As discussed previously, Mamelodi is an urban landscape situated 20 kilometers east of the Tshwane City Centre. It is a dynamic, vibrant, multi-cultural community set at the foot of the majestic Magaliesberg Mountains. This physical barrier forms the northern and eastern borders of Mamelodi, while the Pretoria-Witbank highway creates the southern border.

A tributary of the Apies River, called the Moretele, divides Mamelodi into two distinct halves, and a significant portion of Mamelodi’s green open spaces can be found along its banks.

Tsamaya road - the main road cutting diagonally across Mamelodi, along which much of the township’s business and light industry can be found, lies along the old trade route to Sekhukhuneland. The railway line running along the southern edge of Mamelodi is a reminder of President Paul Kruger’s struggle to gain independence from Britain through access to the Maputo harbour 110 years ago (van der Waal, 2000:1).

Mamelodi has a rich history of cultural diversity, complex social and economic relations, as well as its spirited political dynamics, mainly brought about by historical policies.
The History...

Mamelodi was originally a large farm called Vlakfontein, and its name was officially changed in 1962 to Mamelodi which means “Mother of Melodies”. It is widely believed that this name originated from President Paul Kruger who was known to the Bantu by his name ‘father of whistling’ or ‘man who can imitate bird’. Mamelodi lives up to this name, as it saw the formation of an original and unique jazz style called Molombo Jazz (Mamelodi Tourism Brochure, [S.a.]).

The Pretoria City Council bought Vlakfontein farm in 1945 to provide accommodation for the city’s labourers. In 1950, the apartheid policy and Group Areas Act saw people being forcibly removed from their houses and relocated to Mamelodi, where in 1953 the first official housing units were built, and it was formally proclaimed a ‘township’. Development began west of the Moretele River but was halted in 1968 in line with the apartheid regime, due to the fact that there were too many people moving into the area. Development only began again in the late 1980’s and spread over the river into the east (van der Waal, 2000).

The Vista University Campus, as it was previously known, was built in 1980 and served as an intellectual centre during the move towards a democratic government (van der Waal, 2000). It was officially incorporated into the University of Pretoria on 2 January 2004 (University of Pretoria, 2008).
Employment:
unemployed

informal:

- shebeens
- taxi's
- vegetable vendors

Methods of Transport:

- by foot
- rail
- taxi

travel everyday
Part 2: Climate, soil and vegetation

**Biome: Rocky Highveld Grassland**
This is a transitional type of biome lying between the typical grasslands of the high inland plateau, and the bushveld of the lower inland plateau. It is found mainly between 1500 – 1600m in altitude, also known as Bankenveld, which is a fire maintained grassland (Low & Rebello, 1996:39).

**Soil type:**
Mamelodi is situated mainly on the sedimentary shale deposit on the Magaliesberg Group, Pretoria Series of the Transvaal System. The soil comprises mainly of weathered shale which tends to become clayey under wet conditions (Le Roux, Louw & Nel, 1980:5).

Summers are long, hot and dry, and even though there are frequent thunderstorms, water is still considered a precious resource. Winters are short and mild with little to no rain, and frost is therefore rarely a problem. The clayey soil found in this area ensures that not too much water will be 'lost' to infiltration, and the vegetation commonly occurring here has a low - moderate water consumption.

![Precipitation](image1.png)

**Figure 69, 70, 71 & 72:**
Cussonia sp.; Rhus Karree alongside a large poplar growing inside the stormwater channel; Acacia xanthophloea and Acacia sieberiana - all photographed on the UP Mamelodi campus (Author, 2008). Other vegetation found on site: Combretum sp, Dombeya rotundifolia, Celtis africana and various other Acacia species.

![Average Temperatures](image2.png)

**Figure 73 & 74:**
Precipitation & Average Temperatures in Mamelodi (Author, 2008)

Students relaxing under the shade of an Acacia karroo on the UP Mamelodi campus (Author, 2008).
Part 3: The Site

- **Environmental**
  - storm water channels - unrealised opportunity for irrigation and recreation
  - large tracts of open land with the potential to become spaces of value
  - no botanical / medicinal or food gardens

- **Cultural**
  - inappropriate identity and a lack of sense of place
  - no art / sculpture
  - a lack of organised events, few students and therefore a lack of liveliness and fun
  - people have many different cultures, beliefs, languages, and so on, that provoke spontaneous, diverse activities and learning opportunities

- **Physical**
  - storm water channel - opportunity to become a playground / landmark / feature
  - very flat site
  - lack of landmark / focal points / identifying features
  - insufficient seating elements

- **Psychological**
  - campus lacks unique character
  - nothing to foster identity or sense of community
  - able to begin with a clean slate

- **Social**
  - no gathering spaces where many people can come together
  - lack of organised events
  - no focal elements
  - lack of variety and excitement - one small, empty cafeteria for example
  - people are vibrant, diverse and socially inclined

- **Educational**
  - lack of students
  - library is sadly lacking and does not come close to reaching its true potential as a community facility, for example
  - no visible communication of arts or culture
  - inaccessible institution that is inapplicable in its context
  - has the potential to become a life-changing institution that can make a difference in the lives of many

- **Recreational**
  - no organised entertainment or events
  - lack of outdoor gathering spaces
  - lack of sport facilities
  - students are always ready to have a bit of fun

Figure 76: Diagram analysing the opportunities and constraints of the UP Mamelodi campus (Author, 2008)
Western edge of University - High school across the road - create a link? Large open un-surveyed stretch of land, with a natural storm water channel running along its edge.

Figure 78: Gladys - lives opposite the University entrance and rents rooms out to students (Author, 2008)

Figure 79: On weekdays, throngs of school children move along the University's southern edge (Author, 2008)

Southern edge of University - Entrance to the campus, busy mornings. Major pedestrian route for children on their way to & from school. Formal residential edge - many people, passive surveillance, etc.

Figure 77: Informal vendors located at the entrance to the University and along Hans Strydom Road (Author, 2008)

Eastern edge of University - Open land on both sides of Hans Strydom Road - very busy road, some retail happening along the edge - retain and enhance this. University turns its back on the road and closes itself off - solution? Concrete-lined storm water channel running the length of the campus.
Existing fences, entrances and circulation

Figure 81:
Intimidating double wire + palisade fence surrounding the campus (Author, 2008)

Figure 82:
The palisade fence and open buffer zone are not a welcoming site (Author, 2008)

Figure 83a:
The entrance to the campus is walled off and secured by a guarded boom gate. There are no seating / waiting areas and trees are non-existent (Author, 2008)

Figure 83b:
View of the University from Hans Strydom Road
All but the roofs are obscured by the palisade fence

Entrance to University
- Pallisade fence

- Vehicular circulation
- Parking
- Pedestrian circulation

0m 100m 200m 400m
Existing hydrology

Figure 84: Hydrology in context (Author, 2008)

Figure 85: Site drainage (Author, 2008)

Figure 86: Storm water runs in a vegetation-lined permeable channel on the eastern side (Author, 2008)

Figure 87: Channelised water on site (Author, 2008)

Figure 88: Storm water runs in a concrete-lined channel on the western side of the campus (Author, 2008)
Various faculty buildings, not being used optimally (offices are empty, courses have been discontinued, and so on) - 6 - 9m high

Lecture halls, presently in use - single storey

Landmark entrance building - 15m at its highest point

Arena - used by University for sport and large gatherings, as well as the cafferteria. Used by the community for special functions like weddings, etc - 12m high
Existing library within restrictive laager formation - square, visually impermeable structure dominating the existing rigid, geometric arrangement. Inaccessible to the public.

Figure 99: Diagrammatic drawing of the campus (Author, 2008)

Figure 100: Interior view of the library building (Author, 2008)

Figure 101: The library building is almost completely visually impermeable (Author, 2008)

Figure 102: Vertically exaggerated, diagrammatic plan & section of library building (Author, 2008)

Figure 103: Situated in the centre of a ring of buildings, the library is visually dominant (Author, 2008)
Having analysed the site and having identified both the challenges that need to be addressed, and the opportunities that will inform the future design proposal, as well as the theoretical premise on which to base this proposal, we can now move on to the design specifics.

The design brief, as well as the successes and failures of pertinent precedents, serve to create a reliable point of departure from which to proceed.

**Part 4: Brief**

**Mission:**

- Maximise opportunities for **all people**
- Teach, empower and stimulate creative thought
- Build community spirit
- Provide spaces in which feelings of pride and local identity are fostered
- Encourage mutually beneficial relationships between people and their natural environment
- Promote sustainable development

The **U.P. Mamelodi Campus** offers the ideal place in which to explore and address these goals...

“If you are thinking a year ahead, sow seed.
If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant trees.
If you are thinking one hundred years ahead, educate the people”

Part 5: Precedents

Ivory Park Food Gardens, Johannesburg

The Ivory Park urban eco-village is run by a host of co-operatives, with members growing and selling vegetables, fixing and selling bicycles, recycling waste, running eco-tours and sewing clothes. A construction co-operative made up of local community members is in the process of building the village’s first homes. Project founder, Annie Sugrue defines the eco-village as a place "where people work, play, grow their own food and generate their own energy". She also explains however, that the village does not function as an "island", but strives to work in partnership with the broader Ivory Park community (Russouw, 2004). This is a prime example of what the University should become - a facilitator that encourages and oversees the running of small businesses by local community members; a facility that provides education at a grass roots level.
Dorothy Nyembe Park VS

- Bold, sculptural, robust place making elements
- Vast, open and relatively unused
- No evidence of community involvement
- Sand soccer field with footpath straight through it
- Water used as element running throughout park – areas of neglect & lack of maintenance
- 3-4 children’s play spaces – pre-made standard elements
- Standard element tying park together – concrete sculptures and benches

Figure 108: Bold, sculptural focal elements (Author, 2008)
Figure 109: Soccer field used as a walk-through (Author, 2008)
Figure 110: Water course - littered and eroded (Author, 2008)
Figure 111: Amphitheatre (Author, 2008)
Figure 112: Neglect and degradation (Author, 2008)
Figure 113: Standardised play elements (Author, 2008)
- Sculptural qualities not as immediately striking
- Smaller spaces, more enclosed and better utilised
- Community art and involvement evident – creating pride and local identity
- Grass soccer field in use
- Water used as element running through park – better maintained
- Children’s play areas not as standard and unimaginative
- Standard element tying park together – balustrades, bridges and fences

Figure 114: Family picnic under a large shady tree (Author, 2008)
Figure 115: Soccer on a Sunday afternoon (Author, 2008)
Figure 116: Gum-pole play structure (ILASA Merit Awards, 2005)
Figure 117: Bridges can become sculptural elements (Author, 2008)
Figure 118: Community-designed mosaic (Author, 2008)
Figure 119: Community participation (ILASA Merit Awards, 2005)