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# JOHANNESBURG CHALLENGES OF INCLUSION?

URBAN AGE CONTACT

Johannesburg Conference Contact  
M. +49 (0)1733 163 072  
M. +27 (0)82 739 74 64

Cities Programme  
The London School of Economics  
and Political Science  
Houghton Street  
London WC2A 2AE  
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)20 7955 7706  
urban.age@lse.ac.uk

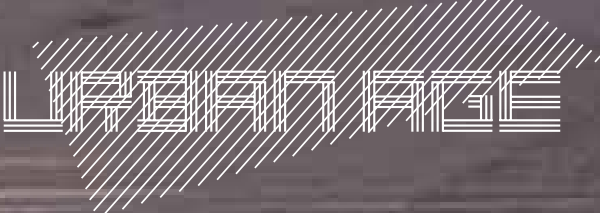
Alfred Herrhausen Society  
Deutsche Bank  
Unter den Linden 13/15  
10117 Berlin  
Germany

T +49 (0)30 3407 4201  
Ute.weiland@db.com  
www.alfred-herrhausen-gesellschaft.de  
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# THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

Like Melbourne or San Francisco born a generation or two before, Johannesburg is a city that erupted into existence out of a spasm of explosive growth. In all three cities, rapid urbanisation was triggered by the rush to exploit the discovery of large deposits of gold. Like Melbourne, Johannesburg became an instant metropolis toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, crystallising from a mining camp into a city of stone and stucco. It imported electric trams and trolley buses, dance halls and department stores in a matter of decades. Of course, Johannesburg had more gold, and therefore more need of rather more mining labour than the other two cities. It attracted the ambitious and the dispossessed from around the world: Russian Jews fleeing persecution; indentured Chinese labourers (65,000 of them were shipped in and then out again when they were considered surplus to requirements); Indians moved in from Natal; and also Africans, pass laws permitting.

Unlike Melbourne and San Francisco, Johannesburg grew up on the edge of the gold fields. And, in contrast to its coastal counterparts, it is a mile above sea level. Johannesburg has lost the trams that still grace Melbourne and San Francisco. They have been replaced by swarms of micro-buses that put the city closer to Mexico City or Moscow in ethos. The surviving public transport system is regarded with such anxiety by Johannesburg's citizens that nobody who can afford a car would even consider using public transport. But its shared roots with its American and Australian counterparts are still recognisable. That is perhaps, what makes it a subject of such fascination to those who observe the evolution of cities from the relative comfort of western Europe.

Johannesburg is the product of a set of circumstances that are highly specific to Africa. It was born out of the conflict between Afrikanerdom and a British empire engaged in its final bout of expansionism. It was shaped by the cruel restrictions of the apartheid regime, as well as by the dreams of modernity of the post-war years, that together brought about some distinctive inversions of urban norms. But it is also a kind of laboratory for projecting urban phenomena to their extremes.

The apartheid regime deliberately planned for low density in black areas, as an instrument of social control. Soweto for example was built on the model of an English Garden City, its density increased only through multiple occupancy. Higher densities were reserved for the more affluent whites in the inner ring, living in Brazilian inspired highrises. Now the city has become a honey pot for a new kind of Africa, drawing immigrants, legal and otherwise, from all over the continent. The whites have consolidated in the northern suburbs.

In fact the pre- and post-apartheid city does not represent an entirely sharp break as it might seem. There was a gradual relaxation of the racial controls on black urban settlement before majority rule, and the patterns of change have their echoes of other cities. It is a city that forms part of a complex urban hierarchy which reflects South Africa's origins as the union of a range of once individual states, a country with its parliament in Cape Town, the executive based in Pretoria, which is now close to the edge of the

Johannesburg conurbation, and a supreme court in Bloemfontein.

Johannesburg grew rapidly as a commercial, banking city, an upstart challenger which quickly overtook the older, more genteel Cape Town. To some, the city is in itself a mark of colonialism, in an Africa of nomadic movement. Certainly it attempted to exclude black people from citizenship for half a century. One reflection of South Africa's post-apartheid constitutional settlement is the way in which Johannesburg has constantly drawn and redrawn its political boundaries during the last decade. This has allowed it to incorporate suburbs with an ease that Los Angeles would certainly envy. It has also seen local boundaries within the city reshaped, initially along radial lines so as to ensure an income and racial balance within each unit. These boundaries have now been superseded with an entirely different structure. Soweto itself was included into the city boundaries only four years ago.

Johannesburg is a city of around three million, with the infrastructure and the skyscrapers of the first world, and with a degree of hollowing out, and suburban flight which can be found to match that in any American city. But the process has been given an accelerated twist by an epidemic of violent crime and by the rapid changes brought about by the creation of a black managerial class since the ANC came to power. The starkest symbolic move in this process of hollowing out was the departure of the stock exchange for the white northern suburbs. The last four star hotel in the city centre closed four years ago.

Johannesburg is a city in which the malls and gated communities which we associate with Southern California have been given their most baroque – perhaps one should say Tuscan – expression, in deference to the style of choice of the developers. They have turned the northern edge city of Sandton into an alternative to the city centre that has been abandoned by all but the most determined of banks and mining conglomerates. Sandton is growing as fast and is as affluent as any American sunbelt city. In some ways, Johannesburg's gated settlements, literal recreations of medieval walled cities, could be seen not as a reflection of American suburbs, but as predictions for what they may one day be like.

The prospect of the skyscrapers of the central business district being taken over by Nigerian traders, and hemmed in by street markets selling traditional remedies and bush meat, and of formerly affluent white suburbs being turned into no go areas, can at times look like a real life version of JG Ballard's dystopias. Indeed there is something about the mood of the skyline of downtown Johannesburg that suggests Shanghai's art deco bund, marooned in Mao's China.

The reality is that Johannesburg is facing many of the same issues as its American and European peers. But in addition it has to deal with the prospect of a tragic drop in population – caused by the appalling mortality of AIDS and TB. The death rate among young adults is a phenomenon that is already facing the city with the need to find ways to protect the property rights of child heads of households.

Johannesburg has the economic potential to address the challenges that it faces, and to share its wealth with a wider section of the community. Its attempts at urban regeneration have started to have an effect on the city.

By directing government jobs to the city centre, blight is being reversed. Retailing is beginning to come back into the centre. And the new constitutional court, weighted with resonance, has been built on the site of an apartheid era jail in the stigmatised Hillbrow area.

One continual refrain which sounds eerily familiar in Europe is official: Johannesburg's determination to present itself as Africa's 'world class' metropolis. The very words are a betrayal of a certain level of anxiety. Despite its dominant position as Africa's industrial and financial power house, with 45 million or so citizens, South Africa looks modest in comparison to Africa's real giant – Nigeria with 100 million people. And the city Johannesburg may one day be measuring itself against is likely to be Lagos.

To that end, South Africa is putting great store on symbolic markers, in particular the 2010 World Cup, when Johannesburg will be one of its centrepieces. The city is working on a series of large-scale investments in the build up, of which Gautrain, linking the city's down town to the airport and Pretoria, is the most ambitious.

On a world scale Johannesburg's population is still relatively modest. But it has been through a whirlwind of change in its shape and structure whose outcome is still far from clear. It is a city in which the threats facing all cities are present in their starkest, bleakest form, but also a place full of a vitality demonstrating all that cities have to offer.

*Deyan Sudjic, Dean of the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, Kingston University, London and Architecture Critic, The Observer*



All photographs © Lemna Hoffmann, The Market Photo Workshop

## AN UNLIKELY GLOBAL CITY

Johannesburg is historically a mining centre and an industrial city, but today its economy is that of a financial and business services centre – these sectors make up almost a third of gross geographic product (GGP). With commerce accounting for a fifth of GGP, the fast changing industrial economy contributes less than a sixth.

Johannesburg's GGP was estimated at US\$15.5 billion in 2002. This 16.4% of gross national product contrasts sharply with the city's 7.2% share of national population. With the surrounding urban region the city contributes well over a third of GNP. Over the last decade the annual growth rate has been rising from about 2% per annum towards 6% today. But employment growth has averaged only 1% per annum while unemployment rose between 1996 and 2001 from 27% to 37%. Johannesburg has high population growth compared not only with New York and London, but with Mexico City and Shanghai. Despite the booming times, the challenge of jobs looms ever larger. Beyond the city are hundreds of thousands of rural households dependent upon it – observe the long-distance 'taxi's' ceaselessly conveying the supporters and the material support of those households out of and back into the city.

Like Shanghai, Johannesburg has been restricted in its past growth by a policy of urban containment, in this case racially motivated. Whilst the city has grown enormously since the 1950s, it has clearly not done so to the extent of creating a mega city on the scale

of Mexico City or Shanghai. However the entire 'continuous polycentric urban region' of Gauteng province, to which Johannesburg is central, (and which includes Tshwane (Pretoria) to the north and Ekurhuleni to the east), has a population likely to exceed 15 million within 15 years, and is indeed in the process of becoming a 'mega-urban region' equivalent to some of the larger world cities. Can it build the economy and opportunity to match?

There is an enormous concentration of business in Johannesburg. There are approximately 290,000 formal sector business enterprises which employ about 950,000 people. Some 74% of national corporate head offices are in the city, using much of the approximately 7 million square metres of office space available. This in turn represents 55% of the total office space in the country. Previously concentrated in the city centre, office space is now spreading out across many growing suburban nodes. Among the companies based in Johannesburg are most South African and international banks operating in the country. Approximately 70% of banks have their head-quarter here – mostly located in the centre. There are 580 accountancy firms. The JSE Securities Exchange is eleven times larger than the next largest exchange in Africa. At the end of 2002 it ranked 20th in the world, measured by market capitalisation of shares of domestic companies, being roughly equivalent in size to those of Mumbai, São Paulo, Singapore and Helsinki.

From the first, Johannesburg has been a site of international organisations, particular-

ly corporations, and media. The city is the key point of global economic contact for South Africa and a much wider region – a role hugely expanded since 1990. In turn it is Johannesburg based companies which increasingly shape business in many other African cities from Bamako to Dar es Salaam, in sectors such as telecommunications, retailing and banking.

Like most other cities of the global south a large part of the local economy is generally thought of as 'informal' in Johannesburg. The informal sector is growing very rapidly – it accounts for something like a sixth of all 'jobs'. This of course is a low proportion by the standards of many African cities, but there is no sign of the proportion decreasing. A key challenge for the future is to find the means of raising productivity and income levels in the informal economy towards those of the formal economy, perhaps through enhancing the integration of the sometimes separate worlds.

The connection between local and global business and broader society is particularly striking in Johannesburg. But that connection involves directly, only a minority – symbolised by the mingling of business tourists and high income residents in the expensive shopping centres in the northern suburbs. Yet there are other forms of connection with economies (and social life) in other parts of the world. Patterns of movement link Johannesburg with much of the rest of the African continent. For example, traders from Mali sell wares in Johannesburg market places and purchase commodities here to take to markets in west Africa.

'Black economic empowerment' is a highly significant feature, advancing the interests of a powerful emerging black élite. New intersections between business and government abound. The face of economic power is likely to be very different within a

decade, but that does not resolve the burning challenges of the economy, jobs, and the economic geography of the city and its region.

According to Bernstein and McCarthy, Johannesburg is the most global city in Africa but an 'increasingly unlikely member of a global network of world cities'. The city government recognises at least some of the difficulties and has, in its major economic development policy, *Joburg 2030*, identified two key social issues to be addressed if the city is to provide a space for serious levels of investment and economic growth. Those issues are skills, and crime. Neither is fully within the range of powers formally available to the city government. Add to these the fact that the sprawling nature of the built environment has long attracted criticism for its low densities and apparent inefficiencies. Yet the spatial organisation of the city and its surroundings somehow seem peculiarly suited to particular patterns of accumulation: taxis make money moving people from townships and shack areas to glossy malls and office complexes; extensive freeways provide for rapid movement of commodities between far flung industrial zones, commercial spaces, households and indeed far off ports and markets.

It is not at all clear what 'sustainable' would mean in this context. Yet in the vibrancy of activity across these complex spaces, must lie the answer to the challenge of work for all otherwise the city will dash the hopes of more than its present generation.

*Alan Mabin, Professor and Head, School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand*

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# TRANSPORT AS JUSTICE

City Johannesburg / This way I salute you...”, the poet Mongane Wally Serote wrote in a celebrated 1970s poem. Saluting the city, as he travelled in from his black dormitory township, he parodied a traditional African praise poem: “This way I salute you:/My hand pulses to my back trousers pocket/Or into my inner jacket pocket/For my pass, my life.../I travel on your black and white and robotted roads,/Through your thick iron breath that you inhale/At six in the morning and exhale from five noon./ Jo’burg City.../That, that is all you need of me.../Jo’burg City, you are like death,/Jo’burg City, Johannesburg, Jo’burg City.”

‘Apartheid cities have unusual spatial contradictions’, notes the South African Cities Network, *State of the Cities Report*. On the one hand, they are sprawling realities with density levels too low for sustainable public transport. This encourages further sprawl and growing car dependence. On the other hand, there is high density in the populous townships and informal settlements on the peripheries of our cities. In the apartheid era, these townships were deliberately surrounded by high-speed freeways and rail-lines, like mediaeval moats but with the opposite intent – to protect what lay without.

Marginalisation and containment, planned under apartheid, has often been unintentionally perpetuated in the post-apartheid period. For instance, two million low-cost houses have been rolled out nationally since 1994. But to meet this ambitious

target, the bulk of the housing has been located on peripheral land. Access and mobility inequities have been deepened.

This unwitting entrenchment of some of the apartheid spatial legacy has not been helped by neglect of public transport, or by a series of well-intended but inappropriate policies, tangled institutional arrangements and unsustainable interventions. The consequences are dramatically visible in our cities, not least Johannesburg.

While only 37% of households in Johannesburg own a car, private car use to get to work has now surpassed other modes. On the other hand, the percentage of ‘stranded’ people in the city who walk to work (often in dangerous circumstances) for more than 30 minutes, because they cannot afford any form of public transport whatsoever, has increased. Another staggering 46% of households in Johannesburg are spending more than 10% of their poverty-level incomes on transport.

Significant numbers of the poor in Johannesburg (as in our other cities) find themselves marginalised to the distant peripheries of the city where there are few jobs and few amenities. They are hostage to unsafe walking or costly and unreliable public transport.

Recent Johannesburg household surveys find very high levels of dissatisfaction with public transport. Fare prices, crime on board and at terminuses and stations, taxi violence, and the danger of accidents, particularly in minibuses, are all listed as very serious concerns by around half of households.

The persisting legacy of apartheid infra-

structure also impacts dramatically on the lives of Johannesburg residents. In 2003 there were 1,076 transport-related deaths in the city, 42.1% of these being pedestrians. Among children younger than 15 years, pedestrian fatality is the leading cause of unnatural death.

How can the metropolitan authorities in Johannesburg begin to create a safer and spatially more equitable city? Unfortunately, for the moment, there are many challenges and constraints. Johannesburg authorities have little direct leverage over the public funding directed towards the main public transport modes in the city. Metrorail is a national public entity receiving R2.1 billion (US\$0.29 billion) as an operational subsidy. But the subdivision of this subsidy is decided upon nationally, as if the various city-based commuter rail systems were part of some national network.

Bus subsidies of R2.4 billion (US\$0.33 billion) are handled by provinces. Again, Johannesburg has little leverage over any of this subsidy. It even finds its own municipal bus company competing on unfavourable terms with the provincially subsidised, privately owned PUTCO.

Minibus taxis, the major public transport mode in the city, receive no operating subsidy. The national government has been endeavouring to implement a stop-start R7 billion (US\$1 billion) taxi recapitalisation programme for the past six years, however, it has been largely disconnected from any metro-level transport planning.

To complicate matters further, the Gauteng provincial government is about to construct a R20 billion (US\$2.7 billion) rapid rail project. In the face of considerable public opposition, there are now attempts to retro-fit greater integration into this Gautrain project. But, in terms of route and its privileged and paltry target ridership, it remains essentially a

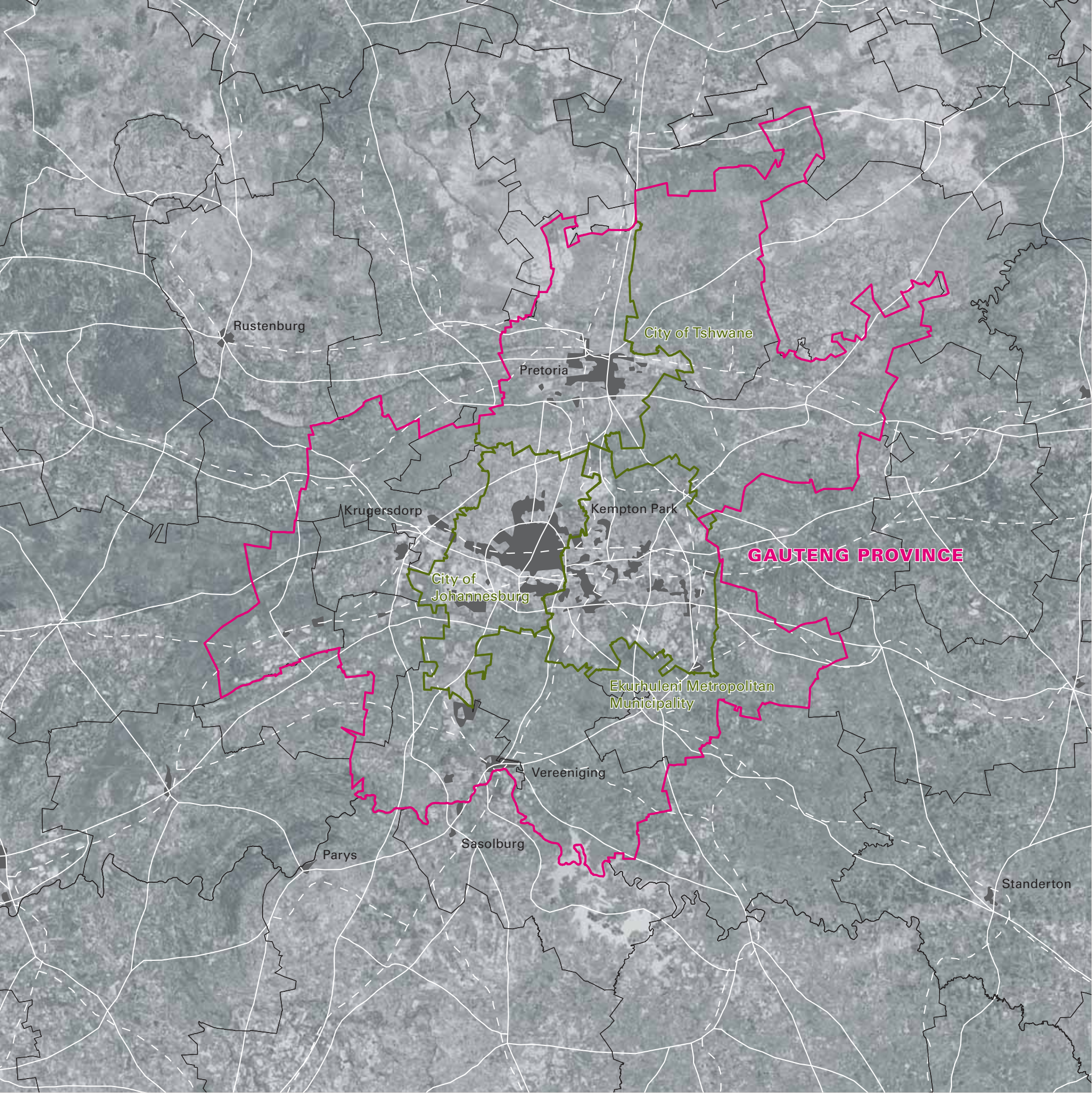
costly, stand-alone project that will do little to transform the mobility inequities of Johannesburg and the province.

Our public transport policies call for an integrated, multi-modal approach. They also call for appropriate devolution to municipalities, where such integration is most likely to be achieved. While there is some progress, our interventions have tended to be uni-modal, un-devolved and institutionally scattered.

For all these reasons, the heartless, ‘thick iron breath’ of Jo’burg City continues daily to suck in and spit out millions of its inhabitants.

*Jeremy Cronin, Deputy General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, ANC Member of Parliament*

# GAUTENG PROVINCE: THE GLOBAL CITY-REGION



Gauteng is the smallest province in South Africa in terms of land area. However, with a population of 8,837,178 residents, it is highly urbanised and density within the province is 5.2 persons/hectare. Gauteng’s role in the macro-economic success of South Africa is profound: the province generates more than 38% of the country’s GDP on top of contributing 60% of national fiscal revenues.

Additionally, the province’s fiscal might beckons throughout the continent while generating 9% of the continent’s GDP. Financial services, telecommunications, and the processing of natural resources feature heavily in the industrial make-up of Gauteng.

The province is divided into 12 municipalities. Its urbanised area is composed mainly of

three metropolitan municipalities: the City of Johannesburg, the City of Tshwane (formerly known as Pretoria), and the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality on the East Rand. These urban cores within the province contribute to Gauteng’s economic prowess and its attraction for migrants, both domestic and transnational, looking for enhanced labour opportunities.

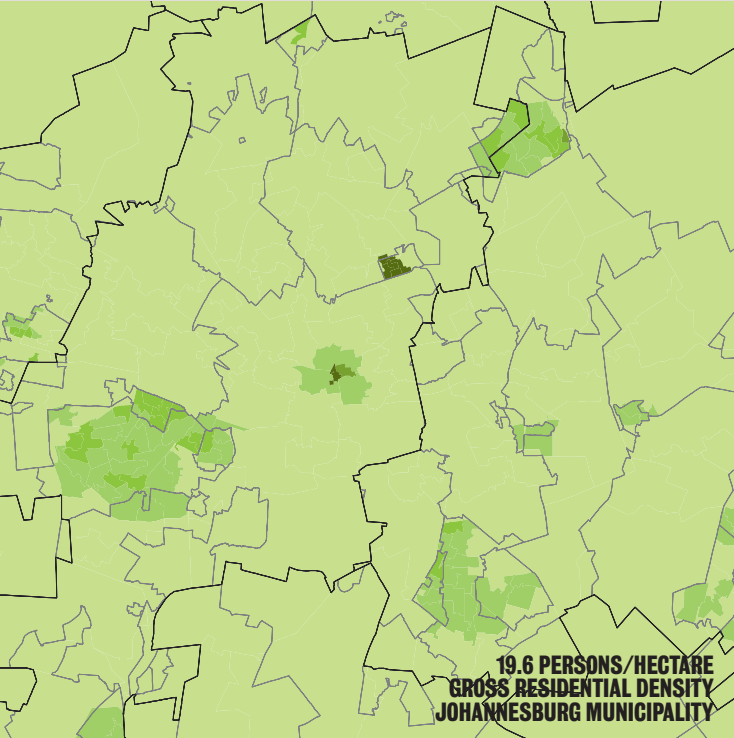
Both provincial and metropolitan leaders are invested in the growth of the province as a polycentric urban region with increased capacity to attract foreign direct investment and international status as a commercial hub. The formal global city strategic plan aims to increase Gauteng’s economic growth by 8% by 2014. By 2015, the province is projected to

become the 14<sup>th</sup> largest urban region worldwide. Ideally, the three urban cores will integrate resources and planning approaches on common good areas including transport, safety, and economic development. Still, the global city-region may achieve macro-economic growth of 8% by 2014 without addressing the underlying causes of skewed income distribution and social inequality. A focus on increasing the commercial status of the global city-region should be accompanied by rigorous efforts to bridge the economic gap and create a socially cohesive urban region within the province, generating improvements in housing, transport, health, income and employment.



# DENSITY

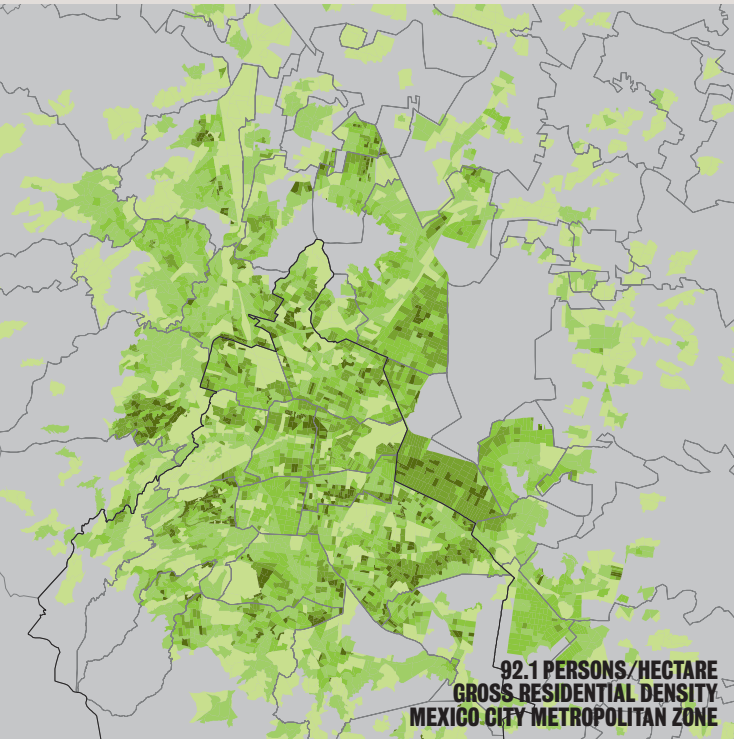
## JOHANNESBURG



Source: Statistics South Africa Census 2001

Johannesburg's population density varies dramatically between the 11 regions that comprise the City. The region incorporating the Central Business District is smallest in area (47.74 km<sup>2</sup>), yet considerably high in population density with 54 persons/hectare. The affluent and multinational corporation dotted landscape of Sandton and Rosebank is close in land area to the adjoining township and informal settlements of Alexandra, yet has considerably lower population density. Dense pockets of population emerge in more impoverished areas while affluent residents prize spacious accommodation, large gardens and secure parking. Patterns of migration are pushing density figures up in the central region, in the five years from 1996 to 2001, population density grew over 25%.

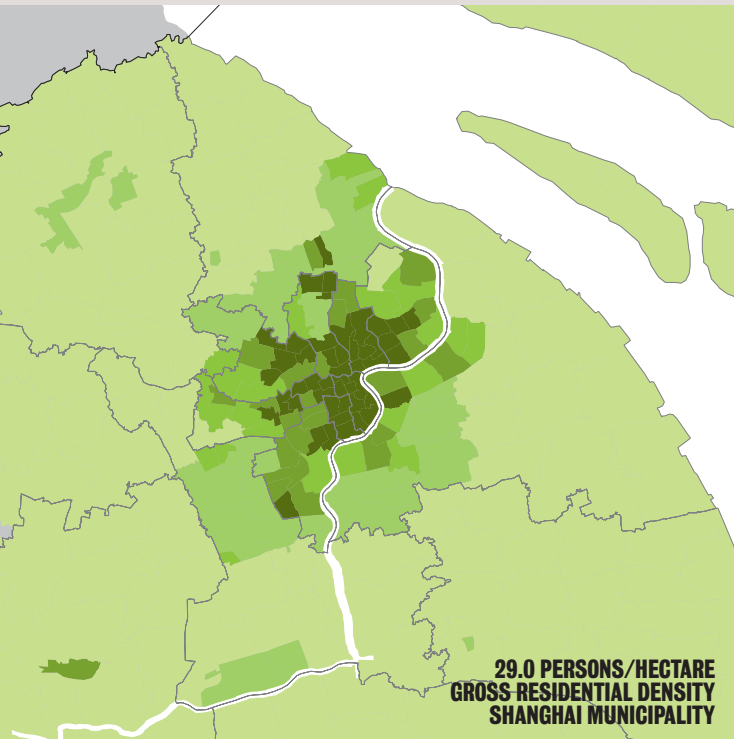
## MEXICO CITY



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática 2000, supplied by Desamplificación Metropolitana SA

The Mexico City Metropolitan Zone (MCMZ) is a high density metropolis with a gross residential density of 92 persons/hectare. Peaks of residential density are scattered throughout the metropolis, both within socially advantaged and disadvantaged areas, and inside and outside the Federal District (FD). The relatively low density levels found in central districts of the FD are now being addressed by redensification policies which intend to maximise the urban infrastructure available in these areas. Sprawling subdivisions and gated communities beyond the older suburbs are the other side of the coin that is the recent construction boom at the centre which these policies may be supporting.

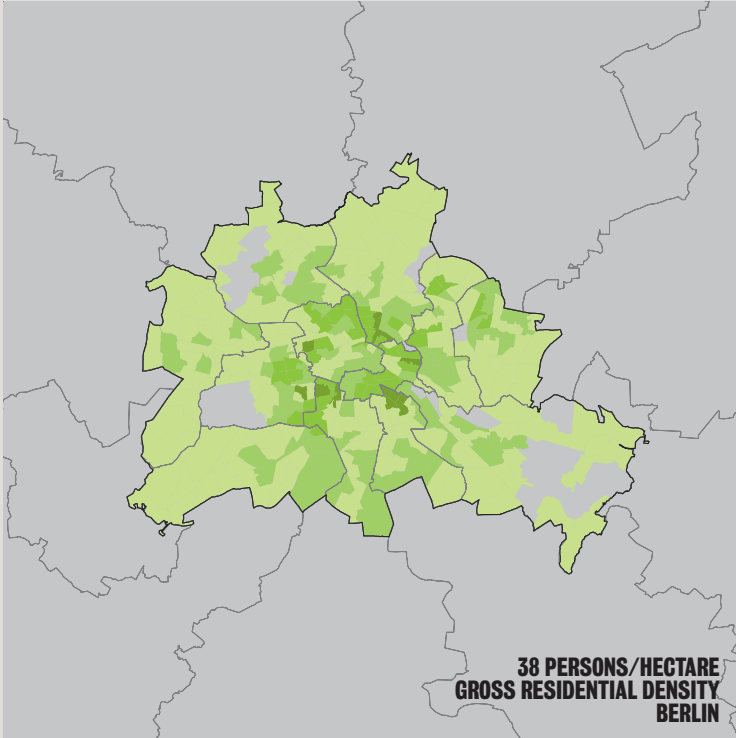
## SHANGHAI



Source: The 5th census of China, 2000

The overall population density of Shanghai's territory is 29 persons/hectare. This figure is comparable internationally to those for other metropolitan areas of a similar size. Yet, what differentiates Shanghai and sets the tone for its current development dilemmas is the steep density gradient from the highly urbanised core to its traditionally rural hinterland. Approximately half of Shanghai's population is concentrated in a limited area that is less than 10% of its total territory; here population densities reach peaks of 600 persons/hectare in some neighbourhoods. The average density in the urban core (nine districts) is 126.7 persons/hectare.

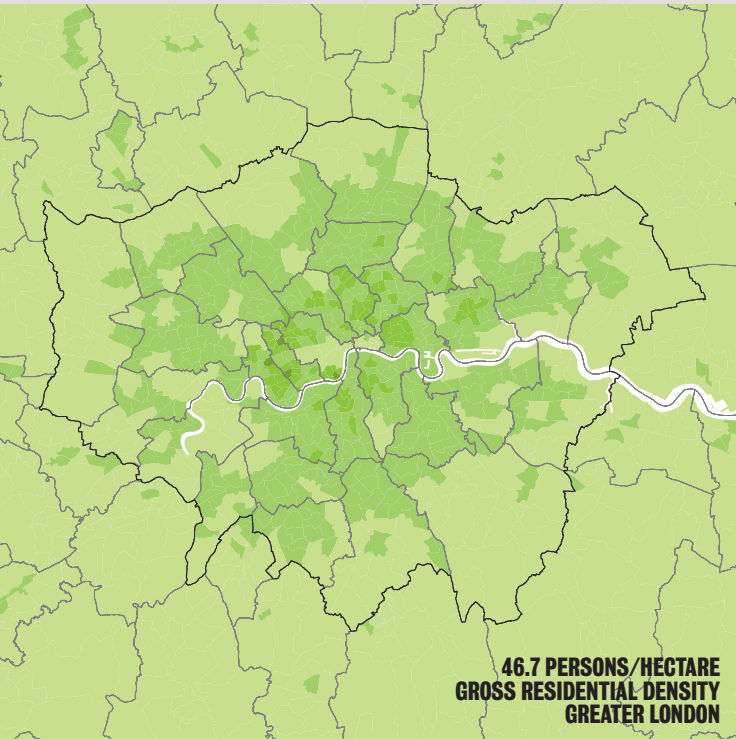
## BERLIN



Source: Senate department of urban development Berlin

Berlin has an extensive parks and woodlands network within the city's boundaries and yet its gross residential density (38 persons/hectare) and density gradient remain rather high in comparison to other German cities. Whereas most other large German cities have experienced dedensification over the last 50 years, this has not happened in many neighbourhoods of Berlin where density levels are still well above 400 persons/hectare. Due to its isolated and bounded position, West Berlin was unable to have a large scale suburban expansion during the 1970s and 1980s while the suburbanisation of East Berlin was entirely linked to populations moving to large scale socialist estates which had density levels of up to 350 persons/hectare.

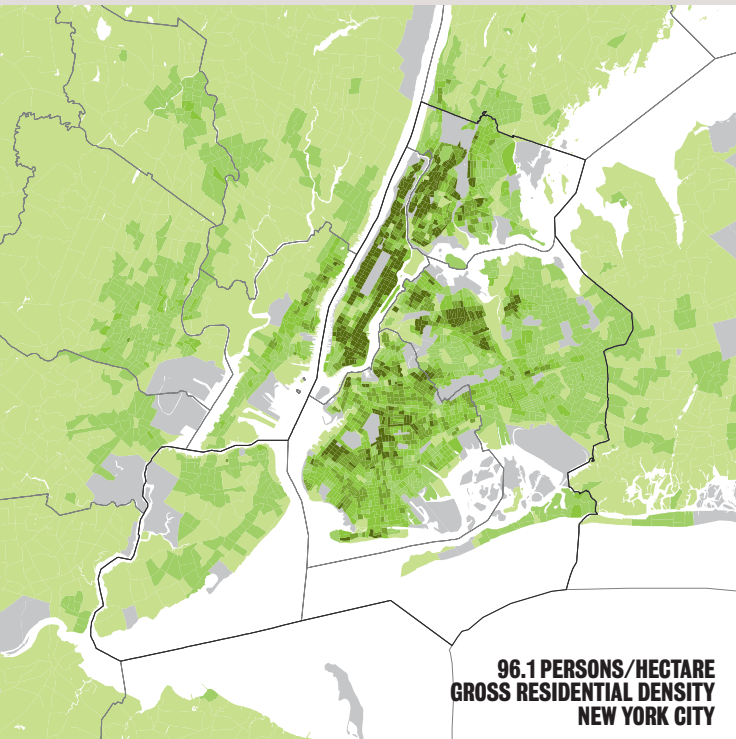
## LONDON



Source: UK Census 2001

In comparison to other world cities, London exhibits low levels of residential density, with a gross residential density of 46.7 persons/hectare. The poly-centric distribution of residential pockets, or 'urban villages', along London's main transport routes stands in contrast to the physical norm of more centralised cities in continental Europe. High density neighbourhoods form a band around Central London.

## NEW YORK



Source: US Census 2000

New York is a densely built city (96.1 persons/hectare gross residential density) with particularly high residential peaks in the borough of Manhattan. But not all of the city's high density character is due to high-rise condominiums of luxury rental apartments, as the densely settled areas of Queens and the Bronx demonstrate. Low density residential patterns in Staten Island resemble those of adjacent suburban areas in New Jersey more than those of other boroughs in New York.

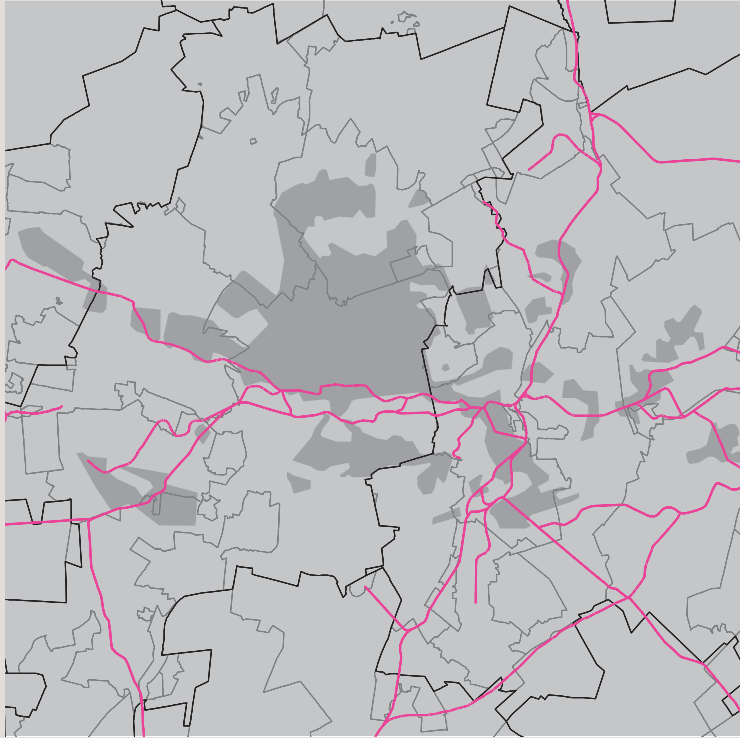
Residential density [pers./ha]

- 39 or fewer
- 40 to 119
- 120 to 199
- 200 to 299
- 300 or more

0 2.5 5 10 km

# TRANSPORT

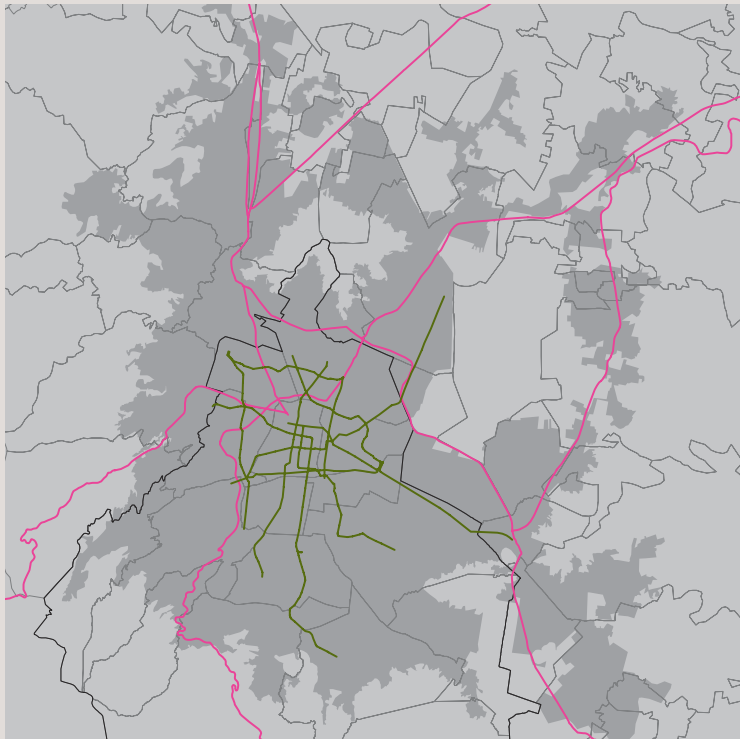
## JOHANNESBURG



Source: Statistics South Africa Census 2001

Johannesburg has no underground rail system and most of the 120 km of surface rail dates back to the city's formation, this explains why only the older areas are served by rail. The majority of new developments, particularly to the north, rely on road transport, which, due to affluence, means the private car. The 12,500 privately run mini taxis have become by far the most dominant public transport mode, used for 20% of journeys to work. Due to the overall lack of public transport provision 40% of all journeys to work are done by foot. The current debate about the 3 billion Euro Gautrain Rail project designed to link Johannesburg with Pretoria and the region's international airport indicates a revived interest in rail transport as a key component of the region's transport system.

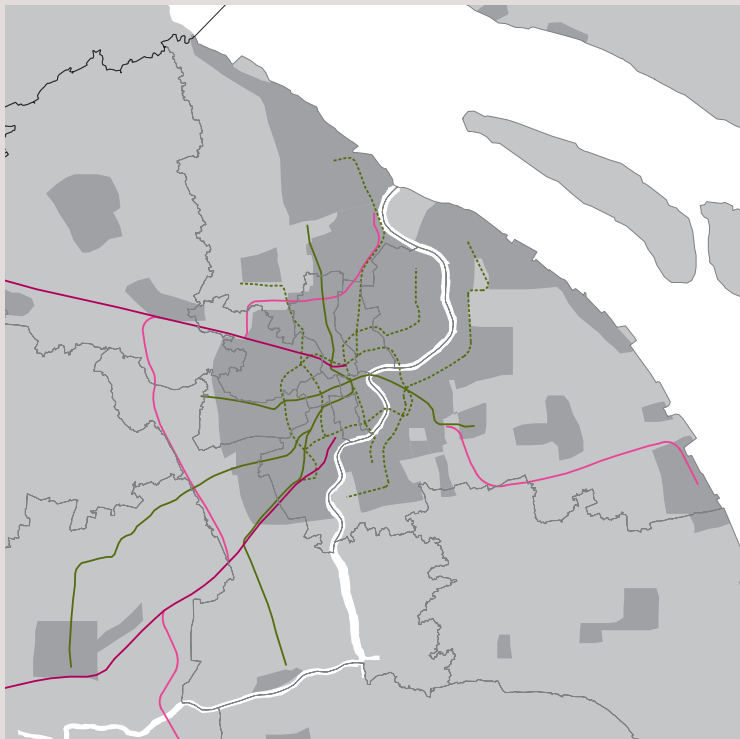
## MEXICO CITY



Source: Desamplificación Metropolitana SA

Mexico City started building its underground in the late 1960s and today operates an efficient 200 km long network. Despite this being a reliable system, the share of underground trips fell significantly from over 20% in the 1980s to about 14% today. This is mainly due to the system's limited area of service, which, for reasons of infrastructure funding, remains almost entirely within the boundaries of Mexico City FD; offering mobility for not even half of the city's population. At the same time commuter rail has not played a significant role and public transport today is clearly dominated by minibus services, which account for more than half of all trips.

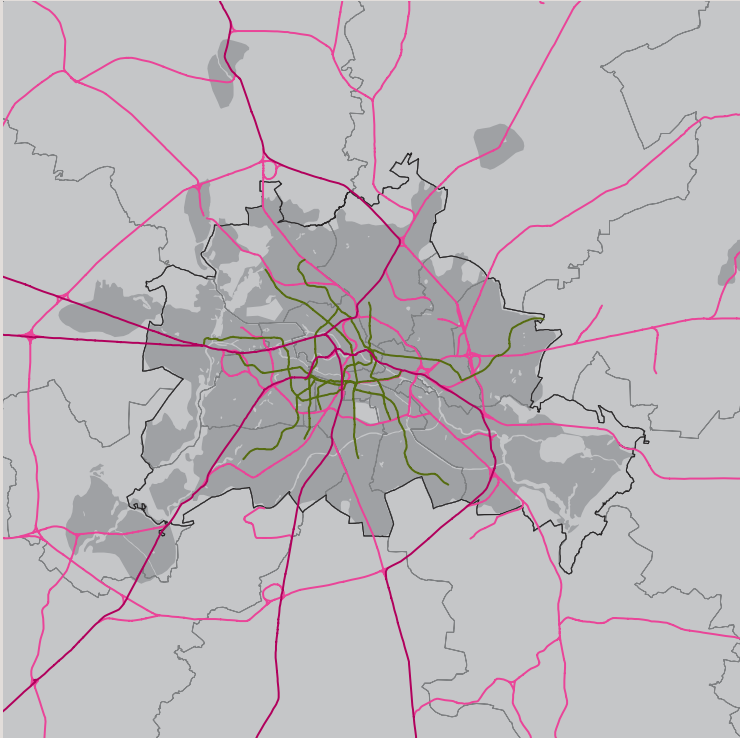
## SHANGHAI



Source: The 5th comprehensive transport investigation of Shanghai 2005

Shanghai's first underground metro line was opened only a decade ago. The total length of the current metro system adds up to 65 km, but another 10 lines totalling 218 km in length are under construction, reflecting the scale of growth and reach in the city's infrastructure. The regional rail service does not have as extensive a coverage of the wider metropolitan area as seen in other cities. The share of public transport is rapidly growing with 23% of daily trips to work relying on some form of public transport, including rail, metro and bus.

## BERLIN



Source: Senate department of urban development Berlin

Berlin's public transport system still bears the consequences of the city's history of division. While the underground and bus networks were upgraded in the western part of the city, trams and rapid transit (S-Bahn) were favoured in the East. Following reunification the disused S-Bahn network in the West was slowly reopened taking 16 years to close the last network gaps. In May 2006 the new central station opened, allowing trains to pass through the city from north to south for the first time. All high speed trains to and from Berlin as well as long distance trains from Paris, Moscow and Zurich will operate through this station which is forecast to accommodate up to 72 million passengers per year. Almost 27% of all journeys in Berlin are made using public transport.

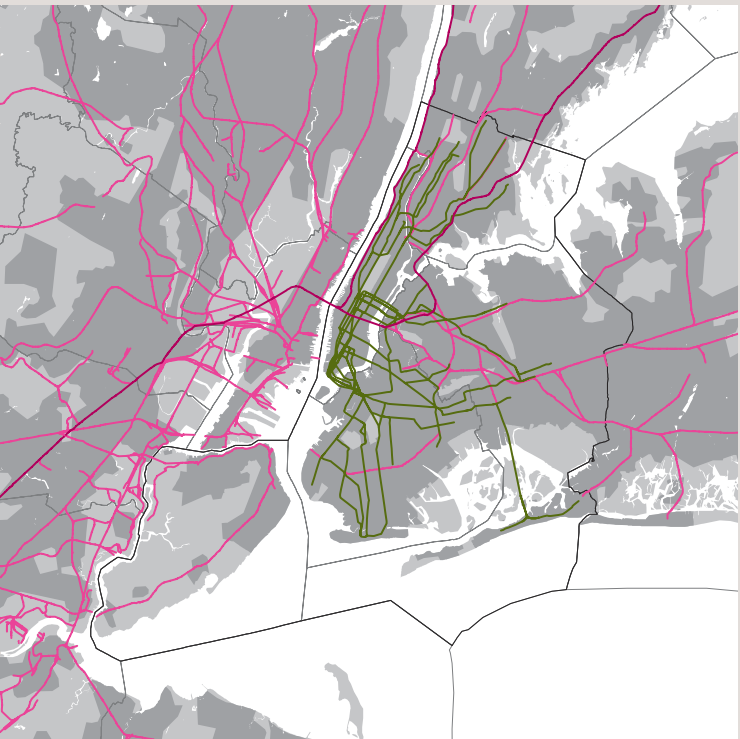
## LONDON



Source: UK Census 2001 and Transport for London 2004

London's public transport is based on a first generation rail system with an extensive underground network of 408 km and an even larger commuter rail network, with a large number of central mainline stations that connect the regional rail system to the underground network. Due to the limitations of early 20th century technology to deal with geological constraints in South London, this vast area is poorly served by the underground but well connected with regional rail. A Congestion Charge tax of £8 (c US\$15) is payable for non-residents who use private cars in the central area.

## NEW YORK



Source: US Census 2000 and New York Transit 2004

The geographical and political structure of New York City has shaped its public transit system, with the Hudson and East Rivers defining a clear constraint to the distribution network. Within Manhattan the subway system is strongly orientated north-south and does not connect with the urbanised areas west of the city's core. The extensive network of regional rail services enters the city core from three sides, terminating at two stations. New York's subway has a total route length of 370 km. Just over 50% of all commuters in New York City use public transport to get to work.

Rail transport network

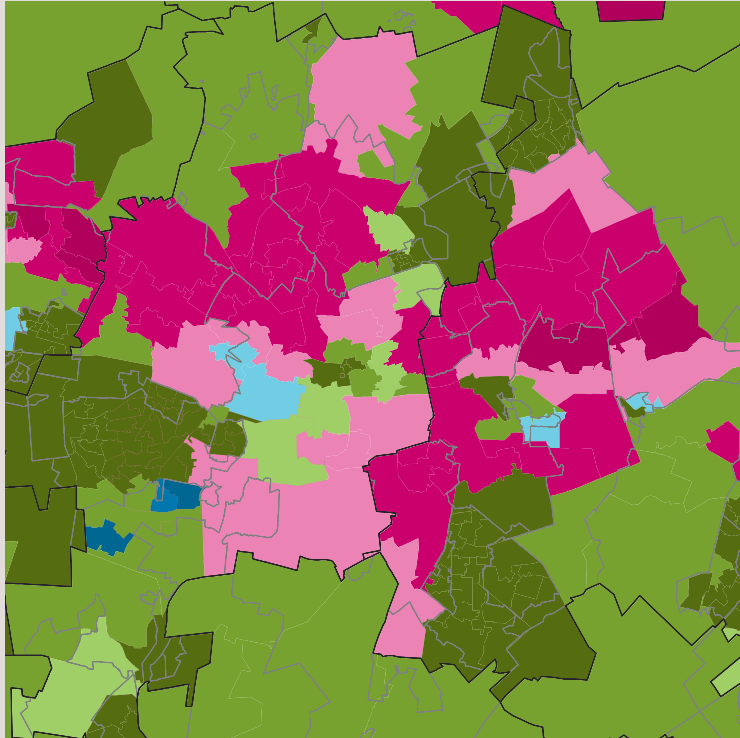
- metro/underground lines (dashed: planned)
- regional/commuter rail lines
- inter-city rail lines

0 2.5 5 10 km

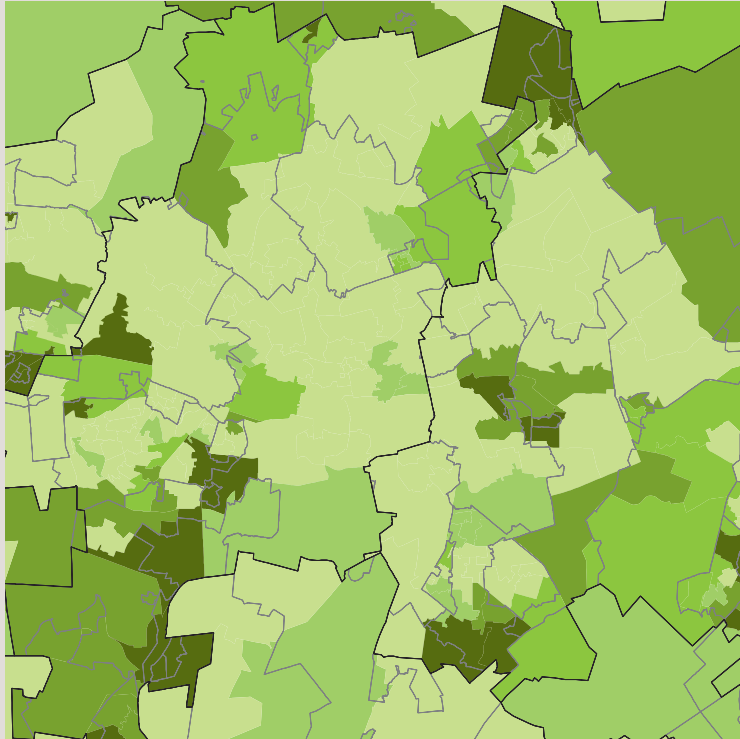


# JOHANNESBURG

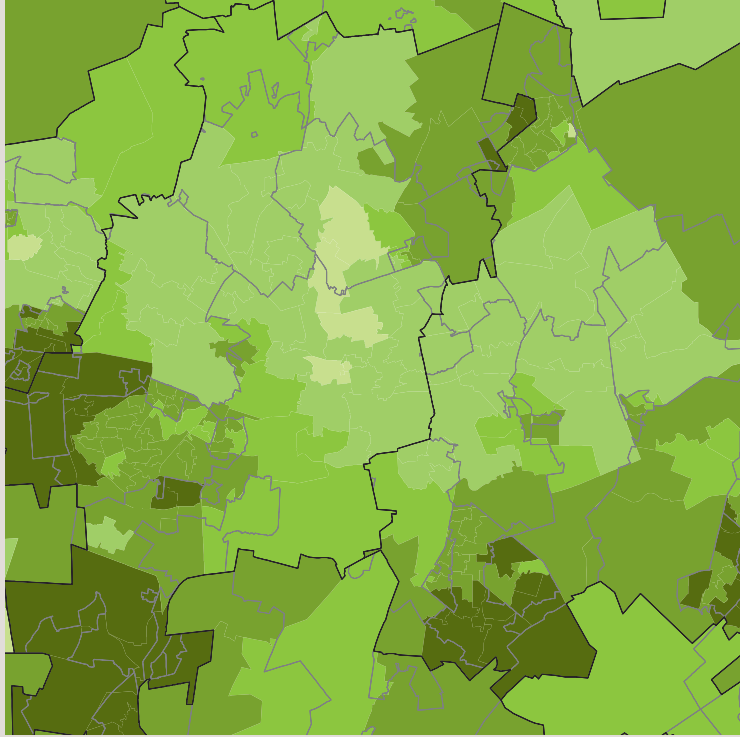
## ETHNICITY



## INFORMALITY



## CHILDREN



Apartheid’s legacy looms large through the spatial distribution of living patterns and access to municipal services by race. White-headed households are dominant in the affluent northern suburbs and are geographically proximate to a concentration of health facilities and medical clinics. Black-headed households, particularly in southern Johannesburg and the far north frontier towns, have fewer health facilities, even in areas with high population density. Fully redressing apartheid’s pernicious effects requires a more even distribution of health facilities across population density patterns.

**Population groups**

- Black African
- White
- Coloured; Indian or asian

**Percentage of population**

- 59.9% or less
- 60.0% to 84.9%
- 85.0% or more

22.2% of households live without formal shelter and accommodation, while 15.5% live without access to on-site clean water. Informal settlements are concentrated in former apartheid-demarcated black townships. Often, hubs of informal settlements are geographically proximate to affluent suburban residential areas, as with Alexandra and Sandton. Local authorities are continually challenged by the need both to formalise the dwellings for many Johannesburg residents and to ensure that future building projects and neighborhood planning integrate households with different socio-economic realities.

**Households in informal dwellings**

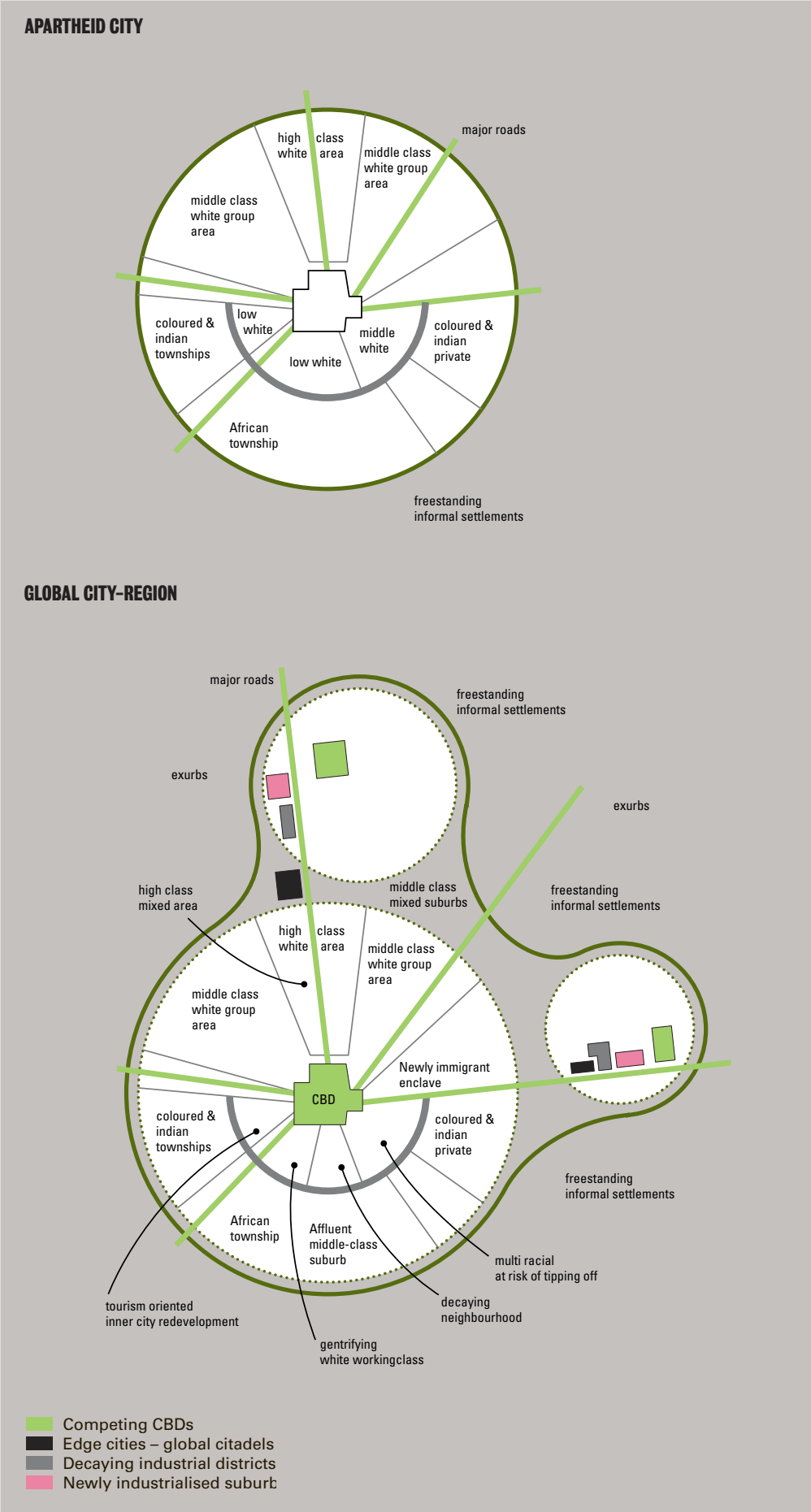
- 4.9% or less
- 5.0% to 14.9%
- 15.0% to 24.9%
- 25.0% to 44.9%
- 45.0% or more

Increasingly, Johannesburg is a youthful city where young people under the age of 15 are concentrated in the southern areas of the metropolis. The affluent north holds lower concentrations suggesting an association of higher socio-economic status with lower birth rates. In southern informal settlements, youth population figures reach 33.8% of the total population and indicate a growing need for greater investment in primary education. Additionally, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa, particularly in populations of low socio-economic status, may explain the concentration of youth in poorer areas.

**Children as percentage of total population**

- 14.9% or less
- 15.0% to 19.9%
- 20.0% to 22.9%
- 23.0% to 26.9%
- 27.0% or more

## SPATIAL TRANSITION



Over the past two decades the socio-spatial structure of Johannesburg has undergone a radical transformation which parallels the major political, economic, social and cultural changes experienced by the city, the whole of South Africa, the entire continent and beyond. Simplifying matters with the licence granted to outside observers, we argue that the space of the apartheid city has been turned both inside out and outside in. On the one hand, the metropolis has pushed outwards, developing suburbs in further out locations, bleeding to exurbia. The sphere of influence of its central business district now overlaps with that of nearby metropolises in an ever more interdependent urban region, and the emergence of edge cities further intensifies the local competition for urban centrality and the metropolitan chances of global economic relevance. But on the other hand, political barriers have vanished and those previously excluded from the city have now gained a foothold in the centre. Micro-entrepreneurs and migrants play a substantial part in the reemergence of the urban core. Leafy suburbs are no longer exclusively white, as African townships cannot be identified only with squalor and precariousness any more. The new Johannesburg is far more complex than the old rigid armature of colour-coded social binaries, filled with transformative possibilities, and urban openings. Yet it is in this global city-region in the making, where the economic divide may be widening even more, that the challenges of inclusion are as present now as ever.

*Miguel Kanai, Project Researcher, Urban Age, London School of Economics and Political Science*



## MAKING PUBLIC LIFE

Say ‘Public Space and Urban Life’ in Johannesburg and people will probably view you with suspicion. ‘What on earth do you mean by that?’ they are likely to ask. Do you mean the streets of kasi (the township), where we hang out on weekends? Or downtown Joburg, where the pavements are lined with endless piles of tomatoes, bananas and cheap Chinese clothing? Or the traffic intersections where the poor try to sell us coat hangers, bin bags or a blind relative? Or do you mean Joubert Park, where the unemployed spend all day lying sleeping in the sun? Or Zoo Lake, whose car park is turned into a luxury car showroom by Lenasia’s youth every Sunday afternoon? Or the Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown, which the City has successfully managed to sanitise and strip of all life? Or no, perhaps, you mean the malls of Rosebank, where the trendy swank, or the Nelson Mandela Square in Sandton, where we all imagine ourselves to be in Italy? Well, in fact, I mean all of the above. For all are spaces in which the cocoons of private worlds are exited for a while, to meet friends, rub shoulders with strangers and construct the public life of the city. Yet what kind of public life and what kind of city is this?

Under apartheid, public space and urban life was colour coded. Black and white lives might have brushed shoulders, but they inhabited different worlds, or rather the world they inhabited meant very different things. Where they did intersect, a whole

administrative apparatus of laws, bylaws, prohibitions and punishments was mobilised against this intersection. This denial of common rights or a common destiny produced a dual city and a dual nation, diverse urban worlds existing side by side in the same geographical space.

This legacy underpins the kinds of public life and urban space taking shape today. The first kind is formed in commemoration of the struggle against apartheid. A number of symbolic public buildings and spaces serve as sites for the mobilisation of new collective histories and bodies. For instance, the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication in Kliptown, commissioned by international competition in 2001, celebrates the 1955 signing of the ANC’s liberation manifesto, the Freedom Charter. This monumentally scaled square is lined by parallel loggias containing a 3,000 seat hall, art gallery, museum, offices, shops and, as yet unoccupied small scale trading spaces. Annual national commemorative events fill the space, which is otherwise however starkly dislocated from the bustle of daily life around it.

The second kind is underpinned by the culture of protest, now centred on human rights, civility and the independence of the rule of law. New and old forms of public associational life (Trades Unions, The Treatments Action Campaign, the Homeless People’s Movement etc) visibly assert the rights and demands of people on the streets of the city. At the same time, others (religious sects, continental migrant networks, criminal syndicates etc) pursue modes of associational life

based on principles of invisibility, rendering the city’s streets fluid and secretive.

Given the intractability of apartheid’s urban geography, many of Johannesburg’s citizens spend large parts of their day in cars, trains or mini-bus taxis, travelling from their places of residence to work and back. This daily migratory pattern offers endless opportunities for the elaboration of public life, or at least for the interaction of strangers in public space. Traffic intersections, highway verges, train carriages, minibus taxis and their ranks have become intense orchestrations of public and private interest. In the inner city, nodal interchanges – Jack Mincer Square, Metro Mall and Faraday Market – attempt to align these. Their spatial, programmatic and aesthetic arrangements construct new hybrid urban typologies, new sites of contestation and new modes of urban life.

At the same time, in Johannesburg’s post apartheid economy, an instant, spectacularly wealthy (and increasingly black) elite have emerged. Life is centred around money, its acquisition and display. Habits of lavish spending, on the body, cars and houses and their interiors, fuel a consumer economy of dizzying proportions. Architecture constructs the public theatres of consumption and display in this economy – the shopping centres, casinos, homes, clubs, bars, restaurants and gyms – in and through which wealth and its signifiers circulate. Ersatz places like the Nelson Mandela Square, Melrose Arch, and Montecasino become the centres of this middle class world. They offer the opportunity to forget the racial city by gazing into magical mirrors of frozen and imaginary pasts, while, at the same time, reducing public space to sites where private interest and consumer choice dominate.

Living in Johannesburg today then, as a vast experiment in how to inhabit apartheid’s ruins, exhibits a number of contradictory tendencies. On the one hand, its nascent public life is taking shape around new official narratives, modes of associational life, meanings of money and everyday travail. On the other hand, its public space is viewed and experienced by many as out of control and dangerous. It is bounded on by fences, palisades, walls, gates, private security guards, cameras and other defensive security technologies. Public life withdraws into the interiority of the private realm (hotels, homes, malls, gated enclaves etc) and urban space is abandoned to featurelessness and neglect. Building more robust intersections between the two becomes a priority.

*Lindsay Bremner, Honorary Professorial and Research Fellow, Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand*





## HOUSING JOHANNESBURG

Johannesburg, home of wealthy and poor, permanent and temporary residents, reveals extreme models of housing and urban neighbourhoods. From enormous mansions with vast landscaped gardens in tree lined avenues, to dense shack settlements accessed by muddy paths. From high-rise, high density blocks in the inner city, to low rise suburban sprawl, and the medium density cluster developments transforming the semi rural periphery.

The road to democracy was fought on the basis of human rights but despite the removal of discriminatory legislation, low income housing developments have since 1994 entrenched the fragmentation and segregation of the apartheid city. New RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) housing has perpetuated the patterns of apartheid planning, providing low density, 27m<sup>2</sup> houses in monotonous suburban layouts that continue to locate the poorest furthest from the benefits of urbanity. Whilst wealthy and middle income households have exercised choices about residential neighbourhoods, poor (mostly black) households have remained in the designated low income townships of the apartheid plan. Ironically these once despised townships are transforming into lively urban neighbourhoods where residents themselves have taken the initiative to consolidate and invest in their environment. Demonstrating enormous creativity, the streets are teeming with people, informal trading, children playing and many opportu-

nities for chance encounters with neighbours.

Despite the impressive delivery of 1.7 million houses since 1994, the housing backlog and demand for new housing is increasing due to: natural population growth; continuing in-migration; urbanised households tending towards smaller families; extended family structures; and an increase in child-headed households as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Housing provision focussed on the delivery of houses rather than other forms of tenure and types of accommodation. This is borne out by the increasing demand for rental apartments provided both by private sector and social housing institutions. High demand for rental rooms with shared ablutions and cooking facilities is evident in the fact that the single sex hostels, developed for migrant workers, continue to be extremely overcrowded with four to eight persons sharing a room. Although most of these hostels can hardly be described as desirable accommodation, for many it is the only affordable alternative. The government's policy on hostels has been to convert them into family accommodation but this has proved difficult and very expensive. Many hostel conversion projects have met with resistance as this would result in dedensification and displacement of existing residents and simultaneously render the new units unaffordable. The demand for rooms, often occupied by families, is also evident in the increasing provision of rooms and shacks in the backyards of township houses. These rooms built by homeowner landlords have provided a substantial proportion of rental accommodation utilising the township house

or RDP house as an income generating resource. For many poor people who are unemployed, or rely on temporary employment, or who operate in the informal sector, these rooms are the only affordable accommodation available. Rural to urban migrant workers are still prevalent, and for many it still makes more economic sense to work in the city and send remittances to the rural areas, than to bring a family to the city.

Inner city accommodation in highrise apartment blocks is perceived to be predominantly the domain of immigrants from other African countries, although many local people have also chosen to locate there to gain access to employment opportunities and benefit from amenities. Apartments are subtle to make them more affordable and often several households share one apartment. This has resulted in extensive deterioration of the build-ings as overcrowding puts a strain on services and a lack of management and maintenance aggravates the situation. There have been some successful regeneration initiatives by private property companies and social housing institutions that have turned neglected buildings into desirable accommodation. However, the high costs of management and maintenance make these 'successful' projects unaffordable to low income earners. These poorer residents are driven to cheaper accommodation in abandoned buildings run by 'slumlords' who subdivide the building into rabbit warrens of rooms with inadequate ablution facilities. The city managers often find themselves in the invidious position of being criticised when they evict people from these unhealthy and overcrowded living conditions, and equally condemned, if residents die as a result of fires in these unsafe build-ings. Social housing projects subsidised by the government and intended for lower income households are proving expensive to build

and to manage. These projects are not affordable to the poor and are only serving the very upper end of the subsidised income band. Recent social housing developments are only providing 20-30% of the units for subsidised rental in order to make the projects viable.

During apartheid the form and growth of the city was determined by the public sector utilising the Group Areas Act and modernist theories of planned neighbourhoods. Currently, the power of the city planning department appears to have diminished despite extensive processes to produce Local Integrated Development Plans. Whilst, government provided low income housing continues within the neighbourhood planning paradigm, new residential living environments on the periphery of the formerly white areas are being promoted by private developers. Their sole objective seems to be profit driven as they buy up land in an ad hoc manner with little concern for the creation of urban environments that have a life beyond the next development. This part of the city no longer consists of an integrated network of streets and neighbourhoods but rather a set of arterial roads giving access to a proliferation of cluster developments enclosed by high walls and security fences. Private developers trade on the reputation of Joburg as the crime capital to sell these safe and secure gated communities. Entry and exit occurs via private car with little chance of neighbourly encounters outside of the gated community. The only pedestrian activity in the road is that of domestic workers walking to the nearest taxi stop.

Johannesburg's urban living environment thus continues to be spatially fragmented and socially segregated.

*Lone Poulsen, Adjunct Professor, Architecture Programme, School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand*

## JOHANNESBURG: A WORLD CLASS AFRICAN CITY

On the southern edge of the Johannesburg city centre is the Standard Bank super-block. This juggernaut of a building, an early icon of Johannesburg's rising power as a finance centre, contains one of the city's premier art galleries. This recently hosted an exhibition tracing Africa's influence on Picasso's art – how a chance encounter with African masks led Picasso to the revelation that painting should not merely capture surface appearances. Just as ceremonial masks are used to symbolize evil, sexual power, human character in moments of crisis, transition or celebration, the canvas ought rather to be a 'form of magic that intersperses itself between us and a hostile universe, a means of seizing power by imposing a form on our terrors as well as on our desires'. A short distance from the gallery is the Faraday Taxi Rank. Fêted as a prime example of new South African architecture, the rank stood empty for years after its construction. The taxi industry it was meant to serve refused to use it, balking at the implication of its location for their informally determined routes, and at its layout, which did not facilitate embarkation in line with sedimented practices. While it has been hard to catch taxis at the Faraday rank, it has been possible to buy 'muti'. Faraday is reputed to be the largest local source of the herbs, roots, animal parts and other arcana of traditional medicine. The everyday equivalent of the mask, 'muti' is the means by which a majority of Johannesburg residents still seek to cure inexplicable illnesses or summon the intercession of ancestral spirits to find meaning in strange turns of events.

In multiple ways, this small quarter highlights challenges and opportunities in the project of governing Johannesburg.

In official strategy documents Johannesburg has defined itself as a future 'world class African city'. In 2000 the new City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality stated that it has 'A vision of becoming an African world class city defined by increased prosperity and quality of life through sustained economic growth for all of its citizens'. In its 2002 long-term economic development strategy, *Joburg 2030*, the City said that in future it would like to be 'a world class city with service deliverables and efficiencies that meet world best practice'. And in its newly published 2006 Growth and Development Strategy, the City reemphasised the desire to become a 'world class African city for all'. It is easy to dismiss these words as banal, easy to miss the fact that, like masks and muti, city visions are powerful symbolic devices to organise understanding of development challenges, and give form to solutions and aspirations. Read closely, the notion of a 'world class African city for all' helps us come to terms with the nature of this city, and what it might become.

Johannesburg, it must be understood, is not a genteel place. Since the late 1880s, successive waves of fortune seekers from across the globe have scrambled to stake their claim on the richest deposits of gold ore ever found. Over time, who could access this enormous wealth and how, became the *raison d'être* of

one of the world's most perverse systems of ordering physical and social space. Johannesburg was the quintessential apartheid city. For half a century, a national policy of 'influx control' relocated millions of South Africans to various rural Bantustans on the basis of their skin colour. Cast in Afrikaner-nationalist policy-speak as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water', their chance to live full urban lives was systematically negated. Those who did make it into the city were defined as 'temporary sojourners', dispatched to underdeveloped ghettos on the edges of the built-up area, where their costs of social reproduction could be deflected and suppressed. Under this system 'white local authorities' subsidised the cost of utility and property services to business and a wealthy minority, creating a virtuous cycle of development. Meanwhile, poor black residents likely to cost the tax base more than they contributed to it were kept out of their boundaries and off their budgets in separate 'black local authorities'.

With this history, it is not surprising that Johannesburg is today portrayed as a place of migrancy, stark division and informality. The vision of a 'world class African city' reflects this legacy, but paints the challenge in a positive light.

Some have said that this city, a 'gold-rush tent town' from the start, seems defined by processes of frenetic extraction, of people who would rather be somewhere else – urbane Europe or the idyllic Zululand countryside perhaps. From the bond trader on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange to the informal trader sharing a one room Hillbrow flat with two other families, all seem hell-bent on getting out as soon as possible with as much cash as possible, at the least cost to soul and pocket. But whereas some recoil at the resulting instability and transience, others feel, and revel in, this city's restless energy. Growing at 4% per annum, and bumping up against equally fast growing neighbours in a now virtually continuous urban region of some 10 million people, this is not a city on the edge of crisis and collapse. It is a 'city of potential' constitutively always on the verge of 'hitting paydirt'. The vision is to harness this energy by absorbing opportunity seekers, and structuring commitment to the city.

This is not easy when so much energy is still dissipated by spatial, social and economic divisions. In their green suburbs some residents enjoy the highest level of services and public amenity. Others dwell in dusty, overcrowded, under-serviced townships, where they struggle to reach jobs, education, shops and leisure on the other side of incongruous 'buffer zones'. While the apartheid city remains, the structures of exclusion *are* gradually dissolving. Previous white suburbs, even walled ones, are becoming melting pots of all colours and creeds. And in places like Soweto the streets are now tarred, new shopping malls are springing up, thousands of trees are being planted and residents are investing in homes they now legally own. This process must accelerate. Our vision of a world class city is not one of more hulking bank buildings in the financial district, however many art galleries they contain. It is one of more well-designed

taxi ranks serving ordinary people on their way home to decent neighbourhoods.

It is hard not to notice this city's deep and pervasive sense of incivility. This temperament is both feared and celebrated. Feared because wealth and poverty rub up against each other in a harsh friction that invariably ignites crime and violence. Celebrated because many see an unbroken line between the anti-apartheid boycotts and protests that made townships 'ungovernable' in the 1980s and today's refusal by a 'find its own way' taxi industry to use an official rank. For many too, Johannesburg's apparent disorderliness is one of the characteristics of the 'African city', whose ordinary citizens are invariably obliged to make social 'infrastructures' out of daily improvisations and inscrutable social practices, confounding those in charge of the official order. A vision of a 'world class African city' tries to address both facets. It is certainly a vision of a safer city. But this does not imply painting the informal as irrational. In this vision, city governance enables, and works with, the day to day ingenuity and generative interactions through which residents continuously remake their futures.

*Rashid Seedat, Director, Corporate Planning Unit, City of Johannesburg*

*Graeme Gotz, Specialist, Policy and Strategy, City Manager's Office, City of Johannesburg*