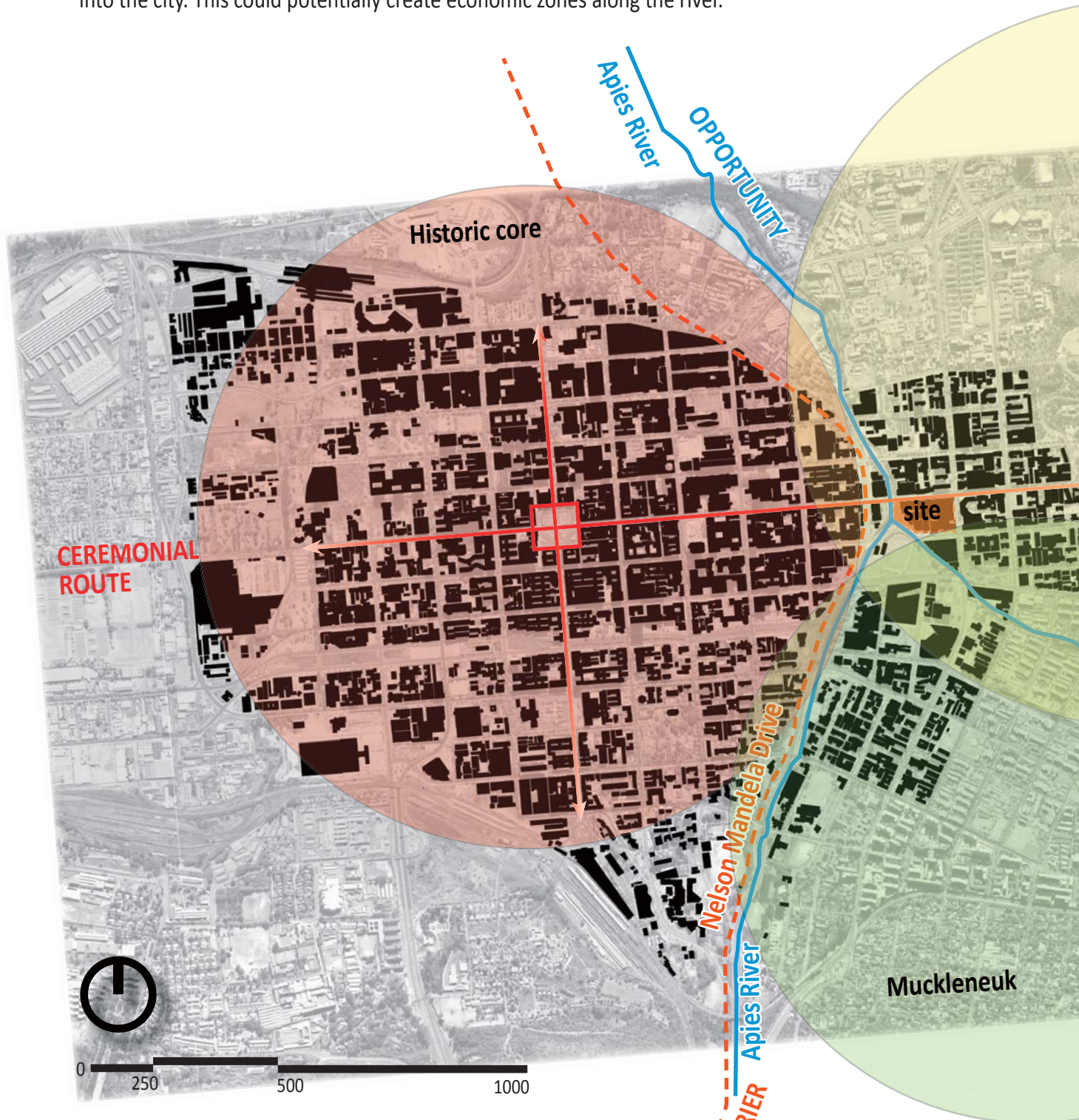


Chapter 2 - Background

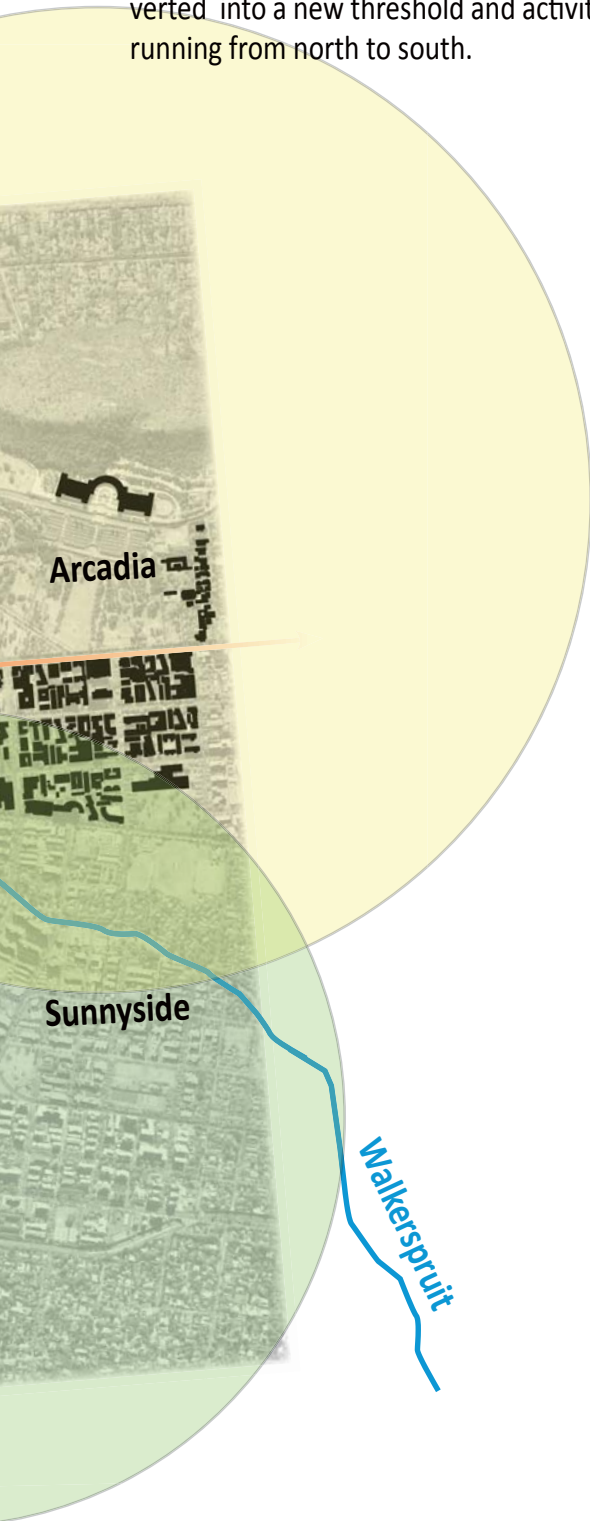
The Apies and Walkerspruit rivers display a huge source of economic, social and recreational potential. They cut through the city diagonally, which could offer pedestrians an alternative route and shortcut into the city. This could potentially create economic zones along the river.



Nelson Mandela Drive is a major route from the south into the city and was part of a proposed ring road in the inner city (see figure 4.4:18), based on modernist planning schemes and colonial notions (Dewar, 1999: 368). This resulted in the fragmentation of the urban fabric along Skinner Street and along Nelson Mandela Drive. These two major inner city routes have created harsh edges and separate the city in both the north-south and east-west directions.

The river is currently a barrier between the CBD and the east of Pretoria could be converted into a new threshold and activity spine running from north to south.

The notion of a 'ceremonial route' is an important part of the city's historical past and development. The ceremonial routes identified and illustrated in figure 2.1 are Church Street (east to west) and Paul Kruger Street (north to south). Both streets are poorly identified and celebrated - fragmented from the memory and history of the city.



Since 1930, with the completion of the canalization of Walkerspruit and the Apies rivers (van der Waal Collection, 2006, University of Pretoria, archival collections, accessed on UPspace (2011), the surrounding urban fabric has been in decline and fragmented with the loss of cultural and social networks that once existed and made the edges of the CBD a vibrant attractive spine within the city.

The image of the river as an integral part of the city has long since been forgotten and any significant historical value has been stripped from the memories of the people living or working in the original CBD.

Pierre Nora (1966: 1) identifies this problem where progress tumbles forward at an increasing rapidity into an irretrievable past - further disrupting the equilibrium between our past and present; where there are no longer any *Lieux de memoire* (settings in which memory is a real part of everyday experience).

No interest has been created in attracting people back to live in the city. People still migrate to the edges of the city and surrounding suburbs. The CBD needs to forge a new identity and create areas of attraction in order to re-establish social networks that once existed. There is a need for a new mixed use typology with creative infill that could encourage people to make cities their home; where they could live, work and learn, create new memories built on their experiences of the city and history.

Figure 2.1. Diagrammatic figure ground study of Pretoria and the site highlighting important influences and design generators (Author, 2011).