CASE STUDY

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE MITCHELLS PLAIN TOWN CENTRE
OVERVIEW

- Background
- Origins of the project
- Problem statement
- Problem analysis
- Targeted outcomes
- Intervention logic
- Solutions – current and proposed
- Results
- Lessons learned
• Mitchells Plain is about 20km from the Cape Town city centre
• Built in the 1970s for coloured people forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act
• A dormitory town with lots of vacant, unsafe space
• Spatially marginalised
  • Isolated from the rest of the city, amenities and opportunities
• 30% of people unemployed
• 41.8% earn less than R1 600 per month
• 74.9% of adults do not have matric
Aerial photo of MPTC in 2000
ORIGINS OF THE PROJECT

- Mitchells Plain was declared a URP node in 2001
- The MPTC project started in 2003 as a public transport interchange upgrade
- Since public transport was effectively MPTC’s ‘anchor tenant’, the project sought to leverage an integrated upgrade of the entire 70ha town centre out of the public transport upgrade
- The taxi industry and informal trading, normally seen as ‘problems’ to be kept out of sight, were seen as opportunities for economic development which:
  - deserved good locations
  - had the latent capacity to manage themselves
PROBLEM STATEMENT (1)

- MPTC an unsheltered, unprotected, unlit, inaccessible, unsafe environment
- A high level of conflict and diverse and conflicting stakeholder interests
- Problems associated with buses:
  - facilities had become inadequate
  - bus movements were restricted (under-designed)
  - the bus rank occupied potentially prime trading space
- Problems associated with taxis:
  - no facilities for 1 000 taxis and their passengers;
  - 24 taxi associations in frequently violent conflict
  - gangs demanded protection money from taxis
• Problems associated with informal trading:
  – 1 000 traders
  – five trade associations in constant conflict
  – traders obstructed pedestrian walkways:
    ➢ hampered movement of pedestrians, law enforcement officials and emergency vehicles
    ➢ hampered formal business activities
• City was in a no-win situation:
  – The law was being infringed, but enforcing informal trading regulations would require pushing traders onto unsafe vacant land outside the town centre
PROBLEM STATEMENT (3)

• Crime:
  – gangsterism, robberies and drug dealing were rife
  – law enforcement was hampered by trader encroachment of public space

• Problems associated with formal business:
  – business represented by property owners’ and merchants’ associations, and there was a well developed and profitable retail sector
  – however, encroachment of public space by informal traders and high crime meant business was in decline
  – businesses threatened a rates boycott
PROBLEM ANALYSIS

• MPTC’s infrastructure was inadequate for the number of people and range of activities present there
• This led to high levels of conflict between and within sectors, creating unsafe conditions, and making law enforcement very difficult
• Municipal service delivery problems made this situation worse:
  – historically inadequate capital and operating budgets
  – a lack of development facilitation to integrate service delivery beyond engineering services
  – reactive rather than proactive
  – an inability to conduct urban management activities in what had become a chaotic situation, including an inability to effectively enforce the law
TARGETED OUTCOMES

- A safe, convenient, seamless environment for public transport users
- A safe and pleasant environment for shoppers
- As much informal trading as possible in a prime location
- Opportunities for further retail development
- Opportunities for further economic development activities, e.g. training
- An enabling environment for leveraging private investment to generate jobs and support the reinvestment of disposable income
• A stable platform for the expression of community interests through accountable elected representatives

• Ongoing consultation with the community and flexibility throughout the process, even during construction

• The scope of work must not be reduced under any circumstances:
  – if necessary, more money must be found to implement the project to the original specifications
  – the quality of infrastructure delivered in poor neighbourhoods must be on a par with the best in the city. In fact it must be better, because it is used more

• The locus of decision-making and control must move from a centralised authority to a locally autonomous system to:
  – build local ownership
  – effectively manage, operate and maintain public assets
Devolving planning, implementation and management to community level:
Methodology

- Area Identification
- Community Dynamics Audit
- Baseline Survey
- Prioritising interventions
- Development of local strategies
- Design of interventions
- Implementation
- Ongoing M&E
- Sustainability through operation and maintenance

Social Compact

- Trust,
- Accountability,
- Set of principles,
- Developmental approach

Community Participation

Capacity Building

Mentorship
Current (1)

• The establishment of a stable entity to ensure stakeholder participation:
  – Mitchells Plain CBD Steering Committee:
    - reps from the taxi industry, informal traders, formal businesses, property owners, rail authorities, Golden Arrow Bus Company, city officials and councillors.
    - a platform to establish unity in the various sectors, provide a platform for deciding what the elements of an upgrade might look like, and ensure ongoing consultation and participation, even while project work is in progress
SOLUTIONS (2)

Current (2)

• Task teams:
  – taxi task team to unify sector, agree on taxi infrastructure, and agree on operations and management of allocated taxi association blocks
  – informal traders’ task team to unify sector, agree on trader infrastructure, and agree on operations and management of trading facilities
• Ad hoc committees to disseminate information
• Monthly updates to Mitchells Plain Sub-Council
Consultation process

**IDENTIFICATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

- Community organisation
- Informal and formal Traders
- Ward councillors
- Metrorail
- Bus operators
- Taxi forum
- Intersite
- Modalink
- SARCC

**ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS**
Identification of Problems & Issues

**TECHNICAL MEETINGS**

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETINGS**

- CCT – Transportation forum
- CCT – Spatial planning
- CCT – Business area management
- CCT – Design services
- CCT – Roads & services
- CCT – Traffic control

**TASKTEAM MEETING NO. 1**
Presentation of proposals

**TASKTEAM MEETING NO. 2**
Presentation of preferred conceptual plan
Proposed formal entity

- A non-profit community-based operations and management company under a decision-making board (successor to current steering committee)
- A TID – targeted investment district – with a rates top-up levy, and with representatives from all sectors on the current steering committee
- Operating under a head lease with the city over MPTC informal trading areas, bus terminal, taxi rank, parking areas, public spaces and administration buildings
- City would relinquish certain income streams to the proposed new entity
- City would supply defined set of services according to service level agreements and be able to enforce the law because the environment is more stable
- Specific company mandate to promote local economic development and the employment of local people.
Mitchells Plain Taxi Forum
- Coordinating Body for Mitchells Plain Taxi Industry
- Oversees the functions of the Blocks and Associations
- Guides Business Entity
- Guides Regional Taxi Council
- Oversees application of the Code of Conduct

Business Entity
- Economic Development
- Re-Capitilization
- Development of adjacent land

Operational Management
- Coordinates Block Management Structures
- Management of Admin Buildings
- Main linkage with Town Centre Management Company

Block Management
- Traffic Control within Block
- Toilet Management and general cleaning
- Sharing of Holding Area
- Use of Block Office
- Disciplinary Measures
- Payments and Levies
- Block Management Committee
  - 2 reps per association
  - Chair, Secretary & Treasurer through election

Regional Taxi Council
- Will convene as and when required by the Provincial Taxi Council
- Policy
- Lobbying and Advocacy

Provincial Taxi Council

Northern Terminal Block 1
- Eeste River
- Colorado Park via London Village
- Strandfontein Village
- Grassy Park
- Wynberg

Northern Terminal Block 2
- Guguletu, Lower Crossroads & Nyanga
- Phillipi, Samora Michel
- Mandalay
- Cape Town, Mowbray via Athlone
- Cape Town via freeway

Northern Terminal Block 3
- Bellville
- Century City
- Promenade, Lentegeur Hospital
- Beacon Valley via Alpine, Spine
- Beacon Valley via Hengelaar, Pypie

Northern Terminal Block 4
- Delft
- Delft
- Westgate Mall via Caravelle
- Johannes Meintjies
- Hanover Park

Southern Terminal
- 7th Avenue Taxi Association
- CODETA

Portland Terminal
- Hazeldene Taxi Association

Lentegeur Terminal
- Johannes Meintjies
- Lentegeur Taxi Association

Mitchells Plain Taxi Forum

Business Entity

Operational Management

Block Management

Regional Taxi Council

Provincial Taxi Council
Taxi Rank
Physical upgrade

Physical infrastructure (about 75% complete):

- A new bus terminus
- 3 Taxi Terminals of 25 destinations
- Converting the existing bus terminus in the middle of the town centre to a central market square
- Closing off and creating a pedestrian walkway on an existing road to provide seamless access between the station and the town centre
- Building various new roads to link the interchange with arterial routes
- Building five signalised intersections and one signalised pedestrian crossing to ease traffic congestion
Street Furniture
Physical upgrade (contd)

- Building five signalised intersections and one signalised pedestrian crossing to ease traffic congestion
- Building administration buildings
- Improving public space through landscaping
- Improving security through closed circuit television cameras
- Building a pedestrian bridge across the railway line
- Reinforcing the existing pedestrian bridge
Aerial photo of MPTC in 2006
• Continually build consensus with the community.
  – do regular site visits
  – build relationships with people, not only leaders
  – keep in contact with people on the ground to stay aware of shifting community dynamics
  – ensure ongoing negotiation and consultation, even as implementation is happening
  – do whatever it takes to keep community stakeholders on board
• Forget about having the perfect plan:
  – any plan is the product of stakeholder participation
  – the plan must constantly be responsive and evolving
  – make a start, knowing mistakes will be made
  – the MPTC plan will only be final once the last brick has been laid.
• Keep evidence of changes
LESSONS LEARNED (2)

• Be willing to stick with the process, knowing that at times community members will:
  – try to play officials off against one another
  – start undermining rumours about officials
  – accuse officials of corruption and nepotism

• Get high-level political buy-in: MPTC team reported directly to sub-council

• Regularly revise budgets to ensure necessary cash flow to keep up the momentum

• Remind stakeholders of agreements reached

• Scrupulously minute every stakeholder meeting

• Build good relationships with key line department officials, and do legal preparations as early as possible

• Emphasise teamwork and allow people to perform to their strengths