BUILT ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION PRACTICE

South African
CitiesNetwork

CONTENTS

AT EACH OF THE CITY WORKSHOPS, PRACTITIONERS WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE
A T-SHIRT SLOGAN THAT CAPTURES THEIR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING IN THE CITY.
THESE SLOGANS ARE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE REPORT

Executive summary

Since 2017, a group of practitioners involved in spatial transformation and built environment integration have met regularly to discuss and agree on issues that require further research, and enquire about the reality of built environment integration. This Built Environment Integration Task Team (BEITT) agreed that it would be useful to understand, based on actual case studies, what enhances – and what detracts from – spatial transformation and integration. The work was conceptualised by practitioners, and the research comprised a set of dialogue interviews with city practitioners involved in projects requiring built environment integration, with the aim of reflecting back to the system some common threads and emerging issues. Members of the BEITT nominated case studies from their cities that are projects in implementation phase requiring different city departments and government spheres, the private sector and civil society to work together. Interviews were conducted with several practitioners involved in the project, and a site visit was undertaken.

The responses were assessed using a framework developed by the research team, based on their experience and insights from the National Treasury's City Support Programme's transversal management project. After piloting (and adjusting) the framework, the final guiding questions were used in the dialogue interviews. The case studies were synthesised to present insights into unique lessons and to identify systemic issues. This work provides insights into the practical implementation experience and practitioner accounts of their involvement in these projects.

In an ideal world, developmental local government would mean that decisions taken to maximise organisational performance would result in wider social and economic value, generating the intended developmental outcomes. However, there is a growing divide between "organisational value" – focused on achieving scorecards and clean audits, with senior administrators and politicians aiming for expenditure targets – and intended "societal value" – focused on building social capital, increasing community wellbeing and expanding access to economic and social prosperity.

What resulted from the interviews and the case studies were a set of insights (see "What's going on?") and some emerging lessons for built environment integration.

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE, YOU MAY HAVE TO DO IT YOURSELF

RED TAPE

DOING MORE WITH LESS

THIS TOO SHALL PASS

ITS ABOUT THE SYSTEM, STUPID

What's going on?

- The focus is on organisational value
- The tendency is to "play safe"
- Individuals face tensions and pressures
- Political interests are ever-present
- Intergovernmental cooperation is lacking
- Practitioners have different understandings of the same project
- The unsung heroes are delivering
- Crucial skills are missing

Emerging lessons

- Reward transversal approaches
- Create space for conversations between politicians and administrators
- Engage communities
- Manage community dynamics and contractors
- Make intergovernmental cooperation work
- Work on the basis that leadership is dispersed across the system and society
- Implement project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a learning tool
- Maximise learning between practitioners and consultants

Following the analysis and synthesis of the outcomes of the research, a series of city practitioner workshops were held to focus on the co-creation of a set of recommendations that would have value for practitioners.

Priorities identified by city practitioners

1. Develop the IDP to lead collective prioritisation and action.
2. Align the project's intended outcomes and the beneficiary community's needs.
3. Create a culture, procedures and systems that foster solution-seeking behaviour, through collaboration, authenticity and community reality.
4. Maximise stakeholder involvement and participation.
5. Create a big picture vision that can be shared with all involved in the project.
6. Understand political imperatives, manifesto commitments and multiparty government.
7. Ensure that municipal finance legislation and city policies are responsive to the creation of economic opportunities and skills development.
8. Create clear city economic empowerment and skills transfer strategies for built environment projects.

The dialogue interviews and case studies provide a useful opportunity for the system to hold up a mirror to itself and reflect on the actions required to learn from – and improve on – practice towards more integrated outcomes.

SECTION
01

INTRODUCTION

The South African Cities Network (SACN) is a network of metropolitan cities in South Africa that undertakes research and knowledge generation and application activities, and facilitates city peer-to-peer learning platforms, to support local government practitioners. Since 2017, a community of practitioners, called the Built Environment Task Team (BEITT) involved in spatial transformation and built environment integration have met regularly to discuss and agree on issues that require further research, and enquire about the reality of built environment integration. This BEITT agreed that it would be useful to understand, based on actual case studies, what enhances – and what detracts from – spatial transformation and integration. The work was conceptualised by practitioners, and the research comprised a set of dialogue interviews with city practitioners involved in projects requiring built environment integration, with the aim of reflecting back to the system some common threads and emerging issues.

Members of the BEITT nominated case studies from their cities that are projects in implementation phase requiring different city departments and government spheres, the private sector and civil society to work together. Interviews were conducted with several practitioners involved in the project, and a site visit was undertaken. The same questions were posed to each interviewee for all the case studies, as the basis for a dialogue. The responses were assessed using a framework (Figure 1) developed by the research team comprising the core aspects of built environment integration practice, based on their experience and insights from the National Treasury's City Support Programme's transversal management project. After piloting (and adjusting) the framework, the final guiding questions were used in a series of dialogue interviews. A case study is available for each individual project. The case studies were then synthesised to present insights into unique lessons and also to identify systemic issues that seem to prevail across all of the case studies. Each of the case studies is located in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP) of the respective cities, meaning that – on paper – they receive the requisite budgeting and planning attention of the municipality to ensure they are viewed as priorities. This work provides insights into the practical implementation experience and practitioner accounts of their involvement in these projects.
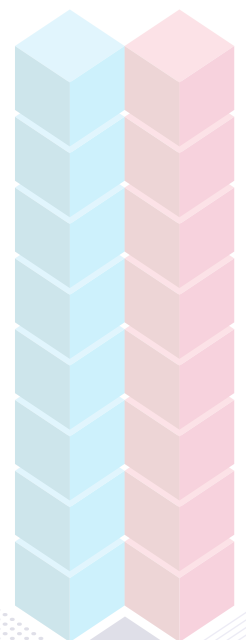
SO MUCH OPPORTUNITY, NOT MUCH DONE

—

CAN WE BUILD?

—

A WORK IN PROGRESS

—

GET INVOLVED

—

TOGETHER

As part of drafting the final report, the research team held workshops in each of the case study cities with city practitioners from different built environment departments. The purpose was to discuss the outcomes of the research and to prioritise recommendations from the perspective of city practitioners. After conducting the five workshops, a clear set of collective priorities emerged (see page 35).

FIGURE 1 Case Study Framework

- How did leadership influence the project?
- What type of leadership is evident – control and command or facilitation and coaching?
- Who was responsible for the project delivery?

- How are decisions made?
- How is performance measured?
- How does collaboration and support take place – sponsor, supporter, funder interaction?

BEI

BUILT
ENVIRONMENT
INTEGRATION

LEADERSHIP
RULES OF THE INSTITUTION
INTERACTION
SKILLS AND CAPACITY
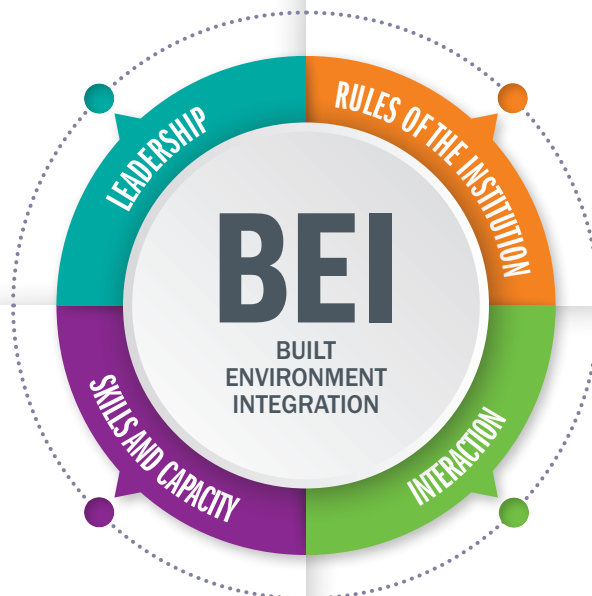
- What is the background and experience of practitioners driving integration?
- What skills are evident in the delivery of the project's integration aspects?
- How does the institution acknowledge/support the integration work?

- What did it mean practically to work across departments?
- Was there any involvement from other spheres of government?
- How did the political-admin interface play out?
- How were other stakeholders engaged – residents, businesses?
- What power dynamics are evident?

SECTION
02

CASE STUDIES

Mabopane Urban Hub
CITY OF TSHWANE

Paterson Park
CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Cornubia
CITY OF ETHEKWINI

Zanemvula
NELSON MANDELA BAY

Cornubia

City of eThekwini

A joint venture between the eThekwini Municipality and Tongaat Hulett, Cornubia is a presidential project, BEPP project and IDP project.

Stakeholders involved

- Tongaat Hulett Development
- eThekwini municipal departments: Human Settlements, Planning, Transport and Education
- National Department of Human Settlements

Interviews held with

Engineers, Urban and Regional Planners, Project Managers, Private Sector Partners and Councillors

"Mixed-use urban settlement"

The project covers over 1300 hectares and will consist of mixed-use, mixed-income development, incorporating some 2.5 million m² of industrial, commercial, residential and open space. Of the planned 24 000 dwelling units, 15 000 will be subsidised units.

Phase 1A consists of 486 units and Phase 1B of 2186 units.

The case study focuses on the implementation of Phase 1. (Phase 2 is in the planning stages.)

Interviews were conducted with people who had a long history with the project and understood its development from the perspectives of the municipality and the private sector partner.

Leadership

Leadership influenced the overall vision and orientation of the project. For many of those involved, their motivation was being of service to the community. Common themes among the leaders were passion and people, taking a personal interest in the project and understanding what was happening on the ground. The project was driven by the deputy city mayor within a cluster that included human settlements, engineering and transport.

> "You can't lead on something you are not passionate about. For me, leadership is about, in the first instance, inspiring self to radiate energy of what's possible."

Rules of the institution

Despite the talk of integration, in reality the project "belonged" to the department which initiated it, not to the municipality. The silos remained in place, while performance did not seem to be based on impact and outcomes, but rather on keeping to the timelines. The institutional environment was fearful and low in trust, as shown by the complex rules and regulations that also affected the quality of contractors etc. It did not encourage innovation or creativity.

> "So that has really been an ongoing struggle – of applied standard tools versus innovation to create new possibilities, new solutions."

Skills and capacity

The practitioners from both the private and public sectors had deep experience and included civil engineers and planners. They were mostly from KwaZulu-Natal, especially Durban, and shared a strong sense of pride in their city. Useful skills for the project were empathy, listening and knowing how to build relationships. An essential skill was the ability to navigate the unwritten rules and agendas, to work the system and just get things done, without getting caught up in politics.

> "I think a lot of it is the personal interaction between the requestor and the person who's responsible to deliver or respond – massage the system to get exactly what you want out."

Interaction

There was a technical task team and interdepartmental meetings, but in practice there was a lack of individual commitment and collective buy-in from departments. The intergovernmental alignment was not evident, while politics added to the difficulties, as did the community dynamics – social cohesion or community organisation was lacking, and people had different agendas and little understanding of the planning process.

> "Force people to commit. Especially if a project of that nature is declared a presidential project, it cannot fail."

Cornubia is an example of a project with large-scale support from government and the private sector that in theory should demonstrate effective delivery. However, it shows that practitioners often have good intentions in project developments, but implementation is limited because of interdepartmental competition, high rates of municipal staff turnover, a lack of intergovernmental alignment and commitment, and misplaced social facilitation skills.

Mabopane Urban Hub

City of Tshwane

The project leveraged off a station upgrade funded by Prasa and identified catalytic projects in the precinct.

Stakeholders involved

- City of Tshwane municipal departments: Land Use, Planning and Spatial Development, Transport and Economic Development.
- Prasa
- Traders
- National Treasury NDP

Interviews held with

Engineers, Urban and Regional Planners, Project Managers

"Urban core with multi-functional facilities"

The catalytic projects include improving the bus and taxi ranks, linking Mabopane and Soshanguve, and improving facilities for informal/formal economic development and social facilities, including the stadium, library, health facilities and the police station.
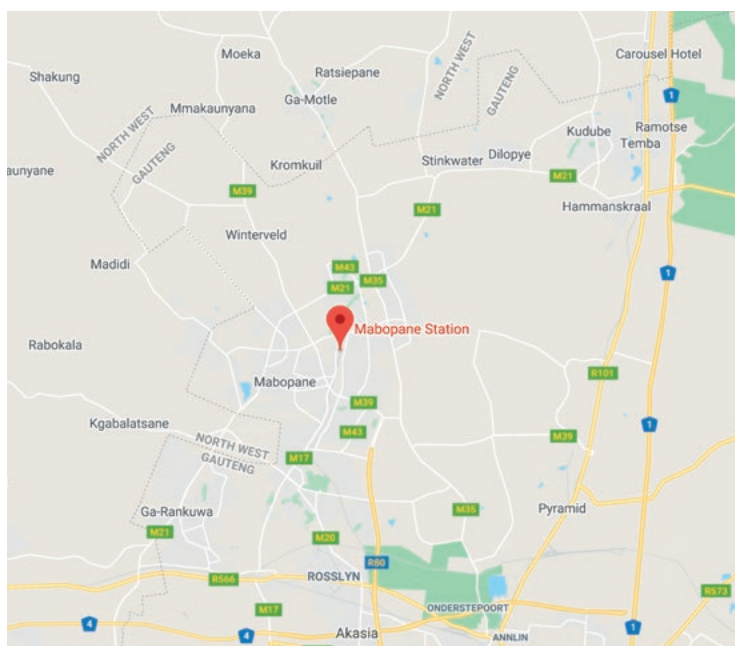
Land ownership and availability have frustrated some of the projects, in particular the bridge linking Mabopane and Soshanguve, which is incomplete because a strategic piece of land was sold to a private developer.

Interviews were conducted with representatives from the land use, planning and spatial development, transport and economic development departments.

Leadership

The leadership in the project was able both to see the big picture and to keep the beneficiaries at the centre. Leadership was shared across the project, rather than there being a clearly defined champion. Leaders came from among practitioners, politicians and community members.

> "You realise that you're working in the public sector but you're serving individuals out there."

Skills and capacity

The practitioners driving the project were all shaped by their personal life stories, which also gave them insights and resilience. Transforming urban space was integrally tied to their experience of growing up in townships. In such a project, engineering and planning skills were not enough – equally important were communication and social skills, and being able to explain the project clearly and succinctly to politicians and communities. Other useful skills included listening, emotional intelligence and having a learning mindset.

> "So, I think emotionally these projects deal with you. So, I think emotional intelligence, you need to grow in that area so that you can manage people [...] so that the project can be executed."

Rules of the institution

Despite being a catalytic project, performance was measured based on budget spend, not on impact or outcomes of the project. Team members shared a common awareness of the urgency and potential impact of the project on communities, but they also recognised the challenges of the system and intergovernmental relations.

> "Remember we are working in a political environment, and councillors and politicians have got a term and they must deliver within that term."

Interaction

The Mabopane Development Forum provided a structure for all stakeholders to work together, but it fell apart when funding was no longer available. There were regular interdepartmental meetings within the city, which provided some continuity. However, practitioners found interacting with communities stressful.

> "There will always be challenges in terms of personalities. Remember, you're dealing with human beings."

Mabopane provides important insights into how city departments can work more collaboratively with each other and with city stakeholders by putting the IDP first. It also raises the importance of planning for post-implementation operationalisation across departments. Although much of the planning and implementation was strengthened by the active participation of the practitioners, after handover much of the work was completed in a siloed manner. It raises important questions about the role and performance of national government agencies in these projects.

Paterson Park

City of Johannesburg

- Community leaders
- Consultants
- City of Joburg municipal departments: Housing (Joshco), Planning, City Parks, Johannesburg Roads Agency, Johannesburg Property Company, Johannesburg Development Agency

Interviews held with

Engineers, Urban and Regional Planners, Architects, Consultants and Community Leaders

"Mixed-income, mixed-use, higher-density, residential project"

Having been included in the City of Joburg's regional spatial development frameworks (SDFs) since 2009, the project was revisited in 2013 and included in the Corridors of Freedom. The vision is to enhance the public park, upgrade the recreation centre and provide integrated housing development along a transit corridor.
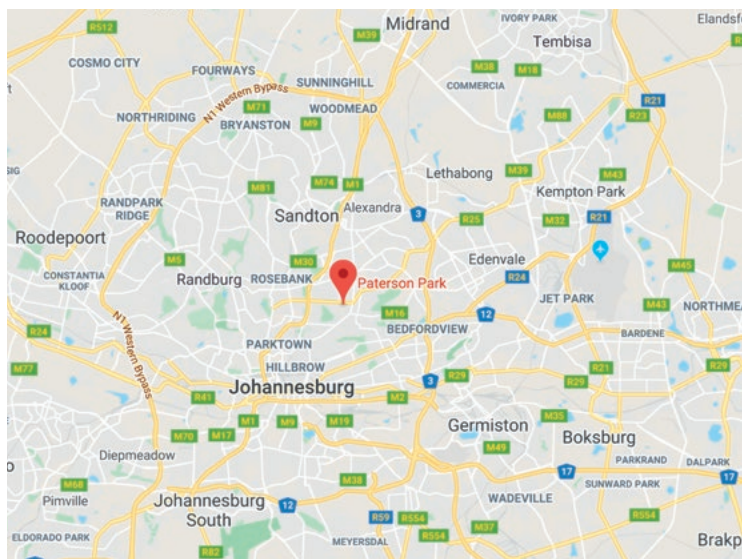
Some elements of the Paterson Park precinct have been completed, but others have been delayed because of outstanding heritage issues, work stoppages and protests, as well as the re-sequencing of some activities, in particular the stormwater rehabilitation programme.

Interviews were conducted with community leaders and consultants, and representatives of city departments and entities. Some of the interviewees had a much longer historical understanding of what had transpired, while others only became really involved from the inception of the Corridors of Freedom.

Leadership

Leadership was both collective and individual, and came from inside and outside the municipality. Some felt that a champion was needed, while others felt that it was a team effort. Community leaders helped to shift community perceptions and many breakthroughs came from third-party mediation. The decision-making and direction of the project were affected by changes at political and managerial level.

> "As a leader you shouldn't just rely and say somebody must do it. You must be the one to make sure that it's done."

Skills and capacity

The personal experiences of practitioners affected their commitment to the project. For example, having grown up in the suburbs, they knew the importance of feeling safe when walking to school. Common skills were the willingness to be open to others and ongoing learning, as well as the ability to work with communities and SMEs. Those who understood the system were able to move things forward.

> "The city is very good at initiating projects; they are very bad at completing projects."

Rules of the institution

Although many city departments and agencies spoke of integration and interdepartmental coordination, in reality they worked in silos and focused on their own deliverables. This led to finger-pointing and frustration. Despite this, resources were available for the project, although having resources also raised expectations among communities and SMMEs. There appeared to be a growing culture of fear within the institution.

> "There is sort of competing mandates between Johannesburg Property Company and Johannesburg Development Agency in those aspects."

Interaction

The importance of face-to-face/offline meetings and ongoing communication, especially with communities, was highlighted. Given the number of players involved with the project, there was a need for clarity on who was driving the project. What was under-estimated were the complexities of dealing with contractors and with communities – and the negative impact of not meeting their expectations and not understanding their circumstances.

> "I think the important lesson we learnt was the stakeholder engagement – you need to have that relationship with the community."

Paterson Park represents a case of how relatively small-scale projects, marked as municipal priority projects, can get caught up in the fractured institutional environment and become overly complicated. It also presents useful insights into the complexities of dealing with multiple stakeholders with varying and competing interests in a project.

Zanemvula

Nelson Mandela Bay

Stakeholders involved

- HDA
- Community leaders
- Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality: Chief Operating Officer and municipal departments of Strategic Planning, Human Settlements, Planning, Transport and Education
- Provincial Department of Human Settlements
- National Department of Human Settlements

Interviews held with

Engineers, Urban and Regional Planners, Project Managers

"Housing project"

The Zanemvula housing project was established to address the sustainable human settlement needs of approximately 10 000 families in Nelson Mandela Bay. It has been ongoing since the early 1990s and covers the areas of Chatty, Joe Slovo West, Soweto-on-Sea and Veeplaas.

In the 1990s, the Urban Foundation through the Mzingisi Development Trust started in-situ development of the informal settlements in the areas. In 2006, Zanemvula became a national government-led flagship housing delivery mega-project and then, in 2009, was handed over to the Housing Development Agency (HDA). In total, the project expects to deliver about 13 500 houses.
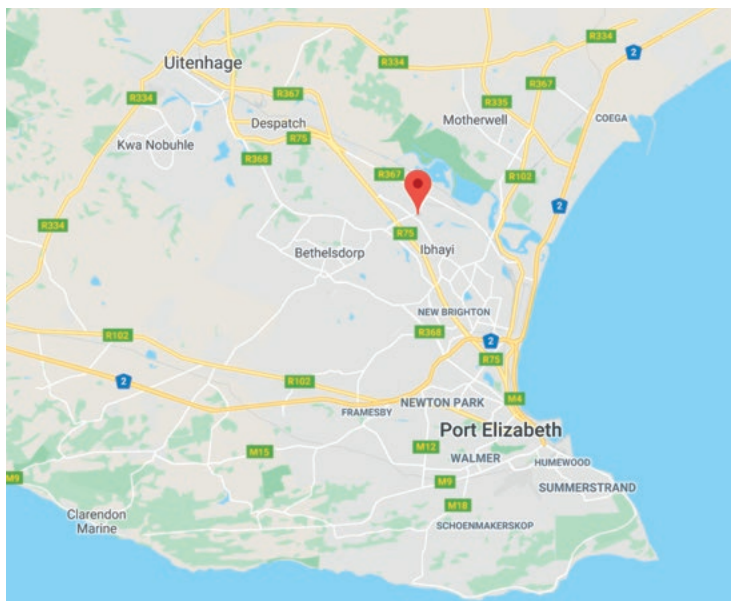
Interviews were conducted with people who had had a long history with the project and understood its development primarily from the perspective of the municipality. The interviews reflected the different perspectives and views, creating a picture of the many different interventions attempted in the same space, the outcomes and impact of which fell short of policy vision and pronouncements.

Leadership

From 2006, the project was a national government-led priority, but there was some resistance from the municipality. The municipality lost more control when the project was handed over to the HDA, which reports to province. There was no team or collective approach, but rather times when an individual's personal passion drove the project and times when individuals felt overwhelmed and with diminished agency.

> "You need somebody actively driving, living this particular project or programme all the time, and I think personal passion is one of those big things."

Skills and capacity

The practitioners driving integration were all planners with many years of experience. Networking and the ability to work with communities were important skills for delivering an integrated project. However, what was missing were skills related to economic development and managing SMME and community economic expectations.

> "On that exercise it was clear you had to have agency [...] know from the beginning how to conceptualise a building and how to make it happen"

Rules of the institution

The intergovernmental nature of the project made it difficult to ascertain which institution's rules dominated. Over the last two decades, decisions have been made at national government level but without any performance management. Despite the talk of integration and cooperative governance, the reality was very different, with inadequate budgets and ultimately no communication when things got more difficult.

> "When you have regular and frequent meetings, regular commitment and participation, you have movement. Then when you pull back, then you start slowing down"

Interaction

Despite the talk of cooperative governance (and signed agreements), the reality was contestation, turf battles and undermining of others. The inability to cooperate and align budgets led to the demolition of a partially built new multi-purpose centre. The lack of coordination meant that housing was delivered without socioeconomic infrastructure. In brief, the needs of the community did not take centre stage.

> "The multi-purpose centre, which was fantastic. But it got two-thirds of the way constructed and then there was also the intergovernmental failure about who's going to pay for it to be finished, and the contractor was forced to leave the site and now it's been demolished completely – it's rubble lying there."

Although Zanemvula was considered a Ministerial priority project, this is not reflected in the actions taken and the communications. There was a lack of clarity around who was *responsible for* vs. who was *driving* the project. This is an example of a total breakdown in intergovernmental relations and provides important lessons on cooperative governance, intergovernmental alignment, social facilitation and mutual accountability.

Transversal Management Diagnostic

MM 2.0 Maturity Model

Transversal management is an approach that could assist South African cities to address the challenges of implementing programmes and projects that require different city departments to collaborate in order to achieve particular outcomes, specifically in the area of spatial transformation. Such outcomes include transit-oriented development in integration zones, informal settlement upgrading, catalytic land development programmes, economic nodes and an enabling regulatory environment for businesses to grow.

The local term "transversal management" is also known internationally as "matrix management". Matrix management is an operating system for organisations to manage horizontally suppliers, customers, products/ services, operating processes and projects, while resources are housed and managed in the traditional vertical organisational structure.
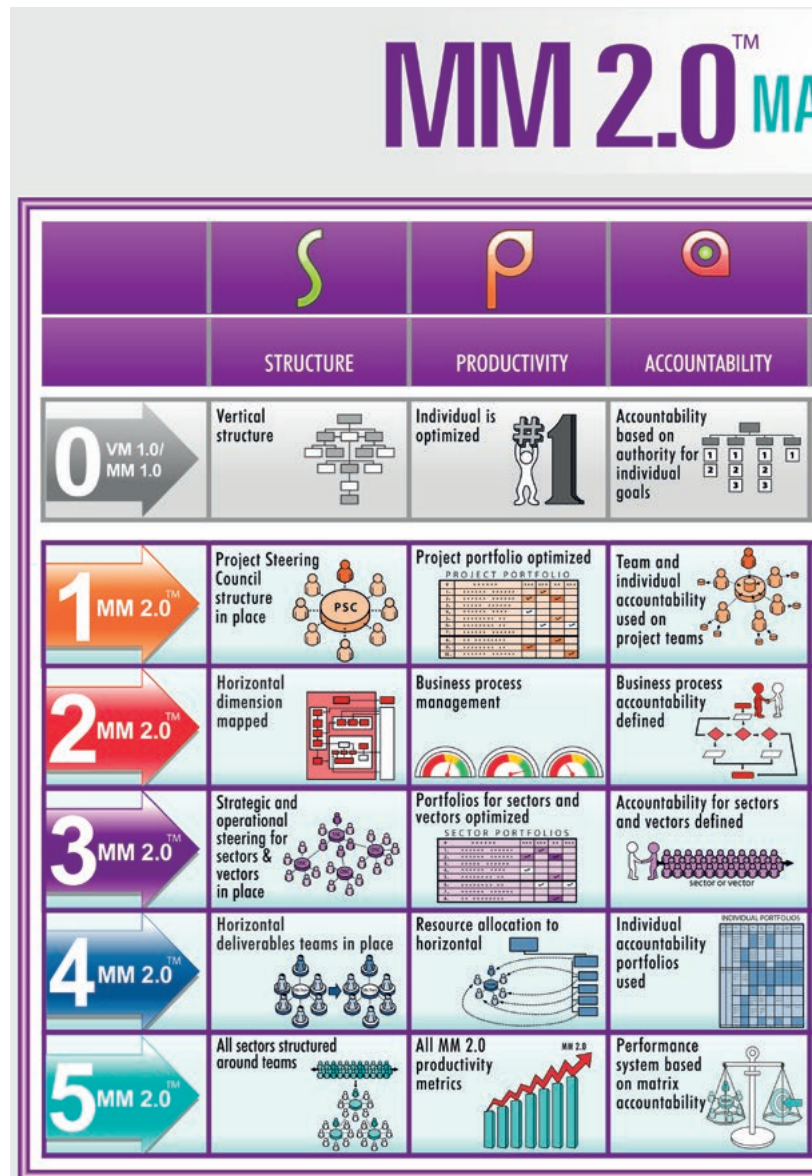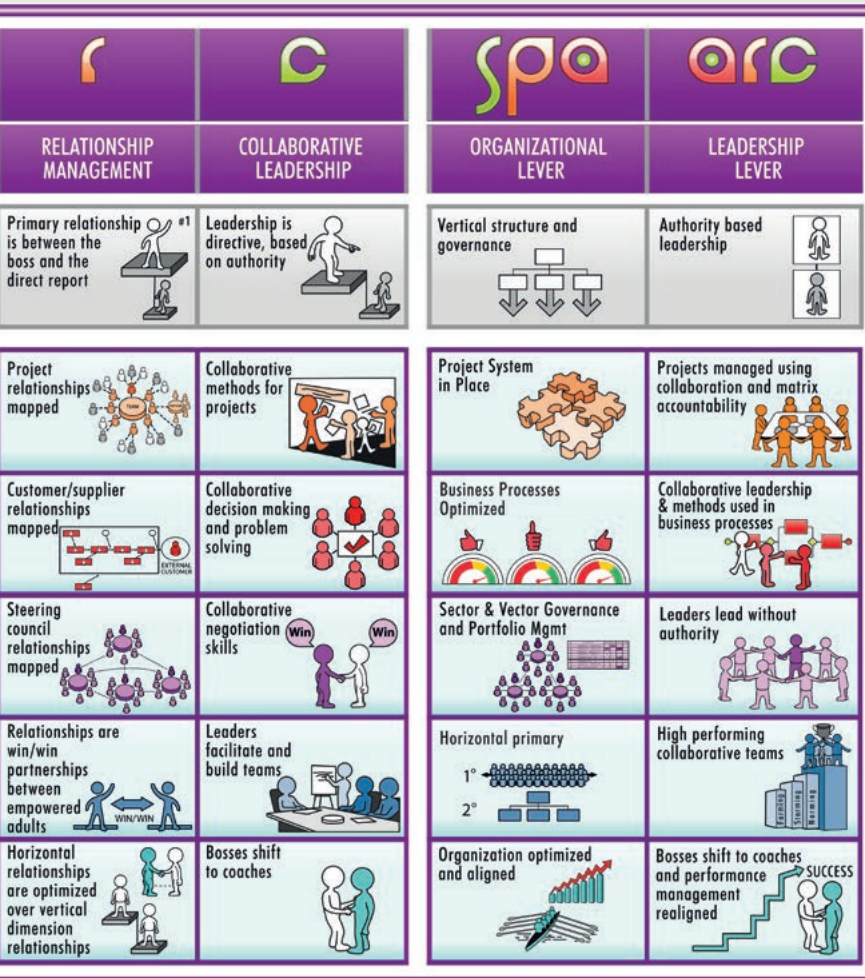
The cities were assessed using the Matrix Management Institute's matrix management model, or Matrix Management 2.0 (MM2.0) methodology. The MM 2.0™ methodology follows a robust assessment, design and implementation process to support organisations to transform from being vertically managed to being horizontally (transversally) managed for the delivery of outputs/services.
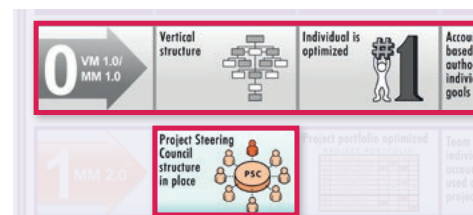
All the cities assessed are mainly operating vertically (Level 0). Their level of matrix management maturity is low for projects and business processes – they are located at levels 0 and 1. The cities basically display no matrix management at the other levels measured by the methodology.

Transversal Management Diagnostic

City Practitioners' Management Challenges

For the MMI 2.0 transversal management diagnostic, city practitioners were asked to identify the consistent management challenges. Each city listed their five top challenges. The challenges shown below were listed among the top five challenges by 1, 2, 3 and 6 cities respectively.

6X

We tend to be more reactive than proactive

Our cross-functional organisational processes are not efficient

Leaders struggle to cooperate across functions/ departments/divisions

3X

We commit to do more than we have the resources to execute properly

Leaders struggle to cooperate across projects

We have difficulty prioritising as a whole organisation

2X

There is blame and finger-pointing in our organisation

We struggle with executing our strategic goals in an efficient way

We have too many initiatives/ projects

1X

Our projects are frequently late and/or over budget

Leaders focus on achieving their own goals not organisational goals

Our leaders don't have the leadership skills to manage effectively in a matrix

A STORY OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION PRACTICE

In an ideal world, developmental local government would mean that decisions taken to maximise organisational performance would result in wider social and economic value, generating the intended developmental outcomes. However, as demonstrated by the case studies, there is a growing divide between "organisational value" – focused on achieving scorecards and clean audits, with senior administrators and politicians aiming for expenditure targets – and intended "societal value" – focused on building social capital, increasing community wellbeing and expanding access to economic and social prosperity. What follows is a set of insights that have emerged from the case study dialogue interviews.

Built environment integration – what's going on?

The focus is on organisational value

The written rules, which make up the current compliance metrics (for procurement, audits, individual departmental prioritisation, scorecards and expenditure progress) incentivise and result in behaviours that blindly pursue organisational value without considering the broader social and economic value impacts.

> "That spirit, the spirit of collaboration, good intentions begin to just get caught in all these bureaucratic processes."
>
> "You need to sit down with people because people are driving what they're driving simply because it exists in their performance plans, and if [the project] does not exist, they're gonna do it because somebody above said so, and we need to cut that, so that we can be taken seriously."
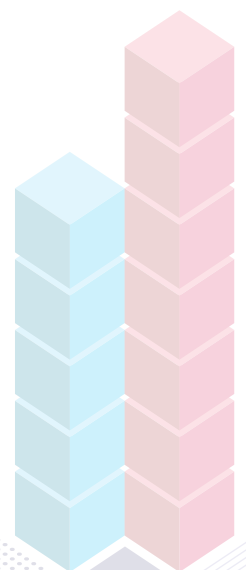
THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER HILL

———

SO MUCH POTENTIAL; WHAT'S WRONG?

———

CONNECTING LOCAL TO THE GLOBAL

———

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

———

LET'S HOUSE IT

The tendency is to "play safe"

There is a developing set of unwritten rules for interpreting certain policies and legislation that favours "playing it safe", rather than doing what needs to be done to create societal value. The tensions inherent in the interpretation of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and supply chain management and procurement policies are often compounded by a reluctance on the part of officials to take decisions that may be challenged in court. The need to award to the most price-competitive bid and not factor in, for example, experience upfront tends to create downstream difficulties – what appears cheapest upfront often becomes a lot more expensive down the line.

> "To be totally frank about it, the bid committees who make decisions are so scared to make a decision based on any deviation from the lowest and most responsive."
>
> "[I]t just comes down in the end to technical issues of PFMA and MFMA issues and that became a major challenge at the end of the day where education department says that they cannot transfer funding across to [the] municipality in advance of the work being done."

However, there are instances where officials have put broader societal value at the centre of finding creative ways to implement different approaches. These examples need to be celebrated and learnt from.

> "People were converted from traders and they became participants in the project. So, they became builders, some of them they managed the traffic, they were on safety issues. We sort of brought in stakeholders."

A PLACE OF
WICKED PROBLEMS

NEVER A
DULL MOMENT

Individuals face tensions and pressures

As a result of the different rules informing decision-making, individuals and project teams end up being pulled in many different directions. The quality of internal collaboration depends on the appetite, interest and willingness of individuals to work with other departments and partners in order to get a project done. The case studies show that these individual efforts often come at the expense of meeting their own performance objectives and departmental scorecards. This places a tension on the ability of multiple players in the municipality to contribute systematically and meaningfully to implementing integrated built environment projects.

> "Then [department X] does you a favour, they actually say, if we can move this and that, you can be there. Now, that's a favour and it builds goodwill. Next time, when someone says – [department Y) is just asking you to do this, then whoever benefited would go – yeah, it's okay, let the guys organise."
>
> "So, I think it's more the silos – the silo type mentality where people are in silos and they don't really worry about what happens on the other side. You've got a priority, housing – and we always say to line departments, it is not [the department] that's building this project; it's [the] municipality, and you are part of [the municipality]. So, don't think we are coming as [the department] and asking for a favour – we're not."
>
> "Everybody will applaud when you present the potential, but it ends there. The moment they leave the room, they go back to their corners [...] and you cannot retain the energy throughout."
>
> "We do have our differences as departments, and sometimes I think the challenge would be the financial commitments. For example, my department has financial commitments of let's say R8 million for this financial year and the next one will have R2 million. Now, the issue will be who will you prioritise because probably some departments don't serve human settlements alone but serve multiple other departments – priorities then have to clash."

Political interests are ever present

Another unwritten rule book at play relates to the political interests that are present in project implementation. The case studies highlight the prominent role played by politics in every project, and how challenging it can be when the political system brings another set of rules to inform decision-making. While politics is a constant feature of municipal government, the politics of decision-making need to be defined and made a transparent part of all projects.

> "And the biggest challenge we all have, and politics unfortunately we can't push it away, it's there, it has its place in delivering, there's elections next year and there's pressure because at the moment I've finished housing. So, there's no construction happening, nothing, no expenditure and if you don't spend money, you don't employ people and if you're not employing people, that gets reported that way to the senior as well as to all entities."
>
> "There are some politicians who I believe, if they really cared for what they were doing, they would take their jobs a whole lot more seriously. For me, I wouldn't be able to sleep at night knowing that I didn't do the best I could, but for many councillors, it's money, it's power, it's the bodyguards that you've got, you know you're a big man, you're a big lady now, driving around, being driven around. No doubt, a lot of councillors are involved in deep things they shouldn't be involved in. So, it's the status and the money for a lot of them, it's not about true service delivery."

GETTING THERE SLOWLY

Intergovernmental cooperation is lacking

There is a breakdown in intergovernmental project cooperation. Different spheres of government are able to establish their own priorities, in isolation from other spheres but in the same municipal jurisdiction. In none of the case studies where national government and provincial government were important contributors was there a sense of aligned priorities for the projects. For instance, provincial government does not have to account to municipalities for school and hospital delivery, while national government (as land owner or project initiator) is not asking cities what it can do to make the project a success.

> "Then we still have this financial issue between national, provincial and municipality, where we are always seen to be the red-headed stepchild and we get our money last. So, you can't implement if you don't have money."
>
> "So, that was a breakthrough when we got on that [Education Department] priority list, but then nothing has happened since and it's about alignment of budgets. [...] I'm concerned because could it possibly be that we've had four schools in the top 10 on the priority list [...] for 20 years and we still find that we haven't any delivery there."
>
> "We have challenges with Sanral and DoT, but DoT was a bigger problem than Sanral was – you would invite the relevant officials to the meetings, but they don't pitch up, obviously other priorities or whatever else, funding restrictions, challenges and problems always – you don't resolve those issues."

Practitioners have different understandings of the same project

What comes across clearly in the interviews is that those involved have different reasons for initiating the project, and understandings of the project differ across the system. How the individual projects relate to broader city objectives and outcomes is not always evident, especially in instances when other spheres of government or the private sector are seen as the project initiators, not the city. In all of the projects, practitioners had different understandings of where the project initiated and what its primary objectives were. None of the projects appear to include knowledge management practices based on the sharing of common information. Instead, there is a reliance on individual interpretations, which results in divergent understandings of the project's role and importance. Similarly, none of the projects have clear M&E mechanisms. Indeed, many of the practitioners expressed the view that questions related to project process and individual experiences were seldom – if ever – asked. The quality of project processes, leadership and coordination among role players is not being documented and incorporated into project evaluation, to provide the institutional reflection and learning required to improve the system.

> "Yeah, I'd really love to hear because the questions you're asking are quite important. I've never had those conversations with the people you're going to speak to, and it will be interesting to hear what they have to say."
>
> "I have never contemplated whether [the project] has contributed to my style of leadership. I cannot say that the thought has crossed my mind. It's most possible that it would have."
>
> "What I'd like to get from this engagement is some kind of feedback and how we can actually improve on these kind of processes because we do these reviews and they get published, they either become academic papers or just kind of policy formulation, but they never come back to how you implement, how you actually translate ideas into reality and this kind of duality between practitioners and thinkers who are also academics."

The unsung heroes are delivering

Across all the case studies, projects are still managing to move along, despite the challenges of priority confusion, admin-compliance-driven rules and diffused power structures. The unsung heroes of these case studies are the municipal practitioners who are tasked with driving integration within a system that is not designed for integrated development. Despite the odds being heavily stacked against them, they continue to work tirelessly within the system to deliver projects – albeit with mixed success. The projects are able to progress often because these champions bring to the table soft skills (people management and the ability to discern what is needed most and when), life experiences that promote empathy, and activism. At a time when there is a leadership vacuum, it is important to recognise the players who are demonstrating leadership through their courageous, people-centred efforts, often without the title of "leader".

> "But having said that, we still get through the minefield."
>
> "He wouldn't let it go, he committed to making decisions, sometimes making decisions is difficult, but he had to respond for those if there's a mistake. I think that commitment to the project to see it through, and that's the kind of leadership that we need. It's not just about facilitation, not just making a contribution, because I think those are very valuable, but somebody had to run with the flag."
>
> "Difficulty to get a buy-in sometimes from senior politicians but I believe if you present your story with fairness and with with honesty, people, whether they buy it or don't buy it, sometimes long as you can substantiate it and sleep well at night."
>
> "If I had to think who I've worked with over the years, it's been very committed and very determined people, that they really want to make a difference."
>
> "Because I grew up like this and I knew what it is when the resources are limited, and you don't have anything. So, really, it sharpens your thinking."

EXPECT THE
UNEXPECTED

Crucial skills are missing

Across all the projects, the role of social facilitation is apparent when effective – and starkly evident when ineffective. The case studies reveal the type of skills and capabilities that are sorely missing from municipal environments. In short supply are highly skilled social facilitators who thrive in working in challenging contexts. Often such work is given to planners and engineers who do their best but are not equipped for the work, or given to community members in an attempt to neutralise the tensions but who are also seldom equipped. Also in short supply are highly creative people who are able to design and engage from a different perspective, to speak a different and more universal language, and to capture hearts and minds.

> "Well, in essence, CLOs [community liaison officers] are appointed by ward governance. My comment on ward governance is that it doesn't exist. From the very top at the speaker's office, ward governance is a misnomer. So, you're relying on regions to decide on CLOs and do the appointing and do the public participation, which is a shambles and blitz all throughout the city, not just one place."

Building trust with communities

A pilot case study was run to test the methodology of the BEITT project. Some interesting insights were gained that did not emerge in the later case studies about building trust with communities from a low trust base.

In the beginning, the lack of trust translated into calls for the project leader to be removed. It became personal and quite racial – the project leader was told, "You are not black and you are female, and we will never accept you in the context of a township". However, instead of taking these attacks personally, the project leader learnt that it was not personal and building trust with community members takes time. It was about:

> "... getting them to trust that this is in their best interests, and there is no underhand collusion."
>
> "... changing their perception of what urban development is."

The experience showed that it is possible to build trust, even from a low trust base. What it takes is the following:

1 Be present and available

- Spend as much time as required with the community before, during and after the project.

> "We were there almost weekly in the beginning and then we continued that to monthly meetings."
>
> "It was about hearing what they wanted and then actually seeing physically it being brought to life."
>
> "It's about turning up and listening to all of their complaints."

2 Be transparent and open

- Show clearly the process being followed.
- Share meeting notes and other documentation needed.

> "Often the mistrust is that we are not giving them the full story, we are not giving them the right figures."
>
> "Playing open cards and just being there [...] so they know me and they know they can come up to me and ask something and get a yes or a no."

3 Be authentic and resilient

- Show that you are committed and that you care.
- Don't be defensive (even if you are scared).

> "All people want to know and feel is that they are being acknowledged and they are being heard."
>
> "They called for me to be removed from my CEO level [...] I had to learn that it had nothing to do with me."
>
> "I would cry at home where they wouldn't see, and I had to make sure that I was firm."

4 Work to enable and empower

- Don't engage to tick a box.
- Engage to develop a community's ideas for development and build a sense of ownership.

> "So when we started and asked, 'What do you want?', the community will say things like 'can you fix that pothole on that corner' and 'this streetlamp is not working'. So they had no idea of the input they could make until you started asking them things. And then they saw the perception again of service delivery meaning the fixing of stuff rather than change. Now they will come up to you and ask, 'can we create a walk of heros on these bars' and 'what if we put like a painting of a person?'. So to change their thinking was also a challenge but I think, hopefully a success."

EMERGING LESSONS FROM THE CASE STUDIES

Having understood and synthesised the stories of built environment integration practice as expressed by practitioners, the research team carried out an analysis to understand the critical insights and emerging lessons. The following lessons are important for guiding the development of recommendations for how to begin addressing the practice challenges presented in this report.

Reward transversal approaches

The case studies indicate that, despite all the talk about breaking the silos and working in a transversal manner, the reality is that the system measures and rewards individual and departmental performance rather than coordination and collaboration. Most interviewees expressed the frustration of getting other departments to meetings, sequencing, and aligning budgets and workplans correctly. A common practice is for project teams to create separate institutional vehicles, such as project steering committees, technical committees, oversight teams and co-ordination groups, in an attempt to foster integration in institutions. These vehicles appear to have some success in terms of joint planning, but are ineffective when it comes to implementation and decision-making. The challenge for project leaders is to hold together these institutional vehicles, keeping group members unified and consistently participating in delivering the project. Yet back in the individuals' line departments, the projects have not been internalised into the departmental operating and reporting environments. For those who drive the projects, most of their time is spent not productively (on executing the project), but rather on rounding up, persuading and coordinating peers whose energies are being channelled elsewhere by the system. The consequence is an energy-draining system, leading to delays, wasteful expenditure and sub-optimal outcomes from well-intentioned initiatives.

City leadership, both political and administrative, needs to look seriously at how collaboration and interdepartmental and interdisciplinary processes are measured and rewarded, to enable individuals and departments to adopt the transversal approaches required. It is not sustainable to rely on individuals who are able to navigate the system and who have the skills and capacity to build relationships and get things done.

IMPLEMENTATION
IS HARD

- Measure and reward behaviours such as collaborative budgeting, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Create a culture, procedures and systems that foster solution-seeking behaviour, through collaboration, authenticity and community reality.

Create space for conversations between politicians and administrators

Unlike other spheres of government, city practitioners respond to a multiplicity of politicians – Mayoral Committee members, ward councillors, proportional representation councillors, oversight committees and full council, as well as sometimes politicians in the party structure. These multiple levels of political interface can create unnecessary tensions and confusion. In addition, the hierarchical nature of relationships means that even when officials have reservations about the practicality of what is being mooted, there are no opportunities for solution-seeking discussions.

The case studies highlight the importance of understanding the city as a political environment and creating the space for meaningful conversation between politicians and administrators to work through issues as they arise.

- Understand political imperatives, manifesto commitments and multi-party governance.
- Develop a clear project communication matrix.
- Develop the IDP to lead collective prioritisation and action.

Engage communities

For many of the case studies, interaction with the beneficiary community starts once construction is imminent. This indicates that projects are initiated somewhere in the system without benefitting from the practical experiences and daily, lived reality of communities. Therefore, although the projects are well-intentioned and aimed at benefiting communities, they are often initiated without understanding whether the problem being solved is the real issue. City practitioners need to build relationships with community members and community-based structures, to better understand what problems are being addressed. Solutions should be co-crafted by those with real lived experience and those with the professional and academic qualifications. The importance of community agency, intelligence and resources in shaping responses should not be underestimated. Equally, city practitioners need to understand that influencing and educating community members requires humility, perseverance and patience. Communities are not homogenous and have their own power dynamics and contestation. It may sometimes feel easier to plan from the comfort of a boardroom, appoint contractors and implement without the "messiness" of having to interact with community-based structures. However, project outcomes and deliverables are the poorer if this important voice is not engaged with and navigated.

Cities should weave in community engagement from the project conception phase. Investing in educating community structures is important, so that they understand the many steps and processes that need to be followed. It also helps counter the impatience felt by communities over legislative and regulatory requirements such as geo-tech, impact assessments, heritage studies, etc.

- Align the project's intended outcomes and the beneficiary community's needs.
- Maximise stakeholder involvement and participation.

Manage community dynamics and contractors

Successful tenderers sometimes become entangled in the community dynamics around the project and are often not informed upfront of the potential difficulties which could arise in implementation, project timelines and deliverables within budget. With South Africa's high rates of unemployment, the level of expectation for economic opportunity from built environment projects is incredibly high. For many local businesses and unemployed people, the arrival of a built environment project brings a glimmer of hope for accessing a short-term job and perhaps improving skills. The complexity of the relationship between the main, well-established or emerging contractors and local SMMEs creates many issues. There is often contestation when contractors arrive with their own labour force but community members expect to be provided with job opportunities. Such contestation and delays often result from the lack of clear city guidelines on remuneration rates for local labour and the failure to factor in a local empowerment

strategy upfront. In some instances SMMEs call into question the practices of main contractors using sub-standard supplies, etc. In addition, for projects with more than one contractor working on the same site, the lack of management of multiple delivery teams – which may be reporting to different city departments or entities – sometimes leads to poor planning and wasteful expenditure because of the work not being sequenced correctly.

Cities need to pay attention to issues between main contractors and sub-contractors, and to the importance of a clear local labour policy and strategy (including local labour rates), and of streamlining application for economic opportunities on a project.

- Understand and facilitate the community's economic expectations of the project.
- Ensure effective contract management.
- Create clear city economic empowerment and skills transfer strategies for built environment projects.

Make intergovernmental cooperation work

Sometimes projects are announced and begun, only for the project implementers to find that geo-tech or land ownership issues impede the original vision for the project. City practitioners cited examples of housing projects that are built without the necessary social and economic infrastructure, resulting in dislocation and unemployment, which create new challenges. At times, spheres of government and their respective agencies appear to be actively undermining each other. Even ministerial initiatives or presidential catalytic projects deliver poor quality outcomes because of the lack of systems and structures for joint budgeting, planning and monitoring. A concern is the defeatist resignation and acceptance of things by city practitioners and their inability to articulate what would make sense from their perspective.

More work is needed to move the vision for intergovernmental relations as espoused on paper into practical working reality, where the spheres (not tiers) of government operate on an equal footing. In particular, meaningful conversations are needed about the impact of legislation and regulations, and the development of clear intergovernmental working arrangements.

- Create a big picture vision that can be shared with all involved in the project.
- Keep a historic timeline in a format and style that is accessible to new entrants on a project.
- Create clear protocols for intergovernmental communication.
- Ensure that municipal finance legislation and city policies are responsive to the creation of economic opportunities and skills development.
- Promote city-led planning for all spheres of government.

Work on the basis that leadership is dispersed across the system and society

The case studies demonstrate that leadership is not in a title. In each of the case studies, people across the implementation chain at various levels played important leadership roles and demonstrated leadership at different times. A crucial factor in driving these projects forward was the ability to discern when something is needed. Leaders in these projects demonstrated the ability to take tough decisions, lobby, encourage and fight for better project outcomes in the face of the many rules that exist in the environment. They have an energy, passion and enthusiasm for the work they are doing, and seem to embody a sense of optimism. When practitioners bring their "whole selves" to work, drawing on their lived experiences in combination with their skills, they are able to lead in dynamic ways. The ability to grow and support others, and to promote team work, has emerged as an important aspect of implementing built environment projects, which no one person can manage alone.

For projects to succeed in a constrained environment requires empowering people and teams across the implementation value chain to take responsibility for their contributions. Empowered people and teams come up with creative and innovative approaches to solving the many challenges that arise during these projects. The sign of a leader is being able to empower people which goes hand in hand with ensuring a shared big picture vision, having clear societal-value performance targets, and rewarding collaboration and innovation.

- Highlight the importance of project champions who build effective teams.

Implement project M&E as a learning tool

Although no specific question about M&E was asked, what emerged from the interviews was that projects do not have effective (or sometimes any) M&E systems in place. There is no follow-up on the expected delivery approaches and actions across the municipality and intergovernmentally. A common understanding is needed of M&E, which is not only about compliance or accountability but also learning. The value of M&E lies in the institutional learning that follows, which also requires a knowledge management strategy to ensure good practices are shared and institutionalised. The M&E role needs to be clearly defined, and a team needs to be empowered to run knowledge management and M&E in projects.

The project-level M&E system is currently suboptimal. At the beginning of a project, a clear and specific monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be established and be the basis of progress meetings.

- Promote continuous learning as a core part of any project.

Maximise learning between practitioners and consultants

Many professionals are involved in projects but not employed by a municipality, although some may be former city employees. These consultants and professionals offer deep insights into how built environment projects are unfolding, highlighting the frustrations associated with interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination. However, their observations and recommendations are often watered down or remain unexpressed in the interest of maintaining good client relationships. In some instances, the skills of the consultants help to create momentum and build trust with communities. However, in certain instances, consultants who are new to the municipal terrain can benefit from the experience and knowledge of practitioners. Projects could do well to promote better learning opportunities between officials and consultants.

It is not evident from the interviews how consultants are helping to build in-house skills in municipalities, or whether officials are also able to impart lessons to consultants, and to what extent they are being encouraged to share insights that could lead to systemic changes. There is also an element of holding back from consultants and professionals for fear of losing the opportunity to work with a city on future projects.
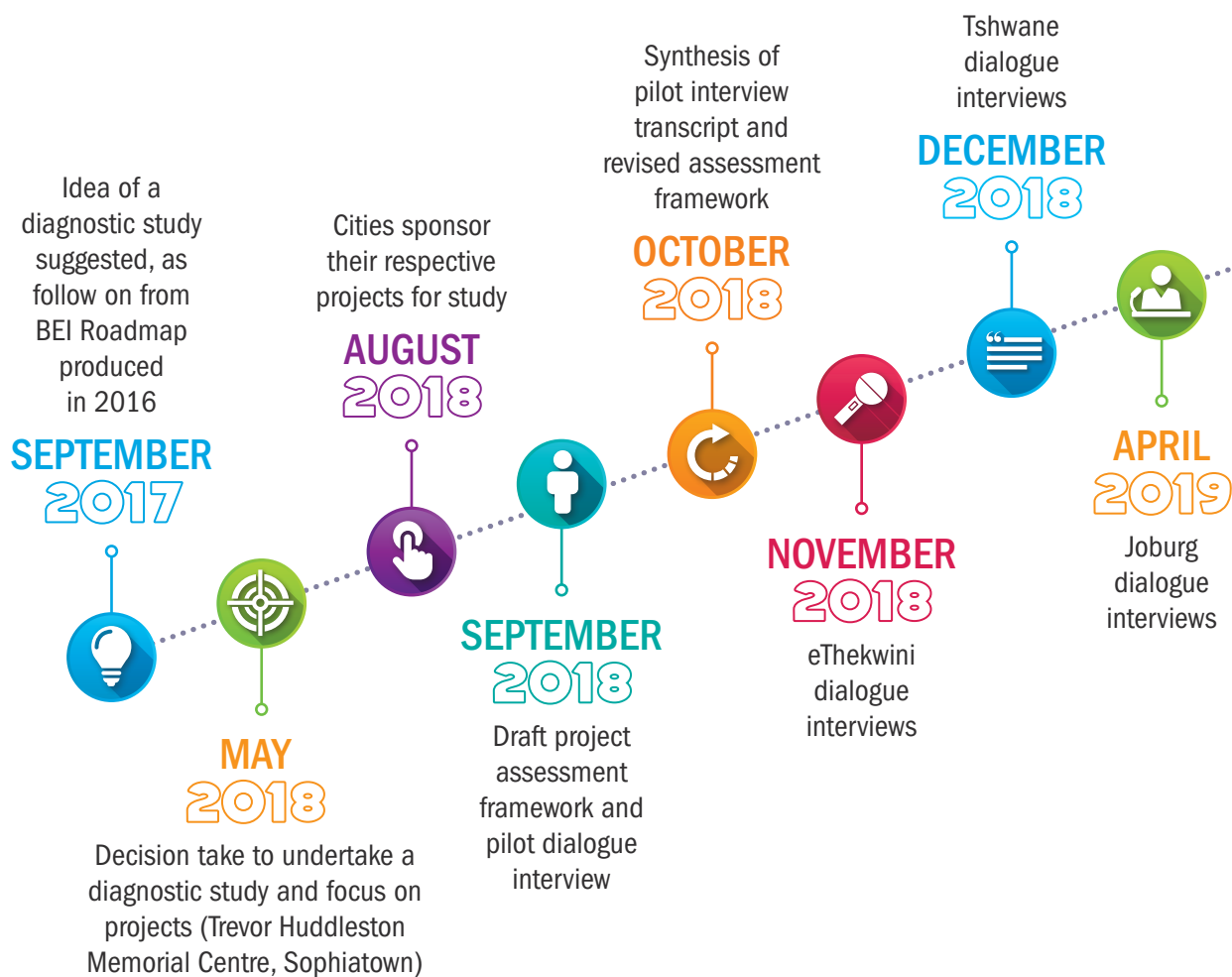
- Know your people, their skills and capabilities.
- Manage consultants and external professionals well and ensure that they assist to bolster internal skills and capacity, and share project knowledge during handover to new service providers.
- Invest in actively building and retaining social facilitation skills within the city.
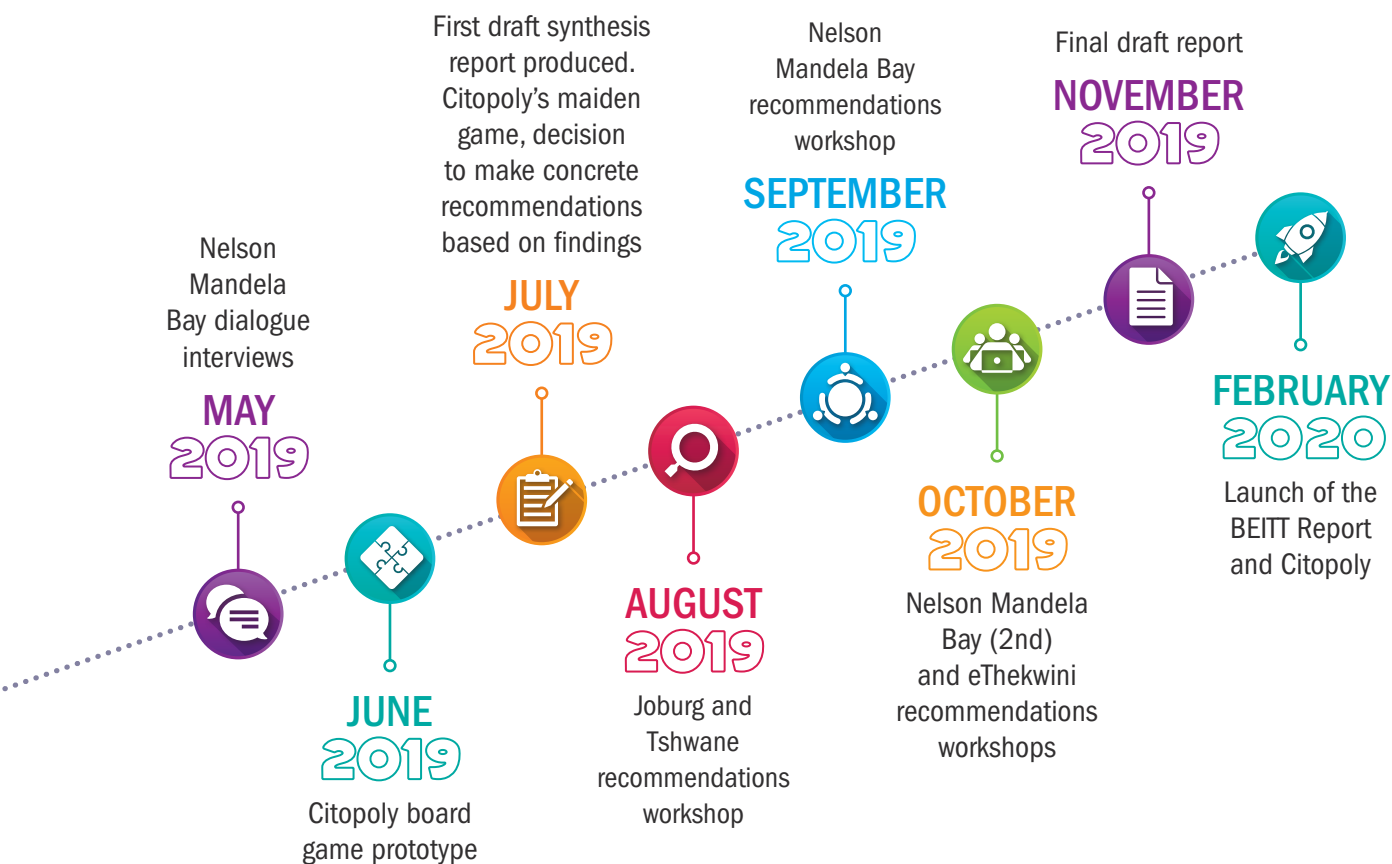- Build skills for partnering within the city.

Four cities, four case study areas and four sets of dialogue interviews have provided rich insights into the practice and reality of built environment transformation. This exercise revealed that the system will not transform itself. What is required are agitators and change agents who will be courageous and audacious in pushing back and creating new rules that are less about dividing and more about connecting. The system needs to acknowledge – and unapologetically set out to change – the injustice and uneven starting pointspoints. Practitioners in cities, consultants, professionals, community members and structures are needed who can move beyond "maximum me" and start to show different ways of relating and doing, which create fundamentally transformed people and places. What is clear is that there are enough people in the system who want to do things differently. The challenge is how to amplify those voices to the tipping point, where processes and systems are transformed to give different outcomes to the ones being measured now.

Project Timeline

CITY PRACTITIONERS were at the centre of the research process, guiding and informing it.

Idea of a diagnostic study suggested, as follow on from BEI Roadmap produced in 2016

SEPTEMBER 2017

MAY 2018

Decision take to undertake a diagnostic study and focus on projects (Trevor Huddleston Memorial Centre, Sophiatown)

Cities sponsor their respective projects for study

AUGUST 2018

SEPTEMBER 2018

Draft project assessment framework and pilot dialogue interview

Synthesis of pilot interview transcript and revised assessment framework

OCTOBER 2018

NOVEMBER 2018

eThekwini dialogue interviews

Tshwane dialogue interviews

DECEMBER 2018

APRIL 2019

Joburg dialogue interviews

Project Timeline

Nelson Mandela Bay dialogue interviews

MAY 2019

First draft synthesis report produced. Citopoly's maiden game, decision to make concrete recommendations based on findings

JULY 2019

Nelson Mandela Bay recommendations workshop

SEPTEMBER 2019

Final draft report

NOVEMBER 2019

JUNE 2019

Citopoly board game prototype

AUGUST 2019

Joburg and Tshwane recommendations workshop

OCTOBER 2019

Nelson Mandela Bay (2nd) and eThekwini recommendations workshops

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FEBRUARY 2020

Launch of the BEITT Report and Citopoly

25
DIALOGUE INTERVIEWS
held with practitioners

Over 50
CITY PRACTITIONERS
engaged in recommendation workshops

The Story of Citopoly

Citopoly was born out of experimenting with ways of getting city practitioners more engaged in knowledge generation and application. The research team for the Built Environment Integration Practice study sought to package the findings to promote engagement and interaction. The dialogue interviews contained so many practitioner quotes that illustrated the realities of practice across the city institutional environment, but not all of these quotes could be included in the report. Therefore, the team explored gaming as a fun and interactive way to pull the quotes together and share the insights.

In synthesising and analysing the interview transcripts, what became clear was that municipal practitioners are often faced with a tough ultimatum: comply with organisational performance parameters, knowing that their actions will not deliver community impact, or compromise organisation performance by going out of the box to achieve developmental outcomes for communities and beneficiaries. Sadly, but understandably, more often than not the tendency is to focus on delivering organisational value, often to the detriment of the community development outcomes intended by the projects.

The verbatim practitioner quotes provided the basis of a game that illustrated the conundrum of building organisational value vs. societal value. Quotes by practitioners expressed the behaviours, thoughts and experiences that build either organisational value or societal value. The research team then developed specific consequences for gaining or losing these values, as represented by the quotes. Enter the idea of building two towers, and having the looming threat of these towers collapse at any stage.

A basic prototype of the game was piloted with SACN colleagues and, after a few tweaks, in July 2019, the first official playing of Citopoly took place at the BEITT's retreat in Ficksburg at Earthrise Mountain Lodge. Thereafter, the prototype game was played by city practitioners across South Africa, as a basis for engaging the draft version of this report, reflecting on practice and co-developing a set of priority recommendations.

An official Citopoly game has been produced and will continue to encourage discussion and reflection on current municipal practice within and beyond the built environment.

SECTION 05

PRACTITIONER-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES

The dialogue interviews and case studies provide a useful opportunity for the system to hold up a mirror to itself and reflect on the actions required to learn from and improve on practice. The actions, in form of recommendations, are organised around the clear set of collective priorities identified by city practitioners at the five workshops.

1. Develop the IDP to lead collective prioritisation and action.
2. Align the project's intended outcomes and the beneficiary community's needs
3. Create a culture, procedures and systems that foster solution-seeking behaviour, through collaboration, authenticity and community reality.
4. Maximise stakeholder involvement and participation.
5. Create a big picture vision that can be shared with all involved in the project.
6. Understand political imperatives, manifesto commitments and multi-party government.
7. Ensure that municipal finance legislation and city policies are responsive to the creation of economic opportunities and skills development.
8. Create clear city economic empowerment and skills transfer strategies for built environment projects.

To achieve these priorities, different parts of the system, which hold the different pieces, will need to cooperate – it will require a step-change in the way that things are done. Different actors will have to come together and begin to address these system issues that emerged from the case studies, through dialogue and joint action in order to achieve better developmental outcomes. It is a whole-of-society approach, and it is possible.
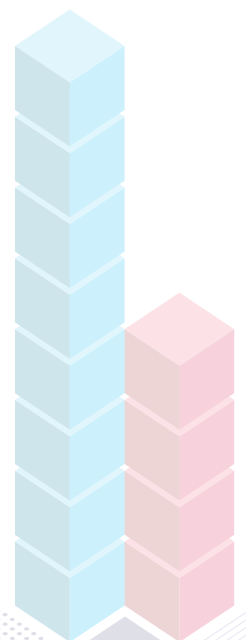
NEVER GIVE UP
—
PUT YOUR RUNNING SHOES ON
—
A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY
—
DIGNIFIED SPACE
—
KEEP PUSHING

Develop the IDP to lead collective prioritisation and action

The IDP is a legislative single plan that municipalities are responsible for producing in collaboration with stakeholders and partners. The IDP's status, as a tool for urban development, needs to be elevated, to strengthen and inform the district development model approach. A shift is needed in how IDPs are developed (i.e. greater collaboration) and how participation in and adherence to IDPs are monitored and evaluated.

Stakeholders

City Managers, National and Provincial COGTA; IDP managers and city IDP stakeholders

PRIORITY NO. 2

Align the project's intended outcomes and the beneficiary community's needs

Developmental local government means working with communities to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives. Projects that do not put the community at the centre fail to be developmental. A shift is needed in how communities are engaged, to create sustained, long-term relations. Building trust with communities requires authentic and accessible ways of working.

Stakeholders

Project leaders (administrative and political), community leaders, civic-based and non-governmental organisations.

PRIORITY NO. 3

Create a culture, procedures and systems that foster solution-seeking behaviour, through collaboration, authenticity and community reality

The current metrics of performance are compliance based and do not incentivise behaviours for integrated delivery and desired developmental outcomes. A shift is needed in the design of government performance management systems, and new performance management systems need to be piloted in cities for projects focused on community and broader developmental outcomes.

Stakeholders

City Manager, Human Resources, City Treasury, Auditor-General, COGTA, National Treasury

PRIORITY NO. 4

Maximise stakeholder involvement and participation

Participation is a term that is easily thrown around, and yet cities still do not have sound and authentic participatory models and approaches to projects. Engaging stakeholders in diverse contexts requires highly skilled social facilitation, as well as investment in ongoing relationship building and management. Cities need to continue to explore better ways of working with communities and to draw from the experience of the development agencies, NGOs and CBOs that work in this space.

Stakeholders

HR Project managers and implementation team, national treasury, city treasury, communities, private sector

PRIORITY NO. 5

Create a big picture vision that can be shared with all involved in the project

Cities are capable of developing visions and mission statements, but these seldom cut across the institution's planning and design, and wider stakeholder communities. Cities need to explore more effective and exciting processes to build shared big picture visions that can channel the actions of many stakeholders towards a common end.

Stakeholders

Project leaders, community leaders, city communications, M&E

PRIORITY NO. 6

Understand political imperatives, manifesto commitments and multi-party government

Local government is politicised by design. In effect, executing projects and programmes requires the political and administrative arms of local government to work together. Currently, there is a breakdown in the political-administrative interface. The way in which information and ideas are generated at a local government level needs to shift, from a "combative politics vs. technocratic" perspective towards an empathetic and generative approach. This will require providing more opportunities for politicians and administrators to come together and share, learn and build trust.

Stakeholders

City Manager and Senior managers, Mayor, MMCs and Councillors

Ensure that municipal finance legislation and city policies are responsive to the creation of economic opportunities and skills development

The regulatory environment for municipal finances has become exceptionally controlling due to the expanse and threat of corruption. Unfortunately, this over-regulation has resulted in cultures that affect the very people who are meant to benefit from city investment and development. There needs to be greater flexibility in the interpretation of what is considered inappropriate procurement for projects that benefit communities directly. A shift is required in how expenditure and procurement are monitored and measured.

Stakeholders

Economic development, city treasury, national treasury, Supply Chain Managers

Create clear city economic empowerment and skills transfer strategies for built environment projects

The reality is that built environment projects bring hope for employment, contracts and skills to beneficiary communities. Cities must make the shift towards clear overarching policies and strategies that allow project-level economic empowerment strategies to inform how a specific project could provide opportunities for the community and meaningfully empower local actors.

Stakeholders

Economic development, project leaders (political and administrative)

Practice Insights Related to the Recommendations

EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS		PRACTICE INSIGHTS
	Reward Transversal Approaches	City leadership, both political and administrative, needs to look seriously at how collaboration and interdepartmental and interdisciplinary processes are measured and rewarded, to enable individuals and departments to adopt the transversal approaches required. It is not sustainable to rely on individuals who are able to navigate the system and have the skills and capacity to build relationships and get things done.
1	Measure and reward behaviours such as collaborative budgeting, planning, implementation and evaluation.	
2	Create a culture, procedures and systems that foster solution-seeking behaviour, through collaboration, authenticity and community reality.	"Understanding how can I then contribute to transform the areas where I grew up in like the townships." "The impact you know you're able to touch the ground and feel what people are feeling and then the opportunity of coming up with solutions to try and reduce those levels of inequality." "This is what I always tell my project managers that my definition of a project manager is somebody who's got an ability to lobby and do everything possible to get people to buy into what they are wanting to produce." "I think the ward committee systems ... it has sort of diminished the power – with civic associations we were forced to account and we were forced to collaborate and co-plan and co-produce and co-deliver." "Project management is really about managing people to get things done and the importance of appreciating what people can offer and how." "I think it's the love of what I do." "My job for the project was mainly to make sure that the informal traders shift for the project – which involves negotiations, it involves day to day interaction, it involves fighting, it involves interrogation when you're moving the bread and butter of a person."
	Create space for conversations	*The case studies highlight the importance of understanding the city as a political environment and creating the space for meaningful conversation between politicians and administrators to work through issues as they arise.*

	EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS	PRACTICE INSIGHTS
3	Understand political imperatives, manifesto commitments and multi-party governance	"I don't have a background of being a politician but working with politicians, I have to exist in their world but at the same time maintain honesty." "You always have to say – what are your expectations politically?" "You must understand your structure, which committee you report to, who's your MMC and what relationship you are creating with them." "Remember we are working in a political environment and councillors and politicians have got a term and they must deliver within that term."
4	Develop a clear project communication matrix	"I got an opportunity to sit with a plain mama from the informal settlement and explain their anxiety with conviction, and I represent hope and then I've got an opportunity to sit with the minister and explain that I've got my ducks in a row. So, for me to be able to operate at the widest range and understand at what time to pitch what and be relevant at any given point." "I think in that space there was a lack of communication to be honest, between administration and politics because if you go there to make a presentation, sometimes, you don't get the platform. There were a lot of challenges with communication from the councillors as well as the administration."
5	Develop the IDP to lead collective prioritisation and action	"So, people could see that there is commitment from the IDP to fund the project. So, stability from the political ... there was still continuous funding because everybody saw it as a critical catalytic project. People participated in the project, it became easier for them to know what is the next step of the project, what is required and where opportunities are for them to get engaged in."
	Engage Communities	*Cities should weave in community engagement from the project conception phase. Investing in educating community structures in understanding the many steps and processes that need to be followed is important, and helps with the impatience felt by communities over legislative and regulatory requirements like geo-tech, impact assessments, heritage studies etc.*
6	Align the project's intended outcomes and the beneficiary community's needs	"To negotiate that option, but then to understand why it is difficult for them. Why would they rather choose a situation that is undesirable?" "How do you then take care of your home because once we hand over it's your responsibility. That's what ownership is responsibility. So, we do these programs, we work with different departments – water and sanitation, revenue, electricity, roads and transport – just to educate them before they move into the house. Once they move in we re-educate them. This is just on a social perspective only." "I also learnt that we couldn't really engage with such a complex process on our own as planners and architects. We really needed to find ways of collaborating, just strengthening the network to the level that it needed to be thought and really address the different issues. I mean it wasn't really about housing or services – it was more about transformation of our environment and putting people in the driving seat to really exercise the right to make decisions."

	EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS	PRACTICE INSIGHTS
7	Maximise stakeholder involvement and participation	"We established a committee and luckily at the facility itself" "We then said let's have stakeholder engagement, in fact we broaden our stakeholder engagement, first we have our city stakeholders and then we open it up to Province because this is an integrated project."
	Manage community dynamics and contractors	*Cities need to pay attention to issues between main contractors and sub-contractors, the need for a clear local labour policy and strategy and streamlining application for opportunity and rates for local labour on a project.*
8	Understand and facilitate for community economic expectations of the project	"The potential of _____ project to deliver potential revenue and job opportunities." "It was a long project. There were stoppages in between. There was a time when the contractor couldn't perform – he was saying that theres a lot of interference from stakeholders on the project. There were also toyi, toyis – sometimes the community wanting to get more work on the project, so it was a big task."
9	Effective contract management	"A lot of projects are stalled because we don't know how to fire underperforming contractors." "Sometimes you don't have to fire the contractor, you must identify challenges why the contractor is failing. Sometimes you realize they don't have cash flow, they can't buy materials, they can't pay their labour and so on." "We once implemented that the funding must go into a joint account , the contractor agreed and the project was finalised even if outside the original timeframes."
10	Cities must create clear economic empowerment and skills transfer strategies on built environment projects.	"The labour issues are holding up construction. Holding up construction costs the contractors money and costs the city money." "Communities are so desperate for work that you can't say but he's doing so well, and not give another guy a chance to do well as well. We are sitting with a challenge." "We've got the South African National Bureau of Standards for equipment for playgrounds .... I find that there's only a limited number of manufacturers or suppliers who are able to meet those requirements." "If SMMEs don't have the equipment or it's not possible for them to acquire that as yet, they still need to get the main contractor to do that component of the work for them so then their profit margin reduces."
	Make Intergovernmental Cooperation Work	*More work is needed to move the vision for intergovernmental relations as espoused on paper into practical working reality, where the spheres (not tiers) of government operate on an equal footing. In particular, meaningful conversations are needed about the impact of legislation and regulations, and the development of clear intergovernmental working arrangements.*

EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS		PRACTICE INSIGHTS
11	Create a big picture vision that can be shared with all involved in the project.	"The discussion started as a land transition, but the bigger picture we had understood." "So it worked really by hook and crook to a point that that we understood that we were collaborating here and when that vision started to come together we were able to shape a framework." "To try and pull everybody to buy into the vision." "I think it's the lack of communication down the hierarchy."
12	Keep a historic timeline in a format and style that is accessible to new entrants on a project.	"I like to work around people that know what they are doing and if they don't it's my job to make sure that they get to that level. I'm always open and inclusive and we co-run so that it becomes a shared benefit." "With the changing of project managers, engineers all the time, is when the city managers change or the deputy city manager's change .... so they're going to go with it but are they just going with the flow or are they leading the flow?" "There are some leaders right now – because of the change of leasdership in the city, there some people sitting in positions at the moment that have almost no idea about this catalytic project."
13	Create clear protocols for intergovernmental communication	"So the investment came from national direct because we had put a submission to the Minister. We said "we need funding, we see a lot of potential unlocking growth and we see a lot of integration that needs to happen." "So we then developed the IGR, we called it the IGR for a lack of a better word; we said the intergovernmental forum."
14	Municipal finance legislation and city policies must be more responsive in dealing with creation of economic opportunities and skills development.	"I'm going to push a document that you will adopt as Councillors. I am not asking you to adopt who gets allocated – I am asking you to adopt the rationale and tell me if you differ." "When it comes to who you give work, the procurement aspect of it, again we develop a criteria." "Your merit and your knowledge and everything else just gets you to stage one of the evaluation of the tender and the actual award gets done on price. So, it's a bit weird because there are certain projects where you may want to say I will sacrifice price for a certain outcome." "To be totally frank about it the bid committees who make decisions are so scared to make a decision based on any deviation from the lowest and most responsive." "There were many tenders where I said we are not awarding to the lowest ... we go for the company that we believe can do the work and that's market-related, that's reasonable." "Before the letter of appointment is issued, if there's an appeal the letter of appointment doesn't get issued and there's no time period for that. So, if it goes for mediation and then it ends up at litigation, it could end up in the high court, it could end up in the constitutional court. It could go anywhere and it could take you 6 months, it could take 2 years."

	EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS	PRACTICE INSIGHTS
15	City-led planning for all spheres of government.	
	Work on the basis that leadership is dispersed across the system and society	*For projects to succeed in a constrained environment requires empowering people and teams across the implementation value chain to take responsibility for their contributions. Empowered people and teams come up with creative and innovative approaches to solving the many challenges that arise during these projects. The sign of a leader is being able to empower people and goes hand in hand with ensuring a shared big-picture vision, having clear societal-value performance targets, and rewarding collaboration and innovation.*
16	The importance of project champions who build effective teams.	"This now becomes a program that has got a program champion, so human settlements had to champion it because during the budget process we needed to make sure that everything we required is budgeted for." "I think sometimes when we try to do this collaborative work, we lose the sense of whose driving it. I think it's important that in these processes, there's a clearly defined driver which will stay to the end." "Unless there's an individual who really takes matters at heart to make a point of engaging and co-ordinating wth the others, it just does not happen."
	Implement project M&E as a learning tool	*The project-level M&E system is currently suboptimal. At the beginning of a project, a clear and specific monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be established and is the basis of progress meetings.*
17	Recommendation to be added	
	Manage consultant-administrative interface	*It is not evident from the interviews how consultants are helping to build in-house skills in municipalities and to what extent they are being encouraged to share insights that could lead to systemic changes. There is also an element of holding back from consultants / professionals for fear of losing the opportunity to work with a city on future projects.*
18	Know your people, their skills and capabilities	"I think the negotiation skill is one key and then my people management skills. I think those are the key skills that helped because time and again you need to understand them, that these people, they are not there for being there, they are there to make a living and they are mothers and fathers." "I drove it, like the decision that I made was that if I don't program drive this, no one else will and if I want to pitch it at that level, I have to do it myself."

	EMERGING LESSONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS	PRACTICE INSIGHTS
19	Consultants and external professionals must assist to bolster internal skills and capacity. Consultants must share project knowledge during handover to new service providers. Consultants must be well managed.	"What happens is often and I think this is where I don't quite know where to draw the line is that I start to do the task of the officials." "It also has positives and negatives – meaning that here you've got an entity, a person or company or whatever the case – that's got the experience, intimate knowledge of it but as soon as the appointment comes to an end, should they not be successful in any other work on the project, the institutional knowledge they gain is lost to the project. So, a new team comes in, it will take them 6-8 months perhaps a year to gain understanding of the project." "As consultants to the city we were undervalued, we were sidelined. But it's not only us. It's what we get from all the consultants that work with the city."
20	Cities must actively invest in building and retaining social facilitation skills.	"I just realised that ok – my kind of job actually doesn't require me to be formal, because the moment I am formal, the people that I am meant to interact with will then already have this perception that – okay he won't understand, he's a spoilt brat." "My work was very much about modelling and discussions with members of the community that were still being antagonistic about the idea and really engaging in a number of workshops and presenting proposals – they were commenting, we were adjusting and through the process we actually achieved a kind of land use distribution and heights and number of units that the city has managed to get approved." "It will be difficult to manoeuvre in those kinds of situations because they are not book based. This is how we deal with people, this is how people have to be treated ... I think our environment has humbled us and my upbringing also – because I'm from a bigger family – we had to survive with smaller resources ... people have to be treated this way because they might be from the previous situation you were in."
21	Building the skills for partnering.	"We co-developed the agenda ... Are we still on the same page, what are the things that are coming out in this partnership, what other things are required?" "Don't come with that status that you come from the local authority, you must understand who is in charge – because you are not in charge. Somebody is in charge, how best can you collaborate with the person in charge so that they trust you?" "Work at collaborating first and seeing what is the art of the possible in anything that we have to do." "There's a very big difference to where officials respond to other officials and how officials respond to private sector counterparts."
22	Continuous learning	"That's why we have a lot of collaboration with global agencies around the work that we do. And it's an interest of mine – how are other cities dealing with these kinds of things?" "For me, as much as I am helping communities. I am learning. I don't see myself as helping people. I'm just here to learn and I am still learning." "We're fortunate as Durban to have the Municipal Institute of Learning, which is an autonomous branch that actually runs some of the innovative pull together strategies for the city as if they're not the city."

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