

Framework **Chapter 4**

Location

The precinct which is to serve as urban laboratory for the study is situated within Pretoria CBD. The precinct is located within the boundaries created by Skinner Street to the north, Nelson Mandela drive on the east, Pretoria Station to the south and Potgieter street on the west. The proposed Burgers Park Framework (BPF) focuses on the identified precinct and serves to inform design decisions on an urban level.

Identity

The Burgers Park precinct is contradictory in character. To the eastern side of the area, centred around Burgers Park, the precinct is quiet and mainly residential. This is juxtaposed with the western side of the precinct where commercial activity is focussed along the Paul Kruger axis with transportation activities to the south and cultural activities to the north.

Even though building use on the eastern side of the precinct being focussed

on residential development, the area consists largely of mixed use buildings. The area includes civic and cultural functions within walking distance such as churches, clinics, museums, government buildings and educational facilities which all contributes to its diverse environment.

The alignment of the transportation node with Church Square and the Paul Kruger Street axis leads to the formation of an important gateway where the axis nears the station. Due to the transportation node, the gateway (though currently not expressed through architecture) and axis ensures activity throughout the day and a continuous stream of pedestrians.

With high levels of pedestrian movement and numerous existing residential developments situated within the area, twenty four hour activity within the Burgers Park precinct is likely to be successful.

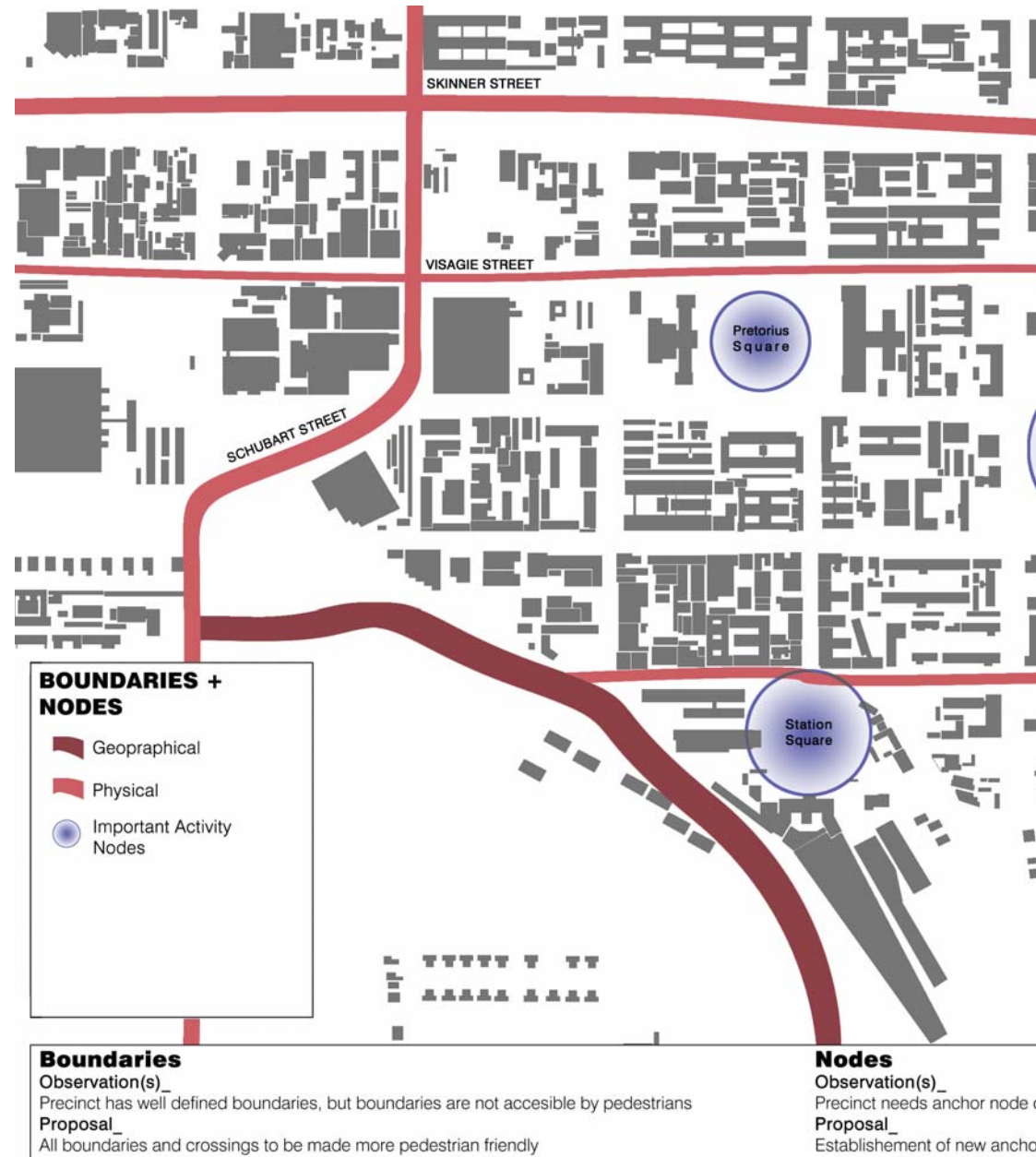


Fig. 4.1: Precinct analysis: boundaries + nodes



Fig. 4.2: Pretoria Station



Fig. 4.3: Victoria Hotel



Fig.4.4: City Hall



Fig. 4.5: Pretorius Square with Transvaal Museum



Fig. 4.6: Burgers Park



Fig. 4.7: Melrose House

Attractions

Numerous attractions and destinations are located within the precinct. These include, Freedom Park and the Salvokop Village (which although not included within the precinct adds to the genius loci of the area and can be reached on foot), Pretoria Station, the Blue Train, the Victoria Hotel and the Museum Park district.

The Museum Park district is situated within the BPF and contributes to the identity and vision for the area. The Museum Park redevelopment program was established in 1995, and was based on the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C., United States of America (Krige & Van der Waal, 1995: 2). The Redevelopment program aimed

at linking the different museums to form an identifiable whole while creating an environment where museums can spill into the city enhancing urban experience, tourism and educational potential (Krige & Van der Waal, 1995: 26).

The area identified as Museum Park is defined by Visagie street on the north, Van der Walt street on the east, Minnaar Street on the south and Schubart street on the west. Museum Park includes the National cultural history museum, City hall, Pretorius Square, the Museum of natural history (Transvaal Museum), Burger's park and Melrose house.



Fig. 4.8: Museum Park district

Problem

The Burgers Park precinct is faced with unique problems within the urban area and plays a critical role within the urban context of Pretoria CBD.

36 Pedestrian Movement

The area concerned with the BPF serves as transitional zone and gateway for pedestrians and commuters moving to and from the CBD by train, Gautrain, bus and taxi. Due to the concentration of public transport modes at this entrance to the city, the area is characterised by high levels of pedestrian movement. The area however, does not meet the needs of people moving through the precinct and is evident where vehicular transport currently surmounts the importance of pedestrian movement. Sidewalks along the Paul Kruger axis are too narrow to handle the amount of pedestrians moving through the area and does not contribute to interactive streetscapes or humanised

environments as is needed in high pedestrian areas.

Fragmented Identity

The Burgers Park precinct does not form a coherent, legible whole but is characterised by a fragmented identity. The traffic node on the southern perimeter, residential area to the east and Museum Park district to the centre of the precinct are in contest due to the lack of a unifying element. The undeveloped identity in the area leads to the perception that the Burgers Park precinct is a transitional space and not as a destination where undefined gateways serve as weak introduction to the city.

Minnaar Street

Minnaar Street is central to the precinct and the main axis through Museum Park. With only the northern side of the

street developed for pedestrian use the street actively turns its back on the rest of the precinct. On a smaller scale, problems can be identified within the museum park district itself.

Although the National Cultural History Museum forms part of the Museum Park development, the museum cannot be accessed through Minnaar Street which forms the main spine for Museum Park. Numerous barriers and accessibility problems with regards to cultural spaces and buildings can be found along the Minnaar Street axis, preferring rather to close off public space.

Activities do not extend beyond the cul-de-sac at the western end of Minnaar Street, resulting in the reduction of pedestrian activity beyond Bosman Street and the isolation of the precinct.

Public Buildings

With the addition of the Gautrain to the precinct, the lack of tourist infrastructure and building interface becomes increasingly problematic.

The Gautrain is estimated to be used by more than 55 000 people on a daily basis and will encourage tourism as well as pedestrian use. Pedestrian links will therefore need to be upgraded as well as the addition of new tourist infrastructure and the revitalisation of existing tourism resources.

The area is characterised by a lack of precinct specific and appropriate community functions such as public facilities, restaurants, shops and services for example tourist information. The existing public buildings within the precinct do not interact adequately with the street and the cultural facilities such as museums appear neglected and unfrequented.



Fig. 4.9: Analysis_1: strengths weaknesses and threats



Fig. 4.10: Building functions within the area



Fig. 4.11: Public space network



Fig. 4.12: Average daytime pedestrian activity

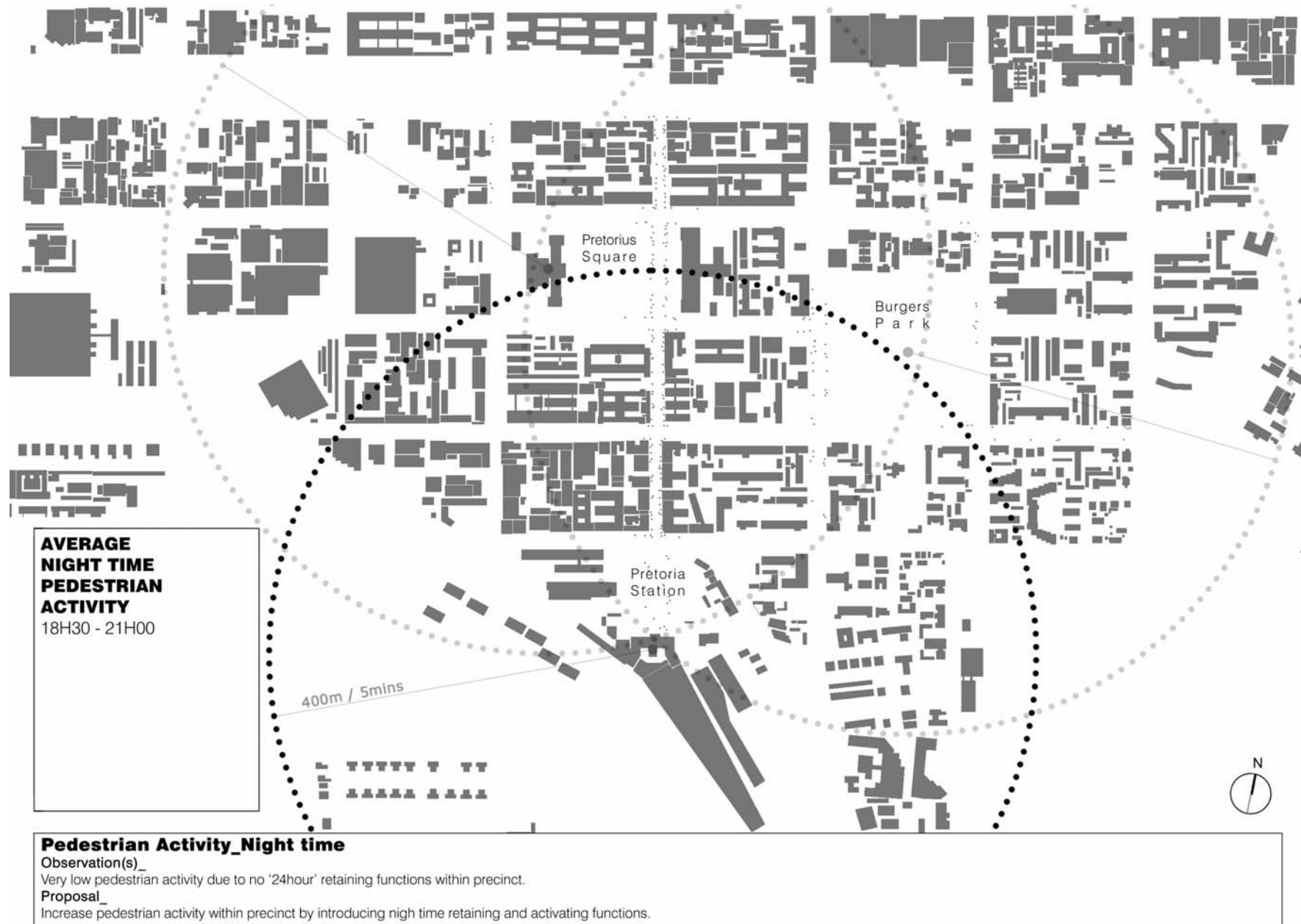


Fig. 4.13: Average night time pedestrian activity

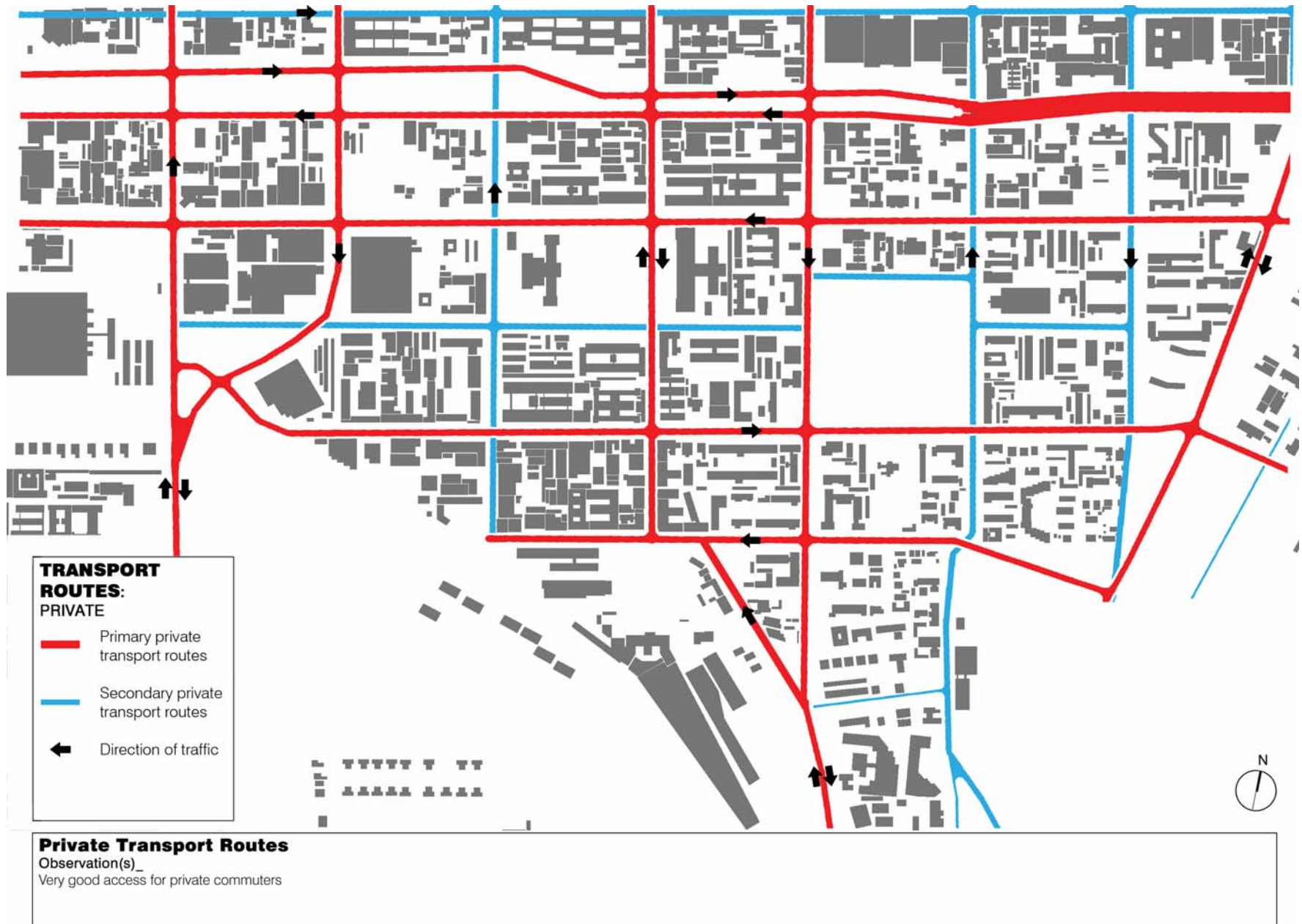


Fig. 4.14: Vehicular transportation routes

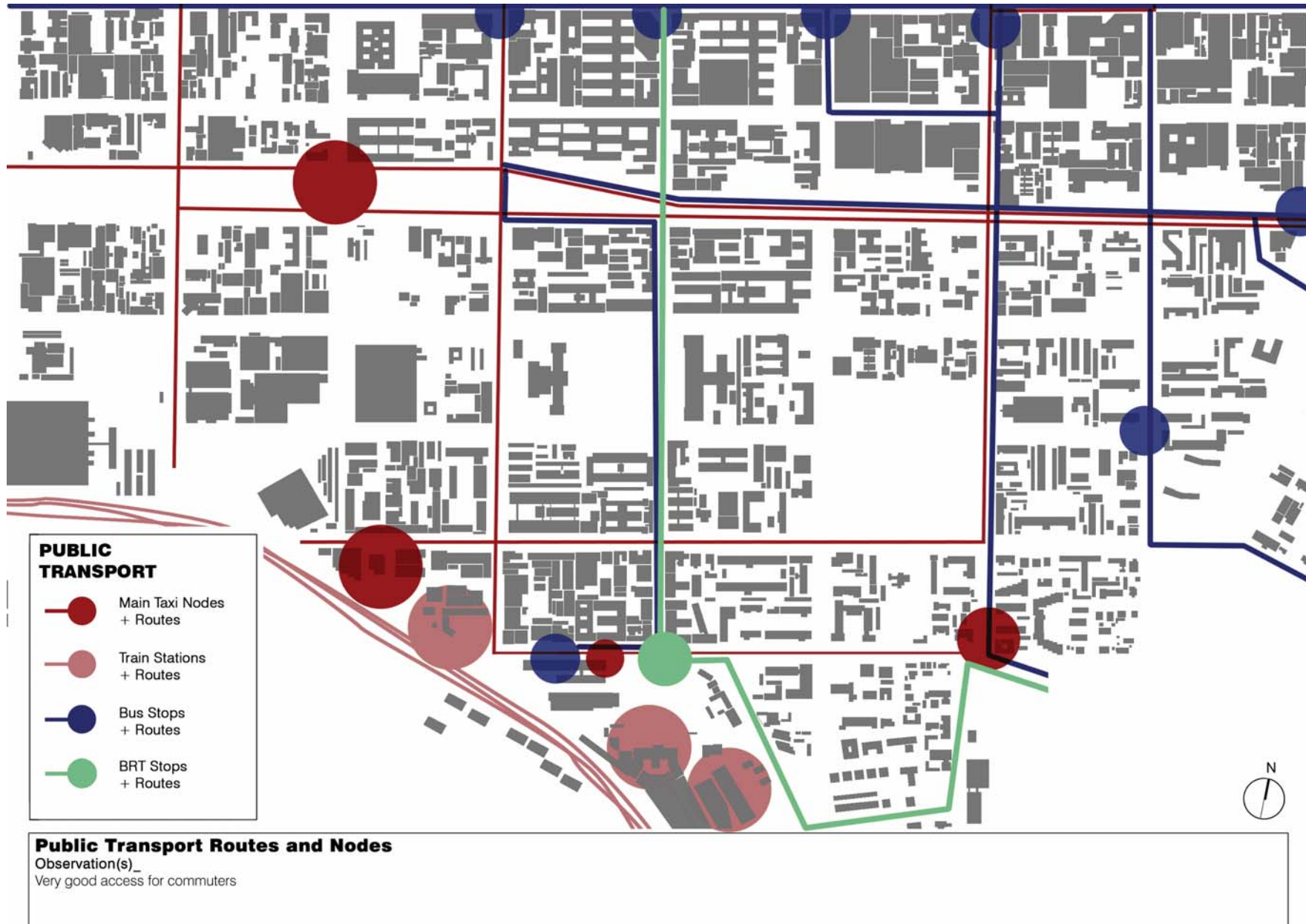


Fig. 4.15: Public transportation routes + nodes

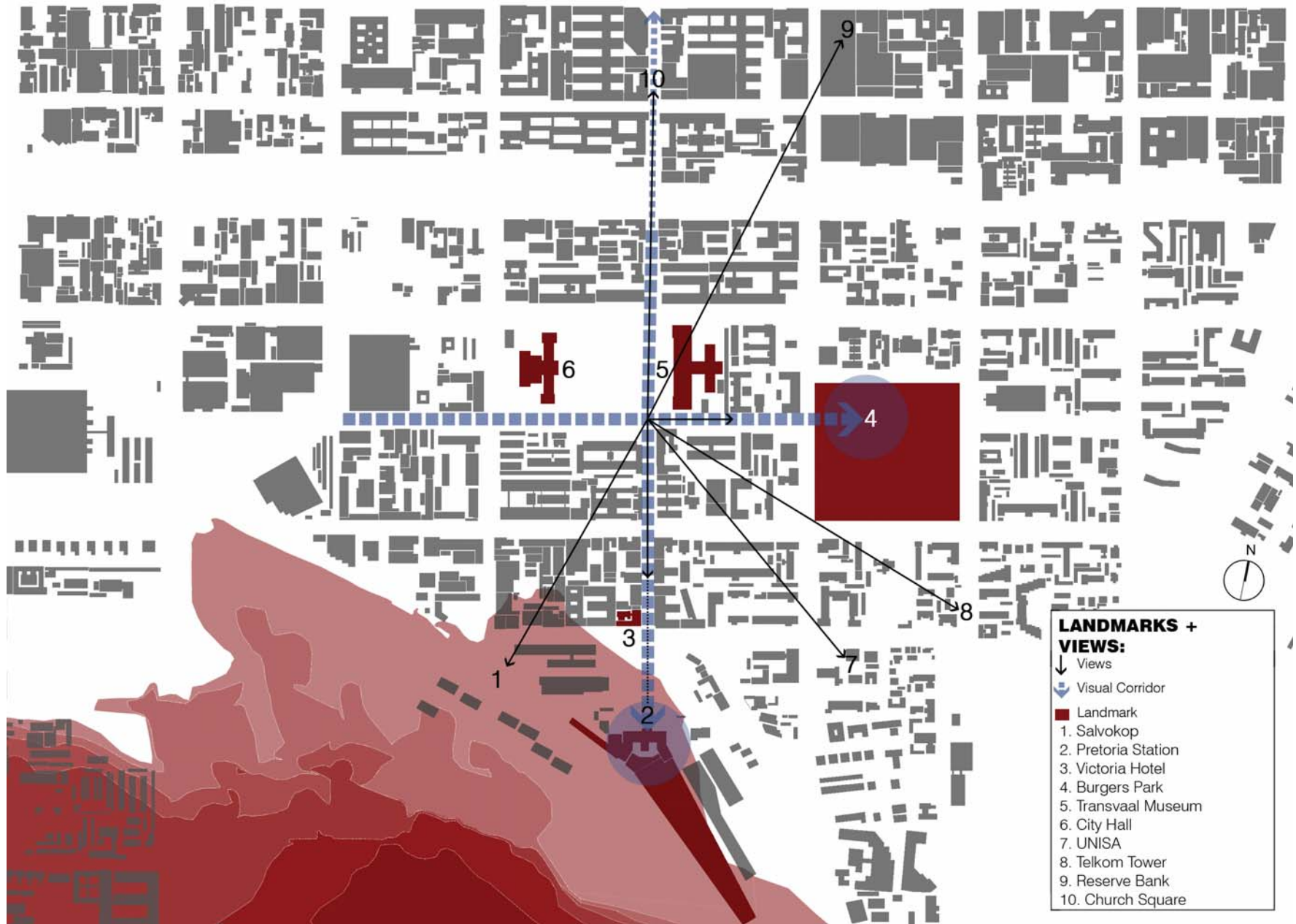


Fig. 4.16: Landmarks, views + visual corridors



Fig. 4.17: Analysis_2: opportunities

Target Group

The BPF focuses on three groups of people. The framework focuses on tourists, people moving through the precinct in order to get to a different location and people making use of the area itself.

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Tourists include people visiting the city, Citizens of Tshwane visiting the area unfamiliar with the environment and educational groups such as school fieldtrips. People moving through the area will include commuters who are either moving to a destination deeper within the city, or making their way to Pretoria Station in order to leave the city. Lastly the third group will include people who currently reside within the area, workers who make a living within the Burgers Park precinct and locals to the area.

Vision + Aims

The BPF aims to establish the identity of the precinct by consolidating the fragmented identity currently within the study area. The museum district should not be isolated within the precinct but should rather be linked with the mixed use environment surrounding it as well as the residential area and the transportation node to the south.

Due to the location and dominance of the transport node, pedestrian movement within the precinct should enjoy higher levels of attention with regards to movement routes, crossings and street side activity. Environments should be safe and secure for use by tenants, commuters and visitors. Twenty four hour activity should be promoted where well defined public space, civic buildings,

building interface and social interaction is of the utmost importance.

The BPF aims to create an environment which attracts museum and art education institutes, thereby facilitating the relocation of all museums in Pretoria to Museum Park and the Burgers Park precinct. In order to achieve this, museums need to play a bigger role in the public realm by making the spaces physically more accessible, or by associating the museum with public programmes. By attaching public programmes such as restaurants, after school care and children participation educational centres to museums it is hypothesised that these cultural spaces may be perceived to be more accessible and open to users.

Framework Proposal

The guidelines for the urban framework are based on the theories of Kevin Lynch and New Urbanism. Additionally the framework was informed by mapping done within the area, the target groups as well as the vision and aims for the precinct.

The BPF propose the establishment of the Burgers Park precinct as a pedestrian based environment with the facilitation of pedestrian crossings at every intersection. Pedestrian interventions will be focussed along the Paul Kruger axis connecting Pretoria Station in the south with the rest of the CBD to the north as well as the Minnaar Street axis that links the east and western extremes of the precinct.

The Minnaar Street axis will be completed by providing a new cultural node at the western end of Minnaar Street which is to be highly public in nature and should incorporate cultural programs and public green space. The existing Government printers are to be adapted to be a working museum with a permeable interface toward the south thereby linking it with the new node. The Pretoria Art Museum which is currently situated on Schoeman Street will be moved to new facilities provided along the edge of the node.

The east-west axis will be articulated by developing the southern side of Minnaar Street as well as continuing the line of trees to the western extreme of the axis. All public buildings along this axis are to be

orientated with the main entrance along Minnaar Street as well as the placement of new cultural and civic buildings in order to increase activity within the area.

The north-south axis will be articulated and pedestrianized by widening the sidewalk and creating a boulevard in accordance with the Re Kgabisa Tshwane framework allowing for the incorporation of natural elements and a generous flow of pedestrians. Plant species are to be regulated in order not to spoil the existing visual axis to Pretoria Station. A new gateway is to be designed at the corner of Paul Kruger and Scheiding Street thereby articulating the entrance to the city.

All buildings along the axes are to have public programs at ground floor. Existing cultural and historical buildings (City Hall, National History museum, Natural Cultural museum, Victoria hotel and Melrose House) must be adapted to include or reinforce public functions.

Hope Street and Christina Avenue – currently mere alleyways – have been identified to become pedestrianized arcades connecting Scheiding and Jacob Mare Street with Christina Avenue extended as a pedestrian link into Minnaar Street. The surrounding buildings are to be densified and to respond to the arcades in program and typology, thereby making these currently unused areas safe for pedestrian use.

Urban Problems Identified within the Study Area

- 1. Minnaar street termination**
Poor spatial beginning for prominent road within precinct
- 2. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection**
Dangerous for pedestrians and unarticulatec
- 3. Crossings within precinct**
Orientated towards vehicular use
- 4. Current museum buildings**
Severely underutilised and neglectec
- 5. Palisade fences and brick walls**
Prevents urban and pedestrian amalgamation of space
- 6. Underutilized and vacant lots**
Degrades urban character of precinct
- 7. Taxis along Jacob Mare street**
Creates dangerous urban edge to street
- 8. Government Buildings**
All government, office and institutional buildings to have public interface ground floors
- 9. Block thoroughfares**
Poorly defined and severely under utilized arcades
- 10. Pretorius square**
Poorly functioning public space - no established hierarchy
- 11. Pretorius square / Paul Kruger street edge**
Edge not defined - public space bleeds into street
- 12. Paul Kruger street**
Street and edges need revision in order to improve pedestrian environment
- 13. Informal off-street parking**
Street edge definition and pedestrian environment compromisec
- 14. Buildings close to Pretoria Station**
Densities too low to accommodate increased economic activities from Gautrain
- 15. Pretoria Station crossing**
Dangerous for pedestrians and unarticulated - lacks "gateway" to precinct



Fig. 4.18: Urban problems identified within the study area

- 1. Minnaar street termination**
New civic space and anchor node to be established
Post office building to be demolished and relocated to Post office precinct west of Potgieter street
- 2. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection**
Crossing to be articulated and made highly pedestrian orientatec
- 3. Crossings within precinct**
Articulated and orientated towards pedestrian use
- 4. Existing museum buildings**
Museums to be fully refurbished and modernised.
What is exhibited needs to be showcased and propagated to the public
- 5. Palisade fences and brick walls**
Boundaries to be removed to allow for better spatial utilisation and amalgamator
- 6. Taxis along Jacob Mare street**
To be accommodated in newly developed taxi rank south of Jacob Mare street
- 7. Government Buildings**
All government, office and institutional buildings to have public interface ground floors
- 8. Block thoroughfares**
Connection between city, pedestrian and public space need to be considerec
- 9. Pretorius square**
Square to be programmed and hierarchy to be introducec
- 10. Pretorius square / Paul Kruger street edge**
Edge to be articulated and densific
- 11. Informal off-street parking**
Parking to be landscaped and formalized in order to improve identity and character of precinct
- 12. Buildings close to Pretoria Station**
Replacing existing low-rise structures with high density mixed use buildings
- 13. Pretoria Station crossing**
Crossing to be articulated and made highly pedestrian orientatec
Establishment of gateway necessary



Fig. 4.19: Interventions + opportunities

Urban Design Proposal for the Precinct

1. Minnaar street termination

Creation of a new pedestrianised anchor node. The node will include new landscaped areas as well as new cultural facilities.

2. Relocation

New site for the relocation of the Pretoria Art Gallery.

3. Reprogram

Government Printers to be reprogrammed in order to interact with the new node as well as gain museum / educational functions.

4. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection

Crossing to be paved in order to facilitate a change in texture as well as level. Current termination of Minnaar Street to be non-mountable.

5. Crossings within precinct

Crossing to be paved in order to facilitate a change in texture as well as level in order to indicate the predominance of pedestrian use.

6. Paul Kruger street

Sidewalks along Paul Kruger Street to be extended by one lane on each side in order to better facilitate informal trade as well as flow along the Paul Kruger axis. Boulevard to be created through the addition of a pedestrianised island in the middle of the road in accordance with the Re Kgabisa Tshwane framework. Landscaping to be dealt with as appropriate.

7. Block thoroughfares

Thoroughfares to be articulated as arcades. Building interfaces and landscape to be dealt with as appropriate

8. BRT Station

Proposed BRT Station to be moved north one city block

9. Buildings close to Pretoria Station Western block

Building densities to be increased and reprogrammed as mixed use high density development. Perimeter blocks to define street edge with a building height of 5-10 storeys

10. Buildings close to Pretoria Station Eastern block

Building densities to be increased and reprogrammed as mixed use high density development. Buildings above 5 storeys to be considered for adaptive re-use

11. Pretoria Station crossing

Crossing of Scheiding Street to be adapted as to facilitate high levels of pedestrian movement

12. New cultural / civic building

Existing structures to be demolished and underutilised site to be developed. Program to be cultural / civic based and highly public in nature. Building height to be between 7 and 9 storeys. Public parking to be included

13. Vacant / underutilised lots

Vacant sites to be developed. Buildings to be highly public in nature with the building height in accordance with existing built fabric

14. Melrose House

Bicycle rental facilities to be provided

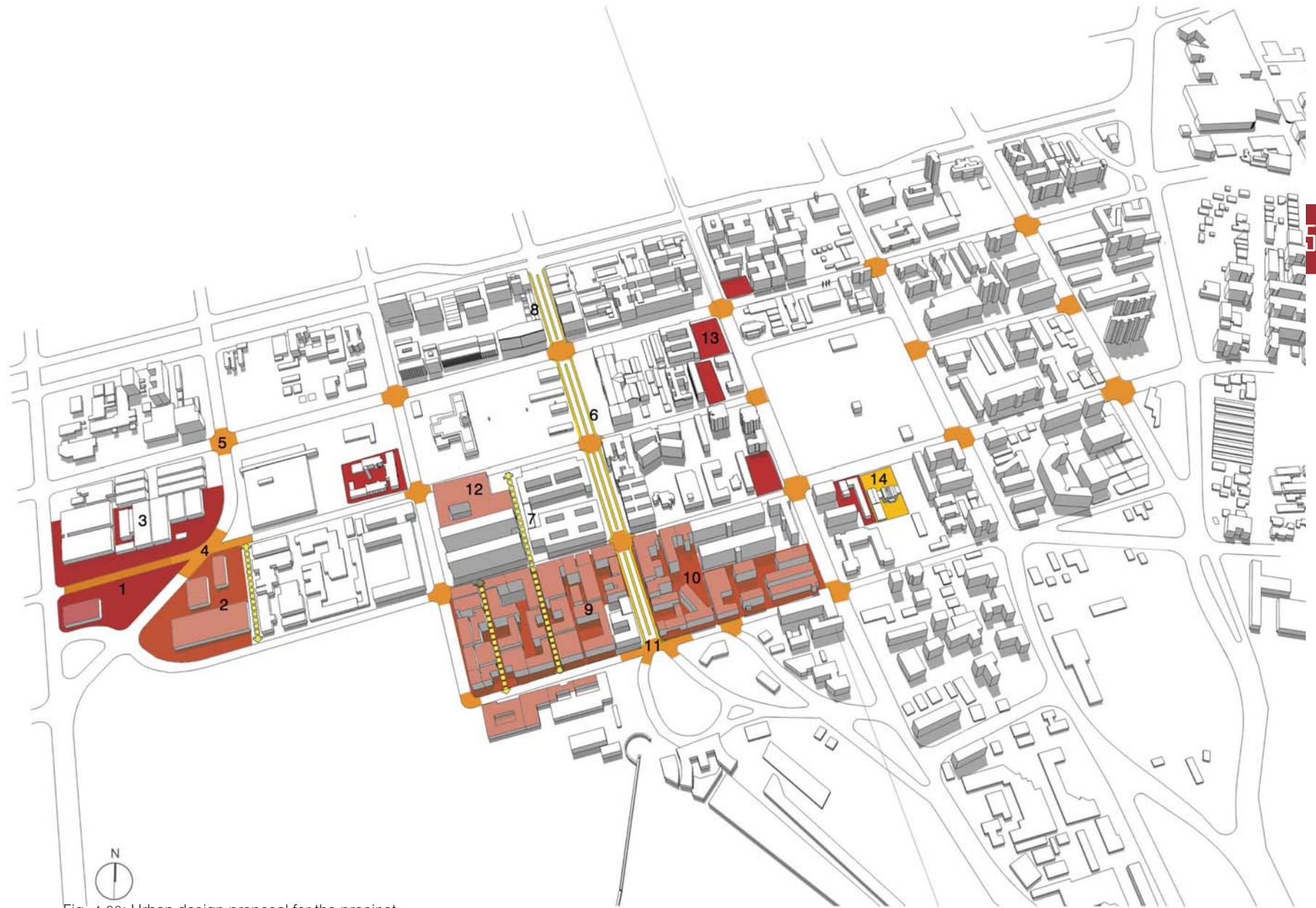


Fig. 4.20: Urban design proposal for the precinct

Response to Framework

The project is informed by the framework by responding directly to various problems identified within the study area.

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During the framework development it became evident that the establishment of a gateway is necessary at the corner of Paul Kruger and Scheiding Street which is achieved through the new urban transition space.

The design additionally responds to the framework with regards to Paul Kruger and Scheiding Street by broadening

the sidewalk along Paul Kuger Street to facilitate informal trade and pedestrian flow. In contrary to the framework a boulevard, which has been proposed by the framework, has not been created in order to retain the visual corridor along Paul Kuger Street to facilitate exit from the city.

Pedestrian movement over Scheiding Street is facilitated in accordance with the proposed framework as well as a re-evaluation with regards to appropriate building height.

Selected sites

The various designs developed within the new framework relates strongly to one another with regards to the nature of the projects.

All new projects are public in nature and aims to promote and establish the pedestrian nature of the precinct.

Additionally all new projects identified relates to context and site location on order to determine the correct programmatic response.

**1. Heinrich Olckers ·
Urban transition space**

**2. Deirdre Marais ·
Dance studio and community
centre**

**3. Alexia Philippou ·
Art museum**

**4. Gavin Williams ·
Library**

**5. George F. Pieterse ·
Museum of typography**

**6. Isabel van Wyk ·
Cultural centre for architecture
and planning**



Fig. 4.21: Selected sites within the precinct