

**A critical analysis of the process of transformation
of the city planning function in the city of Tshwane Metropolitan
Municipality**

by

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Submitted in fulfillment of part of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Town and Regional Planning in the Faculty of Engineering,
the Built Environment and Information Technology, University of
Pretoria

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2005

*To my parents,
Herman and Esther Tesner,
who gave me roots
and my husband,
Martin,
who gives me wings.*

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MEMBERS OF THE CAST



CHAPTER 1

ABOUT THE STUDY

The establishment of a new unicity municipality represented a significant departure from the previous dispensation for local government in the Tshwane area. The implementation of the new structure was preceded by the gargantuan task of compiling a comprehensive body of legislation that would set out the framework for and provide guidance with regard to the multiple processes involved. Yet, at the point when implementation actually started, it was, more than anything, a human drama that unfolded. It is this drama of people with widely divergent backgrounds, personalities and ambitions aspiring to, wielding and oppressed by power that forms the focus of this study.

1.1 The purpose of the study or problem statement

The study is about the restructuring of the City Planning function during the Tshwane local government transformation from 5 December 2000 to 30 June 2002. It provides an analysis of the forces that were at work in the process, as well as the outcomes thereof with specific reference to power¹ and rationality². The study is presented in the form of a narrative³.

1.2 Type of study

The research focuses on a specific experience of organizational change, namely that of the City Planning function of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM). The research attempts to observe this specific case and to describe the forces and patterns that gave it its characteristic shape – a shape that may well contain elements found in similar experiences in other municipalities and in other organizations. As such, the study has strong parallels with case study research. Moore (1987:47) states that “*Case studies*

¹ See Chapter 5, paragraph 5.1.3, for more on the concept of power in the context of this study.

² Rationality denotes arguments based on scientific knowledge and reason. It represents the objective truth as it is discovered through human understanding.

³ See Chapter 2 for more on the narrative as literary form.

are usually used when the research is attempting to understand complex organization problems or the diffuse causes and effects of change". Leedy & Ormrod (2001:149) offer a simple but valuable definition of a case study when they state that: "In a case study, a particular individual, program, or event is studied in depth for a defined period of time". Yin (1989) describes a case study as an "empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". The legislative and theoretical context of the Tshwane experience is provided in Chapters 4 and 5.

I opted for a very detailed and personalised case study, trying to render my own experience as fully as possible. This is in contrast with the type of "generic" case study advocated by Catanese (1974), which, as he states it, "can overcome the necessity to provide countless details of background for each analysis – enhancing readability." It is even further removed from the case studies presented by Schütte et al (1995), which have been generalised to the point of appearing fictitious. It is my contention that it is exactly the densely woven detail of the narration of the Tshwane case study that will convey something of the experience and that will draw in the reader to share in the social reality within which the experience took place. This reality is recreated through my own observations and emotions captured in writing.

The study is an example of Flyvbjerg's (2001) contemporary interpretation of the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis*, which can best be translated as "prudence" or "practical wisdom". He argues that *phronesis* goes beyond the other two sciences identified by Aristotle, namely *episteme* (empirical, natural science) and *techne* (craftsmanship) and demands value-judgments of the type required of a "virtuoso social and political actor" (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 2). Basing his argument on the five levels of human learning identified in the Dreyfus model, Flyvbjerg (2001: 9-49) shows that *phronesis* is closely related to the highest, or "expert" level of learning, and not to the lower levels that rely less on contextual factors and more on context-independent facts or rules. As a context-dependent science, *phronesis* is concerned with praxis. In this

regard Flyvbjerg (2001: 4) attempts to help “*restore social science to its classical position as a practical, intellectual activity aimed at clarifying problems, risks, and possibilities we face as humans and societies, and at contributing to social and political praxis*”. Flyvbjerg (2001) therefore argues that social science as *phronesis* is a distinct science and that “*attempts to reduce social science and theory either to episteme or techne, or to comprehend them in those terms, are misguided*” (Flyvbjerg 2001: 2). Therefore, social science fails when it attempts to be (or become) natural science. In popular management theory, however, Flyvbjerg’s viewpoint is yet to be adopted. Kaplan and Norton followed their bestselling book *The Balanced Scorecard* (1996) with another well-received volume *Strategy Maps: Converting intangible assets into tangible outcomes* in 2004. The balanced scorecard and strategy maps developed by Kaplan and Norton (1996 and 2004) are both tools for lending an empirical edge to the practice of management. The rationality underlying this work is aptly summarised on the fly leaf as “*you can’t manage what you can’t measure*”. This stands in stark contrast to the understanding that is to be gained from *phronetic* science, which, according to Flyvbjerg (2001), is intuitive, mature, holistic and well-tried. Flyvbjerg (2001) presents a view directly apposed to that of Kaplan and Norton (2004) when he (2001:19) states that “*Experience cannot necessarily be verbalized, intellectualized, and made into rules. Therefore, the cognitivists have a difficult time understanding it*”. From my own experience as a novice researcher in the field of social science, Flyvbjerg’s (2001) arguments for *phronetic* social study are more convincing than attempts by scholars such as Kaplan and Norton (1996 and 2004) for social (or management) science to be forced into a natural science mould.

Flyvbjerg (2001:63) identifies the following characteristics for *phronetic* social science:

- A focus on values;
- A closeness of the authors to the object of their study;
- A focus on the details (*minutiae*) of practices that “*make up the basic concerns of life*” Flyvbjerg (2001:63);
- Extensive use of case studies;

- Use of the narrative as revelatory tool, and
- A dialogical slant that allows for other voices than that of the author to be heard.

Phronetic research is unequivocally practice-oriented. Flyvbjerg (2001:134) states that “*Phronetic research focuses on practical activity and practical knowledge in everyday situations*”⁴.

Flyvbjerg (2001) argues that the case study is a useful tool for developing the “*tacit skills*” Flyvbjerg (2001:35) with which experts (including expert researchers) operate. He illustrates that, while the background conditions for natural science is physical facts, for social science it is “*patterns of behaviour*”, characterised by “*expert exercise of tacit skills*” Flyvbjerg (2001:45). As does expert knowledge, *phronesis*, more than anything else, requires *experience* (Flyvbjerg, 2001:57). Experts have been shown to draw on intimate knowledge of large numbers of cases in their fields of expertise (Flyvbjerg 2001:71). Flyvbjerg therefore describes the case study as a “*method of learning*”.

Flyvbjerg (2001) argues that case studies produce the type of knowledge that makes it possible to progress from the lower levels of human learning to the higher levels. He states that “*if people are exclusively trained in context-independent knowledge and rules, that is, the kind of knowledge which forms the basis of textbooks and computers, they will remain at the first levels of the learning process*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:71). He adds that the detailed closeness to real-life situations offered by case studies is helpful in developing a nuanced view of reality. Case studies are, however, also important for the researcher’s own skills through “*concrete, context-dependent experience*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:72), which is essential to progress to the higher levels of learning.

The reader should be aware of the limitations of a case study approach. As Moore (1987) contends, case studies lack the statistical validity of properly

⁴ More could be read on this point on page 39, paragraph 5.1.2, “A penchant for practice”.

selected samples and the validity of conclusions can be limited by the degree to which such a study can be viewed as “*typical*”. Refuting such criticism, Flyvbjerg (2001:66-87) contends that case studies are well suited to produce concrete, context dependent knowledge, which in essence is all that social science has to offer. He adds (2001:75) that the argument that formal generalization is always at the root of scientific progress is unfounded. As *phronesis* has at its centre *practical* rationality, it benefits from case studies and particularly the exposition of the situational ethics and context-dependent value-judgments that constitute cases. Case studies are not only a tool for understanding practical rationality, but also for communicating it to others (Flyvbjerg, 2001:135). It is not the intention of this study to present the Tshwane experience as unique in every (or any) respect, neither is it the intention to portray it as “*typical*”. Rather, my aim is to discover those common threads that characterise processes of organizational change. It should furthermore be noted that purely scientific or empirical research does not necessarily yield more valid results, the classical example of which is the well-known Hawthorne experiments (Moore, 1987:48; Ott, 1989). Moore also argues that case study research can be a time-consuming process, as a study of organizational change, for example, can extend over months or even years. The danger, according to Moore (1987:48), is that the research results, when finally published, may already have been “*overtaken by events*”. I am confident, however, that the timeframe of this study is such that its outcome, which is of a generalised nature (in other words not limited to application in one situation only), will still be relevant at the time of publication. The specific period of eighteen months I have chosen to study represent the peak of the transformational phase that is temporally situated between two phases of relative inertia, or stability (see Aldrich, 2002), or as Greiner (1991) puts it, a *revolution* situated between two phases of *evolution*⁵. The understanding gained from the study may find universal application in other cases of organizational change.

⁵ See also page 50, paragraph 5.2.2: “*Organizational Change*”.

Flyvbjerg (2001: 73-81) argues in favour of strategic sampling of cases which promise to be either critical (cases that allow a deduction of the type “*if this is (not) valid for this case, it is valid for all (no) cases*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:79)) or extreme (cases that are particularly problematic or particularly good in relation to the subject being investigated), or paradigmatic cases (cases that develop a metaphor or establish a school for the relevant domain) or a combination of the three, rather than selecting cases on a random basis. I would add to this, however, that there is also a case to be made for the researcher selecting a case that is close to him/her, even a case in which he/she has had personal involvement, as such selection brings with it the benefit of particular insight and unarticulated knowledge that would be absent in an “*external*” case or a case far removed from the researcher’s own experience. A survey of practice proves that this is most often the case. Examples are Flyvbjerg’s (1998) study of Aalborg, and the South African studies of Watson (2001) (Cape Town) and Coetzee (2005) (Tshwane). I also chose the Tshwane case partly on the basis of my own involvement in it.

This approach is strengthened by Flyvbjerg’s (2001:82) view that case study research “*can ‘close in’ on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice*”. He (2001:83) furthermore argues that, in keeping with the model of human learning, researchers stand to gain the most advanced level of understanding when they place themselves in the context studied.

1.3 Focus of the study

The study focuses on people – their intentions and actions, and the relations they have with each other as they take shape and exist at a certain time and within a certain setting or context. In the discourse around the transformation of local government in South Africa, the necessity of capacity-building is often stressed. In this regard, Moosa (1998) refers to the fiscal, technical and administrative capacity of municipalities that will have to be increased in order to enable them to manage the process of change. The main focus of this study is, however, not on the technical capacity of planners and the city

planning function, budgets, organizational structure, or number of support staff, etc. Although I have described the organizational, technical and political conditions that impacted on the planners, as referred to by Rabinovitz (1969), I tried to relate the experience of and reaction to these factors by the people involved in the restructuring of Tshwane's City Planning function. This implies that, rather than to provide a mere description of the context and events, I attempted to expose the social reality of culture, values, relations and emotions that shaped and was shaped by the events in question.

I recorded and scrutinized the deeds and words of the main role players during the study period not only through a recollection of my own experience of the related events, but also through encounters and discussions (interviews) with others who shared in the experience. I did so in an attempt to discern the underlying dynamics of power that shaped the story. More particularly, I focused on how power, or rather the aspiration to power, influenced the words and deeds of the main characters during the restructuring process. This is much the same approach as that which was followed by Flyvbjerg (1998) in his study of Aalborg.

The planners who are characters in my story are all "*real*" people, each with their own personality, background, political and religious affiliation, likes, dislikes and values. Unlike other authors (Catanese, 1974, and So et al (ed), 1979) who portray "*the planner*" as a distinct type, I have not sought to promote such stereotyping or generalisation, as I believe that it will greatly detract from the credibility of my narration and will remove from it the basis of synergy or tensions and powerplay, which, to a large extent, resulted from the unique idiosyncrasies of the characters involved.

1.4 Drawing the line: Defining the scope of the study

The scope of this study can be defined in terms of different parameters. The first is chronological. The study essentially seeks to describe and analyse events pertaining to the restructuring of Tshwane's planning function from **5 December 2000** to **30 June 2002**. The first date is that of the democratic local

government election that heralded the advent of a new structuring of local authorities in South Africa, the so-called unicity structure. The second date is the end of the Tshwane financial year, eighteen months after the introduction of the new structure. These eighteen months of the study were, in my view, the most eventful with regard to the restructuring of the planning function (although the restructuring was not completed in that period) and represented a manageable chunk of history to be studied in depth.

The scope of the study is defined not only in terms of the study period, but also in terms of the subject matter as such. Rather than include the whole of the Tshwane restructuring process, the study is confined to the planning function only, as this formed a manageable unit within which the experience of the transformation process could be studied. The choice of the planning function as the focus of this study was furthermore motivated by the central role afforded to planning within the new system of developmental local government as a tool for redressing past inequities in the country as set out in the White Paper on Local Government (1998).

I tried to expose the underlying forces that determined the course of the restructuring of the planning function. The work of Bent Flyvbjerg (1998), in particular, inspired me to take this approach. Flyvbjerg's study of Aalborg (1998) sparked a renewed interest in how planning works – in the factors and forces that shape the interaction between the profession and the city environment. I chose Flyvbjerg's (1998) gripping, richly textured narrative of the Aalborg Project as a key reference for this study not merely because it is inspirational reading for anyone attempting a case study of planning practice. I also chose it because of the apparent parallels that exist between the Aalborg case and that of Tshwane – this notwithstanding the fact that the focus of the Aalborg narrative is on planning as an activity in relation to external space while that of the Tshwane story is on the planning function as it is constituted within a bureaucratic municipal structure. The stop-start nature of the Aalborg project and the resultant delays in implementation, the failure of noble intentions to be realised, and most of all, the intricate web of powers at play and the use (rather, manipulation) of information and communication to

exercise such powers, are all mirrored in the Tshwane case. This study presents a valuable opportunity to add to this discourse by investigating the forces at play in the internal structuring of a planning function. The changing role of the planning profession, its struggle to find a meaningful role and identity in the face of a radically changing context, has been the subject of much deliberation in recent years (Healey, 1995; Sager, 1994; Nylund, 1995; McLoughlin, 1992) and adds another dimension to the narration.

Campbell and Fainstein (1996) argue that it is difficult to define planning theory in view of the fact that it overlaps with other disciplines and that it is therefore difficult to determine the boundaries between planning and other disciplines. Hulsbergen and Meyer (1998) furthermore argue that such fading boundaries could prove to be sources for renewal and alternative approaches, provided that the respective disciplines define their particularities anew. My study shows, however, that all aspects of planning (its external effect as well as its internal manifestation) are clouded and distorted by issues of power. Scholars such as Flyvbjerg (1998) show that the days of the planner as technician and design master are long gone (see also Oranje, 2000). It seems, however, that a new vision for planning is yet to emerge. Nonetheless, the debate around the new face of the planning profession falls outside of the scope of this study. My study is limited to the experience of organizational change in the planning function of a specific municipal structure.

I have deliberately attempted to “*narrow down*” the scope of the study so as to allow for the level of detail that would give the study the desired depth, rather than “*shallow bulk*”. As Moore (1987:65) argues: “*The tendency is to think that our understanding of a problem will increase as we collect more and more information about it. In fact, the reverse is usually the case ... when more questions are introduced, the amount of data increases but the understanding declines*”.

1.5 Structure of the study

The following four chapters provide the reader with more information on the narrative form that was used for the study, the research methodology and the legislative and theoretical context within which the narrative is located. Chapter six provides the narrative account of the transformation of the planning function of the CTMM during the study period, which can be viewed as the crux of the study. The last chapter offers an analysis of the recurring/enduring elements or patterns that emerged from the narrative.

1.6 Value of the study

An Internet and library catalogue search revealed that no study has yet been done of the transformation of a planning function in the most recent round of Local Government transformation in South Africa. In this sense, the study represents new knowledge. It also seeks to enrich the more general body of knowledge on organizational change or transformation. The study furthermore presents the opportunity to extrapolate the findings by Flyvbjerg (1998) regarding power and rationality from the external effect or operation of planning, to the internal organization of the planning function within a municipality.

CHAPTER 2

EMPLOYING THE POWERFUL ART OF STORYTELLING

As this study is essentially a story, the natural form to present it in is a narrative.

In popular self-help literature, the narrative has recently made a huge comeback. Books such as *Who moved my cheese?* by Spencer Johnson and *The one minute millionaire* by Mark Victor Hansen and Robert Allen (2002) have reached millions of readers with a message conveyed by way of simple, unadorned narratives. Painter-Morland (2003) proposes so-called “*narrative witnessing*” as an alternative approach to moral education in schools. She believes that narratives have the potential to allow “*a form of diverse and complex coherence to emerge and develop, both within and among learners with different moral loyalties and orientations*”. Similarly, Boje (1991) in his study of storytelling organizations, suggests that storytelling is used (particularly in turbulent environments) as an attempt to understand unfolding events. In spite of being an outspoken critic of the managerialist approach⁶, Boje (1991) argues that “*training managers to be storytellers may ... result in training them to be more effective in organizations*”. It would seem that we are genetically predisposed to understand and be attracted to narratives, to identify with characters thus presented and to gain from it a kind of learning that is the closest to experiential learning, or, if you will, *real life*. Flyvbjerg (1998) confirms the view that a narrative presentation of events facilitate the understanding thereof, when he states that “*it has been my aim to present my findings in the form of a narrative that would help readers move about in the dense case material*”.

2.1 The default genre of human experience

According to literary theorists such as Webster (1996) and Culler (1997) the narrative is, in fact, such an obvious and natural literary form, that it tends to be invisible. Scholars such as Roland Barthes view the narrative as inherent

⁶ An explanation of managerialism can be found in Chapter 4 of this study.

to all human experience. This is supported by Fredric Jameson (1981), who calls narrative “*the central function or instance of the human mind*”. Culler (1997) argues that humans have a basic drive to hear and tell stories and that we have implicit knowledge about the shape of stories, which results in certain expectations regarding, for example, the manner in which a story ends⁷.

Narrative theory could therefore, according to Culler (1997), be seen as an attempt to make explicit our unconscious narrative competence. The theory of narratives is known as narratology (Webster, 1996). One of the earliest studies of narrative texts can be found in Aristotle’s analysis of plays that showed, among other things, that a play always has a beginning, a middle and an end (Webster, 1996 and Culler, 1997). More recent and comprehensive theories of narrative were developed by the early twentieth century school known as the Russian Formalists. Focusing mainly on poetry, the Russian Formalists sought to approach the study of literature through a scientific, objective methodology. As an example, they would identify “*laws of plots*” that could be applied to all narratives. The Russian Formalist Vladimir Propp (1986) is well known for his analysis of folk tales, through which he attempted to isolate a pattern of regularly occurring features that appeared in all folktales. The focus was not so much on analysing the content of literature, but on its “literariness”, its unique use of organized language. A key concept coined by the Russian Formalists was that of “defamiliarisation”, a device used mainly in poetry to make ordinary/everyday things appear strange. The Formalists were strongly criticised (to the point of persecution in Russia) for not taking into account the social context of literary works and refusing to address ideological concerns arising from them (Groden & Kreiswirth, 1997; Wynne-Davies, 1997).

In his plea for a new (*phronetic*) social science, Flyvbjerg (2001) makes a compelling argument for the use of the narrative as a tool for such research. He (2001:18) states that “*Where science does not reach, art, literature, and narrative often help us comprehend the reality in which we live*”. He argues (2001:84) that narratives are ideally suited to conveying the complex and

⁷ For more on the endings of narratives, see the discussion on “closure” in paragraph 2.5.

contradictory nature of real life. The minutiae of a case that can be conveyed in the form of narrative description are important in the light of “*a fundamental phenomenological experience, that small questions often lead to big answers*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:133). However, Flyvbjerg (2001: 84-87) is sceptical of the ideal of summarising and generalisation as the outcome of social research. He rejects the notion of sacrificing detail in favour of “*conceptual closure*” and concludes that “*the narrative itself is the answer*”.⁸ Apart from the voices of the narrator and of the actors in the case, there is also room for the voice of the reader to ultimately decide the meaning of a case. Flyvbjerg (2001: 87) views “*thoroughly executed case studies*” as producing the exemplars which are essential in ensuring an effective discipline.

Such case studies, according to Flyvbjerg (2001:137) do not use explicit theoretical assumptions as their point of departure, but rather “*an interest in a particular phenomenon that is best understood narratively*.” This was indeed the case with the narrative of the restructuring of Tshwane’s planning function.

Flyvbjerg (2001:164) furthermore remarks that, thanks to the central place accorded to the narrative in *phronetic* social science, this form of research is less Eurocentric than other methods. *Phronetic* studies can be of value in all cultures by tapping into existing narrative traditions. In the light of the strong oral tradition in Africa, the narrative promises to be a mechanism well suited to bridging the cultural divide in the development of a *phronetic* science that is indigenous to the African continent.

2.2 The “narrative turn” in planning theory

The emergence of the focus on communicative action and power, as well as a heightened interest in planning practice (and the iterative relationship between practice and theory) in recent literature⁹ by authors such as Patsy Healey, Jean Hillier, Charles Hoch, Judith Innes, Helen Liggett, Tom Stein and Tom Harper, Seymour Mandelbaum, Tore Sager, Jeff Throgmorton (Yiftachel and

⁸ For a listing of possible research questions to be answered in this manner, see page 189.

⁹ See Chapter 5 for a discussion of communicative planning theory.

Huxley, 2000) is accompanied by a preference for the narrative as a tool with which to describe and analyse practice stories.

Hillier (2002:16) explains that she uses practice stories for three reasons. Firstly, practice stories are used to enable planners to recognise situations similar to their own experiences. Secondly, they provide planners with more understanding of the behaviour and motives of the actors involved, and lastly, they serve as a basis for theorisation in order for *“those experiences to be shared amongst a wide range of practitioners attentive to the complexities of planning practice”* (Hillier 2002:16).

In the light of what is said in 2.1 above, it would seem that the narrative is the obvious form for presenting complex cases of planning practice. The practice stories studied were typically dense, or so-called *“thick”* descriptions (Hillier, 2002:16). They described the *“voices, feelings, actions and meanings of interacting individuals”* (Hillier: 2002:16), or, in the case of Flybjerg’s (1998) study, *“the minutiae of the Aalborg story”* The *“dense case material”* (Flybjerg, 1998) thus presented, forms the basis of theorisation that could contribute to explaining and improving practice (see Hillier, 2002 and Forester, 1999). In this regard, Flybjerg (1998: 8) states that: *“Narratives not only give meaning to our past experiences, they also help us envision alternative futures”*.

Despite the fact that most of the proponents of communicative planning theory display an awareness of postmodernism (as the plurality of values and viewpoints characteristic of postmodern society is part of the rationale for a communicative approach), it should be noted that none of the practice stories studied (Coetzee, 2005; Hillier, 2002; Watson 2001, Flybjerg, 1998; Mcloughlin, 1992, Peattie 1987) were presented in the post-modern narrative style. In other words, these stories are not characterised by a disjointed temporal aspect, a blatantly dishonest narrator, or the use of puns and wordplay found in typically self-conscious postmodern story texts (Sim, 1998). Although Flybjerg (1998: xi) suggests that he is not a structuralist, he admits (1998:9) that his narrative is structured *“by the conventional means of time,*

place, actors and context.” The same can be said of the other narrative planning texts studied. The story of the transformation of the Tshwane planning function will also be offered as a narrative in the conventional sense. Background on this literary form is given below.

2.3 The story and the telling of it

Many studies and models of narrative writing exist. Roland Barthes suggested a model categorising all elements in the narrative in two groups, namely “*catalysers*”, which play an incidental or background role; and “*nuclei*” which are crucial moments of development or integration.

Studies such as those by Propp and Barthes concentrate on the content of narrative texts. However, much has also been written about the form of narrative texts, the telling itself or narration. Genette (1980) distinguishes between story, narrative, and narration. In concise terms, the story is the chronological sequence of events, the narrative the text presenting the events (in an often dislocated sequence) and the narration is the actual telling of the story. The Russian Formalists distinguished between the “*fabula*” or story material (events) and the “*suzet*” or plot. Later, EM Forster made the distinction between “story” and “plot”. Wayne C. Booth (1961) differentiates between the “*teller*” and the “*tale*”. Culler (1997) chooses a confusing terminology when he refers to “*discourse*” (the narration or story) and “*story*” (the events in chronological sequence) to distinguish between the events (albeit fictional events) and the telling of the events. It is therefore clear that a mere sequence of events does not constitute a story, rather, there has to be a plot indicating some kind of transformation and an ending relating, somehow, back to the beginning (Culler, 1997). In this study, I hope to transform the “*fabula*” or history through the telling of my own experience of the events (which I will further enrich with what could be discovered of how others experienced the events) into a narrative, or “*suzet*”. According to Culler (1997), the plot of any narrative hinges on the tension between that which was said to have happened, and that which actually happened. The same applies to my narrative of the transformation of the Tshwane planning function.

2.4 The powerful and, sometimes, invisible narrator

Fundamental to all narratives is a teller and a listener, or reader. A variety of terms are used to refer to these parties. The “*teller*” or narrator can appear in a variety of different forms, notably as first person or a third person narrator (Webster, 1996). First person narrators can play different roles in the stories they tell. They may be:

- The main *protagonists* (main characters);
- *Participants* who have a minor role in the story, or
- *Observers*, whose main role is to describe rather than to act (Culler, 1997).

Furthermore, the first person narrator may be fully developed (a person with a name, history, personality etc) or not well developed at all (Culler, 1997).

Culler (1997) states that “*to tell a story is to claim a certain authority, which listeners grant*”. So-called *unreliable* or *self-conscious* narrators undermine this authority when they flaunt the fact that their telling is coloured by their own bias or that they have the power to determine how the story will turn out. In this study, however, I endeavour (within the limitations of my own undeniable bias) to be a reliable narrator. I did not attempt to manipulate the story or its outcome, but rather tried to render “*the facts*” in the form of a narrative or story.

2.5 Who sees, who tells? Narrator and focalizer

Henry James developed the term “*post of observation*” (later referred to as “*point of view*”), which in more recent literary theory is called narrative focalization (Webster, 1996). Gérard Genette (1972) was the first to indicate the flaw in the assumption that the narrator and the figure in the text from whose perspective events were seen, was always the same person. This led Genette to make a distinction between the narrator and the focalizer. In the case of a first-person narrator, the narrator and the focalizer are most often

one and the same. Focalization can, furthermore, shift from one character to another during the course of a narration.

Culler (1997) identifies three variables that come into play during narration and focalization. The first variable is the *temporal aspect*. A narrator or focalizer can view events as they happen(ed) or with the gift of hindsight, or there can be a combination of the two. The second variable is related to *distance and speed*. This has to do with the pace of the story and the level of detail that is related. The third variable is so-called *limitations of knowledge*. A narrator or focalizer can lie anywhere between the two extremes of, on the one hand, viewing events and characters from a very limited perspective (similar to the lens of a camera), or, on the other, as a so-called omniscient narrator that has the godlike ability to access the innermost thoughts and motives of the characters.

2.6 Closure: the persuasive ending?

A narrative text follows a trajectory and, of its very nature, has to come to an ending, or closure. The manner in which narratives end is in itself the subject of much theorising. Endings vary from closed or “*rounded-off*” (Forster 1968) endings, to more open or unresolved endings. The term used for the way in which a narrative ends is “*closure*”. According to Webster (1996), closure has to do with the way in which a text persuades a reader to accept a certain worldview as valid or natural, as “*truth*”. This is confirmed by Catherine Belsey, in her book *Critical Practice* (1980), when she says that closure is the moment at which “*the events of the story become fully intelligible to the reader*”.

2.7 Telling seeking or becoming the truth

Culler (1997) refers to several functions of narratives, or reasons stories are told. The first function of narratives, initially identified by Aristotle, is to give pleasure through their imitation of life and their rhythm. Furthermore, the movement of narrative is driven by the human desire to know, to discover the

truth, to know the end. This is known as “*epistemophilia*”. Stories also teach us about the world and, through focalization, allow us to view the world from different vantage points. Narratives are at the same time a device for internalizing social norms and a mode for social criticism. Culler (1997) furthermore states that the basic question for narrative theory is whether a narrative is a fundamental form of knowledge of whether it is a rhetorical structure, which offers delusory clarification and consolation.

As it has become fashionable in texts such as this one, to also point out the “*dark side*” of certain academic perspectives or vantage points, such as modernism (Boje, 2001; Allmendinger, 2001), or planning (Allmendinger, 2001), it should also be pointed out that there is indeed a dark side to the use of the narrative. In the light of the American “*war on terrorism*”, which followed the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001, Boje (2001) argues that “*Narratives that posit a ‘totality’ of people in the West versus another ‘totality’ of people in the East need to be deconstructed to reveal the play of differences and emergent forces of resistance to such grand narration.*” He adds that storytelling can be a dangerous tool in the hands of political forces, especially in times of war, and when used by “*the non-critical academy*”, that is, academy that perpetuates propaganda rather than to expose it.

2.8 Telling it as I see it

In my narration of the transformation of the City Planning Function of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality rendered in Chapter 6, I am a participant teller or narrator and the focalization is my own. It could be argued that all narrators are biased (see Watson, 2001). Nonetheless, as stated earlier, I am what is referred to as a “*reliable narrator*”, as I attempted to provide the reader with a truthful and sincere rendition of the events as I experienced them. As does Flyvbjerg (1998:4) with his rendition of the Aalborg case, the Tshwane case study provides the reader with the “*real history*”¹⁰ or the “*effective truth*”¹¹. Of course, I realize that *any* attempt at a

¹⁰ Referred to as the “*wirkliche Historie*” by Nietzsche.

“truthful telling” is suspect. As Peattie (1987) says: “After all, every telling represents a different way of seeing. We see from where we stand; and why would we look unless we care about how the story comes out?”

As far as the temporal aspect is concerned, I write the story from my present post of observation, looking back at events as I recall them and as they emerge from the research into CTMM operational documents and from the interviews I have had with some of the role players or characters. It is implied that I have the benefit of hindsight, without which, I have no doubt, I would have written the story differently. This temporal aspect is also a dimension of “where I stand” as a storyteller, to use the words of Peattie (1987) above, and could therefore be viewed by some critics as another “filter” that could have a distorting effect on the facts of the events I relate. It could, in other words, be argued that the story would have been more authentic, even more “true” had it been told as it happened. I would counter, however, that *all* stories are essentially told from the vantage point of a narrator who has already “moved on in time” (examples are Peattie (1987), McLoughlin (1992), Flyvbjerg (1998) and Hillier (2002)). Particularly in the case of a participant narrator (see paragraph 2.4) I believe the distance thus achieved could assist the narrator to give a *less* biased account of matters as the passing of time brings better perspective and an understanding of the “*bigger picture*” of which the events and experiences form part. Flyvbjerg (1998:139) also views hindsight as an advantage.

¹¹ Referred to as the “*verita effettuale*” by Machiavelli.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 A qualitative approach

This study is qualitative rather than experimental (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 147) and research methodologies were chosen accordingly. The study therefore contains no examples of experimental research where a control group is compared with the experimental group after being subjected to certain variables (Moore, 1987). I have not gone through the cycle characteristic of experimental research of hypothesis development, prediction, testing and hypothesis modification etc (see McBurney 1994: 180). Rather, I have adopted a hermeneutic approach, which aims at interpreting that which I observe and finding the reasons behind it, rather than proving certain cause-effect relationships (McBurney, 1994).

The type of research employed is what Moore (1987) calls historical research and which is, in contrast to experimental or statistical research, mainly a product of the humanities. Leedy & Ormrod (2001) describe historical research as research that deals with the meaning of events. The historical researcher does not merely describe what events happened, but tries to “*present a factually supported rationale to explain why they happened*” (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:161). Moore (1987) states that historical research is better suited to recording and describing human behaviour, which is the angle I have chosen for telling the story of the restructuring of Tshwane’s planning function.

3.2 Observation

For this study, I used a combination of research methods, as recommended by Moore (1987). McBurney (1994) contends that the fact that multiple information sources are used in a case study distinguishes it from other types of research. A major part of the research conducted consisted of what Moore (1987) refers to as an observation survey. More specifically, I see myself as a participant observer who not only viewed events as they happened, but also

participated in the object of my study. McBurney (1994) places this in juxtaposition to naturalistic, unobtrusive or non-reactive observation, where the observer has no influence on the subject being observed. He argues that participant observation is most appropriate where a small group of people is studied, which little is known about, or when the group's activities are not open to public scrutiny.

Moore (1987) furthermore qualifies the specific category of observer applicable to me as that of a "*covert participant observer*" as none of the other role-players were aware that their actions would be the subject of a research study¹². As Moore (1987) contends, the method of direct observation has the advantage that it is a very close form of research, which provides insights other secondary or indirect research methods are unlikely to yield. He furthermore argues that observation is less prone to bias than other research methods where the researcher is further removed from the subject that is being studied. It is, however, also true that *all* observation is clouded by the bias of the observer, as well as factors such as mood, prior knowledge or information, values and norms, religious conviction and all the other factors that constitute human diversity.

Moore states that, although drawing inferences from observations should be avoided if possible, it is necessary to introduce some inference or interpretation while recording what is going on. As a participant observer, I feel that I am probably better positioned than any external observer or researcher to expose the "*actual reality*" behind the sequence of actions that constituted the restructuring of the Tshwane planning function. Indeed, a study such as this would have little value if it remained mere observation without colouring it in with so-called "*inside information*" to which only a privileged few had access. As McBurney (1994) puts it, my insider position makes it possible for me to not only present the manifest content (the objectively measurable content) of text and events, but also the latent, or interpreted, content. The latter is only apparent to someone who shared experiences, encounters and moments that made up the fibres from which the

¹² At the time that the events that are studied unfolded, I was also not yet aware that this study would follow.

story was woven. This view is supported by Boje (1991) when he argues that listeners are co-producers with tellers of story performances. Sociolinguistic studies have shown that stories are “*brief and fragmented across extended and interrupted discourse*”. As listeners, we fill in the gaps between the lines with our own experience. He adds that, “*because of what is not said, and yet shared, the audible story is only a fraction of the connection between people in their co-production performance*”. Cues such as “*you know the story*” elicit shared experience from the listener and paralinguistic elements such as body language and facial expression are interpreted as part of the story message. It is this element of “*negotiation of meaning*”, the interaction between listener and teller, that text research alone cannot capture.

In addition to my own observation of the restructuring process, I also made use of a number of other research methods, which included surveys of various types of literature and documentation and structured interviews with key role players. This was done in the first place to achieve a higher level of detail and factual accuracy (eg specific dates, times, numbers, names etc) and secondly to attempt, as far as humanly possible, to mitigate the inevitable bias of my observations.

3.3 Interviews

A questionnaire (Annexure A) was compiled and used to guide structured interviews with key players, who were selected according to the extent to which they participated in, or were affected by, the restructuring of the City Planning function. The people with whom interviews were held are:

- **Henry Bezuidenhout** (a member of the Core Team and later the Acting Manager: Land Use Planning);
- **Johnny Coetzee** (a member of the Core Team and later Acting Manager: Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning);
- **Mike Yates** (Executive Director: City Planning and Development of the former City Council of Pretoria, then Acting General Manager: Land and Environmental Planning of the City of Tshwane)

Metropolitan Municipality and later member of the Strategic Unit of the Strategic Executive Officer: Housing);

- **Verna Nel** (Chief Planner of the former Centurion Town Council, then Convenor: Local Economic Development of the Economic Development Strategic Unit of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and later the Acting General Manager: City Planning); and
- **Kestell Serfontein** (Town Planner of the former Centurion Town Council and later member of the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning team).

As the subject of this study is the intentions, motivation, desires, aspirations etc of people, the questionnaire consisted mainly of open-ended questions. Nonetheless, the same questions were asked to each respondent in an attempt to discern patterns or similarities in the answers given. Asking the respondents the questions in person was a deliberate decision as I felt that they would be less likely to manipulate the answers if they had to respond on the spot (rather than ponder written answers over an extended period of time) and if they were responding to me in person. McBurney (1994) advocates face-to-face administration of questionnaires because of the rapport that can be established between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewer can also intervene when the respondent misunderstands a question and can probe for more complete answers if required.

It is true, as Moore (1987) contends, that questionnaires containing mostly open-ended questions are extremely time-consuming and more difficult to analyse than questionnaires containing multiple choice or closed questions. Nonetheless, taking in to account the relatively small group of people surveyed in this manner (seven people) and the nature of the subject matter, I believe that the easier option would not have achieved the necessary qualitative depth of answers required for this study. McBurney (1994) adds that open-ended questions are more likely to lead the researcher to unanticipated discoveries. Open-ended questionnaires are more suitable for

small samples, while close-ended questions are better suited for large studies.

The sample for the above structured interviews was neither haphazard nor random, but was what McBurney (1994) refers to as a purposive sample. The sample was selected on the basis of participation in the Core Team for the Restructuring of the City Planning Function and its Task Teams as well as in the structures that followed the Core Team process. Two people who stood slightly apart from the process, but who had a significant influence on it, namely Mike Yates (former Executive Head of the Department of City Planning and Development, City Council of Pretoria and later the Acting General Manager: Land and Environmental Planning, City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality) and Amund Beneke (former Head of City Planning at the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council) were also interviewed.

3.4 Literature survey

An important part of all research is the literature survey. The survey was used both to define the research proposal (see Smit 1995:22) and as part of the study itself. It was particularly the works of three authors, namely Mclendon and Quay (1992) and Flyvbjerg (1998) that influenced the form this study took. The Doctoral thesis by Vanessa Watson of the University of Cape Town was important background reading, as it also confirmed that the narrative was the appropriate sub-genre for my study.

The literature survey focused specifically on Organizational Theory and Organizational Change/Transformation, and on certain aspects of Planning Theory. Books, journals, dissertations (published and unpublished), seminar papers and Internet documents were studied. I also surveyed a large volume of operational documentation of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Council - also referred to as *archival* documentation by McBurney (1994). These included reports to the Mayoral Committee and Council and to other structures within the municipality, circulars and memoranda, agendas and minutes of meetings, email messages and faxes, newsletters and attendance

registers. These documents enabled me to render a more detailed account of the restructuring process and to achieve a higher level of factual accuracy. The study also included an overview of the most significant legislative documents pertaining to developmental local government, which are listed in Chapter 4. As Leedy & Ormrod (2001) recommend, I tried to limit my literature survey to texts that had direct bearing on my own research. I attempted throughout the study not to merely duplicate the thoughts of the scholars whose works I quoted, but to truly synthesize these with my study, also to attempt to add some depth, or a new perspective to such thoughts (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:84).

3.5 Is it OK to do this? The question of ethics

McBurney (1994) argues that the concern for ethics in research is part of the historical trend towards the protection of civil and human rights. The current trend came to the fore pertinently after World War II. Since then, many institutions and professional associations established committees or drew up policy documents to ensure that research is conducted in an ethical and morally defensible manner. McBurney (1994) refers to the “*Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*” drawn up by the American Psychological Association. The document contains several principles of ethical research. The responsibility for adhering to those principles is that of the investigator. The principles highlighted by McBurney include

- that research should not cause harm to the participants;
- that participants in research should not be coerced into taking part but should give informed consent to participate in the study (they have the freedom to refuse or cease participation); and
- that their privacy must not be invaded.

Research should furthermore not be deceptive. Participants should ideally be debriefed after completing their part in the research and should receive feedback on the results of the study. Leedy & Ormrod (2001:107) list the same considerations in their guidelines for ethical research.

In this case, the study was only undertaken *ex post facto* after the events being studied had taken place. I declared my intention to “*tell the story*” of the restructuring of the Tshwane City Planning function as the focus of my Master’s dissertation to all the members of the Core Team and, of course, to the other city planning officials who were interviewed. No objections were raised, although some of the respondents requested that their identity not be revealed when I reported on the interviews. I deliberately chose to use the names of the players in my story and not only titles (as does Flyvbjerg (1998) in his account of the Aalborg case, e.g. “*The City Engineer*”) or pseudonyms so as to ensure that characters are perceived as real (and therefore credible or convincing) to the reader. Although this increases the risk of unethical invasion of privacy or harm to the character of my main players, I endeavoured throughout to avoid this. In so doing, I had to constantly tread the tightrope between my commitment to a frank and unbiased account of the events and the moral obligation to do so without a cost to the participants. At all times, I attempted to present my own role in the process in an unflinching and honest manner.

According to McBurney (1994), some researchers are of the opinion that participant-observer research is always unethical because the participant-observer does not obtain consent from her subjects. Conversely, it is viewed as acceptable that professionals such as journalists engage in such activity to a certain extent. Observational or case study research has yielded important insights into psychological and social problems in the past. Although fraught with risk as far as ethics is concerned, the value of such research is undisputed. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that a participant-observer is best positioned to render an accurate and credible account of how the case unfolded.

CHAPTER 4

THE POLITICAL AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 A basket of legislation enabling democratic local government

A comprehensive body of legislation governs the establishment of democratic local government structures in a post-apartheid South Africa. The Constitution established three distinct spheres of government that are interdependent and interrelated, and broadly outlines the functions of each. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, established the broad policy framework within which all subsequent legislation concerning local government was drafted. The Local Government Municipal Demarcation Act, Act 27 of 1998 (also referred to as the Demarcation Act), established the Demarcation Board, which was tasked with demarcating boundaries for municipalities in accordance with the factors listed in Section 25 of the Act. In terms of recommendations by the Demarcation Board, the number of municipalities was reduced from 842 to 284 and boundaries were determined for each of them. The Demarcation Act is closely linked with the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, Act 117 of 1998 (also known as the Structures Act). The latter was used by the Demarcation Board to determine which municipalities should be categorised as Category A (metropolitan municipalities), B (local municipalities) and C (district areas or municipalities) Municipalities respectively.

The Structures Act further determines the type of municipalities that can be established. It determines the powers and functions of the Executive Committee/Executive Mayor. The Structures Act furthermore provides for the appointment of a Municipal Manager who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Municipality.

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (MSA), Act 32 of 2000 and the Regulations published in terms of the Act established a framework for municipal planning, performance management, effective use of resources and organizational change. The Act furthermore regulates public private

partnerships and allows municipalities certain powers to corporatise their services, establish service delivery utilities or enter into partnerships with other service providers. In the Act, there is a strong focus on the preparation of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for municipalities. The IDP addresses a five-year planning cycle and is subject to annual monitoring and review. The IDP forms the basis for the municipality's budget and provides the yardstick against which the performance of the Municipality is assessed. As the MSA is the definitive act with regard to the relationships between the new local government and its community, as well as the principles that govern internal relations within the municipality, a closer reading of the MSA is provided on page 31.

Several other pieces of legislation address specific aspects of municipal governance. The Local Government Municipal Finance Management Act, Act 56 of 2003, is aimed at modernising municipal budgeting and financial management and facilitates the development of a long-term municipal lending or bond market. The Act is accompanied by the Policy Framework for Municipal Borrowing and Financial Emergencies. The Local Government Property Rates Act, Act 6 of 2004, regulates the power of municipalities to levy rates on property and concomitant issues such as exemptions, reductions and rebates, valuation methods and objections and appeals processes.

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act 3 of 2000, gives effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, and to the right to demand written reasons for administrative action. The Act sets out the minimum requirements that all administrative actions must comply with in order to be lawful and fair. It *“creates a culture of accountability, openness and transparency in the exercise of public power and the performance of public functions”* (RSA, 2000b).

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000, gives effect to the constitutional right of access to any information held by the State and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise

or protection of any rights. The Act seeks to address secretive and unresponsive culture that was prevalent in many public and private bodies before 27 April 1994, and to foster, in stead, a culture of transparency and accountability. By giving effect to the right of access to information, it aims to actively promote a society in which South Africans have effective access to information to enable them to more fully exercise and protect their rights.

The Remuneration of Public Office-bearers Act, Act 20 of 1998, provides, among other things, a framework for determining the upper limit of salaries and allowances or benefits of members of Municipal Councils. The Local Government Municipal Electoral Act, Act 27 of 2000, provides the framework for managing all aspects of the municipal elections. A survey of the above legislation, whether gazetted or still in draft form, again indicates transparency, accountability and equity as the main underlying principles.

With regard to Human Resource Management, the following legislation applies to local government as it applies to all other employers:

- The Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995;
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Act 75 of 1997;
- The Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998;
- The Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998, and
- The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, Act 4 of 2000.

4.2 A handful of noble principles

It is clear from the constitution and the other legislative documents pertaining to local government that the challenge to address the legacy of apartheid in terms of achieving equity with regard to municipal planning, management and service delivery falls squarely on the shoulders of local government.

Pimstone (1998) summarises the kind of local government envisaged by the Constitution as government that answers to the people and is accountable to the public for the decisions it takes. It is responsive and effective, sensitive to community needs and capable of action towards fulfilling those needs. It is transparent, i.e. open to scrutiny and criticism. It is accessible and informative. It facilitates ongoing dialogue with the community through a participatory system. To this, Pimstone (1998) adds that the Constitution “*speaks to values of equity, ethical behaviour, procedural and broader administrative justice and formal, substantive equality*”.

When studying the applicable legislation, it becomes clear that the new approach to local government redefines the role of the municipality and that it hinges, in the main, on a new relationship between local government and the community.

The Constitution mandates local government to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; to promote social and economic development, and to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

This commitment to democratic, accountable, developmental, sustainable and participative local government is echoed in many of the other pieces of legislation pertaining to local government in the new political dispensation, such as the Green Paper on Local Government (1997), the White Paper on Local Government (1998) the Municipal Systems Act (2000) and the Municipal Structures act.

The concept of Integrated Development Planning (IDP) was widely touted as the primary tool for meeting this challenge. Indeed, a significant amount of resources have been expended in capacitating municipalities to compile (and to implement) IDP's. The Department of Provincial and Local Government also compiled a series of IDP Guides (known as the Guide Pack) to guide role players through the process of compiling an Integrated Development Plan in

an easy-to-follow, step-by-step manner. A large number of seminars and training sessions aimed at Councilors, Municipal Managers, Chief Financial Officers, municipal town and regional planners and other municipal officials were conducted in order to empower them to utilize the IDP as a tool for restructuring their municipalities¹³.

This study is, however, conducted from the premise that the success of the new municipal dispensation is not only dependent on political will at the national level or an enabling legislative framework. Nor is the IDP a panacea that will, of itself, cure all the ills inflicted on our settlements by Apartheid and bring about the development necessary for communities to flourish. I wish to illustrate that the so-called “*soft issues*” or “*people issues*” – particularly the manner in which municipal office bearers and officials react to power and the aspiration to power – play a determining role in how the new municipalities, as agents of developmental local government, are and will be shaped.

4.3 A closer look at the Municipal Systems Act (MSA)

As stated earlier in this chapter, the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) is one of the most prominent acts shaping the new local government landscape. It places much emphasis on transparency and communication between the Municipality and the community it serves, as well as on community participation. In fact, as it is defined in the Act, “*municipality*” includes the community.

In Chapter 2 of the Act it the responsibility of the Municipality to provide democratic and accountable government, to encourage community development and to consult the community on the level, quality and range and impact of services, as well as options with regard to service delivery is set out.

Chapter 2, paragraph 6 emphasizes the importance of the Municipality being responsive to community needs and establishing clear relationships, as well as communication and co-operation between with the community. The

¹³ According to the definition found in Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, a “municipality” includes the community that lives within its boundaries.

importance of the Municipality providing the community with full and accurate information on issues of municipal service rendering and management is stressed.

In Chapter 4 of the MSA it is clearly prescribed that municipalities should develop a culture that promotes participative governance. The mechanisms, processes and procedures for community participation are set out and again special emphasis is placed on the municipality's obligation to communicate to the community information pertaining to community participation. The imperative of participation is reiterated in chapter 6 where the involvement of the community in the review of the Municipality's performance management system and the discussion of the Municipality's annual report is mandated.

The first reference to the Municipality's responsibility with regard to its internal management and structuring is found in Chapter 3, paragraph 11(3) (c) and (d). The following is listed among the actions required by a Municipality to:

- *“exercise its legislative or executive authority”*;
- *“establishing and maintaining an administration”*, and
- *“administering and regulating its internal affairs”*.

In Chapter 7 (Local public administration and human resources), this responsibility is more clearly set out. Paragraph 50 sets the tone for the Municipality's internal management: *“Local public administration is governed by the democratic values and principles embodied in section 195 (1) of the Constitution”*. Paragraph 51 (e) (i), (j), (l) and (m) states that a municipality must organize its administration so as to establish clear relationships, and facilitate co-operation, coordination and communication between its political structures and political office bearers and its administration. The organization must also maximise efficient communication and decision-making and should involve staff in management decisions. It must furthermore provide an equitable, fair, open and non-discriminatory working environment. In terms of Chapter 7, part 2, paragraph 55, all of the above is in the first instance the responsibility of the Municipal Manager. The study will investigate whether the Municipality performed well with regard to the above requirements during the

restructuring period and whether the Municipal Manager, as the accountable official, lived up to the responsibility that was entrusted to him.

Part 4 of the Act indicates the Municipality's responsibility to develop and adopt systems and procedures to ensure fair, efficient, effective and transparent personnel administration in accordance with the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (paragraph 67 (1)). This part (in paragraph 68) also sets out the Municipality's responsibility to develop its staff members to enable the Municipality to perform its functions in an economical, effective, efficient and accountable way.

4.4 Extrapolating legislative principles to the inner workings of the municipality

Although the emphasis in the MSA seems to be on the relationship between the Municipality and its community, enough is said about the internal relations of the Municipality to make it clear that the intention was that the same principles (democracy, transparency, sound relations, participation and an emphasis on communication) should apply in-house as well.

Nonetheless, the values or principles that underpin the envisaged new relationship between a local government and its community might therefore well be extrapolated to act as a guideline for the nature of the internal relations of the municipal structure. It could therefore be argued that the relationship between the municipality and its staff should be democratic, developmental, sustainable and participative. The principles of equity and holism could equally be applied to the working environment of municipal officials. The *Batho Pele* ("people first") principle, which was adopted by Government in 1993 in its drive to improve client service could similarly be seen to be applicable to the internal clients, or employees, of a municipality. It is clear that a municipality that endeavours to practice these principles in its relationship with the community, while being internally governed according to a different set of principles, will experience severe internal tensions and cannot hope to meet the challenge to "*have a major impact on the daily lives of South Africans*" as it is envisaged in the White Paper (1998).

According to Bennis (1993) democracy is not only an appropriate form of organization because of “*some vague yearning for human rights*”, but because democracy is, under certain conditions, a more efficient form of social organization.

Bennis (1993) views democracy as a system of values or beliefs, which “*people are internally compelled to affirm by deeds as well as words*”. The values include free communication, a reliance on consensus, the idea that influence is based on technical competence or knowledge, an atmosphere that permits expression and a human bias that is willing to mediate the conflict between the organization and the individual on rational grounds. Flyvbjerg (1998:5) says that “*democracy must be fought for each and every day in concrete instances, even long after democracy is first constituted in a society.*” As much as this holds true for society in general, it certainly also holds true for its institutions, which are none other than microcosms of the society of which they form part.

It is imperative that Local Government delivers with regard to the transformation of our cities and rural settlements in order to address the legacy of our Apartheid past. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) views local government as a point of integration and coordination for the delivery of national programmes. It furthermore states that metropolitan government provides a basis for socially just and equitable metropolitan governance, enables strategic land-use planning and coordinated public investment and the development of a citywide framework for economic and social development within the metropolitan area. It is therefore clear that the City Planning function has a major contribution to make in this regard. To this end, it is most important that the planners, technical and support staff of the municipal City Planning functions be motivated and empowered to become agents of change in line with the ideals set out in the White Paper. As stated in Chapter 1 of the study document, this is one of the main reasons why the City Planning function was chosen as the focus of the study.

Challenges facing South African municipalities, which are highlighted in the White Paper, include skewed settlement patterns, unequal distribution of taxable economic resources, lack of spatial integration and inadequate recognition of the linkages between urban and rural settlements. These challenges clearly indicate not only the importance of municipal town and regional planning, but also the obligation to ensure that municipalities become geared towards implementation of the new socio-political order. Entrenched modes of decision making, administration and delivery that were organised to be instruments of *apartheid*, need[ed] to be restructured. The White Paper emphasized the need for capacity building in many local authorities, as well as the need to restore creditworthiness and relations between the municipality and the community it serves.

The introduction to the White Paper indicates that in March 1998 when it was first published, municipalities were all already experiencing difficulties arising from the transition process. Capacity focussed inwards, rather than towards constituencies and delivery. Prolonged uncertainty about powers, functions, and areas of jurisdiction was the order of the day, as well as an “*overall lack of information and capacity*”.

The White Paper aptly summarised that:

“Developmental Local Government requires of municipalities to become more strategic, visionary and ultimately influential in the way they operate. Municipalities have a crucial role as policymakers, as thinkers and innovators, and as institutions of local democracy. A developmental municipality should play a strategic policy-making and visionary role, and seek to mobilise a range of resources to meet basic needs and achieve developmental goals.”

It is against the background of the lofty ideals of developmental Local Government, among other things, that the transformation of the Tshwane City Planning function was narrated and analysed.

CHAPTER 5

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The theoretical framework against which the Tshwane story will be analysed, stands on two legs. The one is a specific focus within the theory of planning and the other a perspective on organizational/management theory. It is the intention to use these two theoretical streams as a tool for deconstructing the narrative in Chapter 6 in order to gain a better understanding of the complex web of powers that were at play during the transformation of the Tshwane planning function. This tallies with the view expressed by Williams in Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) that theory is an “*explanatory scheme*”, or the view of Hillier (2002:25) that it serves as a “*toolbox*” with which to approach studies of praxis.

5.1 A SLICE OF PLANNING THEORY

Planning theories that focus on communicative action and power provide a useful framework for analysing the Tshwane study. I will not directly refer to, nor offer an in-depth interpretation of, the work of philosophers such as Foucault, Nietzsche and Machiavelli (power theories), Habermas (communicative action) or Wittgenstein (hermeneutic understanding of language), whose work underpins much of the current discourse around planning. Rather, I will use the work of scholars who have applied the work of these philosophers to the field of planning theory as my point of departure. Hillier (2002) provides a useful summary of the positions put forward by Habermas and Foucault, as does Flyvbjerg (2001) in his work on *phronetic* social science and Gunder and Mouat (2002) in their study of the New Zealand Resource Management Act. In this regard, I will particularly refer to Flyvbjerg (1998 and 2001), Forester (1982, 1987 and 1996), Hoch (1984 and 1996) and Hillier (2002), among others, who focus on the communicative turn and power relations in planning theory and practice. Although much has been made of the *distinction* between the philosophical approaches of Habermas, who focused on “communicative action” and Foucault, who focused on power relations, (see Flyvbjerg (2001), Allmendinger (2001) and Hillier (2002)), I concur with Forester’s (1982:76) view that “*the exercise of power is the*

management, through communication, of comprehension (or obfuscation), of trust (or false assurance), of consent (or manipulated agreement) and of knowledge (or misrepresentation" (my emphasis). Some reference will be made to two earlier works that I regard as seminal texts in this regard, namely Catanese (1974) and McClendon and Quay (1988).

The reason for choosing this specific focus within contemporary planning theory, is that the Tshwane case study is aligned with two prominent characteristics of communicative planning theory, namely:

1. Its emphasis on practice and the analysis of practice examples (part of a trend described in the literature as "*the practice movement*"), and
2. Its preference for narrative writing.

I will provide a concise overview of the focus on communicative/discursive action and power in theories of planning, while briefly describing the practice movement. Chapter 2 offers more on the use of the narrative in planning theory.

5.1.1 The call for communicative action

Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) highlight the way in which planning theorists have increasingly, since the 1970s, changed the focus of planning theory from instrumental rationality with its modernist limitations towards the rational-communicative. In addressing this "*communicative turn*" in planning, Healey (1997) describes this new wave of planning theory as argumentative, communicative and interpretative. In recent years, a growing number of planning theorists, including Jean Hillier, Charles Hoch, Judith Innes, Helen Liggett, Tom Stein and Tom Harper, Seymour Mandelbaum, Tore Sager, Jeff Throgmorton (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2002) have contributed to this focus, inspired mainly, as is Healey, by the work of Habermas.

It is not the intention here to suggest that communicative planning theories represent the emergence of a single new consensus among planning theorists. In this regard, I strongly agree with Yiftachel and Huxley (2000)

when they state that communicative planning “*despite its marked contribution to the understanding of planning, is but one in a number of recent approaches to theorise planning*”. Indeed, an assumption that communicative planning theory could have a certain “*overarching*” or “*supreme*” position with regard to the divergence of planning theories, would question the very root of communicative planning, which accepts a multiplicity of values and viewpoints and rejects the myth of neutrality of knowledge (see Hillier (2002:8). Allmendinger (2001:4-5) agrees that “*the notion that there is a single paradigm for planning is unsupportable*”. Communicative planning theories have furthermore been criticised for having lost focus of the “*core business*” of planning, namely “*urban/regional/environmental changes that are carried out by, or in relation to, the state’s power and resources*” (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000). Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) furthermore argue that communicative planning theorists tend to treat planning as a “*generic, procedural activity*”. However, I believe this to be an overly critical view. Rather, I would support the view put forward by Forester (1996), that: “*Because planners always work on problems but in processes, their arguments involve both substantive and procedural matters*”.

Hillier (2002:12) furthermore points out that communicative planning theories have been challenged for their neglect of structure. The response has been an “*increased emphasis on analysis of the relational dynamics of local agents in the context of broader structural forces as a basis for contextualising and situating communicative analyses of planning practice*”. Such structural forces played a prominent (and possibly a dominant) role in the Tshwane study and provide, at the micro-level, the framework within which the events are contextualised.

The communicative turn in planning engaged theorists in poststructuralist and multicultural discourses on the nature of knowledge, ethics and justice. This led a number of planning theorists to focus on communicative-pragmatic logic, accumulating evidence about speech, narratives, professional profiles, consensus building and negotiation (Hoch, 1996; Yiftachel and Huxley, 2000).

The process of communicative action as defined by Habermas and applied by planning theorists provided a new perspective on the complex web of social and power relations within which planning practice takes place. Healey (1997) refers to the relational webs or networks in which we live our lives. The nodes where these webs intersect, are normally the common spaces of the institutions and associations or “*the arenas where systems of meaning, ways of acting and ways of valuing are learned, transmitted and sometimes transformed*” (Healey 1997).

5.1.2 A penchant for practice

The narrative offered in Chapter 6 is essentially a study of planning practice. Hillier (2002) argues that the aim of practice-centered theorizing, as is attempted by this study, is to use practice stories to strengthen theory. She adds that, if planning theory is to be of use to practitioners, it has to address practice as it is encountered in the worlds of planners and elected representatives. She (2002) states that “*planning theory should be grounded in practice and vice versa*”.

Flyvbjerg (1998: 3) pleads for a reorientation from Modernity’s focus on “*what should be done*” towards a focus on “*what is actually done*”, that is, examining “*how knowledge, rationality, and power work in real life*”. At the outset of his narrative study, Flyvbjerg (1998:8) clearly states his intention to use practice, rather than theory, as his point of departure: “*We will look at what people actually do, not only what they say they do nor their stated reasons for doing it. In short, we will focus on practices rather than discourse and theory.*” The fundamental question underlying practice-centered theory, is aptly captured by Forester (1982:70) as “*So what? What does this analysis mean for an effective, progressive planning practice?*”.

Flyvbjerg’s (2001) concept of *phronesis*, to which he adds the dimension of power (and specifically of power relations in the Foucauldian sense) emphasizes “*practical knowledge and practical ethics*” (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 56). Rather than a kind of science, he argues, *phronesis* is a “*sense of the*

ethically practical”, which “*cannot be articulated in terms of theoretical axioms*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:57). According to a *phronetic* approach, particular, concrete, context-dependent aspects are emphasized over universal or theoretical aspects (Flyvbjerg 2001:58). Practice is interpreted historically and in terms of politics and ethics (Flyvbjerg 2001:112). Supporting Foucault’s position in this regard, Flyvbjerg (2001:128) does not dismiss the importance of theory, but contends that “*theories, and conceptualization in general, must be constantly confronted with praxis, including the praxis of the individual scholar.*”

Mandelbaum (1996) states that there is “*a pervasive interest in the behaviour, values, character and experiences of professional planners at work*”. Theorists increasingly acknowledge the need to listen to and register the daily interactive work of planning professionals (see also Flyvbjerg (1998), Watson (2001) and Hillier (2002)).

Hillier (2002) argues for practical wisdom, which she calls prudence. She (2002:14) states that: “*Technical knowledge and practical wisdoms work together. Connection of theoretical, statistical, legislative and practical wisdoms can imbue planning practitioners with opportunities for leverage in engaging the power of other actors*”. There are strong parallels between Hillier’s (2002) concept of “*prudence*” and Flyvbjerg’s (2001) “*phronesis*”, which is a classical concept translated as “*prudence or practical wisdom*” and to which he adds the dimension of power. Forester (1982:71) similarly argues for a critical social theory that “*joins an account of power relations to an account of emancipatory, politically informed and guided practice.*”

This study is an attempt at practice-centered theorizing, as promoted by Hillier (2002). According to Hillier (2002) such theorizing is a blend of individualistic interpretation, paradigm and a practical context.

5.1.3 Power, politics and planning

The concept of power and how it impacts on, for instance, the planning and management of cities, has been a focus of the planning discourse in recent time. The viewpoints on power developed by Foucault in the 1990s were used by a number of planners to gain better understanding of the forces at work in the relational/social web within which planning is practiced. These include Kogler (1996), Lapintie (2001), Allmendinger (2001), Watson (2001) and Hillier (2002).

The work of Bent Flyvbjerg (1998, 2001, 2003), which draws heavily on the Foucauldian theory of power and rationality, as well as the work of philosophers Kant, Nietzsche and Machiavelli, has contributed greatly to this new focus. In his argument for *phronesis* as a social science that is distinct from natural science and cannot successfully be practiced along the principles (rule-based, predictive) of natural science, Flyvbjerg (2001) identifies as a shortcoming in the classical concept of *phronesis* as developed by Aristotle the fact that it does not explicitly include power. Flyvbjerg (2001:3 and 88-128) critically evaluates the philosophies put forward by Habermas (communicative action in a “perfect” democracy) and Foucault (power relations) and concludes that a contemporary *phronetic* science has to include in its repertoire of research questions questions about power. (With specific reference to planning, Forester (1982:67) concurs when he states that “*If planners ignore those in power, they assure their own powerlessness*”, as does Lapintie (2002) when he contends that “*future planning concepts will have to address the Foucauldian concepts of power /knowledge and productive power more seriously*”) Flyvbjerg (2001: 60) formulates the primary “power question” to be answered by *phronetic* research as “*Who gains and who loses; by which mechanisms of power?*”.

Flyvbjerg (2001:116) thus favours the Foucauldian model of “*power as force relations*”. He does not view power as an entity that can be possessed or as an institution, but rather as a strategic position that can be exercised within a particular society. Power must furthermore be understood as a “*multiplicity*

of force relations” that is “*produced from one moment to the next in all points and all relations*” (Flyvbjerg 2001:120) (my emphasis). Flyvbjerg (2001:121) furthermore supports Foucault’s view of power as a productive force that produces reality and truth. He views resistance as intrinsic to all power relations: “*where there is power, there is resistance*”.

Flyvbjerg’s (1998) study of the powers at play in the case of the Aalborg Project, is widely acclaimed as an example of a study of planning practice in which the role of power relations is expertly reflected. Lapintie (2002) acknowledges Flyvbjerg’s Aalborg study as a “*brilliant case study*”, which adds value to planning theory through acknowledging that urban planning is always confronted by special interests and objectives on the one hand, and confirming the importance of (specialized) communication skills and political clout for the present day planner to be effective, on the other. However, he expresses the opinion that Flyvbjerg does not adequately explore the “*theoretical perspectives opened up by the tradition of thought [Machiavelli, Nietzsche and Foucault] he refers to*”. He furthermore criticizes the fact that Flyvbjerg represents the original Aalborg Project Plan as “*rational*”, while arguments levelled against it are described as “*rationalization*”. In general, Lapintie is of the opinion that the dualistic struggle between power and rationality, with rationality “*yielding*” to power, as it is presented by Flyvbjerg, is too simplified. Flyvbjerg (2001:125) himself however states that any sort of separation of rationality and power is an oversimplification.

Forester (1999) similarly views Flyvbjerg’s (1998) case study as “*superb and compelling*”, but agrees that the accompanying theoretical analysis is over-generalised, which undermines his argument. He feels that Flyvbjerg’s analysis is at war with itself because it purports to expose the deceptions and powerplay of that particular planning case without admitting that, in accordance with the theory Flyvbjerg puts forward, he might also be deceptive and manipulative as the narrator. Of course, any narrator is at risk of being called deceptive or manipulative by those who have a different perception of the “*truth*”. Forester furthermore argues that Flyvbjerg does not draw a clear enough distinction between the “*truth*” or rationality and instances of

rationalization¹⁴. He also views it as a weakness in Flyvbjerg's study that he does not draw comparisons with earlier cases of transportation planning.

More recently, Hillier (2002) argues that Foucault's work aids understanding of power in the multiplicity of micropractices that comprise everyday life as well as understanding power as a relational process rather than as a commodity operating from the top down. Hoch (1996) argues that Foucault's concept of power relations provides an important critique on the professions (such as the planning profession) that claim to serve the communal good.

Hillier (2002) uses the allegory of chiaroscuro, using terms such as "*tenebrism*" (sharp contrasts of light and dark) and "*sfumato*" (gentle transitions from light to dark) to describe and analyse the play of power in two practice stories. The title of her book, *Shadows of Power*, is derived from a Mexican proverbial expression implying subtle, rather than overt, power.

John Forester (1996) confirms the importance of an awareness of power when he says that "*planners do not work in a political vacuum*". In his seminal work, *Planning in the Face of Power* (1982), Forester explores the control of information as a key source of planners' power. He identifies five perspectives on information as a source of power, namely:

1. The power of technical information;
2. The power of "*knowing the ropes*" (Forester, 1982:68) within an organization;
3. The power of information to enable underrepresented groups to participate in planning processes;
4. The power of information to legitimize/rationalize existing power structures' and
5. The power of information to enable citizen participation (without rationalizing existing power structures), while recognizing the structural and political barriers that "*may unnecessarily distort*" such information.

Forester (1982) points out the limitations of the first four perspectives and argues in favour of the fifth, which he calls the "*progressive perspective*". He

¹⁴ The question is whether it is ever possible in a [post] post-modern paradigm to distinguish with absolute certainty between rationalization and rationality.

contends that, by adopting a progressive perspective on information as a source of power, planners can develop the skill of anticipating, identifying, understanding and taking action against misinformation.

The different powers at play in the lifeworlds and systems in which planners find themselves require that they engage with other role players – hence the need for what Hillier (2002) refers to as “*discursive democratic planning praxis*”.

The question of the relationship of planning and politics is densely interwoven with the question of planning, planners and power. On the one hand, power can be seen as the motivation for planning. On the other hand is the question whether, and to what extent, planners really have the power to influence the city form.

Herington (1989: 38) states that planners have to respond to prevailing political priorities. The autonomy of local government planners is limited both by decisions/policies of higher levels (other spheres) of government and by the values of political representatives.

Fowler (1993) argues that, although it seems that local authorities have considerable control over what happens within their boundaries, this is not the case. He states that, in fact, “*municipalities are relatively powerless. They are subject to the ebb and flow of increasingly large sums of international capital, and they are routinely devastated by the actions of large corporations closing factories and changing office locations.*” Although Fowler (1993) draws this inference from the American experience, there is no evidence to suggest that South African municipalities have a higher degree of power to shape their urban or rural centres, be it spatially or otherwise. Fowler (1993) continues to say that, although planners are often blamed for city problems, they are “*politically powerless and sometimes barely accepted as legitimate parts of the policy-making process*”.

Devas and Rakodi (1993) touch on the motive for planners to engage with the city as well as their capacity to do so when they call for a realistic approach to the task of planning and managing urban development. They call for realism

“about the capacity of governments to intervene effectively with complex urban systems, about the capacity of institutions to deliver what is required, and about both the motives and the competence of the actors involved – politicians, planners, managers.”

Lisa Peattie (1987) strikes at the root of the fear of impotence plaguing the planning profession when she asks: *“Can it be that planning is not the way to a better environment at all?”* This is supported by Oranje and Harrison (2001) who argue that *“there is no longer a naivety or facile optimism about the power of planners and the inherent goodness of planning”*.

In his classical text on planners and politics, Catanese (1974)¹⁵ states that experience has taught him that *“integrating planning into the political process is equally as problematic as integrating it into life itself.”*

Catanese (1974) sees the fact that the planner is never in a role to implement his/her own plans as a fundamental difficulty of the municipal planning profession. He states that *“Planners must rely on politicians to accept and implement recommendations of substance”*. Catanese is scathing in his criticism of planning which *“broke away from its elitist home”* only to *“settle in a bureaucratic maze”*. He states that this has resulted in more than half a century (from 1920 to 1970) of ineffective planning and says that, in America, no historically significant accomplishments were made by planners. He argues that planning becomes the scapegoat for political failure. Catanese’s statement sounds a warning bell to planners in South Africa. Already sullied by its role in implementing apartheid, the profession runs the risk of also becoming the scapegoat for the failure of the new democracy in years to come. One could, however, just as well argue that the success with which spatial planning was used to manifest apartheid in urban and rural settlements

¹⁵ Although this is indeed a very old source and the relevance thereof for this study might be questioned on those grounds, I view it as a seminal text that influences the discourse on planning and politics even today.

holds the promise of equal success in giving expression, through spatial intervention, to the ideals of developmental local government¹⁶. The Green Paper on Development and Planning (RSA 1999), supports this view:

“The failure of the planning system to protect the rights and to meet the needs of the majority of South Africans ... is not a case for abandoning spatial planning. Indeed, positive, creative planning is now more necessary than ever. ... The current distorted settlement pattern ... will (not) be addressed by default. The development of more efficient and enabling settlement systems, which is necessary to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, requires creative thought and bold, purposeful action.”

Catanese (1974) does not view an advisory role for planners as a strategy to attain a measure of influence in a political environment. Rather, he sees the advisory role of planning as a way of avoiding involvement and commitment, a non-role of sorts. He states that: *“The elusive and puerile concept that the wisdom of the planner can stay alive above the fray of political life is nonsense.”* He sees it as the task of planning theorists to develop a philosophical basis for planners from which to serve the municipality’s executive management and the community.

It is clear that the relationship between Planning and politics is a complex one. Planners are always at risk of being exploited by those in power to secure their position and they are often not equipped to play the political game of influence and manipulation. Very often, the only tool available to planners to leverage power is what Habermas (in Flyvbjerg, 1998) refers to as *“the better argument”*. Habermas believed *“the better argument”* to be a rational argument arrived at through open discussion. The catch, of course, is that in reality *“the better argument”* is not necessarily the rational argument, but merely the argument preferred by the party that holds the most power...

¹⁶ For more on the ideals of developmental local government, see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1: *“The political and legislative framework of Local Government transformation in South Africa”*.

5.2 ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY – VIGNETTES FROM A VAST DOMAIN

5.2.1 Management and Communication – tools to turn legislative ideals into reality

The ideal of developmental local government, and the legislative and policy framework that has been put into place in order to achieve it, cannot be faulted. The principles of a developmental approach, community participation, holism and sustainability are sound and are acceptable across the spectrum of political ideology.

However, management theorists today are unanimous in arguing that an enabling legislative framework, albeit necessary, is in itself not sufficient to ensure that objectives are realised. The key outcomes of developmental local government, namely the provision of household infrastructure and services; the creation of liveable, integrated cities, towns and rural areas; local economic development, and community empowerment and redistribution will not materialise simply because it is mandated by law.

Wilson (1994) observes that *“the values, motivation, and behaviour of the organization’s members are critical determinants of corporate performance – and so of success or failure in implementing strategy”*. Puth (1994:10) argues along the same lines that *“the best interests of the organization are ensured not by its structures and procedures, but rather by the quality of life experienced by its members”*. He views an organization’s employees as its most important audience and sees managers as ultimately responsible for the organizational culture and climate in an organization. Schütte et al (1995) stated in the mid-1990s that:

“For the RDP to be realised, the South African public service requires well trained persons with a proactive, problem-solving orientation and attitude. People who are capable of analysing, reflecting, deciding and, most importantly, acting appropriately.”

I would argue, however, that, in ensuring such appropriate action, power relations and politics, especially what Flyvbjerg (1998), among others, refers to as *Realpolitik*, play a determining role. It is not only the type of people in the municipality that play a role, but also the amount of power that they wield, or their aspirations to power. They wield power through their alliances and skills to create a beneficial “*effective reality*” (see Flyvbjerg, 1998).

In 1993, Lessem argued that management approaches that have evolved out of the Western cultural heritage were prevalent in South Africa. Such approaches were dominated by individualism and competition rather than by the African heritage of community and co-operation. Even after the first democratic election in 1994, Koster (1996) maintains that this is still the case. With specific reference to Planning, Oranje (2001) argues that “*African Planning*” as a distinct expression of planning practice is yet to emerge.

Skopec (1990) argues that, in management “*The ability to manage, motivate and lead is far more important than any of the technical skills. Being a manager means working with people, and working with people requires refined communication skills.*” He views developing and maintaining relationships as the key to meeting the challenges facing managers today.

Skopec (1990) furthermore argues that, as managers “*work through*” other people to get things done, they have to be acutely aware of employees’ expectations. Such expectations are not limited to adequate pay and fringe benefits. Skopec (1990) states that employees demand participation in decisions that affect them. With the growing global awareness of democracy, participative management has become an even stronger imperative since Skopec’s (1990) study. This is particularly true of South Africa where the specific socio-political history resulted in heightened sensitivity around issues such as participation and consultation.

In putting forward their theory of post-modernist management as “*coping*”, Beech et al (2002) argue that the primary skills required for managing are

“*questioning, sensing and imagining*”. They argue for increased granularity¹⁷ in management and claim that there is proof that “*treating employees better*” will increase performance to the benefit of the organization.

The role of communication as an integral part of management is widely acknowledged. Gellerman (1995) views communication as essential for continuous improvement in an organization. Puth (1994) calls communication the lifeblood of an organization and deems it important that managers adopt a positive attitude towards communication. He views a well-designed communication strategy and effective communication skills as elements that could contribute to a manager being highly successful. He argues that what is needed is the emergence of the “*communicating manager*”. Davis (1972) goes even further by contending that management in an organization is only possible through communication. Myers and Myers (1982) regard communication as an essential part of the functioning of any organization. In his argument around the 1990’s being the decade of the employee, Smith (1991) also sees communication as central to obtaining and keeping the commitment and loyalty of the best employees.

Definitions of what exactly is meant by communication abound. Many definitions revolve around information flow, or the encoding and decoding of messages, as put forward by Gellerman (1995) and Kuga (1996) among others. However, I find the definition formulated by Puth (1994), namely “*the sharing of meaning*” to most aptly capture what communication is aimed at achieving.

It is clear from the above that communication and effective management are inextricably linked. In the ANC’s policy guidelines for a democratic South Africa, which were adopted at the National Conference in May 1992, it was even then stated that “*The ANC is committed to the administration of local government on the basis of participatory management and to reorganize the bureaucracy accordingly.*” The policy guidelines also state the belief that municipal officials will have to be trained in order for them to deal effectively

¹⁷ As opposed to a one-dimensional approach to management.

with the development challenges facing them. Such training would also be used to address affirmative action in the municipal bureaucracies. It also stated that local government would adopt “*progressive employment practices*”.

Communication, or discourse, is a powerful tool in the exercise of, or resistance to, power. Flyvbjerg (2001:142) accords discourse a central place in the study of “*the relationship between rationality and power, truth and politics*”, which he describes as his own professional interest. He states that (Flyvbjerg, 2001:124) “*the reasearcher’s methodology must take account of the complex and unstable process according to which discourses can be both an instrument of power and its effect, but also an obstacle, a point of resistance of a starting point for a counterposing strategy.*”

5.2.2 Organizational Change

Aldrich (2000) defines transformation as a major change in an organization occurring over three possible dimensions (which are interdependent), namely changes in

1. goals,
2. boundaries, and
3. activities.

Transformation can only be studied if relative inertia, or stability, constitutes the normal state of the organization’s life. Such “*relative inertia*” does not imply the absence of small fluctuations or deviations from established routines. Greiner (in Barnes & Kaftan, 1991) calls the inertia phase “*evolution*”, while the transformation phase is referred to as “*revolution*”.

Aldrich (2000) argues that the strategic choice theory, top management team theories and planned variation theories of organizational change largely assume that an elite group in the organization (managers) makes the decisions leading to transformation and control the transformation process. On the other hand, human relations and socio-technical theories place more emphasis on involving members in change processes. However, studies

mostly focus (as does this one) on the sub-unit level and not on the level of the whole organization.

Old school theories of organization development (OD) (see Huse, 1980) placed the emphasis on scientific interventions, such as “*laboratory training of change agents*”, “*encounter groups*” and the “*T-group*” which is the core group responsible for implementing so-called “*organization design interventions*” and applied special techniques such as the “*Job Expectation Technique (JET)*” and “*Management by Objectives (MBO)*”. The OD theories were all pro-active in their approach. Management decided what needed to be changed and typically involved an OD consultant to assist them in this by applying a number of techniques towards implementing the required intervention. OD theorists have little to say regarding so-called “*unplanned change*” and have trouble finding solutions for “*fixing the plane in flight*” (CTMM 2 May 2002). A further criticism against these theories is that they assumed that there was a “*recipe*” for initiating and managing organizational change, whatever the environment. There was limited awareness of the need for unique or customised change management approaches in different organizational environments.

In their study of organizational transitions, Barnes and Kaftan (1991) state that a recurring theme in case studies of transitions in work groups (their focus is on business enterprises) is that individuals and work groups at all levels of the organization can make a difference in the organization’s life. There is not only potential for initiative at the top of the hierarchy, but throughout the interactive parts of the organization. In that sense, they argue, organizational transition is also about individuals who spend significant parts of their lives as members of organizations.

Greiner (in Barnes & Kaftan, 1991) takes the position that the future of an organization is determined less by outside forces than by the organization’s history. The Tshwane case will investigate whether, in this case too, environmental characteristics that have been embedded over many years

have survived despite a significant change in the institutional and political framework within which the municipality operated.

Koster (1996) states that there are doubts as to whether the new local government system in South Africa can respond positively to environmental challenges, especially since local government has failed in the past to recognize or develop attributes of civic responsibility and local leadership. He adds that local government not only needs to manage its interaction with the environment, but also has to bring about and manage internal change in order to align it with its environment. Although Koster (1996) made these statements almost a decade ago, Local Government is still in the throes of transformation and it is still too early to assess whether it has been successful in bringing about positive societal changes. The imperative highlighted by Koster (1996) for municipalities to effect internal changes in order to meet external challenges also remains equally relevant.

Bennis (1993) postulates that, although finite violent or drastic changes have been known to take place under autocratic regimes, democracy is the only organizational form compatible with perpetual change. Therefore, "*democracy becomes a functional necessity whenever a social system is competing for survival under conditions of chronic change*". A democratic system is furthermore argued to have more flexibility to deal with problems and is characterised by generally higher staff morale and loyalty. Bennis (1993) views planned change as the crucial link between the theory and practice of the behavioural sciences.

In his study of the role of communication in organizational change, Puth (1994) concurs when he notes that changes often have to be implemented in order to ensure an organization's survival and that organizations that cannot effectively manage change will not survive. He views communication as key for successful change management and notes that organizational change that is not accompanied by appropriate communication can devastate the organization and its people. Puth (1994) states that resistance to change is inherent to human nature and that the greater the magnitude of the change,

the more the discomfort and reluctance that will accompany it. It is my contention, however, that where human nature is concerned, such purely linear relationships seldom occur in reality. In any change situation, as was the case in the Tshwane study, there are usually forces seeking to initiate/accelerate change, and opposing forces seeking to prevent/slow down change. Any number of smaller or transient forces can influence the dynamic relationship between the two at a given point in time.

Good communication can help convince employees of the eventual benefits of changes and that they will be worth the risks and pain involved. The worker-management partnership that is thus achieved is only possible through communication, as this must be built on a solid, factual understanding of the organization's position.

Puth (1994) views communication as a powerful change-agent in itself, which can provide employees and unions, as well as external stakeholders, with reasons that may lead to understanding and acceptance. A key objective of communication in times of change is defining the new corporate culture to employees. According to Puth (1994), management desperately needs the support of employees in defending its positions, also to the outside world. He adds that managers are more likely to secure such support if they have an established base of credibility, a reputation for openness and honesty towards employees.

Puth refers to the distinction Bridges (1991) draws between change and transition. Change represents the new situation as manifested by a new site, new management, new policy etcetera. Transition, however, is the psychological processes people undergo in order to deal with the new situation. While change takes place externally, transition is an internal process. Transition, and not change, is the challenge to the communicating manager. According to Puth (1994), transition is about the "*endings*" and "*losses*" that people will have to accept in coming to terms with change. After the ending, follows a "*neutral zone*" or limbo between the old and the new. Only after this, comes the new beginning. Puth sees a clear role for the

communicating manager to assist employees to let go, to comfort and reassure them in the neutral zone and to lead them successfully into the “*new beginning*”.

Bridges (1991) argues that, in order to facilitate letting go of the old, it is necessary to clearly identify and relate who is losing what. Although some losses are subjective they have to be acknowledged and stated openly and sympathetically. Employees have to be given the opportunity to grieve their real or perceived losses. Clear, accurate information has to be communicated throughout the process.

The endings associated with transition should be marked activities or occasions that mark them in a symbolic and tangible way. It is important to treat the past with respect and to show employees how endings form part of the transition towards future success.

Communication in the neutral zone is made more difficult by the fact that many employees do not understand that it is necessary, but expect to move directly from the old to the new. The neutral zone provides the opportunity for essential reorientation and redefinition. Puth (1994) argues that short-range goals are helpful in combating feelings of being lost or meaningless in the neutral zone. The neutral zone is not the time to promise or demand high levels of productivity. Special training e.g. in problem solving, team building and communication skills may help supervisors and managers to function in the neutral zone. Employees can easily feel lonely and isolated in the neutral zone, especially if they do not understand what is happening to them. Communication can help them feel part of the organization. Puth argues that, without effective communication in the neutral zone, rumours multiply and employees experience anxiety or apathy.

In order to prepare employees for a new beginning, Puth (1994) argues that it is essential to clearly explain the purpose of the change. Furthermore, it is important to convey the envisaged outcome in concrete terms that can be visualized. Another essential element is a plan providing a step-by-step

timetable for the transition. The plan should also indicate how and when employees would receive the necessary information, training and support to make the transition. It is of cardinal importance to also outline the part that each individual will play in the “*new journey*”.

Human reactions to change have been widely documented and analysed. The most well known model is the psychological model of the process for dealing with loss or trauma, which consists of phases of denial, anger, depression and acceptance. Puth (1994) confirms that individuals will react to change in different ways. Some may experience a feeling of disengagement and will withdraw from the situation. Another response is disidentification. Employees experience a loss of identity when familiar structures, tasks or teams are changed or taken away. Employees may also experience disorientation. Explanation is a key element in combating disorientation. Some employees may experience disenchantment and will feel the need to vent their anger. It is important to acknowledge each of these reactions and to allow employees opportunity to express their feelings within a framework of structured change management.

Puth (1994) states that one of the most difficult challenges of the communicating manager is to keep employees motivated during times of change. The best way to motivate and boost morale is for managers to demonstrate that they really care about their employees. In this period it is crucial, for instance, to give recognition for a job well done.

5.2.3 Diversity

Diversity features prominently in the current discourse on organizational and management theory, particularly in the South African context. Arai et al (2001) describe diversity as differences in age, ethnic heritage, gender, physical ability and qualities, religious belief and sexual/affectional orientation. They claim that the influx of women and people of colour into the workplace (which, in South Africa, became a strong trend after the dawn of democracy in 1994) is often met by confusion, discomfort and irritation on the side of existing

employees. Kuga (1996) simplifies the definition of diversity when she states that “*Diversity implies different*”. She reminds the reader that dimensions such as economic level, educational level, lifestyle, geographical and regional differences are all factors that contribute to diversity.

From a survey of existing research, Arai et al (2001) conclude that few large organizations find effective strategies that change their employees’ behaviour regarding diversity. They state that “*Rather than simply committing to valuing diversity, companies must create an atmosphere of inclusion, fairness, openness, and empowerment that can support diversity initiatives.*”

Loden and Rosener (1991) view communication as one of the most complex aspects of managing a diverse workforce. They state that: “*Without an awareness of nuances in language and differences in style, the potential for garbled communication is enormous...*”

Kuga (1996) places the concept of inclusion at the center of effective communication in diverse work groups. According to her, such communication “*reaches out and captures ideas, opinions, experiences and perspectives from people of diverse backgrounds*”. Kuga (1996) argues that it is worth acknowledging different perspectives in an organization as this leads to higher levels of creativity, more options for the organization and better products for its customers. New leaders who enter the work group have to be sensitive to the expectations that work group members have of them and have to assess their communication needs and preferences. In order to get the work done, work groups have to organize themselves. In a diverse environment, this can give rise to conflict and problems. Kuga (1996) views effective communication as a critical element for avoiding and/or addressing such problems. She sees a special role for the leader to set the tone for open communication and to lead negotiations.

Starosta (1998) proposes the adoption of of an open-systems approach to diversity. According to this approach, any individual is a member of various systems, many of which are embedded with others. The groups or systems

could be based on the individual's nation, region, language group or ethnicity, gender, university, quality circle or age. According to Starosta (1998), the ideal situation in a business is one where the activities of different "microcultures" are harmonized into the corporate "overculture". He argues that "*The ideal situation is one within which each individual pools unique skills and insights to create a product that surpasses the abilities of individuals and of individual microcultures*". He describes the end state of this process as "synergy" – a transcendent process that fulfills employees both professionally and personally, much the same as the state of "community" described by Peck (1994).

Starosta (1998) drives home the importance of training or capacity building to make employees aware of cultural differences that exist and to accept that such differences are valid. He views it as the task of the corporate communicator to ensure that employees are made to feel welcome in the business setting regardless of their cultural background. Communication is to be used as a tool to make membership of the corporate culture attractive to all employees. Van der Colff (2002) states that:

"The leader of the future has to learn to assist people of divergent values, beliefs and backgrounds and to weave all employees' efforts into benefiting each individual and the organisation as a whole".

Within the municipal environment, it could similarly be argued that the municipal manager of the future would have to learn to manage diversity within the municipality to benefit the community (which is, after all, part of the municipality as defined in the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000) as a whole.

5.2.4 Bureaucracy

Bennis (1993) describes bureaucracy as "*a social invention which relies exclusively on the power to influence through reason and law*". The German sociologist Max Weber defined the concept of "*bureaucracy*" around the 1900's. He likened bureaucracy to a vending machine that could dispense

judgements on the basis of a written pleading (accompanied by the appropriate fee) that was inserted into the correct slot. Bennis (1993) argues that bureaucracy developed as a reaction to the managerial vices of personal subjugation, nepotism, emotional instability, cruelty and subjective judgements that emerged during the Industrial Revolution. It was an attempt to eliminate chaos and unanticipated situations through rationality and predictability. Technical competence was emphasized and arbitrary decisions rejected.

Flyvbjerg's (1998) study seems to indicate, therefore, the failure of bureaucracy as a result of the initial assumptions underlying it being flawed. According to Flyvbjerg (1998), any attempt at creating a system within which rationality prevails is doomed to fail because of the influence of power, which leads to "*rationalization*"¹⁸ gaining prominence over rationality.

Bennis (1993) characterises a bureaucracy as an organization within which there is a division of labour in terms of functional specialisation; a well-defined hierarchy of authority; a system of rules governing the employees' duties and rights; a system of procedures for work situations; impersonal relationships and promotion based on technical competence.

Bennis (1993) states that bureaucracies have been widely criticized from a theoretical perspective, for moral or ethical reasons and for weaknesses in methodology. Common criticisms include that bureaucracy does not allow for personal growth, breeds conformity and does not take account of the "*informal organization*", has outdated systems of control and authority, does not have efficient means of conflict resolution, thwarts communication and innovative ideas through its hierarchical structure and has difficulty assimilating new technology. Furthermore, Bennis (1993) argues that bureaucracies modify the personalities of officials so that they become dull, gray and conditioned "*organization men*".

¹⁸ Presenting subjective or self-serving arguments as rationality.

Bennis (1993) concurs that, in order to survive, organizations must be able to adapt to and shape the external environment on the one hand, and maintain and coordinate the internal system of “*mutual compliance*” or “*reciprocity*” on the other.

Bureaucracies, which are large public organizations dominated by rules and formal procedures, have, over the years, gained the reputation of being slow, faceless institutions devoid of creativity and unable to respond to changing environmental demands. Mir, Mir and Mosca (2002) argue, however, that the employee-employer relations are much the same in the private and public sectors and are characterised by a paradoxical combination of high hopes and declining trust. They suggest that there is a psychological contract between employees and organizations that goes far beyond market transactions. They claim that empirical examinations of the issue have found that mutuality of investment is the foremost determinant of the strength and success of the employee-organization relationship. Already in the late-1990s, Lippit (1998) recognized this trend when he stated that it was not only the bottom line that determines employees’ commitment, but also the “*top line*”. Employees need to feel a spiritual connection, or calling, or have to recognize a deeper meaning to the work they are performing.

What Mir, Mir and Mosca (2002) refer to as “*new age employees*”¹⁹ expect more equitable treatment in the workplace and have the potential to transform the workplace for the better. They require continuous training and want information on how the organization is performing. Apart from feedback on their progress, they also want proper tools to assist them in achieving goals. They want reward systems and higher compensation for their work. They expect management to be honest and to have an understanding of their values. At the same time, however, new age graduates are willing to accept lower remuneration in favour of a higher quality of life.

Mir, Mir and Mosca (2002) furthermore cite leader communication as one of the factors that strengthen the bond or commitment between employees and

¹⁹ Statistics quoted by Mir, Mir and Mosca (2002) indicate that in 1998, over 30 percent of the United States public sector workforce could be classified as “new age employees”.

their organizations. Commitment is lowered by role ambiguity, conflict and work overload. Commitment is deemed desirable, because it lowers employee turnover and increases productivity.

Ellickson (2002) conducted a survey of 1227 full-time municipal employees in the US Midwest region representing 18 departments and serving a population of approximately 200 000 people. He found that satisfied workers engage in organizational citizenship and exceed formal job requirements. Dissatisfied workers withdraw, suffer burnout and are prone to workplace aggression.

In order to identify and measure the variables related to job satisfaction, Ellickson (2002) formulated and tested 14 hypotheses. The variable of “*departmental pride*” was found to be the key determinant of variation in overall job satisfaction of municipal employees. Ellickson (2002) accedes that additional research would be needed to identify the elements of departmental pride. Nonetheless, the preliminary research indicates that:

“departmental pride is part of a larger psychological climate that includes an atmosphere of cooperation and friendliness among work group members, a group perception that they produce work of higher quality and quantity than other groups in the organization, and the existence of open lines of communication and trust among all members of the department”.

Ellickson (2002) found that the second most powerful determinant of job satisfaction was promotional opportunities, while good relationships with supervisors also had a significant effect on employee satisfaction. Ellickson (2002) states that the results suggest that local governments should “*develop work environments that foster mutually trustworthy relationships with supervisors, perhaps through better communications and employee empowerment.*”

Drawing on a study of strategic planning in Chicago during the early 1980's, Mier, Moe and Sherr (1986) elucidate a number of factors that limit the capacity of municipalities to engage in local strategic planning. The Tshwane

will attempt to test whether the factors indicated by Mier, Moe and Sherr (1986) almost two decades before, were still relevant at the time of the study. These include staff capacity, communication, intercultural sensitivity, co-operative working relationships both within the municipality and with other spheres of government and systems to monitor performance. Mier, Moe and Sherr (ibid) are of the opinion that many of the Chicago planners were inadequately trained and reflected decades of hiring dominated by a patronage system. More recently, Landry and Bianchini (1995) have argued that the networks of patronage and long-standing elites that characterise bureaucracies reduce freedom of access to power and information. They contend that the elites that ensue, lose the means to draw on the creativity of the people they are meant to serve.

Landry and Bianchini (1995) furthermore argue that bureaucracies block creativity because they have to keep the urban machine running by way of complex rules and regulations. Such rules are resistant to change and bureaucratic mindsets can imbue the whole organization. Merton (in Ott, 1989) states that bureaucracy pressures people to be methodical and disciplined, to conform to patterns of obligations. This causes blind conformance and is responsible for mostly negative behavioural consequences. According to Merton this can eventually lead to the creation of so-called "*bureau-pathological personalities*"²⁰.

Although published in 1988, the study by McClendon and Quay (1988) is one of few focusing pertinently on (public sector) planners and change. They state that many planning agencies in the USA have become "*tired bureaucracies more concerned with survival than the search for excellence*". They advocate the creation of a team-based competitive work environment, which includes performance incentives and an expectation of excellence as a strategy for more effective planning.

²⁰ Personalities characterised by blind conformance to bureaucratic rules and regulations.

5.2.5 Managerialism

Theorists such as Boje (1991, 2001, 2002) may argue that the above theories are all managerialist in their approach. In other words, they argue from the premise that “*better management will prove an effective solvent for a wide range of economic and social ills*” (Pollit in Boje 2002). As such, it was a by-product of the emergence of corporate capitalism at the beginning of the 20th century and displays a masculine and paternalistic ethic. Boje (2002) argues that the “*ideal type*” managerialism is characterized by concepts such as “*corporate planning; grouping of activities by outputs or outcomes; a divisionalised organizational structure²¹; performance monitoring; generalist managers and results oriented remuneration*”. In a managerialist organization, storytelling is a “*meaning-making and sense-making process*” (Boje, 2002). In other words, managerialists follow a functionalist approach that focuses mainly on the use of stories to transfer knowledge, communicate vision and accomplish change.

By contrast, Boje (2002) proposes an approach to storytelling organizations that is neither managerialist nor functionalist. This approach, which he calls “*critical postmodern*” draws upon critical and postmodern theory, deconstruction, feminist critique and intertextuality. It focuses strongly on power in storytelling and acknowledges the pluralism of plots, the multiple ways in which stories may be interpreted, as well as the interplay between marginalized (silent) stories and the dominant (hegemonic) stories in an organization. Furthermore, the focus of the post-managerialist ideology is on “*collective self-determination*” rather than on control or so-called empowerment by managers.

Boje (2002) does not propose, however, that the managerialist perspective should be discarded or ignored, rather, he states that: “*Critical postmodern*

²¹ Braverman (1976) illustrates that the division of labour into core tasks results in a degradation (referred to as “deskilling” by Braverman) of work from a high to a low level of skill and a high to a low level of remuneration. This division of work is an inherent characteristic of a bureaucratic organization such as the CTMM. In the context of South Africa’s apartheid past, it furthermore introduced an element of race. I.e. the highly skilled, well paid work (e.g. that of city planners) was performed by whites, while unskilled, low paid jobs were performed by blacks.

approaches to storytelling allows for a dialectic relationship between managerialist narrative and critical narrative". Boje (2001) also states that critical postmodern theory does not accept the total rejection of the grand narrative as put forward by Lyotard, but rather is a theory that is "*up to the task of exploring the postmodern turn that never transcends modern*".

This dialectic approach was also followed in the Tshwane study. Therefore, the entrenched managerialism of the municipality is not merely reflected, but also criticized by way of exposing so-called "*contested emplotments*" (see Boje, 2002). The metanarrative of the transformation of the Tshwane local government is deconstructed by way of telling the "*microstoria*"²² of the experience of the planners employed by the municipality during the study period.

²² "Alternative histories" see Boje, 2002.

CHAPTER 6

HOW A CITY PLANNING FUNCTION FOR THE CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY CAME ABOUT

6.1 The end of an era

The story of what happened to City Planning in the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area (later referred to as the Tshwane area) during the unicity transformation process is an intriguing one, and it was remarked more than once, especially at times when a new and unexpected turn of events became apparent, that “*someone should record it*”. In essence, this study attempts to, in the words of Gunder & Mouat (2002:127) “*accord textual voice*” to the story of Tshwane’s planning function. I have attempted to do this objectively, knowing that, as a character in the story, it is impossible to do so without a measure of bias (see also Watson 2001 and Chapters 1 and 2 of this study document). Furthermore, I do not purport to know or tell “*the full story*”, as I am constrained both by my own limited experience of the described events, as well as by the degree to which other sources of information on the events exist.

One could be forgiven for assuming that the story begins on 6 December 2000, as this was the date of the establishment of the new unicity structure known as the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM). As such, it was indeed a date that heralded a new era for local government in the greater Pretoria area²³. The truth, however, is that the real transformation of City Planning started on different dates for different people.

Mike Yates celebrates an ending

One such beginning came a week earlier, on 30 November 2000. On that day, the then Executive Director of City Planning and Development of the City Council of Pretoria, Mike Yates, did something that surprised most of the town

²³ A milestone for the legislative process was 1 October 2000, when the establishment of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality was gazetted by way of Government Notice 6770 of 2000 in the Gauteng provincial Gazette Extraordinary No 141 and Notice 330 of 2000 in the North West Extraordinary Gazette No 5580.

planners. Mike, who was painfully shy and perceived by many of the staff members to be a bit of a religious zealot – certainly not a public speaker or a performer – organized what he called an “*End-of-an-Era*” function in the Sammy Marks Library Hall to which all the staff members of the City Planning and Development Department were invited (Tindall, 2000). The function was the culmination of a series of informal visits that Mike had paid to each division within the department “*talking about the significance of the present time and sharing the latest information concerning transformation*” (Yates in Tindall, 2000). In the speech he delivered on that occasion, Mike summarised the history of the Department. He also gave a brief glimpse of what was to be expected in the near future, referring to the inaugural meeting of the new council, which was to take place on 12 December 2000, and at which point, according to Mike, the executive mayor would be appointed. He warned his staff that they could expect a new leadership style, a new focus regarding the core business of the Council and a “*new way of doing things*”. He also said that a new organizational structure would be designed and the first posts filled by June 2001. Little did Mike know then that the posts would indeed only be filled in December 2003, more than two full years later than expected. He could not have foreseen the levels to which the “*uncertainty*”, “*fear of the unknown*” and “*unanswered questions*” that he referred to in his speech would have escalated by that time.

Mike closed his speech by urging everyone to remain positive, and honouring all the staff members for their contribution. He singled out a few staff members who had been in the service of the Department for a particularly long time (ranging from 37 to 20 years). Lastly, he proposed a toast to the “*department and the new council – to the end of an era and the start of something new and exciting*”. This is the first incident in a pattern of actively cultivating goodwill and avoiding conflict that will be apparent throughout the restructuring process. This is a strong parallel between the Tshwane case and the story of the Aalborg Project, of which Flyvbjerg (1998:22) states that “As we shall see repeatedly in this study, however, confrontation is actively

avoided in the Aalborg Project”. This “stroking strategy”²⁴ is viewed by Flyvbjerg (1998:74) as “central to an understanding of the relationship between rationality and power”.

Much of what Mike said was inaudible and most of those present were extremely surprised that he, who was not perceived as a people’s person and a notoriously poor communicator, had initiated such a function. Nonetheless, comments made afterwards by those present indicated a large degree of appreciation for the gesture. Indeed, Mike Yates was, to my knowledge, the only person in the entire City Council of Pretoria who had deemed it necessary to “*celebrate the ending*”, something which scholars such as Bridges (1991) view as indispensable to effective change management.

Administrative Units and Divisions

When the new municipality, the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) came into being on 6 December 2000, it replaced the following structures:

- the Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure (NPMSS) (Akasia and Soshanguve areas),
- the Centurion Town Council (CTC) (Laudium, Centurion and Olievenhoutbosch),
- the City Council of Pretoria (CCP) (Atteridgeville, Pretoria and Mamelodi); and
- the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council.

Its municipal area also included the areas of Temba, Mabopane/Winterveld and Garankuwa.

From 6 December 2000 on, these areas had the status of Administrative Units (AUs). At the first meeting of the new Council, which was held on 12 December 2000, seven acting Administrative Unit Managers (AUMs) were appointed (CTMM 2000). They were:

²⁴ A strategy employing actions and/or words to appease the other party in order to avert possible conflict.

- Marelize Fourie (City Council of Pretoria);
- Nick Hamman (Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure);
- Len de Kock (Town Council of Centurion);
- Chris Opperman (Temba);
- Patrick Sokhela (Ga-Rankuwa);
- Piet Venter (Mabopane/Winterveldt); and
- Kenny Rosenberg (Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council).

The acting Administrative Unit Managers had all been first or second level managers (Directors or Deputy Directors) in the four former municipal structures mentioned above. As from May 2001, Nava Pillay²⁵ was appointed as the Divisional Manager: Operations in the office of the Municipal Manager. He was also responsible for convening and chairing meetings of the Administrative Unit Managers (CTMM, 2001n).

In addition to this, eleven divisions were established, each headed by a Divisional Manager. The Divisional Managers were each responsible for managing a specific function, or “*Division*”, across all the Administrative Units. “*City Planning*” did not feature on the list of the new Divisions; neither did any of the names of the departments of the former City Council of Pretoria (CTMM, 2000).

The Division under which City Planning resorted was that of Economic Development, and the Divisional Manager was **Nomgqibelo Mdlalose**, seconded from her position as Manager: Local Economic Development in the former Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council.

The other functions of the Economic Development Division were Transport Planning and Management; Fresh Produce Market; Local Economic Development; and later the Wonderboom Airport. There was general consensus that the placement of Transport Planning, City Planning and Local Economic Development within one division was a sound decision and would

²⁵ Nava Pillay actively participated in the struggle for liberation in South Africa. He joined the then City Council of Pretoria as a Councillor in 1995, following which he was appointed Executive Director of Community Upliftment Programmes.

enhance the integration of these functions, as had been called for by the planners of the former City Council of Pretoria, as well as by the planning fraternity in general, for a long time.

The Amund Beneke process

Soon after the new municipality came into being on 6 December 2000, **Amund Beneke**, Chief Planner at the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, initiated a process to restructure the City Planning Function (CTMM, 2001f). He established a working group called the “*Restructuring of the City Planning Function Working Group*”. The Working Group consisted of eight teams, namely:

- Organizational Design
- Budget 2001/02
- Delineation of Planning Units (Regions)
- Land-use Strategy
- Planning Data
- Building Control
- Land-Use Applications, and
- Outdoor Advertising.

It was later decided to add another task team, namely one for Urban Design.

Two interesting features of the “*Amund Beneke process*” can be deduced from a progress report he submitted to Nomgqibelo at her request at the beginning of April 2001 (CTMM, 2001f). Firstly, it is clear that the task teams consisted almost exclusively of existing managers. Secondly, the structuring of the task teams and the terminology used in the progress report confirmed earlier indications of a strong bias towards land use planning as the primary tool and activity of the City Planning Function. This is in stark contrast to the slant towards strategic planning that was to emerge later.

Although Amund Beneke insisted that the working group had been established with the blessing of the Divisional Manager, Nomgqibelo, this claim was later strongly refuted by her and by several of Amund’s colleagues.

Over the years that Amund had spent at the GPMC, he had built up a reputation as a domineering person due to his forthright and sometimes aggressive manner. Physically large and intimidating, Amund was referred to as the “*Groot Krokodil*” (Big Crocodile)²⁶ by some of his former colleagues (pers comm Ngonyama, 2001 & pers comm Van der Merwe, 2001). According to them, it was apparent from the beginning that Amund did not recognise Nomgqibelo’s authority. Subsequently, he did not involve her in the process, nor consult with her on it.

In February 2001 Nomgqibelo compiled a Purpose Structure for the newly formed Division (CTMM, 2001a). The document mentioned City Planning and Management as one of the goals of the Division along with Local Economic Development, Transport Planning and Management, Fresh Produce Market and Wonderboom Airport. In this document, City Planning and Management was described as “*to facilitate and promote an integrated spatial plan in order to attain urban growth management by means of balancing economic, physical, social and institutional development*”. The emphasis that she put on the spatial plan, without any reference to land use management, was refreshing in the light of the fact that, in the former City Council of Pretoria, the largest of the disestablished municipal structures, the emphasis was always on land use planning. It was also a significant departure from the approach followed by the Amund Beneke-group, who listed “*Land-use Strategy*” and “*Land-use Applications*” as two of the main planning functions.

In the Purpose Structure compiled by Nomgqibelo, the objectives of City Planning and Management were listed as:

- Town and Regional Planning;
- Urban Design;
- Building Control;
- Services Infrastructure Planning;
- Determining mechanisms to enhance and promote desired spatial patterns (e.g. incentive programmes);

²⁶ “Groot Krokodil” was the colloquial term used to refer to PW Botha, the last State President of South Africa under the Apartheid regime. The name denotes something of the brutal “kragdadigheid” (forcefulness) which was commonly associated with the Apartheid leadership.

- Integrated Spatial Plans;
- Strategic Development Initiatives (SDIs); and
- Strategic Development Areas as well as Metropolitan Activity Nodes.

This list could certainly be criticised for the fact that it mixed functions (Building Control), with actions (determining mechanisms etc.) with objects stated as nouns (Integrated Spatial Plans, SDIs, Strategic Development Areas and Metropolitan Activity Nodes). It is further interesting that the inclusion of “*Services Infrastructure Planning*” and “*Metropolitan Activity Nodes*” placed the City Planning and Management function in a central position with regard to both services planning (previously mainly the function of the City Engineers) and economic development planning, which was also dealt with by a different department in the past. This approach to the function was welcomed by some planners who had felt that spatial planning should be the point of integration between the different municipal planning functions (pers comm Barbir, 2001; pers comm Ludik 2001)²⁷.

In the proposed organogram, the name of the function was “*Town Planning and Management*”, rather than “*City Planning and Management*”. The confusion regarding the names of functions and structures became a recurring theme during the transformation process and was indicative of the general confusion that characterized the study period. It would not seem that the alternative use of “City Planning” and “Town Planning” was merely the result of general confusion or uncertainty²⁸ and did not denote any distinction on the basis of the scope, approach or content of the function.

At the end of the Purpose Structure compiled by Nomngqibelo (CTMM 2001a), under the heading of “*Actions initiated for the new financial year*”, the only action for the new year pertaining to City Planning simply read as follows: “*The Town Planning processes need to be analysed and re-engineered.*”

²⁷ This view is also supported by the Green Paper on Development and Planning, 1999.

²⁸ The name of the planning department of the former City Council of Pretoria was “City Planning and Development, while the department in the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council was referred to as “Land Use and Transportation Planning”. The relevant academic department at the University of Pretoria was called “Town and Regional Planning”. In most of the recent literature on planning theory studied, qualifiers such as “city”, “town” or “land-use” are dropped and the discipline referred to merely as “planning”, while the qualifier “spatial” is implicit (see also Hillier (2002) and Yiftachel and Huxley (2000)).

Although this placed the necessary emphasis on the need for restructuring, it did not reflect anything of the normal operation of the function, or of projects/programmes that were already under way in the respective municipal structures. Already at this early stage, the document compiled by Nomngqibelo seemed, therefore, to convey the notion that “*everything would stop while transformation was taking place*”. This sense of discontinuity would later be enforced by a number of factors.

It is hardly surprising, in the light of the incoherent nature of the so-called “*Purpose Structure Document*”, that a group referring to themselves as the “*city planners and local economic development practitioners, which (sic) are committed to transformation*” expressed their dissatisfaction with the document in an undated memo addressed to Mr PNS Makgathe (Acting City Manager), Ms N Mdlalose (Divisional Manager: Economic Development) and the Administrative Unit Managers (CTMM, 2001b).

The group consisted of representatives (mostly relatively senior officials) from the former CCP, TCC, GPMC, Mabopane, Temba (Eastern Gauteng Services Council), and the NPMSS, and was convened by Amund Beneke who had led the transformation of City Planning up to that point. They based their criticism on the document on three factors: Firstly, they argued that the document was biased towards Local Economic Development; secondly, that it was not consulted on and, thirdly, that it ignored certain statutory requirements with regard to City Planning.

The group continued to explain the nature of a city and its spatial elements. Flyvbjerg (1998:80) states that “rationality is part of the power of the weak”. This argument is supported by the manner in which the Amund Beneke group (a group with a weak power position) attempted to attack Nomngqibelo’s purpose structure through rationally superior arguments. The Beneke group proposed that the Economic Development Division be renamed to the “*City Planning and Economic Division*”. This marked the beginning of a long struggle to get “*City Planning*” acknowledged at the highest level of the structure of the new metropolitan municipality.

The group proposed an alternative purpose structure for City Planning and Economic Development. The following sub-functions were envisaged:

- Support Services (registry/archives, messengering service, decentralised human resource and finance services, typists etc)
- Land-use and Planning (note the sequence, which gives prominence to land-use)
- Urban Design
- Environmental Planning
- Infrastructure Planning
- Law Enforcement
- Building Control (City Development Control)
- Outdoor Advertising
- Transport Planning and Management
- Local Economic Development, and
- Strategic Projects.

Each of these sub-functions was expanded upon through a definition of its goal and a list of objectives. The goal proposed for the Land-Use and Planning function was formulated as follows: *“To ensure functional, economical, orderly and sustainable use of land in Tshwane by promoting harmonious land-use patterns and by managing land-use rights.”* This very traditional definition, with its strong land-use orientation, was not in any discernable way aligned with the new legislative imperatives of developmental local government and a more facilitative approach to planning. No mention was made of the role that planning had to play in restructuring the city.

The role of City Planning in Nomngqibelo’s purpose structure was worded in terms that emphasised a holistic, integrated approach with a slant towards growth and development. The focus was on spatial planning rather than on land-use management. In the response prepared by Amund Beneke and his colleagues, however, land-use planning was seen as dominating the planning function.

Although the group criticized the purpose structure proposed by Nomgqibelo Mdlalose on the basis that it did not take into account statutory requirements, the counterproposal seemed oblivious to the spirit of developmental local government. No mention was made of concepts such as restitution, addressing spatial distortion, achieving equity, or any other term indicating the changing political context. It would seem from this document that, at that stage, the perception of planners was still very much that of the strong, controlling, “*big planner*”, rather than the facilitative, enabling, collaborating planner, which is presented as the ideal by planning theorists proposing a communicative action approach, such as Healey (1995 & 1997), Innes (1999, 2002, 2003), Campbell (2002) and those in favour of a more ethical approach to planning, such as Fainstein (1999) and Gunder (2000).

On 11 April 2001 (CTMM, 2001f) a slightly altered version of the Amund Beneke counterproposal for a purpose structure was submitted to Nomgqibelo. This time, a schematic representation of the proposed city planning function was included. In this scheme (*figure i*) City Planning (excluding Building Control etc) was divided into a Unit for Metropolitan Land-use Planning and a Unit for Sub-Regional /Local Land Use Planning and Management. Yet again, the names given to the functions seemed to favour land-use management, or zoning, as the primary mechanism of City Planning.

As could be deduced from the tone of this correspondence shortly after the dawn of the new dispensation for local government in the Greater Pretoria Area, conflict was developing between the group that compiled this document on the one hand, and the newly appointed acting Divisional Manager, Nomgqibelo Mdlalose, on the other.

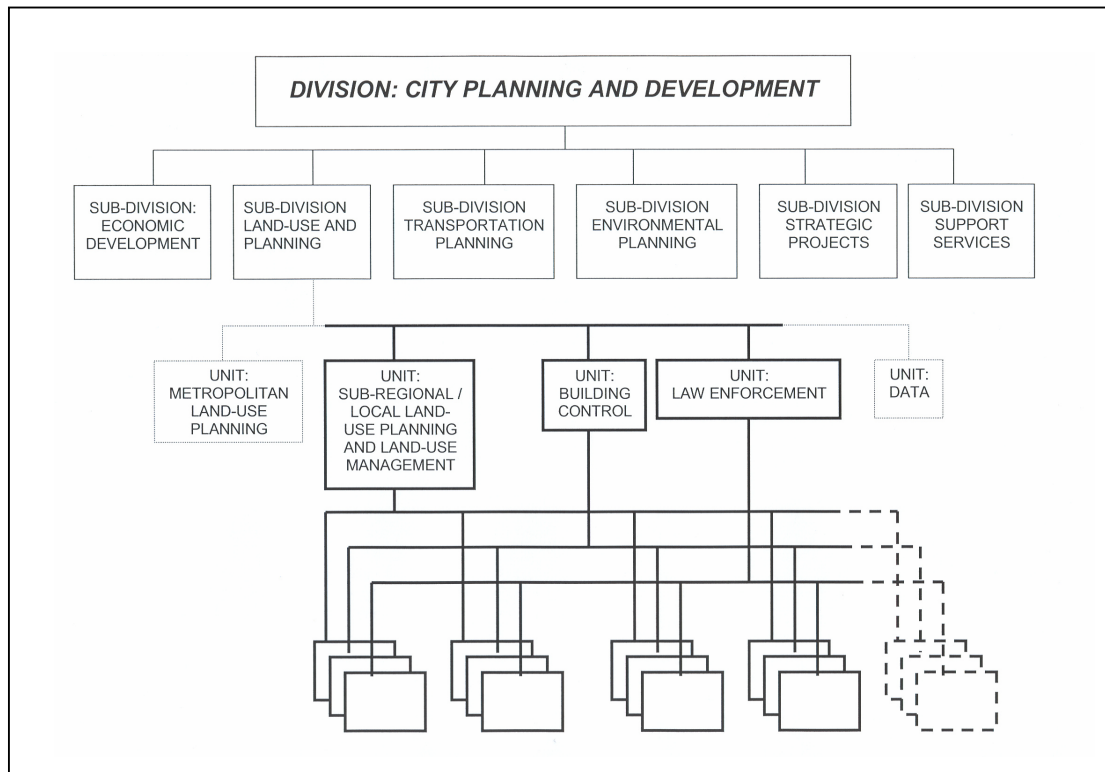


Figure i: City Planning purpose structure proposed by the Amund Beneke group in April 2001

The planners that compiled the counterproposal to Nomgqibelo's purpose structure prided themselves on "*their profession*". As was the case with the planners in Flyvbjerg's (1998) account of Aalborg, the planners' professional status was their source of power within the municipality. It was a power source that they fiercely protected. This was already evident from the long-standing feud that had emerged between the Planners and the Technicians in the former City Council of Pretoria. The planners were dissatisfied with the fact that, in some cases "*Planning Technicians*", who did not hold degrees in Town and Regional Planning and who were not registered as Town and Regional Planners, had been appointed in Town Planner posts, which were on a higher job level. Many of the planners in Amund's group found it intolerable that Nomgqibelo, who did not have a Town Planning degree, could presume to be their manager. It could be argued that the fact that she was a woman, and black at that, were further obstacles to the planners (the vast majority of whom were white males with conservative political views) regarding her as an authority figure. She had not gone "*through the ranks*" as was the tradition in the local authority and was on a post level more junior than that of some of the people who now reported to her. It is interesting that

one of the more persistent rumours about Nomgqibelo was that she was very young. Many people insisted that she was “*in her early twenties*” and used this “*fact*” to point out how ridiculous the new management structure was²⁹.

6.2 Belinda and the Core Team

By April 2001, the schism that had emerged between Amund and Nomgqibelo had widened beyond repair. At the same time, a strong bond of friendship had developed between Nomgqibelo and Belinda van der Merwe, a Senior Town Planner in Amund’s team. The two had met in the course of work before Nomgqibelo was nominated as Divisional Manager. However, after the appointment, Belinda’s frustration with Amund Beneke’s authoritarian management style (which was vehemently denied by Amund in his interview, 2004) and Nomgqibelo’s frustration at his failure to acknowledge her authority or consult with her on the restructuring process led to the formation of an opposing force to Amund. It was on Belinda’s insistence that Nomgqibelo finally took action. On 9 April 2001, she issued a memorandum (CTMM, 2001e) addressed to all personnel of the Division ordering “*All existing (restructuring) initiatives and discussions within the Division*”(my parenthesis) to “*be terminated with immediate effect*”, thus causing what came to be known as the “Amund Beneke-process” to come to an abrupt end.

In the Memorandum, Nomgqibelo proposed an alternative structure in the form of a new set of working groups to “*facilitate the restructuring process within the division*”. The reasons she cited for this decision were the following:

- Inadequate participation;
- Inadequate communication;
- A lack of sufficient coordination with other functions and disciplines;
and
- A lack of a clearly defined mandate and terms of reference to guide the restructuring initiatives.

²⁹ Nomgqibelo developed a real interest in City Planning. An arrangement was made with the University of Pretoria whereby she received weekly tutorials on different aspects of town planning from Prof Mark Oranje and colleagues at the Department of Town and Regional Planning.

Amund (interview Beneke, 2004) later expressed outrage at the accusation that the restructuring process he led was regarded as exclusionary. According to him, the managers who were on the team should have given feedback to their respective constituencies and consulted with them regarding the proposals formulated by the team. As part of the same process, any inputs from the planners under the respective managers could have been fed back to the restructuring team. He furthermore claimed that he saw to it that his own team was continually kept informed.

Apart from a working group for City Planning, Nomgqibelo also indicated (CTMM, 2001e) that working groups were to be established for Local Economic Development, Transport Planning and Management, Tourism, the Fresh Produce Market, Strategic Development and Administrative Support Services.

Nomgqibelo furthermore indicated in the memorandum that a Convenor would be nominated for each working group. Such a convenor would be *“responsible for administrative and logistical arrangements and support related to the activities of the working groups”*.

In terms of the memorandum, one of the first tasks of the convenor would be to, in conjunction with the working group members, compile a *“work plan”*. The work plan had to address a work program (including dates and frequency of meetings), the goals, objectives and deliverables of the working group, the establishment of sub-working groups or task teams, a communication strategy or plan to ensure that officials were involved and informed, and the modus operandi of the working group and task teams.

Shortly afterwards, Nomgqibelo issued another memorandum, naming **Belinda van der Merwe** as the Convenor for City Planning (CTMM, 2001g). Up to that point, Belinda was a planner working under Amund Beneke at the former Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council. Victor Baloyi, a transportation planner in the former Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, was nominated

as the Convenor for Transport Planning and Management, Verna Nel, the Chief Townplanner of Centurion who had a doctorate degree in Geography, for Local Economic Development, and Christo Groenewald, the existing manager of the market, for the Fresh Produce Market.

Belinda co-opted **Henry Bezuidenhout** and **Nikki Ludik**, who worked as her colleagues under Amund Beneke in the planning function of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, to assist her with the task of restructuring the City Planning function and so a process was started to source other members for what was to be known as the “**Core Team**”. Belinda often used the expression “*scraping the bottom of the barrel*” to indicate how difficult it was to find suitable people to manage the restructuring process. (“*Restructuring*” now became the fashionable term, instead of “*transformation*”, which was the prevalent term used to refer to the change process in the City Council of Pretoria before 5 December 2000. It was as if the new term was part of that which defined the new era.)

Amund later conceded that the betrayal by his team members Belinda, Henry and Nikki, whom he had held in the highest esteem, was a bitter pill to swallow (interview Beneke, 2004). Although Henry said that Amund posed a “*huge obstacle*” to the growth of those who worked under him (interview Bezuidenhout, 2002), Amund said that he had always “*put his people first*” (sic). He was particularly disappointed that Nikki, whom he had recruited for his team from the former City Council of Pretoria several years before, had joined in the mutiny. He cited this turn of events as the direct cause of his resignation from the CTMM at the end of July 2001³⁰. In the interview (Beneke, 2004) he stated that he would return to planning only if “*politics could be taken out of it*”. There is a striking similarity between these words of Amund and the exclamation by Aalborg’s Social Democratic Deputy Mayor when he retires: “*I don’t like politics, I really don’t...*” (Flyvbjerg 1998:167).

³⁰ Amund Beneke resigned on 31 July 2001 after buying an ice-cream franchise at the Hartebeespoort Dam. He has not been involved in City Planning since (interview Beneke, 2004).

Henry Bezuidenhout had been involved with the Pretoria Inner City Partnership (PICP) as a representative of the GPMC since the inception of the Partnership in 1996. He identified **Johnny Coetzee**, who was then the Inner City Programme Manager, and I (**Desirée Homann**), as additional members of the Core Team. Henry motivated Johnny's inclusion on the basis of his strategic thinking skills, and I, who managed the Marketing and Communication portfolio at the Partnership, was included because of the high priority that Nomngqibelo placed on communication, particularly in the light of the criticism she raised against the Amund Beneke-process. I had been working at the City Council of Pretoria for seven years and had an honours degree in Journalism.

A very positive relationship had formed between Henry and Johnny through Henry's cooperation with the Pretoria Inner City Partnership. Henry facilitated funding from the GPMC for a number of Pretoria Inner City Partnership projects and was therefore a valued associate. Johnny and I, on the other hand, had witnessed the steady decline of political support for the Pretoria Inner City Partnership over the course of the preceding months and had been toying with the idea of establishing a new career as partners in a private consultancy to municipalities. It was on the grounds of the bond that had formed between us, that Johnny championed my inclusion in the core team, which seemed to promise exciting new career prospects. The power of (old) acquaintances also features clearly in the Aalborg case (Flyvbjerg, 1998:16 in the form of the charismatic mayor, "Bus-Marius" who was allied to the Aalborg Bus Company on the grounds that he used to work for the Company as a young man. The confirmation of our inclusion in the Core Team came in the form of a formal letter from Nomngqibelo on 2 May 2001 (CTMM, 2001g).

A "transparent and participative" process

It almost became a mantra in the core team discussions that this was a "*transparent and participative*" process, and just as often, this was placed in juxtaposition to Amund Beneke's process, which was said to have been "*exclusive and top-down*". The commitment to communication seemed real

enough. Already at the beginning of the week following the co-option of Johnny and I on the core team, a road-show was held by Nomngqibelo (on 14 and 15 May 2001) at the Pretoria, Akasia, Ga-Rankuwa and Centurion Council offices to introduce her and her convenors to the officials, to explain the structure of the new division and to encourage officials to participate positively in the “*restructuring*” process.

I had compiled a newsletter for distribution at the road show meetings (CTMM, 2001k), which reiterated the commitment of the Divisional Manager to a participative approach and again explained the arrangement with regard to the convenors and working groups. Contact numbers of all the convenors were provided and a special effort was made to word the document in such a manner so as to foster enthusiasm for the process. The first heading, for example, read “*Become part of a positive process*”.

The rationalization or “positivization” of the restructuring process of the Tshwane planning function in the Core Team’s newsletters and circulars is similar to the reporting of the Aalborg Stiftstidende on the Aalborg Project. Both are instances of propaganda, although the reporting of the Stiftstidende aims to achieve the opposite, namely to project a negative image of and muster opposition to the Aalborg project (Flyvbjerg, 1998:58; 59; 82; 95; 113; 123; 129; 159; 215). Ironically, the Aalborg City Council member from the Socialist People’s party later writes an article in the Stiftstidende in an attempt to mobilize support for the Aalborg Project (Flyvbjerg, 1998:159).



RESTRUCTURING OF FUNCTIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Become part of a positive process

A positive process is under way to restructure the individual functions of the Economic Development Division. The process will be driven by working groups, each of which will be coordinated by a convenor. Convenors have already been nominated for the Local Economic Development, Transport Planning and Management, Fresh Produce Market and City Planning working groups. Working groups for which convenors are still to be nominated are Tourism, Strategic Development, and Administrative Support Services.

A coordinator has also been nominated to coordinate the activities of all the working groups. The coordinator reports to the Divisional Manager, who in turn liaises with the Municipal Manager, the Transformation Manager and other Divisional Managers.

The convenors and the coordinator have been nominated to do important work during the transformation process. These functions should in no way be confused with appointments, promotions, or any other permanent change to the personnel structure. All the nominees retain their current job levels, etc.

What happened to the 'old' processes?

Since the establishment of the Division in December last year, there have been a number of ad hoc restructuring processes. Various discussions have taken place, and working groups were established related to some of these ad hoc processes. Some very valuable work was done by way of these processes. However, the manner in which it was done proved counter productive, mainly because of the following reasons:

- Restricted participation and involvement by officials.
- Inadequate communication.
- Lack of coordination within the Division and with other Divisions.
- No clearly defined mandate and terms of reference to structure the process.

A committed Divisional Manager

It is, however, the commitment of the Divisional Manager: Economic Development, Ms. Nomgqibelo Mdlalose, that the new restructuring process will be inclusive of all officials, that communication will enjoy a high priority, that there will be proper coordination of restructuring processes within the Division, as well as coordination with processes of other Divisions, and that a clear structure and terms of reference will be established to guide the process.

All Administrative Unit Managers have been asked to grant their officials permission to participate freely in the working groups.

What will the convenors do?

The task of the convenors will be two-fold. While they will focus on the restructuring of the functions, they will also manage the operational tasks within their function. The convenors will also be responsible for administrative and logistical support related to the activities of the working groups.

In conjunction with the working group members, the convenors have to compile a work plan which will contain information regarding a work program (including dates and frequency of meetings); goals, objectives and deliverables of working groups; establishment of sub-working groups or task teams if and when applicable, a communication strategy/plan to ensure participation and informed officials, as well as a modus operandi of the working group and task teams.

Let's respect the protocol

Uncertainty about correct protocol has caused a good measure of delay, misunderstanding, and embarrassment since the establishment of the Division. All officials are asked to take note that, from now on, the convenors will be the central point of reference for each function. You are kindly requested not to contact the Divisional Manager directly with requests (especially not requests for interviews) as this places undue strain on an already full portfolio. All enquiries, reports etc should be directed to the Divisional Manager via the relevant convenor.

The following is a list of the convenors and their contact numbers.

FUNCTION	CONVENOR	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	TEL. NO.	FAX	E-MAIL
Coordinator	Pieter Vosloo	Room 227, 2 nd floor, Old Raadsaal	337 4186	323 5824	Pvosloo@gpmc.org.za
City Planning	Belinda van der Merwe	Room 411, HB Phillips	337 4075	328 5137	BVDMERWE@gpmc.org.za
Fresh Produce Market	Christo Groenewald	Market, DF Malan Drive	328 3010	323 2855	Groenewald.Christo@pretoria.gov.za
Local Economic Development	Verna Nel		671 7252	671 7865	Nelv@etc.co.za
Transport Planning and Management	Victor Baloyi	Room 501, HB Phillips	337 4068	328 5137	Vbaloyi@gpmc.co.za

Remember that your comments are important to us. Please do not hesitate to send us your comments/queries, preferably by fax or e-mail. You can count on a response!

While the Core Team members often discussed amongst themselves the future prospects that had opened up as a result of them being elevated to the position of managing the restructuring process for the City Planning function³¹, it was emphasized in the newsletter that the Convenors only had temporary appointments and had not been “*promoted*”. This was done specifically to avoid possible conflict that could arise around unfair “*promotion*”. From the outset, the Core Team instinctively employed a strategy of avoiding open confrontation, the same strategy used by the Technical Department in Flyvbjerg’s Aalborg study (Flyvbjerg, 1998). The strategy is also apparent in the rest of the newsletter, when the question was put “*What happened to the ‘old’ (restructuring) processes?*” (my parenthesis) and it was acknowledged that some “*valuable work*” had been done in those processes. The criticisms against the “*old processes*” (a euphemistic reference mainly to Amund Beneke’s restructuring effort) are listed as restricted participation by and involvement of officials, inadequate communication, lack of coordination and no clearly defined mandate or terms of reference – a repetition of the list cited in Nomgqibelo’s letter of 9 April 2001 (CTMM, 2001e).

This is a prime example of rationalization, as one of the contributing factors that led to the decision to terminate the “*old restructuring process*”, namely the personality clash between Amund and Nomgqibelo on the one hand and Amund and his former team members Belinda, Henry and Nikki, on the other (interview Beneke, 2004), was never overtly stated.

The commitment of the Divisional Manager that the new restructuring process would be inclusive, that communication would enjoy a high priority, that restructuring processes would be properly coordinated and that clear terms of reference would be established to guide the process, followed.

³¹ Ironically, only two of the Core Team members later achieved a higher status in the new organizational structure. Belinda van der Merwe was appointed as General Manager: IDP and Henry Bezuidenhout was later appointed as Manager: Land Use Management. Three of the other Core Team members resigned to pursue other opportunities. They were: Marietjie van Zyl (who resigned at the end of 2001), Desirée Homann (who resigned at the end of May 2002), and Nikki Ludik (who resigned at the end of 2003). Johnny Coetzee was unsuccessful in his application for the post of Manager: Metropolitan Spatial Planning, and has since been working as a planner in the same function under Kestell Serfontein.

In the newsletter, the role of the Convenors with regard to compiling a restructuring work plan and establishing working groups and task teams was carefully set out. Making sure that everyone knew how the process would unfold and what the deliverables were, was another conscious effort on the side of the Core Team. In this way, the officials were prepared for what was to come and conflict later in the process was avoided. This would be heralded as “*sound change management practice*” according to, among others, Myers & Myers (1982), Skopec (1990), Puth (1994) and Gellerman (1995). However, it was also a wise strategy on the part of the Core Team to ensure that later decisions/actions would not be challenged by other officials, as the Core Team “*had informed them beforehand*” of what was going to happen.

Lastly, the officials were asked to “*respect the protocol*”. This meant that the Divisional Manager was not to be contacted directly and that all enquiries, reports etc, had to be directed to the Divisional Manager via the appropriate convenor. Although the reason for this arrangement was given as avoiding undue strain on the Divisional Manager’s full portfolio, the real motivation, as discussed within the Core Team, was to secure the Convenor’s (Belinda’s) position as the only one with direct access to the Divisional Manager – the source from which the convenors derived their newfound power.

The fact that there was no real relationship between the new top management and the officials was highlighted as a problem by all of the interviewees (interviews Beneke, 2004; Coetzee, 2004; Bezuidenhout, 2002; Serfontein, 2002; Nel, 2002; Yates, 2002). Yet, in their effort to strengthen their position of power, the Core Team also actively limited the possibility of any of the “*old*” managers or the other officials forming a relationship with Nomgqibelo. As Nomgqibelo was a newcomer to the Tshwane City Planning scene and none of the planning officials knew her, there was no chance of anyone bypassing the Core Team to get close to Nomgqibelo and, in so doing, weaken their “*exclusive rights*” to interaction with her. To the Core Team members, this was yet another way of attempting to secure future positions of power in the new municipal structure.

For the Tshwane officials, particularly the majority who were formerly employed by the City Council of Pretoria, being addressed in person by a member of top management was a rare occurrence. As a matter of fact, the only time this had happened in the six years that I was employed by the municipality, was Mike Yate's "end-of-an-era" function. Nomgqibelo's decision to address the officials, as well as the Core Team's implementation of the commitment to communication articulated by their Divisional Manager was therefore much appreciated. The effort invested in the road show paid off handsomely: Following the event, many officials made positive remarks regarding Nomgqibelo. A number of planners said that she seemed intelligent as well as in control of the new function (pers comm Herholdt, 2001; pers comm Erasmus, 2001). The fact that she gave people the opportunity to voice their concerns was particularly well received (pers comm Herholdt, 2001; pers comm Erasmus, 2001).

Despite the radical changes in the City Planning leadership, the existing management went about their business unperturbed by the latest developments around the function. This is clear from documentation for a management meeting of Amund Beneke's Land Use and Planning Function in the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Administrative Unit shortly after the road show by Nomgqibelo (CTMM, 2001o). It is telling that Belinda was not invited to the meeting, but that it was attended by all the existing managers of the City Planning function at the GPMC. They were Victor Baloyi (Chairperson), G Strydom, Dan Baloyi, Amund Beneke, Marius Nadel and Mike Krynauw. The meeting took cognizance that the road show took place and was well attended, but made no further comment on the content of the presentations made (CTMM, 2001o).

Belinda's Work Plan

On 8 May 2001, less than a month after the memorandum ordering the termination of the Amund Beneke process, Belinda completed the required "*Work plan for the Restructuring of the City Planning Component*" (Van der Merwe, 2001). The document was characterised by a strong project

management approach, which was characteristic of the *modus operandi* followed by the former Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council (GPMC). It set out the terms of reference, purpose and objectives, process and approach, risk management and time frames. Henry Bezuidenhout even drew up an elaborate and sophisticated project plan (using MS Project software) as an annexure to the work plan. The plan was thorough and rational in its approach and it was clear that Belinda had made an effort to give the plan the advantage of what Habermas refers to as “*the power of the better argument*” (in Flyvbjerg, 1998). Belinda’s effort in compiling the plan, which was nothing other than a change strategy, was particularly laudable in the light of the fact that, on a corporate level, no such strategy existed to guide the transformation of the Municipality as a whole.

In the work plan Belinda defined the purpose of the restructuring process as “*developing a purpose structure for the City Planning Component while taking into account legislation*” (the MSA, the Structures Act, the DFA and applicable ordinances), as well as so-called “*policy and strategic directives*”. These directives included the Tshwane strategic indicators, the interim IDP (or corporate strategy for Tshwane), service delivery needs, customer service, organizational culture and leadership that promotes good governance, effective and efficient management and sustainable local government. This certainly seemed to be a very thorough and sensible approach. In subsequent discussions during the restructuring process, however, neither the legislation, nor the “*policy and strategic directives*” (regarding which there was very little clarity at that stage) featured to a significant extent. Apart from Nikki and Johnny, who had a particularly good grasp on the legislation pertaining to the IDP, it was my impression that most of the Tshwane planners were not at all *au fait* with the new legislation, let alone what the “*service delivery needs*” were, or what was really meant by “*sustainable local government*”. Furthermore, the need to change the organizational culture was a vague and undefined concept and there simply was no capacity within the Core Team (and possibly within the entire Municipality) to address such issues.

The fact that these supposed drivers featured so little in the actual restructuring of the City Planning function adds proof to the suspicion that something else lay at the heart of the restructuring – something which was never overtly stated. Simply put, the actual drivers were such common vices as the lust for power (by the members of the Core Team and the new Top Management and political leadership, for instance), personal gain (for those who aspired to management positions in the new structure) and even revenge (eg revenge of the new management or Core Team for perceived suppression by the outgoing management, such as Amund Beneke).

Although the Core Team claimed to be a consultative body, it is obvious that it operated in a vacuum when it came to the structuring of the new planning function. There were no discussions with the Department of Town and Regional Planning at the nearby University, no bouncing off of ideas with the municipality's many consulting town and regional planners and no scouting for best practice examples elsewhere in Africa or in the world. These factors seem to indicate that, as was the case in Flyvbjerg's (1998:68) account of the Aalborg case, "*tactical considerations clearly dominate any desire to reach some form of rationally informed consensus*".

Belinda's Work Plan (Van der Merwe, 2001) indicated that the Core Team (led by the Convenor, Belinda) would oversee the activities of task teams that were to be established to execute specific tasks derived from the identified objectives. These objectives were listed as the following: to formulate a vision for the City Planning Component; to define and structure the City Planning Functions; to define Key Performance Areas that needed to be measured in terms of City Planning; to develop a code of conduct to guide performance of City Planning Functions; to develop an implementation plan and strategy, and to gain the positive participation of all applicable role-players in terms of the process.

The process which was to be followed in order to achieve the above objectives, was summarised in the following steps:

- Defining the legislative and strategic requirements;

- Formulating the vision;
- Defining the purpose structure; addressing the organisational structure;
- Defining business processes;
- Formulating an operational plan; drafting an implementation plan, and
- Drafting and implementing a communication strategy and a training programme.

An organogram (*figure iii*), was attached to the work plan. It was stated repeatedly in meetings of the core team that this organogram should only serve as a point of departure for the restructuring process. Nonetheless, it had some interesting features that merit discussion here.

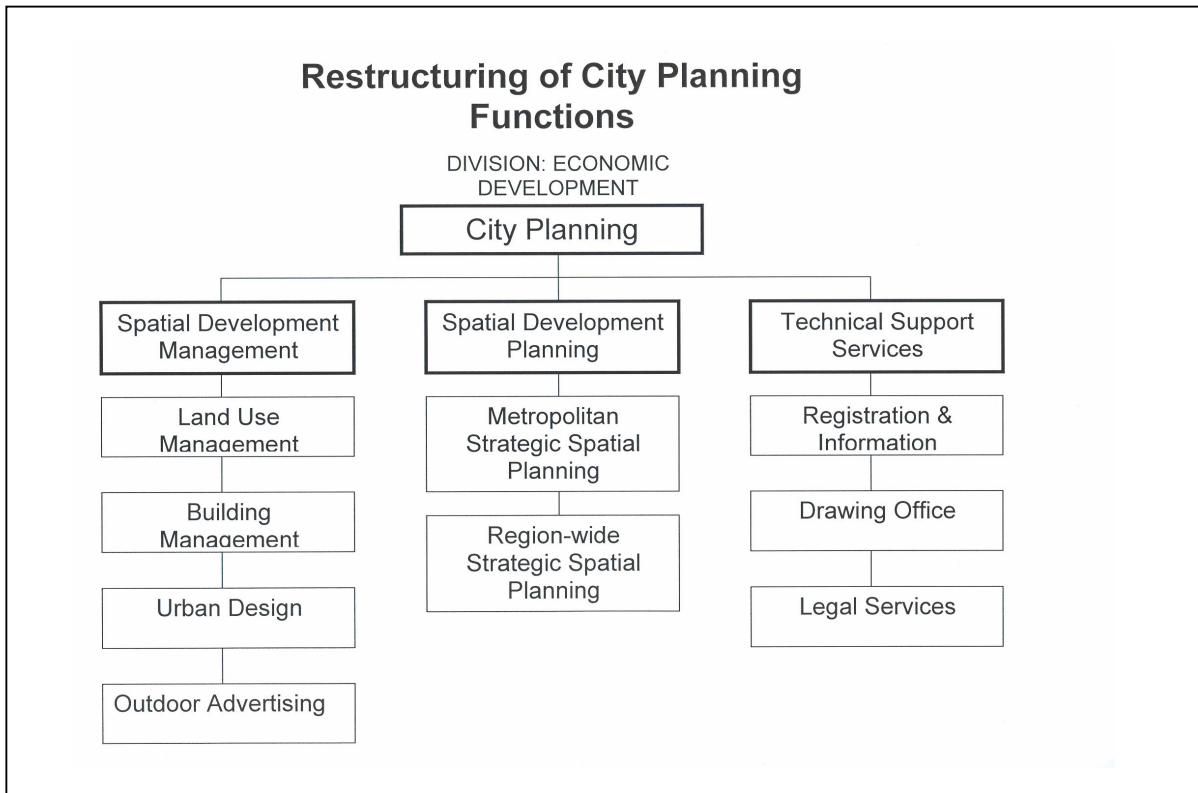


Figure iii: City Planning functions from the work plan compiled by Belinda van der Merwe, 8 May 2001

According to the organogram the City Planning function would be broken down into only three main components: Spatial Development Management, Spatial Development Planning and Technical Support Services.

Land use management, building management, urban design and outdoor advertising were all grouped under Spatial Development Management, while Spatial Development Planning comprised a metropolitan spatial planning and region-wide spatial planning. The integration of the “*management*” functions was innovative, as these functions had been operating in relative isolation from each other in the past. In the discussions around these functions, it was always emphasised that words such as “*control*” should be avoided in favour of “*management*”, as this was more in line with the facilitative approach proposed by the post-1994 legislation.

In this organogram there was a marked shift away from the over-emphasis on land use that characterised the Beneke-proposal. What is of concern, however, is that the organogram indicated in the Work plan re-enforced the pre-existing division between so-called “*planning*” and “*management*” functions, a division seen by scholars such as McClendon and Quay (1988), Virtanen (1992), Swanepoel (1997) and Baer (1997) as the main reason for spatial plans not being implemented.

Throughout the Core Team process, and beyond, the difference between a “*purpose structure*” as a list of functions and an “*organizational structure*” as a structure indicating the hierarchical relationship between those functions was emphasized. This was also part of the Core Team’s covert “*conflict avoidance strategy*”, which the Core Team employed specifically to allay people’s fears regarding their career prospects and job security. In this way, concerns that were raised regarding the emerging structure could be labeled as invalid because of the fact that the organogram was “*only the purpose structure*”. (This approach was later sustained by Verna Nel in the second phase of the restructuring project, as can be seen in her letter to staff dated 1 August 2001 (CTMM, 2001mm)

The entrenched managerialism of the municipality, with its strong focus on structural aspects is exploited by the Core Team in its rationalized use of the terms “*purpose structure*” and “*organizational structure*”. The planning officials saw a new “*organizational structure*”, i.e. a new municipal and departmental

hierarchy with new posts, as the main outcome of the restructuring process. At the point that such a new “organizational structure” was available, it would be clear what opportunities existed for the individual planners in terms of promotion within the municipal structure, and promotion was the ultimate motivator for the “will to power” within the organization. The Core Team, and its successors throughout the life of the restructuring process, used the term “purpose structure” to denote a preliminary division of the work into functional categories and it was repeatedly stressed that there was no obvious relation between the “purpose structure” and the “organizational structure”. The translation, as it were, of the “purpose structure” into an “organizational structure” was always something that would follow later, at some undetermined time in the future. The rationality behind this indefinite and artificial postponement of the development of the “organizational structure” was the avoidance of the heightened levels of anxiety and interest as the “organizational structure” became a reality and the accompanying potential for conflict. This rationality is founded, in all probability, on the experience that, as is reflected in Flyvbjerg’s (1998:118-122) Aalborg case study, the potential for conflict is greatest at that point where a project or idea becomes a “tangible reality” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:122).

Within the Core Team, however, there was an awareness that all of this was mere “*smoke screening*”. These rationalizations by the Core Team were premeditated and carefully planned, which, as in the case of Aalborg’s Technical Department (Flyvbjerg, 1998:98), certainly raises questions of integrity and “professional ethics”³². There was no reason why the so-called “*purpose structure*” would not, for the most part, become the organizational structure, as indeed it did. Towards the end of the study period, the “*purpose structure*” did in fact become the “*organizational structure*” by default.

³² Forester (1982) points to the need for a focus on the ethics of “misinforming actions by planners”, and adds that such actions may be “systemically encouraged by the structure of the bureaucratic organizations in which the planners work”.

6.3 Indications of turbulence and uncertainty

The time of the establishment of the Core Team was, in many respects, turbulent and was marked by many of the classic responses to organizational change, namely denial, fear and apathy (see Puth, 1994, and McClendon & Quay, 1988). The minutes of a meeting of the top management of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council Administrative Unit held on 21 May 2001 (CTMM, 2001n) clearly shows how the different Administrative Units still functioned in isolation. There was no sense yet within the different Administrative Units that they now formed part of a new structure, nor had the new management made any effort to promote a spirit of solidarity between the staff members of the different disestablished structures. As was apparent from the meeting by Amund Beneke's Land Use and Planning function referred to earlier (CTMM, 2001o) see page 83), it was still business as usual to a large degree. The minutes of that meeting also seemed to indicate some dissatisfaction with the support provided to the Administrative Units by the Municipal Manager. According to the minutes, the uncontrolled secondment of staff (often referred to as "*poaching*") between Departments continued despite an appeal to the contrary that was made by the Administrative Unit Managers to the Municipal Manager. Such secondments took place in a haphazard manner and were often sanctioned by managers who had not been mandated to do so in an attempt to build capacity in their functions. Nonetheless, once such a "*secondment*" had been implemented, it was extremely difficult to reverse and the opportunistic "*poacher*" usually got away with it. The phenomenon of poaching occurred throughout the study period and was a symptom of the breakdown in established procedures and structures that characterised the Tshwane restructuring process.

Rumours of a crack in the top structure

At the meeting of Amund Beneke's function referred to above (CTMM 2001o) the problem of politicians bypassing the office of the Municipal Manager and giving direct instructions to officials was raised. An point was raised regarding conflicting information communicated by the Acting Municipal Manager,

Wonder Nkosi (later appointed as Chief Operational Officer) and by **Dr TE Thoahlane** (nicknamed “*Dr T*” by the officials) regarding a possible moratorium on disciplinary hearings. This was an early indication of the uneasy relationship that was developing between two of the most prominent members of the new CTMM top management.

These details convey something of the effect that a disruption of old, established power relations had on the municipality. Apart from the uneasy relationship (or the lack of a relationship) between the new top management and the officials, the members of the new political and executive leadership were also “*sizing each other up*”. Furthermore, members of the executive management were jostling among each other to secure their positions of power. The emerging conflict between Dr T and Wonder was apparent to all and it was even rumoured that there was a “*Wonder camp*” and a “*Dr T camp*” in the municipality. The implication was that, should one be seen to align oneself with the one, one would make an enemy out of the other. It was thought by some that the conflict between the two was not a matter of a personality clash only, but was informed by a division within the ANC on a national level. Dr T was thought to represent the “*far left*” of the ANC and Wonder the “*more moderate group*”. This was possibly the reason why Wonder was generally well-liked by the white officials, while Dr T remained rather unpopular. Rumours were rife that he was an ego-maniac (this was motivated mainly by the fact that his white Mercedes bore “*Dr T*” number plates!) and that he had left his previous post at a large corporation amidst allegations of mismanagement³³.

Having experienced the Tshwane restructuring, there is no doubt that Wonder’s charismatic personality was a source of strong personal power which enabled him to become an opposing force to the Municipal Manager in spite of the fact that the Municipal Manager held the highest office in the municipal administration. Flyvbjerg (1998:16) identifies individual factors as one of the reasons behind the inordinate degree of power wielded by the

³³ During 2003, Dr T left the CTMM in disgrace after it was found that he had contravened the Municipality’s financial regulations by extending the contract of Yarona Creative Management Solutions by several million rand without obtaining permission from Council to do so. Yarona was commissioned by Council to compile a new organizational structure for the Municipality.

Aalborg Bus Company in the form of the city's "*charismatic, social democratic mayor*".

The crack in Tshwane's top structure is reminiscent of the division that develops in the ranks of the Aalborg's Chamber of Industry and Commerce regarding the Aalborg Project. As in the Aalborg case, there can be no doubt that such a division tainted the image of the Tshwane top management and weakened the perception of its power. In the words of the Chairman of the Aalborg Chamber's City Centre Committee: "*Unity is very, very important, collective action is absolutely decisive*" (Flyvbjerg, 1998:63). In the Aalborg case, the Chamber actively withdraws from the co-operation with the Technical Department in order to preserve its "*image of a unified business community*" (Flyvbjerg, 1998:67). In Tshwane, however, there is no eyeblind measures to project unity in the top structure, adding to the general experience of confusion and uncertainty experienced throughout the first months of the restructuring process. Fortunately, unlike the disagreement between Aalborg's mayor and county supervisor, who are both Social Democrats (Flyvbjerg, 1998:96), the uneasiness between Wonder and Dr T never evolves to the level of open confrontation.

Regions all up in the air

The matter of possible management regions within the larger Tshwane Area was a source of much uncertainty for most Departments. Already in the Amund Beneke-process "*Delineation of Planning Units (Regions)*" was listed as one of the topics to be considered during the restructuring process (CTMM 2001f). In the Planning Function it was particularly land use management that would be affected by a decision in this regard. The matter was also discussed at the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council Administrative Unit (GPMC AU) Top Management meeting of 21 May 2001 where two permutations of such a division of the city were presented. The Core Team anxiously awaited a corporate decision on so-called management regions (manageable groupings of wards) for the City. The old Planning Zone Forums and other existing Community Forums were, in terms of a Mayoral Committee decision of 19

June 2001, all disestablished with effect from 30 June 2001. At the same meeting the Mayoral Committee decided that the Ward Committees, which were to replace these structures, had to be established by 31 August 2001. Had this deadline been reached, there would still have been a window of two months during which no formal community liaison structures existed. The reality was that, by that date, very few of the Ward Committees had been established – a fact that caused considerable concern with regard to the public participation and consultation required for compiling the Tshwane IDP. It would seem that the *laissez faire* approach that characterised the municipality's internal organization at that time extended to organizing the structures necessary for the municipality's interaction with its community.

Nikki Ludik, later joined by Masego Kodisang from Themba when the Core Team made an effort to increase its representivity, was the Core Team member tasked with monitoring the corporate process of determining management regions. However, the feedback that was given by them to the Core Team always indicated that the Top Management had not yet reached any clarity in this regard. The Core Team felt that the new structure for City Planning could not be decided on without clarity on the regions.³⁴

Backlog in applications tackled

Although the core team initially focussed strongly on strategic restructuring issues, a number of serious operational concerns were emerging. The most pressing of these was the approval of land-use applications. With the establishment of the CTMM, the delegated authority to approve applications was withdrawn from the city planners. Such powers now resided with Nomgqibelo. The uncertainty regarding town planning delegations in the time

³⁴ Towards the end of 2001, no significant process in this regard had been made and the planners decided to take matters into their own hands. The City was then divided into eight regions, each with a dedicated team of land-use planners. Although finalization of the demarcation of so-called management regions for the metropolitan area was seen by many as a pre-requisite for most aspects of the transformation process, the Council did not manage to reach consensus on the issue within the study period. When Dr Hein Wiese, SEO of the Economic Development Department, was requested in February 2002 to establish a regional management model for the Municipality. Henry was particularly concerned that a model of three regions would be adopted, which would necessitate changes to the model of eight regions implemented by the Regional Spatial Planning Function (CTMM, 7 February 2002).

that had lapsed between the withdrawal of the delegations and awarding them to Nomgqibelo, had caused a huge backlog in land-use applications.

Nikki suggested that **Marietjie van Zyl**, a planner working under Tony Walker on the notorious “*fourth floor*” in Munitoria³⁵, join the Core Team specifically with the aim of dealing with land use applications. Whenever the question was asked why Marietjie, who was a close personal friend of Nikki, had been singled out for this task, the response was that she had “*private sector experience*”³⁶. Marietjie’s task was to make sure that the applications were in the correct format (the format of applications was not the same in each of the Administrative Units. A new, uniform format was now prescribed, and it was Marietjie’s role to enforce this). She also had to summarise the applications and comments for Nomgqibelo so that the latter could make an “*informed decision*”. Some of the planners mistakenly perceived Marietjie’s role as another level of evaluation of the applications, which was not well received. Before long, however, the system was working well and significant inroads were being made into the backlog.

From shortly after the establishment of the new unicity structure, delegations in terms of Town Planning issues were a burning issue. The Mayoral Committee resolved on 6 March 2001 to rescind all existing delegations and to delegate all such authorities to the Section 79 City Planning Committee (CTMM, 2001c). On 4 May 2001 a report, compiled by Alex de Beer, requesting that such delegated powers be given by the Section 79 Committee to the Head: Legal Services and the Divisional Managers/Officials, was approved by the Committee (De Beer, 2001; CTMM, 2001j).

The fact that the Mayoral Committee initially rescinded the delegations was clearly a power-driven action by the politicians. As referred to earlier, it was apparent from the outset that there was a good measure of distrust between

³⁵ Among the Pretoria City Planners, the 4th floor of Munitoria was seen as a most unpleasant working environment with a very negative climate. Staff members were required to sign in and out and there were strict and elaborate procedures for taking short time leave (e.g. for a visit to the doctor). Arriving at work a few minutes late was a serious contravention and there was no flexibility with regard to, for example, when lunchtime and tea times were taken.

³⁶ Marietjie had indeed worked in a private planning consultancy before joining the City Council of Pretoria.

the new political leadership and top management and the officials. When communication did take place, the white officials, in particular, often perceived the tone as threatening and the content as alienating. When the Chief Operating Officer, Wonder Nkosi, who was perceived as politically moderate, addressed officials in March 2001, he indicated that the white officials had to “*align (themselves) with the ruling class*” if they wanted to survive. In November 2001, the Municipal Manager, Dr Thoahlane (Dr T) addressed the officials of the Housing Department for the first time. He rationalized Management’s failure to engage with officials in discussions on the transformation process by stating that it was Management’s expectation that the Unions would have kept officials abreast of the latest developments. In terms of current best management practice it was completely unacceptable for the new Tshwane top structure to abdicate their responsibility to communicate with the officials for almost a whole year following the establishment of the new municipality. A further problematic aspect of Dr T’s approach was the fact that it assumed an “*us vs them*” situation where the Top Management saw themselves as one party and the officials and Unions as the other. This was clearly not conducive to the promotion of a sense of unity among the different role players brought together in the new municipality.

The role of formal party politics, alongside the daily maneuvering of “*Realpolitik*” is apparent from the Aalborg story (e.g the link between the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Conservative Party (Flyvbjerg, 1998:87), the “*Dream Plan*” presented by the Social Democratic City Council Group (Flyvbjerg, 1998:165)). Although such an interpretation is bound to meet with disapproval, the manner in which events unfolded, as well as more subtle remarks and indications gleaned from my experience of the Tshwane restructuring, seem to point toward the fact that the planners and the new top management were also opposed along political lines. The planners, who were mostly white, male and politically conservative, stood in opposition of the new top management which was mostly black and members of the ruling African National Congress. Formal party politics is therefore another factor that plays

a role in the formation of alliances and divisions along which power dynamics develop.

Another reason for the perceived distance between the new municipal leadership and the officials could merely have been that they were still “*finding their feet*” in a new environment. Many of the new councillors (and even top level officials) had no background in city governance or any other aspect of municipal management. Nava Pillay³⁷ was one of the few “*old*” officials that the new management took into their confidence. As Divisional Manager: Operations in the office of the Municipal Manager, he was also instrumental in arranging a variety of briefing and information sessions to educate and empower the leadership with regard to municipal management. At a Mayoral Committee Meeting held on 19 June 2001, for example, the Executive Mayor requested the chairperson of the City Planning Committee to attend the next Mayoral Committee Meeting in order to brief the members on the functioning of the Committee (CTMM, 2001u). It may be assumed that this lack of technical expertise, which is taken to be the foundation of power in a bureaucracy (see Bennis, 1993), must have caused a measure of *angst* on their part and fuelled actions, such as one-sided decisions regarding the corporate structure (for an example of this, see page 113, section 6.5 “*A new organizational structure upsets the Task Team applecart*”), office space and parking (for an example of this, see page 168 “*A bitter complaint and a frank assessment*”), to strengthen their power base. This, along with the conflict that was developing within top management, notably between the Municipal Manager and his predecessor, Wonder Nkosi, as referred to earlier, was probably partly responsible for the Mayoral Committee deciding later that year that all contracts for procurement of goods and services had to be signed by the Municipal Manager or his nominee (CTMM 2001eee). In this way, the power of the Municipal Manager was increased and that of other role players, such as the COO, Wonder Nkosi, and members of the “*old management*” reduced.

³⁷ For more about Nava Pillay, see [footnote on 25 on page 67](#).

An ambitious synergy

In the mean time, on a level far below all of this, the Core Team was working with great enthusiasm towards a new City Planning function for Tshwane. Possibly because of the careful selection of its members, there was instant synergy within the team. Soon after its establishment, the Core Team members drew up a cryptic Code of Conduct for themselves (Core Team, undated), which included points such as their “*loyalty to the Core Team Manager*” (Belinda)³⁸; their commitment to being role models and champions for the officials; professionalism; respect for the responsibility or status they were given; openness and acceptance that they should have realistic expectations; as well as a declaration that their participation in the Core Team was “*not for personal gain*” (Core Team, undated). As mentioned earlier, this was not the full truth behind the enthusiastic support of the Core Team demonstrated by its members. This shows, however, how deeply rooted the commitment was to avoid exposure of their own (selfish) aspirations and any conflict with the “*old*” management or other planners that could result from such exposure. Even in the Code of Conduct, which was an “*internal*” document of the Core Team they did not risk articulating their expectation to gain from their status as Core Team members, although they frequently did so verbally among themselves. However, despite the prevalence of rationalisation in the Core Team’s conduct, the team worked very well as a unit. The power wielded by small groups is highlighted by McClendon and Quay (1992). According to them, effective teams have a high level of trust and give each other the necessary latitude to take decisions within their own fields of expertise, while at the same time coming together to seriously address issues of common concern. According to McClendon and Quay (1992) such groups also have self-correcting mechanisms, are constantly taking stock of their progress and are willing to take action where there are problems. These were indeed the characteristics of the Core Team. A specific portfolio (in some cases more than one) was entrusted to each Core Team member (see *figure iv*), while events or issues that affected the group as a whole were

³⁸ Through her friendship with Nomgqibelo, Belinda was the Core Team’s vital link to power. Furthermore, had it not been for Belinda, none of the other members would have had the opportunity to serve on the Core Team. This was probably what lay behind the “oath of allegiance” that the members swore to Belinda.

collaboratively planned. Furthermore, the team spent time regularly reflecting on progress and adjusting their strategy where weaknesses were detected. One example of this was to introduce a weekly meeting with the existing managers when it became apparent that the antipathy from the existing managers was becoming a threat to the Core Team's power base (see page 111: "*An uneasy relationship with the existing managers*").

The enthusiasm of the Core Team at the start of the Tshwane restructuring process and the willingness of the Core Team members to "go the extra mile" without receiving any additional remuneration or formal recognition, as well as the unique synergy that developed within the team, is echoed in the Aalborg story. Flyvbjerg (1998:10) quotes a member of the Task Force for the Aalborg Project as saying that the Task Force members had "*the desire to make a contribution and the desire to work far beyond normal working hours*" and that a certain "*unity of spirit*" existed in the group. The Task Force member furthermore remarks that "*A good start and good cooperation, which is something we definitely had, is something very, very powerful and difficult to stop.*" This power, which I refer to as the power of the small group, is evident not only in the Core Team, but much later also in the team that establishes a new strategic planning function for Tshwane. Flyvbjerg (1998:112) calls such small groups "hidden juntas".

The Core Team took up offices on the 4th floor of the HB Phillips building on the Corner of Bosman and Pretorius Streets. Committee Room 501, which was one floor above their offices on the 5th floor was the scene for the intense strategic discussions that characterised the team's short existence from the beginning of May to the middle of July 2001. Some structure was usually given to the discussions through an agenda compiled by Henry. (He displayed a special aptitude for producing impressive agendas on short notice.) Unfortunately, the core team lacked someone with the same passion for taking minutes, and most of the discussions therefore went undocumented. Of course, had minutes been kept of the Core Team discussions, they would have been a damning record of the systematic scheming and rationalization undertaken by the Team in order to entrench their own position. As Flyvbjerg

(1998: 31) states: “The documentation **not** produced is just as interesting as that which is produced”.

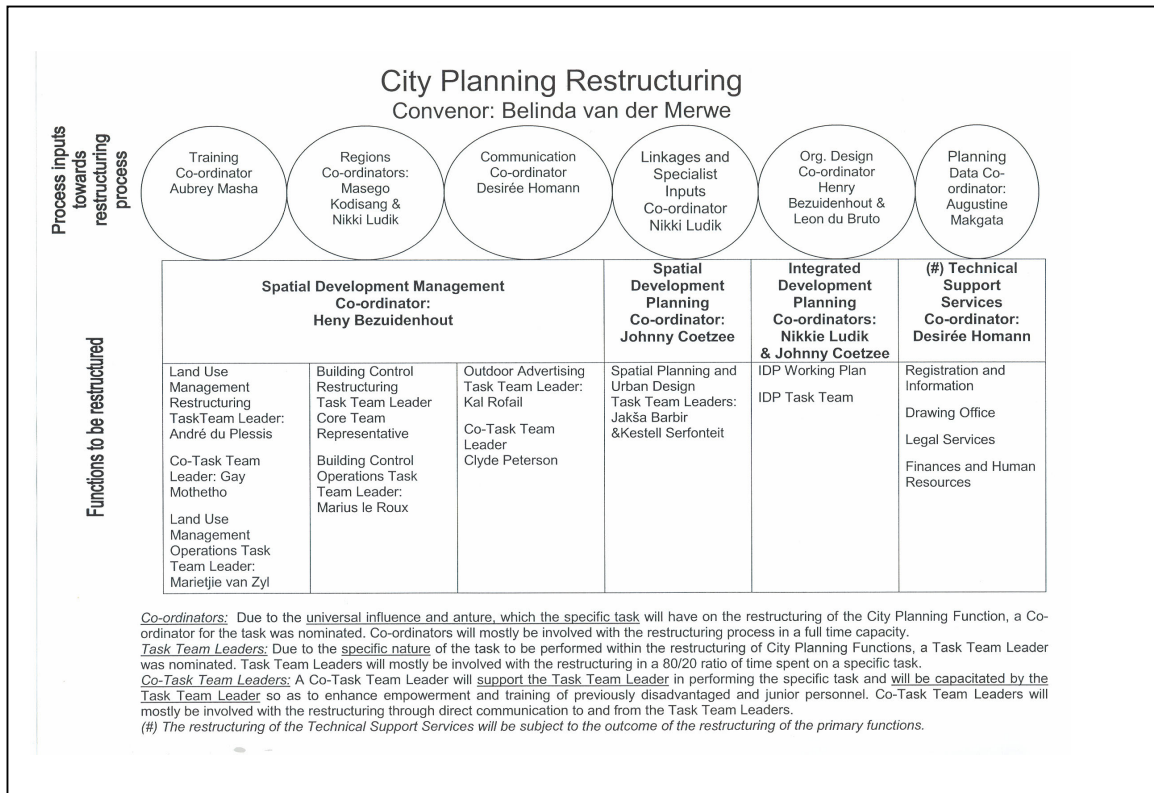


Figure iv: Structure of Core Team and Task Teams

6.4 Establishing the Task Teams

The Core Team now faced the challenge to extend the team and to nominate people to establish task teams that would deal with specific process inputs (such as training and planning data) or functions of city planning (such as Spatial Development Management, Spatial Development Planning, etc). A dedicated functional task team was also established to deal with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The general perception within the Core Team was that “*although the IDP is now a corporate function (according to the guidelines provided by the Department of Local Government and Development Planning), the work will still be done by the Planners*” (my parenthesis) (pers comm Ludik 2001 and pers comm Van der Merwe, 2001). To equip themselves for this task, Nikki and Belinda attended an IDP training course presented in Vereeniging from 17 to 22 June 2001 by the IDASA-Plan Associates Consortium on behalf of the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) (RSA ,2001). Even before that, in May 2001, Nikki, Belinda and Johnny compiled an IDP progress report (CTMM, 2001m), and shortly after the course, on 25 June 2001, Nikki completed the plan for the IDP preparation phase (CTMM, 2001v) as required by the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000). It should be noted that all of this was done on the initiative of the Core Team in the absence of any guidance or instruction from the Top Management.

Identifying the Task Team leaders

The Core Team spent several hours discussing the identification of the Task Team leaders (see *figure iv* on page 98 for the structure of the Core Team and Task Teams). Although it was never put in writing, they developed a number of pertinent criteria to guide them in this process. The criteria were strictly adhered to. These included that no existing managers would be considered as task team leaders (or members, for that matter) and that the people identified would have to be able to produce the identified deliverables within strict timeframes. It was agreed that special attention had to be given to the race and gender profile of the group. As indicated earlier, much of the

communication by the Core Team served to stress their commitment to the principles of inclusivity, participation and transparency. This was motivated in part by the fact that a lack of participation was the main criticism against the “*Amund Beneke process*”. Yet, in spite of this, the Task Team leaders were chosen by the Core Team in an autocratic fashion that reeked of favouritism. When the Aalborg Chamber of Industry and Commerce, known for opposing any form of restriction on business, moves in favour of restrictions on banks, the “*difference between what [they say] and what they actually do is so obvious that the Chamber itself is painfully aware that its image could be construed as one of inconsistency and hypocrisy*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:103). The Core Team runs the same risk when it preaches participation and inclusivity, but hand-picks additional Core Team members and Task Team Leaders in a top down fashion and does not live up to its promise of black empowerment.

It was not easy to find people that met the Core Team’s criteria. Furthermore, there was no-one left that they had close ties with and that they knew with certainty would support the Core Team effort rather than detract from it. It was mainly the impression that the Core Team got of the planners in the respective Administrative Unites during the road shows and other encounters that decided who was nominated as Task Team leaders. It was those people who “*seemed like the right kind of person*” that were chosen. During this time, Belinda would often lament on the difficulty of finding suitable people by using the expression that the Core Team was “*scraping the bottom of the barrel*” (pers comm Van der Merwe, 2001).

André du Plessis, a planner from the former Centurion Town Council, was chosen to lead the task team on Land Use Management Restructuring and Marietjie van Zyl for that of Land Use Management Operations. Alf Vorster, who was second in charge of the former City Council of Pretoria Building Office, would lead the team on Building Control Restructuring and Marius le Roux, from the Akasia (NPMSS) Building Office, on Building Control Operations. Kestell Serfontein, who also hailed from Centurion, and Jakša Barbir, head of the Urban Design at the former City Council of Pretoria, were made jointly responsible for the Spatial Planning and Urban Design Task

Team. It was communicated that the restructuring of the Technical Support Services, which I would lead, would be subject to the outcome of the restructuring of the primary functions.

Racial equity

It became increasingly apparent that the Core Team needed to give urgent attention to racial equity within its structure. Two strategies were employed to reach this objective. Firstly, two of the task teams that had been established by the Core Team earlier, namely that of Training and Planning Data, were elevated to the level of so-called “*process inputs*” (see *figure iv*) and their nominated leaders, Aubrey Masha and Augustine Makgata, two black planners from the former City Council of Pretoria, therefore received the title of “*Coordinator*” and were introduced as members of the Core Team. At the same time, Masego Kodisang was nominated as joint Coordinator to share Nikki’s responsibility of monitoring progress and making inputs with regard to possible management regions within the metropolitan area. In this way, it was ensured that three of the Core Team members were black. Secondly, it was decided to introduce so-called “*Co-Task Team Leaders*” who would work with the Task Team Leaders and “*be empowered*” in the process. In effect, every single black official in the city planning function was made part of the wider Core Team structure. While this certainly looked very impressive and seemingly achieved the Core Team’s stated objective of racial equity, there was very little authenticity to it. Most of the intense discussions I referred to earlier, took place without the black members. They were isolated due to the fact that they did not share the Core Team’s offices in the HB Phillips building (they remained in their existing offices in Munitoria) and were often “*forgotten*” when informal or impromptu meetings were called. It would seem that the initial members of the Core Team had an alliance that was not shared by the extended group and that the efforts to promote racial equity did not amount to much more than window-dressing.

City Planning Restructuring (CPR) employee audit

The City Planning Restructuring (CPR)³⁹ Employee Audit (CTMM, 2001cc) was the brainchild of Nikki Ludik. In consultation with the other Core Team members, Nikki designed an audit form that was distributed to all City Planning personnel to be completed and returned to the office of the Divisional Manager by 4 June 2001. In the introductory paragraph Nikki wrote that the audit form aimed to collect information, which was “*now crucial for a successful restructuring process*”. The form requested personal (eg name, ID number, gender) and job related (eg designation, total years at current Administrative Unit) information. Staff members also had to indicate their expertise and fields of interest respectively. The fields listed were land use management, development control, IDP/LDO, environment, urban design, housing, communication, marketing, local economic development (LED), project management, management, spatial planning, outdoor advertising, registration and general information, planning data, legal services, finance and human resources, training and drawing office. Space was also allowed for staff members to add other fields.

Lastly, staff members were asked to indicate which of the restructuring task teams they were involved in or wanted to be involved in as a task team member or on an occasional basis.

³⁹ The Core Team members were at first perplexed by the abbreviation “CPR”. However, Nikki explained that it stood for City Planning Restructuring. She added that it was also appropriate as the abbreviation for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which was what the City Planning Function needed at that point (perscomm Ludik 2001).

CPR	CITY PLANNING EMPLOYEE AUDIT	CPR																					
<p>All employees of the current City Planning Functions at all the Administrative Units are here-by requested to complete the Audit Form comprehensively and to submit it to the Office of the Divisional Manager: Economic Development on or before 4 June 2001 at 16:00. The forms may be submitted via fax for the attention of Nikki Ludik at (012) 3285137 or may be sent electronically via email to nludik@ppmc.org.za. It has come under the attention of the Divisional Manager that there is no universal employee audit containing all the necessary information for restructuring purposes. Although it is accepted that employees had to submit similar audit forms in the past, those forms did not contain all the important information, which is now crucial for a successful restructuring process. Please accept the completion of this form in a positive light as it is envisaged that these forms may assist the Divisional Manager to utilise personnel where most appropriate by taking into account, not only the employee's experience and qualifications, but also the respective fields of expertise and interests. If you have any questions please contact Nikki Ludik at (012) 3374073 / 0824671812.</p>																							
<i>First Names</i>		<i>Last Name</i>																					
<i>Gender</i>		<i>Home Language</i>																					
<i>Race</i>		<i>Nationality</i>																					
<i>Job Designation</i>		<i>Current Post Level</i>																					
<i>Id nr.</i>		<i>Administrative Unit</i>																					
<i>Previous Dispensation Department / Division</i>		<i>Office Location / Physical Address</i>																					
<i>Office Phone nr.</i>		<i>Office Fax nr.</i>																					
<i>Email Address</i>		<i>Cell Phone nr.</i>																					
<i>Postal Address</i>		<i>Residential Location / suburb</i>																					
<i>Total number of years at current Admin Unit</i>		<i>Highest Qualifications</i>																					
<i>Where was qualifications obtained</i>		<i>Other completed courses, training programs etc.</i>																					
<i>Your fields of expertise (Please tick the appropriate box/es)</i>																							
<input type="checkbox"/> Land use management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing																					
<input type="checkbox"/> IDP / LDO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Economic Development																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: Please list																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Design	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
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If yes, in which Task Teams would you like to be involved with / are you involved with and on what basis?																							
<i>TASK TEAMS (please tick the appropriate box/es)</i>	<i>INVOLVEMENT AS A TASK TEAM MEMBER</i>	<i>INVOLVEMENT OCCASIONALLY FOR FEEDBACK ON RESTRUCTURING</i>																					
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SIGNED:	CAPACITY:	DATE:
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IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TASK TEAM MEMBER OR IF YOU ARE ALREADY A TASK TEAM MEMBER, READ THIS:

- A Task Team is a consultative body.
- Task Team Members may be nominated by the Task Team Leader to assist with specific problems, tasks and functions.
- Task Teams will meet on a regular basis as, when and where most appropriate for the majority of the Task Team Members.
- The Task Team Leader will communicate meeting arrangements to the Task Team Members.
- If you have any questions related to your specific Task Team, please contact your Task Team Leader directly. In the instance where a Task Team Leader has not been nominated, please contact the Function Co-ordinator directly.
- If you have any **other** questions related to the **restructuring process** please contact Desiree Homann at 0829284394.
- If you are unhappy about any issue or problem related to your specific Task Team which you feel you can not openly discuss within your Task Team or with your Task Team Leader, please contact Nikki Ludik at 0824671812.

IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TASK TEAM MEMBER, READ THIS:

- If you are not a member of a Task Team and you have any questions related to a specific Task Team, please contact the Task Team Leader directly.
- In the instance where a Task Team Leader has not been nominated, please contact the Function Co-ordinator directly.
- If you have any other questions related to the restructuring process please contact Desiree Homann at 0829284394.
- If you are unhappy about any issue or problem related to a specific Task Team, which you feel you can not openly discuss with the Task Team Leader, please contact Nikki Ludik at 0824671812.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!
YOU ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE CITY PLANNING FUNCTION AND AS SUCH YOUR POSITIVE INPUT ARE HIGHLY APPRECIATED!

Figure v: City Planning Restructuring (CPR) Employee Audit Form

At the bottom of the form the Core Team provided information regarding contact persons for queries, comments or complaints. The Core Team seemed, superficially, to place people at the centre of the restructuring process with their emphasis on communication and participation. Yet the CPR employee audit represented a very dehumanizing approach – suggesting that the placement of staff would take place on the basis of faceless forms. This is typical of the approach advocated by management theorists promoting an empirical, natural science, approach to decisions regarding organizational design, such as Kaplan and Norton (1996; 2004). The questionnaire ended with the following message in capital letters in a large font size and bold typeface: “*THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME! YOU ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE CITY PLANNING FUNCTION AND AS SUCH YOUR POSITIVE INPUT ARE (sic) HIGHLY APPRECIATED!*”. Minutiae such as the use of capital letters or specific words are also deemed significant by Flyvbjerg (1998). The use of capital letters in documents is remarked upon twice in the Aalborg story, once with reference to the Chamber of Industry and Commerce’s counterplan report (Flyvbjerg 1998:72) and the other time in the minutes of the final meeting of the Aalborg Project’s Executive Committee (Flyvbjerg, 1998:204). The use of these words in such a prominent fashion was one example among many of the Core Team consciously employing what Flyvbjerg (1998) refers to as a “*stroking strategy*” to avoid conflict in order to ensure that their position of power was not threatened. The rather contrived tone of this message could have contributed to the fact that the CPR Audit was not at all well received by some of the planners. A small number of the forms (less than 10) were returned with the word “*human*” written where the respondent’s race had to be indicated. The CPR forms created the impression that someone (Nomgqibelo) was going to allocate officials to sections or tasks on the basis of the information supplied on the form. Despite sugar-coating the form with stroking words, many officials found the idea of being redeployed in such a mechanistic fashion without their own preferences being taken into account hard to swallow (pers comm Du Plessis, 2001).

In the Aalborg study, Flyvbjerg (1998:21) exposes how the Task Force for the Aalborg Project decides on the location of the bus stop at Nytorv-Østeraagade before the report motivating the location has been prepared by the consultant firm. The same disregard for rationality is shown by the Core Team when they select additional members and Task Team Coordinators about a month before conducting a “CPR Employee Audit” ostensibly aimed at ensuring that *“the right person is selected for the right job”*.

Task teams given orders

On 30 May 2001, after meeting with the nominated Task Team Leaders, I compiled a letter, with the heading of *“Circular 1 of 2001”*, for Nomngqibelo’s signature (CTMM, 2001p). Little did she know then that only a month later another *“Circular 1 of 2001”* issued by the Municipal Manager, Dr Thoahlane Thoahlane (Dr T) (see page 116) would herald a new organizational structure and would bring the reign of the acting Divisional Managers to an abrupt end. The letter I wrote was addressed to all officials of the Economic Development Division and confirmed the structure of the Core Team consisting of the Convenor and Coordinators. It furthermore referred to the Task Teams, each with a Task Team Leader and Co-Task Team Leader. The letter explained the role of the Core Team as that of coordinating and managing the restructuring process, specific operational matters related to the restructuring and the IDP. The Task Teams were responsible for coordinating the restructuring of specific aspects of the function and for specific operational tasks related to restructuring.

According to the letter, the Task Teams had to identify tasks in their function related to restructuring, operations and the IDP. Furthermore, they had to identify obstacles and enablers and allocate responsibilities. They were also required to compile a Restructuring Work Plan for their function in the same format as the Work Plan that Belinda had compiled for the function as a whole at the beginning of that month.

Also, in the letter I wrote, a point was made of the fact that the members of the Core Team and the Task Team leaders “*have been nominated for the interim to manage the restructuring process*” and that they “*retain their current job levels, salaries etc. No formal appointments, promotions etc have been made*”. Two aspects of this paragraph warrant further discussion here.

Firstly, there is the choice of the words “*have been nominated*”. As stated earlier, the appointment of the Core Team members came about on the basis of relationships between the members and Belinda, or the members and other members already appointed by the Convenor. For example, Johnny was co-opted on the Core Team because of his relationship with Henry and I was co-opted because of my relationship with Johnny. Marietjie had a long-standing friendship with Nikki. Of course, at the time, a number of other reasons (which were seemingly all valid) were given for choosing specific people to serve on the Core Team (such as special expertise or experience). When it came to choosing the Task Team Leaders, and specifically the Co-Task Team leaders, other considerations prevailed. It was important to choose people who would be loyal to the task team, and those who would deliver outcomes of a high standard so as to guarantee the Core Team’s success. The Co-Task Team leaders were also chosen in order to increase representivity in terms of race and gender, so that Core Team would be politically above reproach. The manner in which people were chosen to serve as members of the Core Team and as Task Team Leaders and Co-Task Team Leaders was autocratic and self-serving, which stood in stark juxtaposition to the Core Team’s stated commitment to transparency and inclusivity. Assurances that all affected officials would be involved in the process ring rather hollow in the light of the fact that it was only at the very bottom of the process structure, namely on the level of “*Task Team Member*”, that officials could participate by their own choice.

Secondly, reassurances that the Core Team members and Task Team Leaders had a temporary role only and that they had not been “*promoted*” were in conflict with our own expectations of what these positions would mean in terms of our status in a future organizational structure. When Henry

championed the inclusion of Johnny and me in the Core Team, he made no secret of it that this was our (and his) “*big break*” and that it virtually guaranteed that we would be in line for managerial positions in the new structure. All the Core Team members had career histories that made them very susceptible for such expectations. Johnny had been managing a budget much larger than that of any of the managers on the level directly above him and I had been hoping for formal promotion to managerial level as I had been acting in a managerial capacity at the Pretoria Inner City Partnership for a number of years, but could not progress owing to the moratorium on job evaluations. Belinda, Nikki and Henry had been working under a strong and dominating leader in the person of Amund Beneke and relished the opportunity to get out from under his wing in order to assume positions of leadership (Interview Bezuidenhout, 2002).

To further drive home the point of the so-called open and transparent nature of the process, the letter of 30 May 2001 gave particular emphasis to the fact that everyone in the Division would be given the opportunity to make inputs into the documents compiled by the Task Teams at “*open forums*” which were to be held during the first week of June 2001 (this referred to the Purpose Structure Workshop, which took place on 14 June 2001).

Four different options were provided for officials who wished to become involved in the process. Firstly, they could either submit proposals to the Task Team Leaders; secondly, they could become “*a Member of a Task Team*”; thirdly, they could comment on the deliverables produced in terms of the process, and lastly, they could give once-off inputs through participation in the open forums or workshops.

The circular furthermore briefly referred to the “*New Corporate Structure*” in the last paragraph. The first sentence of this paragraph is a good example of those in power (the Core Team) using language to *define* reality, rather than *describe* it (a phenomenon highlighted by Flyvbjerg (1998) in his Aalborg study). It reads: “*It has come to my [Nomgqibelo’s] attention that there is widespread apprehension about the possible changes to the corporate*

structure". In fact, the only apprehension we were aware of, was our own. The subtle indications that we got from the existing managers seemed to hint at a careful optimism regarding the possible appointment of a new Divisional Manager, which would possibly topple the Core Team from its perch. Nomngqibelo went on to give the "assurance" that "*the outcome of the current restructuring process will serve as a blueprint that will be presented to the relevant Divisional Managers, after the posts have been filled*". It was furthermore stated that the restructuring process would not be stopped or delayed, but would "*continue as before*". This statement was, of course, pure rationalization, seeing that we did not know who the new Divisional Manager would be and had no guarantee whatsoever that he/she would be in favour of retaining the Core Team.

Core Team visits and the Purpose Structure workshop

At my instigation, seven small group meetings, which we referred to as "*Core Team visits*", were scheduled for 11 and 12 June 2001. As I explained in a fax to Masego Kodisang (Homann, 2001), the purpose of the visits were "*simply for the people to get to know us (the Core Team) better and share their feelings (fears and expectations)*" (parenthesis in original), and not to share any technical information. My aim was to use the visits to establish a personal relationship between us and the City Planning officials as a strategy for ensuring the success of the crucial "*Purpose Structure Workshop*" that was planned for 14 June 2001. The visits were held with a number of groups, including the support service staff members from all three the larger former municipal structures and the Centurion town planners. The messengers working in the Support Service Section of the City Planning and Development function of the former City Council of Pretoria were addressed separately, as they were a group with special communication needs⁴⁰.

⁴⁰ A day before Nomngqibelo addressed staff at the roadshow meeting of 14 May, an anonymous letter was delivered to her complaining about City Planning being a "*devil department*" where racism was rife. When Nomngqibelo gave the opportunity for comments and questions after her address, Shadrack Molelekwa, the most senior of the messengers of the City Planning Department of the former City Council of Pretoria, stood up and gave a passionate speech about the "*devil department*", City Planning. This led the Core Team to believe that a special effort was necessary to instill a sense of loyalty and enthusiasm about the restructuring process with Shadrack and his team of messengers.

As it turned out, the strategy paid off handsomely. Belinda admitted at an informal meeting at Huckleberry's in Magnolia Dell after our last Core Team Visit (pers comm Van der Merwe, 2001) that, although she was at first sceptical about investing so much time in the visits, she had come to realise that it was a good tactical move. Although the officials expressed certain concerns and even criticisms⁴¹ against the Core Team, the visits built support for the Team - the workshop was attended by more than 100 of the roughly 150 City Planning officials (CTMM, 2001t), most of whom participated in a positive spirit.

The Core Team invested much effort in planning the workshop. The challenge was to structure the workshop in such a way that the entire city planning function could be discussed meaningfully in a single day. The program that was eventually decided on, consisted of a general session for all officials followed by two sets of three concurrent sessions covering all the component functions i.e. Land Use Management, Outdoor Advertising, Planning Data, Building Control, Spatial Planning and Training.

To further facilitate the process and save time, a framework program for each session was provided: The Task Team leader would briefly describe the work done to date and introduce the work plan, the identified tasks, obstacles and enablers. This would be followed by a brainstorming session, which everyone could participate in. Those attending were allowed to migrate between sessions in order to give input into more than one function.

The Task Teams meet the challenge

The task team leaders responded with amazing alacrity to the challenge put to them by the Core Team and by the end of June 2001 most of them had

⁴¹ At the small group discussion held in Centurion on 12 June 2001, one of the Centurion planners, Liana Strydom, took offence to Belinda's use of the term "*scraping the bottom of the barrel*" to indicate how difficult it was to identify suitable task team leaders. Liana felt that many planners who could make a significant contribution to the restructuring process chose not to become involved because they had to see to it that the day-to-day work continued.

progressed to the point where the requested information and proposed organograms for the different functions were available.

In the work plan for the restructuring of Land Use Management, prepared under the leadership of André du Plessis, Gay Mothetho⁴² and Marietjie van Zyl, a number of guidelines for restructuring the function, derived from the Purpose Structure Workshop held on 14 June 2001, were identified. The first guideline, identified by those attending the workshop as the first priority, was that spatial planning and land use management should be integrated. This preference was voiced throughout the restructuring process.

The purpose structure that was developed for the Spatial Development Function (consisting of Spatial Planning and Urban Design) by the Task Team led by Kestell Serfontein and Jakša Barbir had two main components, namely one for Metropolitan Spatial Planning and another comprising a number of teams doing Regional Spatial Planning. Metropolitan Spatial Planning would entail the compilation of a position statement on spatial development planning; metropolitan spatial development planning; metropolitan urban development projects and the coordination of regional spatial development planning. Regional Spatial Planning had three subcomponents, namely: Regional spatial development planning, local spatial development planning and urban development projects.

The task team for training, under the leadership of Aubrey Masha, stated its purpose as developing and implementing a training programme for the City Planning and Management function with the aim of ensuring high performance by employees, effective service delivery and employment equity. This was very well aligned with the requirements for building capacity of municipal officials set out in the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000).

Aubrey and his Task Team members presented a rather unflattering view of the staff members of the city planning function. In their work plan, they listed the following problems relating to the performance standards of the staff

⁴² Gay was a planner who worked under Tony Walker in the Land Use Control Section of the former City Council of Pretoria

members: Performance ineffectiveness; low technical skills; the fact that existing skills were not applicable to assigned duties and, lastly, inexperience.

The Training Task Team also drew up an implementation framework linking actions to target dates. According to this matrix, 1 October 2001 would have been the start date for implementation of the training programme. However, owing to difficulties in securing the necessary funds, the project never materialised. Much later, after the Core Team had been disbanded, I received a call from Masego Kodisang from the Winterveldt office, enquiring about the training programme that Amund Beneke had planned and for which candidates had already been nominated. I knew nothing of the programme and referred her to the Core Team's Training Coordinator, Aubrey Masha.

Another couple of months later, at a meeting of the City Planning Management Team on 14 February 2002, it transpired that there had still not been any progress with regard to training for city planning staff. This time, it was Johnny who enquired about the work of the Task Team that had been established for that purpose. He argued that expectations had been created that planners in the previously disadvantaged areas would receive training, but that the promised funds never materialised. At that meeting, the Managers who attended were asked to forward training requirements in their sections to the Acting Manager of the Departmental Support Services for follow-up. Sadly, that was again where the matter ended. It was apparent that with training, as with so many other themes of the transformation process, there had been more than one false start and a lack of political will to live up to the legislative requirements regarding skills development within the municipality.

An uneasy relationship with the existing managers

The relationship between the Core Team and the existing City Planning Managers⁴³ at the different Administrative Units was strained from the start. The managers took offence to the fact that they had not been involved in any of the task teams. They felt uncomfortable with Belinda's unanticipated

⁴³ The existing City Planning Managers were Amund Beneke (GPMC), Mike Yates (CCP), Pieter de Haas (NPMSS) and Leon du Bruto (CTC).

authority over them and were cut off from the seat of authority as all communication with the Acting Divisional Manager, Nomngqibelo, had to take place via Belinda. At the same time, the Core Team was disconcerted by indications that some of the existing city planning managers (notably Amund Beneke) were continuing to work on large development projects without informing or involving the Core Team in any way. On 6 June 2001, Belinda sent a memorandum to all City Planning managers “*laying down the law*” in this regard (CTMM, 2001r).

The memorandum instructed the existing managers to give regular feedback to the Core Team Convenor, Belinda, on all operational projects they were involved with. The purpose of the arrangement, as stated in the memorandum, was ostensibly to “*contribute towards effective communication and add value to the restructuring process, to the benefit of all involved parties*”. Of course the real reason was that the Core Team members were feeling uneasy about managers carrying on with large strategic projects without their knowledge or involvement, as this was seen to erode their power base. While they were quite happy to ignore and sideline the existing management, it was uncomfortable when they were, in turn, the ignored party.

We had become aware of some of the managers, notably Pieter de Haas from the Akasia Administrative Unit (NPMSS), experiencing intense irritation as a result of having to travel to the HB Phillips building to attend meetings whenever they were summoned to do so by the Core Team. In order to defuse the situation an expression of gratitude for the “*positive manner in which (they) have responded to recent requests for attending meetings on short notice*” was also made in the memorandum. Yet again the Core Team consciously employed what Flyvbjerg (1998) refers to as a “*stroking strategy*” (very similar to the “*peacekeeping ritual*” performed by the planners in Forester (1996) in his study of a transcript of a meeting between municipal planners and a developer) to ward off conflict.

In order to facilitate feedback on projects to the Core Team, a weekly meeting between the Core Team and the existing managers was instituted from

Wednesday, 30 May 2001. These meetings continued to take place every Wednesday at 14:00 until Verna Nel was nominated at the Convenor for City Planning early in July 2004.

6.5 A new organizational structure upsets the Task Team applectart

Towards the end of June 2001, merely two tumultuous months after the inception of the Core Team, it came to our knowledge that the political level (the Mayor and his committee) had decided to fundamentally change the new organizational structure without consulting any of the officials. The structure is not open to debate when it is first introduced. It is clear that this is not a proposed structure – it is presented as a decision already taken, a fait accompli. While the initial lack of alternative locations for the bus stop in the Aalborg case (or of alternative uses for the Nytorv site) was indicative of the power of the “*strong position of public transportation in the Aalborg Project and in Aalborg*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:25;29), the lack of alternative organizational structures was a symptom of the strong power position held by the new Tshwane Top Management. In the Tshwane case, also, this kind of one-sided change is made possible by the new Tshwane Top Management’s “*political and organizational dominance*”, which is also the factor to which Flyvbjerg (1998: 30) ascribes the Aalborg Bus Company “*winning out*” on the issue of the location of the bus stop at Nytorv. Flyvbjerg (1998:104) furthermore tells how the Aalborg Chamber of Industry and Commerce later “*objects to the very plan they themselves had helped to propose and implement just one year before*”. As was the case with the Tshwane organizational structure, this is another example of how those with power have the luxury of taking decisions without having to offer any explanation.

The lack of documentation of the necessity of locating the bus stop at Nytorv in the Aalborg case (Flyvbjerg 1998:33) indicates that, where actors have strong and unchallenged positions of power, the need for rationalization diminishes. This argument applies very well to the Tshwane top management, whose positions of power could not be threatened by the officials and who therefore did not see the need for communicating or engaging with them.

Flyvbjerg (1998:37) says that “*a party’s unwillingness to present rational argument or documentation may quite simply indicate the freedom to define reality*”. More succinctly put, “*Why concern oneself with how reality really is when one has the privilege of defining it? Why use the force of the better argument when force alone will suffice?*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:80). It therefore seems that Flyvbjerg’s (1998:2) statement, after Foucault, that “*the greater the power, the less the rationality*”, can be read in its extreme application to imply that where there is absolute power (i.e. power that cannot be challenged by resistance as in the case of the Tshwane top management), there need for rationality is obviated. Seen in this light, efforts by the Core Team to communicate may *seem* laudable, but in reality merely indicate that the Team *needed* communication to enforce their position of power.

Just as the so-called “summit meetings” between the Technical Department and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce exclude the experts that can ensure the “technical-functional linkages” necessary to ensure the functional coherence of the project (Flyvbjerg, 1998: 81) the expertise of the planners and other officials are ignored when the new organizational structure for Tshwane is developed. A more pertinent example of this is when the executive mayor’s office “forgets” to invite the staff of its own strategic planning function to the conference on the “Rebirth and Restructuring of Tshwane” a few months later. As is also clear from the Aalborg example, the inclusion and exclusion of people by those in power in the Tshwane municipality is a manner in which to entrench power relations. The exclusion of the planners from key decision making processes made them keenly aware of their relative lack of power within the new organizational structure.

The design of the new Tshwane organizational structure was not developed by the members of top management themselves, but was outsourced to a Midrand-based consultant, Yarona Creative Management Solutions. While Flyvbjerg (1998:21) shows that transferring the task of compiling the report motivating the location of the Aalborg Project bus stop to consultants was a strategy for increasing the credibility of the report, the decision by the Tshwane Top management to make use of external consultants to develop a

new organizational structure, achieved the opposite. The general feeling among the officials was that an external firm could not possibly understand the intricacies underlying the structuring of a municipality.

The new structure was not immediately communicated to all officials, but only distributed to the Administrative Unit Managers, again entrenching the disparate distribution of power within the municipal hierarchy. Henry Bezuidenhout got hold of the document through the office of Kenny Rosenberg, who was the Administrative Unit Manager for the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Administrative Unit. The new structure consisted of 8 Strategic Units (later called “Divisions”, then “Departments” and finally “Directorates”), headed by Strategic Executives (later called Strategic Executive Officers or SEO’s). With this arrangement, the Administrative Units ceased to exist and the structure of the new unified City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality came into being.

The new Departments were the following:

- Service Delivery
- Finances
- Safety and Security
- Corporate Services
- Marketing and Tourism
- Social Development
- Housing; and
- Economic Development.

The new Economic Development Department consisted of two components, namely Public Transport and Local Economic Development. It was clear that City Planning was no longer part of this function. On the face of it, it was also not part of any other function.

An anxious Core Team

There were a number of reasons why the announcement of the new organizational structure led to a significant measure of anxiety within the Core Team and among members of the Task Teams. One of these was that we had hoped that our Champion, Nomngqibelo, would be permanently appointed as Divisional Manager: Economic Development. This would have ensured the continuance of the Core Team and their restructuring process. With the announcement of the new structure, however, it seemed clear that City Planning would no longer resort under Economic Planning. Furthermore, there were no assurances that Nomngqibelo would be appointed in any of the new top management posts.

The Core Team's suspicion that Nomngqibelo would no longer have the executive responsibility for City Planning in the new structure was confirmed by a document distributed by the Municipal Manager, Dr Thoahlane Thoahlane on 2 July 2001 in which all acting Divisional Managers were ordered to return to their previous posts with immediate effect (CTMM 2001 bb). The tone of this document, titled *Circular 1 of 2001*, was again characteristic of the confrontational and unsympathetic manner in which Top Management communicated with officials. Even though the acting Divisional Managers had gone to great lengths to aid the restructuring process without receiving any additional remuneration for their efforts, they were now ordered to return to their previous positions without as much as a word of appreciation. The indignance of the people affected by the circular was exacerbated by the fact that, apart from this general circular, no personal communication with them had taken place. Soon after his appointment to the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO), Wonder Nkosi referred to *Circular 1 of 2001* as "*the most inhumane document I had ever seen*" (pers comm Nkosi 2001) because of the unfeeling manner in which it dismissed the acting Divisional Managers and the lack of acknowledgement that it gave for their contribution. The harsh tone of this document reminds of the unexpected use of the term "demands" by the bus company in Flyvbjerg's (1998:13) story. Dr T's letter created even more distance between the officials and the top management, proving that, as

argued by Forester (Argument, Power and Passion), that talk (or written communication) is action and that *words matter*.

The Core Team had been dedicated to Nomgqibelo and the members did everything in their power to support her and boost her image as Divisional Manager. However, now that there were indications that she would no longer be in a position to guarantee the continuation of the Core Team, our loyalty was quickly dissipated. We feverishly followed up every available lead in an attempt to find out under whose management City Planning (and therefore the Core Team) would operate in the new organizational structure. The argument was that, the moment this was known, the Core Team could start building an alliance with the new manager and start selling their restructuring process to him/her.

Another reason for the Core Team's unease about the new structure was that it perpetuated the disregard for the status or importance of the City Planning function. In fact, where City Planning was at least mentioned as one of the components of Nomgqibelo's Economic Development Division, there was now no mention whatsoever of it in the new structure.

It would seem, however, that the functions of City Planning, Economic Development and Transport Planning and Management would no longer be grouped together under one Department. This raised concerns in the Core Team that the promise of better integration between these functions which the Nomgqibelo structure held, would come to nought.

The Core Team was also very concerned that the announcement of another new structure, and especially the fact that the officials were not consulted about it at all, would be another blow to staff morale that was already rock bottom. This concern proved valid, as some of the Task Team leaders that had been invaluable in the process up to that point, indicated that they no longer saw a role for themselves in the new structure. (When I requested the City Planning personnel to indicate how many of them were feeling "*gatvol*"⁴⁴

⁴⁴ A widely used Afrikaans colloquialism meaning "fed-up".

by a show of hands by way of breaking the ice at the workshop of 3 August that year, there was no-one who didn't raise a hand – in fact, some raised both hands...)

Survival instinct – the Core Team's continuation plan

The concerns regarding their position in a new organizational structure spurred the Core Team into action. Firstly, we set about compiling a comprehensive report and covering letter (CTMM, 2001v) explaining the progress made with the restructuring of City Planning and arguing for the continuation of the Core Team and Task Teams. The covering letter made a strong case for continuing the process that was underway, citing as the main reason the legislative imperatives with regard to the approval of land-use applications, building plans etc. Much deliberation went into deciding whom the report and letter should be addressed to. One option was to send it to the Municipal Manager (later referred to as the Chief Executive Officer), Dr Thoahlane Thoahlane (Dr T). In the end, however, we agreed that the report should go to Wonder Nkosi, who had at that stage just been appointed as the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

The cover letter to the report submitted to Wonder Nkosi listed three functions, which Belinda and the Core Team were appointed to coordinate. These were the “*daily operational City Planning responsibilities*”⁴⁵, the restructuring of the City Planning function, and the compilation of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Each of these three aspects were dealt with in detail in the report.

As far as the IDP was concerned, there had still been no communication from the Top Management. In the Core Team we held the attitude that, although in terms of legislation the City Manager would also be the IDP Officer, the planners would be the people actually compiling the plan as was the case with the previous IDP cycle. In the light of the importance placed on the IDP by

⁴⁵ While at its inception the Core Team was focused on restructuring rather than the day-to-day management of the function, they purposefully expanded their role to also include the operational aspect of the function, usually citing “legislative requirements” as the reason.

legislation, this was seen as a vehicle for further entrenching the Core Team's position of power. In the report, Belinda stated that "*Although a corporate responsibility, the IDP is being dealt with by the City Planning Component as an integral part of the City Planning Function for the interim, including the 2001/2 IDP*".

In essence the report provided, in glowing terms, an overview of the work done by the Core Team up to that stage. It ended with a number of recommendations which came down to a request that cognizance be taken of the progress made by the Core Team regarding the three issues listed in the cover letter and that the Core Team be allowed to continue its work in that regard. It furthermore referred to an attached report in terms of which the Mayoral Committee had approved that all City Planning delegations be given to the Convenor: City Planning or her successor in title from 1 July 2001. Lastly, it was recommended that cognizance be taken of another attached report, which had not yet been approved, relating to the appointment of an Acting Building Control Officer for Tshwane, an appointment that the Municipality was required to make in terms of the law.

Belinda signed the report as acting Divisional Manager: Economic Development and as Convenor: City Planning. Space was also provided for the Chief Operating Officer to sign the report. We hoped that if Wonder Nkosi had signed the report, it would entrench the Core Team's position regardless of who was appointed as the function's new Top Manager.

On the morning of 27 June 2001 Johnny set out to meet Wonder Nkosi at the BJ's Bistro built across the N1 highway at Midrand to give him the Core Team's report. Johnny was tasked with trying to convince Wonder of the importance of supporting the Core Team. He would particularly highlight the urgency of starting with the compilation of the IDP, which, by law, had to be completed by March 2002. Johnny was seen off by all the Core Team members and wished well with his task. It was a mission of mythological proportions – the dragon that had to be slain in order to ensure the Core Team's survival. We waited anxiously for Johnny's return to hear what

Wonder's response was. Unfortunately, it turned out that Wonder would not commit to signing the document right away. Neither Belinda nor Johnny ever received a response from Wonder on that report, in which we had invested so much time and effort.

Despite the anxiety experienced by the Core Team in the face of the new organizational structure, I suggested that they project an image of confidence and even excitement about the changes. At the meeting held between the Core Team and the existing managers on Wednesday 27 June 2001 the Core Team stated that we were very happy about the new organizational structure as it was a sign that the Top Management wished to progress from the interim phase to a more permanent situation. Flyvbjerg (2001:94) argues that communication is typically characterised by rhetoric, which has as its aim to maintain interests. In rhetoric, the mode of communication (for example charisma and the use of dependency relations between role players) determines "validity", and not rational arguments about the matter under discussion. He furthermore argues that "*success in rhetoric is associated precisely with distortion*".

This mock-optimism, an excellent example of using communication to *define* reality rather than merely *describe* it, a strategy which, according to Flyvbjerg (1998: 35) can be employed by entities that are "politically, organizationally and structurally" strong, and a strategy that is used by several players in the Aalborg story. Even though the Tshwane Core Team has limited power, within the planning function it employs this strategy with a significant measure of success, repeatedly using communication (often rationalization or propaganda) as the tool by which reality is defined. As Flyvbjerg (1998:36) puts it: "Power, quite simply, produces that knowledge and that rationality which is conducive to the reality it wants." He adds that the ability to suppress or facilitate knowledge is to a significant extent what makes certain parties more powerful than others in modern societies.

The Core Team's use of language to define reality was echoed in a circular to all staff members in the City Planning function issued by Belinda on 28 June

2001 (CTMM, 2001y). In the circular, *Circular 3 of 2001*, Belinda briefly referred to the success of the purpose structure workshops held on 14 June 2001 and thanked the officials for attending in such large numbers. She furthermore stated that “*Although no formal communication had been received in this regard, it is clear that the City Planning function will be located within the Housing Strategic Unit*”.

Belinda continued to give assurances that the appointment of a Strategic Executive for Housing would not affect the pace of restructuring or cause any disruption. Furthermore, in the circular, Belinda’s position as Convenor for the City Planning restructuring, IDP coordinator and contact person for all Tshwane-wide City Planning issues was confirmed. It was also stated that the Core Team remained in place despite the changes to the corporate structure.

In the circular, Belinda also shared the Core Team’s “*continuation strategy*”, which was to compile a report for the to be appointed Strategic Executive and the newly appointed Chief Operations Officer, Wonder Nkosi. The report contained information on the progress made with the restructuring and listed critical operational issues that needed urgent attention.

The confidence with which the assurances to both the existing managers and the rest of the officials were given belied the *angst* the Core Team was experiencing at that stage. Nomngqibelo was on leave (Belinda acted in her place as Divisional Manager) and seemed to know as little as the Core Team members did about who City Planning would report to from 2 July 2001. The plan to give Wonder Nkosi the Core Team report was a desperate one – the Team knew that he and Nomngqibelo got along well and hoped that, in his new position of power as Chief Operating Officer, he could intervene to ensure the Core Team’s continued existence if that proved necessary.

In line with the Core Team’s established stroking strategy, the letter ended with an expression of praise and thanks for the Task Team leaders and members for their contribution to the restructuring process.

Mike Yates' brief stint as General Manager

The most distinctive indication of where City Planning lay on the new structure was the advertisements for the Strategic Executive Officers and the General Managers. It was clear from the advertisements for the Strategic Executive Officer (SEO) for Housing (CTMM, 2001z) that City Planning was seen as part of the Housing Directorate, of which an organogram appears in *figure vi*. It was, however, not clear whether it would resort under the General Manager: Housing or the General Manager: Land and Environmental Planning, which were the two legs of the new Department. At this time, **Si Bogopa**, from the former Centurion Town Council, was asked to act as Strategic Executive Officer for the Department. Mike Yates, who was the then Executive Director of City Planning and Development in the former City Council of Pretoria, was appointed as Acting General Manager for Land and Environmental Planning and Ria van Rensburg, who had been working in the Legal Department at the Centurion Town Council, as Acting General Manager for Housing.

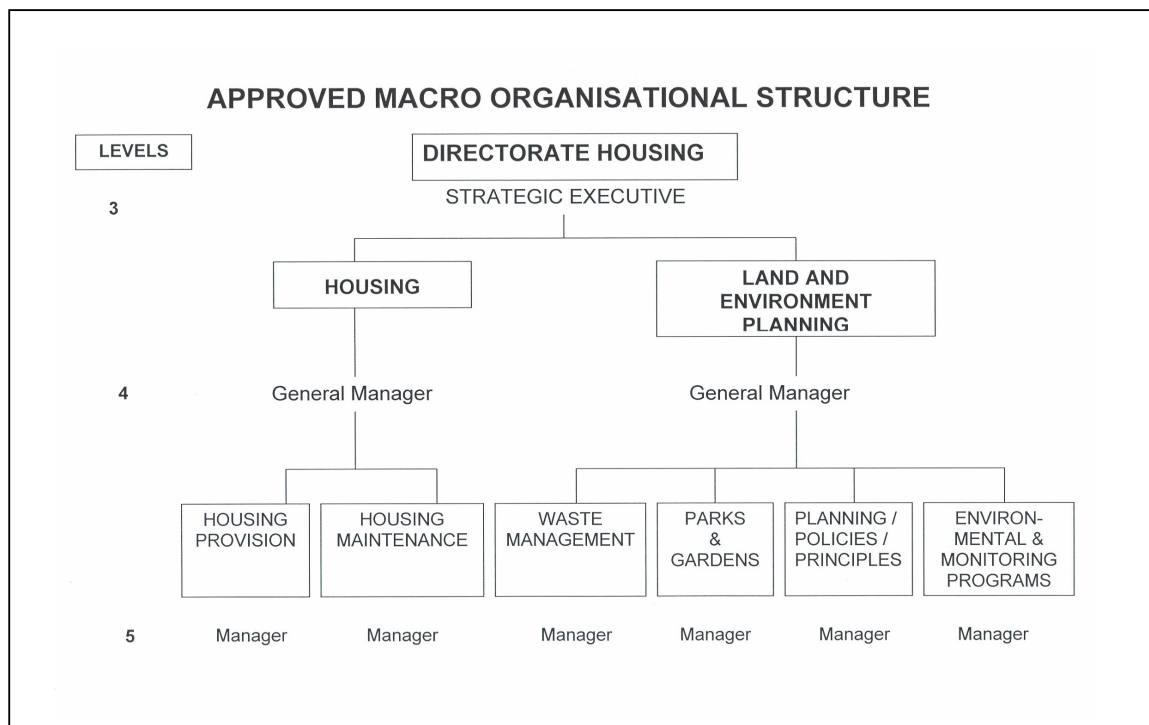


Figure vi: Approved macro organizational structure for the Housing Directorate as on 1 July 2001

Although, as I stated earlier, the Core Team was confused regarding where exactly City Planning was supposed to be situated within the new

Department, Mike Yates was convinced that it resorted under Housing rather than under Land and Environmental Planning.

However, because of Mike' long-standing involvement with the City Planning Function and because Ria van Rensburg had indicated that she was not keen on managing the City Planning Function along with the other Housing functions, it was agreed that Mike would manage the function for the time being.

When Mike communicated this decision to the Core Team at the beginning of July 2001, their hearts sank. They were convinced that, following the power struggle and simmering conflict between the Core Team and the existing management (of which Mike was a prominent member), he would disband the Core Team and revert back to the existing managers.

It came as a very big surprise therefore, when Mike indicated at a workshop held by the Core Team on 4 July 2001 (CTMM, 2001dd) to which we invited him, that he was satisfied with the work we had done up to that point and that he intended to retain the Core Team unchanged. Looking back, I now realise that it would have been a serious tactical error of Mike not to support the Core Team at that point. We had clearly performed in terms of the deliverables we undertook to produce and, more importantly, through our policy of openness and regular communication, we had rallied the support of the City Planning officials for the Core Team efforts to restructure the function. If Mike had chosen to disband the Core Team, as he could have done, he would in all probability have had to face the antagonism of the officials.

The workshop where Mike gave his unexpected commitment to the Core Team process, was held at "*Ben se Den*" (Ben's Den), the recreational facility of the City Engineers in the Magaliesberg to the North of the City⁴⁶. The

⁴⁶ This facility, and the one next door to it, "*Jack se Plek*" (Jack's Place) were the setting for many a social function of the City Planning and Development Department of the former City Council of Pretoria. It was therefore an appropriate venue for building team spirit, as well as enthusiasm for the restructuring process. At the same time, however, it was an example of how old traditions persisted in the face of change. The workshop could be seen as an initiation of the planners from the other structures into this tradition.

workshop was attended by the Core Team, as well as the Task Team leaders, each of whom invited two members of their Task Team to join them. The workshop was facilitated by Johnny and I, while Henry, as had become customary, compiled the agenda. This had as its main points a presentation on progress with restructuring by the Core Team, and a discussion of the proposed purpose structure, which would consist of defining the functions of City Planning and defining the relationships or links between the functions. At the workshop, we also gave the Task Teams the terms of reference for the Resource Plans. A proforma (CTMM, 2001ee) was prepared on which the Task Teams had to list the primary functions of their components with an indication of the Administrative, Technical and Professional Support required. They had to qualify whether such support was “*collective*” (i.e. shared by the entire City Planning function) or “*function specific*” in nature.

The primary aim of the workshop was to reach consensus on a purpose structure for the City Planning function. However, the ideas from the different breakaway groups were too divergent and abstract to enable the Core Team to come to a commonly accepted solution within the available time. What did come out of the workshop was a strong common concern for the apparent lack of recognition for the City Planning Function from Top Management. It was decided to take action and make a presentation to the Executive Mayor to explain the benefits of a strong City Planning function. This struggle to get City Planning recognized at an appropriate level within the Housing Department would also become a recurring theme throughout the restructuring process.

The Resource Plans submitted by the Task Team leaders following the workshop, bore testimony to the optimism that characterised this phase of the restructuring of the City Planning Function. The Spatial Planning Task Team, listed, among other things, a Legal Advisor, Analysts (Urban Geographer, Urban Economist, Sociologist), a Marketer, a Facilitator for Public Participation and Project Managers as the human resources that would be required for the function (CTMM, 2001hh). The Outdoor Advertising Section also requested, among other things, “*Dedicated Legal Support, Training, and*

Back-up Typing Support” (Petersen, 2001). The Land Use Management Task Team proposed a hierarchical system of which the lowest level would be nine Geographical Planning Areas (GPAs) of eight wards each (Du Plessis et al, 2001). As far as staffing was concerned, the Land Use Management Task Team envisaged a Head, four Town Planners, one Assistant Town Planner and three administrative support staff for each GPA – a scenario that was ridiculously far removed from the then current reality. In most departments, staff shortages were the order of the day owing to the moratorium that had been placed on the filling of vacancies since the beginning of 2001, on the one hand, and the fact that a much larger geographical area now had to be serviced, on the other. Although the staff of the former municipal structures of Garankuwa, Winterveldt and Themba had become part of the new municipality, this did not contribute significantly towards alleviating staff shortages, especially in the light of the fact that no professional staff (planners, engineers etc) were gained in this manner.

On 6 July 2001, Belinda issued another “*Circular 1 of 2001*”⁴⁷ (CTMM, 2001ff) to all City Planning Officials. The letter, only a page long, in brief terms communicated the fact that, owing to the uncertainty with regard to the position of city planning in the new corporate structure, it would as an interim arrangement be accommodated in the Strategic Unit: Housing under the Acting General Manager for Environmental Planning, Mike Yates.

The letter also stated that the Core Team was pro-actively liaising with the Strategic Executive: Economic Development in order to ensure that the necessary linkages with Local Economic Development and Transportation Management were established. In fact, the Core Team’s liaison with the newly appointed Strategic Executive for Economic Development, Hein Wiese, had less to do with establishing the necessary planning links than it had to do with the Core Team trying to ensure their sustained existence in a position of

⁴⁷ This is the third “Circular 1 of 2001” to be quoted in this study. The first was the circular issued by Nomgqibelo on 30 May 2001 in which she confirmed the Core Team structure. The second was the circular issued by Dr T on 2 July 2001 in which he dismissed the Acting divisional Managers (see [page 116](#)). Although Belinda had issued a number of memoranda before this date, this was the first “circular” to appear under her signature – hence the heading “Circular 1 of 2001”.

power. Henry knew Hein well and felt that, if the Core Team could successfully make a case for locating the City Planning function under Economic Development, their position would be more secure than it would be under Si Bogopa or his successor in the position of Strategic Executive: Housing, who was yet to be appointed. Of course, in the light of the calls that had been made by the planning fraternity over the years for better integration between city planning and transportation planning, this “*rationalization*” was watertight.

Belinda’s letter of 6 July 2001 also stated that the acting Strategic Executive: Housing (Si Bogopa) as well as the Acting General Manager: Land and Environmental Planning (Mike Yates) approved that the Core Team and Task Teams remain in place to take the restructuring process further. However, it would later be proved that the confidence with which Belinda made this statement, was unfounded. It soon transpired that Si did not support Mike’s position with regard to retaining the Core Team. Unbeknown to the Core Team, Si had requested that **Verna Nel** take over the operational management, as well as the restructuring of the function, leaving Belinda out in the cold.

Si Bogopa’s intention to change the arrangement Mike had made with regard to the Core Team continuing as before became apparent when, soon after the workshop, Mike received an organogram by fax indicating an interim structure for the City Planning function and was asked to nominate coordinators for the various components. From the point of view of the Core Team, there were two major problems with the organogram: Firstly, the proposed organogram was not the same as the one arrived at through the consultative process driven by the Core Team. Secondly, while all the other blocks were blank, Verna Nel’s name was written in the block provided for “*Convenor: City Planning*”. Apparently, Si Bogopa had already asked Verna, the former Chief Town Planner at Centurion, to take up that position.

Verna Nel usurps the throne

The Core Team urged Mike to enquire telephonically from Thys Barnard, an official from the former Centurion Town Council who was trained in organizational design, who had been tasked with compiling the new organograms, whether Belinda could continue to act in the position of convenor/coordinator for City Planning. Thys, however, assured Mike that Si Bogopa had insisted that the position be filled by Verna. Verna later indicated during an interview (interview Nel, 2002) that she had worked with Si in the past and that he personally requested her to manage the function. Yet again, as was the case with the establishment of the Core Team, someone was being given a position of power on the basis of a good relationship with another role player who was already in a position of power.

Verna's personality and approach was completely different to that of Belinda, who was authoritarian and businesslike. Verna's management style was very feminine. She gave people Christmas cards and little tokens with Bible verses. She also had a very intimate and people-oriented style of communication. This was clear from two "*informal*" memoranda that she wrote to her staff – one at the beginning of 2001 while she was still Chief Planner at the then Town Council of Centurion (Nel, 2001) and the other just before the Christmas holidays that year in her capacity as Acting General Manager: City Planning in the new municipality (CTMM 2001fff). She included cartoons in the newsletter and congratulated staff members on getting married or on the birth of their babies. Verna elicited a lot of criticism for not being a "*strong leader*"⁴⁸. Nonetheless, the fact that there was now a woman in charge of City Planning, which was unheard of up to that point in the former City Council of Pretoria, indicated progress towards a more inclusive demographic profile of the function.

The slight to Belinda, as well as the fact that Nikki had not been accommodated in the new structure, was a blow to the Core Team and shook

⁴⁸ Verna was also not physically strong. She was often away from work due to ill health caused by the stress associated with her position as Coordinator of the City Planning function (interview Nel 2001).

our confidence. Again, within a very short space of time, as was the case when the Core Team was first established, the power had shifted completely. Although bureaucracies are generally characterised by stable power relations (Flyvbjerg, 1998), the restructuring process of the CTMM created space for more dynamic power relations to evolve. The failure by the Top Management to communicate clearly on the “*rules of the game*” further contributed to the instability of the power relations on the lower levels.

Henry went back to the office immediately after our meeting with Mike and drafted a report for Wonder Nkosi’s signature nominating Belinda as the IDP Coordinator. The report was approved by the Mayoral Committee without hitches. Soon afterwards, Nikki and Belinda moved to the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, Wonder Nkosi, to work on the IDP. They compiled the IDP process plan (CTMM, 2001vv) in September 2001 and Belinda was eventually (early in 2003) appointed to the position of General Manager: IDP, a higher position than that achieved by any other member of the initial Core Team. The manner in which Belinda became IDP coordinator is another example of officials restructuring the municipality “*from the bottom up*” in the face of indecisiveness and a lack of guidance from the Top Management.

Mike Yates placed former Core Team members in all the other coordinator positions. At this stage, the City Planning function consisted of the following components: Strategic Spatial Planning (coordinated by Johnny Coetzee); Regional Spatial Planning (coordinated by Henry Bezuidenhout); Building Management (coordinated by Alf Vorster); Outdoor Advertising (later changed to Streetscape Management and coordinated by Kal Rofail, who was later replaced by Hugo de Wet); and City Planning Support (which I briefly coordinated before being replaced by Valerie Steyn on 3 August 2001).

All of the above functions were faced with the challenge of finalising a new structure that would be able to serve the newly demarcated metropolitan area. Owing to the fact that Henry, Johnny and I still had our offices in the HB Phillips building, we were now geographically isolated from the rest of the interim management team and from Mike. This made us feel isolated on other

levels as well. They put pressure on Mike to arrange that offices be made available for them in Munitoria, where Mike's office and that of all the other Functional Coordinators were. Not only had the power relations changed with Verna's appointment, its physical locus within the municipality had changed too. After an intense struggle to find accommodation in Munitoria, the three former Core Team members left the HB Phillips building at the end of July 2001 to take up offices there. Henry was accommodated on the fourth floor and Johnny and I on the seventh.

Even once the problem of office accommodation had been resolved, the task of the Functional Coordinators remained a difficult one. This was particularly so due to the fact that no political decision had as yet been reached on the division of the municipal area into regions or zones. Yet, even in the absence of clarity regarding the regions and, for that matter, any strategic leadership for the spatial development of the new sprawling municipal area of the CTMM, city planning officials continued preparing and submitting reports with regard to the many significant development projects that were initiated before the establishment of the unicity structure. These included projects such as the Eerste Fabrieken Project (a project to stimulate retail activity in Mamelodi), the Ring Rail Development (a project aimed at developing a circular rail route that would significantly improve the accessibility of large parts of Tshwane by rail), and the redevelopment of Winterveldt (a presidential lead project aimed at upgrading the township towards the North of the city) (CTMM, 2001x).

For the most part, however, the actual implementation of these projects had stood still for a period of seven months since December 2000 (CTMM, 2001II). The reasons were that there was no clarity with regard to the budget that was available to each Directorate; that there were sometimes long delays before reports were considered; and that reports were referred back owing to the fact that they were not in the correct format, or had not been approved by all the parties indicated in the report-flow process.

Flyvbjerg (1998:205) generalizes that municipalities show low levels of activity during the period following an election and argues that this could be due to

“*changes in the City Council’s political composition*”. In the Aalborg case, the Aalborg Project is dormant for almost two years following the election. It would seem, therefore, that the apparent apathy from Tshwane’s new political leadership and the lull in activities following the election of 5 December 2000 was not a phenomenon unique to Tshwane. Yet more cases will be necessary to see whether generalizations regarding internal power relations and the role of communication in establishing and maintaining such relations could be made.

One project with which significant progress was made in terms of actual implementation was a huge investment by the Department of Trade and Industry towards the development of their new campus in Trevenna (CTMM, 2001x, Jacobs 2001). This was one project that enjoyed the full support from top management in the person of the COO, Wonder Nkosi, and from the political level in the person of the Executive Mayor. From the municipality’s side, the project was driven by the Inner City Team, which consisted mostly of planners working directly under the Chief Operating Officer, Wonder Nkosi. The fact that officials continued working on these significant projects without decisive guidance or support from the Executive Mayor and his Committee or from the Municipal Manager (CEO), seem to point to an innate “*momentum*” of the organization – a tendency to continue with “*business as usual*” despite the fact that the institutional environment had undergone sudden and radical change. Furthermore, it strengthens the impression that, from just after the establishment of the new structure in December 2000, it was the officials, rather than the new Top Management, that was the driving force behind the municipality.

In July 2001 the Top Management for the first time requested a list of all the existing projects that were being planned or implemented in each function (CTMM, 2001II). This request from Top Management is at the same time an indication of their lack of active management up to that point (six months after the establishment of the new Municipality) and of a move toward empowering themselves with knowledge of the main activities and projects of the respective Departments up to that stage.

The neutral, official demands for documentation from officials made by the new Tshwane top management was an effective way of de-politicising the restructuring process. Flyvbjerg (1998:20) describes a similar strategy used by the Aalborg Bus Company through their “ostensibly neutral” demands regarding the location of the bus strategy. Flyvbjerg (1998:20) shows that presenting seemingly value-neutral, rational arguments or requests (instructions in the Tshwane case), could be a strategy for defusing resistance and avoiding conflict, while furthering political (in the sense of *Realpolitik*) aims.

The operational environment was still in a state of disarray when Verna appeared on the scene. Aspects such as the availability of leave forms bearing the name of the new municipality, signing powers, letterheads, a filing system and the budget had to be attended to (CTMM, 2001II)⁴⁹. At that stage the City Planning Division functioned “*unofficially*” under the Housing Department (CTMM, 2001II). It was a thorn in the side of the planning Co-ordinators that there was no reference to “*Planning*” in the name of the Department. By 12 October 2001, Nava officially requested that the name Housing, Land and Environmental Planning be used for the Department and City Planning for the Division (CTMM, 2001ww & 2001xx). The acronym “*HOLEP*” was first introduced by Mike Yates and was eventually taken up by the other officials.

For little more than a month after Verna had been nominated to manage the City Planning function, Mike Yates remained closely involved with the function. The working relationship with the existing managers, most of whom were once again not part of the interim management team (or Co-ordinators) was something that bothered Mike. The matter was discussed at a Coordinator’s Meeting held on 6 August 2001 (the last such meeting to be chaired by Mike before Verna took over the responsibility). It was decided that

⁴⁹ Week after week, these issues remained on the agenda of the Coordinators’ meeting. By October 2001, there was still uncertainty regarding Support Services for the function (CTMM, 5 October 2001). Most of the Co-ordinators did not have secretaries and none of the officials were sure where to apply for stationery to be ordered, or how the filing system had operated since December 2000.

Mike would investigate the matter and try to find a place for each of the existing managers. Subsequently, Skaap Mouton, who had been responsible for the old “*Guideline Planning*” (formerly called “*Forward Planning*”) function in Pretoria, was asked to assist with the management of correspondence, as well as queries from the office of the SEO (Strategic Executive Officer), Nava Pillay, the Executive Mayor and the CEO. Tony Walker, previously responsible for the Land Use Management function at Pretoria, was asked to attend to the City Planning support services and Pieter de Haas, Chief Town Planner of the Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure (Akasia) worked under Henry to co-ordinate all land-use applications in the Northern area (CTMM, 2001oo). Leon du Bruto from Centurion had joined Johnny’s Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning team. This was a conscious effort by Mike to accommodate the existing managers, all of whom worked either directly under or closely with him in the previous dispensation. This was another example of the power of personal relationships. Mike was “*looking after*” the colleagues with whom he had built a relationship over many years.

On 1 August 2001, Verna sent out a memorandum, which I had prepared for Verna’s signature, to the staff members of the City Planning, Building Control and related administrative functions (CTMM, 2001mm). On the letterhead the function was referred to as “*City Planning and Zoning*”. Again, a new permutation to denote the City Planning function was used, building on the pattern of confusion that emerged from the beginning of the restructuring process. The name “*City Planning and Zoning*” furthermore indicated that a conceptual split existed between the two components of the function at that stage. This went directly against the stated intention of the officials as expressed at the workshop of 14 June 2001 that land-use management and spatial planning should be integrated.

This split was reinforced by the list of Functional Coordinators for the City Planning Function given later on in the memorandum, which indicated that Henry Bezuidenhout would be responsible for Land Use Management and Johnny Coetzee for Spatial Planning. Although it was explicitly stated in the letter that the functions did not represent a new structure for City Planning and

that it was merely an arrangement to ensure that service delivery could continue, it could be seen to represent a reversion to the old structure as it existed at the City Council of Pretoria where Land Use Management and Spatial Planning were two distinct functions operating, for the most part, in isolation.

A remarkable aspect of the memorandum I prepared for Verna, however, was that in terms of it, the power of the coordinators was increased. It was stated that *“the Coordinators will have the full operational responsibility of the functions Tshwane-wide”*. The existing line managers were to act as *“Regional Coordinators”* who would report to the Functional Coordinators. This meant that the coordinators were no longer merely responsible for restructuring (although that responsibility remained), but that they now also had to manage the day-to-day operations of their functions. With the memorandum Verna brought the coordinators into the mainstream of management of the function, albeit merely in an acting capacity. As such, it signalled a milestone in the restructuring process.

Verna closed the memorandum to staff of 1 August 2001 (CTMM, 2001mm) by acknowledging that the *“protracted nature”* of the restructuring process and lack of information on aspects of the corporate restructuring process caused *“uncertainty and negativity”* among officials. She added, however, that *“all indications are that it will not be long before a permanent structure is in place for Tshwane City Planning”*. This echoed an earlier paragraph of the memorandum, which stated that the arrangement with regard to the Functional Coordinators was not expected to remain in place longer than a month. It also echoed similar optimistic statements that had been made since the inception of the Core Team, and even before that, when Mike Yates presented his *“End-of-an-era”* function. Little did Verna or I, who compiled the letter on her behalf, know at that stage that it would be more than two years before the final structure would be approved and the posts filled.

In the Aalborg case (Flyvbjerg, 1998), also, longer delays than the Technical Department could ever have foreseen characterise the implementation of the

Aalborg plan. Finishing the north-south bicycle route takes almost a decade and a half (Flyvbjerg, 1998:196). The reduced-speed zone on Danmarksgade is implemented five years later than planned (Flyvbjerg, 1998:200) and the work on John F. Kennedy Square is delayed a decade before implementation (Flyvbjerg, 1998:200). The division of the Aalborg Project into stages and the later extension of the project timeframe to twenty years by the alderman for the Technical Department (Flyvbjerg, 1998:59) was a strategy for “pacifying” opposing parties, particularly the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. In Tshwane, however, resistance was managed in the opposite manner, namely by continually assuring officials that the permanent filling of posts, which the officials so anxiously awaited, was imminent.

It is also telling that, apart from a few minor tweaks, the list of functions presented by Verna did, after all, come to represent the structure of the “new” City Planning function as approved by the Mayoral Committee in May 2002 (CTMM, 2002o).

When Verna communicated to her staff in her new capacity of Coordinator for City Planning (CTMM 2001mm) she also cited the advertisement for the position of General Manager: Housing as proof that the City Planning function resorted under the General Manager: Housing, which in turn was a division of the Housing Strategic Unit (see *figure vii* for an organogram of the Housing Strategic Unit). Even on Verna’s level (the third tier of management in the municipality) external clues such as the job advertisements for the General Manager positions, had to be followed up for information that one would have expected to have been provided to the officials directly from the Top Management. It was therefore not a case of middle management not conveying to their teams messages that they were given by Top Management, but rather that of a complete failure by Top Management to communicate with, or provide strategic leadership to the officials who reported to them. It furthermore caused confusion that the Division: Housing, had the same name as that of the Strategic Unit/Department: Housing, of which it was a part. The terms “Directorate”, “Department”, “Division” and “Strategic Unit” were all at some stage used to refer to the larger “*Housing*” structure. The

confusion that emerged regarding names of functions and structures could be seen as a reflection or symptom of the general lack of stability that characterised the restructuring process. As far as the names were concerned, at least, such stability could have been established with ease through proper communication by Top Management.

In the absence of any communication from the Tshwane Top Management, planning officials had nothing to “respond to”. In effect, their ability to resist the new organizational changes or to influence them in any way, was greatly diminished by the deafening silence experienced from the top. This contrasts sharply with the effective resistance to the Aalborg Project mustered by the “troika” of powers in the Aalborg case (Flyvbjerg, 1998:46), which is constituted of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the local newspaper, the *Aalborg Stiftstidende*, and the police. According to Gunder and Mouat (2002:129) the consequence of power when one lacks the ability to resist is symbolic violence and victimization. They (2002:129) state that *“If there is no scope for resistance, then only domination and oppression may occur resulting in violence and victimization on those acted against”*.

Just as it was strange that, during a time of discussion on citizen participation and alternatives in planning in Aalborg (Flyvbjerg, 1998:51) no alternatives were entertained in the Aalborg Project, it is strange that, during a time when democracy was such a topical issue in South Africa, the restructuring of the CTMM was done in such an undemocratic manner. The conflict that exists between the prominent metanarratives and the local realities are clear in both cases.

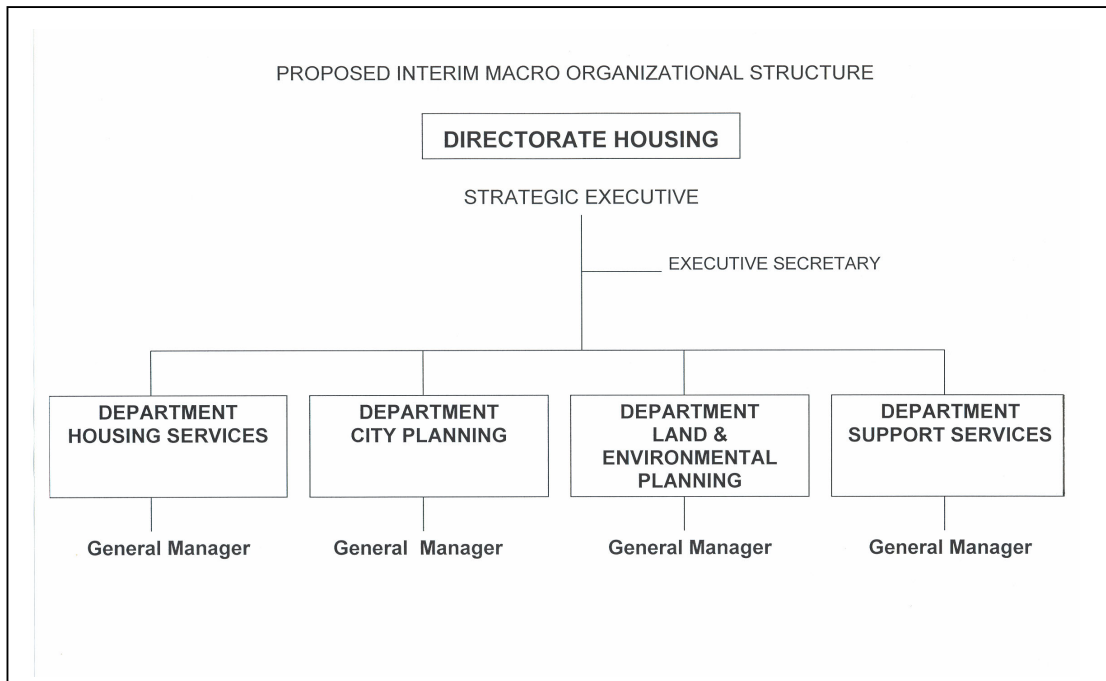


Figure vii: Proposed new macro organizational structure: Housing Directorate, as on 7 August 2001

Verna and the Functional Coordinators had to work to meet the deadline for presenting a new purpose structure of the city planning function to the Acting Strategic Executive: Housing (Si Bogopa), which had been set as Monday, 6 August 2001. Time proves to be a deciding factor in the decision regarding a new organizational structure for the planning function. In the interest of meeting the stringent deadlines put to Verna, the interim management team of the planning function agrees to accept the status quo model. Time is also a factor in Flyvbjerg's Aalborg case. The Task Force for the Aalborg Project foregoes an analysis of the effects the implementation of the "frequency model" would have on the buses in practice because of time constraints: "We came to the conclusion that in reality the time schedule [for the Aalborg Project] would collapse if we were to carry out a systematic analysis of this." The irony, of course, is that the implementation of the Aalborg Project would eventually be protracted over more than a decade. The same irony applies to Tshwane, where the approval of the final organizational structure, and the permanent filling of posts (which was actually what the officials chased after) would occur several years later than originally envisaged. Gunder and Mouat (2002:135) show how "the power of time", which includes, for example, the tactical use of short windows of time for objections, is used as a strategic tool to exclude resistance by the public under the New Zealand Resource

Management Act. As was the case with the division of the Aalborg Project in phases by the Technical Department, the rationality behind the use of time in the Tshwane case was *“the rationality of power, ..., not the rationality of technical or economic argument”* (Flyvbjerg, 1998:53).

In order to reach the deadline for presenting the new purpose structure to Si Bogopa, a workshop to discuss the purpose structure was arranged for Friday, 3 August 2001 (CTMM, 2001kk) for all officials working in the city planning function. Verna requested all the regional line function managers (ie the existing managers) to attend and to allow their staff to attend the workshop as well. The Purpose Structure Workshop held in the Premos Auditorium, the same venue that was used for the Core Team’s Purpose Structure Workshop held on 14 June that year. It was Verna’s first opportunity to address the planners face-to-face. After I had welcomed the members, Verna introduced the coordinators and showed the officials the proposed new purpose structure. The roughly 100 officials from the City Planning functions of all the former Administrative Units who attended accepted the structure, as well as Verna’s first appearance as the new Coordinator: City Planning, without remonstrations or, for that matter, discussion. At the workshop it was also announced that I would no longer coordinate the City Planning Support functions, although I would continue to assist Verna with the communication portfolio. Johnny used the workshop as an opportunity to request an indication from the planners as to who would like to join the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning Function (SMSP) (later referred to only as Metropolitan Spatial Planning) of which he was the Functional Coordinator.

A few weeks after the Purpose Structure Workshop, in September 2001, Nava Pillay, who up to that stage was the Divisional Manager: Operations in the office of the Municipal Manager, was appointed as the Strategic Executive Officer: Housing, without the post having been advertised. He replaced Si Bogopa who had acted in the position since July 2001. Nava was known as an excellent strategist and a strong leader, and had positioned himself as an informal confidante and advisor to the Municipal Manager. It was clear from his comments at management meetings that the focus of the Department would be *“housing provision”*, as this was perceived to be what the success of

the municipality would be judged on at the end of its current five-year term (CTMM, 2001uu).

In the course of their co-operation following the so-called “*life-and-death*” meeting, the relationship between the Aalborg Technical Department and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce develops into what Flyvbjerg (1998:82) describes as “a prototypical example of a stable power relation.” Following the nomination of Verna as the manager of the planning function, the relationship between the Tshwane officials and the new top management gradually move to a stable one. This process is facilitated by the permanent appointment of a Strategic Executive Officer to manage the Housing, Land and Environmental Planning Division within which the planning function finds itself in the person of Nava Pillay. It is apparent that the normalization of the new organizational structure, with all its managerialist trappings, is a key factor in stabilising the power relations between the officials and the top management. Unlike the Aalborg example, however, where this relation develops between two parties of equal strength, the Tshwane power relation remains a very unequal one, with the balance of power unquestionably on the side of those occupying the very top of Tshwane’s hierarchical pyramid.

A new strategic planning function

It is probably not surprising that the officials who indicated their willingness to become part of the new SMSP function at the workshop that was held on 3 August 2001, all turned out to be friends of Johnny, or colleagues who had worked closely with him in the past. Once again, it was not primarily merit or expertise that shaped the new function (although all the members probably qualified in both respects), but rather the power of personal relationships. I was involved in the team almost by default, as I no longer had the role of coordinator and was uncomfortable returning to the Pretoria Inner City Partnership where I had been working before joining the Core Team in May 2001. Furthermore, my role of assisting Verna with communication concerning the City Planning function was not a full time one. Jan Roode, who had a strong land-use orientation, had been a personal friend and a colleague of

Johnny of several years. Marius Nadel was formerly with the GPMC and also knew Johnny on a personal level. He had very strong project management experience and was thought to be a valuable addition to the team on the grounds of his interest in urban economics. Jakša Barbir, who had immigrated from Croatia eight years earlier, was the former head of the former City Council of Pretoria's Urban Design section and had served on a number of working groups of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership while Johnny was the Programme Manager of the Partnership. He was also a Co-Task Team Leader in the Core Team structure. He was strongly critical of the bureaucratic system within which he worked, but was generally regarded as a very skilled and thorough planner⁵⁰. Colin Hattingh, who had also worked with the Pretoria Inner City Partnership in the past, formerly worked as a planner in Jakša's team. The only members from outside of the old City Council of Pretoria were Kestell Serfontein, who led the Task Team for Spatial Planning under the Core Team and Leon du Bruto, who acted as the Head of Town Planning in Centurion in Verna Nel's absence. (Kestell involved Leon, his erstwhile supervisor, in the team shortly after its inception). Both Leon and Kestell were predisposed to the "new" approach to planning, i.e. moving away from "statistics-based" planning to a more intuitive approach, making use of the insight/foresight technique and comfortable with concepts such as chaos theory. Kestell handed out copies of Chapter 6 "The new planning paradigm" of TI Sanders' (1998) book "Strategic thinking and the new science" to all the members of the team. In the former City Council of Pretoria, for one, it never happened that reading material from an external source (ie other than Council documents) was introduced or discussed at meetings. This was one aspect that contributed to the sense of "newness" within the SMSP team.

Despite the fact that all the members of the initial SMSP team were strong individuals, with very divergent views on planning, the members developed a positive and productive working relationship that was reminiscent of the way in which the Core Team "clicked". For the second time in the restructuring of the city planning function, an effective small group, as described by

⁵⁰ Jakša was also an outspoken atheist, which juxtaposed him to Mike Yates, the Executive Director he worked under in the former City Council of Pretoria, as Mike was an equally outspoken Christian, who quoted Bible verses and invited officials into his office to pray for them.

McClendon and Quay (1992) emerged (the first was the Core Team). The creation of the SMSP function was a chance for planners to dream again, to once more think about the city (and by this I mean the vast expanse of the new Tshwane Metropolitan Area) on a grand scale. There was a pervasive pioneering spirit in the team, a sense of adventure at entering territory previously uncharted in the municipality.

The strategic thinking/strategic planning approach adopted by the SMSP team was a radical move away from the integrated development planning of the previous couple of years. As expressed by Jan Roode (pers com Roode, 2002) integrated planning had turned the planners into “*administrators*”, arranging meetings for the planning zone forums, answering queries from the public and receiving and responding to written inputs. It was also an approach very different to that of the so-called “*land-use planners*”, who followed a control-oriented rather than a facilitative approach.

During the second half of 2002, the initiating members of the SMSP function spent many hours in the “*Operations Room*” that had been allocated to them on the 7th floor of Munitoria in lengthy and intense discussions on the shape and content of the future function. Once again, as was the case with the Core Team more than a year before, a stimulating synergy developed in the small group that initiated the SMSP function. Once again, also people were placed in positions of relative power⁵¹ on the grounds of “*who they knew*” rather than “*what they knew*”. The difference in this case was that the actors were given an opportunity to indicate their willingness to participate in the new function and were not “*chosen*” in an autocratic manner, as was the case with the Core Team members and Task Team Leaders.

From the start, the emphasis of the SMSP function was on strategic planning. Mainly as a result of arguments put forward by Kestell and Leon the SMSP team adopted the principle that the strategic planning process should not be a rigid, scientific process, but should allow for a certain degree of “*gut feel*” or intuition.

⁵¹ There was, from the outset, no doubt that the initiating members would eventually form the management of the new strategic planning function.

Against this backdrop, the team used generic strategic planning processes (once again supplied by Kestell, see *figure viii*) as the point of departure for the structure of the function. The generic processes were the following:

- Insight about the present (research);
- Foresight about the future;
- Strategic planning;
- Attending to operational requests;
- Planning implementation; and
- Planning monitoring.

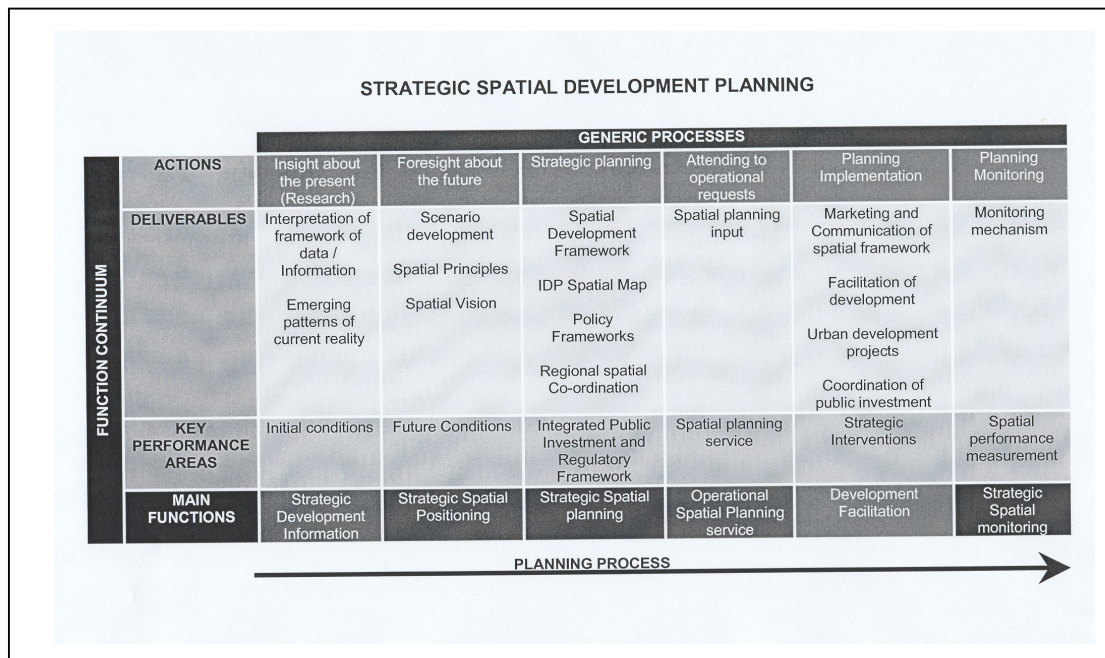


Figure viii: Table indicating how the strategic spatial planning process was derived from generic strategic planning processes

The SMSP initiating team also spent time considering the type of people that would be required to work in each component of the function. As far as could be ascertained, this was the first time in the history of the local authority that a function was not designed merely in clinical OD (organizational design) terms, but that attention was also given to the characteristics of the people who would ideally be appointed to staff the function. Of course, this was no different from what was done by the Core Team several months before when criteria were developed for nominating the Task Team leaders. In the light of the constraints referred to earlier, however, it was not possible to fill existing

vacancies with external candidates who met the SMSP initiators' ambitious requirements, let alone create and fill additional new posts. Ultimately, planners who were already working in related functions (eg the research function of the City Planning and Development Department of the former City Council, headed by Johann Steyn) slotted in under Johnny “*by default*”. Again, despite efforts to establish a new function *de novo*, much of the existing structure had to be retained. The persistence of the “*old*” structure was emerging as one of many themes that seemed to run like a golden thread⁵² through the story of Tshwane’s restructuring process. The main reason for this was probably that no new appointments could be made. By appointing existing staff members who were used to the old way of doing things in what was supposed to be “new” structures, the object was defeated.

A technically sophisticated and informative digital presentation on the function was prepared by Jakša and shown to all the planners (Barbir, 2001). An open invitation was again extended to those who wished to do so to join the function. This resulted in some of the land-use planners “*crossing the floor*” to join the SMSP function, much to the aggravation of Henry, who was facing an ever-increasing workload in the newly established Regional Spatial Planning function. This was a continuance of the “*poaching*” phenomenon that had developed early in the restructuring process and persisted throughout the study period. This was symptomatic of the state of flux the municipality was in during the study period. Moving staff from one function to another without proper prior authorisation or due process would have been unthinkable, for example, in the former City Council of Pretoria.

The first meeting of the SMSP management team was held on 17 October 2001 (Strategic Spatial Planning, 2001). At that stage, the function consisted of the following components: Strategic Development Information, Spatial Positioning, Strategic Spatial Planning, Operational Spatial Planning Service, Development Facilitation and Strategic Spatial Monitoring. As envisaged, a manager from among the ranks of the initiating team was nominated for each of these functions, which had evolved from the generic strategic planning

⁵² A number of these “golden threads”, or emerging truths, are discussed in Chapter 7.

model introduced by Kestell (see *figure viii*). The Managers were given the task to assess, develop and implement their functions, while liaising with each other and concerned parties. In essence, this was the same instruction as that given to the Task Team leaders by the Core Team half a year before. Furthermore, just as the Task Teams had been given a “*frame of reference*” by the Core Team, a framework was also provided to the Acting Managers of the SMSP function. The framework consisted of the following steps:

1. describing the function, its purpose and objectives;
2. developing a strategy to achieve those objectives;
3. drawing up an inventory of the work that has been done and existing documentation and integrating it into the new function;
4. determining shortcomings;
5. identifying strategic actions, and
6. prioritising and programming the implementation of the function’s operations.

This meeting represented a significant milestone in the life of the new strategic planning function, and it was agreed to have such meetings in the “*Operations Room*” on a weekly basis.

In discussions by the SMSP Management Team the point of City Planning not having been given its rightful place in the organizational structure, which was first formally raised at the Core Team workshop held on 4 July 2001, was often discussed. There was general consensus that the only explanation for top management and the political leadership not giving the function a higher status in the structure was ignorance as to its actual importance. It was therefore decided, soon after the first meeting, to draw up a document under the title of “*City Planning – a rough guide*” setting out in very basic terms what City Planning was all about (CTMM, 2001ss). The guide consisted of 10 pages with ample illustrations and text in a large font size with headings such as “*What is a city?*”, “*Why do cities have to be planned?*”, “*What is the city planning function?*”, etc. It was thought that the sparse, simple text, large font and use of graphic elements would effectively convey the importance of City Planning to the Councillors, who had no background in town and regional

planning. What was not articulated, though, was the implicit condescension that could be inferred from the overly simplified manner in which the document was presented. The tone and format was that which one would have employed to convey a message to children. It bore testimony to the officials' deep-seated distrust of the competence of the new leadership. Nonetheless, the document was copied and distributed at the next meeting of the Mayoral Committee and was apparently well received. It did not, however, result in any change with regard to the status of the City Planning function.

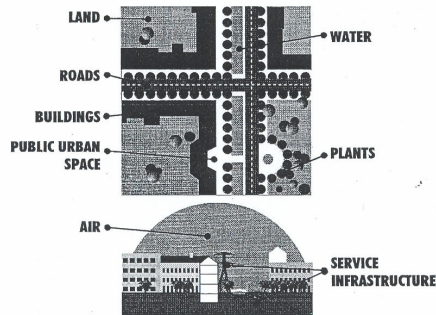
Flyvbjerg (1998:160) states that "*One can attempt to use rationality as power when one has no other power.*" Just as the Aalborg Technical Department attempts to use rationality as a tool to counter the plan proposed by the Social Democratic City Council Group, the planners use rationality in an attempt to convince the Tshwane top management of the importance of the planning function. The decisions of top management, however, were probably based on political considerations rather than on rational arguments around the importance of a strong planning function.

From the inception of the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning function, there was tension between the concepts of Strategic Spatial Planning, Strategic Corporate Planning and Integrated Development Planning. Johnny's SMSP team felt that the municipality's strategic *corporate* planning, which had at its core the future of the municipality as an organization, was the responsibility of the Mayor and his committee, as well as that of the Municipal Manager. They were unambiguous about their own focus, which was strategic *spatial* planning. *Part* of this function was the preparation of spatial planning input into the municipality's Integrated Development Plan in the form of a Spatial Development Framework (SDF).

1. What is a city?

A city is a place where many people come together to live, socialise, work and trade.

For this purpose they occupy space and use various natural resources, such as land, water, air, minerals and plants. They build buildings, public urban spaces (such as streets, squares and parks), roads and other structures. These structures are serviced by service infrastructure (such as networks of pipes and cables).



2. Why do cities have to be planned?

All these resources, structures and infrastructure co-exist within the same space and are therefore called spatial elements. Apart from sharing the same space, all spatial elements depend on and affect each other.

Because of this and in order to ensure that resources are used wisely and people's needs met in a coordinated manner, all spatial elements have to be developed and used in accordance with a well thought-out plan or spatial development framework.

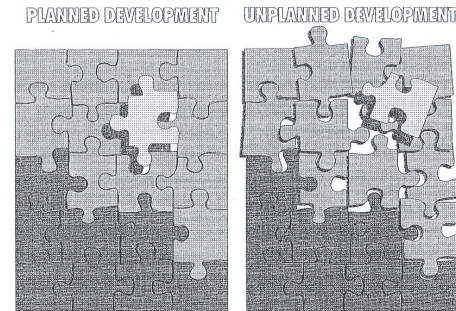


Figure ix: Extract from *City Planning – a rough guide* (CTMM2001ss)

The SMSP management team members were therefore exasperated when they heard of a symposium on “*The Restructuring and Rebirth of the City of Tshwane*” which was a joint effort between the CTMM, the Development Bank of Southern Africa and the University of Pretoria to be held on 22 and 23 November 2001.

The SMSP team became aware of the workshop through Bernard Hanekom who now acted in Johnny's place as head of the Inner City Team. According to the faxed invitation received by Bernard, the symposium has as its purpose to “*discuss issues of urban restructuring, urban growth and the apartheid City's impact on human development*”. It was therefore apparent that the focus of the symposium was *spatial* restructuring, which placed it clearly within the ambit of the core focus the SMSP function.

Yet the SMSP team was neither informed of nor consulted on the symposium. Which people are invited to key meetings is an indication of the ruling power relations. This is also clear from the Aalborg story (Flyvbjerg, 1998), where

the attendance of meetings by certain parties (e.g. the Chamber of Industry and Commerce) and the exclusion of others (e.g. the secretary of the Task Force for the Aalborg Project, and the Kayerød Neighbourhood Association) follow the contours along which opposing powers are aligned.

As far as the SMSP team could ascertain, the workshop was initiated by Noviwe Qegu, a former planning official of the Centurion Town Council and at that stage an advisor in the office of the Executive Mayor. Some enquiries followed, and eventually the SMSP management team was invited to attend the first day of the workshop. Only one of the team members, Kestell Serfontein, was invited to the second day, which would focus on a more exclusive programme. The workshop was very well presented and the speakers that had been invited to it were excellent. It was a relevant and inspiring event. Of course, this only served to increase the uncertainty the SMSP team felt regarding their place in the municipality. They felt that their expertise was being disregarded and their capacity to make a positive contribution ignored. This was yet another indication of the fragmentation of the new structure and the lack of communication and co-ordination that prevailed.

The SMSP management team was convinced that the Strategic Spatial Planning function should be in a position to advise top management and it was often mooted within the team that the function should rightfully have been situated in the office of the Executive Mayor⁵³. Yet, despite this conviction, the team did not feel close to the Top Management at all – rather, the members had a creeping suspicion that the Mayor and his Committee, as well as the Municipal Manager/CEO, were blissfully unaware of the existence of the SMSP function. The frustration of the SMSP team with the lack of recognition for their function mirrored the struggle for recognition by the city planning function as a whole.

Another factor that made the SMSP team very uncomfortable, was the fact that Mike Yates, now part of Nava Pillay's "*Strategic Unit*", had been given the

⁵³ This approach tallies with Wilson's (1994) findings that strategic planning should ultimately be an executive and not a staff function in order to be effective.

mandate to convene a “*Strategic Task Team (STT)*” to gather and collate strategic inputs in order to “*advise the Mayor and his team on strategic issues*” (Yates, 2001). The working group, which comprised representatives from City Planning (Kestell Serfontein, Johnny Coetzee, Jakša Barbir and Hendrik Kleynhans), Environmental Planning (Michelle Wheeler), Transportation Planning (Herman van Zyl) and Economic Development (Hein Wiese) was established by Nava Pillay to the outrage of the Strategic Spatial Planning team, who viewed the compilation of any form of strategic spatial plan for the city as their task and felt disempowered and undermined by the establishment of yet another “*strategic team*”. This was compounded by the fact that the SMSPP team had repeatedly attempted to show Nava the digital presentation on the function that was prepared by Jakša earlier. Verna eventually took Johnny and me along to a meeting she had with Nava on other issues, in order to give them the opportunity to deliver the presentation to him. However, Nava indicated that he did not have time to view the presentation, but assured Verna and Johnny that they were “*preaching to the converted*”, as he was already convinced of the importance of the strategic spatial planning function.

The management team of the Strategic Spatial Planning (SSP) team, as it was now called, discussed the matter and considered whether they should take a confrontational approach and demand that Nava acknowledge their role as the custodians of strategic spatial planning. However, it was decided to rather avoid confrontation and adopt a collaborative approach, just as the Core Team had done earlier in respect of the existing city planning managers. Therefore, the SSP religiously attended the meetings called by Mike Yates, participated actively in the discussions there and offered to do work for the group whenever the opportunity arose. As proven in the earlier stages of the restructuring process and as supported by Flyvbjerg’s (1998) account of the Aalborg case, the approach of avoiding confrontation was again greatly beneficial to the SSP team. Eventually, Kestell Serfontein and his colleagues in the Spatial Positioning sub-section compiled the document and presentation on behalf of Mike’s Strategic Task Team (STT) and in so doing

earned the respect, acknowledgement and even open admiration of the other members of the STT (later known as the City Strategic Working Group).

The reaction of Johnny and his team in this instance echoes that of the Technical Department in Flyvbjerg's (1998) case study of Aalborg, when they are presented with the "*counterplan*" to the Aalborg Project by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. At first, the Aalborg Department were "*tempted to make a devastating criticism*" of the counterplan (Flyvbjerg, 1998:73), but the alderman and section heads realise that getting the plan approved is about "*strategies and tactics*" rather than "*producing better arguments*" and eventually decide to "*maintain an air of being receptive and constructive*" (Flyvbjerg, 1998:74) towards the chamber.

As indicated earlier, active avoidance of conflict characterised both the Aalborg and the Tshwane case studies. At the close of the so-called "*life-and-death*" meeting between the Technical Department and the Aalborg Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the alderman for the Technical Department surprises his staff when he offers to assist the Chambers committee for formulating proposals to change the Aalborg Project. As in the Aalborg case, employing the "*stroking strategy*" proved to be a prudent decision by Johnny's SMSP team.

Despite their initial struggle for recognition, Johnny (interview Coetzee 2004) was convinced that the Metropolitan Spatial Planning function was making a difference. According to him, the Urban Edge⁵⁴ that had been proposed by the function, for instance, was being respected and enforced by Councillors when considering applications for development. Although this was encouraging, it was clear that more time would have to be allowed before it would have been possible to determine with any measure of certainty whether the efforts of the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning function would have a significant impact on the city form in the long run. Nonetheless, all indications are that

⁵⁴ In the Tshwane context, the urban edge was an imaginary boundary outside of which development was to be discouraged in order to increase density inside the edge and in so doing combat expensive urban sprawl. On a provincial level, an urban edge was also proposed for the Gauteng province to denote the area within which development should be concentrated.

towards the end of 2001, a year after the establishment of the new municipality, Johnny and his team had succeeded in establishing a new strategic spatial planning function for Tshwane.

Regional spatial planning at the coalface

While Johnny and his team at first dwelt mainly on the philosophical aspects of the SMSP function, the activities of the Regional Spatial Planning function (often referred to by Henry Bezuidenhout in meetings as the “*Land-use Planning Function*”) had a strong operational focus. The issue of regions had not been finalized. Henry and his team were very concerned by the absence of corporate guidance or finality with regard to the division of the municipal area into so-called “*management regions*”. It was felt that, without finality on the regions, a decision could not be taken on the interim structure of the Regional Spatial Planning function. This problem was compounded when it was rumoured (CTMM, 2001ww) that the engineering services would be centralised. The planners in Henry’s team did not view a centralised model of service delivery as a viable one, and feared that, if the engineering services adopted such a model, it might be enforced on the other municipal functions, including land use management. In an attempt to avoid such a scenario, the Regional Spatial Planning team decided to take matters into their own hands. Lettie Steyn, a planner who had worked under Tony Walker in the former City Council of Pretoria and was now in Henry’s Regional Spatial Planning team, proposed a model of eight management regions. The proposal was accepted, not only by the planners, but also, to the surprise of the planners, by the Transportation Engineers. This was another example of planning officials taking the initiative on important issues in the absence of leadership from the new Top Management⁵⁵. Henry put in place a team of planners for each region and each planning team was headed by an acting Deputy Manager. The new teams set to work immediately to deal with the backlog that had built up as a result of the delay in restoring the delegated authority of the town planners, which had initially been revoked with the establishment of the new

⁵⁵ Another example of this was the initiative taken by the Core Team to “get the ball rolling” with regard to the process for the compilation of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

municipal structure and which was again in question following termination of Nomgqibelo's role as manager of the City Planning function (interview Bezuidenhout, 2001).

The backlog was not the only factor that placed Henry's team at the coalface during the 2001/2002 financial year (i.e. July 2001 to June 2002). Another factor that placed enormous pressure on the land-use planners was the fact that, under instruction from the Executive Mayor, there was a clampdown on property developers who proceeded with developments without obtaining the necessary approval from the municipality. Again Nava Pillay requested his trusted advisor, Mike Yates⁵⁶ to drive the campaign. This process later gained new momentum after the collapse of a part of the roof structure of Brooklyn Mall in March 2002. The collapse eventually proved to have been due to the fact that a shopkeeper had removed a load-bearing wall and not to any fault of the Municipality. However, the incident brought to light that the centre had been operating without a valid occupation certificate. This put renewed pressure on the Municipality to enforce land-use and building controls. For the first time in history, the Municipality enforced regulations with regard to the approval of building plans and concomitant matters to such an extent the building was stopped on premises where the necessary approvals had not yet been obtained.

This time, it was not Johnny and his team that experienced discomfort because of Mike's involvement, but Henry and his. Developers (for instance those of the Cherry Lane Centre in Brooklyn) were losing tens of thousands of rands every day they could not proceed with building. They spent many hours in heated discussion with Henry and planners from his team, as well as with the acting Manager of the Building Control function, Alf Vorster, trying to resolve the matter and expedite approvals. Henry adopted a facilitative approach in the light of the substantial investment made in the city by the developers in question and was frustrated by Mike's rigid and heavy-handed approach (interview Bezuidenhout 2001).

⁵⁶ Mike described himself as Nava's "arms bearer" (interview, Yates, 2002).

Matters were often complicated by the fact that, in spite of the Mayor's instruction, some private developers approached Councillors and even members of the Mayoral Committee directly for approval for projects. Where a developer was sympathetically received by the Councillor or Member of the Mayoral Committee, the formal application procedures became no more than rubberstamping. These issues brought to the fore the difficulties of reconciling the municipality's regulatory duty and the challenges of a more facilitative approach in the new paradigm of developmental local government (CTMM, 2001aaa). There had still been no discourse on a corporate level regarding the role, place or approach of City Planning in the new municipal structure.

In October 2001, Henry took the initiative to address an issue that had been a bone of contention in the City Planning and Development Department of the former City Council of Pretoria for a number of years (CTMM, 2001yy). There had for a very long time been bitter frustration with the Planning Technicians because of the fact that many of them did essentially the same work as the Planners, but received neither equal recognition, nor equal remuneration. On the other hand, the planners were bitterly upset when, on one or two occasions in the past, a Technician was appointed in a vacant Planner's post, as they felt that this eroded the base of the Planning profession. Henry started a discussion forum and cited the National Qualifications Framework and the new legislation on Planning Professions to address the problem. The initiative, which eventually led to an adjustment of the remuneration of the Planning Technicians, while retaining a job title that was distinct from that of the City Planners, was received very well by his team and by all accounts improved his popularity as a manager. Within the scope of his authority, Henry had done what the new Top Management had failed so miserably to do. He had made it a priority to attend to so-called "*soft issues*" or "*people issues*" and in so doing greatly improved his team's sense of commitment and belonging.

Henry also facilitated that establishment of a new function within the City Planning Department, namely Land Use Legislation and Administration (LULA). This function, which was formalised in March 2002, contained the functions foreseen by the Core Team under the heading of Land Use

Information. The function was, for the interim, headed by Tony Walker, who was formerly the Head of Development Control, the land use section of the City Council of Pretoria and later placed in charge of City Planning support services by Mike Yates (see page 132). LULA depended heavily on a computerised management system for processing land use applications, the APS (Application Processing System). The creation of this function, on the level of Manager, seemed to lend additional weight to land use planning (now officially called Regional Spatial Planning) and to contribute towards diminishing the prominence of strategic spatial planning. This view was strongly confirmed by Johnny in an interview (interview Coetzee, 2004).

City Planning all at sea

While Johnny was establishing a new function and Henry was struggling to keep up with operational demands, the issue of the finalization of the organizational structure, and the staffing thereof, was a constant concern. Since her nomination as Coordinator: City Planning in July 2001, Verna very often had to compile and submit documentation regarding, among other things, the purpose, objectives and structure of the City Planning function. These inputs were used to develop a consolidated organizational strategy for the Housing Strategic Unit, or, as it was called by August 2001, the Directorate: Housing. Whenever such documentation had to be submitted, it was viewed as a chance to obtain the appropriate recognition for City Planning in terms of the level upon which it appeared in the organizational structure. In the draft consolidated organizational strategy of the Housing Directorate which appeared in August 2001, (CTMM 2001pp) the approved macro organizational structure (the structure developed by Yarona Creative Management Consultants) (*figure vi*) was given, as well as a proposed structure where City Planning appeared as a Department alongside Housing Services and Land and Environmental Planning (*figure vii*).

In the body of the draft consolidated organizational strategy of the Housing Directorate (CTMM 2001pp), it was stated that City Planning was one of the key responsibilities of the Directorate, which “*implies that there should be a*

*separate division within the Department Housing Services, to execute the **city planning and zoning** (another example of the confusion that arose regarding the names of functions and sections) *function**” (my emphasis and added parenthesis). The document stated that the Top Management of the Directorate felt that City Planning should be a separate Department under a General Manager “*due to the key responsibilities and size of the city planning responsibility within the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality*”.

It is clear that, while the overriding consideration for resistance by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Aalborg is *retail earnings* (Flyvbjerg, 1998:71), in the Tshwane case the main rationale for the actions by the planning officials is *the will to advancement within the bureaucratic structure*. In both cases, however, the advancement of personal interests dominate. In Aalborg, Flyvbjerg (1998:83) finds that “it is the preliminary, backstage power play, not the plan’s rubber-stamping by the City Council, which is the real politics of planning in Aalborg”. In Tshwane, this “Realpolitik” consists of the jostling of planners to secure both their own positions and that of their function in the new organizational structure. Flyvbjerg (1998:36) views the will to survival as the “most fundamental aspect of a will to power”. In the Tshwane bureaucracy, to survive meant to scramble for a position as high as possible in the organizational hierarchy. The managerialist nature of the municipality meant that success could be defined, for the most part, in structural terms.

However, notwithstanding the strong, rational arguments put forward by the planners, it would be almost another year before City Planning was recognized as a function on the level of General Manager in the organizational structure. Not only were the planners powerless in changing the status of their function (however strongly they believed that it should be done), but they were also powerless in eliciting any response from Top Management on their submission. It seemed that the fate of the City Planning function, and by association that of the staff members working in the function, was simply ignored by Top Management.

It was therefore clear to all that City Planning, which was still not officially recognised as a function at the level of General Manager, would not enjoy the status in the new structure that it had in the past. At the first management meeting of the Department of Housing, Land Use and Environmental Planning (HOLEP), which was the new name given to the Housing Directorate, Verna's position as acting General Manager for the City Planning function was confirmed "*while the status of the function was being formalised*" (CTMM, 2001uu).

Verna chaired the first of her weekly Co-ordinator's Meetings on 5 October 2001 (CTMM, 2001ww). At this stage one of her concerns was that the Top Management had requested that reports be submitted by all Divisions on the period from July 2000 to the end of September 2001 for a management report to the Mayoral Committee, as well as for the envisaged Tshwane Annual Report. However, by the time the Co-ordinators again met on 19 October 2001, the deadline had lapsed and none of them had submitted the requested information. This could probably be ascribed to the fact that there were such stark differences between the environment in which the Planning functions operated before December 2000 and that within which the officials found themselves thereafter. Furthermore, it was not the same management team that led the function for the whole report period. The Co-ordinator for Support Services, Valerie Steyn, was asked to enquire whether the information requested for the management report to the Mayoral Committee, as well as for the envisaged Tshwane Annual Report, was "*still necessary*" (CTMM, 19 October 2001), no doubt in the silent hope that it would no longer have been necessary to submit the requested reports. Despite these difficulties, the request for information from the Top Management, which echoed the earlier request for information regarding City Planning projects, confirmed the slow shift towards more involvement and tighter management by the leadership of the municipality.

The lasting nature of allegiances and established power relations is clear in the Aalborg "troika" of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the local paper and the police (Flyvbjerg, 1998:210). In the Tswane story, the stable

and unequal power relation between the political top management and the officials is also an example of such an established power relation. Flyvbjerg (1998:141) states that stable power relations are constituted of a symbiotic interplay between rationality and power. This is a form of power relation that is very familiar within the municipality, with the officials preparing reports (rationality) and the councillors debating these reports and passing resolutions on them (power). It is clear, therefore, that rationality really forms the basis of the role of the officials within municipal governance. This explains the utter confusion and helplessness experienced by the Tshwane officials when they felt that the new top management did not recognize, much less value, their technical expertise or rationality. The two planning sections (land use planning and strategic planning) also fall into the old folds despite efforts by the Core Team to “shake things up”.

An old division prevails

The subordinate divisions of City Planning were listed in the draft consolidated organizational strategy of the Housing Directorate (CTMM 2001pp) as Development Information; Spatial Planning and Land Use Management; Building Control Management; Streetscape Management (essentially the old Urban Design function), and Finance and Administrative Support (see *figure x*). “*Spatial Planning and Land Use Management*” was proposed as a single function under one manager. The Core Team’s attempts to integrate Spatial Planning and Land Use Management based on the argument that the functions were fundamentally both spatial planning, but focused on different levels (hence the proposed names *Metropolitan* Spatial Planning and *Regional* Spatial Planning for the respective functions) had clearly been taken into account in the compilation of the proposed structure.

The proposed interim structure for City Planning was submitted to the Chief Operating Officer, tasked with the finalisation of the organisational structure, in November 2001. In May of the following year, the interim structure was supplemented by so-called ‘pencil placements’ which were to give an indication of who would be accommodated where.

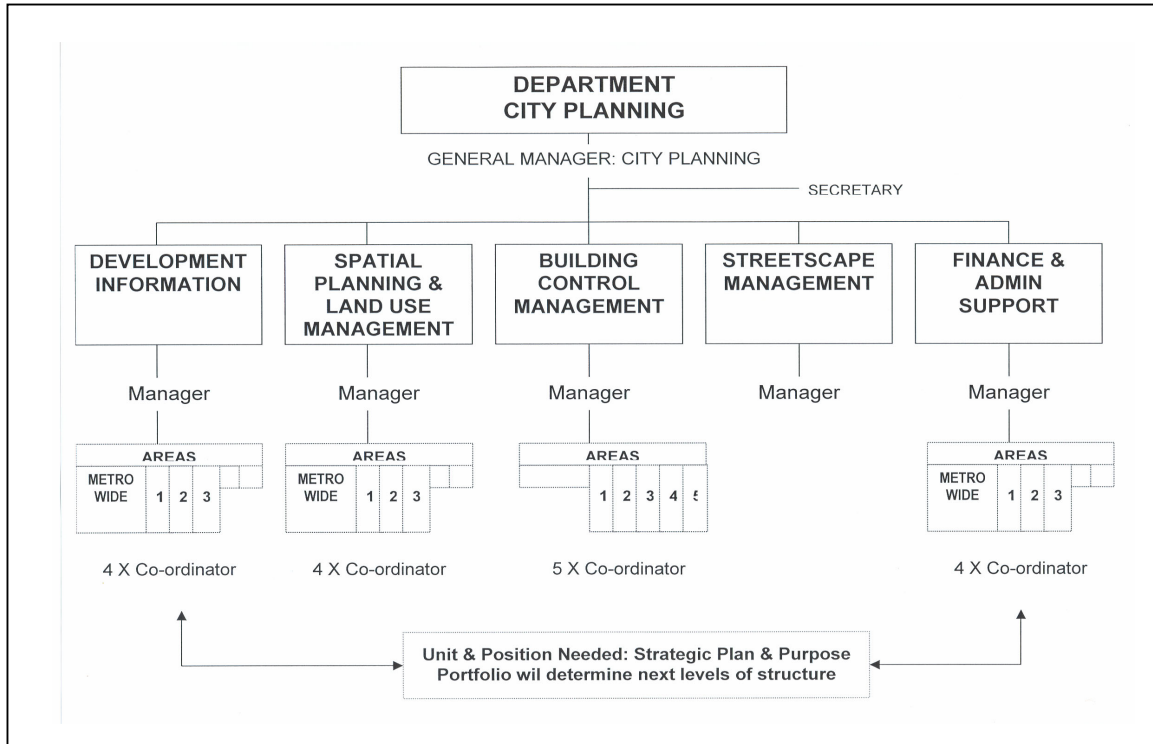


Figure x: Proposed structure for the City Planning Department, August 2001

Early in October 2001, a workshop was held under guidance of Nava Pillay with the management of all the functions of the Housing Strategic Unit to discuss the vision of each function and the contents of each of its sub-functions. Verna asked me to facilitate the discussion on the City Planning function. However, the managers did not participate in the discussion with much enthusiasm. This was possibly owing to the fact that the proposed structure of the function (see figure vii) did not meet with much resistance and was perceived by most as a continuation of the *status quo*. The structure was part of a Purpose Portfolio for City Planning prepared by Verna (CTMM, 2001tt).

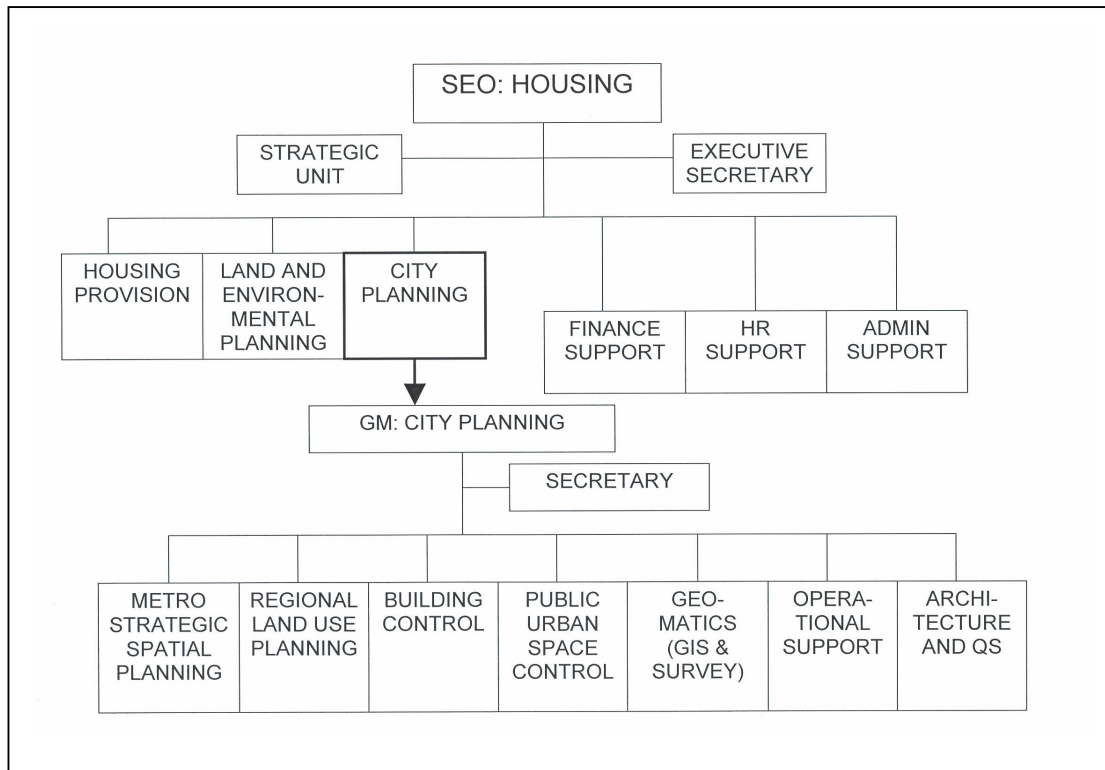


Figure xi: Proposed interim structure for the City Planning function, October 2001

It was the intention, all through the deliberations in the Core Team, to integrate the old “*Forward Planning*” and “*Land Use Control*” functions, referring rather to “*Strategic Spatial Planning*” and “*Regional Spatial Planning*”⁵⁷. As mentioned earlier, it would seem that, up to August 2001, this dream was still pursued, as the proposed structure for the City Planning Department indicated a single manager for Spatial Planning and Land Use Management (*figure x*). In the organogram of the proposed structure for City Planning that appeared in the Purpose Portfolio discussed at the workshop in October 2001 (*figure xi*), however, the structure had developed to indicate two functions on the level of manager called “*Metropolitan Strategic Spatial Planning*” and “*Regional Land Use Planning*” respectively.

⁵⁷ In March 2001, Leon du Bruto, Acting Chief Town Planner of the Centurion Administrative Unit sent an email to Belinda complimenting her Work Plan, to which he attached a document titled: “The Development of a Planning Paradigm for Land Use Management” (my translation). In this document he, too, argued for bringing the two primary city planning functions closer together when he said: “Yet there is a close relationship and it should at least be systemically linked so that a constant process of interlinking between the two functions would take place” (my translation).

At first glance, this might seem to be even closer to the original Core Team proposal than the purpose structure proposed in August 2001 (*figure x*). However, the proposal by the Core Team was for two functions distinguished solely on the basis of the geographical scope of their function, namely **Metropolitan Spatial Planning** and **Regional Spatial Planning**. The fact that the regional function was qualified as “*Regional Land Use Planning*” enforced the old distinction between the two functions that the Core Team attempted to do away with. Yet, in the text of the Purpose Portfolio, Verna strongly argued that the proposal was indeed aimed at integration. She stated that “*spatial planning and land use management are two sides of the same coin*” and added that “*the proposed structure (figure xi) combines these functions at all levels of planning.*” She furthermore argued that the distinction between the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning function and the Regional Planning function was based on a hierarchy of plans. This meant that the SMSP function would deal with the inputs into the IDP, specifically the Spatial Development Framework, and generic policies, while the Regional Planning function would focus on a “*more detailed level of planning*”, which included local spatial development frameworks, as well as dealing with land use applications.

Although communication between the two planning components had certainly improved in the new structure (CTMM, 2002k and CTMM, 2002q), to a significant extent the old distinction between two planning teams working, for the most part, in isolation, remained. Probably as a result of the fact that this presented a minimal disruption of the status quo (in the Pretoria Administrative unit, at least) and allowed for the day-to-day operational work with regard to processing land-use applications to proceed, the planners accepted this proposal accepted without much remonstrations⁵⁸. In an interview (Nel, 2002), Verna explicitly stated that her intention with the transformation of the function was “*not to rock the boat*” in order to allow for service delivery to continue.

⁵⁸ Of course, the new organogram (*figure xi*) made provision for two posts of Manager, while the previous proposal (*figure x*) made provision for only one. In terms of the new proposal, there were therefore more opportunities for aspiring managers. This could also have contributed to the proposal being so readily accepted by the planners.

Verna's appearance at the helm of the planning function marked a turning point in the process, much as did the abandonment of the integrated bus stop by Aalborg's Technical Department (Flyvbjerg, 1998:179). Just as the initial rationality behind the Aalborg project was turned around at this point (from reducing automobile traffic to an avoidance of such a reduction), the initial "pioneering spirit" of the Core Team captured in Belinda's plea for "new solutions for old problems" is reversed by Verna's attitude "not to rock the boat".

Despite the dawn of an entirely new approach and structure for local government in Tshwane, it would therefore appear that the old power relation between the strategic planning and land use planning functions has reproduced itself once again. As is the case with the relation between the Aalborg Technical Department and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and with all power relations, for that matter, this relation, too, proves to be "*not static, but ...constantly ... reproduced*" (Flyvbjerg, 1998:85).

6.6 From leaderless chaos to a semblance of normality

At the end of 2001, the MEC for Development Planning and Local Government, Trevor Fowler, requested the Municipality to prepare a report on the progress with the establishment of the new municipality in a prescribed format⁵⁹ that was to be submitted to Mr Fowler during a two-day Transformation Conference held on 10 and 11 December 2001 (CTMM, 2001ggg). Wonder Nkosi requested my assistance⁶⁰ with the compilation of the report, which he had been instructed to manage. He presented me with a variety of inputs that had to be consolidated into the format prescribed by the MEC. When it came to change management, however, no change management plan existed. Wonder admitted to me that this was a problem and undertook to "*come up with something*". What was eventually captured in

⁵⁹ The report consisted of four parts. The first part addressed cross-border issues, the second organizational structure, placement of staff and change management, the third part the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the fourth and final part the Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Program (CMIP).

⁶⁰ Wonder was referred to Desirée by Bernard Hanekom, her former colleague from the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, who now worked closely with Wonder.

the document was a plan for formulating a change management strategy. It was a real blow to my confidence to realise that, almost a full year since the establishment of the new unicity municipality, no change management strategy had been drawn up. Up to that stage I simply believed that the Top Management was keeping the change management plan to themselves as part of a larger strategic or political agenda. I could never have imagined that anyone would attempt a transformation process of that magnitude without a well thought out change management plan.

Yet it would seem that, in practice, such “oversights” occur more often than one would think. In the Aalborg case, for example, the “*Technical Department had originally not even considered including a phase where the project was to meet the public. No public hearings and no citizen participation was planned at first*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:54). Of this, the Aalborg city engineer remarks that “*For me ... it is astounding to hear that ... we simply did not consider it obvious that there was to be citizen participation*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:55).

A possible cause of the observed lack of strategic direction at the corporate level was the uncertainty within the Top Management regarding roles and responsibilities. At a meeting of Nava Pillay’s so-called “*Strategic Unit*” (CTMM, 2002), consisting of the (acting) General Managers, and his two advisors, Mike Yates and Si Bogopa, held on 23 April 2002, he gave feedback on a “*disastrous*” workshop on the organizational structure held on 10 and 11 April 2002. Nava told the meeting that the Councillors who attended the workshop were not satisfied with the format in which information on the proposed organizational structure was presented and refused to participate. The Councillors furthermore wanted to know what informed the proposed organizational structure, what the core business of the Council was, and whether a strategy existed for Tshwane. This incident clearly indicated a muddling of roles and a lack of political leadership.

The Councillors, who could reasonably be expected to provide leadership and strategic guidance, were, almost a year and a half after the new local government came into being, asking the officials what the core business and strategy of the municipality was. At that stage, the pressure on the

municipality to come up with a clear transformation strategy was compounded by the fact that the National Treasury had made available R10 million as seed capital towards an eventual restructuring grant of R500 million, which the CTMM could obtain if it complied with all the requirements set for utilizing the R10 million. The requirements included that a city strategy be compiled, which addressed issues such as organizational design, revenue collection, economic growth and service delivery (CTMM 2002I).

Apart from grave concerns about the strategic direction (or lack thereof) of the municipality on a corporate level, persistent staff-related problems, of which the most prominent was the delay in finalising the organizational structures and making permanent appointments in the structure, were hampering performance and were contributing to the low morale of the officials. Towards the end of 2001, the so-called “*poaching*” of staff, which had been a problem from the start of the restructuring process, continued unabated despite instructions issued by the Municipal Manager in May of that year that all such practices should be stopped. The Acting Managers were actively seeking staff to assist in building their functions, and Managers from other Departments, such as Economic Development, were also approaching some of the planners to take up interim positions in those Departments. It was only after a letter strictly prohibiting any such practices was issued by the SEO: Corporate Services, Adv Ben Shai (CTMM, 2001aaa) that the poaching came to a halt.

White negativity

In the midst of the confusion about the corporate structure and the uncertainty experienced by officials regarding their future at the municipality, widespread negativity and absenteeism was the order of the day. In a memorandum addressed to all staff members on 28 November 2001, the Strategic Executive: Corporate Services, Adv Ben Shai, wrote the following: “*It has been brought to our attention that since the disestablishment of the various Municipalities within the City of Tshwane, office hours are being **totally** disregarded by **most** officials...*” (my emphasis). In order to encourage adherence to the official working hours, Verna requested all City Planning Co-

coordinators to keep an attendance register, as well as a register for signing in and out when attending meetings out of the office. A format for both registers was distributed to the Co-coordinators on 12 October 2001 (CTMM, 2001xx).

During the entire first year of the restructuring process, the Top Management only communicated directly with the officials twice: Once when Wonder Nkosi addressed them, and much later when Dr T addressed them in the Library Hall. This contributed significantly to feelings of uncertainty and alienation with particularly the white officials, who realised that they were no longer in a position of power. On the few occasions that the top structure did communicate with the officials, it only served to fuel this uncertainty. In the September 2001 edition of the staff newsletter (CTMM, 2001qq), it was reported that the CTMM has submitted “*migration principles*” to the trade unions, which provided for relocation of officials to other areas within the municipal border. Dr Thoahlane Thoahlane (Dr T) was quoted as having said that “*If white officials are transferred to previously disadvantaged areas, it will be because their skills are needed there.*” Despite this assurance, most white officials viewed the prospect of being transferred to a formerly disadvantaged area with fear. Furthermore, it was reported that the placement of staff in the new organizational structure “*may result in officials from previously disadvantaged groups being promoted*”. This was echoed in the following month’s edition of the newsletter (CTMM, 2001rr), in which Dr T stated that “*one of the main aims of the migration process will be to ensure that previously disadvantaged groups will be empowered and placed in leadership positions*”. This contributed to feelings among the white officials, most of whom had conservative political views. Although the negative reaction from the side of the white officials was unfounded in the light of the broader political context of the country, it could be argued that the new Top Management should have devised a strategy to address problematic perceptions, which could have unlocked positive energy to the benefit of the restructuring process and the municipal operations in general.

Frustrated gatekeepers

By November 2001 there was still much uncertainty regarding the migration of staff to the new structure, and, although certain principles had been agreed on, the matter was still being discussed with the unions (CTMM, 2001zz). The fact that, almost a year after the elections on 5 December 2000, there was still no permanent structure and no certainty with regard to the placement of staff was definitely a demoralizing factor. The delay in finalizing the new structure and the staffing thereof was cited by most of the interviewees as the single largest frustration of the restructuring process. Johnny (interview Coetzee 2004) stated that it was very difficult for the Acting Managers to perform optimally or initiate new projects while they were only gate keeping. This is confirmed in the minutes of the Coordinators/Managers Meeting of 2 November 2001, where it was noted that: *“The issue regarding placement and migration has a negative effect on service delivery”*. A quote from the draft minutes of the Coordinators/Managers Meeting of 16 November 2001 (CTMM, 2001aaa) captures the mood of the planners and their suspicions towards the Top Management somewhat less diplomatically (unedited): *“Problems regarding the unhappiness of people city wide as a result of uncertainty. Frustrating strategy by the top brass to let you pack up and leave the workforce”*. In the same document, the following is also noted from the discussion (unedited): *“Communication internally is very important. Corporate decisions should be communicated to the staff via the managers. Communication from corporate level is very bad, virtually non-existent. We are fortunate that we have Nava as SEO [(Strategic Executive Officer)] who at least communicates information to his (sic) managerial staff”* (my parenthesis added).

A glimmer of light around Christmas

Given the lack of communication up to that point, it came as a surprise when officials received a short letter addressed to all CTMM employees dated 18 December 2001 (CTMM, 2001hhh) in which Dr T thanked the employees who helped make 2001 a successful year and wished them a joyous time with their

loved ones over the festive season. He ended the letter by saying “*I trust that when you return to your workplace in 2002, I may again rely on your efforts and expertise to render effective and affordable services to residents in the City of Tshwane*”.

When another very personal “*stroking*” letter (CTMM, 2002, see also Flyvbjerg, 1998 for a definition of “*stroking*”) was sent to the General Managers (addressed to each in person) by the Executive Mayor early in January 2002, it seemed that the top management had realised something of the value of personal communication and staff motivation. The letter had four aspects, namely welcoming staff back from a “*well deserved*” rest, thanking them “*sincerely*” for the work they have done the previous year, reminding them that they would have to “*hit the ground running*” in 2002 and informing them that he (the Mayor) expected “*nothing less than excellence*” from them. In the letter, the Mayor states that “*It is common cause that 2001 was a learning curve for everybody. We all worked together for the first time in a new political dispensation. I personally appreciate your contribution in assisting the political leadership to fulfill its mission. I thank you also for your patience and understanding while we are setting up new systems in our organization.*” The letter contained inspiring quotes and a poem and ended with the phrase “*God bless and take good care*”. The difference in tone between this letter and the infamous “*Circular 1 of 2001*” issued by Dr T six months ago (see page 116), could not have been greater. One can only deduce that, at that stage, the (political) top management realised that they had to win the favour of the officials if they were to succeed at achieving their objectives, and, one might add, if they were to retain their positions of power.

Yet problems persist

The rhetoric did not do much to allay the fears of the officials though, and the pervasive atmosphere was one of confusion and distrust. Most of the planners interviewed⁶¹ expressed a lack of confidence in the top management as well as the political leadership. They complained that the Municipal Manager as

⁶¹ Names withheld for ethical reasons

well as the Mayor and Councillors were inaccessible and that they had had very limited contact with them. There were also complaints that the top management did not function as a team. As stated earlier, perceptions of a division in the ranks of the Top Management originated very soon after the new municipality came into being. Officials generally perceived the political and top management as both ignorant on issues of municipal management and arrogant, and a wide variety of operational problems were being experienced on the ground. Most disconcerting, however, was the fact that even more than a year after the new structure officially came into existence, many of the operational problems had still not been addressed. Such problems included problems with office space, concerns regarding asset control (CTMM, 2001jj) and staff shortages (CTMM 2002l). During a meeting of the Strategic Unit of the Department of Housing, Land and Environmental Planning (HOLEP) held on 23 April 2002 (CTMM 2002l), it was reported that the Mayoral Committee had confirmed that only 40% of *critical* vacancies throughout the municipality would be filled in the 2002/2003 financial year and that the rest would be frozen until further notice.

Almost from the start of the transformation process, numerous circulars were prepared to propose the format and procedure for submitting reports (CTMM 2000, CTMM 2001, CTMM 2001e, CTMM, 2001ii; Thoahlane, 2001). In November 2001 (CTMM, 2001zz), yet another format for reports and an amended process to be followed when submitting reports was distributed to all the City Planning Co-ordinators. In the minutes of the Co-ordinator's Meeting where this took place (2 November 2001), it was noted, that "*this process will probably change in future*". This was indeed the case. On 4 April 2002, the City Planning Co-ordinators received another letter from Nava Pillay yet again prescribing a new report flow process.

The constant changes to the process and format for submitting reports to the Mayoral Committee caused confusion and officials were generally very frustrated by the length of time it took for their reports to be considered by the Mayoral Committee, resulting in severe pressure in terms of implementing projects before the end of the financial year, among other things. A report on

uniform tariffs for building plans, which was prepared by Marius le Roux, from the NPMSS (Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure) Building Office in June 2001 only served before Council in May 2002.

A rumour that there had been a corporate decision to rescind all standalone computers and supply staff with terminals functioning from a central server elicited a severe reaction from the planners and caused the matter of computers to become a standing point on the agenda of the City Planning Co-ordinators/Managers meeting from January 2002. According to the decision, all computer files would apparently in future be stored in a central location. It was also said that staff members would no longer have printers in their offices for their exclusive use, but that hardware such as printers would be centrally positioned and shared by all staff members in a section (CTMM 2002a,b,c,d). The planners felt threatened by the possibility of such an arrangement. They raised a number of arguments against the proposal, namely that the new computers would be sub-standard, that the network would not be reliable, that Eskom (the national electricity provider) had adopted a similar system but later reverted to individual computers again. The arguments thus raised seemed rational enough and also seemed to have as their basis concerns regarding productivity and efficiency. However, in the light of the history of the restructuring process and the antipathy between the (predominantly white) officials and the Top Management, it is not improbable that the real reasons for the resistance voiced by the planners had more to do with the fear of, for example, losing their independence and fear that their activities could be more closely scrutinised and their privacy invaded. Stated differently, the issue had at its core the concern of the planners that what little power or autonomy they had was being further eroded by the proposal from the Top Management.

Conspiracy theory

On Wednesday, 16 January 2002, I had a chance meeting with Joshua Ngonyama, Chairperson of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership. He made the statement that there was a deliberate political agenda to lower the status of

the city planning function and to bring the planners “*back down to earth*” (“*grond toe te bring*” in Joshua’s original Afrikaans). Joshua was an active member of the ANC and was known to have had regular meetings with the Executive Mayor, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa. He was regarded by the officials on the Inner City Project Team as someone with “*inside information*”. However, when I put Joshua’s theory to Nava Pillay a short while later, he strongly denied that there was any truth to it.

The status of the City Planning function was once again raised as a point of concern at the meeting of the City Planning Coordinators Meeting held on 2 May 2002 – the only such meeting Nava Pillay ever attended. Here, too, Nava gave the Planners the assurance that there was no agenda behind the fact that City Planning had not formally been confirmed as a function on the level of General Manager. However, somewhat contradictory, he added that “*he has fought and is still fighting to have City Planning placed on a General Manager level*” (CTMM, 2002n). However, if it was true that no agenda existed on a higher level to suppress the City Planning function, the question remains what the forces were that Nava had to “*fight*” to obtain recognition for the function at an appropriate level.

The matter of the status of the City Planning Function was not finalized in the study period. This was the case despite months of enquiries, both written and verbal, to Nava Pillay, who continued to indicate that he was attending to the matter and gave assurances on more than one occasion that he would take it up with the Municipal Manager.

Pencil placements and prejudice

During January 2002 it became clear that the long awaited “*pencil placements*” of staff on the interim organizational structure would be no more than a reflection of the status quo that had been in place for more than six months. The pencil placements furthermore only dealt with the levels of General Manager and Manager (CTMM, 2002j).

When discussing the issue of affirmative action in respect of the pencil placements at the Co-managers/Managers Meeting of 7 February 2002 Verna remarked that it was not fair to place someone in a position for which they did not have the necessary experience, which would, as it were, set them up for failure. She added that it was *“also unfair to the community to place inexperienced personnel in top positions”*. She referred to a bursary scheme for affirmative candidates initiated by the Engineers and proposed that City Planning consider doing the same. About a month later, on 14 March 2002, the Acting Managers were informed that Nava had requested that special consideration be given to the placement of affirmative candidates on the levels of Deputy Manager and Assistant Manager. Again, the statement was recorded that: *“Both Mr Nava Pillay and Dr Verna Nel cannot perform if competent people are not appointed”*. Although these statements may be taken to be innocent statements of fact, they would seem to indicate a certain racial bias on the side of the City Planning Managers, particularly as there seemed to have been an underlying assumption that *“there are no competent affirmative staff members”*.

A bitter complaint and a frank assessment

The fact that the pencil placements did not represent any real progress towards a final post structure for the Municipality was not the only frustration experienced by the planners at the beginning of 2002. On 28 February 2002 Verna wrote to Nava complaining bitterly about the proposed *“creation of luxury offices”* in the eastern wing of Munitoria for Mayoral Committee members. She argued that finding alternative accommodation for the City Planning personnel affected by the proposal (between 15 and 25 people) within their sections would be very difficult and that the new offices would mean that whole sections of the City Planning Division would have to be relocated. She also complained about the closure of the public parking space at Munitoria to create parking space for the Mayoral Committee Members. It was expected that this would create severe problems for members of the public who came to Munitoria wishing to make use of services offered by the City Planning Division (CTMM, 2002f) This was another example of the lack of

communication by Top Management and the lack of consultation on issues that directly affected the officials. Also, it provided a good example of the use of rationality by Verna in the face of the power exerted by the Mayoral Committee. As time would tell, in this case, also, rationality had to yield to power – the Mayoral Committee had its way and Verna's complaints fell on deaf ears.

Faced by demands from the new Tshwane top management to vacate their offices, or give up their parking spaces, or by the complete lack of consultation in deciding on a new organizational structure, planners often remarked in exasperation that *"they can't just do that!"*. This is echoed in the words of a member of the Task Force for the Aalborg Project when the alderman decides, without consultation, to reopen Algade: *"This is disgusting, he can't do that"*. Of course, as it turns out, the alderman can (i.e. has the power to), and does – as did the Tshwane top management.

A refreshing and frank assessment of the state of the Tshwane transformation process, from a corporate perspective, came from Wonder Nkosi, the Chief Operating Officer (COO), when he held the first of a series of *"Operations Meetings"* with all the Strategic Executive Officers (SEOs) on 7 March 2002. Wonder was known as an excellent orator and, on this occasion too, he delivered a gripping speech regarding his observations of the Municipality from December 2000 to February 2002. He argued that the municipality was neither at the exciting beginning or the dramatic end of the transformation process, but in the middle, where perseverance and persistence were called for. He added that the managers had forgotten the basics of management and were seeking for *"silver bullets"*. The officials felt that their employers were losing trust and confidence in their capabilities and the general citizenry would soon follow suit. The lack of communication was aptly captured when he said that: *"There is a lack of a coherent message of what need (sic) to be done, by whom and when."* He furthermore stated that *"no vision will succeed unless it is evoked through the participation of those you lead"*. He ended his address with eight principles that he felt should be embraced. These included *"Communicate the vision"* and *"Empower others to act"* (CTMM, 2002h). It

was this kind of charismatic openness that made Wonder popular with the officials, yet it would seem that his commitment to communication and participative management was not shared by the rest of the Tshwane top structure.

Although there was still no attempt at direct communication with the officials on the ground by the Municipal Manager/CEO, Nava Pillay wrote in a letter to all officials in his Department on 11 March 2002, that the Municipal Manager had indicated that he would meet with the SEO's on a bi-weekly basis to discuss strategic issues. He added that "*I believe that this initiative will greatly improve communication between the different levels of management*".

In his letter, Nava wrote that he was well aware that the protracted nature of the restructuring was taking its toll on staff morale. He gave assurances that, despite the slow progress, the Department was moving in the right direction. He closed by thanking officials for their diligence "*despite the strain of the restructuring process*". He said he was proud to encounter officials who put Tshwane first and that their efforts were greatly appreciated. These words were reminiscent of the stroking that was employed by the Core Team little under a year before. It cannot be said with certainty whether these utterances were sincere, or whether Nava, too, was using the strategy to ensure that officials in his Department kept performing despite difficult circumstances.

On the whole, it did not seem that Nava had a strong commitment to regular communication with the staff of his Department. He initially made some effort towards establishing a communication forum within the Department when he instituted the monthly HOLEP (Housing, Land and Environmental Planning) meeting with all the General Managers and Managers in the Department. At these meetings issues such as the budget, staff placement and shortages, the process for submitting reports to the Mayoral Committee, as well as the name of the Department, were discussed. The HOLEP meetings were the only chance for many of the managers to see Nava in person and to feel some sense of belonging to the larger Department, which was scattered over a number of different buildings. Regrettably, however, from the beginning of

2002, the HOLEP meetings were frequently postponed or cancelled and eventually stopped taking place altogether.

In the absence of other fora on which to voice their frustrations to Nava, the City Planning Coordinators invited him to their meeting held on 2 May 2002, “*so that he can get an idea of the frustrations experienced*” (CTMM, 2002n). The Co-ordinators made full use of the opportunity and bombarded him with a number of issues. This included the top-down management style that characterized the manner in which Top Management operated. It was said that decisions were “*forced on employees*” and that some things were implemented without even informing employees beforehand.

An impressive performance

Yet despite the frustrations and the continued uncertainty regarding the status of the City Planning function and the posts of the officials within the function, as well as the fact that the distrust and lack of communication between the Top Management/Political Level and the officials remained, some measure of stability did indeed emerge in the two core functions of City Planning, which were now officially called Regional Spatial Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning.

In the quarterly management reports submitted to Council for the last part of the study period, from 1 January 2002 to 30 June 2002, Regional Spatial Planning (managed by Henry Bezuidenhout) appeared before Strategic Spatial Planning (managed by Johnny Coetzee) and had a very long and impressive list of functions and achievements. Under the heading of Spatial Planning, Local Policies and Project Management, no fewer than 38 “*policy issues*” that were being worked on, were listed. These included matters such as the formulation of policies for gated communities, spaza shops, guesthouses etc.

Apart from policy formulation, officials from the Regional Spatial Planning function also worked on three large-scale capital projects and managed the

budget for them, namely the Olievenhoutbosch Urban Renewal Project in Centurion, the Solomon Mahlangu Square in Mamelodi and the Hatfield Streetscape Project.

The atmosphere that existed in Henry's Regional Spatial Planning function during this time was one of serious activity. A fast pace was maintained and some of the planners in his team complained of being overworked (pers comm Swanepoel 2002; pers comm Van der Vyver 2002). The statistics bear testimony to the team's productivity: From January to June 2002, no less than 1608 land use applications⁶² had been finalized by the function.

In contrast to this, the volume of work done in this period by Johnny's Strategic Spatial Planning team was apparently significantly smaller. This was a conscious decision by Johnny, who felt (pers comm Coetzee, 2002) that a lower workload would to a certain extent compensate for the uncertainties experienced by the officials. The two main sources of uncertainty remained the fact that posts in the Division had not been filled on a permanent basis and that the position of City Planning in the larger organizational structure had not yet been sorted out. Furthermore, the lack of contact between the planners and Top Management persisted. Johnny agreed with his team that, although he would expect of them to produce the necessary outcomes, he would not closely manage working hours and encouraged pleasant staff activities such as "*working*" lunches.

Despite the more relaxed management approach, the Strategic Spatial Planning function produced a number of significant outputs during the first half of 2002. The function conducted a spatial analysis of the composition and characteristics of Tshwane, the results of which were included in the draft Integrated Development Plan, which was being compiled by the former convenor for City Planning and Core Team member, Belinda van der Merwe in the office of the Chief Operating Officer, Wonder Nkosi.

⁶² These included consent uses, consolidation, subdivision, removal of restrictive conditions, rezoning, division of land, administrator's consent, comments on other Local Authority applications, township establishment, applications in respect of Council property, site development plans, building line relaxations and general queries.

During the first quarter of 2002, a small group under the leadership of Jakša Barbir furthermore compiled an Integrated Spatial Development Framework (ISDF). The Plan contained spatial development key issues and trends emerging from the spatial analysis, the spatial concept and strategic guidelines for spatial restructuring and spatial integration of Tshwane and a number of basic guidelines for land use management, local spatial development planning and streetscape management.

A particular breakthrough achieved by Strategic Spatial Planning during the same period was that of compiling a report and presentation on Strategic Spatial Directions for the City of Tshwane in close collaboration with Mike Yates' City Strategic Working Group, previously referred to as the Strategic Task Team (STT) (see page 147).

Although the Strategic Spatial Planning team did not manage any capital projects, it was involved in an advisory or coordinating capacity in the Freedom Park, Eerste Fabrieken, Gautrain, Dinokeng, Ring Rail and Winterveldt Reconstruction and Development Projects.

From the progress reports of the two components of City Planning, it is clear that, as far as service rendering and operational activities within the function was concerned, matters had stabilised to a large extent from the beginning of 2002. While issues regarding the transformation of the function predominated until the end of 2001, there was now a stronger focus on operational efficiency.

Apart from two issues, namely the permanent filling of posts and clarity on the position of the City Planning function in the organizational structure, it would seem that City Planning had weathered the storm and was entering calmer waters once again.

Towards the end of May 2002, a team building workshop and social function, facilitated by Dr Louise Niemeyer, an acquaintance of Verna Nel, was held by the City Planning Co-ordinators. The workshop was a huge success and was

felt to have contributed significantly to a positive team spirit among the interim management team (CTMM 2002p).

6.7 Conclusion

It is true that, in a certain sense, the story of the transformation of Tshwane's City Planning Function has many endings or, in a different sense, that it will never end. For purposes of this study, however, it ends with an integrated City Planning function, comprising staff from the city planning functions of the former Centurion Town Council, Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure, Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council and City Council of Pretoria, having been established. The systems, policies, procedures and information of the various former structures had been integrated to some extent. The functions had been carefully structured into sub-sections that were captured on the "*Interim Organizational Structure*" approved by the Mayoral Committee in May 2002 and are being led by Acting Managers who have been indicated in the "*pencil placements*" that appeared on the interim structure. Logistical problems related to stationery, secretarial and administrative support, office accommodation and parking had to a large extent been addressed and the staff shortage in the Regional Spatial Planning function had been alleviated to a certain degree through the appointment of four temporary staff members. Some measure of cohesion had developed between the acting management team of the function.

However, despite the measure of stabilisation that had been achieved, certain important issues remained unresolved. The most significant of these was probably the lack of clarity with regard to the status of the City Planning Function in the organizational structure. At the end of the study period, City Planning still carried the proviso "*status to be confirmed*" on the interim organizational structure and, although General Managers had been appointed for all the other Divisions within the Department of Housing, Land and Environmental Planning (HOLEP), Verna Nel was still only appointed in an acting capacity to manage the City Planning functions. The fact that the officials had not yet been permanently appointed more than a year and a half

after the new municipality had come into being remained a constant source of frustration.

Although the initial fears of retrenchments had been allayed, the fact that the managers were only working in an acting capacity and were not receiving any financial recognition for the additional responsibility they were carrying, had an effect not only on the morale of those staff members, but also on the authority with which they could take decisions and their willingness to initiate long term projects. Their frustration was exacerbated by the fact that they had expected the appointments to have already been made a year before in July 2001. Seen in the light of the fact that an agreement had been reached between the CTMM Top Management and IMATU, the most prominent labour union, that no external appointments would be made below the level of General Manager, no legitimate explanation could be found for the fact that appointments had not been made sooner.

The lack of communication that existed between the officials and Top Management and the fact that no relationship had been established between them remained a problem. There was a strong perception among the planners that Top Management as well as the Executive Mayor and the members of his Committee were inaccessible to the officials. This extended, to a large degree, to the Strategic Executive, Nava Pillay. Towards the end of the study period, corporate communication was normalised to the extent that a network of regular management meetings at all levels of the Municipality was in place. The CEO met with the Strategic Executives, the Strategic Executives with the General Managers, the General Managers with the Managers, and so on. However, the window of opportunity that had existed at the beginning of the restructuring process for the Mayor and the CEO to create a sense of belonging to and enthusiasm for the new municipality through frequent, direct interaction with the officials had closed.

There can be no doubt, however, that the unplanned and uncaring manner in which the Tshwane restructuring was managed, damaged relations between the officials and the political as well as administrative leadership of the

Municipality. Most of the officials interviewed remarked that their loyalty towards the Municipality had diminished as a result of the restructuring process. It is furthermore clear that the delay in finalising key aspects of the process resulted in uncertainty and low staff morale.

As in the case of the Aalborg Project, “the actual situation stands in sharp contrast to what was envisioned” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:222) by the Core Team at the start of the restructuring process. Following the establishment of the Strategic Metropolitan Spatial Planning Function (SMSP), the restructuring lost its momentum and the planners driving the process their pioneering spirit. Flyvbjerg (1998) experiences the same problem in his account of the Aalborg Project. He (Flyvbjerg, 1998:217) states that, “*In the last few chapters we have allowed the story of the project to become repetitious and even dull because such is the reality of the project. The project is not implemented as planned, nor does it burn out. It just gradually dissolves into an impasse*”. He later adds (Flyvbjerg, 1998:218) that “there is no grand finale to the story of the Aalborg Project”.

Similarly, there is certainly no grand finale to the story of Tshwane’s planning function. In Aalborg, Flyvbjerg (1998:78) describes a “*gradual but significant reduction of the [Aalborg] project’s level of ambition*”. This reduction process culminates in a severely watered-down eleventh version of the project being formally approved by the City Council more than a decade after its initial conception. Similarly, the grand ideal of a brand new planning function for Tshwane is seen to dwindle to little more than a slightly enriched version of what went before.

The open confrontation that develops between the Technical Department and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in the Aalborg case study, is possible only because of the friction between to parties with equal, or comparable, power. Because of the unequal distribution of power between the officials and the top management in Tshwane open confrontation does not take place. The situation therefore never evolves into one where metaphors of war are appropriate as is the case in Flyvbjerg’s (1998) Aalborg study. Rather, the

Tshwane situation never moves from an uneasy, unarticulated animosity to a sense of resignation on the side of the planners. In the face of the silence from the top management, and given their position of relative powerlessness in the organizational hierarchy, the planners have no means to resist decisions that affect them. In Tshwane, it is perhaps not communication that turns out to be the most powerful tool of those in power after all, but rather the decision *not* to communicate. “*Nonactivity*” it seems, can sometimes also be indicative of a party’s relative power (Flyvbjerg, 1998: 67). It would furthermore seem, both from the Aalborg case and from the Tshwane study, that rationality as power is only effective when the two parties involved have relatively equal powers. In Aalborg, the Technical Department succeeds in their rational response to the Social Democrats’ “*Dream Plan*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:165) because of the comparable power of the two parties. In the Tswane case, however, the rationality presented by the planners fail because of their position of relative powerlessness within the municipal hierarchy.

Furthermore, the resistance of Aalborg’s Chamber of Industry and Commerce to the proposals of the Technical Department develops through a series of contacts, some of them written and others face-to-face as “equals” around a table, to a situation of acceptance and reconciliation (albeit temporary) between the two parties. The Chairman of the Chamber eventually reaches a point where he can state that: “*the more you delve into it, the more you really discover that [the Aalborg Project] is not so crazy*”. In Tshwane, however, similar contact between the planning officials and the new top management is, for the most part, absent. This greatly diminishes the ability of the officials to offer resistance to the institutional restructuring process and also precludes any possibility of reconciliation of the kind that developed in Aalborg.

As Flyvbjerg (1998:150) remarks and logic dictates, one way of bringing a confrontation to a close is “*giving up in the face of the opponent*”. Flyvbjerg (1998:161) calls this the “*strategy of surrender*” that is employed as a last resort to prevent confrontation. In the Tshwane case, however, surrender is not a strategy employed by the planners. Rather, it is the only option left to them in the face of the unchallenged, and unchallengeable power of the new

Top Management. In the Aalborg story (Flyvbjerg, 1998:173), the Technical Department “*must rely on reason and luck to win out over the Social Democrats*” and does so with a significant measure of success. For the Tshwane planners, however, neither luck nor reason is sufficient to achieve the prominence they believe their function should be accorded in the organizational structure.

6.8 ALLOW ME TO BE WHIMSICAL – TWO ALTERNATIVE ENDINGS

Although the Tshwane story does not, I hope, leave the reader asking “so *what?*” (see Forester 1982), it certainly leaves ample room for questions such as “*what if...?*” and “*if only*”. This section is an indulgent flight of fancy entertaining two possible (and possibly extreme) alternative endings opened up by the text. The endings were specifically written in such a manner as to allow the reader room for interpretation.

I

Things could have been better

It has been another clear, mild day so characteristic of autumn in Tshwane. The traffic is not as bad as she expected. It will probably be only another twenty minutes or so until she reaches the function venue – right on time. Then again, it is customary for the guest of honour to arrive a little late. She chuckles to herself. That line of thought was admittedly a little conceited, but, damn it, they owed themselves that much. The SAPOA award she was about to receive was well-earned. It was the result of consistent hard work by an excellent team.

She looked forward to seeing the rest of the guys there. Her team of planning staff had shaped excellently since the establishment of the new municipality. Of course they were empowered by the new municipal structure, but credit was still due to them for making the most of the opportunities posed by a department in which they could work in an integrated fashion with the transportation planners, the green team (the environmental planners) and the local economic development division. It was probably not only the structure of the department that was responsible for the planners coming into their own so brilliantly, though. She suspected that the innovative new structure of the function itself was also a factor. When the core team responsible for the restructuring of the planning function initially proposed a structure where all planners would do land use management *and* strategic spatial planning there had been a few sceptics. But now, almost a year and a half after the new

municipality came into being, it was clear that the new approach was yielding dividends. It not only ensured integration between the ideals of the spatial framework and the management of land uses on the ground, but has also resulted in a new unity among the planners. Although everyone was working hard, the work was diverse and satisfying – she could see that in the enthusiasm with which they approached their tasks and their willingness to put in extra hours when necessary.

Of course it wouldn't be fair to say that there hadn't been problems in the beginning. After those planners who had wished to do so took voluntary severance packages and left the municipality, those who stayed behind and the newly employed (mostly young, black and talented) planners had a lot to get used to. She would always be grateful for their MMC who had pulled some strings to make available funding for the series of short courses and team building sessions facilitated by the nearby university. In fact, the MMC may just have been the X-factor that made *all* of this possible. Over the past eighteen months he had become a true champion for the planning function. More than that, he had become a friend. She recalled with gratification the standing ovation at the Council meeting after their presentation of the spatial development framework. She was certain that that would not have happened without the MMC's tireless lobbying in their favour.

As she turned the corner into the function venue, the sun set spectacularly towards the west.

II

Things could have been worse

He woke up to a quiet house. His wife had taken the children to school and left for work a while ago. She no longer tried to motivate him to get up in the morning. He knew he probably should get dressed, but he simply couldn't get himself to do so. What for, anyway? Since the case made by him and some of his colleagues had first gone to the labour court, he no longer went to work. His lawyer advised that it could not be held against him if he stayed away.

Constructive dismissal. There was nothing constructive about it. Over the past eighteen months he gradually saw his job being fragmented, his tasks being assigned to other sections responsible for housing provision and transportation planning. Hell, even the economic development people now seemed to be city planners. The planners tried to create awareness of the importance of their function, the value that they could add to the city – but such attempts were futile and, it now seemed, foolish. They were hardly ever given the chance to state their case and when they were, well, no-one listened.

A couple of months ago he and a number of other planners decided that they had had enough. Without finality on their delegations to deal with land use applications, a backlog of cataclysmic proportions had developed. They had prepared a number of reports on the matter for approval by the mayoral committee, but time and again there was some excuse and the reports were referred back. Two large property developments had gone bust as a result of the zoning not being finalized in time. A street block of half built walls and muddy puddles strewn with litter now graced one of the city's up-market suburbs.

He stared blankly at the ceiling. A small grey moth was circling the light fitting as if longing for the intoxicating glow that was there the night before. The psychologist had said that he should focus on what he was feeling. He wasn't really feeling anything. Maybe loneliness. He was losing everything that he had taken pride in and nobody cared. In the last six months only, four people had acted as general managers for the planning function. Each of them grabbed the first opportunity to be redeployed with both hands. There was no "boss" that he could talk to, no-one that he could go to for sound advice. The current general manager was a political appointment placed to avoid further embarrassment about the state of the planning function. And the people at the top, well, those bastards didn't give a damn.

He wasn't surprised when he read that the municipal manager's car had been vandalized by a racist with a can of spray paint recently. He had never seen the man in person, but he had felt on more than one occasion that he wanted to march into his office and shake him till he came to his senses. Not that that would make any difference – it would only be another juicy story for the newspapers who were having a field day with Tshwane becoming a “banana republic”.

He looked up at the ceiling again. The little moth had gone.

6.9 OUT TAKES

This section takes its cue from the latest developments in DVD (Digital Video Disk), the most technologically advanced medium through which stories are told and understood in our time. As it happens in the making of a film, there were also snippets in this study that fell by the wayside in the final editing process, or that were, for some or other reason, not included in the study from the start. These so-called “out takes” are, for the most part, anecdotal and some could even be interpreted as shocking gossip not suitable for inclusion in a construct of scientific investigation. However, it is the aim of *phronesis*, which is the type of social study undertaken here, to present a richly textured and multi-layered reality. It is with this in mind that the following collection of snippets was compiled. In some cases names and other specifics were left out for ethical reasons.

I

The Tshwane planners were mostly white and Afrikaans speaking. Another, though less obvious, aspect of the planners’ group identity was their Christianity, a Christianity that could, in some instances, be described as fundamentalist.

A member of the team that lead the inquisition against staff in the building office that were suspected of taking bribes, doing unauthorized private work and other irregularities, who was also a prominent member of the management of one of the former municipal structures, told me an interesting story. He said that he and other members of the team had received a vision from God regarding the forces of evil that were at work in the municipality. The agents of these sinister forces were members of the new top management. The team (known by the other officials as the “Doberman” team for its persistence in sniffing out irregularities) took it upon themselves to sprinkle salt in the offices of the municipal manager, the executive mayor and the strategic executive officer for Housing, Land and Environmental Planning as a measure to counter the evil spirits at work through them. The official

smugly told me that the salt had been smuggled into the relevant offices and disposed of during meetings without anyone noticing, which he regarded as a triumph for good.

II

Players of the power game who use rational arguments to promote the reality they prefer often use the tactic of making other parties seem less knowledgeable, even stupid. In the course of the Tshwane restructuring process, however, such perceptions were in some cases well founded.

There were repeated instances of an embarrassing lack of insight from senior officials in the new municipality. Wonder Nkosi said at the meeting where Nava Pillay was introduced as the new strategic executive officer for Housing, Land and Environmental Planning, that one senior official, closely related to the planning function, had indicated that he was willing to accept a five year contract appointment in one of the new top management positions on the condition that he wanted his old position back upon expiry of the five-year term. Wonder named the person in question repeatedly and laughed raucously as he told the story. This was not the only time that the official in question was made a fool of in the company of others. At a meeting of Nava Pillay's strategic unit, he made a long argument that, while the IDP was good and well, Tshwane should set to work compiling a Local Agenda 21 for the metropolitan area. It took a good measure of explaining that the IDP was an evolution of, among other things, the Agenda 21 process and that environmental sustainability was a key principle underpinning integrated planning. The official in question had quite a number of tertiary qualifications in a variety of fields. He was known within the core team by the nickname of "Ayam" for starting every sentence with "ayam" ("I...um"?, "Ahem"?).

III

Unfortunately, the embarrassment of high-ranking municipal officials who had not yet come to grips with the workings of the municipality

almost a year after they were appointed, was not kept within the inner circle of the municipality but was, at least on one occasion, glaringly made public.

Ayam's was not the only stupidity that was evident in the municipality during the study period. A telling incident occurred at the two-day Transformation Conference held on 10 and 11 December 2001 at the request of the then MEC for Development Planning and Local Government, Mr Trevor Fowler. I had helped Wonder prepare a report for the MEC, as well as a summary of the report in the form of a digital presentation. Wonder also asked me to assist in setting up the technology for showing the presentation before the meeting. I had assumed that Wonder would be making the presentation, but that was not the case. As the meeting was about to start, Wonder said that I should ask the Municipal Manager whether I should present the presentation or whether he wished to do it. I approached the Municipal Manager, whom I had not met before, and was told brusquely that he would do the presentation. He had not read the report nor seen the presentation before that day and I tried, in the five minutes that were available, to page through the presentation explaining its structure and content. What followed was possibly the most excruciating twenty minutes of my life. The Municipal Manager blundered through the presentation misreading most of it and making gross errors of interpretation that caused me to squirm in my chair. The Municipal Manager neither looked at me nor thanked me for compiling the presentation afterwards. But then again, I was happy to get out of there as quickly as possible.

IV

During the study period, some officials displayed an overly helpful and servile attitude towards the new top management, often assisting with menial tasks far below the level of responsibility they had previously been assigned. This phenomenon could probably be interpreted in terms of the so-called "iniquity theory of motivation" according to which

the officials believed that it was through their own fault that they were not recognized and that they simply “had to try harder”.

At the Transformation Conference mentioned above, I was present only to plug in the wires of the laptop computer and the digital projector, while Bernard Hanekom, the acting manager of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership (where I had worked before joining the core team for the restructuring of the planning function) came with Wonder mainly to switch the lights on and off at the correct moment. It became a pattern for some white officials to go more than the extra mile for members of the top management following the establishment of the new municipality. Bernard and I were examples of this, and so was Gerda Potgieter, who had assisted Wonder in compiling a coffee table publication on Tshwane, much to the ire of the general manager of the marketing and communication function, who had not been consulted on the matter. The worst example, however, was Paul Thiede, who had worked as an architect in the former City Council of Pretoria. Paul was requested by the executive mayor to assist with the refurbishment of his new offices. Paul literally worked day and night for months on end neglecting his family and health in the hope, as he confided in me, that the fact that he had been “noticed” by the mayor would assist his career. There had been talk about the possibility of a position for Paul in the mayor’s office, but during the study period, these promises did not materialise.

V

Despite the fact that a new democratic dispensation for South Africa was formally established in 1994, six years before the beginning of the study period, extreme racial bias persisted among some Tshwane officials.

The phone rings and the secretary, also known as the “Pitbull” for the fierce manner in which she screens calls and protects her boss from unwanted intrusions, puts the call through. “Who is it?” he shouts from the adjacent office. “It is the [derogatory term for a black woman],” she shouts back,

indicating his direct line manager. The use of this derogatory term became an anathema with the dawn of South Africa's new democracy. Yet it was still widely used in some circles, always as a marker of strong racial bias against blacks. A more extreme form of the term was also more frequently used among white municipal staff than one would expect. It was even used in my presence by a white official who was also a card-carrying member of the ANC.

VI

In telling a story such as that of the restructuring of the Tshwane planning function, one attempts to convey to the reader as richly detailed as possible an account of events. Yet it is often not possible when writing an academic document to include well-rounded descriptions of the characters involved. However, such descriptions could add to the reader's experience of the narrative. By identifying with specific characters, the reader could also more easily keep track of complicated twists and turns in the story.

Johnny and Henry did not only have different work ethics. They also had different personalities that were mirrored in their very different physiques, not unlike Laurel and Hardy. Johnny was short and portly and had an easy-going, jovial personality to match. Henry, on the other hand, was extraordinarily tall and thin, and was reserved and serious by nature. Johnny once remarked that, while the stress of the position of acting manager was making him fatter, it was making Henry even thinner and that it was only a matter of time before Henry would be able to use his (Johnny's) watchstrap as a belt.

VII

One might be tempted to view the characters portrayed in the narrative as serious professionals always focussed on the task at hand. This was, of course, not the case. Interactions were often playful and informal, sometimes even degenerating to the level of obscenity.

Thanks to one member of the core team, no meeting took place without a lewd joke or two and an inordinate measure of sexual innuendo. A vibrating cell phone clipped to the side of her pants would laughingly be moved to the front; when a male colleague mimicked how expressively she used her hands when she talked, she in turn mimicked (male) masturbation and watched him blush. Furious with the negativity experienced from the side of the existing managers of the planning function, she warned that, if one of them approached her again, she would “*pull his foreskin over his head and tell him to ‘fuck off’*”. All of these incidents, and many others that I cannot recall exactly, took place with colleagues present. Once, when I looked shocked at one such utterance, she shouted at me in exasperation “*Oh, can’t you let your fucking hair down for once?!*”

VIII

The fundamentalist Christian convictions held by many of the planning staff, led them, for example, to reject homosexuality. There was generally very little tolerance for other religions and different cultures were even viewed with suspicion.

Some planners frequently used the expression “*een van ons kerk se mense*” (a person of our church) when referring to a white person. In 2000 a German student, Steffen Brandt, an outspoken atheist, visited the then City Council of Pretoria as part of his study in municipal administration. Steffen was taken aback at the many attempts to convert him and said he experienced the municipality as a kind of sect. Jakša Barbir, the only person among the Pretoria planners who was openly atheist, argued that the reason planners were not making significant interventions with regard to the city form was because some of the planners “*were waiting for Jesus to come and save the city*”.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS – SPOTTING THE EMERGING TRUTHS

7.1 Introduction

Flyvbjerg (2001:59) questions the view that the production of theory should be the ultimate goal of scientific activity. *Phronetic* research, according to Flyvbjerg (2001: 140) is an “*analytical project, but not a theoretical or methodological one*”. *Phronetic* social scientists should develop “partial answers” to research questions such as:

- “Where are we going?”;
- “Is this desirable?”;
- “What should be done?”, and
- “Who gains and who loses; by which mechanisms of power?”
(Flyvbjerg 2001:60-61).

Such partial answers should then be fed into the discourse or dialogue on problems faced in practice and possible alternative ways of doing things. As such, *phronetic* research can never purport to tell a “final truth” (Flyvbjerg, 2001:139), but rather participates in a discussion aimed at improving practice. This is an example of “*reflexive thought aimed at action*” that, according to Flyvbjerg (2001:127), stands at the core of Foucault’s ethics.

I would then, rather than try to create new theory from the Tshwane case, attempt to discern a number of emerging patterns or trends that characterise the story in order to identify problems or risks (or strengths, for that matter) encountered during the course of the restructuring process. In so doing, I am well aware of the bias towards verification that is a danger with regard to all research methods (Flyvbjerg, 2001:81-84).

Having lived through the transformation towards a City Planning function for the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and having gathered and studied information relevant to the context of the story and the events

themselves, a number of themes or issues emerge as prominent. I would like to briefly highlight those in this, the last chapter of the study.

7.2 First, a little confession

I set out to write the story as an exposé, wishing to show how fickle and power-driven the process was and how devoid of moral integrity. Flyvbjerg (2001:135) is in support of such endeavours, stating that the *phronetic* researcher has to be willing to “*uncover and face the morally unacceptable*” and that such willingness should not itself be construed as immorality. The above notwithstanding, with the benefit of hindsight and having read Flyvbjerg’s story on Aalborg, I have been faced with my own complicity in the process, especially in the heyday of the Core Team. Tasked with the Communication portfolio, one of the most powerful tools of rationalisation, I took an active part in defining a reality meant to strengthen the Core Team’s power base. I believe that this study has been worthwhile just as much for its contribution to the existing body of knowledge regarding the forces that shape planning and planning functions than for the personal growth and epiphany that I have experienced in the process. Indeed, I am convinced now that scholarship is not so much about gaining academic insights, but, in that journey, to channel it toward a greater awareness and understanding of the self, albeit through exposing our own weakness and conceitedness.

7.3 Addressing theory’s blind spot

Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) define planning after Lefebvre as “the public production of space; that is, all policies and practices which shape the urban and regional environment under the auspices of the modern state”. I would argue, however, that planning is more than this, that it is not only all the dimensions of a profession producing, acting on or engaging with space, but that it is also the internal organization, positioning and functioning of the planning team. Although the latter issues relate to procedural rather than substantive matters, to use the distinction drawn by Forester (Argument, Power and Passion), they can play a pivotal role in determining how effective

an agent of “space-making” such a team can be. In the South African context, where the need for spatial development and integration is so great, these aspects are all the more important.

The conditions within the CTMM during the study period were far from ideal. Yet one could hardly have asked for a better environment in which to gain experience on working in an environment characterised by dynamic and complex power relations – power relations that always, however subtle, carried the added dimension of race in a city and country still struggling to redress the aftermath of its apartheid past. In that sense, the CTMM was indeed the ideal environment for planners “to learn how to make their arguments under systematically skewed conditions of access, voice, power and authority” (Forester, 1996). As such the municipality was merely a microcosm of the society it served and of which it was also an institutional member. I believe this to be true of any public institution in which planning teams/departments are constituted, which builds my argument for considering the internal organization of planning teams as an important focus for studies of planning practice.

7.4 Democracy in practice

Flyvbjerg (1998:4) writes that “*to understand the story of Aalborg is to understand central aspects of modernity and of modern politics, administration and planning.*” It is hoped that such understanding is also to be gained from the Tshwane story. The central problem highlighted by Flyvbjerg (1998:4) is how to “*make democracy work in a modernity that is strong on democratic ideals but weak in their realization.*”⁶³

⁶³ Although we find ourselves in a (post?) postmodern epoch, and possibly even something beyond that, the Tshwane municipality and the players in the story of the transformation of its planning function still show strong characteristics of modern organization and thought, which makes it apt to use modernity, with its focus on rationality, as an angle for interpreting and criticizing the events and experiences that constitute the transformation process. Allmendinger (2001:9) supports this view when he argues that modernity and postmodernity should not be viewed as two distinct epochs. He is not convinced that we can unequivocally state that we are living in “postmodern times” and adds that postmodern “represents an eclectic shift in attitude and understanding about modernity...from *within* modernity” (emphasis in original).

The Tshwane case is therefore presented to be a “reference point against which rationality, power and democracy elsewhere can be compared” as is the Aalborg case by Flyvbjerg (1998:5). The Tshwane study is significant particularly because the number of case studies of planning praxis in Africa is so much smaller than of those in Europe and America. The Tshwane story is a prime example of how “democracy must be fought for each and every day in concrete instances, even long after democracy is first constituted in a society”⁶⁴. In the Tshwane case study, as in the case of the Aalborg story, “*the dynamics of conflict and struggle become the center of analysis*” (Flyvbjerg, 1998:6). Flyvbjerg (1998:6) argues that such conflict should not be viewed as destructive, but could produce “*valuable ties that hold modern democratic societies together..*” and adds that “*social conflicts are themselves pillars of democratic society*”. Flyvbjerg (2001) is similarly positive about conflict. He states that conflict is inevitably part of the plurality of contemporary concepts of democracy and sees distrust and criticism of authorities as necessary characteristics of strong democracies. “*Moral outrage is continuous, because actual authorities inevitably violate whatever norms civil society has for justice*” Flyvbjerg (2001:109).

The Tshwane study clearly shows that Habermas’s (in Flyvbjerg, 2001:102) focus on establishing democratic constitutions will of itself not contribute to a more democratic society, or, in the case of the Tshwane case study, to a more participative and democratic organizational culture. To take a practical example: one could argue that the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000), which clearly states that the internal restructuring of the municipality should be part of its Integrated Development Plan (IDP), should have played an enabling role in this regard. Although the Act does not provide much guidance with regard to *the manner in which* the municipality should be restructured, one could argue, in the same vein as Oranje et al (2000) argue regarding the IDP, that this leaves welcome room for flexibility and local innovation. In the Tshwane case, however, such innovation is sadly lacking.

⁶⁴ In South Africa, this happened in 1994, six years before the dawn of Thswane’s new Unicity municipality.

7.5 It's all about the power

In the preface to his book on Aalborg, Flyvbjerg postulates that his book will enable later scholars to ask “*Is this an Aalborg?*” when studying cases of city planning. Having both lived and studied the Tshwane case, I hold the conviction that *all* city planning cases will share traits of the Aalborg story, i.e. that reality is shaped not on the grounds of the “*better argument*”, but as a result of dynamic power relations. Certainly, in the Tshwane case, power defined reality, albeit in our case the reality of the planning function as such and not of a city planning framework or project. Rather, therefore, than present a unique case, which will beg the question “*Is this an Aalborg?*”, this study adds to the body of evidence that all City Planning, whether in its internal organization or external effects, is governed by relations of power and the aspiration to power. Although Flyvbjerg’s study is aimed specifically at exposing the underlying power relations and their effect on the actions (and particularly the words) of his characters, the role that power plays with regard to planning has been indicated by a number of other authors in earlier studies. These include Peattie’s (1987) study of Ciudad Guayana, the study of Brindley et al (1989) of planning in the United Kingdom under the Thatcher administration, and McLoughlin’s (1992) study of Melbourne. Following the publication of Flyvbjerg’s Aalborg study, Hoch (1994 and 1996), Yiftachel and Huxley (2000), Hillier (2002), Gunder and Mouat (2002), among others, published papers explicitly exposing and analysing the implications of power relations for planning practice. The Tshwane case builds on this body of *phronetic* research, but in an African context.

7.5.1 Power in a managerialist environment

There can be no doubt that the CTMM presents an extremely managerialist environment. As is true of all bureaucracies (see Bennis, 1993 and Chapter 5 of this thesis) it is characterized by a strict hierarchy. Work is not only vertically segmented in terms of different job levels, but also horizontally into Departments, Divisions or Strategic Units. Issues such as office space (luxurious corner suites for the Members of the Mayoral Committee), parking

and delegated powers (whether for procurement or the approval of land-use applications) and procedures for submitting reports, among other things, feature strongly. The managerialist character of the municipality provides a vital angle for interpreting the power relations that evolved during the transformation process. In many ways, achieving power in the new structure was seen as synonymous with achieving a managerial position. This is most apparent from the manner in which the Core Team members chased the possibility of being appointed as managers of the City Planning function and the measures they employed to protect their prospects in this regard.

A managerial position in the CTMM was sought after not only because it promised attractive remuneration and perks such as a transport allowance and a large office, or because it brought with it the “power” to instruct or manage other people. It was also the key to access information and, more importantly, a change to have a say in the organization. In many respects, where one was in the hierarchical structure of the municipality determined, to a significant extent, “*who speaks? Whose voices are heard? Whose arguments are pressed and how?*” (Forester, 1996). Flyvbjerg (2001:138) does not view the duality of structural and individual analysis as problematic. He states that the *phronetic* researcher seeks to uncover those structural factors that influence the conduct of the actors, and conversely seeks to show the structural consequences of such conduct.

7.5.2 Different types/origins of power

Four types of power, in particular, emerge from this study, although I doubt whether they could ever exist completely in isolation. In all the structures discussed in this study, all four of these types of power are present in some way or another. The first is what I would call **institutional power**. This is power that a person has because of a position or status within an organization. It is this kind of power which allowed the Mayoral Committee and Municipal Manager to change the entire Tshwane organizational structure in July 2001 without consulting any of the officials. The same power allowed

Si Bogopa to substitute Verna for Belinda without providing any explanation or rationalization.

Secondly, there is the **power originating from personal relationships**. Belinda came to power through a relationship with Nomngqibelo, and a network of relationships also passed that power on to the Core Team members. Later, Verna got her power from a relationship with Si Bogopa. It could be argued that Nava Pillay was given power on the basis of his relationship with the Municipal Manager.

The third kind of power that is apparent from this study is that of the **small group**. It was especially the Core Team and the SMSP team that displayed a special kind of synergy, which enabled it to achieve extraordinary results. Although I was not privy to the functioning of more such teams during the study period, I remain convinced with McClendon and Quay (1992) and Peck (1994) that small groups are a powerful force for organizational change.

Lastly, certain individuals have **personal power** thanks to their charismatic personalities. Examples are Wonder Nkosi in the Tshwane case and Aalborg's Mayor, Bus Marius, in Flyvbjerg's (1998) study.

7.5.3 A comparative reading of Flyvbjerg's power propositions

At the end of his study, Flyvbjerg (1998) sets out ten propositions on power and rationality, which he argues "*can serve as useful guidelines for researching rationality and power in other settings*". The following is a reading of the Tshwane story against these propositions.

- i) In the restructuring of Tshwane's City Planning function, as in the life of the Aalborg Project, **power defined rationality**. It was particularly through the rationalized communication by the Core Team, both directly and by way of a variety of written media, that a reality was defined that entrenched the Core Team's power, until, of course, said power was overthrown by the stronger institutional power of the new

Top Management when they introduced a new corporate structure in July 2001. Similarly, the new Top Management had the power to place Planning (and planners) in the municipality in a position of weakness and uncertainty – a sharp contrast to the prominence and power the planners enjoyed in the previous municipal dispensation. Paradoxically, it was to a lesser extent what was communicated by Top Management and to a greater extent what wasn't, that defined the reality of the organization during the transformation process.

- ii) Flyvbjerg's proposition that **rationality is context-dependent** is similarly confirmed by the Tshwane case. What was presented as rational argument by the Core Team and by Top Management, in particular, have been shown to be nothing but flimsy smokescreens for the power-related objectives that lay underneath. It is impossible, in the context of the dynamic power relations that governed the restructuring process, to isolate uncontaminated rationality, or, as it were, the "*objective truth*" from the distortions that surround it. Much of the communication that took place is what Flyvbjerg (1998) refers to as rhetoric characterized by "*eloquence, hidden control, rationalization, charisma, [and] using dependency relations between participants*".
- iii) It emerges, too, from the Tshwane study that **rationalization presented as rationality is a principal tool in the exercise of power**. Practically all the Core Team communication, as well as that which took place when Verna assumed responsibility for the Planning function, was characterized by rationalization. The content of each communication was carefully weighed and considered, not to evaluate whether it was, in fact, rational or "*true*", but rather whether it would further the aims of those who composed it. The story shows that the principles put forward as the rationale for the restructuring process, namely participation/democracy, transparency and a commitment to open communication, as well as a commitment to further representivity or equity, represented a different reality from that which in fact prevailed in the inner sanctuary of the Core Team.

Although the Core Team had a relatively short lifespan, their approach and activities are significant, as they set the tone of the entire restructuring process as it would later unfold.

- iv) The Tshwane case does not present evidence to support Flyvbjerg's fourth proposition, namely that **rationality is inversely proportional to power**. Although the study shows that rationalization only comes into play when there is a position of power to be entrenched or protected, or when those in power wish to build support for their own objectives, those with the most power, namely the new Top Management, did not use much rationalization at all. One would have expected them, soon after they came to power on 6 December 2000, to embark on a propaganda campaign (usually good examples of rationalization with a power motive), yet there is no evidence that such a programme ever existed. Although theirs was institutional power, guaranteed for a set term and therefore not under any immediate threat, it is strange that the new Top Management did not, nonetheless, harness the power of communication in order to further the aims of the municipality within the new legislative framework and, in so doing, enhance their own performance as management.
- v) Flyvbjerg further proposes that **stable power relations are more typical of politics, administration, and planning than antagonistic confrontations**. There are several examples in the Tshwane case where parties made an active choice to avoid confrontation and rather adopt a collaborative approach. It was even decided, on occasion, to abandon a confrontational course in favour of active stroking of the other party.
- vi) On the micro level of the Tshwane study, Flyvbjerg's proposition that **power relations are constantly being produced and reproduced**, is strongly confirmed. In the course of the story, the power to define the new City Planning function moved from Amund to Belinda and the Core

Team, to Verna; and from Nomngqibelo to Si Bogopa, to Mike Yates, to Nava Pillay. There was also a constant play of power between these role players and the Top Management (the Executive Mayor and his Committee, the CEO and COO) and a number of other role players. The Tshwane case clearly illustrates that power relations are fickle and constantly under threat of change.

- vii) The proposition by Flyvbjerg that **the rationality of power has deeper historical roots than the power of rationality** indeed seems to hold true in the light of the Tshwane study. Despite the fact that the concept of democracy lies at the very root of the new local government dispensation, very little of that precipitated in the Tshwane restructuring process. The basic form of bureaucracy remained largely unchanged. Not only did the basic form of the Municipality prevail, but, below the level of Top Management, the demographic profile, also remained much the same. Despite the fact that the new Top Management (the Executive Mayor and his Committee, as well as the Municipal Manager and the Chief Operating Officer) were all African, old distinctions of privilege in the municipality prevailed to a large extent. After completion of the restructuring process in December 2003, the General Manager and all the Managers appointed in the City Planning function were white, with only a handful of black planners in the entire function.
- viii) Owing to the fact that the Tshwane case does not present any examples of open confrontation, it is not possible to make any inferences with regard to Flyvbjerg's eighth proposition, namely that, **in open confrontation, rationality yields to power.**
- ix) It is, for the same reason, equally difficult to comment on the comparative aspect of Flyvbjerg's ninth proposition, namely that **rationality-power relations are more characteristic of stable power relations than of confrontations.** It can merely be stated that the stable power relation that usually exists between the councillors and

officials within a municipality such as the CTMM is a rationality-power relation, as described in paragraph x below.

- x) Again, owing to the limited scope of the Tshwane study it is difficult to accept or reject the comparative aspect of Flyvbjerg's last proposition, namely that **the power of rationality is embedded in stable power relations rather than in confrontations**. It is true, however, that a bureaucracy presents a relatively stable power system. I would argue that this stability is derived from the fact that power in bureaucracies is organized in terms of strict hierarchies, which are not likely to be challenged. In periods of evolution (i.e. periods of normal activity) within the typical South African municipality, much of the activity is indeed based on a rationality-power relationship between the officials, or the various departments, who prepare "*rational*" reports, and the superior power of the Councillors, who consider the reports. It follows that the "*power of rationality*", or technical expertise, is strongly embedded within this stable power system. In fact, as Bennis (1993) argues, it is the very basis upon which the institution of bureaucracy was founded.

7.5.4 Planners in need of re-orientation

The survey conducted among the Tshwane planners clearly indicated a lack of understanding of the planning function as one taking place within a dynamic web of power relations. Furthermore, their activities during the transformation process, was extremely self-centered and inward-focussed. The multitude of organograms that were compiled and distributed, and often discussed at length, also indicates an unhealthy obsession with structure, rather than with action/strategy. What one would have liked to see, was an emphasis on the new role of municipal planners with regard to spatial (and inevitably social and economic) restructuring in the new democracy. The central dilemma is that of a predominantly white male cadre of planners who have to find a way in which to contribute in a new dispensation or become obsolete. The study does not suggest that this change will take place by way

of an epiphany or radical change of heart on the side of the planners employed by the CTMM during the study period. It will probably rather come as a result of, on the one hand, the municipality appointing more young black planners more aware of the need for planning as a tool for spatial integration, and, on the other, the broader national process of closing the racial divide both in a socio-economic and ideological sense. In the light of the inherent resistance to change and the persistence of entrenched approaches/structures that emerged from the Tshwane study, this is bound to be a slow process.

In this regard, one could certainly suggest changes to the manner in which planners are trained. Allmendinger (2001:3) supports Lapintie (2001) when he criticizes planning schools for perpetuating the notion of planning as an elitist profession and pleads for training that will allow for students to “*critically reflect on the needs of people and cities*”. Forester (1996) also argues that planners are poorly trained for the emotional work that is required to respond to others’ ideas, fears, anger, etc. Students in planning need to understand that “*democratic planning decision-making is inevitably messy, time-consuming, turbulent, frustrating and exasperating*” Hillier (2002:15). Forester (1996) views “*professional and political literacy*” as the basic skill planners have to acquire. Flyvbjerg (2001:23) also pleads for a different approach to training professionals when he states that “*Regrettably, the pervasiveness of the rational paradigm to the near exclusion of others is a problem for the vast majority of professional education, and especially in practical fields such as engineering, policy analysis, management, planning and organizations.*” He furthermore argues that this tendency has resulted in scholarly disciplines becoming blind to “*context, experience, and intuition, even though these phenomena and ways of being are at least as important and necessary for good results as are analysis, rationality and rules*” (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 24.). He laments the fact (Flyvbjerg, 2001:142) that, as a student, he was not exposed to questions such as whether knowledge was always important or not; or which factors determined whether knowledge was deemed knowledge or not. He adds (Flyvbjerg 2001:145) that narrative case studies such as that of Aalborg (Flyvbjerg, 1998) create a “*reality*” that students can “*safely be let*

loose in” and that “*provides a useful training ground with insights into practice that academic teaching often does not provide*”. Some people may argue that the opportunity to receive such training is lost to the Tshwane planners, who have stood in the profession for many years and can be regarded, for the most part, as hopelessly “old school”. I do not share this view. Rather, I believe that much could be done in terms of sensitisation, awareness and skills development programmes presented in the form of short courses or refresher courses.

7.6 The importance of communication confirmed

The importance placed on communication both in the organizational theory studied and in the survey of recent planning theory is strongly supported by the story of Tshwane’s City Planning function. Both in terms of the absence thereof in some instances and the use thereof in others, communication played a central role in shaping the experience of the restructuring process.

The consistent absence of clear and frequent communication by the new Top Management, particularly the Mayor and the Municipal Manager (later referred to as the Chief Executive Officer) had a significant impact on the restructuring process. Rather than encouraging the officials to become part of the new structure and winning their loyalty, the silence experienced from the top resulted in the officials experiencing the change of management as a hostile takeover, which caused emotions of fear, distrust and resentment. The fact that, on the few occasions that there was communication with the officials, it was done in a threatening tone, contributed to the alienation of the existing officials. The reality that the new top management was almost in its entirety constituted of black individuals and the vast majority of the officials were white, necessarily imbued the situation with racial overtones – a circumstance that made the possibility of achieving a new, unified structure even less likely. Officials did not understand the processes or the reasoning behind the change that was made to the macro-organizational structure towards the end of June 2001, nor did they have any prior warning that such changes were going to be made. For the officials who were still struggling to

come to terms with the first new structure, this change led to more trauma and caused an upset to the restructuring task and the daily operations of the municipality.

The significant uncertainty as to the location and status of City Planning within the new organizational structure could certainly have been addressed through timeous and open communication. Yet also in this regard, despite numerous enquiries from the officials, there was no attempt by Top Management to engage the officials to address this burning issue.

It is not clear why the new Top Management paid no attention to communicate with the officials on issues that directly involved them. It is a particularly puzzling phenomenon in the light of fact that a commitment to democracy is a cornerstone of the ANC's political ideology and the emphasis placed on transparency by the policies and legislation developed by Government.

It should be borne in mind that communication can only take place if there is something (a message) to communicate. It is possible that the lack of communication by the Tshwane Top Management (both at the political and executive level) was a direct result of the fact that no change management plan, and therefore no clear message to convey on the reasons, process and envisioned end result of the change, existed.

At the level of the City Planning function, however, communication was exploited as a tool to the maximum effect. The Core Team used communication both as a mechanism to entrench their position of power and as a "*stroking device*" to avoid confrontation and to win the support of the City Planning officials. The support that was garnered for the Nomngqibelo and the restructuring process can to a large extent be ascribed to the frequent communication she had with the officials. The response from the officials indicated that it was not so much the written communication in the form of newsletters and circulars that was appreciated, but especially the face-to-face

communication in the form of road shows, information sessions, workshops and small group meetings.

It could be argued that, had such direct communication been sustained⁶⁵, and had it been extended to include the Strategic Executive, and even the Mayor or CEO, the team spirit and motivation levels of the City Planning officials, would have been greatly improved. It would also have contributed to the establishment of a strong “*psychological contract*” (see Mir, Mir and Mosca, 2002) with the municipality, which would have contributed to increased productivity and loyalty.

7.7 Batho Pele? I think not

It should be clear from the narrative in Chapter 6 that the restructuring of the Tshwane planning function was not about plans at all – it was about people. The failure of the new Tshwane Top Management to communicate should not merely be viewed in terms of a failure to communicate operational communication, which had an impact on the productivity and efficiency of the administrative processes necessary for effective service delivery. Rather, it was a failure to establish a relationship between the officials and their new leadership and in particular, a failure to create a caring environment within which the psychological contract between employee and employer, which Mir, Mir and Mosca (2002) refers to, could be established.

Rather than putting people first, as dictated by Government’s “*Batho Phele*” (people first) principle, it would seem that in the Tshwane story, the majority of people, namely the officials transferred to the new municipality from the former structures, were often the very last consideration. In the story, these people were very often ignored, sidelined, disregarded and threatened – and thereby made to feel worthless. There is very little evidence in the study of the “*Ubuntu*”, or humaneness, that is a characteristic trait of African culture. Although there seemed to have been pockets of staff within which a sense of cohesion and caring existed, on the whole, the municipality lacked a sense of

⁶⁵ Direct communication with the City Planning officials by anyone above the level of Manager only took place once after Verna was appointed to manage the function.

“community” as described by Peck (1994). At the same time, as far as the new Top Management was concerned, people were indeed put first. For these people speedy confirmation of their new posts and exorbitant salaries, select parking spaces and luxury offices, among other things, denoted their status as “first officials” of the CTMM.

As the balance of power rested in the hands of the new Tshwane Top Management, it could furthermore be argued that it was their responsibility and, in terms of the role of the Municipal Manager as the head of the municipality’s administration, his, to have ensured that the Tshwane officials were made to feel part of the new municipality.

Although resistance to change, culture clashes, problems with staff morale, power play and manipulation are risks inherent to a process where different structures (Transitional Local Councils) are forced, by law, to amalgamate, no process is proposed in the relevant legislation to ensure that the internal transformation process takes place in a regulated manner. One could argue that it would have been helpful if broad guidelines for the transformation processes had been made available by Government. Such guidelines could have provided mechanisms to ensure transparency and consultation with or participation of all internal stakeholder groups in the transformation process, and could furthermore have provided a timeframe that would have prevented a situation such as that which developed at the CTMM, where officials worked in an acting capacity for almost two years (without additional remuneration). However, it is apparent from the White Paper (1998) that the manner in which transformation is implemented rests in the hands of each municipality.

Yet the manifestation of the change within the micro-environment of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality can be viewed as an example of unplanned change. Not only was it unplanned, it could furthermore be described in terms of Bennis’s (1993) category of “*coercive change*”, which is characterized by “*nonmutual goal setting, an imbalanced power ratio and only one-sided deliberateness*” Despite the prescriptions of the MSA regarding participation, the Tshwane City Planning officials were neither given the

opportunity to fully and meaningfully participate in the transformation of the Municipality in general or of their function in particular, nor where they communicated with or consulted on it. Rather than partners in the process of transformation, the new political and administrative management and the officials seemed to be opposing forces.

7.8 The more things change...

The study seems to confirm an inherent resistance to change, not only of individuals, but of the organization as a whole. With specific reference to the planning profession, Allmendinger (2001) states that “*planners either feel no need to change or, like a rabbit in a car’s headlights, they do not know in what direction to move*”. The sense of bewilderment, of paralysis in the face of change conveyed by Allmendinger’s (2001) description is certainly evident in the Tshwane story. I would argue that the Tshwane story, viewed as a whole, is essentially a call for planners (and planning) to change. In his study of the Aalborg Project, Flyvbjerg (1998:91) draws the conclusion that “*it may be immensely more difficult to effect change than was imagined by the city administration’s policy and planning staff when they launched the Aalborg Project*”. In the Tshwane case, too, it proves that effecting change within the micro-environment of the Tshwane planning department was more difficult than initially imagined by an enthusiastic Core Team. It would certainly be incorrect to argue that the restructuring process documented in this study did not result in *any* change in the manner in which the City Planning function for the Greater Pretoria Area was manifested. In the first instance, the new function was led by a new management team. It should also be noted that, for the first time in the history of all the former municipal structures, except the Centurion Town Council, a woman was holding the highest office in the function. Apart from this, however, there were also differences to the structure and content of the function and its components. One such difference is the addition of the Land Use Legislation and Administration (LULA) function. Another is the Strategic Spatial Planning function’s departure from structure planning towards a framework planning approach, which draws strongly on

strategic thinking⁶⁶. In the Regional Spatial Planning Function (land use planning) special attention was, for the first time, given to so-called “*strategic projects*”, and there was a decidedly stronger focus on liaison between that function and Strategic Spatial Planning, Building Control, Law Enforcement and private developers than that which existed in the past.

This notwithstanding, the structuring of the City Planning function, especially the primary functions of Spatial Planning and Land Use Management, was in essence the same at the time of completing this study as it was before the advent of the Unicity and the protracted restructuring process. Once again, there was a clear split among the planners responsible for processing land use applications and those managing the longer term spatial planning of the city.

The demographic composition of the City Planning function in the CTMM remains an obvious stumbling block to the implementation of developmental local government. Swanepoel (1997) points out the importance of people involved in community planning to know the people they serve and to understand their circumstances. This statement is particularly true if one agrees with Swanepoel (1997) that the ideal of poverty eradication is at the heart of developmental local government. McClendon and Quay (1998) also argue for a “*closeness to the customer*”. The fact that all the town planners in the employ of the CTMM during the study period were affluent in terms of the South African reality and that only 3 of the planners more than 50 planners employed by the CTMM were from previously disadvantaged racial groups, clearly indicates that the staff profile of the function does not meet the above requirement. Most of the planners had never been to areas such as Mabopane and Winterveldt, let alone had a thorough understanding of the areas and the forces that impacted on them. If one adds to this the dimension of “*political persuasion*”, which, in my experience generally leaned towards the

⁶⁶ Before the establishment of the SMSP function, so-called “strategic planning”, or rather “forward planning” for the Pretoria area, consisted of little more than the compilation of the Pretoria Structure Plan.

right, there can be little hope for a planning response that would genuinely address the ravishes of Apartheid.

Despite repeated statements regarding the importance of affirmative action and the commitment of the management (at all levels) to promote it, the entire interim management team of the City Planning Function was white. There is furthermore a strong suspicion of racial bias among the planners inferred from the notes taken of the Co-coordinators' Meetings (see page 168). It would therefore seem that real change, which, according to Flyvbjerg (2001:122) "*requires changing our selves, our bodies, our souls, and our ways of knowing*" is yet to happen in the Tshwane municipality.

7.9 CONCLUSION

The restructuring of the planning function of the CTMM is a compelling example of symbolic violence and institutional victimization⁶⁷ against the municipal planners. The brutality enacted upon the planners through the one-sided decision making by the new top management, on the one hand, and the failure to communicate with the officials, on the other, is all the more alarming because it takes place in an environment where the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and democracy are expected to apply. The Tshwane study furthermore indicates the restrictive effects of a managerialist environment where the entrenched distribution of power leaves little room for innovation or constructive, open debate. Aspirations to managerial positions that characterize such an environment are shown by the Tshwane case to cloud the substantive issues and to encourage rationalization and power play. As most municipal planning practice takes place in similarly managerialist environments, these dynamics dare not be ignored by a planning theory that has as its aim improved praxis.

The Tshwane story displays strong parallels with Flyvbjerg's (1998) study of Aalborg, and seems to confirm most of his power propositions. However, the Tshwane case provides no evidence to confirm the simple inversely

⁶⁷ See Gunder and Mouat, 2002.

proportionate relationship between power and rationality Flyvbjerg (1998) suggests. Rather, it would seem that the relationship between power and rationality is a more complex and dynamic one dictated by an intricate web of situational elements.

The pivotal role of communication, both as a means of exercising power and of resisting it, emerges clearly from the Tshwane study. Moreover, it is seen that in cases where a party finds itself in an unchallenged position of power (as does the new Tshwane top management) communication as a mechanism to entrench the position of power becomes redundant. When the party in power abstains from engaging in communicative action, efforts to resist by parties with lesser power (such as the Tshwane planners) are effectively devastated.

The study unlocks a number of opportunities for further research. Firstly, it could form the basis for a comparative study with other cases of organizational change. In the South African context, specifically, it begs comparative analysis in terms of the restructuring experiences in other municipalities, particularly in the other metropolitan municipalities. In the second instance there is scope for a more in-depth study of the reasons behind the struggle for recognition of the City Planning function within the new Tshwane organizational structure. The possibility could be investigated of drawing parallels with the broader search for a new role and identity for the planning profession.

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Annexure A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me shortly how you came to work in the local authority, and what your career history was to date.
2. Were you involved in the transformation process? If yes, in what way?
3. What do you think about the transformation of the City Planning Function?
4. Are things better or worse now than before the transformation started? Why?
5. Do you think the changes made to the structure and leadership of the City Planning Function were positive or negative? Please explain why you feel this way.
6. What are the main frustrations that you are experiencing at the moment?
7. How do you feel about top management (the Mayor, the incumbent Councillor, the Municipal Manager, the Strategic Executive Officer)?
8. Have you ever seen the Mayor face to face? And the Municipal Manager? How do you feel about this?
9. How would you describe an effective town planner?
10. As a town planner, do you feel that you are effective at the moment? Please explain why (not).
11. Do you think the way in which local government has been transformed in Tshwane has made town planners more effective? Why do you say that?
12. Do you feel more loyal, or less loyal to the local authority now than before the transformation process? Try to describe your loyalty before and now in terms of a scale from 1-10, where 10 is extremely loyal and 1 not loyal at all.
13. How would you describe the team spirit or relationship between the town planners as a group?
14. How would you describe the relationship between the planners and a) other horizontal groups (e.g. the transportation engineers) and b) top management?

15. What do you think planners can contribute towards the aims of developmental local government?
16. What do you think can be done to make the Tshwane planners more effective?
17. Do you feel motivated towards your work at the moment? Why (not)?
18. Are you satisfied with your job at the moment? If not, were you at one time?
19. Do you feel that the reward system in the CTMM is such that planners will be rewarded for being effective? What kind of behaviour is rewarded and how?
20. Has transformation succeeded in addressing/rectifying any of your problems thus far?
21. How do you see your future at the CTMM? How does that make you feel?
22. Is there a common goal/vision shared by all the Tshwane planners? If so, what is that goal?
23. Do you see yourself playing a positive role in the transformation the organization and of the city? Why (not)?
24. Do you experience a sense of belonging to the CTMM? Do you experience a sense of belonging to the group of town planners?

Annexure B

GLOSSARY OF KEY LEGISLATION

Local Government Legislation:

The Development Facilitation Act, 1995 (Act 67 of 1995) (also known as the DFA)

The Remuneration of Public Office-bearers Act, 1998 (Act 20 of 1998)

Local Government Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act 27 of 1998)

Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) (also known as the Structures Act)

White Paper on Local Government. 1998

Green Paper on Development and Planning. May 1999

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000)

Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000).

The Local Government Municipal Electoral Act, 2000 (Act 27 of 2000)

Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) (also known as the MSA)

The Local Government Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) and the Policy Framework for Municipal Borrowing and Financial Emergencies.

The Local Government Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004)

Labour Legislation:

The Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995) (also known as the LRA)

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997)

The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) (also known as the EE Act)

The Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998)

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act 4 of 2000)

Larger reproduction of figures

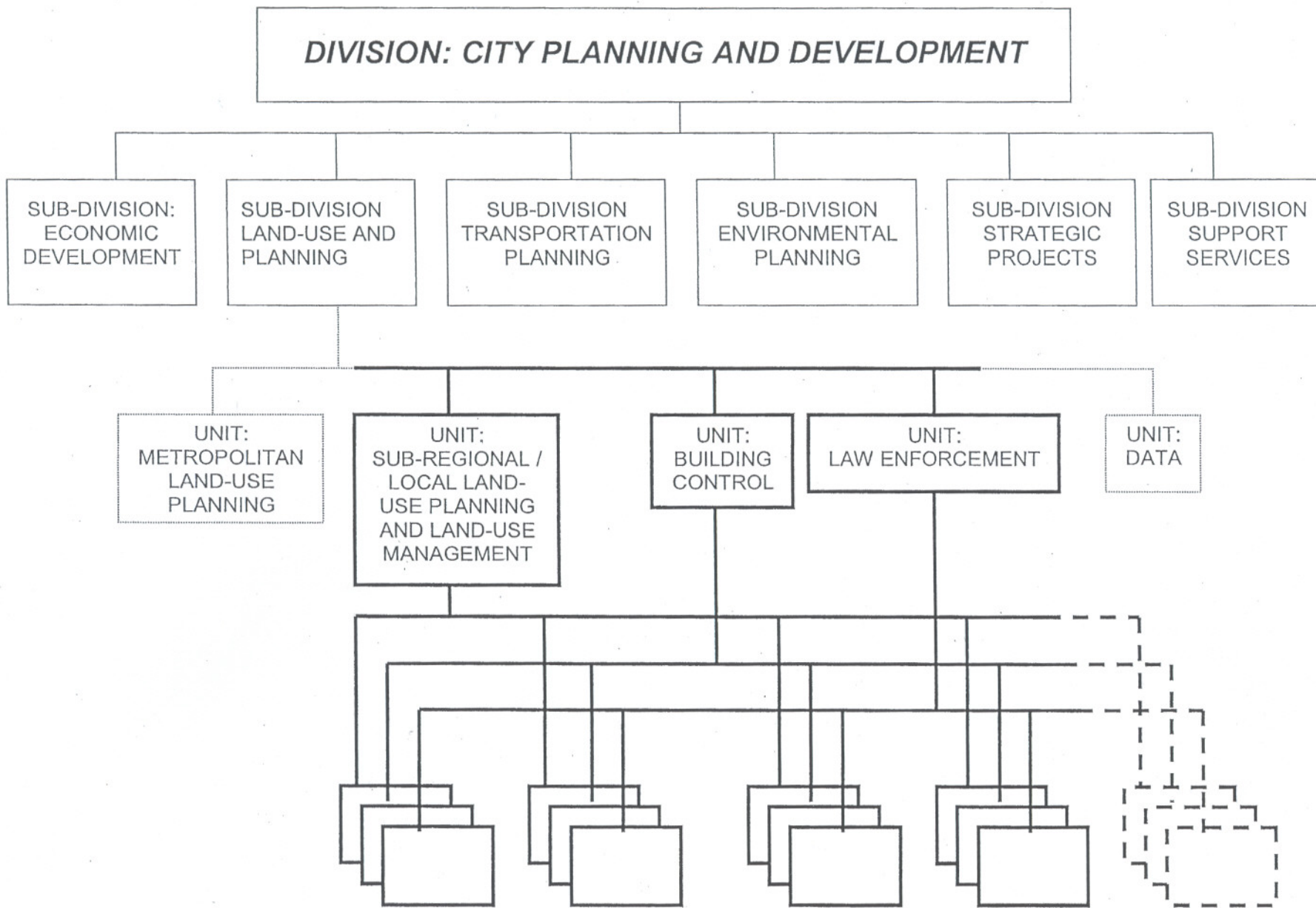


Figure i: City Planning purpose structure proposed by the Amund Beneke group in April 2001

Figure ii: Newsletter distributed at Nomgqibelo's road show meetings of 14 and 15 May 2001 (a)



RESTRUCTURING OF FUNCTIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Become part of a positive process

A positive process is under way to restructure the individual functions of the Economic Development Division. The process will be driven by working groups, each of which will be coordinated by a convenor. Convenors have already been nominated for the Local Economic Development, Transport Planning and Management, Fresh Produce Market and City Planning working groups. Working groups for which convenors are still to be nominated are Tourism, Strategic Development, and Administrative Support Services.

A coordinator has also been nominated to coordinate the activities of all the working groups. The coordinator reports to the Divisional Manager, who in turn liaises with the Municipal Manager, the Transformation Manager and other Divisional Managers.

The convenors and the coordinator have been nominated to do important work during the transformation process. These functions should in no way be confused with appointments, promotions, or any other permanent change to the personnel structure. All the nominees retain their current job levels, etc.

What happened to the 'old' processes?

Since the establishment of the Division in December last year, there have been a number of ad hoc restructuring processes. Various discussions have taken place, and working groups were established related to some of these ad hoc processes. Some very valuable work was done by way of these processes. However, the manner in which it was done proved counter productive, mainly because of the following reasons:

- Restricted participation and involvement by officials.
- Inadequate communication.
- Lack of coordination within the Division and with other Divisions.
- No clearly defined mandate and terms of reference to structure the process.

A committed Divisional Manager

It is, however, the commitment of the Divisional Manager: Economic Development, Ms. Nomgqibelo Mdlalose, that the new restructuring process will be inclusive of all officials, that communication will enjoy a high priority, that there will be proper coordination of restructuring processes within the Division, as well as coordination with processes of other Divisions, and that a clear structure and terms of reference will be established to guide the process.

All Administrative Unit Managers have been asked to grant their officials permission to participate freely in the working groups.

Figure ii: Newsletter distributed at Nomgqibelo's road show meetings of 14 and 15 May 2001 (b)

What will the convenors do?

The task of the convenors will be two-fold. While they will focus on the restructuring of the functions, they will also manage the operational tasks within their function. The convenors will also be responsible for administrative and logistical support related to the activities of the working groups.

In conjunction with the working group members, the convenors have to compile a work plan which will contain information regarding a work program (including dates and frequency of meetings); goals, objectives and deliverables of working groups; establishment of sub-working groups or task teams if and when applicable, a communication strategy/plan to ensure participation and informed officials, as well as a modus operandi of the working group and task teams.

Let's respect the protocol

Uncertainty about correct protocol has caused a good measure of delay, misunderstanding, and embarrassment since the establishment of the Division. All officials are asked to take note that, from now on, the convenors will be the central point of reference for each function. You are kindly requested not to contact the Divisional Manager directly with requests (especially not requests for interviews) as this places undue strain on an already full portfolio. All enquiries, reports etc should be directed to the Divisional Manager via the relevant convenor.

The following is a list of the convenors and their contact numbers.

FUNCTION	CONVENOR	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	TEL. NO.	FAX	E-MAIL
Coordinator	Pieter Vosloo	Room 227, 2 nd floor, Old Raadsaal	337 4186	323 5824	Pvosloo@gpmc.org.za
City Planning	Belinda van der Merwe	Room 411, HB Phillips	337 4075	328 5137	BVDMERWE@gpmc.org.za
Fresh Produce Market	Christo Groenewald	Market, DF Malan Drive	328 3010	323 2855	Groenewald.Christo@pr etoria.gov.za
Local Economic Development	Verna Nel		671 7252	671 7865	Nelv@ctc.co.za
Transport Planning and Management	Victor Baloyi	Room 501, HB Phillips	337 4068	328 5137	Vbaloyi@gpmc.co.za

Remember that your comments are important to us. Please do not hesitate to send us your comments/queries, preferably by fax or e-mail. You can count on a response!

Restructuring of City Planning Functions

DIVISION: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

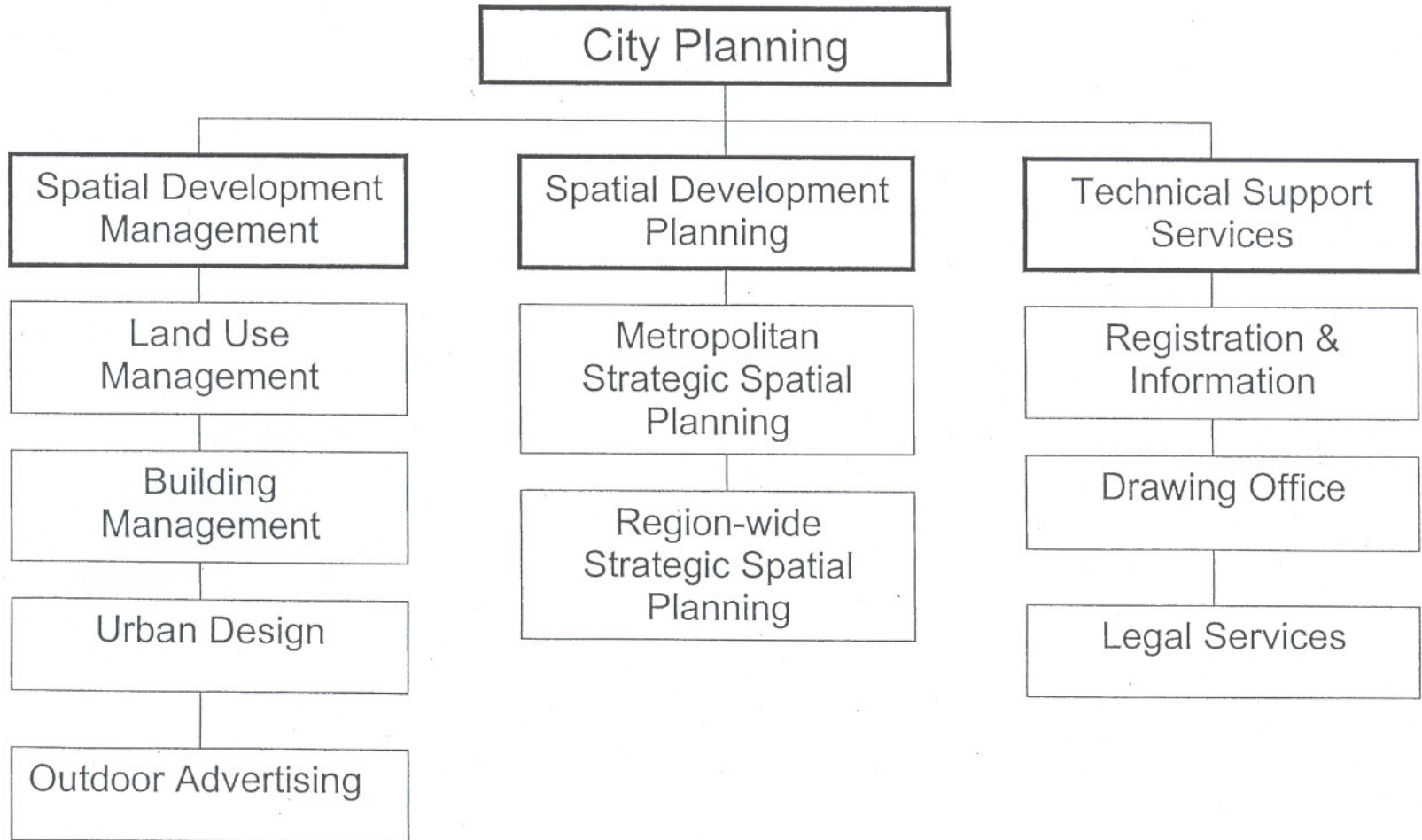


Figure iii: City Planning functions from the work plan compiled by Belinda van der Merwe, 8 May 2001

City Planning Restructuring

Convenor: Belinda van der Merwe

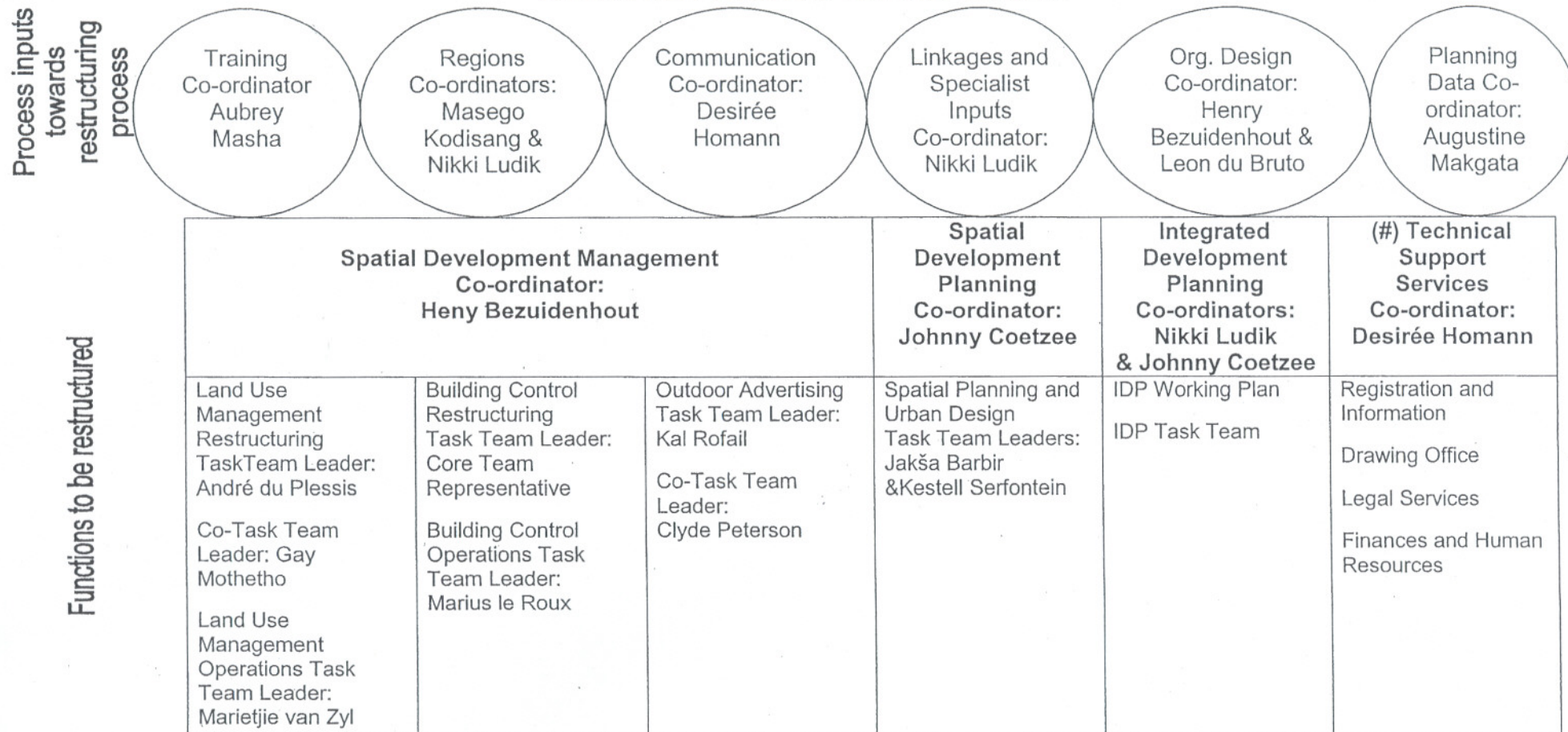


Figure iv: Structure of Core Team and Task Teams

Co-ordinators: Due to the universal influence and nature, which the specific task will have on the restructuring of the City Planning Function, a Co-ordinator for the task was nominated. Co-ordinators will mostly be involved with the restructuring process in a full time capacity.

Task Team Leaders: Due to the specific nature of the task to be performed within the restructuring of City Planning Functions, a Task Team Leader was nominated. Task Team Leaders will mostly be involved with the restructuring in a 80/20 ratio of time spent on a specific task.

Co-Task Team Leaders: A Co-Task Team Leader will support the Task Team Leader in performing the specific task and will be capacitated by the Task Team Leader so as to enhance empowerment and training of previously disadvantaged and junior personnel. Co-Task Team Leaders will mostly be involved with the restructuring through direct communication to and from the Task Team Leaders.

(#) The restructuring of the Technical Support Services will be subject to the outcome of the restructuring of the primary functions.

CPR	<i>CITY PLANNING EMPLOYEE AUDIT</i>	CPR
<p>All employees of the current City Planning Functions at all the Administrative Units are here-by requested to complete the Audit Form comprehensively and to submit it to the Office of the Divisional Manager: Economic Development on or before 4 June 2001 at 16:00. The forms may be submitted via fax for the attention of Nikki Ludik at (012) 3285137 or may be sent electronically via email to nludik@gpmc.org.za. It has come under the attention of the Divisional Manager that there is no universal employee audit containing all the necessary information for restructuring purposes. Although it is accepted that employees had to submit similar audit forms in the past, those forms did not contain all the important information, which is now crucial for a successful restructuring process. Please accept the completion of this form in a positive light as it is envisaged that these forms may assist the Divisional Manager to utilise personnel where most appropriate by taking into account, not only the employee's experience and qualifications, but also the respective fields of expertise and interests. If you have any questions please contact Nikki Ludik at (012) 3374073 / 0824671812.</p>		
<i>First Names</i>		<i>Last Name</i>
<i>Gender</i>		<i>Home Language</i>
<i>Race</i>		<i>Nationality</i>
<i>Job Designation</i>		<i>Current Post Level</i>
<i>Id nr.</i>		<i>Administrative Unit</i>
<i>Previous Dispensation Department / Division</i>		<i>Office Location / Physical Address</i>
<i>Office Phone nr.</i>		<i>Office Fax nr.</i>
<i>Email Address</i>		<i>Cell Phone nr.</i>
<i>Postal Address</i>		<i>Residential Location / suburb</i>
<i>Total number of years at current Admin Unit</i>		<i>Highest Qualifications</i>
<i>Where was qualifications obtained</i>		<i>Other completed courses, training programs etc.</i>
<i>Your fields of expertise (Please tick the appropriate box/es)</i>		
Land use management		Communication
Development Control		Marketing
IDP / LDO		Local Economic Development
Environment		Other: Please list
Urban Design		
Housing		

Figure v: City Planning Restructuring Employee Audit Form (a)

SIGNED:	CAPACITY:	DATE:
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IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TASK TEAM MEMBER OR IF YOU ARE ALREADY A TASK TEAM MEMBER, READ THIS:

- A Task Team is a consultative body.
- Task Team Members may be nominated by the Task Team Leader to assist with specific problems, tasks and functions.
- Task Teams will meet on a regular basis as, when and where most appropriate for the majority of the Task Team Members.
- The Task Team Leader will communicate meeting arrangements to the Task Team Members.
- If you have any questions related to your specific Task Team, please contact your Task Team Leader directly. In the instance where a Task Team Leader has not been nominated, please contact the Function Co-ordinator directly.
- If you have any *other* questions related to the *restructuring process* please contact Desiree Homann at 0829284394.
- If you are unhappy about any issue or problem related to your specific Task Team which you feel you can not openly discuss within your Task Team or with your Task Team Leader, please contact Nikki Ludik at 0824671812.

IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TASK TEAM MEMBER, READ THIS:

- If you are not a member of a Task Team and you have any questions related to a specific Task Team, please contact the Task Team Leader directly.
- In the instance where a Task Team Leader has not been nominated, please contact the Function Co-ordinator directly.
- If you have any other questions related to the restructuring process please contact Desiree Homann at 0829284394.
- If you are unhappy about any issue or problem related to a specific Task Team, which you feel you can not openly discuss with the Task Team Leader, please contact Nikki Ludik at 0824671812.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

***YOU ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE CITY PLANNING
FUNCTION AND AS SUCH YOUR POSITIVE INPUT ARE HIGHLY APPRECIATED!***

APPROVED MACRO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

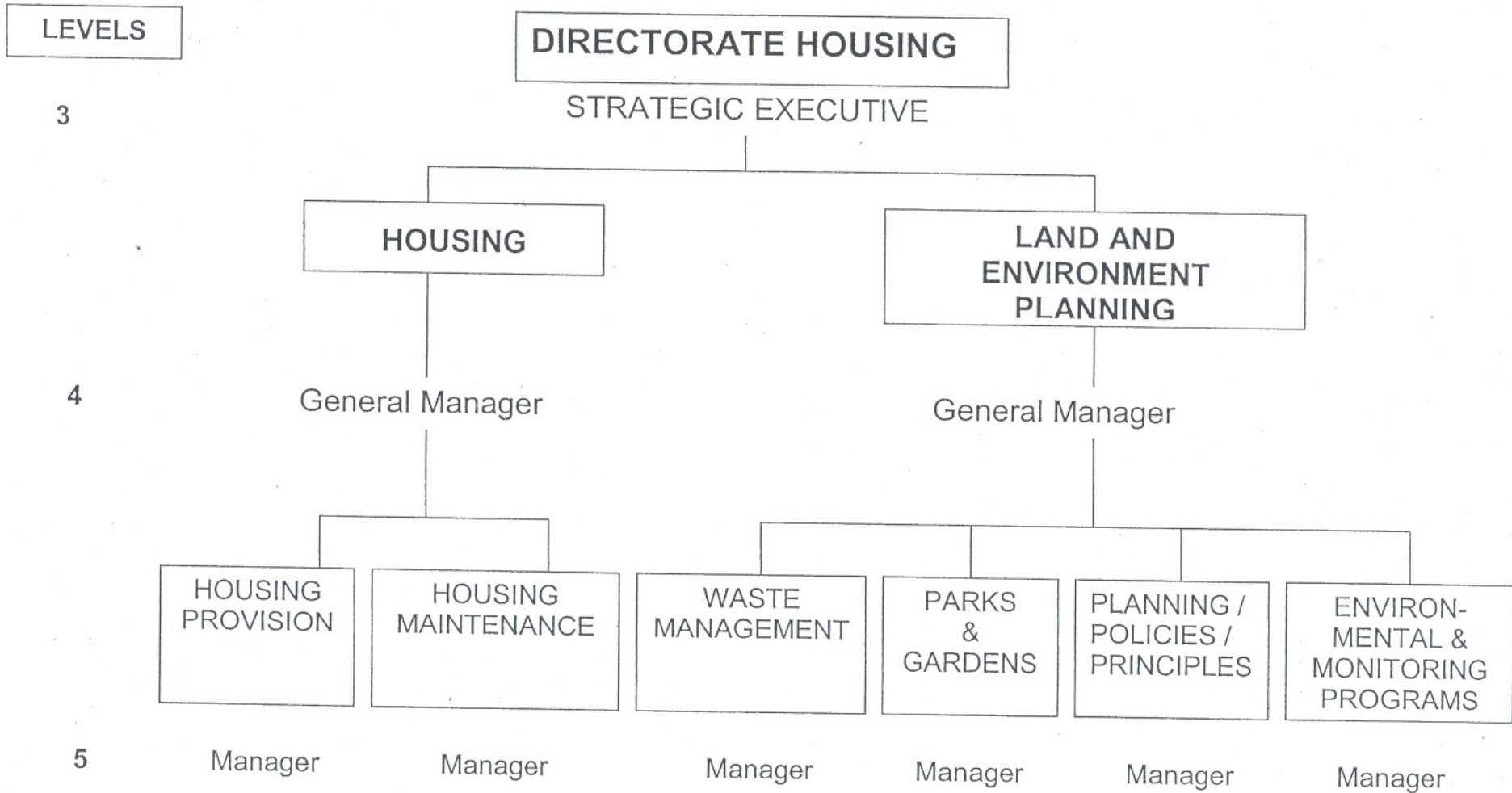


Figure vi: Approved macro organizational structure for the Housing Directorate as on 1 July 2001

PROPOSED INTERIM MACRO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

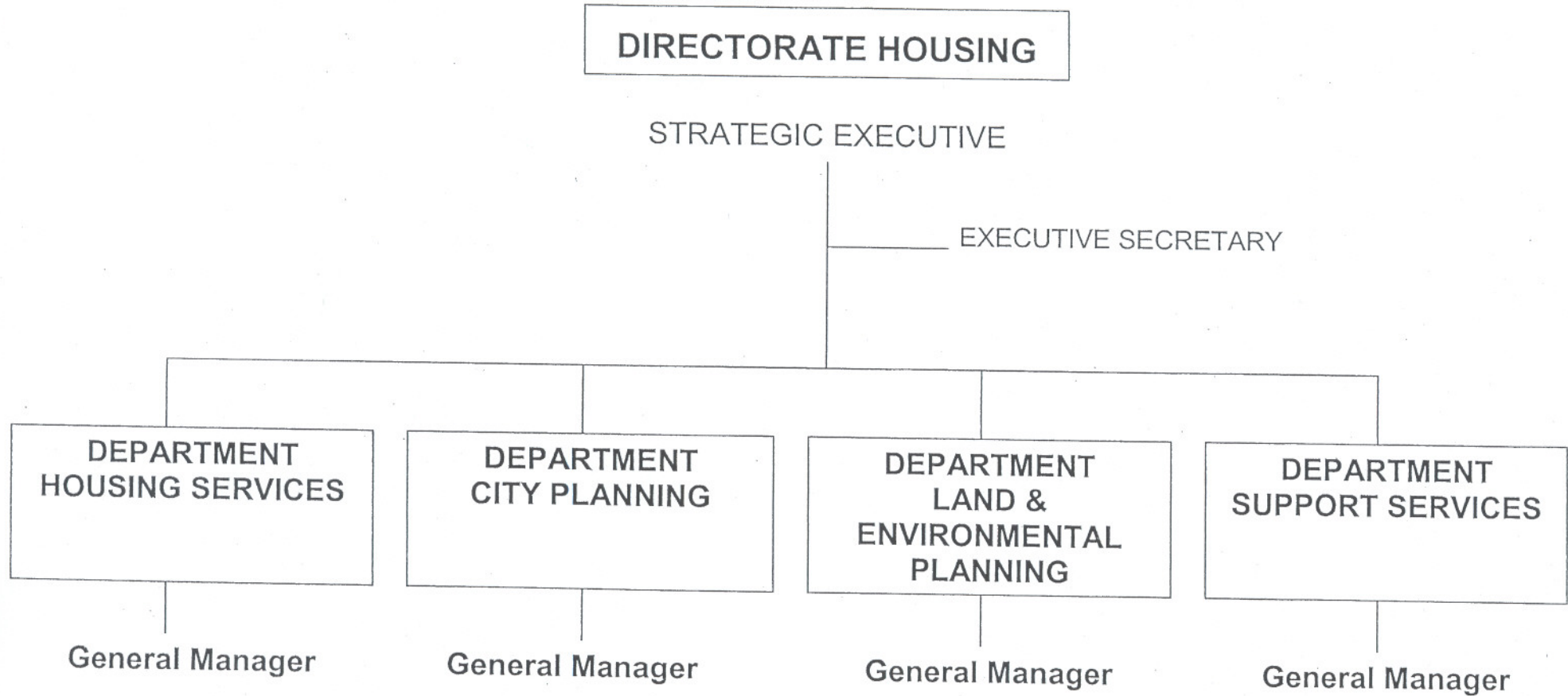


Figure vii: Proposed new macro organizational structure: Housing Directorate, as on 7 August 2001

STRATEGIC SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

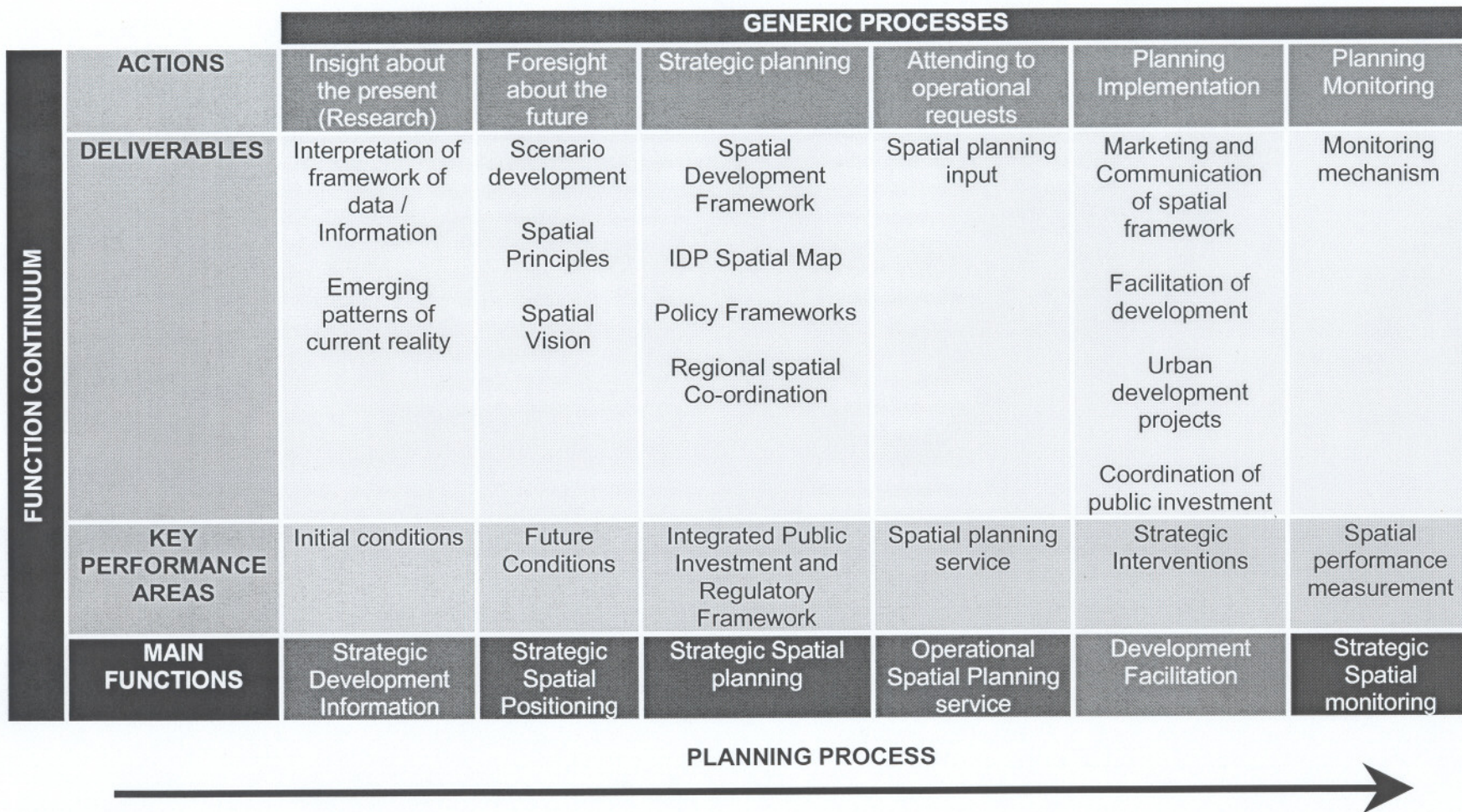


Figure viii: Strategic spatial planning process derived from generic strategic planning processes

Figure ix: Extract form *City Planning – a rough guide* (CTMM, 2001ss) (a)

1. *What is a city?*

A city is a place where many people come together to live, socialise, work and trade.

For this purpose they occupy space and use various natural resources, such as land, water, air, minerals and plants. They build buildings, public urban spaces (such as streets, squares and parks), roads and other structures. These structures are serviced by service infrastructure (such as networks of pipes and cables).

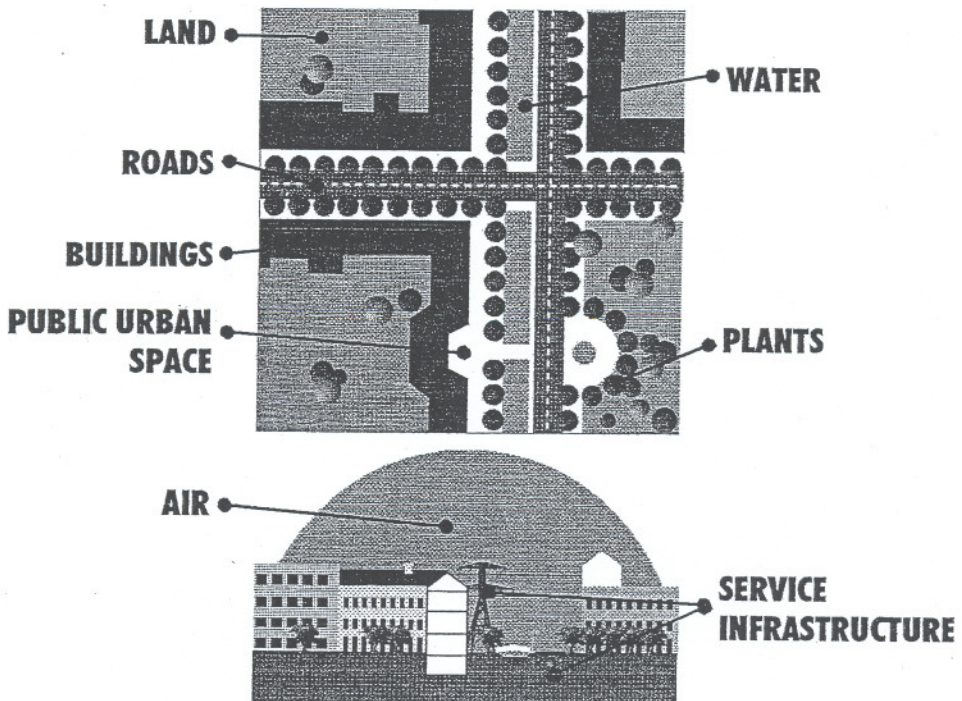
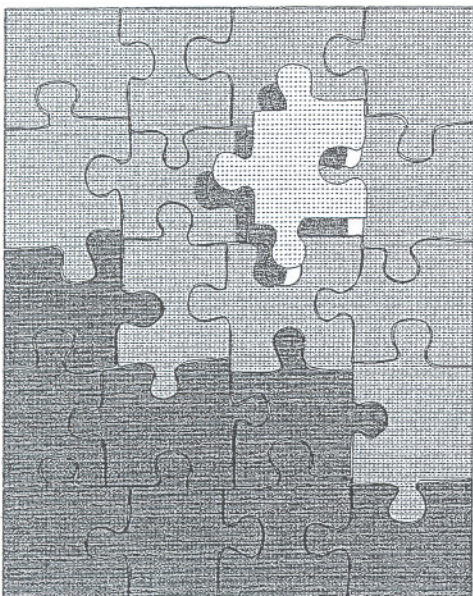
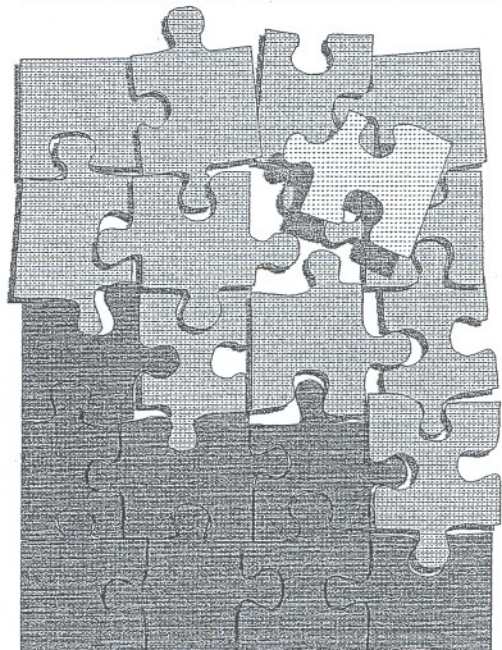


Figure ix: Extract from City Planning – a rough guide (CTMM, 2001ss) (b)

2. *Why do cities have to be planned?*

All these resources, structures and infrastructure co-exist within the same space and are therefore called spatial elements. Apart from sharing the same space, all spatial elements depend on and affect each other.

Because of this and in order to ensure that resources are used wisely and people's needs met in a coordinated manner, all spatial elements have to be developed and used in accordance with a well thought-out plan or spatial development framework.

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT**UNPLANNED DEVELOPMENT**

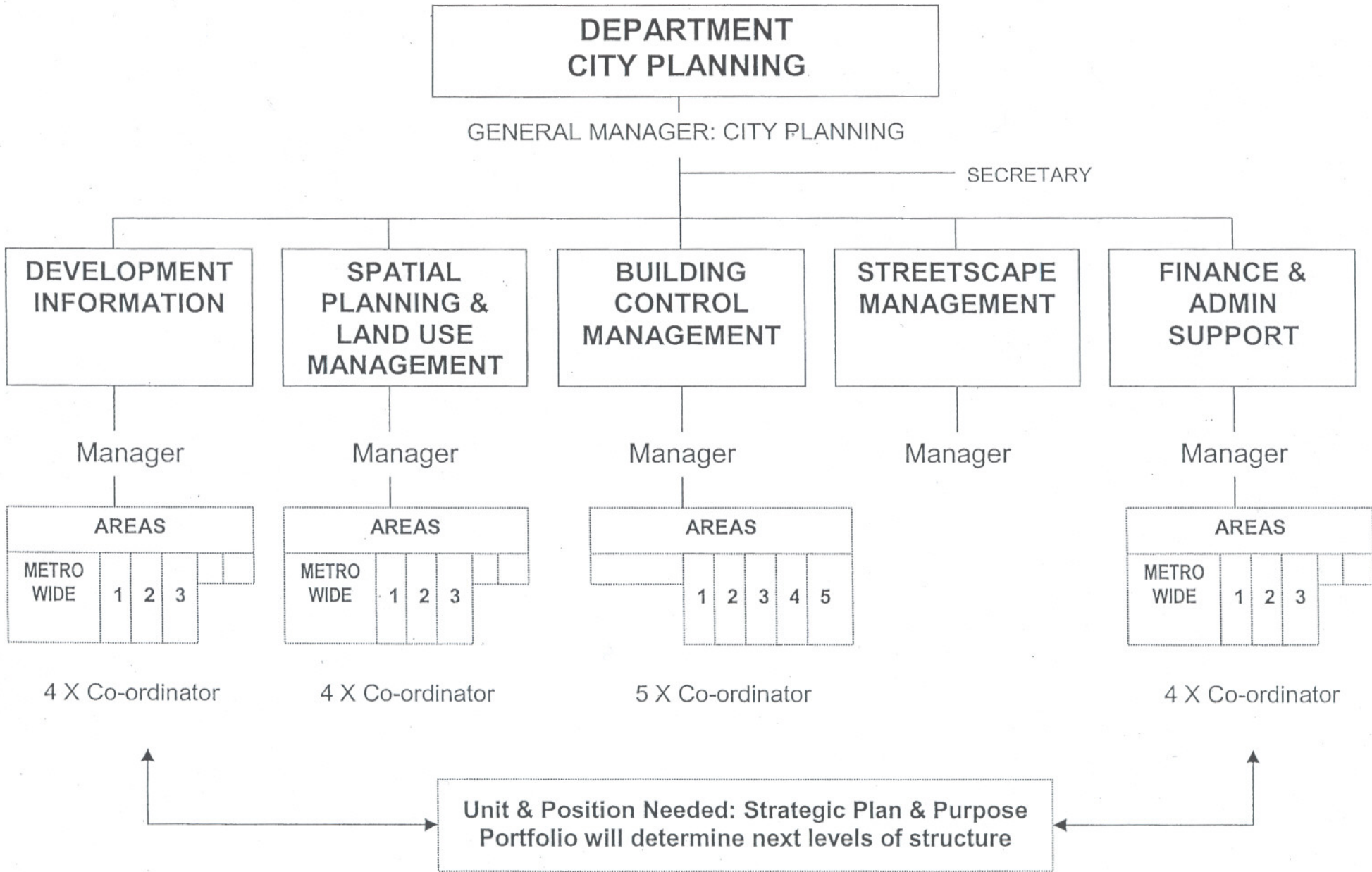


Figure x: Proposed structure for the City Planning Department, August 2001

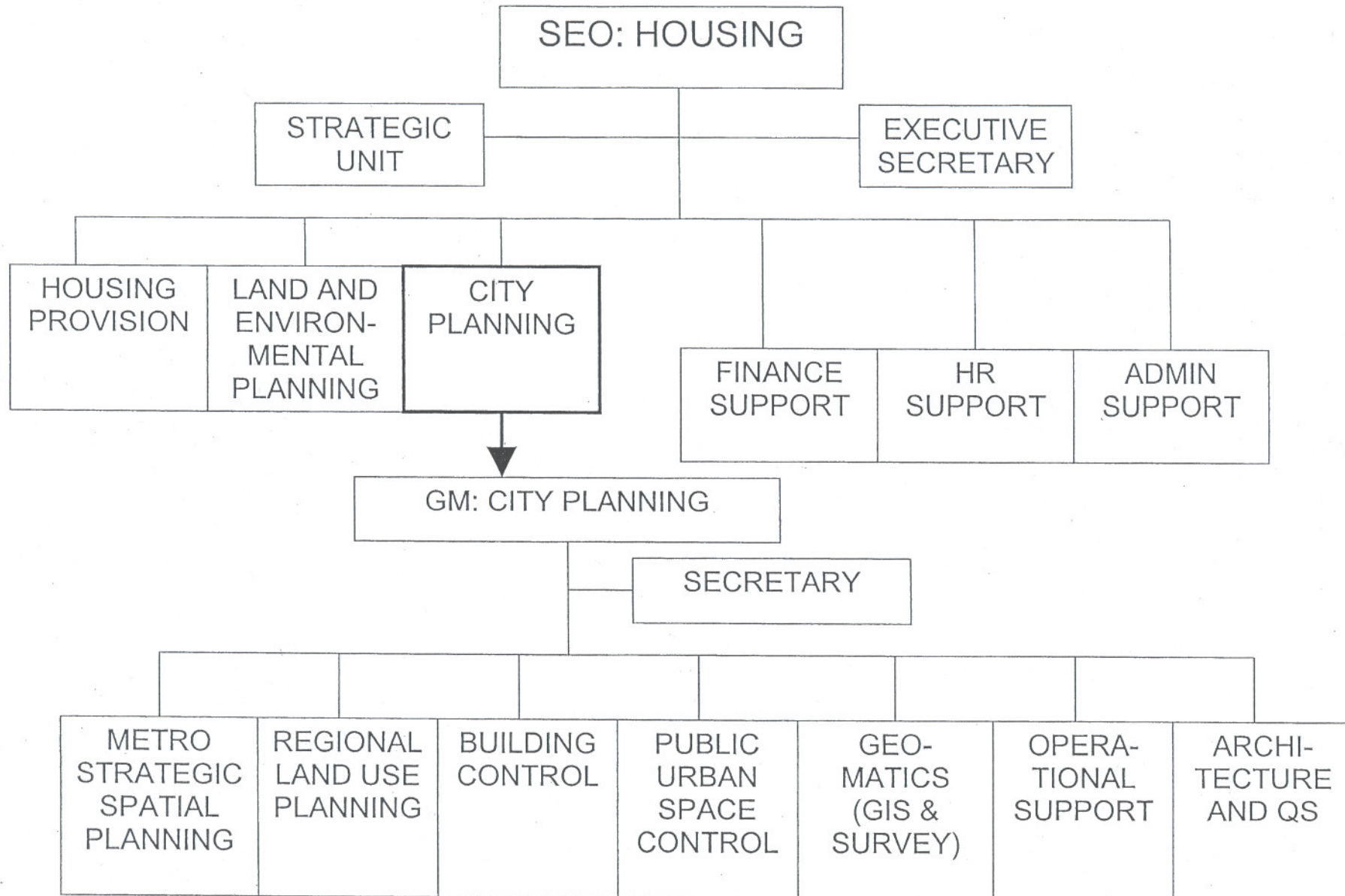


Figure xi: Proposed interim structure for the City Planning function, October 2001