

Chapter 3 - Brief

3.1 Problem Statement

“There is a serious lack of active recreation areas and sports grounds in the inner city.” - The Tshwane Inner City Development and Regeneration Strategy (City of Tshwane, 2005:27).

The design problem is a sport and education facility for students and the community in the study area. The facility provides the necessary infrastructure for a public precinct, a spine that is unprogrammed and flexible in that the community can stage a vast range of events, within a city block identified for these purposes. Effective placement and integration of this precinct into the urban fabric further requires the exploration of the potential of reprogramming the whole city block to function as this public precinct. Such an intervention will assist in providing an identity to the area. The vehicle to bring about this change is recreation in the form of sports facilities, and the potential link of using sport as a method of exposing individuals to education and financing facilities available to provide them with choices in life.

Of further importance is the accommodation of current on-site activities and the need to provide the community with safe social spaces and lend identity to the area.

3.2 Sub Problems

To fully understand the situation, the problem can be explored by analyzing the following sub problems:

- A - The study of the role of sport in a South African context and the potential of sport as a unifying element in a community.
- B - The study of sport facilities and their relevant programme.
- C - The study of public squares and their successful characteristics, including the presence of both unprogrammed space and fixed programme in such places.

3.3 The intervention

Thus, the dissertation will firstly focus on reprogramming the city block as a whole, creating a public precinct with the subsequent vital connections to the city that will ensure the flow of energy into the lost space.

The tendency to place sports facilities on city outskirts in recent times in South Africa, has resulted in a limited use of these facilities. An example of this is the Chatsworth Youth Centre in Durban, that has fallen into disuse and has been taken over by a crime syndicate (Harbour, 2007). It is quite obvious that a facility that provides big open spaces can easily be accessible to the public at all times of the day, ensuring a place of safety and much needed social spaces in the city. The existence of dead spaces in the city provides an ideal opportunity to convert these into vibrant public spaces. The subsequent mass of people present in one place provides the opportunity for community upliftment through commercial ventures, and therefore a skills transfer program will be initiated. Finally, current site uses will be respected and catered for in the reprogrammed city block.

Secondly, the dissertation will focus on the design of a sports and education facility in the newly established public precinct that will expose individuals to opportunities in life. The educational component present in the building also provides the surrounding educational facilities with much-needed library and Internet facilities. The role of sport in a South African society has already been discussed in Chapter 2.