

# **HUMAN SETTLEMENT LAND SUITABILITY: A CASE OF EKURHULENI**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Spatial transformation has been a challenge since the dawn of South Africa's democracy in 1994. The spatial form throughout the country was designed in a racially segregative manner which led to a change in policy over the years to make meaningful efforts to transform this narrative through various strategies. Recently, the Human Settlements Department designated specific areas for developing subsidised low-cost housing to address the housing backlog in South Africa as well as channel development in these priority areas. While this may be progressive it is however unknown how much of this land located within the Priority Human Settlement Priority and Housing Development Areas (PHSHDA's) is developable and how much of it is state owned and therefore making it readily available. This study investigates the City of Ekurhuleni as a study area, which has approximately 160 000 households living in informal settlements that need to be housed. Using Evidence-Based Planning, the Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis and the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) were employed to develop a Planning Support System to determine land suitability within the PHSHDA in the City of Ekurhuleni, in South Africa. The results indicate that only 33% of the land located within the PHSHDA is highly suitable for housing development, with 23% moderately suitable, 21% marginally suitable, and 23% unsuitable for housing development. The results also indicate that 35% of the vacant land owned by the City of Ekurhuleni is located on highly suitable land within the PHSHDA.