

*Chapter 3:*  
PUBLIC  
*Urban Framework for a democratic city*

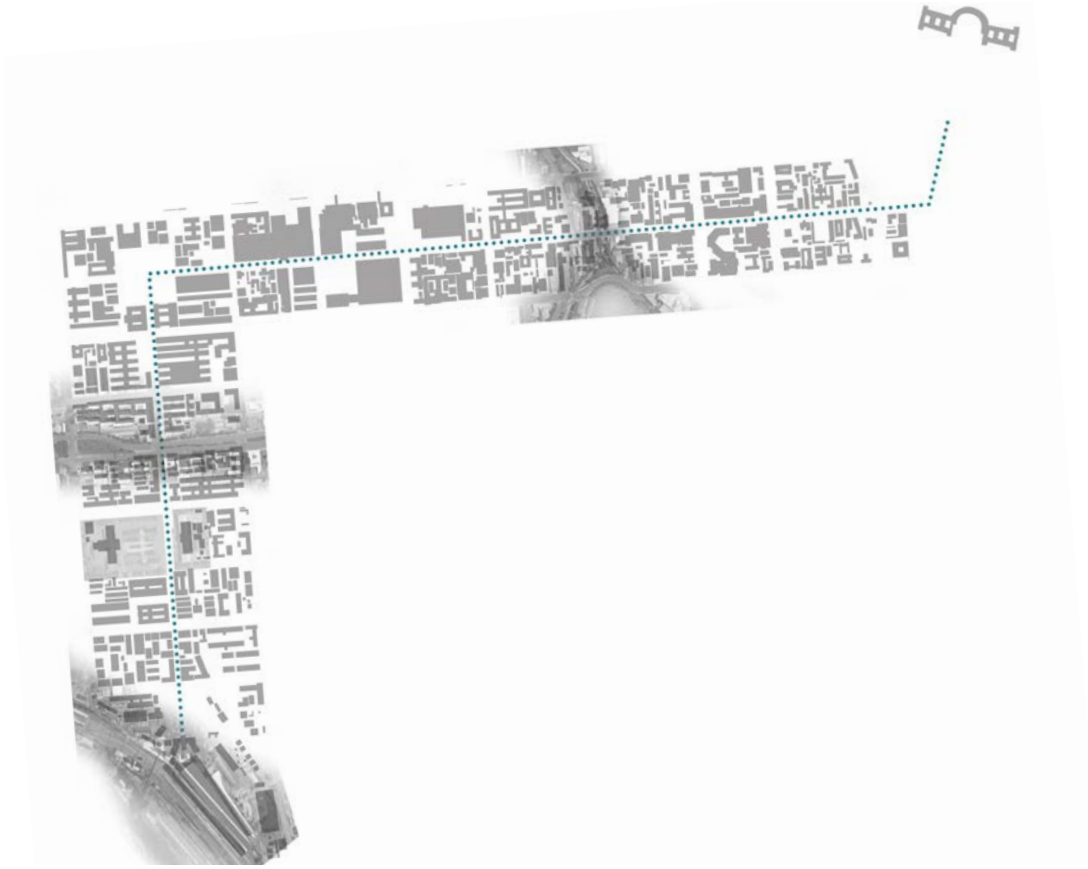


### 3.1. Departure & Discovery

The initial investigation undertaken aimed at mapping locations of politically themed violence in Pretoria over time. Addendum A contains a series of maps and a historic timeline can be found collating these events.

Historically, Pretoria as Apartheid city saw a number of events of contestation and violence. The majority of these displays were directed at national party rule and were the symptoms of dissatisfaction with the oppressive system. The scars of these moments of violence have remained largely invisible and un-commemorated in the city.

It is interesting to note, however, that the route of protest march established by the first display of dissatisfaction (the women's march of 1956) used a route similar to the route used during present day protests against systemic injustice, for example the #FeesMustFall march of 2015.



### 3.2. Development

Kingwell and Turmell (2009:xii & xiv) describe public space as being where democracy occurs, this brings to mind visions of Parisian boulevards filled with hordes of citizens in protest. It was this thinking that led the study to mapping of the formal public spaces along the study area. This proved how few formal public spaces Pretoria had which, with the idea of public spaces being democratic spaces in mind, sheds some light on Pretoria's status as an undemocratic city.

The route that formed the basis of the designated area also falls along a large number of pedestrian focused streetscapes. The portion of road in front of City Hall, for example, has wide sidewalks that spill over from the park in front of the building. However, the erection of a fence on the day of our visit proves why the park and sidewalk are relatively deserted apart from those passing through.

The street plays host to numerous governmental buildings and large office blocks which can be ascribed as the reason for so many pedestrians along its sidewalks. These pedestrians have inspired vendors who sit in building alcoves and on street corners selling an array of goods. This ties in with the belief of the PPS (Project for Public Spaces) that *streets are more than just a means of mobility. Streets themselves are critical public spaces that can lend richness to the social, civic, and economic fabric of our communities* (PPS.org, n.d.).

In order to practice governance, government buildings need to engage with the public. The policy behind Pretoria's scattering of governmental departments is ascribed to the attempted accessibility of departments by the public, by placing them within the city fabric as opposed to isolating them in a specific governmental precinct. Regardless of this intention, the government still seems relatively inaccessible

and out of touch. The government buildings in Pretoria and along the study area mostly have concealed entrances for their staff or numerous barriers to entry. There is little opportunity for public interaction.

The Urban framework proposes the establishment of a network of formal public spaces and streetscapes along the designated route that encourage public use and appropriation and the inclusion of even more governmental programmes in the buildings along the route. The idea is that not only will the city become more democratic in accordance with Kingwell & Turmell (2009: xii & xiv), but this will also encourage an outside life for those working in government buildings where the chance of interaction with those using the public spaces is more likely. The proximity of government buildings (and thus interface) to public spaces and public streets will provide platforms for protest and civil displays within a relevant radius to the governmental institutions they are targeting.

The introduction of programmes to contribute positively to the existing and new public spaces will serve as urban acupuncture to potentially radiate into the city providing improved living conditions for its citizens an intention outlined in the Tshwane 2055 vision (Tshwane Planning Commissioners and City of Tshwane 2013:215).

*The full framework document is contained in Addendum B.*

