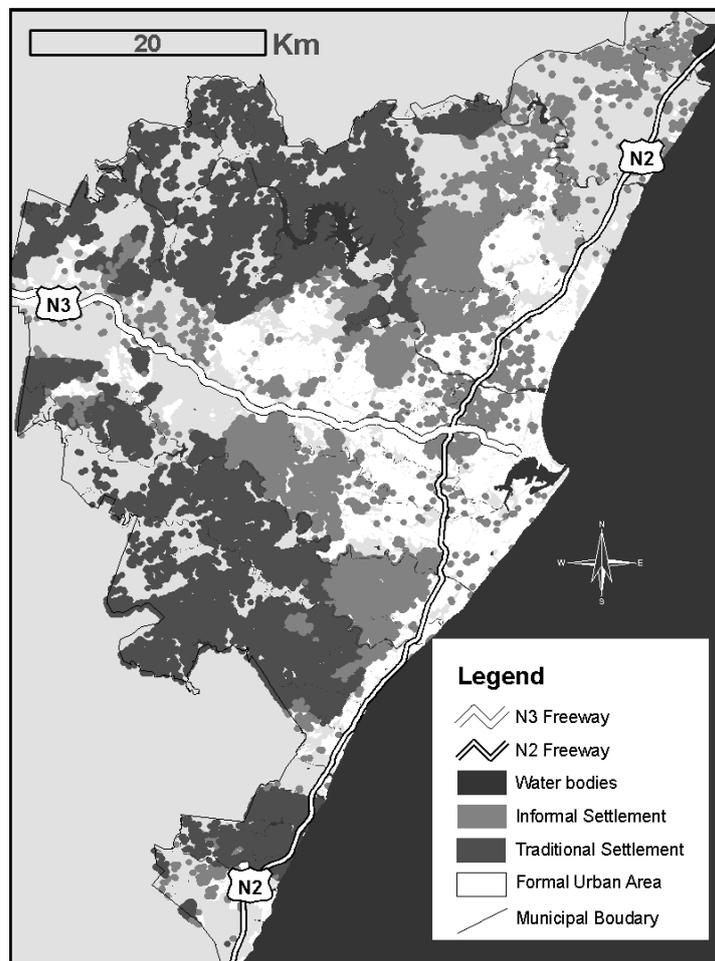


Figure 2. Main settlement typologies for eThekweni Municipality. Source: Province of KwaZulu-Natal 2009, eThekweni Municipality 2007.

Density

The municipality consists of three medium-to-high density nodes; that of the inner city as mentioned, and, beyond the ring of suburbs surrounding the inner city, that of the northern townships node and the southern townships node with a density of 20 to 40 dwellings per hectare (du/Ha), but with pockets of high density of 40 plus du/Ha. In addition, there are a further eight smaller urban nodes of medium density (South African Cities Network 2011: 66, eThekweni Municipality 2012b: 65). These nodes, including a largely informal residential periphery, fall within the Urban Development Line. The nodes contain transport ranks and interchanges and retail and commercial services, often in the form of shopping centres, but there are some street-based nodes, usually older nodes. There are a few specialist industrial and office parks located in close proximity to metropolitan routes.

The municipal boundaries include a large area that is described as rural and that falls beyond the Urban Development Line; here more than 55% of land houses less than 20% of the city's population, at a density of less than three du/Ha. Apart from agriculture and residential uses, it accommodates a range of uses unwanted in urban areas, such as waste disposal sites and sewerage treatments. Similarly, large scale land uses, such as warehousing, and the airport are located beyond the urban periphery.

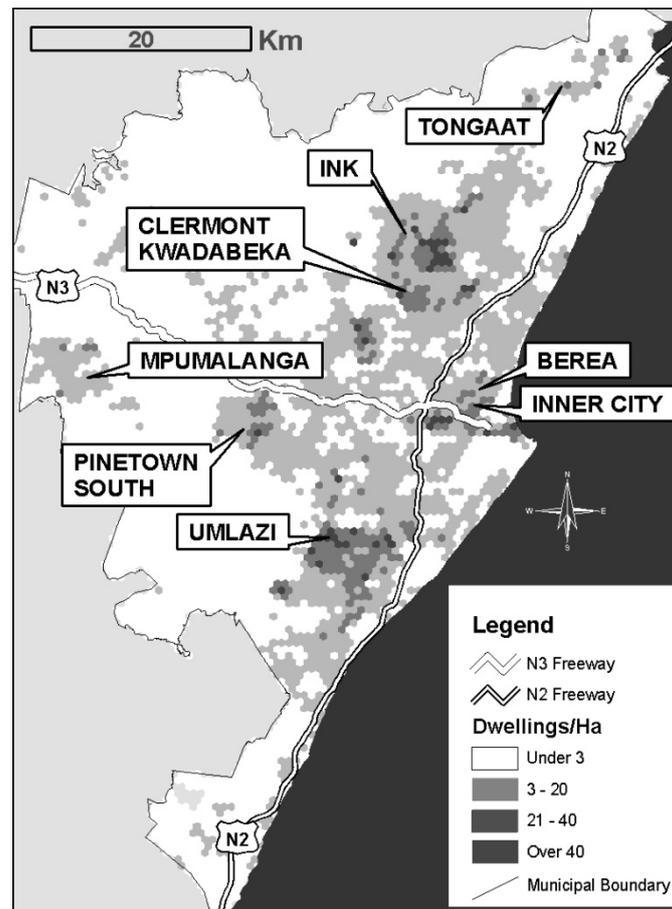


Figure 3. Household densities in eThekweni Municipality. The plan illustrates the poly-centric configuration of the city. Source: eThekweni Municipality 2012b.

The city's housing typology illustrates the complex morphology of the city. The most significant features are firstly, that approximately a third of the population live in informal housing, mainly on the urban periphery, but also in significant pockets within formal urban areas and secondly, approximately 85% of the formal housing stock is a free-standing dwelling. Broadly speaking the city has 945 919 dwellings, of which 55% is formal, 34% is defined as informal and 11% as rural (which includes a small percentage of formal housing) (eThekweni Municipality 2012c: 67).

The formal housing typology ranges from medium and high rise flats in the inner city, to a combination of high-rise flats, old 1940s medium-rise flats, duplexes, two-storey and single-storey housing within a range of six kilometres of the inner city.

The next ring of residential housing within a 12 km radius is largely low density single houses, housing low to high income inhabitants.

In the last two decades upper income households have moved from central and suburban locations to existing 'old' high-income areas on the urban periphery.

These new typologies have taken the form of gated housing estates – containing luxury housing for the very wealthy which 'sells' in the basis of its indigenous landscape. The larger ones often have a range of housing typologies and some open space provision, golf estates, that is, dense clusters of houses set within a golf course with very stringent architectural rules, and more recently, eco-estates. The bulk of formal housing being built is government subsidised housing, which, with few exceptions, takes the form of a single dwelling on a site.

Approximately one in ten people live in state-subsidised housing in eThekweni (South African Cities Network 2011: 50). These new 'townships' are located mainly on the urban periphery, due to land availability and land cost. Informal settlements are mainly on the urban edge, supported in many instances by basic state-provided services in the form of surfaced main routes, communal water standpipes and street lighting.

Urban open space allocation

In eThekweni the Town Planning Scheme designates the type of use and the development controls attached to each zone indicate the bulk of development.

This legal document regulates the uses through a scheme plan based on a zoning system as stipulated in the Planning and Development Act (Province of KwaZulu-Natal 2008), which directs and regulates planning and development in the Province. Table 1 refers to typical public open space zones that are used as a checklist for sub-divisional plans.

PARKS		
Type	Standards provided	Definition
District Park	YES – in combination with community parks and all developed parks	Usually a large park with a variety of recreational spaces. Serves the needs of several surrounding local communities/ or suburbs. People may travel some distance to access. Cater for a range of age groups. Generally multi-functional. Can include active and passive recreational facilities, informal sports facilities such as kick-about areas, multipurpose hard surfaces and playground equipment. Can include a special interest component such as a river, water body, wetland or biodiversity area.



Community Park – incorporating neighbourhood parks	YES – see above	A smaller scale park, serves the needs of the immediate local community or neighbourhood. May include active and passive recreational areas, small scale kick-about areas, multi-purpose hard courts and playground equipment. Cater for two or more age groups. In its simplest form this category may be no more than a couple of items of play equipment.
OTHER MAIN OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL TYPES		
Greenbelt	NO	A greenbelt usually follows the route occupied by natural watercourses or man-made canals (including retention ponds) and is often associated with areas rich in biodiversity or heavily planted with trees. Can form part of DMOSS.
Sports Facilities	YES	Includes sports fields, stadia and indoor halls.
Undeveloped POS	NO	Land zoned but that has not been developed (for whatever reason). May form part of planned allocation of other types but not part of current provision.
Cemetery	YES – separate standard provided	Land falling under the jurisdiction of Municipal Parks Department and set aside specifically for burial purposes, e. g. cemeteries, crematoria and mausoleums.
Coastal Amenities	NO – subject to local context	Usually linear public open space and amenities along coastal regions, which are managed by Municipal Parks Department and may include high profile tourist facilities.
Road Amenities and other amenity servitudes	NO	Land zoned 'road reserve' for which municipal Parks Department has some maintenance responsibility. Other amenity servitudes in same category. The road/amenity reserve may be unmade, alternatively Municipal Parks Department could be responsible for maintaining trees, shrubs, grass or elements of hard landscaping. These areas are sometimes not fully accessible to the public, but contribute to the visual attractiveness or environmental amenity of an area. Some may be suitable for use as food gardens in the medium term.
SECONDARY CATEGORIES OF OPEN SPACE		
Biodiversity Areas	NO	These are usually sub-sets of one of the main categories of POS and indicate areas containing a high concentration of endemic vegetation types (biodiversity of local populations of endangered species).
Servitudes	NO	Pedestrian access between private properties. Servitudes may be jointly managed with other service branches as they may provide access to mountainous regions, provide vital pedestrian links between high and lower level roads or provide a route to underground services.

Table 1. Types of Open Space: Typical categories used in allocation of Open Space Zones
Source: CSIR 2011: 41

All open spaces are delivered in terms of the required standards and are maintained by the eThekweni Municipality’s Culture, Parks and Recreation Department. The National Environmental Management Act (RSA 1998b) has a very strong bearing on approval of development proposals and requires various levels of environmental impact assessment to be done. In eThekweni Municipality the requirements to protect watercourses and wetlands with 32 meter buffers has resulted in relatively small residential subdivisions in green-fields developments with generous passive urban spaces that preclude any active use thereof. This raises concerns by planning consultants that these swathes of land will be invaded as new arrivals in the city search for land near basic services. There is anecdotal evidence from planning consultants that this has already happened in many instances (Kirby 2012).

New urban landscapes in eThekweni

The distinctive spatial features of post-modern urbanism are visible in South African cities: the poly-nuclear, fragmented city form; the sprawl at the edge of the city; event-based glamour projects in the form of sport stadiums and international conference centres; the persistence in car-dependent low density sprawl, the barricaded gated residential communities, privatized public space in the form of office parks and shopping centres.

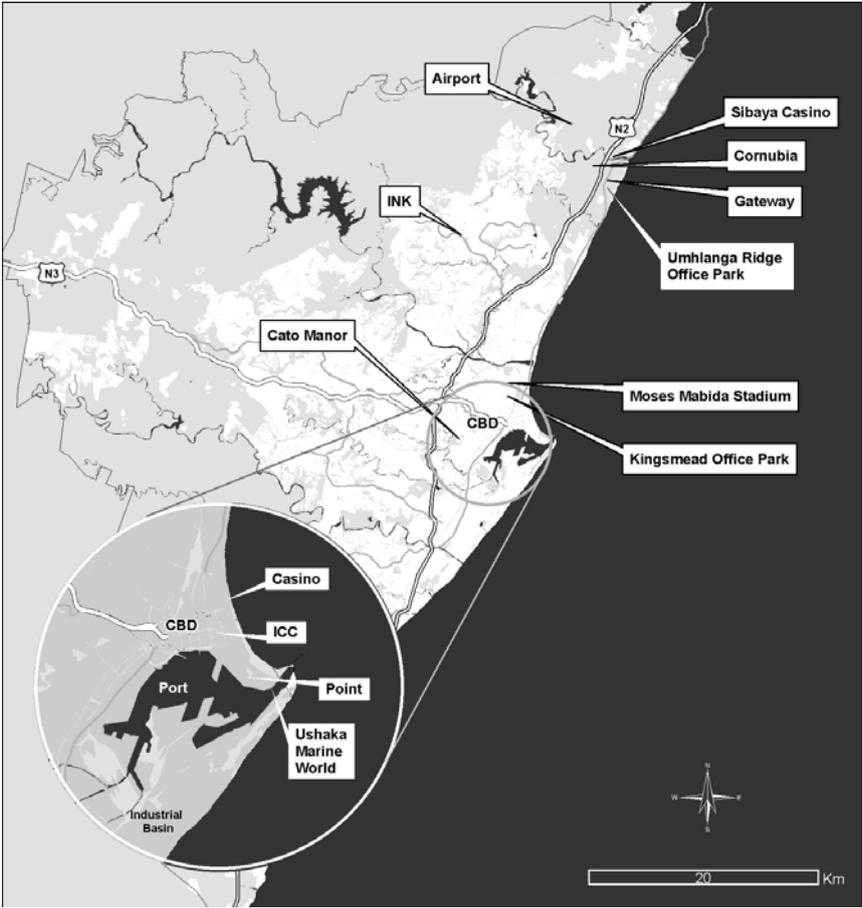


Figure 4. New urban landscapes in post-1994 eThekweni Municipality. Source: Main settlement typologies for eThekweni Municipality. Province of KwaZulu-Natal 2009, eThekweni Municipality 2007.

These characteristics are prevalent in large cities in the global economy and are manifested, interpreted and modified in different ways. Murray (2004:9) suggests that 'What needs to be investigated is how ordinary cities – and this category includes aspirant world-class cities, 'late developing cities', postcolonial cities and 'third world cities' – adopt, borrow, pillage, incorporate, mimic and flaunt the characteristic features of post-modern urbanism'. Some of these adoptions and borrowings will be discussed in the following sections.

In order to categorise eThekweni Municipality's new urban landscapes, Gospodini's (2006) framework for portraying, classifying and understanding the emerging landscapes in post-industrial cities is used as a point of departure; its European roots is acknowledged. The intention is to identify and differentiate, rather than 'universalise' the morphology of eThekweni Municipality. Gospodini reflects on the impact of late 20th century economic globalization on urban systems and there is a strong resonance with the emerging forms of city-building in South Africa, with governance that focuses on "amenity growth" (Gospodini 2006: 311). The creation of place identity to encourage investment were clearly stated objectives (UN HABITAT 2010) that lead to the landscape transformations in eThekweni that preceded the FIFA World Cup in 2010.

The main components of recent episodes of city-building in eThekweni are considered in terms of location, land use patterns, density and form. Gospodini identifies two main categories of classification: firstly, the 'signifying epicentre' in the inner city which is described as creative clusters forming new urban islands and edges, that consists variously of high level financial services, knowledge and technology-intensive firms and leisure-focused developments such as waterfront developments, museums and clusters of restaurant and clubs (Gospodini 2006: 325). These urban islands are mostly the products of episodes of urban redevelopment, replacing obsolete industrial land uses and technologically out-of-date commercial buildings. The second broad category is that of 'diffused urbanity' in the urban fringe (*ibid.* 325). These 'dispersed built episodes' take the form of 'exurban new centralities and housing dispersal' (*ibid.* 321).

Table 2 provides a summary of the new urban landscapes to be discussed below. Gospodini's framework is adapted and extended to include informal urban landscapes and to distinguish between the inner city and other urban cores within the urban perimeter.

LOCATION	STATE PRODUCTION	PRIVATE SECTOR PRODUCTION	INFORMAL PRODUCTION
Inner City. 'Signifying epicentres' (Gospodini 2006).	Moses Mabhida Stadium with public urban spaces integrated into pedestrian and cycling routes connected to the beachfront.	Sun Coast Casino on the beachfront, with its circulation spaces connected to the beachfront.	
	Proposed port expansion.	Ushaka Marine World, a tourist theme park, with a series of pedestrian paths connecting retail shops, restaurants and the beachfront promenade.	
	International Conference	Office Park (Kingsmead	

LOCATION	STATE PRODUCTION	PRIVATE SECTOR PRODUCTION	INFORMAL PRODUCTION
	Centre	Office Park). A small cricket pitch forms part of the internal semi-public spaces.	
	Beachfront regeneration features a refurbished promenade that links the various beaches, with a range of activities and food outlets.	The Point mixed-use medium density residential and commercial development with stringent architectural design guidelines to ensure well-designed canals, parks and pedestrian paths linked to the beachfront promenade.	Small pockets of informal settlements within the urban fabric, usually on marginal land. Pedestrian paths and roads double up as public space.
	Social housing: new construction in Cato Manor and the refurbishment of old building stock in Albert Park supported by old open space provision.	Redevelopment of large residential sites into medium density clustered townhouses in existing residential areas, often gated. Depending on the scale, public spaces form part of the layout design.	
New urban centralities outside the inner city, inside the urban perimeter.	INK urban township renewal, formed by three townships, that of Inanda, KwaMashu and Ntuzuma. Substantial investments in station upgrading, infrastructure and social facilities have been made.	Umhlanga Ridge Office Park, an extensive medium rise office park that is in sections publicly accessible, with stringent architectural design guidelines, a high quality urban realm with extensive indigenous planting, traffic circles to regulate speed.	
The urban periphery. 'Diffused urbanity' in the form of new centralities and housing dispersal (Gospodini 2006).	State-subsidised housing (bulk of provision). Standardised public open space is provided.	New nodes: Gateway Shopping Centre with surrounding new urbanist development with detailed and nuanced urban public spaces.	Densification of existing informal settlements with substantial variation in age, size and pace of densification.
	Proposed Cornubia 'new town' will form a new 'exurban centrality'.	Large scale gated housing estates (La Domaine, Plantations), golf course estates (Mt. Edgecombe), with privatised parks and open spaces.	

LOCATION	STATE PRODUCTION	PRIVATE SECTOR PRODUCTION	INFORMAL PRODUCTION
Outside the urban periphery - leapfrog development. 'Exurban new centralities' (Gospodini 2006).	Aerotropolis: Dube TradePort and King Shaka International Airport. Large-scale integrated urban public space system.	Casino (Sibaya Casino)	
	Large-scale infrastructure provision such as landfill sites and sewerage works.	Gated housing estates with privatized parks and open spaces.	Densification of existing informal settlements, mainly on land under traditional tenure.

Table 2. New urban landscapes in eThekweni Municipality
Source: Adapted from Gospodini 2006

In eThekweni, the ‘signifying epicentre’ is exemplified in the Moses Mabhida Stadium, the International Conference Centre, the Sun Coast Casino on the beachfront and the Point redevelopment at the harbour mouth. These glamorous urban islands are in contrast with the older sections of inner city that, in places, are run down and display a high degree of informality in the form of street traders and informally converted office buildings to residential accommodation. The spaces in between these urban islands and well-maintained beach-front edge offer a range of opportunities to a spectrum of income groups; for example, accommodation in the form of up-market hotels and holiday apartments, as well as social housing apartments, apartments for the aged, illegally subdivided offices used as apartments, shelters and hostels.

The pursuit of a global identity is exemplified in the Moses Mabhida Stadium within the Kings Park Sports and Recreation precincts. In the years preceding the FIFA World Cup event, eThekweni built a stadium, developed a new railway station, renovated the beach-front infrastructure, well-designed facilities and created new urban public spaces. A major advantage of these large-scale capital investments was the opportunity for city planners to leverage significant funds to upgrade the public realm that would be in the global gaze (Breetzke 2012).

The opportunity to invest into the public realm, given the context of housing and services backlogs, does not present itself often. As a case in point, there has been a 30-year gap since the last upgrading of the beach front. (Peters 2010).

As Gospodini (2006: 322) points out, the ‘external new centralities’ such as shopping centres, business parks, theme and amusement parks and hospitals have a profound impact on the city as a whole. The development of a town centre in Umhlanga on the urban perimeter and alongside the National freeway has fundamentally shaped the city. The town centre consists of Gateway, a regional shopping centre with surrounding ‘new urbanist’ apartments, mixed use, a large-scale retail park, specialist facilities such as the Umhlanga Hospital and Medical Centre, hotels and offices and a variety of well-designed, high quality public urban spaces. Part of this ‘new centrality’ on the urban edge is the Umhlanga Ridge Office Park, which became the locus of offices fleeing from the perceived crime and grime of the Central Business District in the early 2000s. The proposed Cornubia, across the freeway from the Gateway town centre node, is a planned new town on the northern urban periphery of eThekweni, the conceptual plans and

layout of the first phase emphasises the importance of the public realm; it remains to be seen whether these concepts and plans will be executed.

The King Shaka International Airport started operating in 2010, in time to capture the visibility that the FIFA World Cup media coverage and influx of tourists would bring. The Dube TradePort hub, of which the airport forms part, was conceptualised as an aerotropolis. The master plan for the complex includes a detailed open space system. The airport is located well beyond the urban periphery and has significant implications for the direction and form of city-building in the next twenty years (Hansmann and Ralfe 2010).

One of the major nodes in the city, formed by the three townships Inanda, KwaMashu and Ntuzuma (INK), is the focus of the national urban renewal programme. Substantial investment in the KwaMashu Town Centre, station upgrading and social facilities have been made. The urban realm has been improved through installation of basic urban furniture, paving and planting.

A third of the population of eThekweni lives under conditions of informality, which with little exception provides no public goods in the form of urban spaces. These informal settlements continue to grow incrementally, in the form of steady accretion at the urban periphery. This fine-grained, organic densification of a low-rise housing morphology is in stark contrast to the impact and visibility of large-scale infrastructure projects and medium-scale housing development at the urban periphery.

In the formal state subsidised housing, the provision of public space is hamstrung by the very stringent requirements to protect the natural environment, leaving planners to make the difficult trade-off between the size of individual residential sites and active and passive public space provision (Kirby 2012). Most of the state-subsidised housing forms a distinctive morphology of single dwellings on the urban periphery, with some different housing typologies beginning to emerge as planners battle to raise the densities in these projects within the funding parameters.

The relatively small amount of mixed-use new urbanism developments at the Point and the Gateway nodes deliver a medium rise cohesive morphology with a range of public spaces that is controlled through architectural design guidelines. The new urbanism medium-density mixed-use redevelopment in the late 1990s on the Point, a brown-fields site on the harbour-mouth, has missed the opportunity to incorporate history into this redevelopment project. These finely grained urban landscapes provide some precedent for alternative residential-commercial land use mixes that is the current norm, but tends towards a 'homogenised' environment that limits memorable place-making (Carmora 2010b). This good quality urban realm is within the public domain, but aims for a small housing market sector that targets middle- and upper-income buyers.

The morphology of gated housing estates and golf-course estates at the urban periphery are usually controlled through architectural design guidelines (the degree of resultant architectural homogeneity varies between developments) to provide privatised and carefully designed communal spaces, often with indigenous planting. These gated urban landscapes are car-dependent, exclusionary spaces that contradict the notions of accessibility and integration espoused by the compact city model (Lemanski, Landman, and Durrington 2008). As Carmora (2010a: 131) points out, this precludes the very process of civility that supports the voluntary controls that keeps the public peace.

Conclusion

This exploratory paper outlines the macro-level policy context within which city-building takes place in eThekweni. The typology of new urban landscapes presented here provides the context within which urban spaces are designed, constructed and used.



This preliminary typology is coarse-grained and requires further research and elaboration in order to build a more comprehensive analysis of how urban spaces are articulated within the old and new urban fabric of eThekweni Municipality.

The new urban landscapes catalogued above, is a starting point towards developing a framework for classifying, cataloguing and assessing the urban realm and more specifically, public space. The expansion and detailing of this typology is the subject of further research. The consideration of older forms of city-building, land ownership and land markets would produce a more rigorous typology.

A more nuanced reading of the micro-scale spaces would extend and modify some of the observations made above and a historical analysis of public space provision would considerably add to an understanding of how and why urban spaces are used.

A comparative study of the different types of urban space provisions in the large South African metropolises would constitute a persuasive body of research to begin to influence thinking on the urban realm and in particular, the making of memorable, exciting urban public spaces.

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