



CASE STUDY

URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE MITCHELLS PLAIN TOWN CENTRE (MPTC)

OVERVIEW

- Background
- Origins of the project
- Problem statement
- Problem analysis
- Targeted outcomes
- Intervention logic
- Solutions – current and proposed
- Results
- Lessons learned

BACKGROUND (1)

- Mitchells Plain is about 20km from the Cape Town city centre
- Built in the 1970s for coloured people forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act
- A dormitory town with lots of vacant, unsafe space
- Spatially marginalised
- Isolated from the rest of the city, amenities and opportunities
- 30% of people are unemployed
- 41,8% earn less than R1 600 per month
- 74,9% of adults do not have matric

BACKGROUND (2)

In 2003, Mitchells Plain Town Centre (MPTC):

- was the third busiest nodal public transport interchange for rail, bus and taxi in the metropolitan area
- was the busiest taxi terminus in the Western Cape
- had 75 000 people moving through the interchange during the morning and afternoon peaks



MAP 1
DRAFT URBAN RENEWAL SDF

- Core areas
- Transition areas
- Sand Mining (Medium Term)
- Active Open Space
- SC Multi-purpose Sports Complex
- Cemetery
- Utilities
- Nodes
- Activity Route
- Proposed Road Link
- Proposed Rail Link
- Infill Housing
- Existing Urban Development
- Existing Military Use
- New Urban Development



Aerial photo of MPTC in 2000



ORIGINS OF THE PROJECT

- Mitchells Plain was declared a URP node in 2001
- The MPTC project started in 2003 as a public transport interchange upgrade
- Since public transport was effectively MPTC's 'anchor tenant', the project sought to leverage an integrated upgrade of the entire 70ha town centre out of the public transport upgrade
- The taxi industry and informal trading, normally seen as 'problems' to be kept out of sight, were seen as opportunities for economic development which:
 - deserved good locations
 - had the latent capacity to manage themselves

PROBLEM STATEMENT (1)

- MPTC an unsheltered, unprotected, unlit, inaccessible, unsafe environment
- A high level of conflict, and diverse and conflicting stakeholder interests
- Problems associated with buses:
 - facilities had become inadequate
 - bus movements were restricted (under-designed)
 - the bus rank occupied prime trading space
- Problems associated with taxis:
 - no facilities for 1 000 taxis and their passengers
 - 24 taxi associations in frequent violent conflict
 - gangs demanded protection money from taxis

PROBLEM STATEMENT (2)

- Problems associated with informal trading:
 - 1 000 traders
 - five trade associations in constant conflict
 - traders obstructed pedestrian walkways:
 - hampered movement of pedestrians, law enforcement officials and emergency vehicles
 - hampered formal business activities
- The City of Cape Town was in a no-win situation: the law was being infringed, but enforcing informal trading regulations would require pushing traders onto unsafe vacant land outside the town centre

PROBLEM STATEMENT (3)

- Crime:
 - gangsterism, robberies and drug dealing were rife
 - law enforcement was hampered by trader encroachment of public space
- Problems associated with formal business:
 - businesses were represented by property owners' and merchants' associations, and there was a well developed and profitable retail sector
 - however, encroachment of public space by informal traders and high crime meant business was in decline
 - businesses threatened a rates boycott

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

- MPTC's infrastructure was inadequate for the number of people and range of activities present there
- This led to high levels of conflict between and within sectors, creating unsafe conditions, and making law enforcement very difficult
- Municipal service delivery problems worsened the situation:
 - historically inadequate capital and operating budgets
 - a lack of development facilitation to integrate service delivery beyond engineering services
 - reactive rather than proactive
 - an inability to conduct urban management activities in what had become a chaotic situation, including an inability to effectively enforce the law

TARGETED OUTCOMES

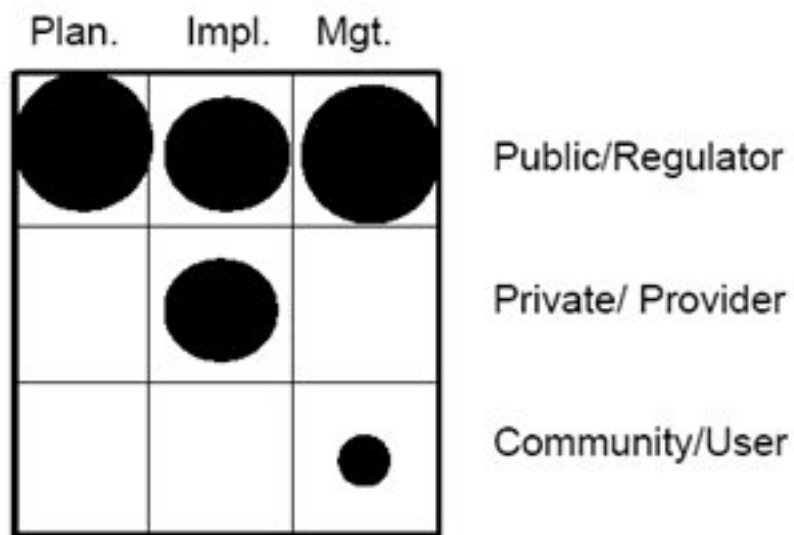
- A safe, convenient, seamless environment for public transport users
- A safe and pleasant environment for shoppers
- As much informal trading as possible in a prime location
- Opportunities for further retail development
- Opportunities for further economic development activities, e.g. training
- An enabling environment for leveraging private investment to generate jobs and support the reinvestment of disposable income

INTERVENTION LOGIC (1)

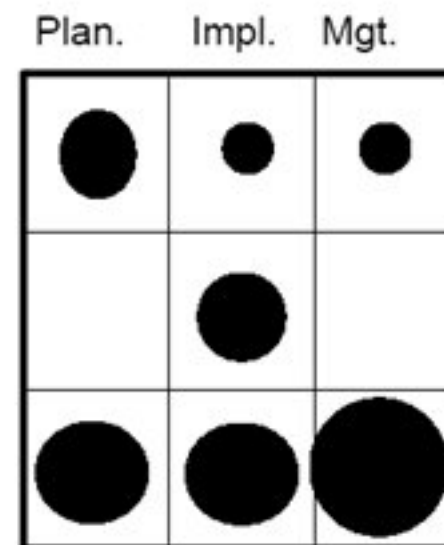
- A stable platform for the expression of community interests through accountable elected representatives
- Ongoing consultation with the community and flexibility throughout the process, even during construction
- The scope of work must not be reduced under any circumstances:
 - if necessary, more money must be found to implement the project to the original specifications
 - the quality of infrastructure delivered in poor neighbourhoods must be on a par with the best in the city. In fact it must be **better**, because it is used more
- The locus of decision-making and control must move from a centralised authority to a locally autonomous system to:
 - build local ownership
 - effectively manage, operate and maintain public assets

INTERVENTION LOGIC (2)

Devolving planning, implementation and management to community level:



Central administrative system



Local autonomous system

METHODOLOGY

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Social compat

Area identification

Community dynamics audit

Baseline survey

Prioritising interventions

Development of local strategies

Design of interventions

Implementation

Ongoing M&E

Sustainability through operation and maintenance

CAPACITY BUILDING
MENTORSHIP

- Trust
- Accountability
- Set of principles
- Development approach

SOLUTIONS (1)

Current (1)

- The establishment of a stable entity to ensure stakeholder participation:
 - Mitchells Plain CBD Steering Committee:
 - reps from the taxi industry, informal traders, formal businesses, property owners, rail authorities, Golden Arrow Bus Company, city officials and councillors.
 - a platform to establish unity in the various sectors, provide a platform for deciding what the elements of an upgrade might look like, and ensure ongoing consultation and participation, even while project work is in progress

SOLUTIONS (2)

Current (2)

- Task teams:
 - taxi task team to unify sector, agree on taxi infrastructure, and agree on operations and management of allocated taxi association blocks
 - informal traders' task team to unify sector, agree on trader infrastructure, and agree on operations and management of trading facilities
- Ad hoc committees to disseminate information
- Monthly updates to Mitchells Plain Sub-Council

SOLUTIONS (3)

Consultation process

IDENTIFICATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Community organisation
- Informal and formal traders
- Ward councillors

- Metrorail
- Bus operators
- Taxi forum
- Intersite
- Modalink
- SARCC

- CCT – Transportation forum
- CCT – Spatial planning
- CCT – Business area management
- CCT – Design services
- CCT – Roads & services
- CCT – Traffic control

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

Identification of problems & issues

TECHNICAL MEETINGS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETINGS

TASK TEAM MEETING 1

Presentation of proposals

TASK TEAM MEETING 2

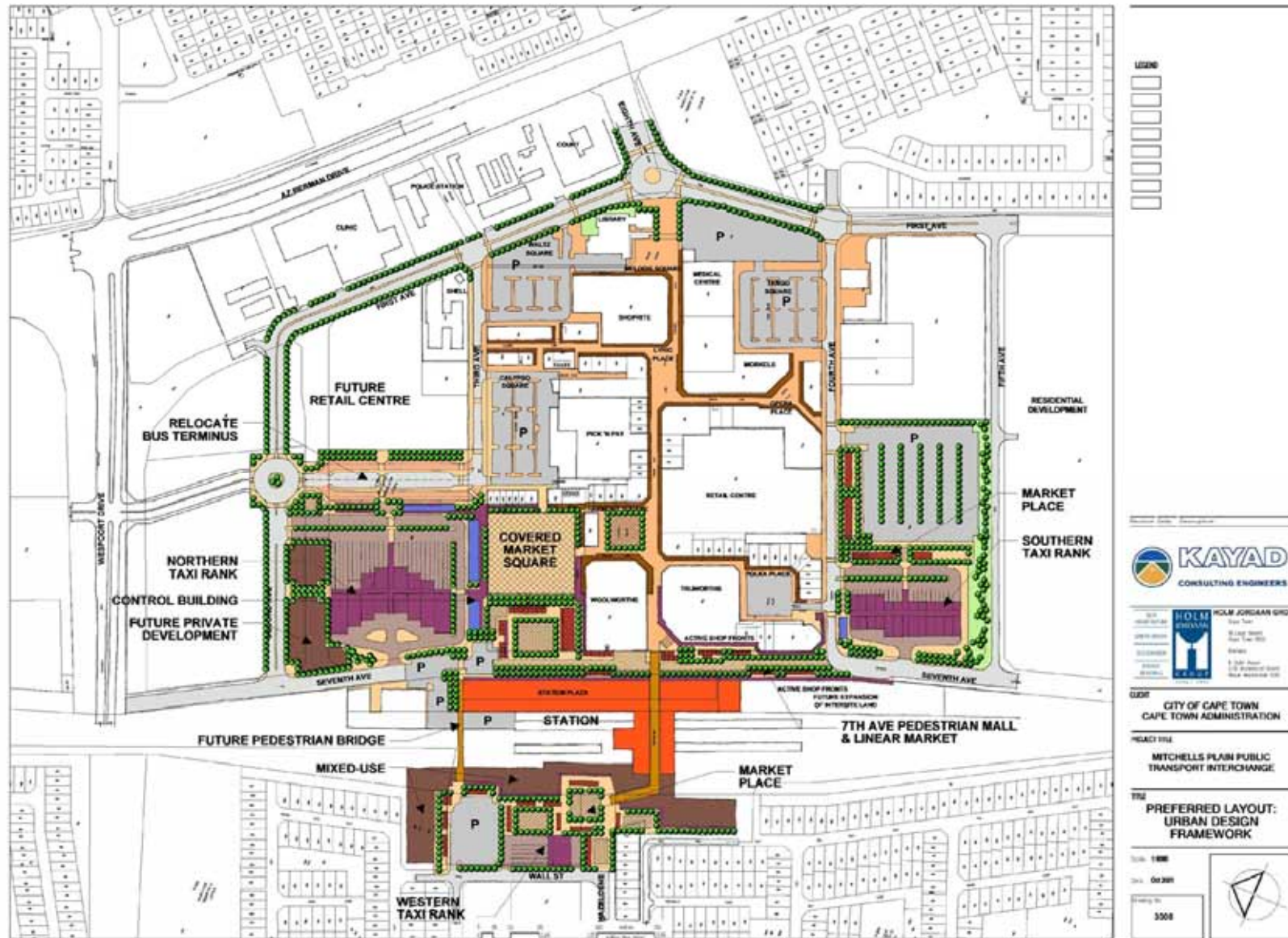
Presentation of preferred conceptual plan

SOLUTIONS (4)

Proposed formal entity

- A non-profit community-based operations and management company under a decision-making board (successor to current steering committee)
- A TID – targeted investment district – with a rates top-up levy, and with representatives from all sectors on the current steering committee
- Operating under a head lease with the city over MPTC informal trading areas, bus terminal, taxi rank, parking areas, public spaces and administration buildings
- City would relinquish certain income streams to the proposed new entity
- City would supply defined set of services according to service level agreements and be able to enforce the law because the environment is more stable
- Specific company mandate to promote local economic development and the employment of local people.

Current MPTC plan



RESULTS (1)

Physical upgrade

Physical infrastructure (about 75% complete):

- A bus terminus of 25 destinations
- Converting the existing bus terminus in the middle of the town centre to a central market square
- Closing off and creating a pedestrian walkway on an existing road to provide seamless access between the station and the town centre
- Building various new roads to link the interchange with arterial routes
- Building five signalised intersections and one signalised pedestrian crossing to ease traffic congestion

RESULTS (2)

Physical upgrade (contd)

- Building five signalised intersections and one signalised pedestrian crossing to ease traffic congestion
- Building administration buildings
- Improving public space through landscaping
- Improving security through closed circuit television cameras
- Building a pedestrian bridge across the railway line
- Reinforcing the existing pedestrian bridge

Aerial photo of MPTC in 2006



LESSONS LEARNED (1)

- Continually build consensus with the community.
 - do regular site visits
 - build relationships with people, not only leaders
 - keep in contact with people on the ground to stay aware of shifting community dynamics
 - ensure ongoing negotiation and consultation, even as implementation is happening
 - do whatever it takes to keep community stakeholders on board
- Forget about having the perfect plan:
 - any plan is the product of stakeholder participation
 - the plan must constantly be responsive and evolving
 - make a start, knowing mistakes will be made
 - the MPTC plan will only be final once the last brick has been laid.
- Keep evidence of changes

LESSONS LEARNED (2)

- Be willing to stick with the process, knowing that at times community members will:
 - try to play officials off against one another
 - start undermining rumours about officials
 - accuse officials of corruption and nepotism
- Get high-level political buy-in: MPTC team reported directly to sub-council
- Regularly revise budgets to ensure necessary cash flow to keep up the momentum
- Remind stakeholders of agreements reached
- Scrupulously minute every stakeholder meeting
- Build good relationships with key line department officials, and do legal preparations as early as possible
- Emphasise teamwork and allow people to perform to their strengths