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Urban planning in Tshwane Addressing the legacy of the past

Nicholas Clarke and Frandah Lourens

The City of Tshwane has strategic significance from a local, national and international point of view as it is the capital city of South Africa. The inner city is its functional and symbolic heart representing the history of the inner city in its built form, is a critical element for the creation of a future African Capital City. Its heritage reminds us of where we've been and where we are going. It creates a rich and unique canvas on which the future can be built. Without history the inner city will have no sense of place and will lack identity. Over the past couple of decades, several aspects have emerged that potentially threaten Pretoria's role as a capital city: decay, the relocation of more affluent inhabitants and businesses to suburban localities, and the lack of curation of its built heritage, to name but a few. These challenges are now being addressed through several initiatives that demand the participation of all that have a stake in the successful creation of the Capital City.

The historical development of the inner city as capital city

Pretoria, the historical core of the City of Tshwane, has been the capital of South Africa in some form or another since it became the capital of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR) in 1860.¹ The inner city specifically reflects this important role, and the history of the country is reflected in the patina of its built form. It is from this city that the organs of the Apartheid state operated, and within this city that the first steps towards democracy were taken. It is the city that hosted events that changed the history of the country—events such as the Treason Trial in 1956, in which 156 people, including Nelson Mandela, were accused of treason. It formed the stage for the Women's Anti-Pass March to the Union Buildings, and for the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as the first president of the democratic government.

While the Ndebele already settled in the area in 1600, the city was only founded as a permanent settlement in 1855, during the early days of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR).

Between 1910 and 1961, it was the administrative capital of the Union of South Africa, a self-governing dominion of the British Empire. The compromise reached when the Union of South Africa was established in 1910 led to the formation of three capitals in South Africa, namely Pretoria as the seat of National Government, Cape Town as the seat of the Legislative Branch and Bloemfontein (now Mangaung) as the Judicial Capital. In 1960, under National Party rule, South Africa became an independent republic and Pretoria its executive capital. Between 1910 and 1994, the city was also the capital of the province of Transvaal. During the apartheid years, the City's

Left: The Union Buildings with in the foreground the Nelson Mandela statue, together a powerful symbol of the City and the new South Africa. (Marieke Kuipers)

¹ Allen, 1971: 9.



A city of Modernist skyscrapers: the Saambou Building (227 Thabo Sehume Street, left) and newly re-faced ABSA Bank Building (right), one of the most iconic of the Modernist tower blocks in the Inner city. (Nicholas Clarke)

spatial development approach was directed by the segregationorientated removal of 'non-whites' from the city; an economic, spatial, social and political exclusion of this population group from urban life. The continued persistence of apartheidorientated settlement planning patterns forced the (re)location of residents in the city to the north and western peripheries of Pretoria, which ultimately defined the city's urban fabric and its historical identity as an inaccessible social space to many of its inhabitants.

Today it is the proud executive and *de facto* national capital of the first democratic government of South Africa. Tshwane, and more specifically the inner city of Pretoria, is the executive capital and is home to the seat of the South African President and National Cabinet. It is with these political and administrative associations that a number of government departments, embassies and tertiary and research institutions are located within Pretoria.

Each successive government tried to erase that which came before and imprint its own dominance onto the built form of the inner city. As capital of successive regimes, Pretoria has become a city of landmarks: national symbols that can be associated with various regimes include public squares and parks, imposing buildings, monuments, and sculptures at prominent, strategic localities.²

The ZAR period bequeathed the urban street grid with, as its centre, the still important Church Square—historically the town market, religious space and gathering place. It is still home to the statue of Boer leader Paul Kruger, and its mooted removal is an emotional issue for parties on all sides. Several important historical buildings from this period remain on and around Church Square, including Kruger House (1884), the Old Government Printing Works (1893), the New Government Offices (1890), the Old Raadsaal (1889), and the Palace of

² Maré, 2006.



Schubart Park, residue of apartheid era planning policies with segregation as aim. (Johan Swart)

Justice (1896). Many of these buildings were designed by the Dutch architect Wierda in the *Departement Publieke Werken* (Department of Public Works) of the ZAR. They remind us of the close links between the government of the ZAR and the Netherlands.

The Union period is well represented in the city's heritage landscape. Associated with this period are well-known monumental buildings such as the Pretoria Station (1910), Transvaal Museum and the Union Buildings, the latter two both completed in 1913. The City Hall followed in 1926.

Under apartheid rule other landmarks arose, including the Voortrekker Monument (construction commenced during the Union period in 1938 and was completed in 1949, a year after the National Party came to power), the TPA Building (constructed to house the Transvaal Provincial Government and now called Public Works House, 1963), the Volkskas Building (1978, now ABSA), the State Theatre (1970), Schubart Park (1976), the Reserve Bank (1988), and UNISA (1972 onwards). The bulk of these were modernist tower blocks in highly visible localities, making them imposing landmarks visible from great distances.

After the advent of democracy in 1994, Freedom Park, on a prominent hill on the southern side of the inner city, was created in honour of the liberation struggle. The new municipal office, Tshwane House, under construction at the time of writing, was commissioned to replace the old municipal offices, Munitoria, a large portion of which had already been destroyed by fire in 1997. Several street names were changed to commemorate heroes from the liberation struggle.

A number of sculptures has been commissioned through the years to adorn prominent public spaces in order to celebrate the heroes of each successive political regime. On the square in front of the City Hall, a statue of Andries Pretorius, a Voortrekker leader after whom Pretoria was named, as well as a statue of his son MW Pretorius, the first president of the ZAR, were unveiled in 1954. The statue of the legendary Chief Tshwane, after whom the City of Tshwane was named, was erected in 2006. At the Union Buildings, an equestrian statue of General Louis Botha, first prime minister of the Union of South Africa and Boer War hero, was erected in 1946. The statue of JBM Hertzog, a Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, was erected in 1977, but relocated on 22 November 2013 to make way for the 9-metre high statue of former president Nelson Mandela.

A larger than life bust of another former Prime Minister and staunch supporter of white dominated rule in the 1950s, JG Strijdom, was located on the square of the same name. Ironically, on 31 May 2001, exactly 40 years after South Africa was declared a republic, this bust collapsed through the floor of the square into the parking basement below. It made way for the new Lilian Ngoyi Square, named after the anti-apartheid activist, and now hosts the Women's Museum, still under construction.

The impact of apartheid planning

Of all her historical periods, the polices of the apartheid period probably had the most dramatic influence on the development of the inner city. Racial segregation policies and their hardhanded application destroyed much of the existing fabric of the inner city. Scant regard was paid to historical treasures except



The live broadcast of the funeral of former president Nelson Mandela, set against the Paul Kruger statue. Tshwane is a city with a rich cultural heritage and myriad associations. (Adrian de Villiers)

where they could be used as part of a nationalist dialogue. The most dramatic of these interventions was the Goedehoop project, which led to the construction of Schubart Park, a government subsidised housing project, in 1976. This modernist housing project, modelled on the principles of Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine, consisted of freeways and tower blocks. Planned to take up most of the north-western quadrant of the inner city, it was never completed. It dislocated communities and destroyed several historical buildings. It left in its wake four introverted, featureless towers and large tracts of vacant land, and sterilised a once vibrant part of the inner city. Residents were forcibly removed from the mixed neighbourhood of Marabastad to beyond the periphery of the city, thereby 'ridding' the inner city of all 'non-whites'. Plans were also made to demolish the western façade of Church Square to make way for high-rise offices to host government departments. Only public outcry and protest managed to save the remaining adjacent heritage buildings.3

³ Clarke, 2014: 378, and Clarke, 2015: 380-1.

Changes after 1994

The inner city suffered decline from the early 1990s onwards, due in part to large-scale suburbanisation and decentralisation. Affluent inhabitants and businesses fled the inner city and the perceived threat of the policies of an ANC-led government, and went in search of the comforts and security of the affluent eastern and southern parts of the city. By this time, as already mentioned, the western part of the inner city, traditionally the poorer part of town, had already been destroyed by segregationist policies and modernist projects.

Coupled with these forces, the change to democracy created new challenges through the need to democratise not only government administration but also the capital's urban form. The focus shifted to addressing the formidable housing needs of the disenfranchised and poor, and the infrastructure backlogs in the townships and rural areas. The development and protection of the inner city received low priority, given the scale of the problems facing the city. Government investment shifted to the periphery of the city, whilst the municipality struggled with institutional restructuring. To make matters worse, when the province of Gauteng was created, Tshwane was replaced by the City of Johannesburg as the provincial capital, thereby losing an important element of its function and leaving large office buildings, such as the TPA (Public Works House) complex, empty.

After 1994, the character of the inner city also started to reflect the changes in the country, and today manifests a multi-ethnic society, encompassing a wide variety of cultures, languages and religions. It also reflects the extreme inequality of a society with a Gini-coefficient of 0.63.⁴

With no clear vision for the inner city, a virtual lacuna in terms of policy, a lack of public investment⁵ and, critically, a lack of urban management, the inner city was sent into a seemingly unstoppable cycle of decline. Crime increased, public spaces deteriorated through neglect, and with a lack of basic maintenance and cleaning, informal trade crowded the sidewalks. As buildings became vacant, they were illegally occupied, overcrowded, and trashed. The inner city lost its sense of pride.

The role of the government in the inner city

Due to the role of Tshwane as the administrative capital of the country and as result of a Cabinet directive, most government departments are still located in the city. These make up a critical part of its functioning, as government forms a significant part of its economic base, currently supporting approximately one in three jobs.

Of late, several government departments had to enter into lease agreements in decentralised locations. A push factor in this trend is the growth in the number and size of government departments and the need to consolidate a single department in a single building. The city often cannot provide for buildings that can accommodate this trend, and consequently departments are now often scattered throughout the inner city in different office blocks, many in low-grade office space. This fragmentation has resulted in additional costs and loss of efficiency. Finding suitable accommodation for new departmental offices in the inner city is complicated by predominantly private landownership and the lack of large enough vacant stands.

⁴ The Gini-coefficient is a measure of income distribution, where 0 represents maximal equality, and a value of 1, maximal inequality.

⁵ Some investment companies have seen the opportunity posed by the flight of capital from the inner city and have strategically effected urban renewal projects of their own accord. See Clarke & Corten, 2011.

This increases costs and creates substantial time delays for construction. The decaying character of the inner city, with dirty streets, pollution, traffic congestion and crime, mostly due to a lack of urban management, makes it an undesirable location for any departmental headquarters.

The diametrically opposite pull factor is the ample land available in the suburbs, which are also perceived to be safer, more convenient, easy accessible and attractive. It allows for campus-style low-density office developments in park-like security environments. National Government have committed themselves to remain within the inner city of Tshwane and develop all permanent head-office accommodation within the inner city. This provides regeneration, and mixed use opportunities within the derelict areas of the city.

Heritage assets of the inner city

The inner city contains the bulk of heritage buildings and structures located within the entire Tshwane. In fact, an estimated 39% of the inner city is occupied by heritage structures, and approximately 500 buildings in the inner city are considered to be of historical value. Due to the city's relatively young age, the oldest buildings only date back to 1870. Heritage buildings are however under serious threat, as only 19 inner city buildings have thus far been listed as Heritage Resources. It is estimated that at least 47 of the total number of heritage buildings were destroyed between 1990 and today, although this figure could be higher. Heritage buildings are neglected and have fallen out of use. Many have been altered to such an extent that their heritage value has been destroyed. This decay has many causes: they might be unsuitability for current demands, the cost of their upkeep is often thought to be too high and there exists a lack of understanding of their importance, to name a but a few.

This built heritage of the city faces destruction unless creative ways are found for the adaptive re-use of these buildings, and their inclusion in the transformation processes of the inner city into a Capital City.

The inner city today

Today the inner city is still the most accessible point in the city, offering the highest number of jobs and the highest residential densities of the whole metropolitan area. Despite its decline, it has remained the only receptacle of a new, shared history, the only place where real integration has taken place. It is still the face of government and portrays a very distinct image due to the presence of various important buildings, squares, monuments and statues. As such it provides the only platform to take the Capital City forward in a way that is truly democratic, shared, and mindful.

However, much still has to be done for the inner city to truly reflect the image of an African Capital City of Excellence.⁶

⁶ This phrase, contained in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document, (City of Tshwane, 2015b), summarises the ambitions for the future of the city.

Towards a capital city: current planning frameworks

From the preceding it is clear that an integrated strategy that couples national and local government is imperative to address the future of the capital. It is in this regard that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Minister of Public Works and the Mayor of City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in 2005. Furthermore several Cabinet decisions? have been issued that affirm the status of the inner city as the capital of South Africa, and mandate a formal cooperation between the City of Tshwane and the National Department of Public Works, whose mandate includes the housing of National Government Departments. These decisions direct government departments to remain in or (re)locate to the inner city, and direct the development of a framework to improve the physical working environment of government departments and to also develop accommodation solutions.

Re Kgabisa Tshwane⁸

In response to the mandate from Cabinet, the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) presented its Re Kgabisa Tshwane Strategic Plan 2005, integrated with the City of Tshwane. The aim of this plan was to provide improved physical work environments for the headquarters of National Government departments in the inner city of Tshwane. Prior to this plan, there had been a holistic strategic initiative facilitating the integrated provision of accommodation for government departments in a manner that would contribute to urban renewal in the inner city.

The Re Kgabisa Strategic Plan was geared to provide for improved accommodation without moving out of the inner city, which would have resulted in accelerating the private sector decentralisation process and further deterioration of the inner city. Why would the private sector move out if government stays within the inner city? National Government was seen as being in a position of responsibility to utilise the strategic opportunity offered by the fact that it occupied more than half of the inner-city office space in order to assist in the growth and development of the area. Despite this, some departments have in the recent past relocated to surrounding suburbs. The environment has also not improved to such an extent that it has become attractive for government departments to remain in the inner city.

The challenge was (and still is) that government departments are located in accommodation that is both spatially fragmented and in dire need of major refurbishment. There is a strong demand for contemporary accommodation which supports service delivery, consolidation of operational functions and improved working conditions, and which is located in a secure and accessible environment with supporting amenities.

The Re Kgabisa Strategic Plan provided as one of its components a Spatial Development Framework (SDF) that had to be integrated with the spatial planning of the City of Tshwane (CoT), and when implemented would result in an improved image for Government in Tshwane, the protection of the

⁷ Cabinet Decisions of October 1997 and February 2001: National Government Departments are to remain in/locate to the Pretoria Inner City.

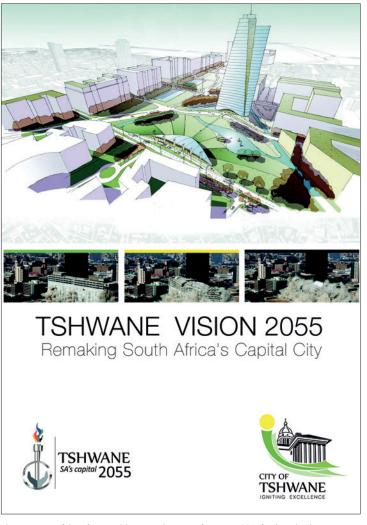
The Presidency's Programme of Action of 2004: ... [T]he national departments of Public Works as well as Public Service and Administration to jointly steer a project to improve the physical working environment of government departments and public servants. Cabinet Decision of July 2004: Approved development of strategic plan for accommodation of National Government in the Inner City of Pretoria ... Cabinet Decision of May 2005: Noted progress to date ... approved the implementation

plan for the project ... Therefore the shared vision of the parties is to develop, operate and maintain the City of Tshwane as the African Capital City addressing ... $\{t\}$ he redevelopment of the Inner City based on the approved Inner City Development Framework. (All from City of Tshwane, 2015b: 11 (unnumbered slides)).

⁸ The role of heritage assists as one of the drivers of the Re Kgabisa Tshwane programme, and is further elaborated in Chapter 5 of this report.

⁹ http://www.rekgabisatshwane.gov.za/about.html [Accessed 26 August 2015]; City of Tshwane, 2005: 13.

asset value of the Government's property portfolio, and the stimulation of growth and development in the inner city. The SDF proposed the accommodation of government departments in a series of corridors and nodes. 10 This has led to the majority of buildings in the inner city being utilised as office accommodation for government departments, including the Department of Basic Education campus, the Civitas Building renovation, the Central Government Offices renovation, the new National Library, and the 40 Church Square renovation, all in the inner city. On the edge of the historic city centre a number of new facilities has been created: the Department of Trade and Industry campus, the Batho Pele House renovation and extension (formerly known as the Agrivaal Building), the newly constructed Department of Environmental Affairs head office as well as the Stats SA head office (under construction in Salvokop). Despite their being located in the city, their interface with and contribution to the public realm remains problematic.



The cover page of the **Tshwane Vision 2055** document, features a vision for the redevelopment of the Caledonian Sports fields as an inner city park, and three photos of the demolition of the remainder of Munitoria to make way for the new Tshwane House. (City of Tshwane)

¹⁰ http://www.rekgabisatshwane.gov.za/spatial.html [Accessed 26 August 2015].

The Vision 2055¹¹

In 2013, the City of Tshwane developed a new vision, called *Tshwane Vision* 2055: *Remaking South Africa's Capital City*, ¹² which has as its aim the creation of a liveable, resilient, and inclusive city. ¹³

The Vision 2055 is meant to provide the city with a broad logic to guide growth and development and serve as point of reference for city priorities and strategic actions over the next 40 years. It details interventions that are aimed at breaking the cycle of generational poverty, inequality and underdevelopment, and redressing apartheid settlement patterns and social and economic exclusion which continue to define the city space. This is a lofty ambition when taking into account the challenges: more than half the households of Tshwane earn R 3 500 per month or less¹⁴ and, due to the legacy of segregation, poor people generally live far away from inner city transport and other social facilities. Compounding this already inequitable situation is the expectation that the city will grow from 2,9 million in 2011 to 4,4 million inhabitants in 2037, with an additional 635 750 housing units by that time. 15 The Vision 2055 therefore not only needs to address the past, but also needs to accommodate the future.

As part of the *Tshwane Vision 2055*, a number of priority projects have been identified to stimulate investment, growth and job creation. The regeneration of the *Tshwane* inner city and its transformation into the face of the Capital City by way of establishing a Government Boulevard, gateways into the city, Apies River damming and revitalisation to name but a view, are some of the priority projects to be implemented. A programmatic and systematic approach to spatial restructuring has been identified as one of the critical elements of remaking the capital and its soul. Another priority project, the rejuvenation of West Capital, is aimed at catalysing public and private sector investment in and around Marabastad. This will have an impact on the heritage of the inner city, and will require a process of compromise.

¹¹ Editor's note: The role of heritage in the *Vision* 2055 is further elaborated in Chapter 4 of this report.

¹² City of Tshwane, 2013: 20.

¹³ City of Tshwane, 2013: 5.

¹⁴ City of Tshwane, 2015a: 4.

¹⁵ City of Tshwane, 2015a: 15.

The Tshwane Inner City Regeneration Strategy (TICRS)

The TICRS was launched in August 2013, builds on the Re Kgabisa Tshwane, and hopes to not only drive the implementation of the regeneration of the inner city, but also to re-affirm the inner city of Tshwane as the Capital City of the country. It is premised on strong spatial governance—i.e. leading, directing and engaging with all stakeholders. ¹⁶

The TICRS consists of a number of integrated projects, covering a variety of fields. The regeneration of the inner city and the creation of a receptacle for the Capital City, is a complex long-term endeavour that requires substantial funding, the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, and integration between different interventions. The projects that make up the TICRS aim to address these complexities. Some of the other critical intervention projects are discussed below.

Urban management

Urban management and service provision, or rather the lack thereof, has been identified time and time again as one of the most important factors driving people and investors from the inner city.¹⁷ Despite these concerns, the cleaning of public spaces, improvement of public safety, and control over the lack of maintenance, unsuitable construction and remodelling of privately-owned buildings, have remained an elusive goal. Coupled to this is the need to make the inner city an investment-friendly environment, in order to encourage and facilitate new private investment and stem the flow of money out of the inner city to the suburbs.

To address these issues, a critical intervention is the creation of an inner city Development By-law, the purpose of which is to provide regulations, procedures and principles to formalise, legalise and institutionalize a Capital City Commission that

will ensure that the goals and objectives of the Tshwane inner city Regeneration Strategy, as set out in the Vision 2055, are achieved. This will, among others, allow for the development of the inner city of Tshwane as a Special Development Region.

The proposed Government Estate

A central part of the TICRS is the creation of a 'Government Estate'. This is envisaged to form the face of the Capital City and its core structure, and be the area where government buildings will be concentrated.

The Government Estate is based on the assumption that a capital city functions as the primary site where the country's collective self-image translates into an expression of physical space by way of creating unique precincts, public architecture and open spaces, cultural artefacts and boulevards. The Estate is envisaged to provide easy access to government and its public services through the clustering of government departments. It also hopes to provide performance platforms where an activist citizenry can present themselves as partners in tackling societal challenges. It will also host places where events, celebrations, marches and festivals can be staged.

Building on the Re Kgabisa Tshwane framework, this proposal has been developed to consist of a Government Boulevard, Ceremonial Boulevard, a Civic Precinct, and the Nelson Mandela Boulevard. The boulevards and precinct will contain landmark developments (including buildings of architectural and historical importance), public spaces, public art and gateways.

The Government Boulevard, located on Paul Kruger Street, will be a formal space reflective of the importance of National Government. It will house the bulk of National Government

¹⁶ City of Tshwane, 2015b: 5-13 (unnumbered slides).

¹⁷ See Nyamukachi, 2005.

offices, agencies and international organisations. The Ceremonial Boulevard, stretching from the Heroes' Acre in the west to the Union Buildings in the east, is located on WF Nkomo / Helen Joseph / Stanza Bopape Street. It will form the stage for protests, marches, parades, festivals, sporting events and the like. The Civic Precinct around the new Tshwane House, the State Theatre and Lilian Ngoyi Square will cluster municipal and government offices with a civic function. Nelson Mandela Boulevard contains Nelson Mandela Drive and the Apies River, which together form the eastern edge of the 'old' inner city and form an important gateway into the inner city.

Important elements of the Government Estate are the creation of high-quality public spaces, the protection, upgrade and celebration of heritage buildings, and ample use of landscaping and public art. This of course mandates a sustainable system of public maintenance and servicing, which in turn may require modulation of existing infrastructure. Where this is effected without taking cognisance of the value of heritage elements, much of the existing positive qualities of the city could be lost.



Paul Kruger Street, seen during construction work for the TRT. This will in future become the part of the envisaged Government Boulevard. (Nicholas Clarke)

Other projects

The TICRS also includes a number of other supplementary projects. The most important of these is the Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan. One of the most pressing issues in the city, that of public transport, had not received any attention in the run op to, or the years following, the transition to democracy in 1994. The city remains most easily accessed by means of private vehicles—a mode of transport that is neither attainable for the majority of the inhabitants of the city nor sustainable. 19

This plan focuses on turning the inner city around from a space dominated by wide streets that accommodate mostly private vehicles, to a space dominated by pedestrians and public transport. The Tshwane Bus Rapid Transit System is the first new investment in the currently inadequate public transport system, and will ultimately link the inner city to its satellite towns, thereby reaffirming the inner city's central role. The marked effects of this intervention can already be seen all over the city, but are most marked on Church Square, where the impact has been cause for some discussion.

Conclusion

Capital cities contain within them various qualities of which the cultural-historic is arguably one of the most important. These need to be maintained in an arena where commerce, entertainment, shopping and political power are concentrated. With the remake of the image of the City of Tshwane as an African Capital City of Excellence, it is imperative to actively direct strategies pertaining to the creation of a modern, integrated urban fabric based on the principles of achieving spatial justice, precinct and building sustainability, urban resilience, quality public space, and effective urban management. A crucial issue pertaining to current urban planning and the development of Tshwane speaks to the issue of how long the city's aging buildings will meet the requirements of government and related stakeholders. A significant amount of money will need to be spent on the upgrade of buildings to bring them to an acceptable state of occupant comfort. This is a clear challenge to the heritage fraternity and professionals in the city. With the inner city population continually increasing, gentrification is evident as young professionals and business workers move into the city centre.20

The adaptive reuse of heritage assets, including buildings, precincts, public spaces and parks, is to be enriched with elements that are representative of an inclusive heritage and new-found democracy. However, to achieve this spatial reconfiguration of Tshwane's current urban fabric, those planning processes set in place will need to be maintained and effected. This adaptive planning approach and the development of a flexible urbanism will need to be balanced against the competing needs of maintaining the cultural value of the city, in order for it to become a world-class capital city whilst functioning as the administrative capital and providing for the local socio-economic needs of its citizens.

¹⁸ City of Tshwane, 2015a.

¹⁹ It is estimated that currently 5% of all trips in Tshwane are made by public transport (including costly private taxis), 35% by private transport, and 30% by means of non-motorised transport (City of Tshwane, 2015a: 4).

²⁰ The city has a relatively young population: 42% of the population is under 25 years of age (City of Tshwane, 2015a: 4–5).

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