



2 CONTEXT

Pretoria : An Architecture of Icons
Site Analysis

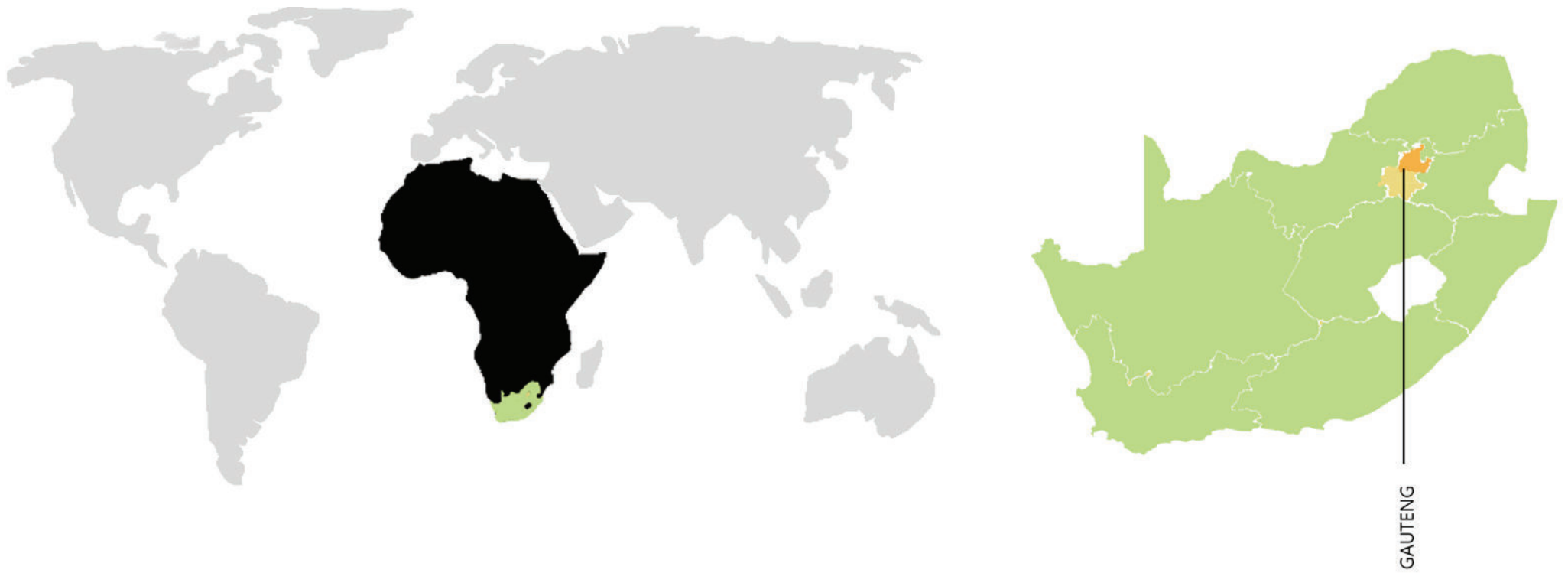
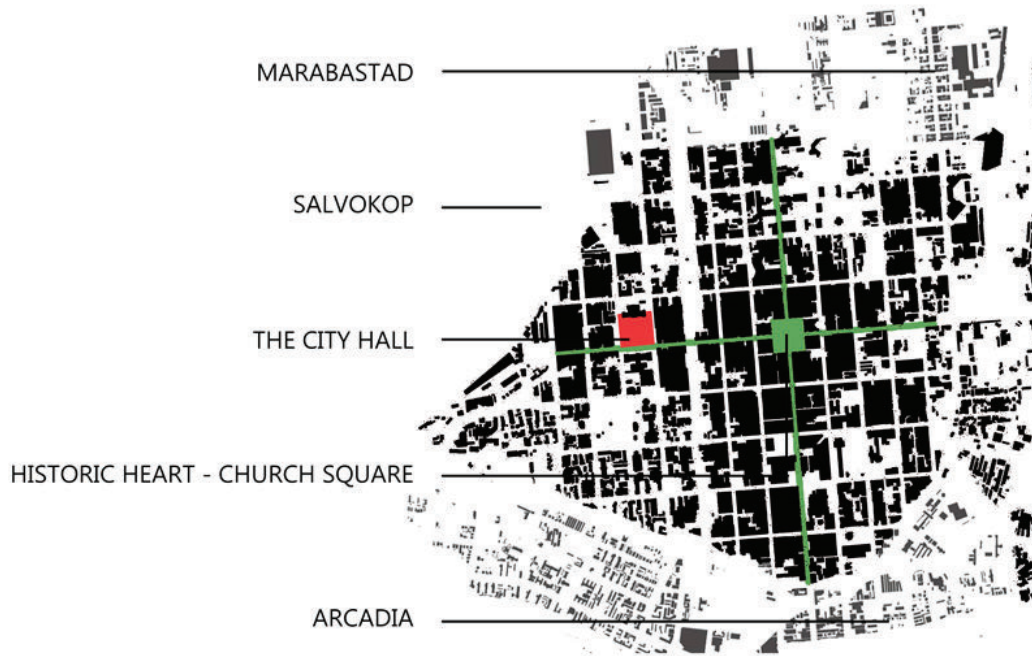
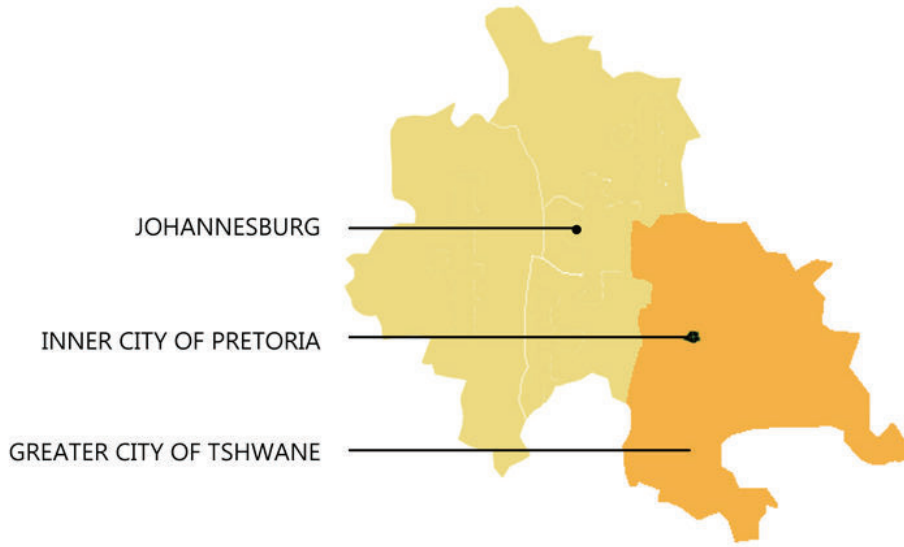
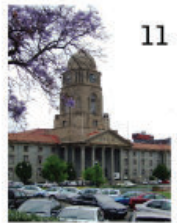


Figure 2.1: Study Area in geographic context
Author, 2010





1. NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS
2. 'GAMOTHE' FORMER PASS OFFICES
3. KRUGER HOUSE MUSEUM
4. PAUL KRUGER'S CHURCH
5. CHURCH SQUARE
STATUE OF PAUL KRUGER
6. STATE MODEL SCHOOL MUSEUM
7. BURGER'S PARK
STATUE OF T.F BURGER
8. MELROSE HOUSE
9. MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
10. TRANSSVAAL MUSEUM
11. CITY HALL + PRETORIUS SQUARE
a STATUE OF CHIEF TSHWANE
b STATUE OF ANDRIES W.J PRETORIUS
c STATUE OF MARTINUS W PRETORIUS
12. NATIONAL CULTURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
13. PRETORIA TRAIN STATION
14. FREEDOM PARK
15. SKANSKOP FORT
16. VOORTREKKER MONUMENT
17. UNION BUILDINGS
STATUE OF LOUIS BOTHA
18. PRETORIA ART MUSEUM
19. MIRIAMMEN TEMPLE



pretoria: an architecture of icons

There is a fracture which exists between the memorialized past of South African cities and the living culture of people today. Due to the mandatory removal and racial separation laws enforced under the Apartheid government, the majority of non-white citizens had little cultural representation in the urban environment before the first democratic presidential election in 1994.

The historic monuments preserved as icons in the contemporary urban environment, shown in Figure 2.1, still hold some negative connotations to the current multi-racial inhabitants of Pretoria. When conducting an informal verbal survey on the significance of Pretoria's icons, the majority of current city users between the ages 15-25 responded that the depiction of past political figures bears no relevance on their impression of the city, responding more to issues of safety, commercial branding and accessibility to services. Older non-white citizens had a more negative attitude towards institutes as well as statues and strongly denied any cultural or patriotic ownership of the heritage represented by the memorials.

This dissociation and negative impression has extended to include museums and other older cultural institutes to be perceived as representative of Western and colonial ideals, which disregard the influence of African and eastern cultures.

The preservation of objects of debatable relevance within a changed context has led to an ever-growing disparity between the past and living cultures of Pretoria. It is apparent that the significance of Pretoria's architectural heritage is becoming ever more intangible to future societies as many current citizens feel no ownership over the symbols of the past. The fractures evident in the capital city are symptomatic of the South African situation in which citizens, indifferent to the past events which have shaped their environment, are subsequently indifferent to the cultural wealth and development of their cities. This is a matter of concern as it is only by viewing heritage as a living time line, by acknowledging and learning from the past, that present generations can continue to evolve and progress into the future.

Figure 2.2: Unpicking the Icons of Pretoria
Author, 2010

What is needed in Pretoria is a **reaction to the architecture of monuments**. The social context of South African cities has been informed by both indigenous African traditions as well as the customs of European and Asian settlers forming **a triple heritage cultural legacy**. However, the architectural representation of South Africa's identity as a nation of dynamic transition has yet to be realized.

The disparity between people and place is not limited to the social or psychological realm as this fragmentation is manifested even within the urban fabric of the Pretoria's CBD. Certain districts are deemed as successful economic or culturally rich zones and are therefore targeted for development while other areas are left to degrade into the peri-urban and scattered landscape reminiscent of land acts enforced during apartheid rule.

As cultural institutions, **Pretorian museums fail to address the contemporary needs of the public and give little back to surrounding communities** adding to the degradation of a city that is 'no longer "consummated" but only "observed"..."the city [is] only an empty, not even functioning shell for our everyday banality" (Günther Feuerstein in Himmelblau 1984:6).

It is apparent that to continue marking cultural and historic value with monuments is socially unsustainable and sealing displaced artifacts in exclusive museums has led to the further **separation of past, present and future social interests**.

The architectural development of Pretoria's city centre has been heavily influenced by European colonial and later Modern ideals while links to indigenous traditions have slowly disappeared further isolating the people of today from the city as an object of cultural manifestation. *Reprogramming Pretorius Square* serves to embrace the existing urban complexity and inhabitants of South Africa's capital by promoting an exciting and stimulating environment representative of a true public space.

site analysis

Places of cultural significance that exist within the heart of the city as well as the surrounding urban context are isolated from the needs of current inhabitants. Even those museums which advertise a celebration of diverse cultural roots are irrelevant in contemporary South African society as they fail to relate past values to present day concerns. Museums themselves are strongly associated with an exclusive culture whose target market does not include the majority of city users.

Determining what constitutes as significant heritage is a controversial issue in a country such as South Africa which draws on the identities of multiple cultures referred to earlier as 'a triple heritage', often contradictory in values and expression. The last widespread cultural influence on the architecture of Pretoria was that of Modernism. Since then, Pretoria has largely remained as a city of monuments lacking in architecture that contextualises the influence of the past simultaneously with the search for current and future architectural identity.

Disregarding the heritage of past ideals has weakened the diversity and progression of architectural style which should be evident in all cities. Lipman's criticism of the post-Apartheid architecture of South Africa is that 'since 1994, poverty has become worse; not better. And the poverty of architecture has become worse; not better. Not only is this culture decadent but the society is decadent around it' Lipman (ARCHI-technology September 2009:8)

As a post-colonialist and post-Apartheid nation, the common thread that is woven into the fabric of our shared heritage is that of a society undergoing transformation. It is imperative that as South Africa's capital, **Pretoria should be expressive of the transformative identity inherent in all South African cities while providing opportunity for the interaction between the existing, preserved historic context and the users of today.**

The following sites of cultural and national significance were examined as potential catalytic nodes for the expression of the concept Identity In Transformation. The study area was further delimited to the inner city as this is the historic heart of Pretoria. The potential heritage and cultural value of each zone was examined against personal perception as well as the perception of passers-by in order to determine a site for the development of a new cultural centre focussed on aspects of communication and exhibition of the preserved heritage to citizens of Pretoria.



Figure 2.3: Pretoria's Architectural Narrative: a disrupted time line
Author, 2010

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Paul Kruger House Museum (1899)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Structure Significant space Symbol of Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) leader, Paul Kruger 	<p>Close proximity to CBD and supportive infrastructure.</p> <p>Recognizable route in and out of city, Church Street as historic east-west axis</p>	<p>Barren plots</p> <p>Dangerous streets - opportunistic crime</p> <p>Museum exists in isolation from current residential context</p>	<p>Revive museum</p> <p>Renovation</p> <p>Interactive functions</p>
<p>GaMothle (1932)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Structure Former Pass Office Former Police Station and Holding cells 		<p>Buildings have poor interface with public street, often mono-functional</p> <p>Negative connotation toward museum being celebrated as a cultural institute</p>	<p>Connect Church Street west to highly successful economic and social activity in eastern district</p> <p>Densify existing fabric by utilising barren plots</p>
<p>Paul Kruger Church (1890)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Structure Replaced original church away from Church Square Religious symbol Symbolic of ZAR 			<p>Uplift local residential areas by providing social and economic opportunity</p> <p>Re-establish ceremonial importance by connecting Museum to Church and Church Square</p>
<p>Heroe's Acre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> War Monument 			
<p>Dunlop Factory + Tobacco Factory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Structures Industrial symbol 			

SITE B : MUSEUM MALL

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES
<p>National Cultural History Museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preservation of cultural artefacts National relevance Icon of Pretoria 	<p>Cultural activities located in one landmark district</p> <p>Ease of accessibility from the inner city by rail (south) or vehicle.</p>	<p>Museums can be inaccessible</p> <p>Monofunctional approach to museums do not attract repeat visitors</p>	<p>New intervention promoting public interface</p> <p>Utilise existing pedestrian activity on Paul Kruger Street and engage with this site boundary</p>
<p>Transvaal Museum (1892)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural artefacts Heritage value Icon of Pretoria National relevance 	<p>Provides recreation and educational facilities to the people of Pretoria.</p>	<p>Local citizens deem the museum buildings as 'elitist' and non-inclusive</p>	<p>Revive museums and exhibits</p> <p>Promote the Museum Mall District as a brand</p>
<p>Science and Technology Museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific objects and enterprise Icon of Pretoria 			<p>Connect the heritage of open space to the preserved icons around the city as a walkable route</p>
<p>City Hall (1935)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built in honour of Pretoria's achievement of city status-1931 Political symbol Once housed the city council's art collection until moved to the Pretoria Art Museum 			
<p>Pretorius Square</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational value Ceremonial collective space before City Hall 			

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES
Recreational value and heritage as an urban park.	Aesthetically pleasing park and building	Park is dangerous at night	Link park to open space network
Statue of T F Burger Political symbol	Close proximity to residential and business zones- can provide a variety of users	Monument has little meaning to current citizens or park users	New functions on edges will allow for passive surveillance at all hours
Melrose House 1886 Historic architecture Museum artefacts Icon of Pretoria War office in 1900's Signing of peace treaty to end Boer War		Fast moving traffic around park isolate the site from the outside rather than provide surveillance Melrose house is not accessible to general public	Link to city's heritage structures as part of an urban tour route.

Among the potential sites within the inner city, Pretorius Square and the adjoining City Hall was chosen as the target for reprogramming and development. The site offers excellent opportunities as a catalytic node for new activity. This is largely due to its location along Paul Kruger Street and subsequent access to high pedestrian activity as city workers use the street to travel between the taxi point at Church Square and the train station directly south.

Other opportunities inherent in the chosen site, is the potential to explore the architectural manifestation of the concept 'identity through transformation'. Reprogramming the square as a contemporary public space will afford the opportunity to react to the existing historic fabric and create new meaning for current inhabitants.

site description

Pretoria's inner city is steeped in cultural significance as it is the oldest development within the greater City of Tshwane which is currently the capital of South Africa. The city of Pretoria was established as the capital of the independent Boer republic or the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) in 1852. The orthogonal city grid pattern determined by the width of an ox-wagon and large inner city plots once occupied with low density housing remain as testament to Pretoria's rural foundation as a frontier settlement.

Over the years Pretoria has transformed from village to urban landscape aided in 1886 by the discovery of gold. Since then the city itself has been the seat of power for the British in 1910 following the Boer War and then the capital of the apartheid regime when it was re-established after 1961 as the capital of the ZAR.

Figure 2.4 is a generalised map of areas where public, social engagement occurs regularly between users of the city, in the form of commercial, recreation or cultural activity. Superimposed upon this is the map of major urban icons and cultural institutes. Public activities are not necessarily constrained to the established cultural facilities of the city. The most successful public area occurs along Church Street, east of Church Square. This area is used as a platform for social exchange and trade, supported by local residents and daily workers.



Figure 2.4: Interface between pedestrian and urban fabric
Author, 2010



Figure 2.5: (a) and (b)
Vendors lined against Lilian Ngoyi Square attract a wide range of
age groups, local and foreign
Author, 2010

axial development to link cultural nodes

Pretorius Square and the City Hall form a nexus between two major cultural zones within the city. The first, shown in Figure 2.5, is the historic north-south axis of Paul Kruger Street. The street forms one of the major access routes into Pretoria, connecting the National Zoo, Church Square, the Transvaal Museum, City Hall and Pretorius Square and the Pretoria Railway Station (Figure 2.5). The National Zoo and Pretoria Station act as the northern and southern city gateways respectively, defining the boundaries of the historic precinct within Tshwane.

The second zone (Figure 2.6) is currently less defined than the Paul Kruger Street route yet is a potentially significant urban axis. The cultural precinct, termed in Tshwane city development proposals as 'Museum Mall', defines the area between the National Cultural History Museum to the west and the Museum of Science and Technology to the east. The area has been targeted for future urban development in order to market the 'Mall' as a cultural node. This thesis proposes an eastward extension of the 'Museum Mall' target area to include Burger's Park, Melrose House, Caledonian Stadium and the Pretoria Art Museum as part of a greater cultural and recreation spine reaching into the residential areas of Sunnyside.

Figure 2.6 is the amalgamation of the two spines with the proposed site marked in red. The future cultural centre on the site will be enhanced by the development of the spines as activity orientated streets. The spines, once established as stimulating routes, will act as channels drawing public activity from the periphery residential zones back into the CBD.

The target of this spine strategy is derived from the early design goal of **Icon to Catalyst**. By linking the function of a new public centre with existing cultural institute and areas of potential development, the result will be a city-wide regeneration. Integration of primarily residential areas aims at achieving a multi-purpose urban environment in which recreational and cultural activities can occur. The result of this strategy would be to re-establish the CBD as more than an exclusive working environment.



Figure 2.5: North-south axial link
Author, 2010



Figure 2.6: East-west axial link
Author, 2010

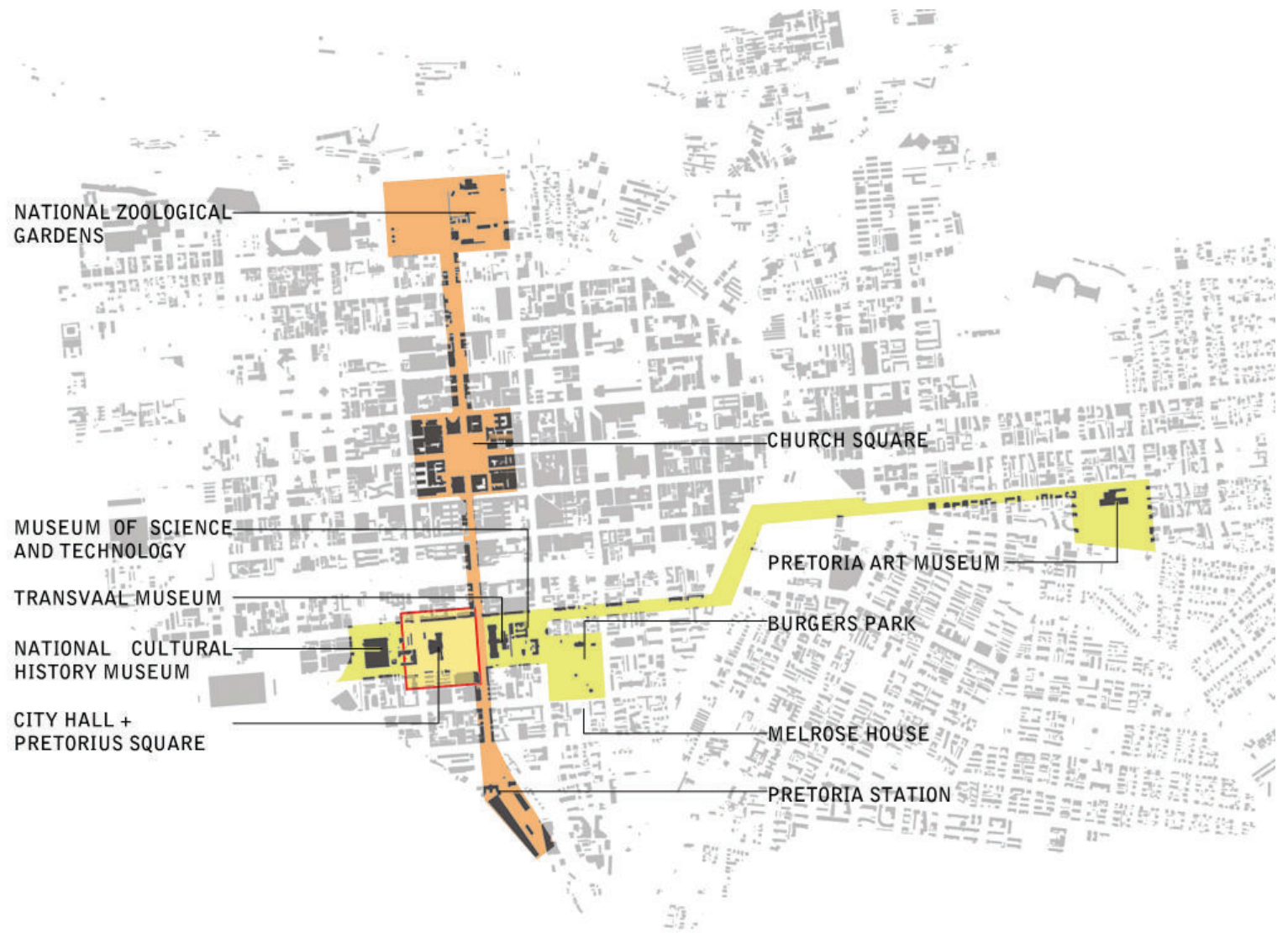


Figure 2.7: Amalgamation of Spines with relation to Pretorius Square
Author, 2010

site analysis : pretorius square



Figure 2.8: Basement Level -1: ventilation and daylight
Author, 2010

The urban block under investigation currently houses the Pretoria City Hall and its forecourt, Pretorius Square. Objects of significance on the site include the statue of Martinus Pretorius, former president of the ZAR and founder of Pretoria, the statue of Andries Pretorius, after whom Pretoria is named and the most recent addition of the statue of Chief Tshwane, past leader of the Tshwane people, who were early settlers of the region (Figure 2.8).

The square belongs to one of only two open landscapes along the historical axis of Paul Kruger Street, the other being Church Square. It is integral to the urban fabric as a green public space. (Figure 2.9)

The square is an open urban park with a strong east west axis connecting the City Hall on western front to the Transvaal Museum on the east. (Figure 2.10) There is little hierarchy or special definition within the garden apart from the central axes. Furniture placement is not directed at any single view and visitors use the grass lawns as much as bench seating

A public parking lot borders the edge of the square separating pedestrian street activity from the north and southern roads of Visagie and Minnaar, respectively. (Figure 2.11)

Although containing significant historical and urban value, the existing context is in need of regeneration with regard to public and pedestrian interface. There is opportunity to rejuvenate the garden as a public space by reprogramming the square with new activities. The new Cultural Centre will serve as a true public space in which the civic function of the City Hall can spill out onto, lending a less formal counterpart to the highly programmed activities contained within the City Hall.

Figure 2.9: View from north western corner of the site looking east toward Paul Kruger Street and the Transvaal Museum
 Author, 2010



Figure 2.10: Symmetrical Axes
 Author, 2010



Figure 2.11: Example of brick pavers on paths along axes. Gardens are terraced and physically accessible from only certain points.
 Author, 2010



Figure 2.12: Looking east from City Hall to along Visagie Street edge
 Author, 2010

site analysis : the city hall

The architecture of the City Hall is strongly representative of the Western ideals of democracy and power. Also significant, is the rigidity of the structure both as a massive, load bearing masonry construction as well as a preserved political and historic monument.

Architectural influences include colonial and classic elements both represented in the order and symmetry of the hall and square. Neoclassic elements are expressed with the use of a Corinthian entablature and pediment composed of Ionic columns and Corinthian capitals (Figure 2.13). The sculpture pediment by Anton van Wouw serves as a memorial to the development of Pretoria itself between 1855-1935 (Jansen, 2006).

'In addition...there are Art Deco fittings and chandeliers and hand crafted window and door frames that reveal an influence from the Arts and Crafts Movement together with a Neo-Cape Dutch Architecture' (da Costa, 2007)

The site is historically significant as a public space, specifically in the exhibition of the identity and ambitions of Pretorian citizens. Following the addition of the statue of Chief Tshwane in 2006, the City Hall is symbolic of a place that is equally representative of existing memorials as well as the previously overlooked contribution of the traditions of indigenous people. The site is therefore important in representing those people whose cultural expression was excluded from the urban landscape in the past. As such it is a fitting stage to continue the narrative of Pretoria's transformation of social identity and as a city growing in cultural wealth.

The high density office buildings to the north and south blocks are enclosed with impermeable walls and diminish the character of the street as a pedestrian route.

There is opportunity to articulate the branding and cultural significance of the Museum Mall District on a pedestrian scale. This will include the larger urban strategy discussed in the framework chapter 5: PLUG-In Festival/

The pedestrian movement on Visagie and Minnaar Streets could be enhanced with appropriate ground floor accessible programming and upgraded public walkway including public street furniture and interactive boundaries.

The square itself will be treated as an expression in contrast to the existing historic and modern context. By using the elements of juxtaposition, transparency, flexibility, transformation and neutral representation, a reaction to the existing icons will be achieved. The reaction must negotiate the conflicting representations of the Apartheid and colonial past with the culturally inclusive identity of citizens today. However, in order to successfully represent the growth and development of the Pretorian society, the contributions of heritage, visible and intangible, must be expressed with techniques later explored in chapter 4: precedent studies.

site analysis : modern context



Figure 2.13: Symmetrical facade, emphasized by fountain and position of Chief Tshwane about the central axis in the foreground

Author, 2010



Figure 2.14: Looking about the same axis, eastward toward the Transvaal Museum

Author, 2010