

A Compendium OF THE BEITT JOURNEY

2017 → 2020



A JOURNEY
BY CITIES,
for cities



BUILT ENVIRONMENT
INTEGRATION
TASK TEAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Compendium was made possible thanks to the commitment and contribution of the Built Environment Integration Task Team, and the financial support of the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

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Design: Ink Design Publishing Solutions

Photo Credits: SACN

Suggested citation:

SACN. 2020. A Compendium of the BEITT Journey 2017–2020: A journey by cities, for cities. Johannesburg: South African Cities Network (SACN).

Available online at www.sacities.net

ISBN: 978-1-920704-30-8



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FOREWORD

Games and the productive use of downtime are part of our social DNA. They are linked to fitness and survival, and historically have enabled conceptual and strategic skills required for survival. The value of such activities is that they are never played alone and often have an audience. They are fun activities but require outcomes-based thinking, strategic thinking and tactical ability – and everyone, from the players to the audience, gets something out of participating.

Living in and governing cities may not be a game, but the same skills need to be applied. It is common knowledge that people do not receive the services that they expect from cities. This Compendium provides excellent insights into the lived experience of municipal officials, as they juggle competing demands. Municipal officials have to plan for the future, while dealing with everyday activities, such as delayed building plans, potholes, unanswered calls and piles of garbage. A typical day can include meetings on city development plans, urban innovation and smart cities, as well as responding to everyday work demands. Managing the everyday can be a challenging and lonely experience, especially in the world of chaos and complexity that is a South African city.

For city governance, the challenge is to find ways of bringing people together to appreciate, and to confront and embrace simultaneously, the complexities of South Africa's urban landscape. The Built Environment Integration Task Team (BEITT) responds to this challenge by gathering city officials to focus on shared learning and qualitative outcomes, rather than obsessing with policy implementation. It brings forth practitioner-generated solutions, builds confidence through shared experiences and practices, and shifts urban governance practice in a multi-disciplinary manner.

The BEITT initiative has taken capacity-building for integrated city development to new and practical levels, by recognising the influences of politics and power, the personal and institutional nexus, and the cross-skills sharing of ideas. The consequence has been greater impact than the usual feel-good workshops that are prevalent in the public sector. What sets the BEITT apart from other initiatives is the methodology followed, which locates learning and applying knowledge within the understanding that humans are social and tactile creatures. Over the past two years, BEITT members have visited actual projects of various scales and sizes, attended retreats and developed Citopoly as an enduring tool to build confidence among city officials. All activities are designed to build on what was learned, and downtime is a crucial part of learning and applying what has been learned.

This Compendium reveals the basic questions and contradictions that city officials confront everyday, even if not all are resolved – and highlights the passion and creativity of practitioners working to better South Africa's cities. The BEITT initiative is a tactile tool to assist communities and city administrators to find each other and is an excellent contribution to IDP public participation. It should also be seen as a means for city officials to find each other and to share their own experiences of identifying and solving service delivery matters while implementing plans for better cities.

ASHRAF ADAM

CEO of the Mandela Bay Development Agency
South African Cities Network Board Member



INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the South African Cities Network (SACN) re-established the Built Environment Integration Task Team (BEITT), as a core pillar of its built environment programme 2017–2021. The BEITT aims to develop a deeper intelligence on the realities of municipal built environment practice (how things actually work), and to start to shift built environment practices. It does this by bringing together a community of city practitioners to engage in generative conversation, learn together, fail forward and reflect on how to change the institutions tasked with transforming South Africa's cities. The city practitioners own the narrative, teach others about effecting change, and find ways of coming together to build fundamentally different cities.

The BEITT comprises built environment practitioners from various disciplines across the SACN's participating cities, members of the SACN Secretariat, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), the National Treasury's City Support Programme (CSP), as well as the SACN Built Environment Integration Programme's funding partners, the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). The BEITT's objectives are:

- To formulate a collective city voice on issues of built environment integration and spatial transformation that is led by city practitioners and rooted in their lived experiences.
- To deepen the collective understanding of practice through case studies, thereby creating a repository of city experiences and practitioner voices to shape the discourse on spatial transformation.
- To continuously improve built environment practice in cities, by using a collective understanding of practice as shaped by the case studies and experiences.

The BEITT identifies areas that are impeding cities from driving spatial transformation, which are conceptualised as research projects – in this way, research is linked more directly to city practices. In addition, the BEITT submits responses into the intergovernmental system (e.g. IDP Guidelines) and engages with stakeholders from government, academia, civil society and the private sector – since 2017, a total of 260 individuals have engaged with the BEITT.

BEITT meeting venues are chosen to reflect an appropriate backdrop to the discussions and are intended to be historically meaningful environments. The Barefoot Facilitator, Rehana Moosajee, facilitates the sessions, using a methodology that is deliberately designed to create a safe space for reflection and generative conversation among participants. The facilitation style used by the BEITT has resulted in the team co-hosting a series of engagements, in particular during Covid-19. These include two ISOCARP¹ international webinars, eThekwi's World Planning Law Conference and the Women's Day Webinar organised by COGTA.

Over the past year, the BEITT has moved to co-creating a meeting agenda with the host city, to provide a more immersive and practical learning experience and to engage with a broader group of built environment stakeholders. Since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, all engagements have been held virtually, which has allowed the BEITT to meet more frequently, going from quarterly to almost weekly meetings, and more practitioners to participate. Once a year, the BEITT goes on a learning retreat, which in 2019 took place at Earthrise Mountain Lodge in the Free State and in 2020 took the form of a Virtual Festival.

This Compendium provides an overview of the meetings and research work of the BEITT since 2017.

¹ The International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) is a global association of over 700 experienced professionals from more than 85 countries. <https://isocarp.org/about-isocarp/>

SEPT 2017

BEITT convenes following
the BEI roadmap of 2016

2018

MAY 2018

CITY OF JOBURG

Trevor Huddleston
Memorial Centre

AUGUST 2018

ETHEKWINI

Blackburn Village

OCTOBER 2018

CITY OF JOBURG

JDA Bus Factory

2019

MARCH 2019

BUFFALO CITY

Steve Biko Centre



BEITT MEETINGS



Establishing BEITT



A focus on Cornubia



The political/admin
interface



How institutions
shape behaviour



ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

SACN/AFD/DBSA LAUNCH

LAND DIALOGUES

BEITT INPUT INTO CSP PHASE 2

STATE OF CITY FINANCES LAUNCH



RESEARCH PROJECTS

BEI PRACTICE DIAGNOSTIC | "We need to be learning from actual practice"

INTERVIEWS BEGIN

CITOPOLY IS PROTOTYPED

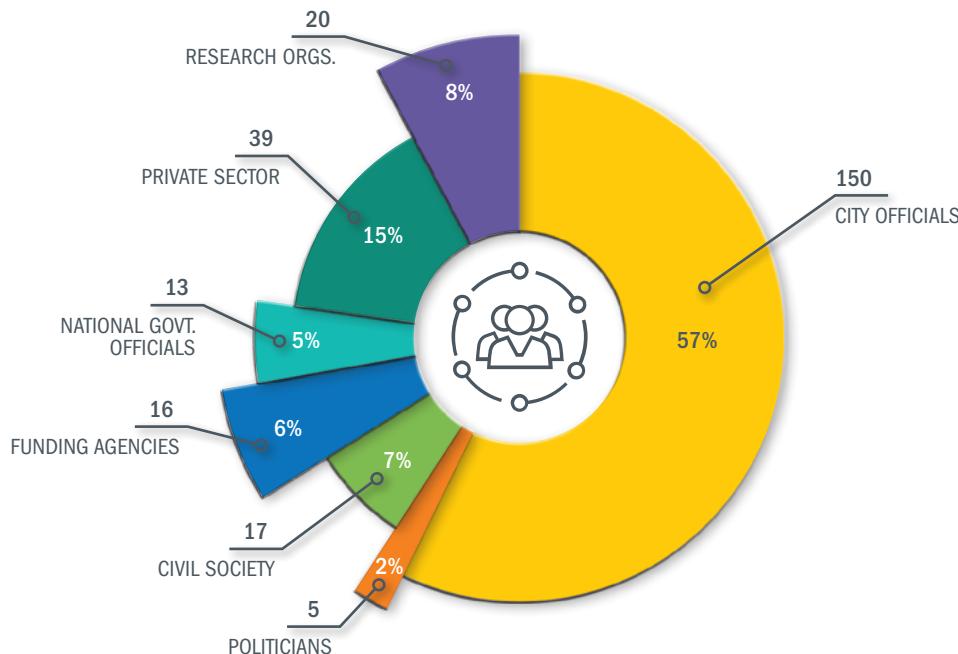
REPORT IS COMPLETED

POLITICAL ADMIN INTERFACE | "There is an increasing breakdown in the



THE BEITT COMMUNITY

260 INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED WITH SINCE 2017



PRACTITIONER PROFILES |

THE BEITT JOURNEY 2017-2020

2020

COVID-19

JULY 2019

RETREAT

Earthrise



Skills and capacity for spatial transformation

OCTOBER 2019

CITY OF TSHWANE

Freedom Park



Elevating the voice of Salvokop

FEBRUARY 2020

NMB

South End Museum



Understanding good community engagement practice

APRIL 2020

VIRTUAL MEETINGS



Public participation beyond compliance in the time of Covid

JULY 2020

RETREAT:

VIRTUAL FESTIVAL



VIRTUAL SERIES

BEITT PARTNER IN SERI DOCUMENTARY LAUNCH

CITOPOLY

REPORT IS DRAFTED



REPORT AND CITOPOLY IS LAUNCHED

CITOPOLY'S TOUR OF SA

political-admin interface that needs to be looked at"

VIDEOS ARE FILMED

VIDEOS ARE LAUNCHED

REPORT IS DRAFTED

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW | "Has any research been done on whether the MFMA actually enables SPLUMA?"

REPORT IS DRAFTED



BEITT STRENGTHS REPORT | "We don't know the real strengths of our own teams"

INTERVIEWS ARE HELD

WORKSHOPS ARE HELD

GUIDELINES ARE DRAFTED

IDP GUIDELINE REVIEW | "The IDP just doesn't function as it should, it is an exercise of compliance"

INTERVIEWS ARE HELD

WORKSHOPS ARE HELD

RULES OF THE GAME | "We are measured on deliverables rather than impact"

STUDIOS ARE HELD

VISUALISATION STUDIOS | "We don't invest in reimagining the future with communities"

INTERVIEWS ARE HELD

WORKSHOPS ARE HELD

HEALING FIELDS | "We haven't taken time to heal from our wounds"

PRACTICE GOOD PRACTICE |

"We need to learn from cases of good practice"



WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

The BEITT meetings are designed differently from traditional workshops. Participants are given time for professional and personal reflections, and activities include check-in circles, personal journaling, dialogue walks, the soft shoe shuffle and the Race of Life. Participants are able to connect on a human level and reminded of the importance of self-reflection and understanding, as well as the power of the collective. The meetings provide a safe space for city practitioners to interact, and enable them to return to their cities re-energised and in possibility for institutional and spatial transformation. Some of the lessons learned through the BEITT virtual and physical meetings are described below.

Navigate the system

Institutional “rules”, i.e. systems and processes for decision-making, procurement and performance management, tend to limit the ability of cities to experiment and collaborate. City practitioners have to find ways of working the system and navigating the institutional rules that do not favour integrated approaches necessary for spatial transformation. Failings at local government level are the result of systemic issues, not the capacity of these highly skilled individuals who are dedicated to achieving transformation.

Build personal resilience

City practitioners share a common trait: a personal commitment to change, often based on personal experiences. However, in their daily lives, they rarely have the time to stop and reflect, but rather are reacting to situations around them. The BEITT meetings allowed practitioners to share converging and diverging ideas, and to develop a common understanding around built environment challenges and opportunities. They also enabled practitioners to understand their strengths and areas for improvement.



Value social facilitation skills

City practitioners have strong strategic thinking skills but sometimes lack the skills needed for delivering transformation. These skills, which are often not highly valued in cities, include social facilitation, the ability to build partnerships and relationships, and the aptitude for dialogues and generative conversations with other departments, spheres of government and communities. Social facilitation needs to be a fundamental competence of local government rather than simply a skill required for projects, as it enables effective engagement with internal and external stakeholders, contributes to building community leadership, and can counter political involvement in municipal operations that is clouding the ability of cities to be drivers of socio-spatial transformation.

Measure quality, not quantity

The organisational metrics of success, both within cities and the intergovernmental system, are contrary to policy ideas. What is measured are the amounts spent and the number of outputs delivered, not the impact of an intervention, the amount of time spent building relationships with the community, or the quality of cooperation across spheres of government. As a result, there continues to be a mismatch between organisational expectations and societal expectations.

Change procurement systems

Inflexible, overly-complex and opaque procurement systems are having dire consequences for the built environment and service delivery, both in terms of corruption and lack of access for service providers. Current tender processes do not enable creative solutions and innovative community-based businesses to access public sector opportunities.



Drive change from the ground

City practitioners share a common calling to transform cities and have to deal with similar issues. The BEITT has given them the confidence that cities must and can lead from the ground and, through the discussions, identified some of the things that city practitioners can do:

- 1 Start with self.** Intrapersonal transformation is needed before being able to change the next person and influence the transformation of cultures and systems. Therefore, practitioners need to find time for reflection, journaling and learning.
- 2 Believe that an individual can change things.** Practitioners need to embrace their agency in driving change within their institutions, as thought leaders capable of influencing political priorities. They need to understand that their role and responsibilities go beyond the title and hierarchy. They also need to act with integrity and transparency, and not give in to short-term political pressures.
- 3 Build relationships.** Practitioners need to build relationships with communities, politicians and other government departments and spheres. In particular, they need to understand the priorities of politicians and align these to their own priorities.
- 4 Remember that you are not alone.** Practitioners can build a supportive team by getting to know people on a personal level, understanding who they are and what makes them tick, their strengths and their areas for improvement – and sharing lessons from the BEITT.
- 5 Put communities at the centre.** Practitioners need to focus on the communities and their needs, by getting out there, building relationships and gathering evidence on the ground. Built environment work should be rooted in building and nurturing communities, and promoting sustainable development.

Improve cities with (not for) communities

Cities need to rethink how they engage with communities and explore the use of different tools. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown highlighted the gaping holes in current community engagement processes and forced cities to think differently, as traditional public participation gatherings were not possible. Cities should move from participation to partnership, improving cities *with* rather than *for* communities – public participation must be seen as a way of creating true partnerships with communities, not a compliance burden. Cities need to recognise that communities have strengths, skills and assets that can be used to drive development – it starts with seeing communities from the perspective of what they have, not what they don't have.





MEETINGS

"WE NEED TO FIND TOOLS THAT EXPOSE OUR WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS IN A COLLECTIVE MANNER"

"WE ARE TOLD 'WE WILL TAKE YOUR MONEY AWAY AND GIVE IT TO THOSE WHO CAN SPEND IT'"

"IT'S HARD TO STAY MOTIVATED WHEN THERE IS POLITICAL ADMINISTRATIVE BREAKDOWN"

"WE ARE MEASURED ON THE DELIVERABLE RATHER THAN THE IMPACT OF THE DELIVERABLE"

THE BEITT MEETINGS

2018
↓
2020

MAY 2018 CITY OF JOBURG

Trevor Huddleston Memorial Centre



SETTING THE AGENDA: Where are we going and how do we want to be together?

ISSUES RAISED:

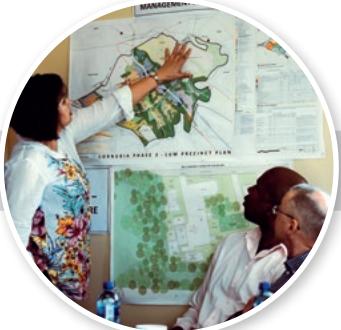
- Political-admin interface break-down.
- The rules of the hierarchy (written and unwritten).
- KPIs prevent effective collaboration.
- Not enough sense of purpose in the system; practitioners are no longer present.

BEITT TO BE:

- Inspirational.
- A working group where ideas, experiences of city practitioners are harvested.
- A safe space for reflection and honest discussion.
- A meeting of city BE champions in venues that reflect the BEI issues we have to grapple with and ground us in the reality.

AUGUST 2018 ETHEKWINI

Blackburn Village, Cornubia



TAKING THE GROUP FORWARD: Creating structured space for city voice

JULY 2019 FICKSBURG

Earthrise Mountain Lodge



Discussing the skills of built environment practitioners

- The state of the intervenor determines the quality of the intervention.
- Skills are about more than degrees and titles.
- Built environment practitioners have an incredible range of lived experience and ability.
- Transformation begins with self-reflection and improvement in individual abilities and behaviours.
- Strategic thinking skills are strengths of built environment city practitioners; more needs to be done to enhance relationship building, executing and influencing skills.

MARCH 2019 BUFFALO CITY

Steve Biko Centre, Ginsberg



Unpacking institutions and behaviour

OCTOBER 2019 CITY OF TSHWANE

Freedom Park, Salvokop



Elevating and learning from the community voice

- Communities are being left in the dark by slow and unresponsive city processes, and there is no demonstrated capacity to activate community resources to co-develop places and spaces.
- City practitioners understand the logic and value in engaging with communities in more meaningful and sustained ways, but the system rewards the production of documents or things (houses, roads etc) and the expenditure of budget – not the process elements of how those tasks are achieved or the developmental impacts.
- Salvokop is an example of a community suffering from the inability of government to effectively work together and with communities for development.

FEBRUARY 2020 NELSON MANDELA BAY

South End Museum



Learning about effective community partnerships

By cities, for cities ...



The BEITT is about building cities' voices and confidence in the system to strengthen capacity to deliver integrated projects and package the experience into knowledge.

- What has it meant to drive the Cornubia project?
 - Requires passion
 - Working outside the box
 - Compassion
 - Ability to talk to community and business
 - Strong leadership
 - Ability to work with Provinces and National
- Cities are doing this work but need better support to deal with the challenges.
- Integrated planning and delivery, institutional culture and behaviour, setting collective priorities, priority aligned budgeting and political-admin interface breakdown were listed as the priority challenges the Task Team needed to address.

These were grouped into the SOCR IV spatial transformation issue and agreed to inform the thematic work of the Task Team moving forward.

OCTOBER 2018 CITY OF JOBURG
JDA Bus Factory, Newtown



DID YOU KNOW?

OUR MEETING VENUES ARE ALL CHOSEN FOR THE CONNECTION THEY SHARE TO COMMUNITY AND REAL BEI CONTEXT

Getting into the detail: How is the political-admin interface impacting BEI

The Steve Biko story reminded us of the power of agency in the quest to shape our institutions and embody the transformation legacy in our practice. In the pursuit of institutional transformation, the following key points emerged:

- Municipal institutions can value and draw on the full experience of practitioners.
- KPIs need to be urgently rethought, as they currently reward output targets and incentivise siloed behaviour.
- BEI practitioners and teams need room to experiment and make mistakes in the pursuit of transformation.
- Social facilitation capacity needs to be built more deliberately in municipalities, to strengthen links to communities.
- Municipal institutions need to promote and invest in learning and reflection.

DID YOU KNOW?

98% OF BEITT MEETING PARTICIPANTS INDICATED THAT THEY HAD LEARNED SOMETHING THAT WOULD ASSIST THEM IN THINKING ABOUT THEIR WORK

Yolisa Kani, Sandy Perry and Crispian Olver attended as special guests to share their insights and experience of the political-admin interface in cities.

- Visionary leadership: making time and people skills are traits that were admired in politicians.
- The political system of local government is complicated, and many administrators don't fully understand or appreciate the details; there is a need for training and support.
- Practitioners need to build (and keep reinforcing) bridges with politicians but also system changes are required to promote clarity and accountability.
- Communities need to be put at the centre.

The BEITT was inspired by the South End community as well as the MBDA's creative regeneration projects in the inner city.

- To achieve spatial transformation, we need to have impact beyond the spatial only, to shape the psycho-social dimension of the city.
- Focusing on assets in a community can lead to innovative solutions that build on what is already working.
- New methods of community engagement are necessary that lose the "participation" lexicon and engagement needs to be seen as an ongoing process without an end, rather than a single event.
- It is not only our cities that need healing. The people who work in them need healing too.

APRIL 2020

Virtual Meetings



Shifting practice in a time of crisis

BEITT's virtual journey is an iterative and co-created process of constant engagement around personal and professional issues during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Adapting to a new way of engaging during Covid-19.
- Considering the inner state is more important than ever, as practitioners face multiple professional and personal pressures during the pandemic.
- Exploring different tools for virtual engagement.
- The pandemic has not created new issues; it has just amplified existing ones.



TREVOR HUDDLESTON MEMORIAL CENTRE

The Centre provided an appropriate backdrop to the discussion. It houses a museum that captures the stories and spirit of the Sophiatown community, which was torn apart by forced removals during the apartheid era. As a location, it highlights the challenges of undoing past spatial injustices and the legacy of apartheid spatial planning, while trying to build both the infrastructure and the institutional capacity necessary to create transformed communities.



LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

Trevor Huddleston Memorial Centre

CITY OF JOBURG

May 2018



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE

In May 2018, built environment practitioners from eThekweni, the City of Johannesburg, Msunduzi and Nelson Mandela Bay came together to establish the BEITT. The practitioners had collectively almost two centuries of experience working in local government.

The BEITT space

At the meeting, participants acknowledged the value of knowledge-sharing platforms, such as the BEITT. The BEITT provides a safe space for sharing knowledge, learning from each other, and finding solutions to the real-life issues that cities are grappling with. It is also a space that allows practitioners to reflect on and deepen their understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses, and reinvigorates their consciousness and energy. In such safe spaces, things feel easier to implement than in the real world. In reality, cities have a hierarchical structure that does not encourage innovation and creativity, responsibilities within the political-administrative interface are unclear, and the power balance between local and national government is uneven.

The CSP transversal management project

The National Treasury's City Support Programme (CSP) is driving a transversal management project, which is closely related to the work of the SACN's BEITT. The project uses a methodology called "matrix management 2.0" to inform a strategy aimed at shifting municipalities from vertical-based performance, which optimises the performance of individual departments, to horizontal-based performance, which optimises overall organisational priorities and goals. The project was piloted in eThekweni and has extended to other metros. It uses the SPARC framework to carry out a diagnostic assessment of the metros.

FIGURE 1: SPARC framework



The quality built environment of the future

The discussion centred around five hypothetical protagonists who represented the stories of diverse residents in a future, functional built environment. From this emerged the issues that would need to be considered when planning for a quality built environment:

- The current realities that are rooted in a harsh past, and the need to deal with issues of land, race and distrust present in South Africa cities.
- The critical things that need to be (and can be) changed in order to make a difference in people's lives, as opposed to creating an ideal city.
- The needs of communities, which are often very simple and require embracing informality.
- Better ways of communicating built environment ideas to the people, remembering that communication is the ability to listen while being spoken to.
- Systemic issues that impede achieving a quality built environment.

BEITT meetings

All agreed that BEITT meetings should be working sessions that generate knowledge, inspire participants, encourage diagnostic city-based research, and develop new business and institutional models. They would also be spaces where things are done differently, including:

- Using creative ways of thinking about how to address challenges facing cities.
- Creating mutually beneficial relationships through working spaces.
- Developing close relationships between built environment departments.
- Forming a stronger working relationships with CSP and SACN.
- Building a body of knowledge that can be shared across the country.





ITHUBA COMMUNITY CENTRE, BLACKBURN VILLAGE

Located in the heart of Cornubia, a developing suburb in eThekini, Blackburn Village is home to an informal settlement that accommodates over 5000 inhabitants. As the meeting's activities flowed from inside the centre to the outside areas, practitioners came face to face with the everyday built environment challenges, reinforcing the need for complex conversations about dealing with these issues.



BEITT PROGRAMME OF WORK: PLANNING FOR 2018/19

Ithuba Community Centre, Cornubia

ETHEKWINI

August 2018



READ THE FULL
REPORT HERE

In August 2018, city practitioners met in eThekini to define the purpose and develop a common understanding of the BEITT, to learn from the Cornubia case study, to prioritise integration challenges, and to plan the year's programme of work.

Purpose of the BEITT

The practitioners agreed that the overarching purpose of the BEITT is:



To share experiences and build confidence and skills in working together.



To learn from each other through sharing ideas, lessons and practices.



To shift practice through building city capacity to act in a more integrated, multi-disciplinary manner.

Lessons from Cornubia

Cornubia is a catalytic development aimed at transforming an informal settlement into a liveable neighbourhood and is an example of partnership between a municipality (eThekini) and the private sector (Tongaat Hulett). Challenges included the simultaneous delivery of housing and social amenities, and tensions among the different spheres of government. Key learnings were that projects need champions, practitioners with different skills-sets can be integrated, and transversal management is possible. This led to a discussion about transversal management.



Transversal management

The transversal management approach towards achieving built environment integration is behaviour-driven and about strengthening relationships, especially at municipal level. Building strong relationships requires good facilitators and a sense of collective contribution. To be effective, transversal management needs good leadership and accountability, so that intergovernmental issues can be resolved. The BEITT's role includes championing the institutionalisation of transversal management and built environment integration within cities.

Integration challenges

City practitioners consolidated the 35 challenges identified in the previous BEITT meeting into 14 overarching challenges. From these 14 challenges, each practitioner selected three priorities. What emerged was that some of the challenges were linked to others or were being dealt with by other forums. The meeting agreed that seven challenges should be prioritised:

1. Unintegrated planning
2. Problematic institutional culture and behaviour
3. Lack of alignment in prioritisation and decision-making
4. Financial and budgeting prioritisation
5. Breakdown in the political-administrative interface
6. Inability to get out of crisis management mode
7. Siloed implementation despite approved plans

Drawing on the recommendations of the SOCR 2016 and the priorities identified, it was decided that the BEITT programme for the coming year would include the following broad themes and specific issues:

- **Politics and Power:** Political-administrative interface
- **City Institutions and Intergovernmental Relations (IGR):** How institutions shape behaviour
- **Management and Capacity:** Skills and experience for built environment integration

The BEITT programme of work would provide practitioners and cities with a platform for voicing collective city issues from a position of informed insights and practice-based research. Having a collective city voice, backed by credible research, would change the nature of conversation and interaction with other spheres of government and institutions.





THE BUS FACTORY, NEWTOWN, JOHANNESBURG

The Bus Factory was originally built as the tram repair facility for Johannesburg and then, in the 1960s, was converted into a garage for the double-decker buses that replaced the tram system.

Today, it is home to the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), an agency of the City of Johannesburg that was set up to assist in stabilising infrastructure delivery. The venue enabled attendees to get out of the boardroom and into a space that was reflective of the built environment challenges and opportunities of South Africa cities, and conducive to deliberations about the political-administrative interface.



POWER AND POLITICS: THE POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFACE

The Bus Factory, Newtown

CITY OF JOBURG

October 2018



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



KEY THEMES

- The municipal environment is characterised by political and administrative instability.
- Chaos and uncertainty are part of the political-administrative interface.
- Some cities have tactics to navigate the interface.
- Building and maintaining relationships are important.

A well-functioning political-administrative interface is essential for municipalities to enable spatial transformation. In October 2018, the BEITT met to deliberate around the nuances, complexities, concerns and challenges of this interface. The objectives were to understand how the political dimension of local government operates, to learn about the dynamics of the political-administrative interface from those with first-hand experience, and to reflect on ways of navigating the local-government political environment.

The political arm of government

City practitioners need to know the role of the political system within local government and how to leverage it. However, knowledge of the political dimension is often lacking because the institutional culture of local government favours working in silos rather than in an integrated manner. City practitioners need to deepen their understanding of the political guidelines, procedures and committees that ultimately have an impact on their work. A challenge is the clash among the spheres of government, whereby national/provincial government sets a political mandate for local government to accomplish but does not provide sufficient capacity and financial support.

The political-administrative interface dynamics

There is a disconnect in the political-administrative interface. Insights were shared by former city practitioners: Yolisa Kani, former head of transport planning and provision in Ekurhuleni; Sandy Perry, former Chief of Staff in the office of the Executive Mayor in Johannesburg; and Crispian Olver who headed up a regional “clean-up” team in Nelson Mandela Bay and is the author of “How to Steal a City”.

- The lack of public participation around service delivery and implementation directly affects citizens. This is illustrated in the example of the Sanral e-tolling gantries in Gauteng, where the lack of engagement with citizens and lack of transparency by government resulted in a breakdown in communication. In addition, the complexity of the system and the many inconsistencies that government could not answer led to the system becoming almost obsolete.
- Housing and service delivery are used as a political tool to gain votes, but politicians do not engage with the administrators responsible for the projects, and internal processes and rules are often disregarded.
- The administrative structures and systems (in the form of policies, plans and strategies) are complicated and do not facilitate what happens on the ground. Indeed, the bureaucracy and red tape slow down implementation.
- The focus on the technical aspects of development and delivery often means that the social aspects are forgotten, such as community engagement, public participation and upskilling of community members. One example given was of engineers who simply moved people out of the way of a project instead of engaging with the affected community.
- The political and administrative domains are characterised by a constant jostling for power, which creates chaos and uncertainty, as well as a sense of loss of control. For some, chaos is the new norm, while for others uncertainty does not automatically translate into chaos. However, in both cases, the ideal of spatial transformation gets lost in the confusion.

To avoid a clashing of perspectives, the interests of both politicians and administrators need to match. This means aligning projects and programmes with politicians who can relate to and benefit from the project or programme outcomes. As an example, in eThekweni, built environment practitioners are encouraged to attend political party strategy sessions, which results in the administration being able to contribute research papers that feed into the development of political party manifestos.



RESEARCH PROJECT

POLITICAL-ADMIN INTERFACE
There is an increasing breakdown in the political-admin interface that needs to be looked at."

SEE PAGE 45

Navigating local government politics

The political-administrative interface is unstable, with political instability feeding into administrative instability. Rules are eroded and transgressed, while the systems are manipulated and certain players are protected. However, the political and administrative roles can co-exist, rather than clash, if administrators and the public understand the political roles in government and learn to speak the same language as politicians. This requires politicians and administrators to do the following.

- To develop mature relationships that look beyond the immediate – improved engagement processes and accountability are crucial.
- To build bridges and new ways of understanding – relationships are central to the political-administrative interface;
- To remember that they exist for the benefit of society and to serve communities – good leadership is putting communities first.
- To understand the unique, interrelated roles and skills of elected representatives and practitioners, and find ways of working together with integrity and robust engagement.

What city practitioners can do

1. **Focus on the community and its needs** – get out into the community, build relationships and gather community-centric evidence.
2. **Expect disruption** – be prepared to respond to, rather than be disrupted by, change.
3. **Build opportunities for dialogue with politicians** – understand their priorities and know your priorities.
4. **Understand your role and responsibility** – beyond the title and hierarchy.
5. **Be thought leaders** – use administrative experience, capability and evidence to influence the political priorities.
6. **Be transparent in decision-making.**
7. **Be brave** – do the right thing, act with integrity and transparency, and refuse to deviate from standards because of short-term political pressures.

“ POLITICAL ROLES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT HAVE TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY BOTH ADMINISTRATIVE AND THE PUBLIC ”



CITY INSTITUTIONS AND IGR: HOW THE INSTITUTION SHAPES BEHAVIOUR

The Steve Biko Centre, Ginsberg

BUFFALO CITY

March 2019



READ THE FULL
REPORT HERE



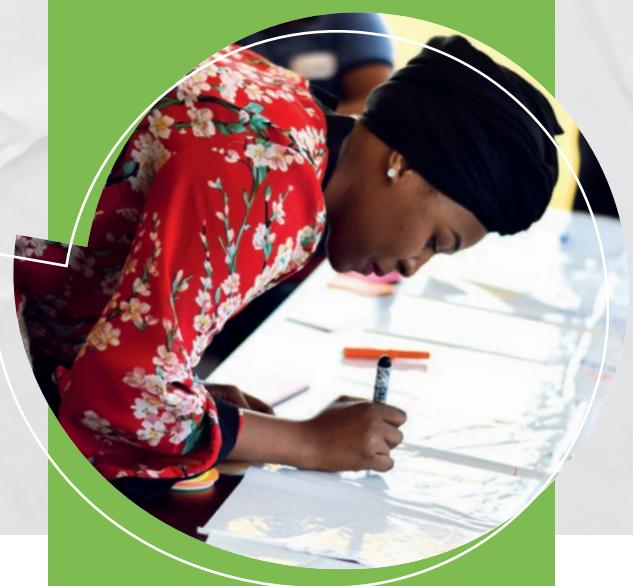
KEY THEMES

- Our stories need to be told, so municipal institutions can value and draw on the full experience of practitioners.
- Key performance indicators for practitioners need to be urgently rethought, as they currently reward the wrong practices and incentivise siloed behaviour.
- Agency must be enabled, by giving practitioners and their teams the room and space to experiment and make mistakes in their pursuit of transformation outcomes.
- Social facilitation capacity needs to be built more deliberately, so municipalities are able to develop links to communities when implementing integration projects.
- Municipal institutions need to create time and space for practitioners to learn from peers and reflect on their practice.

The institutional dimension is rarely the focus of research into municipalities and usually features as anecdotal evidence of the challenges facing practitioners. Yet the rules – written and unwritten – determine how work is carried out and rewarded within an institution. For the BEITT, an important issue is to understand how to enable more effective interdepartmental working relationships and practices for integrated project delivery. A recurring challenge for BEITT members is the impact of silos and the bureaucratic hierarchy within cities, which is crippling the ability of cities to lead integration and spatial transformation.

Individuals vs institutional culture

Many of the city practitioners have had similar journeys and shared stories that others could relate to. Participants reflected on how circumstances have shaped their reality and what they had to overcome to occupy their current positions within municipalities. Most of the city practitioners chose a career in public service and development because of their lived experiences, growing up in a



THE STEVE BIKO CENTRE,
GINSBERG

Located in the middle of a township, the centre embodies the power of individual agency, reflection and understanding.

Steve Biko challenged the oppressive, racist system of apartheid that sought to erode self-belief and internalise inferiority. His legacy revolves around black excellence and the importance of education and community development. The centre seeks to bridge the gap between government and the community, and provides a space for all generations to use and benefit from.

“

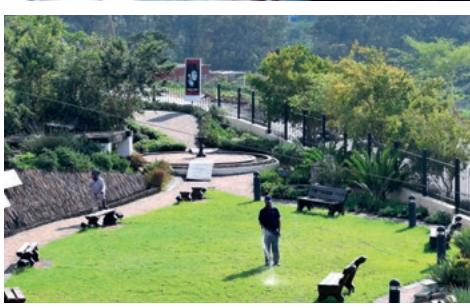
WE KNOW THAT CHANGE IS REQUIRED, AND AS YOUNG PEOPLE WE COME INTO THE MUNICIPALITY TO DRIVE CHANGE BUT ARE TOLD BY OLDER PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE MUNICIPALITY THAT ‘THIS IS HOW WE WORK HERE’ WHEN WE KNOW THAT WAY OF WORKING IS PART OF THE PROBLEM

”

“

IF WE ARE HONEST WITH
OURSELVES, WHAT HAVE WE
REALLY DONE IN 20 YEARS?

”



RESEARCH PROJECT

PRACTITIONER PROFILES

“It is important for us
to tell our stories.”

SEE PAGE 46



RULES OF THE GAME

“We are measured on deliverables
rather than impact”

SEE PAGE 50

highly unequal, violent and segregated society. They wanted to change their livelihoods and, more importantly, the communities where they grew up. However, institutions are not spaces of compassion for practitioners. More importantly, institutions do not value the life experiences of built environment practitioners who are responsible for developing and transforming communities and their quality of life.

Many city practitioners join cities with the aim of changing and transforming the institution, but the reality is that institutions often mould practitioners into the system. As one participant pointed out, “We are perfecting rather than changing the system”. The institutional culture does not give municipal practitioners the room to experiment and to make mistakes in order to achieve different outcomes. Such experimentation is even less likely in an environment where the political-administrative interfaces are breaking down. Time for reflection and learning needs to be deliberately built into the rhythm and performance of municipal practice.

Improving institutional performance

Practitioners identified that the following is needed in order to improve performance and consistently deliver value to people living in cities:

- **Co-produce, co-design and co-deliver.** In other words, invest in enabling communities to define what is of value to them, and in enhancing municipal processes for driving meaningful participation. This will require social facilitation resources and capacity.
- **Prioritise peer-to-peer learning and network building.** Promote learning that supports capacity-building, networking and rejuvenating the energy of practitioners who work in challenging institutional environments.
- **Reward transversal management.**

Measuring for impact

A recurring limitation is that practitioners are measured and rewarded on deliverables and outputs, not on the impact of projects. Performance is based on spending the budget, not on finding the most impactful and effective use of the budget. This is embedded in an institutional culture that is inert and discourages alternative practices, which is justified by the message: “this is how we do it here”.

What city practitioners can do

1. Embrace their agency in driving change within their institutions.
2. Be supported by peers and the collective voice of the BEITT.
3. Find time for reflection and learning.

MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY: SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE FOR BEI

The Earthrise Mountain Lodge,

FICKSBURG

July 2019

 READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



KEY THEMES

- The state of the intervener determines the quality of the intervention.
- Skills are about not only qualifications and titles but also the lived experiences and individual strengths of people and teams.
- Built environment practitioners have an incredible range of lived experiences and abilities that are not being drawn into the work of city institutions.
- The transformation required in our cities begins with “self”, meaning individuals who are mindful of their strengths and open to working on areas of improvement.
- Built environment practitioners have strong skills in strategic thinking but need to build skills in relationship building, executing and influencing, as these abilities are central to working with others and getting things done.

The last meeting of the financial year took the form of a learning retreat at which city practitioners could reflect on the past year's work and plan for the year ahead. Opportunities for reflections in city institutions are few and far between. City practitioners rarely have the luxury of time to reflect on the purpose of their work and to recalibrate themselves. The retreat gave BEITT team members the opportunity to clear their heads, rejuvenate their souls and grapple with the tough questions that get lost in the day-to-day realities of “making cities work”.

Under the theme of skills and capacity required for spatial transformation, the programme was designed to understand the softer people skills and strengths that are often ignored in cities. The aim was for the BEITT to examine their own strengths, and how to combine these with the strengths of team members to drive transformation of the built environment in cities. Practitioners identified the gaps within their institutions that hinder the transformation of cities and examined ways to bridge these gaps.



THE EARTHRISE MOUNTAIN LODGE, FICKSBURG, FREE STATE

Jay Naidoo established the Lodge as a learning and reflection centre for South Africa that is co-owned with the neighbouring Naledi Village. This deliberate partnership approach offered an opportunity for the BEITT to explore what it means to put the community at the centre of doing things.

A successful transition to a more sustainable and humane future requires everyone to answer the question “who am I” in the context of the universe and their purpose on this planet (not in terms of title or societal definition). The Earthrise Mountain Lodge provided the perfect tranquil and healing environment for the team, far from their daily lives spent in traffic, surrounded by buildings and tense spaces.

“

WE HAVE NOT EVER THOUGHT ABOUT BRINGING PSYCHOLOGY INTO PLANNING, OR ISSUES LIKE THAT, BUT MAYBE AS THIS GROUP WE NEED TO BECAUSE IT'S TRUE, THERE IS A DEEP PSYCHOLOGICAL SCAR THAT EXISTS AND IMPACTS THE WORK WE DO EVERYDAY

”

The gaps and bridging them

Practitioners identified the gaps that hinder the transformation of South African cities and highlighted how out of touch institutional practice is with community needs.

- **Regulation vs reality.** The regulations do not reflect the reality of what is happening in cities. For example, land use regulations prevented a crèche in a township from upgrading from a shack to a container structure. As a result, the crèche lost its funding but continued to operate from a shack under conditions that the municipality considers illegal.
- **Management vs staff.** Cities are hierarchical environments where individuals submit to pressures from those above them rather than seeing everyone as teams working towards one goal.
- **Community vs government.** City practitioners focus on those above them, not communities. As a result, there is a growing divide between what government does and what communities need and expect.
- **Community needs vs funding.** The current funding does not reflect the priority needs of communities, and the majority of expenditure goes towards projects that do not directly contribute to the sustainable growth of communities.
- **Intentions vs actions.** Municipalities start out with good intentions but end up with unintended outcomes, as a result of different influences.
- **“Old” voices vs the youth voice.** Institutions are not bringing together and valuing what is offered by experienced minds and what is offered by young creative and fearless minds.

To bridge the gaps will require developing and improving individual and team skills in order to do the following:

- **Build the ability to influence others positively**, as without influence, there is just talk and no progress.
- **Find time to be in (and with) community** in order to understand their needs.
- **Get to know your teams** as individuals with lived experiences rather than as their “title” (e.g. planner, engineer).
- **Change the language**, from negative, over complicated and jargon-filled, to positive, practical and solution-oriented.
- **Build organisational culture and practice based on strong public servant values** in order to build trust, relationships and partnerships.
- **Change the discussion and intergovernmental interaction**, through building good relationships with people from various departments and engaging in regular, open communication with citizens.



Strengths and skills

Bridging the gaps requires city practitioners and teams to understand their own strengths and areas for improvement. Each practitioner completed a Gallup Clifton Strengths Finder. The assessment revealed that the BEITT members are strong in strategic thinking, which is a fundamental skill for making decisions on managing the complex issues presented by city environments. However, they lack strengths in influencing, relationship-building and executing, which are skills necessary to implement projects and ensure societal and cultural change.

What city practitioners can do

1. Carry out the strength finders for their team.
2. Get to know their team members on a personal level, to understand who they are and what makes them tick.
3. Get out into communities more often and encourage their teams to do the same.
4. Spend more time journaling.
5. Share lessons from BEITT with their teams.

RESEARCH PROJECT

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

"Has any research been done on whether the MFMA actually enables SPLUMA?"

SEE PAGE 47

BEITT STRENGTHS REPORT

"We don't know the real strengths of our own teams."

SEE PAGE 48

IDP GUIDELINE REVIEW

"The IDP just doesn't function as it should, it is an exercise of compliance."

SEE PAGE 49

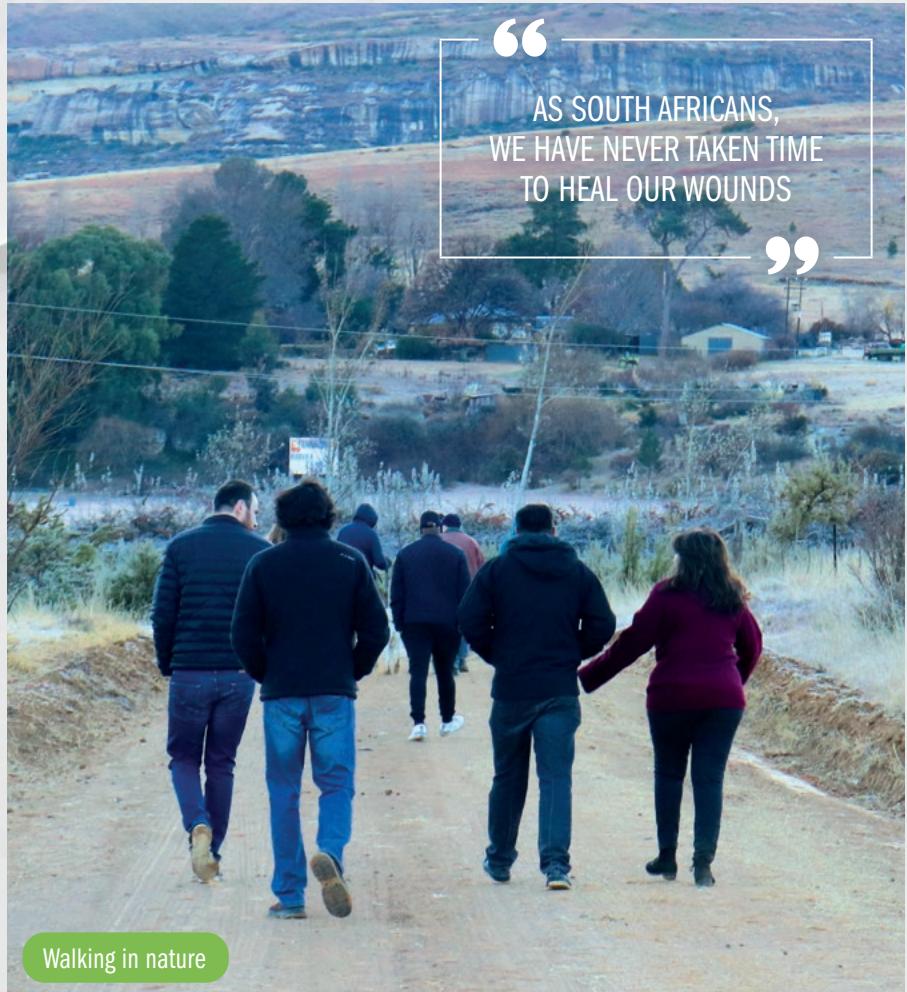


EARTHRISE MOUNTAIN LODGE Retreat



“ SURROUNDED BY THE BEAUTY AND THE PURITY AND CULTURE AROUND US, I AM REMINDED OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF PEOPLE, SOMETHING I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO IDENTIFY AND RECOGNISE CLEARLY IN MY SURROUNDS AT WORK. BROUGHT TOGETHER WITH THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE FIGHTING SIMILAR IF NOT MORE CHALLENGING BATTLES, BUT ALL WITH A DISTINCT SENSE OF PURPOSE, TO IMPROVE LIVES FOR THE NOW AND THE UPCOMING GENERATIONS, TO SERVE. I AM UNEXPECTEDLY SEEING A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ”





“
AS SOUTH AFRICANS,
WE HAVE NEVER TAKEN TIME
TO HEAL OUR WOUNDS
”



“
CHANGING THE
SYSTEM IS ONLY ONE
PART OF THE EQUATION;
THE BIGGER QUESTION
IS HOW DO WE CHANGE
HUMAN BEINGS?
”



THE FREEDOM PARK PRECINCT, SALVOKOP, CITY OF TSHWANE

Salvokop lies at the foot of the iconic Freedom Park, which sits in an idyllic environment overlooking Pretoria's natural landscape. Originally home to white railway workers, today Salvokop's railway houses contain informal backyard shacks, adjacent to an informal settlement known as Baghdad that suffers from a lack of services and infrastructure. The massive investment of Freedom Park has not benefitted the community who feel alienated and excluded from the space. Symbolising the lack of community inclusion is the high-end Stats SA building surrounded with electric fencing that sits directly opposite Salvokop. The Salvokop community is organised and has an active leadership and community policing forum, as well as a reputable primary school and a community centre.

A SHIFT FROM TALK TO WALK: ELEVATING THE SALVOKOP VOICE

Freedom Park, Salvokop

TSHWANE

October 2019



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



KEY THEMES

- With their slow and unresponsive processes, cities are leaving communities in the dark.
- Cities demonstrate no capacity to activate community resources to co-develop places and spaces.
- City practitioners understand the logic and value of meaningful and sustained engagements with communities. However, the system rewards the production of documents and things (e.g. houses, roads) and spending of budgets, not the process of achieving things and the developmental impacts.
- Salvokop is an example of a community that suffers from government's inability to work effectively together and with communities for development.

At the Earthrise retreat, the BEITT members expressed a desire to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice, through shifting the design of meetings, from being a "talk shop" in a safe, enclosed space, to engaging with the local community on the ground. The SACN and City of Tshwane worked together with a social entrepreneur and community intermediary (with the support of the community policing forum, ward councillor and youth leader) to design a workshop that enabled different civil society and community voices to be part of the conversation about spatial transformation at local level. The involvement of Salvokop community members provided valuable insights and amplified the community's voice within the BEITT process. In addition, practitioners were able to relate the institutional issues that they face to the everyday realities of Salvokop residents.

Salvokop scenarios

The walking tour of Salvokop demonstrated the vast challenges experienced by community members, and how far removed the City is from the real (and often-conflicting) needs of communities. Government plans to develop a mixed-use “government boulevard” precinct in Salvokop, but the community members are frustrated by the uncertainty of development processes and not knowing how the development will affect them. Three scenarios from the community illustrated their challenges and common institutional issues:



Community members wanting to report a problem, e.g. sewerage leak on a road, are unable to get through to anyone at the council.

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES:

- Poor integrated planning and implementation of services and infrastructure.
- Institutional rules that prevent direct engagement between city technicians and communities.
- Bureaucratic inefficiencies that result in frustrations for both city officials and citizens.



Community members have skills and are doing things, e.g. someone with experience in agriculture taking organic waste and turning it into compost.

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES:

- Overly prescriptive rules governing supply chain management favour established contractors and do not allow for community empowerment and employment.
- Officials are rewarded on audit and budget results, not finding innovative community-based solutions.
- Practitioners play it safe instead of thinking differently and creatively.



Community members want deep, not superficial engagement, e.g. they want jobs and to be able to build their own houses.

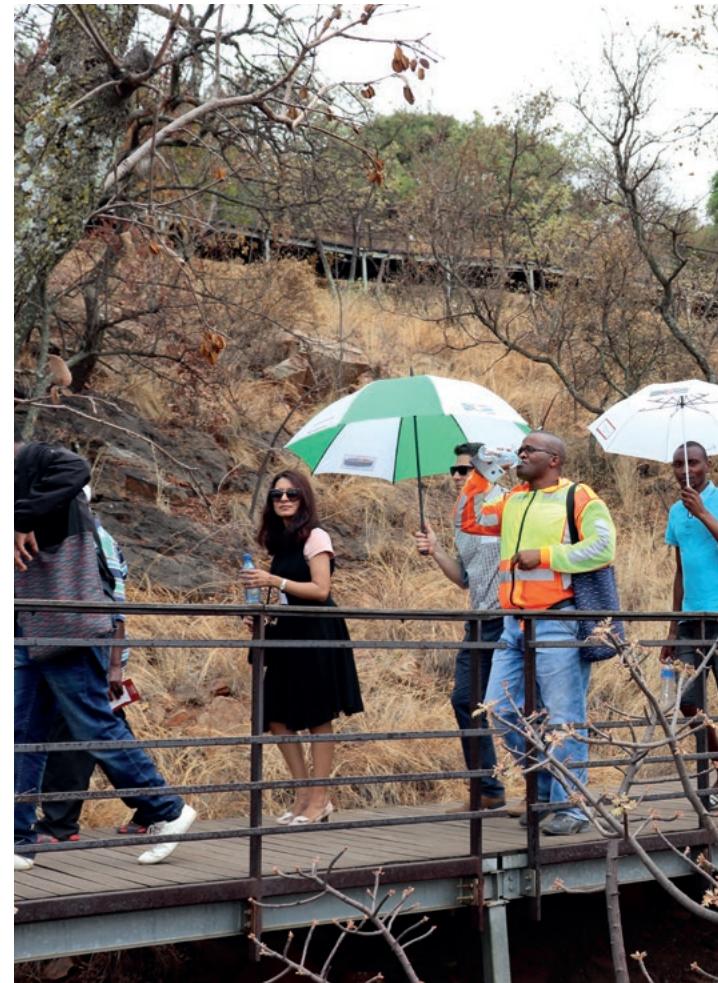
INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES:

- Lack of extended engagement to understand real needs of communities (not all communities want the same things).
- Officials are rewarded for focusing on timelines and budgets, not community engagement.

Common issues facing city practitioners

Following the walk through Salvokop and discussion of the three scenarios, practitioners identified common issues that they face.

- **The system measures and rewards the wrong things.** Projects are measured (and practitioners are rewarded) based on financial and time targets, rather than on social value or impact.
- **Lack of trust within local government.** Trust issues (between government departments, communities and planners, politicians and communities, and politicians and administrators) result in a lack of information sharing and transparency.
- **Practitioners are “between a rock and a hard place”.** They have to deal with multiple, conflicting and often contradictory demands – from communities, the general public, politicians, policy and the institution – but are hindered by bureaucratic inefficiency and stringent regulations and procedures.
- **Public participation is based on IDP cycles.** Engagement processes should happen outside of the IDP cycles and be co-created with communities – a handbook of how to better engage and consult ongoingly with communities should be developed.
- **The City is not in charge of the city.** Current municipal practices need to change, and the municipality needs to recognise its limitations but understand its potential to facilitate better actions and outcomes across the city, by engaging the larger forces present in a city.
- **The hardest part is getting people to think differently.** Officials work within a bureaucratic system that does not reward innovation. Therefore, they need to find ways to influence the system to adapt and value new ways of thinking, and to bring in the practical and implementable, innovative, service-delivery solutions being developed across the country.



What city practitioners can do

- 1. Use “small massive change” as a tool to achieve transformative goals.** Ideas of action-oriented projects for Tshwane included piloting social innovation projects that address infrastructure provision, letting young people run the tourism office, conducting a skills audit in Salvokop and investing in community leadership and change agents.
- 2. Deepen engagement with communities.** By sharing experiences, city practitioners can help communities to understand the restrictive institutional environment in which they work. This will require “getting comfortable with the uncomfortable”.
- 3. Create new partnerships** with other city practitioners and with communities.
- 4. Take ownership of their actions and their potential** to influence and lead others in manoeuvring within an inevitably flawed system, supported by the BEITT.

“

NOBODY WANTS TO
TAKE OWNERSHIP.
EVERYBODY IS SCARED

”

THE IMPACT YOU
CAN MAKE IS SMALL.
BUT THE IMPACT YOU
CAN FACILITATE IS
MASSIVE





THE SOUTH END AND BAAKENS VALLEY, NELSON MANDELA BAY, EASTERN CAPE

The Baakens River divides South End from the inner city and runs for 23 km from the outskirts of the city, through residential suburbs, to the city centre where it flows into the sea. South End was a vibrant, culturally diverse and harmonious community that was destroyed by violent forced removals under apartheid. The community was forced to move to racially homogenous enclaves on the outskirts of the city, separated from their cultural, social and spatial roots. The South End Museum, which commemorates the loss of this established and vibrant community, reminded participants of the history that spatial transformation seeks to undo and provided an example of an active, forward-looking community space.

UNDERSTANDING GOOD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE

South End Museum

NELSON MANDELA BAY

February 2020



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



- The focus should be on examples of good built environment practices, rather than on what is not working.
- Identify the community's assets (strengths, skills, existing infrastructure and opportunities), rather than what's lacking.
- Cities need to find new ways of community engagement, as an ongoing process without an end, rather than a single "participation" event.
- Built environment transformation requires working with both spatial and psycho-social dimensions.
- City practitioners need to self-care and look out for each other, drawing on the reflective spaces provided by the BEITT.

The BEITT co-designed the meeting programme and objectives with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) and the Mandela Bay Development Agency (MBDA). Established by the NMBM in 2003, the MBDA's purpose is to drive urban regeneration, including the Baakens area and the inner city. The meeting's objectives were to have a safe space to discuss developments in individual cities; to showcase the work done to date by the BEITT; to understand good community engagement practice from the perspective of the community, city and NGOs; and to consider the implications of the District Development Model on the work of the task team.

MBDA development projects

The BEITT group braved the pouring rain to embark on a tour of the work being done by MBDA. The work demonstrates a passion and commitment to carve out an inclusive, creative and conscious city identity.

- **The Tramways Building.** This large-scale restoration project transformed the former tram and bus terminus into a mixed-use development, which serves as MBDA's offices and a space for tourism, leisure, entertainment and community activities.
- **The Tramways Unity Bridge.** A pedestrian bridge over the Baakens River that is surrounded by urban design features, including two large tunnels lined with artwork that directs pedestrians from the bridge to the inner city. The development used conscious and inclusive procurement to ensure the involvement of local SMMEs.
- **Route 67 and revamping of inner-city streets.** The route is a highly creative eco-tourism and public art project that knits the inner city together. One of the 67 public artworks found along the route is "Conversations with the Queen", which comprises 12 full-body activists (including Nelson Mandela, Raymond Mhlaba and Govan Mbeki) "in conversation" with the existing colonial statue of Queen Victoria. It is an example of an artwork that goes beyond shaping the physical realm to invite visitors to question the very foundation of the city they call home.
- **Donkin Reserve.** This is another major part of Route 67 that contains 15 of the 67 public artworks. The environmental upgrading of this reserve was about creating a space that all residents can identify with and enjoy.

“

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO
LEAVE PEOPLE BEHIND?
WE CONTINUE TO BUILD
CITIES OUR OWN WAY
AS PRACTITIONERS, NOT
ACCORDING TO WHAT
COMMUNITIES WANT

”



“

I HAVE BEEN DOING THIS WORK (COMMUNITY ACTIVISM) FOR 20 YEARS AND I HAVE NEVER SPOKEN TO ANYONE FROM THE MUNICIPALITY

”

Rethinking community engagement through ABCD

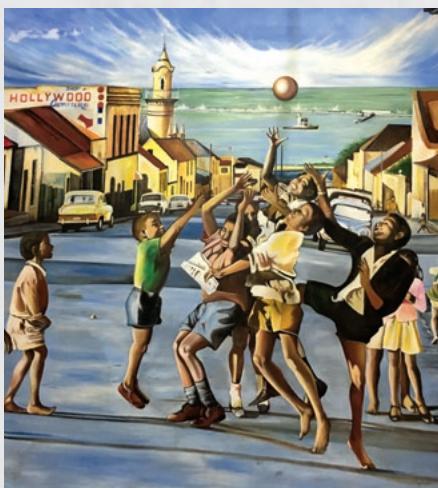
The Ikhala Trust uses the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which is premised on three beliefs: everyone has talents; everyone has something to contribute; and everyone is passionate enough about something that motivates them to act. A community's assets are used to drive development, and so the start is to identify the community's strengths, opportunities and skills rather than what is lacking. The ABCD method uses tools such as appreciative enquiry, collective visioning and asset-mapping. The discussion concluded that municipalities need to fundamentally change the way in which they carry out community engagement, and ABCD offers municipalities a tool for changing how they see communities, so that communities are defined by what they have, not by what they don't have.

The District Development Model

In 2019, the Presidency conceptualised the District Development Model (DDM), as the new "One Plan", in response to an overall lack of coherent and integrated planning and implementation across the country, which results in suboptimal service delivery and little transformational impact. One plan for each of 44 districts and eight metros is meant to guide and direct all strategic investments and projects for transparent accountability, and most importantly to *khawuleza* (hurry up) service delivery. The DDM was piloted in two districts and one metro (eThekwini). The BEITT members from eThekwini shared their experiences of the DDM, and the discussion that followed highlighted issues and factors that the DDM needs to consider. It was agreed that SACN has a short window of opportunity to influence and shape the DDM process.

“ I CAN'T BELIEVE WE ARE USING THE SAME COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODS THAT WE WERE USING 20 YEARS AGO ”





WALKING TOUR

DONKIN RESERVE



VUYISILE MINI SQUARE
“Conversations with the Queen”



FLEMMING SQUARE



FORT FREDERICK



TRAMWAYS UNITY BRIDGE

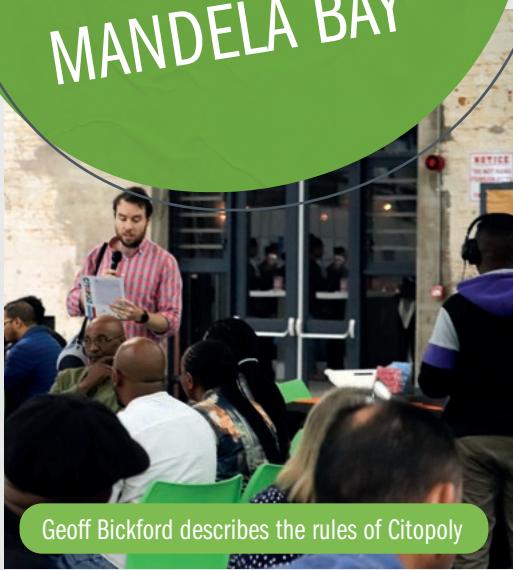


TRAMWAYS BUILDING

Launch at NELSON MANDELA BAY



WATCH MORE
ABOUT THE
LAUNCH HERE



Geoff Bickford describes the rules of Citopoly



Mayor Buyeye and members of the BEITT pose for a picture



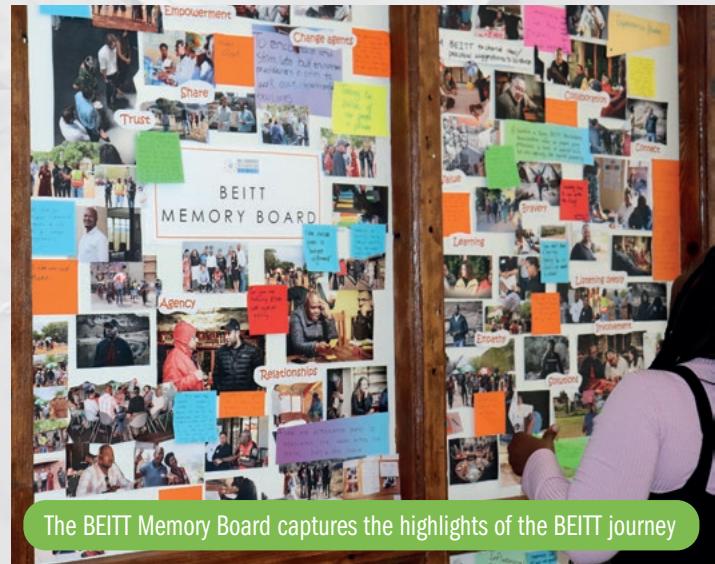
Guests, seated on brightly coloured beanbags, listen to the opening address



Mayor Buyeye delivers the opening address



Guests at the launch contribute to the collaborative collage



The BEITT Memory Board captures the highlights of the BEITT journey

The launch of the BEITT Practice Report, Citopoly and the Practitioner Profiles videos was attended by municipal officials, private property developers, academics and politicians, including the NMBM's Acting Executive Mayor Buyeye. The theme was "Play it Forward", with an emphasis on the importance of learning through playing and the usefulness of using methods of play to break hierarchies within the institution.



THE VIRTUAL WORLD

Zoom was the main online platform used for meetings, supported by the use of Mural (an online collaborative whiteboard tool) and WhatsApp. Moving to the virtual world allowed for shorter but more frequent meetings, and became an ongoing period of engagements rather than individual meetings. In addition to phone calls and emails, weekly “check-in” sessions were held so that practitioners could stay connected at a time when everyone needed it most. As a consequence of this ongoing feedback, the meeting methods and agendas were constantly adapted to meet the needs and voices of practitioners, making the BEITT's virtual journey even more iterative, reflective and practitioner-centric than before.

SHIFTING PRACTICE IN A TIME OF CRISIS: THE BEITT GOES VIRTUAL

Virtual meetings via Zoom

ONLINE

From April 2020



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



- Virtual meetings need different tools and methods from in-person meetings.
- A strong community of practice supports and empowers city practitioners, and enables new thinking.
- Time and space for self-care, reflection and focusing inward are crucial, especially in times of crisis.
- The new ways of doing things must continue beyond the pandemic, with no return to the “old normal”.

On 15 March 2020, the President declared a National Disaster in response to the outbreak of Covid-19. The country went into lockdown, and social distancing and the wearing of masks became the norm. The impact across South Africa was profound, touching all sectors of society. It meant that city practitioners had to adapt to new delivery priorities and a very different way of working, all the while juggling their professional and personal lives, and dealing with additional pressures placed on municipalities. To respond to these challenges, the BEITT moved meetings to the virtual world and found that holding meetings virtually had the unintended consequence of enabling more frequent meetings and better attendance.

Between April and July, the BEITT held:



5
WEEKLY VIRTUAL
CHECK-INS –
FRIDAYS 9:30-11:00



7
POST-COVID
RECOVERY
SESSIONS



1
BEITT
QUARTERLY
MEETING

Weekly virtual check-ins | Fridays 9:30 - 10:30

Join us every Friday in a safe and light space for practitioners to reflect and share as together we navigate this time of uncertainty.

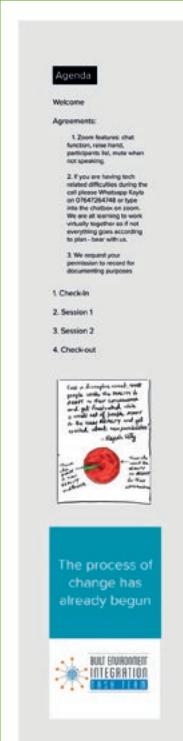


the space to breathe ... the space to be ...



A CITY-LED SESSION ON POST-COVID RECOVERY

Wednesday 6th May | 9:30 - 11:00



Example of a Mural board

“

WHAT ARE WE LEARNING THROUGH THIS DISASTER PHASE ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING AND HOW WE COULD BE DOING IT DIFFERENTLY? IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY TO START THINKING ABOUT MORE MEANINGFUL WAYS OF PARTICIPATION?

”

New ways of engaging virtually

With the shift to virtual engagement, the BEITT members soon discovered “Zoom fatigue” from too many online meetings. The overuse of Zoom resulted in an inability to stay focused, participative and energised, especially on long calls. To counter this, the BEITT adopted various practices:

- Starting each meeting with a physical and mental exercise (stretching, meditation or breathing).
- Supplementing Zoom with offline activities during the meeting (e.g. journaling, where participants switch off their cameras to write in their journal and then post a picture of their entry on the Mural board).
- Capturing discussions and reflections using Mural, a digital workspace for visual collaboration.
- Sharing content (images, photos, videos) during the meeting via WhatsApp.
- Keeping Zoom meetings to a maximum of two hours.

The BEITT continuously explored new ways of engaging virtually, to keep interactions authentic, visually stimulating and fun. For instance, in preparation for one meeting, participants were asked to record a video of themselves impersonating a news anchor giving an update on their work-from-home situation. Meeting virtually allowed the BEITT to connect in more meaningful and creative ways, resulted in stronger and deeper relations among the group, and proved that people don’t have to be in the same room to feel and experience something powerful together.

The power of a strong community of practitioners

Over the years, the BEITT’s regular meetings had built a sense of trust and openness among the group. The arrival of Covid-19 revealed the strength of this community of practitioners. The pandemic and subsequent lockdown placed built environment practitioners under considerable pressure, as service delivery and implementation demands increased, but financial resources remained limited. Adding to the pressure, many practitioners had to deal with home-schooling or caring for families during the workday. The BEITT offered a safe and supportive space – a community – for practitioners, where attention was given to their mental wellness. The “7 Stages of Lockdown” (that range from optimism to anger and depression, and to making meaning) was a useful tool for the practitioners to use to express (and deal with) the sometimes overwhelming emotions and stresses due to Covid-19.

“

I THINK THIS IS THE TIME TO REVISIT OUR PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION, THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REWARD BASED ON OUTCOME ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING THE TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES THAT ARE AHEAD

”

The importance of time and space to focus inwards

The BEITT gives practitioners the space and time to self-reflect, listen and think, which results in new ideas and shifts in perspective. This approach made it possible for practitioners to view the pandemic as a window of opportunity for shifting towards more connected and integrated practices. During this period, government has shown that it can act swiftly and decisively, and be open to creative solutions and innovative ways of working. Departments have worked together to implement new policies at an unprecedented rate, to fast-track water and sanitation service delivery, and to build or retrofit shelters for the city homeless populations. To ensure that lessons learned are not forgotten, and that shifts in practice are internalised and sustained, requires a constant state of reflection.

Public partnerships, not participation

The Covid-19 pandemic showed up the gaping holes in the current community engagement processes, when cities had deal with many communities who were disrupted, displaced or quarantined. In addition, the banning of public gatherings during lockdown prevented the traditional public participation processes linked to the IDP taking place, with potential budgetary consequences. At the same time, it offers an opportunity to rethink IDP participation, so that participation goes beyond being a compliance burden to being a way of fostering real partnerships with communities. Various new ways of engaging communities were suggested, although the lack of access to data is a challenge, especially for poorer communities, and limits the possible use of apps. Other suggestions put forward included:

- Host meetings and gather inputs via public radio stations.
- Connect taxi ranks and public facilities to these radio stations.
- Use DSTV public television channels or public pop-up channels e.g. national disaster channel owned by Parliament.
- Use dedicated WhatsApp line and/or email address for people to raise their issues.
- Summarise important aspects through local free newspapers.
- Set up a suggestion box in hotspot areas.
- Hold smaller consultation groups to generate more focused discussions.
- Digitise local government processes.

This theme, of rethinking community engagement, is not new to the BEITT's discussions, having been covered at the Nelson Mandela Bay meeting where the ABCD approach was presented. An interesting finding was that communities that have been trained in ABCD were more resilient and better able to cope with the impact of Covid-19.

“

A LOT HAPPENED TO THE DESTITUTE DURING THE LOCK DOWN. MANY THINGS THAT WOULD HAVE TAKEN YEARS TO BE IMPLEMENTED. LET'S LEARN FROM THERE MOVING FORWARD. IT MIGHT BE THAT WE HAVE BEEN FOCUSING ON THE WRONG SIDES?

”

“

THINGS THAT WE HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO DO FOR THE HOMELESS AND THE MARGINALISED, WE HAVE NOW BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND TO AND CREATE EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SOCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

”

“

IF WE DIDN'T HAVE COVID-19, WE WOULDN'T HAVE A COMMON PURPOSE PULLING US TOGETHER AT THIS TIME. IT'S BEEN A BLESSING IN DISGUISE – TWO TEAMS PULLING TOGETHER AS ONE, IN THE PURSUIT OF PRESERVING HUMAN LIFE. WE ARE RELEARNING WHAT PARTNERS' VALUES REALLY ARE IN THEIR COMPASSION TO THE MOST VULNERABLE

”

A post-Covid-19 transformed system

The pandemic exposed the stark spatial injustices of South Africa's cities, but also showed that government can act swiftly and decisively to deliver services (e.g. supplying settlements with water and sanitation) and that communities can work together across the city (e.g. the Community Action Networks (CANs) that formed to link more affluent communities with poorer areas). The impact of the pandemic prompted the BEITT to look at what a radically transformed system post-Covid-19 would look like. Of the many ideas put forward, three were selected based on a vote for further discussion.

Use data to inform decision-making and reopening certain parts of the city

“Data is almost like oxygen for practitioners”

- Use drones and aerial footage to get better data on informal settlements.
- Integrate city-level data and find ways to share data with others.
- Participate actively in the SA Council for Cities Data and use SCODA.
- Set up data observatories. (The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) supports the establishment of data observatories.)
- Consolidate databases on land availability, to determine where people can be moved to de-densify informal settlements.

Get individual services (especially water and sanitation) to households in informal settlements or find an alternative housing solution to informal settlements

“Are we committed to listening more than speaking to our stakeholders? We need to find different ways of listening to people who know their environments so much better than we do.”

- Leverage existing community partnerships, as civil society has the capacity to deliver services and collect data. With partnerships, government could provide better depth, quality and reliability of services.
- Empower and give communities/community-based organisations the rights and opportunities to deliver services.
- Clarify COGTA's powers and functions, to avoid contestation when national and provincial departments make decisions and expect municipalities to act. For example, when the national Department of Water and Sanitation sets targets for making water available in informal settlements, but municipalities do not have the financial means.

Learn from how we have been able to make policies and how we implement

“We have been able to circumvent at this time and can develop policies, regs and plans to implement in three hours!”

- Accelerate business processes and put forms on the internet.
- Work faster and better with other departments.
- Sensitise decision-makers that cities cannot return to the way things were, e.g. slow approval of developments or issuing of permits to spaza shops.

THE VIRTUAL FESTIVAL

In 2019, the BEITT's annual retreat was an opportunity for the team to get away and engage in some intense team-building, reflection and idea activation. However, going away together was not possible in 2020. Instead, the BEITT had to find ways of engaging virtually. And so was born the idea of a "Virtual Festival" comprising two sessions via Zoom. To create anticipation and build excitement for the retreat, three weeks of activities preceded the Festival – this also reinforced the intent that the festival was not just another meeting, but rather a period of engagement.

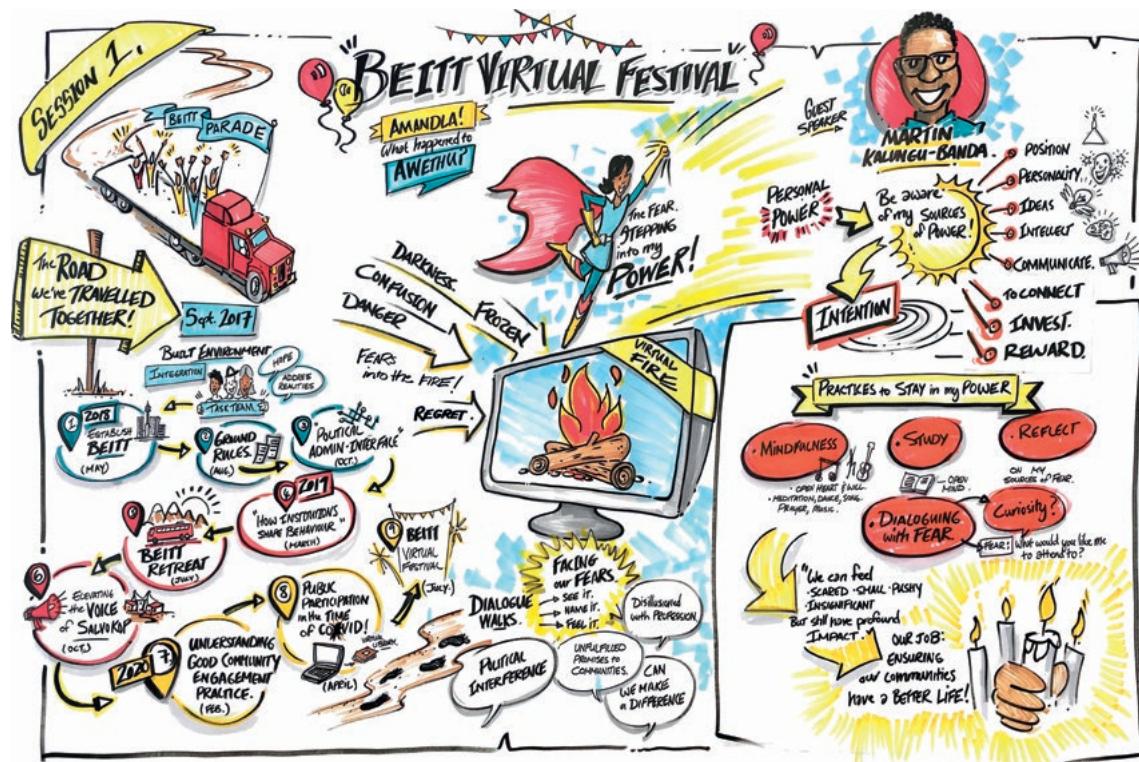


Under the theme "Amandla! What's happened to Awethu?", the Virtual Festival sought to explore notions of power and what it takes to step into one's own power, through developing a relationship with one's fear. The "What happened to Awethu?" question implies that the people who should hold the power are becoming more and more disempowered. This is the experience of many who work in local government, where a pervasive sense of fear means that toeing the line trumps speaking out in order to serve communities best.

In the run-up to the Festival, items relating to fear and power were sent across the country to the practitioners, and fun activities, such as sharing your power outfit or journaling, connected the group via WhatsApp. This meant that by the time the first session – the Virtual Festival Parade – kicked off, the group had connected with each other and prepared to confront their fear and step into their power.

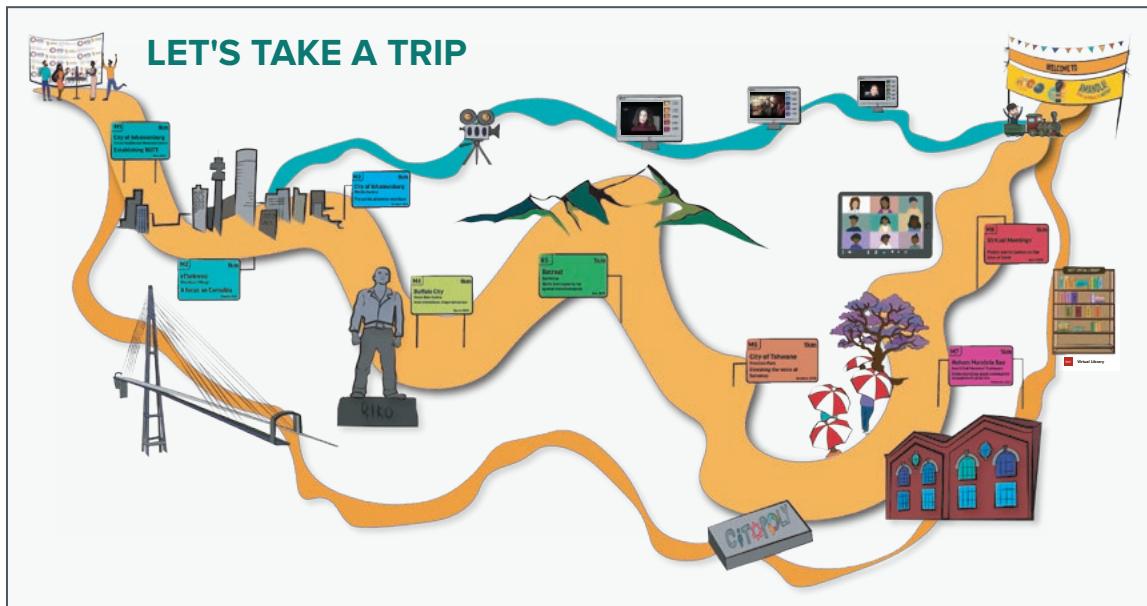
SESSION 1

To open the festival, Geoff Bickford (SACN Programme Manager) took everyone on a virtual train ride that recounted the BEITT's journey since 2017. Then, guided by Martin Kalungu-Bandu of the Presencing Institute, the group learnt about different powers and how to access them: Accessing power does not mean overcoming fear, but *dialoguing* and establishing a relationship with that fear.



SESSION 2

A week later, the group came together to share their reflections on the work done and to ready themselves for "stepping into their power", both as a group and as individuals. They spent time visioning how best to use the work of BEITT and the community of practice to have an impact in the city space. Then, Dr Ela Manga ran an experiential session on her breathwork practice and shared several tools for using the breath to access one's power. The session was particularly moving and emotionally connecting for individuals.





Research PROJECTS

All research projects are a direct result of the BEITT journey, conceptualised by city practitioners who also participate in the research process and nominate case studies. Research topics emerge from the BEITT meetings and are turned into built environment integration research projects by the BEITT Secretariat.

"PERFORMANCE IS BASED ON WHETHER WE HAVE SPENT THE BUDGET"

"PLAN WITH THE COMMUNITY, NOT FOR THE COMMUNITY"

"IS THE POLITICAL ARENA WILLING TO COMMIT TO A RADICAL BUSINESS-UNUSUAL APPROACH TO THE RECOVERY?"

"HOW DO WE OPERATE IN THESE TOUGH TIMES AND STILL MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN SOCIETY?"





BEITT PRACTICE DIAGNOSTIC



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



PURPOSE

To understand what enhances – and what detracts from – spatial transformation and integration, by taking a deep dive into the efforts, experiences and reflections of city practitioners through examining four case studies of large spatial transformation projects across the country.



METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted with city practitioners and other stakeholders involved in projects, and a site visit was undertaken. The research provided insights into the practical implementation experience and identified some emerging lessons for built environment integration.



OUTCOMES

INSIGHTS ("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

From the research, city practitioners identified priorities:

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 findings of the report was also translated into a board game called Citopoly (see page 52), which allows people to connect with the important insights of the report in a fun and engaging way.



READ THE FULL REPORT HERE

CITIES POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFACE IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



PURPOSE

To better understand how the political-administrative interface plays out in cities, and to develop a perspective on what this means for the built environment projects that should be the drivers of spatial transformation. The political-administrative interface refers to the interactions between the municipal administration and council, made up of councillors representing political parties.



METHODOLOGY

A high-level literature review was done and nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with former local government senior managers and mayoral committee members (MMCs) from five metros.



OUTCOMES

- The political-administrative interface is characterised by instability, which is a leading cause of ineffective spatial transformation of cities and inadequate service delivery.
- Intergovernmental politics places additional strain on the political-administrative interface in cities, especially the lack of control over budgeting and target-setting, and declarations by national politicians that undermine work done at city level.
- Officials with political connections and politicians who lack the courage to sell projects to their constituencies can obstruct spatial transformation projects. Administrations can do little about the lack of political will but can creatively package projects to be politically palatable.
- The current political-administrative interface can work well, but success depends heavily on the personalities involved. Personality clashes between MMCs and officials, or mayors and officials, as well as different management styles and interests can derail projects.
- Effective implementation of spatial transformation projects relies on senior managers being able to develop good working relationships with political role-players. This requires understanding the political and institutional dynamic, which differs from city to city and for each individual working in a city. Serving communities should be at the core of all strategies.
- A system that relies on personalities is unstable, especially when personalities change as regularly as in South African cities – e.g. municipal managers last an average of 3.5 years, while 70% of mayors and MMCs hold positions for less than five years.

If spatial transformation is to succeed, structural changes will be needed, to institutionalise the professionalisation of local government's political and administrative roles, both internally (break down silos) and external (professional association for senior management in cities) – the system must depend less on personality and more on process.



PRACTITIONER PROFILES



WATCH THE
PRACTITIONER
PROFILE
VIDEOS HERE



READ THE FULL
MAGAZINE HERE



PURPOSE

To elevate the profile of municipal officials who are working towards built environment integration, and to dismantle the stereotypical view of city practitioners, raising awareness about the human beings who are talented, committed and passionate about spatially transforming South Africa's cities.



METHODOLOGY

A multi-media team attended a BEITT retreat at Earthrise and interviewed the BEITT city practitioners about their work and what gets them up in the morning.



OUTCOMES

A series of written and video profiles were produced and can be found in the online BEITT Magazine and videos.

NOT FOR SALE

BEITT

BUILT ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION TASK TEAM

Issue 01 | AUGUST 2020

having a good idea or plan is easy, but that idea or plan is no good if you can't influence decision making.

WHO IS THE BEITT?

Getting to know the city officials advancing spatial transformation in South African cities

"You're in the actual coalface of what's happening. So when people are fed up with service delivery, they will come straight at you and they expect you to have solutions and answers"

South African Cities Network

BUILT ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION TASK TEAM

NOT FOR SALE

TASK TEAM MEETINGS

INSTEAD OF MEETING IN HOTELS WE ARE MEETING IN PLACES WHERE YOU CAN SEE THE GRAVITY OF THE CHALLENGE AND YOU CAN IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE CONTEXT - THE VENUE IS A PARTICIPANT

WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO CREATE "AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERYBODY CAN BE THE BEST THAT THEY CAN BE" AND SYNERGY THAT GIVES "ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS THREE", NOT "ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS A HALF"

ADRIAN PETERS

MUNICIPAL SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS



PURPOSE

To understand the extent to which legislation is enabling or disabling municipalities to drive spatial transformation, especially the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) in relation to SPLUMA, and to suggest recommendations. With so many pieces of legislation in place for the local government sphere, it is important to investigate the levels of alignment between the pieces of legislation, whether alignment exists or not, and how legislation relates to practice (theory vs reality).

METHODOLOGY

A desktop study analysed the extent to which SPLUMA, MFMA, Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act and the Constitution are aligned and how they enable municipalities to achieve spatial transformation as part of the broader local government developmental mandate. The research findings will be shared with key stakeholders and city officials.

OUTCOMES

- Legislative fragmentation is almost inevitable in a country such as South Africa, where three spheres of government have law-making authority in relation to a big range of interrelated issues.
- Principles and provisions relevant to spatial transformation are found in legislation covering different sectors, including transport, land and property, housing, environmental, spatial planning and building regulations etc.
- The two main legislations for spatial transformation are: SPLUMA, which provides for a single land development process and is underpinned by five principles – spatial justice, spatial sustainability, efficiency, spatial resilience and good administration; and the MFMA, which steers the city's fiscal and financial affairs and processes (spatial transformation requires financial support and allocations).
- Both Acts are in line with the Constitution and serve as legislative extensions of the policy objectives for developmental local government as laid out in the White Paper on Local Government (1998). However, the law relevant to spatial transformation is fragmented, as the ideals and objectives of SPLUMA must be enabled and unlocked via mechanisms (e.g. annual budgets) provided for in other pieces of legislation, including the MFMA.
- SPLUMA can be seen as an outward-facing Act, whereas the MFMA is inward-facing, but their interpretation and implementation need to be harmonised, in order to achieve stability in developmental local government. Other reasons contribute to problems with SPLUMA and MFMA in practice, such as lack of alignment between operations and planning of all three spheres; too narrow an interpretation of the law, specifically the MFMA; and inadequate or absent communication between spatial planning and financial management portfolios in municipalities.





BEITT STRENGTHS REPORT



[READ THE FULL REPORT HERE](#)



PURPOSE

The theme of the BEITT learning retreat at the Earthrise Mountain Lodge (see page 21) was the skills and capacity of city practitioners. By understanding their strengths and areas for improvements, the BEITT members would be able to develop themselves and their teams, and build a stronger team across cities.



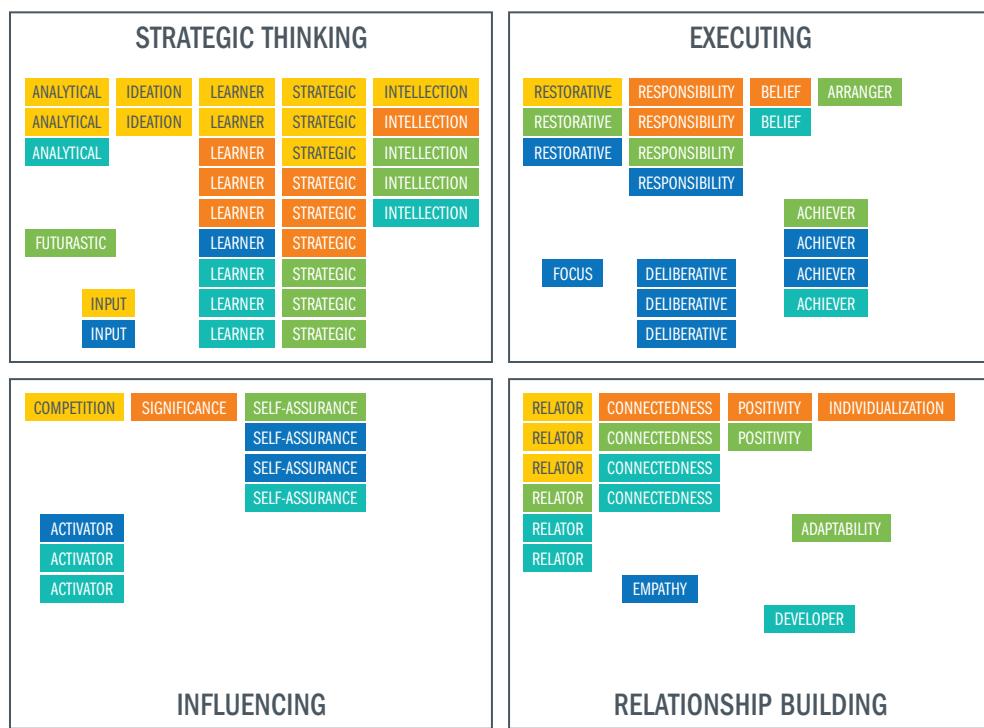
METHODOLOGY

Each member attending the retreat completed an online skills and strengths assessment (<https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com>).



OUTCOMES

The top strength for the team was strategic thinking, followed by some relationship building and execution, with very limited influencing strengths. Strategic thinking is important for making decisions and dealing with the complex issues that characterise city environments. However, influencing, relationship-building and execution are skills that city practitioners need to implement projects and ensure societal and cultural change.



Everyone found the exercise very valuable, as it highlighted the importance of understanding more than just the qualifications of individuals in a team. By understanding the strengths that exist in teams, and playing to those strengths, can improve project delivery and performance. The BEITT identified the dissemination of its work, as an opportunity to strength the influencing skills of practitioners and to leverage existing strengths to drive performance in the respective cities.



PURPOSE

To bring the experience and voice of cities into the IDP guidelines being reviewed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA). The first attempt at these guidelines was done without engaging any of the metros, as the view was that the guidelines would be for all municipalities apart from metros. COGTA then agreed to the BEITT's request to facilitate a process with metros, to learn from their experience of developing IDPs and to identify shortcomings and improvements in the IDP process.



METHODOLOGY

Four regional workshops were held in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and the Western Cape, and one final collective workshop, to harvest municipal experience and good practices of developing and implementing IDPs.



OUTCOMES

- A revised IDP guideline that meaningfully reflects the experiences and lessons of cities, and emphasises the process rather than the plan in developing and implementing IDPs.
- An IDP assessment framework, to ensure that the guidelines could be effectively institutionalised.
- Both the guideline and assessment framework make clear that IDPs are everyone's business and all spheres of government have roles to play.

The process showed that a different approach to intergovernmental relations is possible, but it did not solve the trust breakdown between the spheres. Cities are uncertain about COGTA's ability to implement the guidelines effectively across government, as opposed to just creating more compliance for cities while other spheres behaviours are not accounted for. There is a long way to go, but this is a start and there was a clear appreciation for the level of involvement and engagement in developing the guideline.





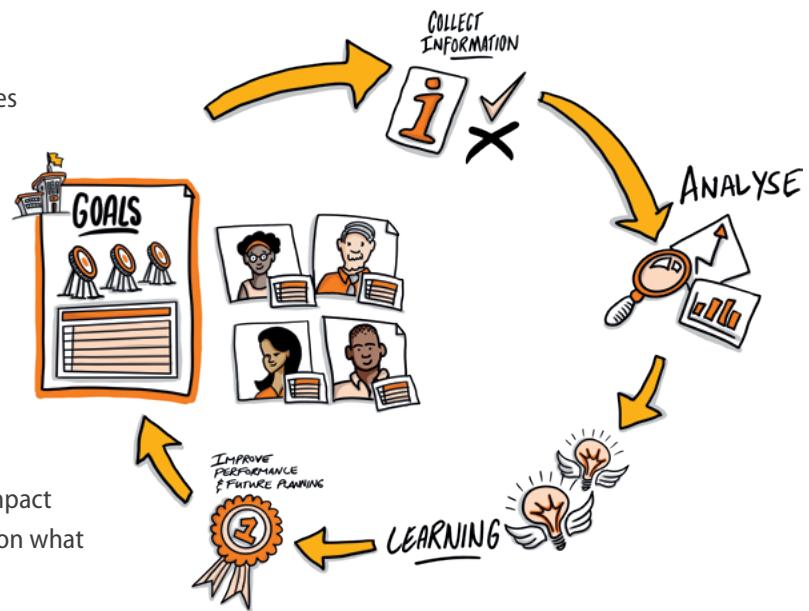
RULES OF THE GAME

READ THE FULL REPORT HERE



PURPOSE

To document and make sense of the rules (written and unwritten) related to leadership and decision-making, reporting and performance management that currently inform built environment practices, in order to understand how they shape the behaviour and practice of city practitioners, and propose the changes needed for institutions to be able to prioritise transformative development in the built environment. The key focus of this research is to determine the impact of current performance management systems on what actually gets done in a city.



METHODOLOGY

Interviews were held with built environment practitioners and human resources, supply chain management and audit managers in order to understand, document and assess the current performance management system in cities as it relates to the built environment. From these, a research report was developed. Virtual workshops were held with city practitioners and senior managers, as well as stakeholders from academia and government, to present the research outcomes and develop solutions and recommendations for cities. A three-minute animation video was produced, to package the key findings in an accessible and succinct way to be shared with stakeholders, and launched at the Urban Festival 2020.



OUTCOMES

- Performance management in government reflects new public management (NPM) attempts to introduce private sector tools and approaches to make the state more effective and accountable.
- The international literature indicates that the NPM assumption is often flawed, in large part because the state (and particularly a city) is a much more complex system than the average private sector corporation
- City systems are complex, made up of multiple components, and there are both similarities and key differences across cities.
- In theory, the IDP should be reflected in the budget and the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), but in practice this is an extremely difficult task to achieve, in part because of the "blue sky" approach towards IDP planning ("needs collection").
- Community priorities may not be within the city's mandate, not reflect long-term priorities, or cannot be funded. This often creates a permanent gap between the IDP (citizen expectations) and what the city is actually doing.
- In an ideal performance management system, individual goals for all employees are well aligned to organisational goals, ensuring that everybody is contributing to the latter. The current process of individual goal setting in cities is far from this ideal.



Going beyond RESEARCH



"IT'S DISCOURAGING THAT EXTERNAL PEOPLE ONLY SEE WHAT PRACTITIONERS AREN'T DOING"



"WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A POST-COVID RECOVERY PLAN BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT IT CONTAINS YET"

"I HAVE REALISED THAT VULNERABLE PEOPLE ARE MORE VULNERABLE THAN WE EVER THOUGHT"

"IS THE CITY I AM HELPING TO CREATE A GOOD PLACE TO GROW UP FOR MY DAUGHTER?"

The BEITT continuously seeks to go beyond research projects and find creative ways of sharing the knowledge and research generated along the journey.



CITOPOLY



FIND MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT
CITOPOLY HERE

The game of Citopoly emerged from a research project initiated by the BEITT. The project interviewed built environment practitioners in order to gain insights into the practices and behaviours experienced by practitioners in implementing various projects. The game was developed as a way of using the many rich practitioner quotations unearthed through the interviews and of disseminating the findings that came out of the case studies.

Citopoly demonstrates, using direct quotes, how the dynamic environments in which they operate mean that city practitioners are often caught between creating institutional value or societal value. There is a constant tension between practices that build organisational value and practices that build broader societal value and performance. The first official sitting to play Citopoly took place at the Earthrise Mountain Lodge retreat and strongly showed how out of touch institutional practice is with community needs. Citopoly sessions were held with the Western Cape Government and the University of Cape Town, eThekweni, SALGA and ISOCARP before the onset of Covid-19. In response to the impact of Covid-19, a virtual version of Citopoly was produced and was played at the virtual Urban Festival.



**TOWARDS CITY TRANSFORMATION:
LET'S PLAY**

CITOPOLY

BUILT ENVIRONMENT
INTEGRATION
TASK TEAM
SACN/CitiesNetwork

Transformers

6 ORGANISATIONAL VALUE 12. SOCIETAL VALUE

Lucky Town

6 ORGANISATIONAL VALUE 3 SOCIETAL VALUE

Space Transformers

8 ORGANISATIONAL VALUE 3 SOCIETAL VALUE

REFLECTIONS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

RED BLOCKS **BLUE BLOCKS** **GROUND-ZERO CARDS**

INSTRUCTIONS

Citopoly is a game of reading, listening, building and reflecting on the development of cities. Teams must choose carefully to dance the fine line between progress and collapse. The game is based on the Built Environment Integration Practice report of the South African Cities Network (SACN) Built Environment Integration Task Team (BEITT).

Up to 4 project teams can play the game at one time.

Contents

- 124 consequence cards in a card box
- 8 ground zero cards – 4 red, 4 blue
- 80 building blocks – 40 red, 40 blue
- 1 dice
- 1 rules of the game insert

The Object of the Game

To go up against other teams to build the best city transformation project that offers as much organisational and societal value as possible.

How To Play

- Each team begins with 5 blue blocks (representing societal value) and 5 red blocks (representing organisational value). After each team has built its red and blue towers, the game can begin.
- Throw the dice to decide who starts. The team with the highest value starts.
- If there is a tie, only the tied teams throw again to determine who starts. Play follows in a clockwise direction.
- On their turn, teams can 1 card from the box and read aloud the quote on the back side of the card. Quotes are taken verbatim from the BEITT report. After reading the quote, the card is turned over to reveal the consequence of the quote. The consequence is also read aloud.
- Each card leads to one of the following consequences:
 - Team gains or loses blue and/or red blocks – “lost” blocks return to the “bank”
 - Team can be instructed to collapse their structure
 - When asked to collapse their structure, the team must knock down the specified colour tower. To rebuild their tower, the team must first use up all the blocks from their collapsed structure. Only once all these blocks have been used can the team start to gain additional blocks. Once a tower is collapsed, teams can combine lost blocks from the collapsed pile should they pick a “lose” consequence card.
 - When a team loses all blocks of a particular colour (a team cannot go into negative blocks), in the next round the team must take a ground zero card of the same colour, not a card from the regular card deck.
 - The game ends once all the cards have been drawn. The team with the tallest combined towers wins. Deciding the winning team will require some discussion.

FOR MORE GAME GUIDANCE ON THIS GAME VISIT [HERE](#)

“THESE ARE NOT NEW SETS OF ISSUES TO US, IF I TOOK THIS BACK TO MY COLLEAGUES AT WORK THEY WOULD SAY YES, THIS IS HOW IT WORKS; WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW IS WHAT DOES THE WORK SAY ABOUT WHAT WE MUST DO ABOUT IT”



VIEW THE VISUALISATION
STUDIO EXHIBITION HERE

VISUALISATION STUDIOS



PURPOSE

To curate a process for the multidisciplinary co-production of visuals and media that reflect what spatially transformed South African cities could look like, based on the collective and combined perspective of various city actors. In so doing, the project will create a platform for different actors to be part of visualising the future of their city and encourage discussion about governance frameworks and infrastructure investments required to realise these future city visions.

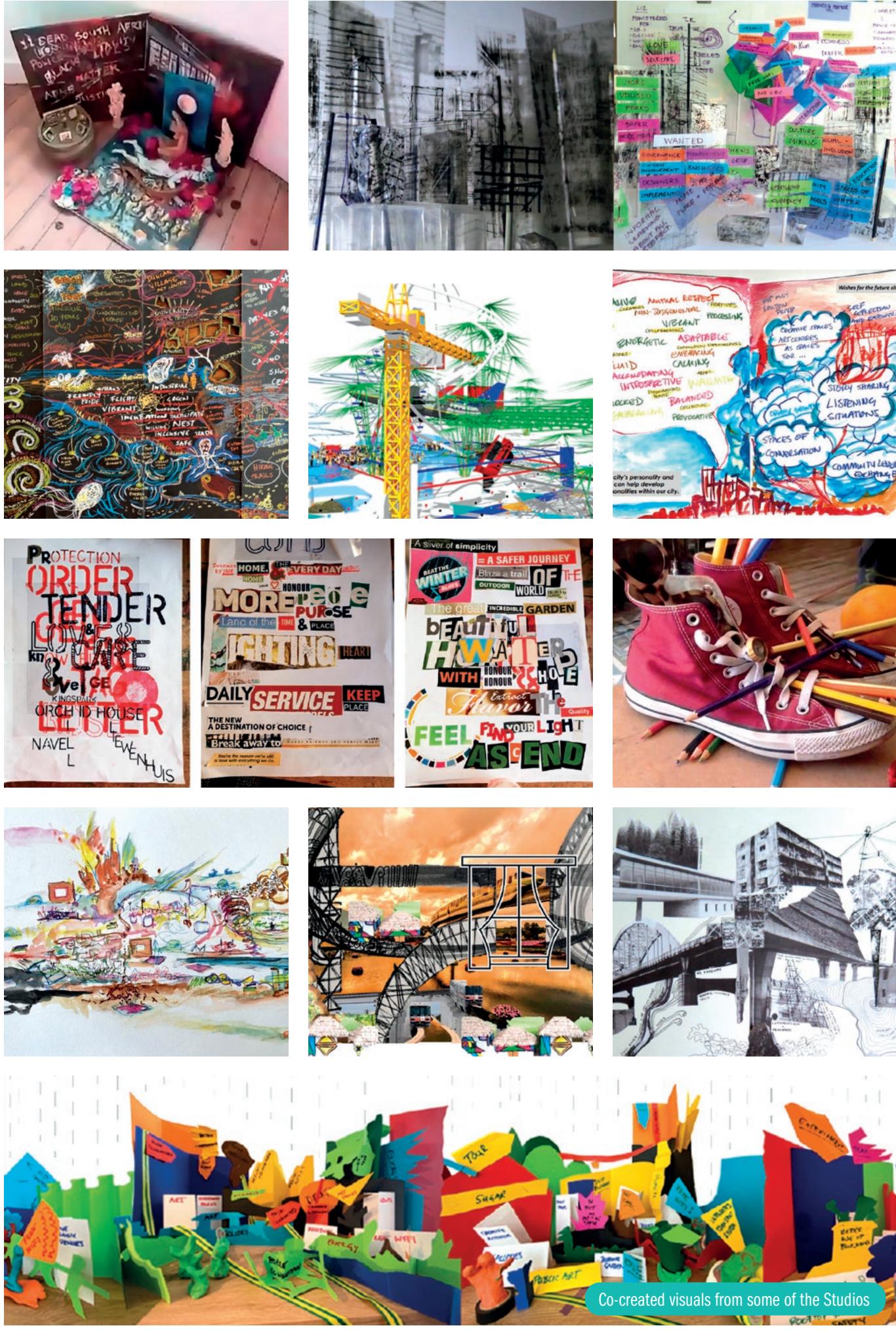
METHODOLOGY

A team of artists, facilitators and crafts people developed and hosted studios in nine cities: Tshwane, Johannesburg, eThekweni, Msunduzi, Nelson Mandela Bay, Buffalo City, Mangaung, Ekurhuleni and Cape Town. At these studios, visuals, photographs, models and various multimedia were developed, to reflect how various actors perceive a post-apartheid, integrated future city. Participants included a mix of stakeholders from the city, including civil society (organisations), entrepreneurs, academics, artists, influencers and city officials.

OUTCOMES

Due to Covid-19, the city studios took place virtually and produced a series of creative and co-crafted 2D and 3D future city visuals per city. These visuals are used to engage on the future city and were exhibited virtually during the Urban Festival.





Co-created visuals from some of the Studios



The Way FORWARD

"THERE IS AN EMPHASIS ON CONFORMITY AND COMPLIANCE RATHER THAN TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENCY"

"COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS NOT A MEETING. IT IS AN ONGOING PROCESS"



"SACN IS THE IDEAL FORUM TO LOOK AT SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTALS FOR A POST-COVID RECOVERY. NO BODY BETTER THAN THIS BEITT GROUP TO LOOK AT THOSE ISSUES"

"WE HAVE BEEN A BIT MALICIOUS IN THE WAY WE HAVE DONE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION"



THE WAY FORWARD

“

THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE FIGHTING SIMILAR IF NOT MORE CHALLENGING BATTLES, BUT ALL WITH A DISTINCT SENSE OF PURPOSE, TO IMPROVE LIVES FOR THE NOW AND THE UPCOMING GENERATIONS, TO SERVE. I AM UNEXPECTEDLY SEEING A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

”

This Compendium covers an incredible time of growth and learning for the BEITT. Despite the difficulties, all involved have found ways to stay committed to the work and to connect authentically to each other. In 2020/21, the BEITT will be focusing on:

- Changing the system – impacting the functionality of the institution.
- Interacting with the political realm.
- Communicating and disseminating previous work.

Two additional projects will be introduced in the coming year.

- **Practice Good Practice** intends to shift the focus, from negative aspects of the city environment to cases of good practices that cities can be proud of and that can inspire more good practices. The project will be a partnership between the BEITT and SACN's communications team, and part of a social media campaign aimed at reaching a wider audience of city stakeholders and leading up to the launch of the State of South African Cities 2021.
- **The Healing Fields** is aimed at creating a safe space to process the harm and trauma that have been inflicted on people, places and the planet. These monthly gatherings are an opportunity to re-imagine compassion and community, and to connect for action.

The BEITT will continue to connect in honest, engaging and authentic ways through 2020/21, whether meeting virtually or in-person. What the BEITT has accomplished in just two years shows that change is possible and that (to paraphrase Margaret Mead), “never doubt that a small group of committed practitioners can transform systems and spaces”.

In memory of George Lebelo

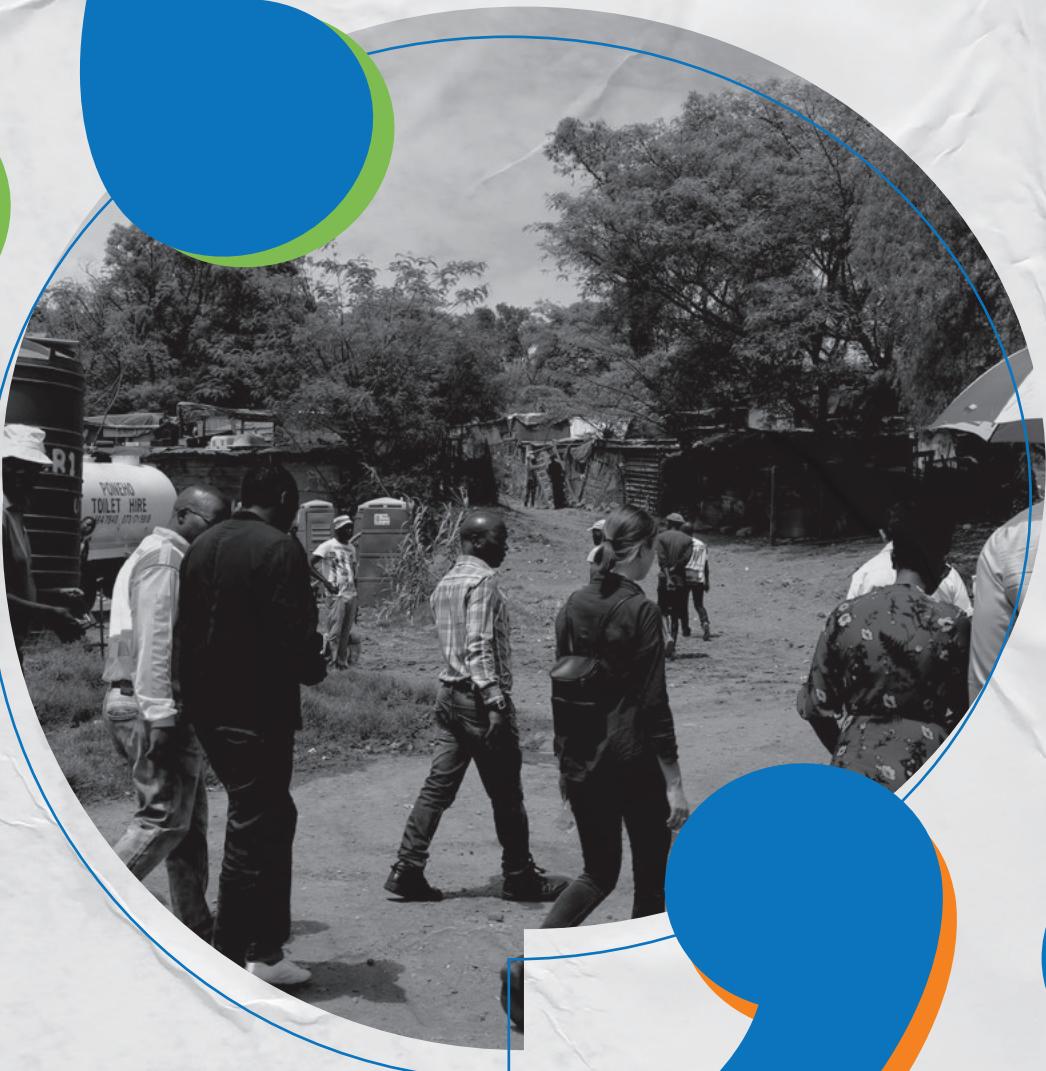
22/07/1988 - 19/09/2020

This Compendium is dedicated to our longstanding BEITT member, colleague and friend, George Lebelo. May his spirit live on in all of us.

George was a senior strategic planning manager at Msunduzi Municipality. For him, planning was a calling, not a salary, and success was measured by the impact on the lives of others. He was full of energy and passion for his job, a champion for BEITT's work, and committed to working towards integrated cities.



*"The solutions are within ourselves,
within our beliefs or our
self-consciousness."*



ISBN 978-1-920704-30-8

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