

Reclaiming the voices and spaces for the youth of Vilakazi Street
Exploring spatial reform in Orlando West



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I would also like to thank my family and friends who have supported and encouraged me through this journey, I am truly grateful.

I dedicate this dissertation as to my late grandparents.

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ABSTRACT

The legacy of apartheid spatial planning is still evident under South Africa's democratic government. Townships are segregated dormitories with residents who still face many inequities in their daily lives. Soweto is a township which has a deep history of struggle for liberation. Vilakazi street is especially symbolic due to all the activists who used their voices as a tool to fight against a system of inequality.

Today Soweto is in a transitional phase. It has developed from what was once a dormitory township to a diverse, resilient community of people who have reclaimed the spaces as their own.

This research serves to gain a deeper understanding of Vilakazi Street (as a catalyst to transformation) - an emerging high street in a culturally rich neighbourhood of Orlando West. Furthermore to understand the missing links and gaps which can better improve the quality of life for the community. It is also important to gain a deeper understanding of the legislation and contributing factors that enable the development of the existing vibrant township culture. Furthermore to learn what role the youth of today contribute to. Orlando West The research is guided and grounded in a theoretical framework which highlights the importance of democratic planning processes and enabling resident's voices in the design processes.

The methodology and methods speak on the approach to gain research on the ground and the interactions with the local residents and their everyday spaces. A contextual analysis is done on the metro scale to better understand the role of Orlando West in relation to the city and a neighbourhood scale analysis is done to better understand the role Vilakazi Street plays in its neighbourhood.

This is followed by a case study which is used as a precedent to address and create inclusive design for the youth of Soweto. The proposal aims to improve and amplifying the vulnerable voices of the youth.

00 CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION
2.0	RESEARCH POSITION
3.0	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
4.0	MANIFESTO
5.0	OBJECTIVES
6.0	METHODOLOGY
7.0	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
8.0	FOCUS AREA
9.0	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
10.0	CASE STUDY
11.0	CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS AT THE REGIONAL SCALE
12.0	CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS AT NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE
13.0	DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
14.0	DESIGN STRATEGIES
15.0	IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK
16.0	ETHICS APPLICATION
17.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY

List of Figures

Figure 1: Figure 1: Match Box Housing	12	Figure 39: Figure 39: Bike Spinning Source Daily Maverick	33
Figure 2: Figure 2: Forced Removals	12	Figure 40: Figure 40: Orlando Timeline Source: GIS	37
Figure 3: Figure 3: Liberation Struggle	13	Figure 41: Figure 41: Aerial Image Orlando Source: Orlando Illustrated	39
Figure 4: Figure 4: BaSotho	14	Figure 42: Figure 42: transitions of Housing Typology/Street Interface Source: Author	39
Figure 5: Figure 5: TsiVenda	15	Figure 43: Figure 43: Amenities on Vilakazi Street Source: Author	40
Figure 6: Figure 6: Manifesto Model	16	Figure 44: Figure 44: Housing Typologies Source: Author	40
Figure 7: Figure 7: African Culture isiXhosa	18	Figure 45: Figure 45: Aerial Image Orlando-West Source: GIS	41
Figure 8: Figure 8: African Culture isiZulu	18	Figure 46: Figure 46: Xitsonga Source Author	43
Figure 9: Figure 9: Vilakazi Characteristics	19	Figure 47: Figure 47: Methodology Source: SafeHub.org	46
Figure 10: Figure 10: Soweto Aerial Source: VPUU	21	Figure 48: Figure 49: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org	47
Figure 11: Figure 11: Community Participation Source: VPUU	22	Figure 49: Figure 48: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org	47
Figure 12: Figure 13: Community Participation Source: VPUU	22	Figure 50: Figure 50: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org	47
Figure 13: Figure 12: Community Participation Source: VPUU	22	Figure 51: Figure 51: Metro Scale	48
Figure 14: Figure 14: Landuse Source: Author	23	Figure 52: Figure 52: Racial Segregation	49
Figure 15: Figure 15: Street Analysis 01 Source Author	24	Figure 53: Figure 53: Structuring Elements Source Author	50
Figure 16: Figure 16: Street Analysis 02 Source Author	24	Figure 54: Figure 54: Structuring Elements Source Author	50
Figure 17: Figure 17: Street Analysis 03 Source Author	24	Figure 55: Figure 56: Soweto Density Source CAD Mapper	51
Figure 18: Figure 19: Street Analysis 04 Source Author	25	Figure 56: Figure 55: Structuring Elements Source VPUU	51
Figure 19: Figure 18: Street Analysis 05 Source Author	25	Figure 57: Figure 57: BRT Network	52
Figure 20: Figure 20: Street Analysis Source Author	26	Figure 58: Figure 58: taxi Network	52
Figure 21: Figure 21: Street Analysis Source Author	26	Figure 59: Figure 59: Ecological Assets	53
Figure 22: Figure 22: Street Analysis Source Author	26	Figure 60: Figure 60: Zoning	53
Figure 23: Figure 23: Street Analysis Source Author	27	Figure 61: Figure 62: Opportunities	54
Figure 24: Figure 25: Street Analysis Source Author	27	Figure 62: Figure 61: Constraints	54
Figure 25: Figure 24: Street Analysis Source Author	27	Figure 63: Figure 63: Orlando West	55
Figure 26: Figure 26: Sakhumzi Source Sakhumzi	28	Figure 64: Figure 64: Vilakazi Surrounds	55
Figure 27: Figure 27: Shisa Nyama Source Sakhumzi	28	Figure 65: Figure 65: Vilakazi Surrounds Built Fabric	56
Figure 28: Figure 28: Kota Source Sakhumzi	28	Figure 66: Figure 67: Vilakazi Surrounds Public Open Space	57
Figure 29: Figure 29: Street Analysis Source Sakhumzi	29	Figure 67: Figure 66: Vilakazi Surrounds Hard Open Public Space	57
Figure 30: Figure 30: Street Analysis Source Sakhumzi	29	Figure 68: Figure 69: Vilakazi Surrounds Source Author	58
Figure 31: Figure 31: Narrative Map Source Author	30	Figure 69: Figure 68: Social Facilities Source Author	58
Figure 32: Figure 32: Participant 1 Source Author	31	Figure 70: Figure 70: Social Clusters Source Author	59
Figure 33: Figure 33: Figure 28: Participant 2 Source Author	31	Figure 71: Figure 71: Vilakazi Street Source Author	59
Figure 34: Figure 34: Figure 29: Participant 3 Source Author	31	Figure 72: Figure 72: Conceptual Framework	61
Figure 35: Figure 35: Street Games Source Daily Maverick	32	Figure 73: Figure 73: Conceptual Framework Proposal Source Author	62
Figure 36: Figure 36: Street Games Source Daily Maverick	32	Figure 74: Figure 74: Conceptual Framework Proposal Source Author	63
Figure 37: Figure 38: Bike Spinning Source Daily Maverick	33		
Figure 38: Figure 37: Bike Spinning Source Daily Maverick	33		

01 Introduction

Soweto is a township that was created under colonialism and apartheid with the purpose of accommodating the black migrant workers who served the economic center in Johannesburg. Like most townships, Soweto was intentionally designed as a mono-utilisation residential dormitory area, where residents were segregated from socio-economic resources, opportunities and further divided from each other according to their tribes (Scheba, Turok, 2020). Soweto, being one of the largest townships in South Africa, comprising of other many other townships, has a diverse culture, deep history and a range of contrasts.

going revitalization, upgrades and development after Apartheid, the consequences of Apartheid spatial planning still existing, leaving Soweto with high levels of unemployment and social ills xenophobia, crime etc.), an unsustainable local economy, poor transport connectivity, inadequate social amenities and public facilities and poor service delivery of existing infrastructure (water electricity, sanitation etc.) (Scheba, Turok, 2020), (Mlambo, Ndebele, Zubane, 2019).

This research seeks to explore the transition of Vilakazi street and neighbourhood from its conception during apartheid to what it is today in 2022. This specifically includes studying and analysing the change in spatial formation of Soweto over the years, the physical forms of Orlando West and Vilakazi Street overtime (streets, housing typologies, street interface, natural public spaces etc.) as well as the socio-economic transition and transformation of residents (gaining a better understanding of the growing social and economic conditions over time). The purpose of undergoing this study is to further explore how a settlement designed with the purpose of unjust conditions has been able to remain not only resilient but positively transform into a more

liveable place for residents over time.

This research includes a literature review highlighting theories and methods of planning processes which begin to address apartheid spatial planning. The research methods used include an in-depth site analysis, attaining stories from locals and residents and lastly proposing an informed design solution based off the findings.

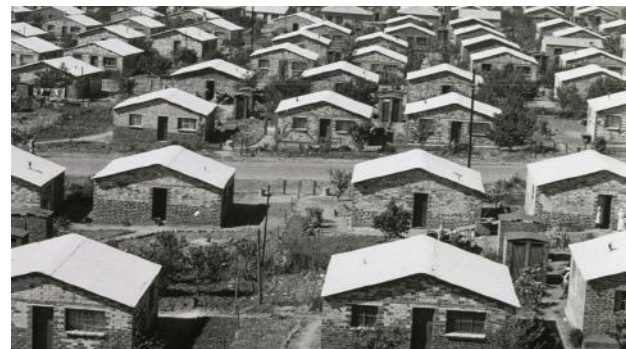


Figure 75: Match Box Housing

The settlement consists of a mixture of backyard shacks, township houses/RDP houses as well as middle class houses. The existing small scale businesses include spaza shops, shebeens, restaurants, backyard rentals, street traders and the taxi industry to list a few. There is a strong sense of community and an element of safety amongst residents (Rule, 1993). But despite the area under-



Figure 76: Forced Removals



Figure 77: Liberation Struggle

02 RESEARCH POSITION

2.1 RESEARCH POSITION

I come from a family of three generations who have lived in Soweto during and after apartheid. Each generation has had a different everyday experience on the same space over a period of years. My interest lies in understanding and analysing the transition of Orlando West, Soweto, from a neighbourhood of inequality and injustice to one of resilience, vibrancy and strong sense of community.

The approach for this study is based on observations taken of everyday spaces in and around Vilakazi Street such as the formal trade spaces (i.e. restaurants), informal traders (arts and crafts, car wash, car guards), heritage spaces and observations taken of how people interact with and move in these spaces. This also includes a collection of stories of residents lived experience of the neighbourhood dating before 1994 to 2022.

This research also acknowledges and appreciates the existing forms and systems which contribute to the unique African Identity Vilakazi as a neighbourhood. This is seen through the amalgamation of languages spoken,

the sense

of community and safety which exists as well as the pride residents have for their living spaces and their agency to improve their neighbourhood.



Figure 78: BaSotho

03 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

What can we learn from Vilakazi street as an urban space that's reclaimed its voice despite it being subjugated to apartheid spatial principles of inequality?

3.2 SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

How do local residents identify themselves in Vilakazi Street? What are the senses of place in Vilakazi street which contribute to its great and unique vibrancy?

How and what spatial principles and applications have been used to address/counteract the previously existing apartheid principles?

What do the existing systems of informality around Vilakazi street (namely; trading, back-yarding and the taxi industry) contribute to its transition?



Figure 79: TsiVenda

04 RESEARCH MANIFESTO



Figure 80: Manifesto Model

The research manifesto explores reform - appreciating and expanding the existing everyday unique culture and identity which makes Vilakazi street South African. Enabling the existing systems of informality which contribute to the local economy and

sense of place in Orlando. Acknowledging the socio-political factors which have shaped the everyday lives and environment of the residents. Better connecting residents to socio-economic opportunities, social amenities and to each other.

05 OBJECTIVES

5.1 Aims

To understand the social and spatial elements that have enabled a sense of African identity and activated Vilakazi street

Using Vilakazi street as a catalyst, reconnect and activate public spaces for locals in Orlando West

To create a safe spaces where the youth of today may express their voice.



Figure 81: African Culture isiXhosa



Figure 82: African Culture isiZulu

How can different programs be integrated to make the neighbourhood more livable? How can elements outside the house (i.e. street, veranda, garden) be used as an extension of public space? How do we expand the existing vibrant public spaces?
quality of life

How can spaces be transformed into ones residents identify with? Is the neighbourhood safe? How do we design or enable spaces that are inclusive of our African identity?
sense of belonging

How can local economies grow? How can communities be self sustaining? What forms of trading exist? How can back-yarding be regulated?
local economy

How do we undo the legacy of apartheid spatial planning? How do we create just environments?
Spatial justice

Which legislation enables local economic growth?
Policy reform

What are the place-making elements that make vilakazi street successful? What other forms of public realm exist? Where are the recreational spaces? What are the recreational spaces?
Sense of place

How do people move in the neighbourhood? What forms of non-motorised transport exist? Do the conditions of the street enable walkability? Is public transport into the central business district affordable? Are the existing buses accessible?
Freedom of movement

Are there safe and educational spaces for the youth? Are youth spaces working well? Are youth spaces well located?
Youth

Figure 83: Vilakazi Characteristics

06 METHODOLOGY

6.1 METHODOLOGY & METHODS

This research project uses qualitative methodology as a means to gain an in-depth insight into how urban design and urban design principles have been used in Soweto, particularly the Vilakazi surrounds as a tool to address issues of inequality. In this paper, qualitative methodology is understood as:

Assumptions and the use of interpretive or theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013, p. 44).

Looking at the issues of inequality that affect my study area and its context, as a researcher, I used a qualitative approach through the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under my study, and produced a data analysis that shows patterns and themes. Part of this research paper also includes the voices of participants. The participants of the research are relatives that either grew up in Soweto, live in Soweto, own businesses in Soweto or all of the above. Additionally, while conducting the research I was attentive to the cultural, political, social, and ideological origins of my own perspective and voice. As well as the perspectives and voices of the participants that I interviewed.

I have used my qualitative research to provide a complex description and interpretation of the issues in Vilakazi

Street while proposing a design intervention which addresses the issues and seeks just change in the study area.

The qualitative methods that have been used include; Phenomenological research of how people occupy and experience public space in Soweto and Orlando West based on consensual semi-structured interviews and storytelling. From this method, descriptions of participants lived experiences were gained. Research also includes a series of workshops taken with representatives of various neighbourhoods in Soweto which formed part of the Soweto Strategic Area Framework.

Historical and present day research have also been used as a means to attain information on Apartheid planning in Soweto and legislation that informs the township's spatial layout today. The following associated methods include: socio-spatial mapping, drawings (such as sketches, sections, plans, diagrams), photography, participatory methods (in the form of interviews and or storytelling) and a literature review.

6.2.0 APPROACH: PHENOMENOLOGY RESEARCH

I studied the lived experiences of participants to gain a deeper insight into and understanding of the factors which contributed to their every day lives in Soweto based on a shared phenomena being the shadow of apartheid's legacy which still has a presence in not just Soweto but South Africa too. Further-

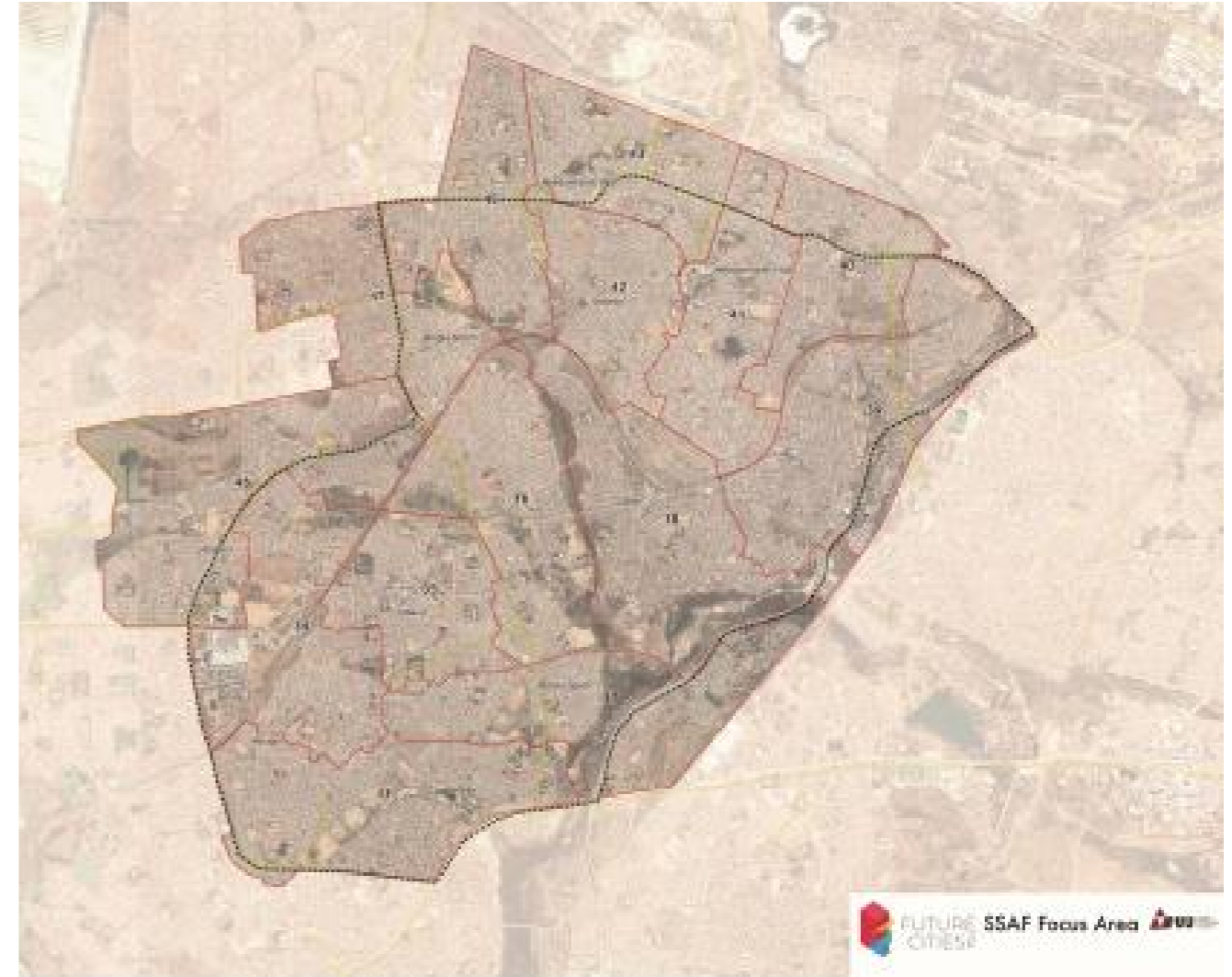


Figure 84: Soweto Aerial Source: VPUU

more a phenomenological research approach can be defined as:

a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 159).

A more in depth description of the qualitative methods that have been used are listed below.

6.2.1 FOCUS GROUPS / ACTION RESEARCH

As a junior urban design intern at VPUU, I was part of a team which facilitated in a series of community based workshops (issues, solutions, vision and manifesto and community reference group workshops) during the course of 2021 and 2022. The participants were from various wards in Soweto which include: ward 47, 46 (Jabulani), 45 (Mofolo North), 43 (Meadowlands West), 42 (Soweto), 41 (Meadowlands East), 40, 39, 38 (Dube), 37 (Mofolo South), 35 (Jabavu), 34 (Molapo) and 33 (Moroka).

These wards were split into 3 cluster groups and each workshop took place over a period of three to four days per workshop. From the combination of the workshops we were able to deduct vital data. This included understanding the needs and experiences of local residents, attaining community owned solutions from locals which directly respond to existing issues and together with the residents, putting up a manifesto and co-creating a vision in-line with a manifesto. This information was also later used as part of the Soweto Strategic Area Framework (SSAF) document which is a project focused on:



Figure 85: Community Participation Source: VPUU



Figure 86: Community Participation Source: VPUU



Figure 87: Community Participation Source: VPUU

In embracing a participatory and partnership approach, the project focuses on unearthing Soweto's socio-economic potential, giving community voices from the beginning and throughout the development process (SSAF, 2022).

My research makes reference to the field work collected and the SSAF document produced. This part of the research made use of participatory planning process as a methodology while taking on a place-making approach (SSAF, 2022).

6.2.2 NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS

This part of the field work included observations of Vilakazi street and how people interact with the street and each other. The street contains varied land-use which is mainly centered around the tourism industry. This includes formal restaurants, clothing -stores, the Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu landmarks, informal street trading of crafts followed by schools and churches. Given the range of activities provided on the street, my observations showed how the street is pedestrian dominant and used more as a public space rather than a car oriented road.

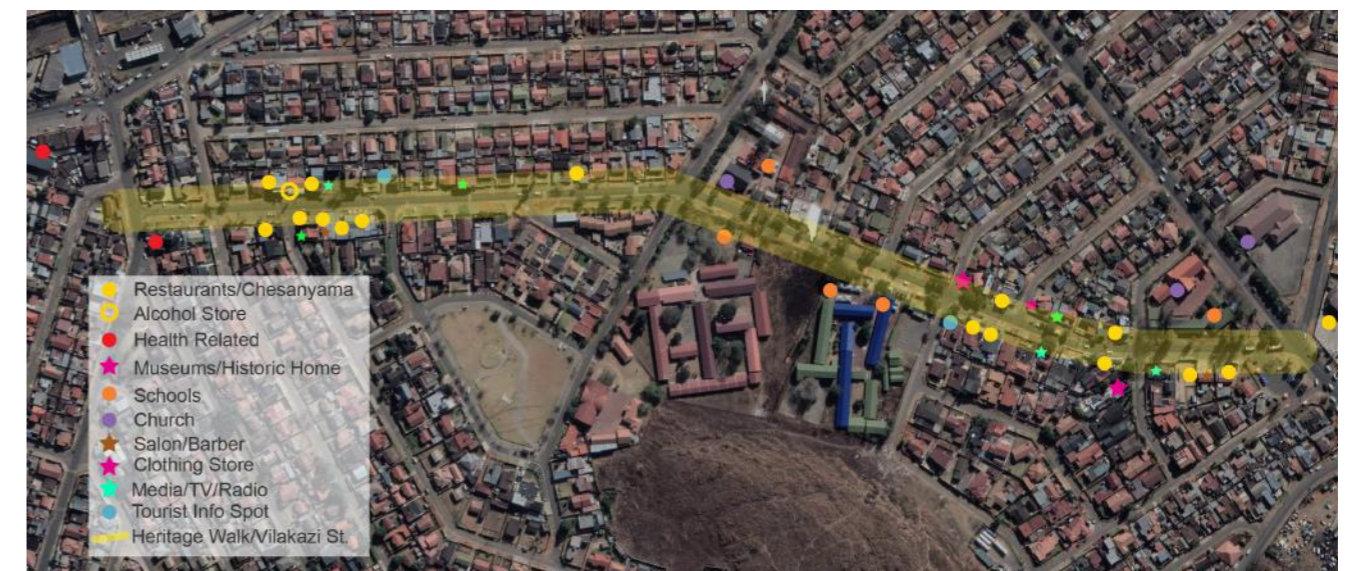


Figure 88: Landuse Source: Author

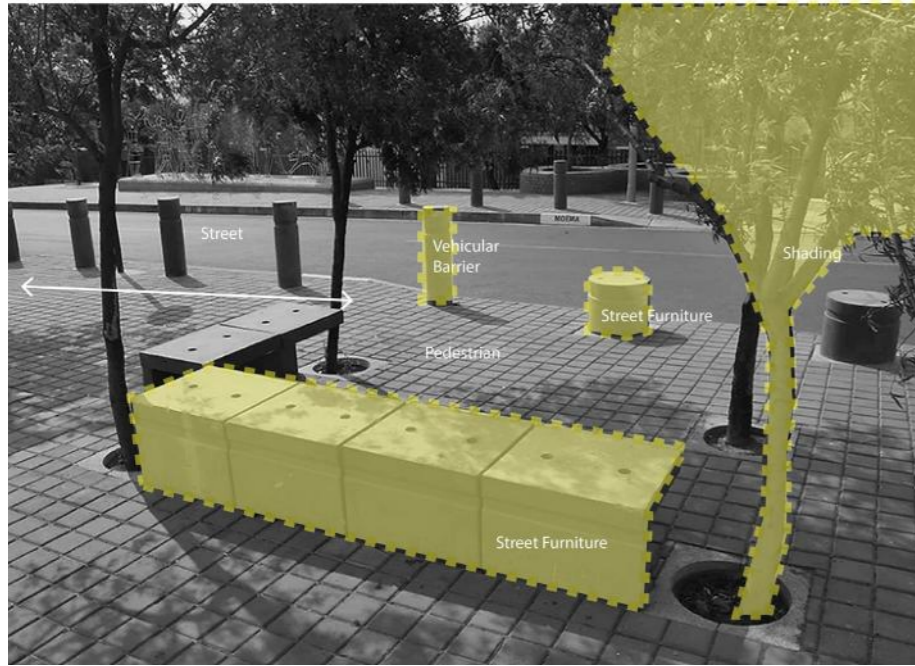


Figure 89: Street Analysis 01 Source Author

PAUSE SPACES

The street pavement discourages motor vehicular parking while encouraging passive activities along the street through the use of street furniture (Gehl, 1987).



Figure 93: Street Analysis 04 Source Author



Figure 90: Street Analysis 02 Source Author

ACTIVE EDGES

The street lights and balconies create a sense of safety through surveillance. The restaurants open up onto the street which created a comfortable transition from indoor to outdoor space.



Figure 91: Street Analysis 03 Source Author

LOCAL TRADERS

The street pavements are wide enough for pedestrian movement and still accommodate street vendors which further contribute and increase pedestrian traffic along the street. The street vendors are strategically placed across the Hector Pieterse Museum.

SHADING

The overhangs, umbrellas and trees provide a shading for pedestrians which contribute to the comfortability of the street.

VISUAL DESIGN: MURALS

The street is decorated with wall paintings of artwork or paid advertising which contribute to the unique cultural identity of the space.

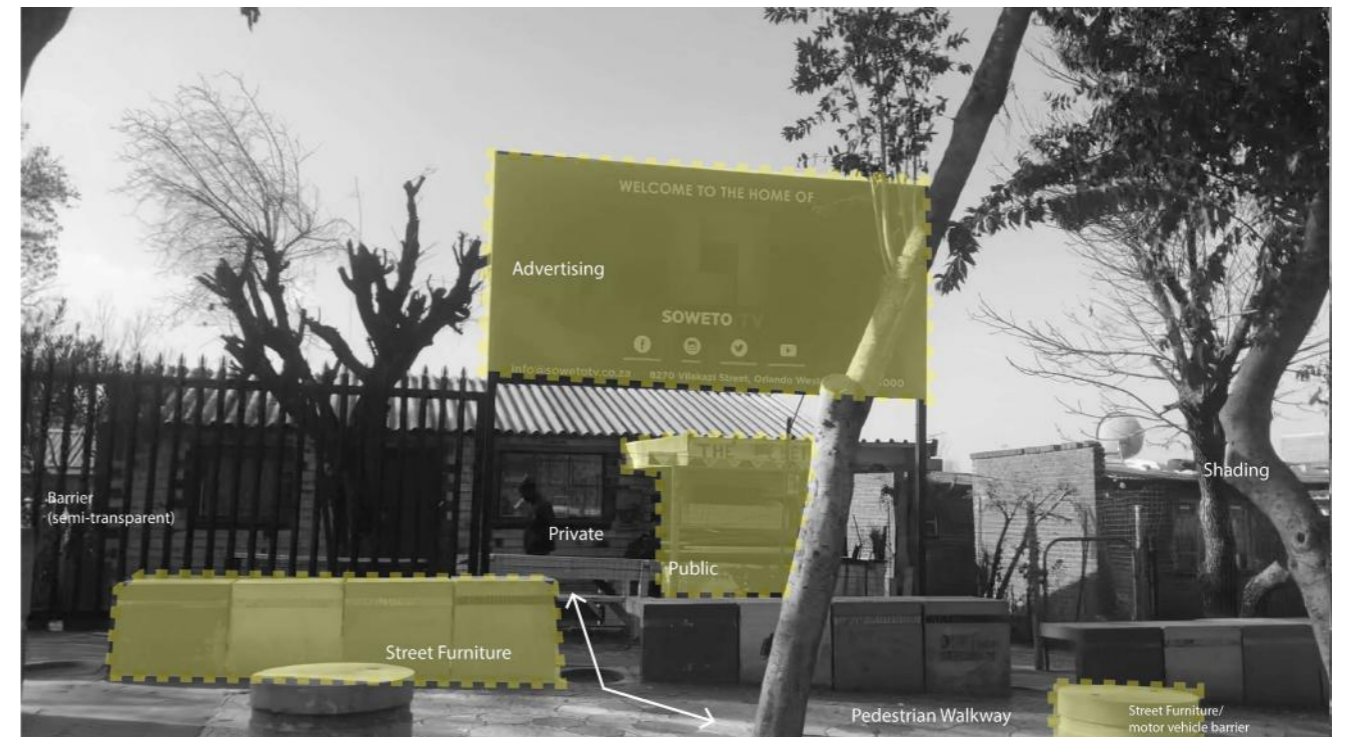


Figure 92: Street Analysis 05 Source Author



Figure 94: Street Analysis Source Author

LOCAL TRADERS

The street pavement caters to temporary trading structures which are packed up every morning and evening.



Figure 95: Street Analysis Source Author

LOCAL TRADERS

The street pavements are wide enough for pedestrian movement and still accommodate street vendors which further contribute and increase pedestrian traffic along the street. The street vendors are strategically placed across the Hector Pieterse Museum.



Figure 96: Street Analysis Source Author

TOURISM TARGET

The local economy mainly caters to tourists. The crafts and clothing are inspired by traditional patterns and attire such as Ndebele prints, s, shweshwe (traditional Sotho prints) and Madiba shirts. Street performances include traditional Zulu dances. Bicycle and walking tours are also offered.



Figure 97: Street Analysis Source Author

SPAZAS

Vilakazi street and its neighbourhood are filled with spaza (tuckshops) which sell essential items and foods at an affordable price. A few traditional Kasi snacks include amakhipkip (coloured popcorn), amazimba (potato crisps), amagwinda (fatcakes) and iceguavas (flavoured ice).



Figure 99: Street Analysis Source Author

Figure 98: Street Analysis Source Author



STREET ART

The neighbourhood is beautifully decorated with abstract art paintings along walls facing the street and walls enclosing public facilities such as restaurants.



Figure 100: Sakhumzi Source Sakhumzi

SAKHUMZI

Sakhumzi is one of 16 restaurants on the street which had started off as a home-cooked takeaway service in 2001 and grew over time into a vibrant space which sells South African traditional foods. Today, the old home is still abuzz serving true township flavour (Sakhumzi, 2022).



Figure 101: Shisa Nyama Source Sakhumzi

SHISA NYAMA

Shisa Nyamas directly translates to “hot meat” is another delicacy consisting of braai (BBQ) meats and vegetables.



Figure 102: Kota Source Sakhumzi

KOTA

Kota is a food derived from the word quarter. A hollow quarter loaf of bread usually filled with potato fries, polony, atchar (fruit pickle), sausage and cheese. This is another affordable meal and tasty meal.



Figure 103: Street Analysis Source Sakhumzi

CHICKEN FEET

The left over parts of meats which tend to be a lot cheaper are also sold and eaten within the region of Soweto. These include chicken feet, pork trotters, smiley (goat head), giblets, livers and mogodu (tripe).



Figure 104: Street Analysis Source Sakhumzi

6.2.3 INTERVIEWS/DISCUSSION ON LIVED EXPERIENCE

The individual interview included questions based on everyday life of residents in Orlando in the present and during apartheid. Although each of participants were from different streets, neighbourhoods, tribes, class and age, each one of them expressed common themes such as the negative psychological impact of apartheid. Another common theme was the tenacity and agency participants possessed which in turn contributed to their resistance against apartheid but also in redefining and improving their quality of life. The interviews were conducted in English and occasionally isiZulu and Ses-

otho when it was a preference for participants.

6.2.4 STORY TELLING

The storytelling method organically occurred through participants descriptions of Orlando West during the semi-structured interviews. These spaces which are associated with memory and heritage include Vilakazi Street, Uncle Tomms Community Hall, Nelson Mandela House, Desmond Tutu House, Beverly Hills, Mampura Street, Orlando West High School, Hector Pieterse Memorial, Orlando Soccer Stadium and Sakhumzi Restaurant.

6.2.5 DATA ANALYSIS



Figure 106: Participant 1 Source Author



Figure 107: Figure 28: Participant 2 Source Author

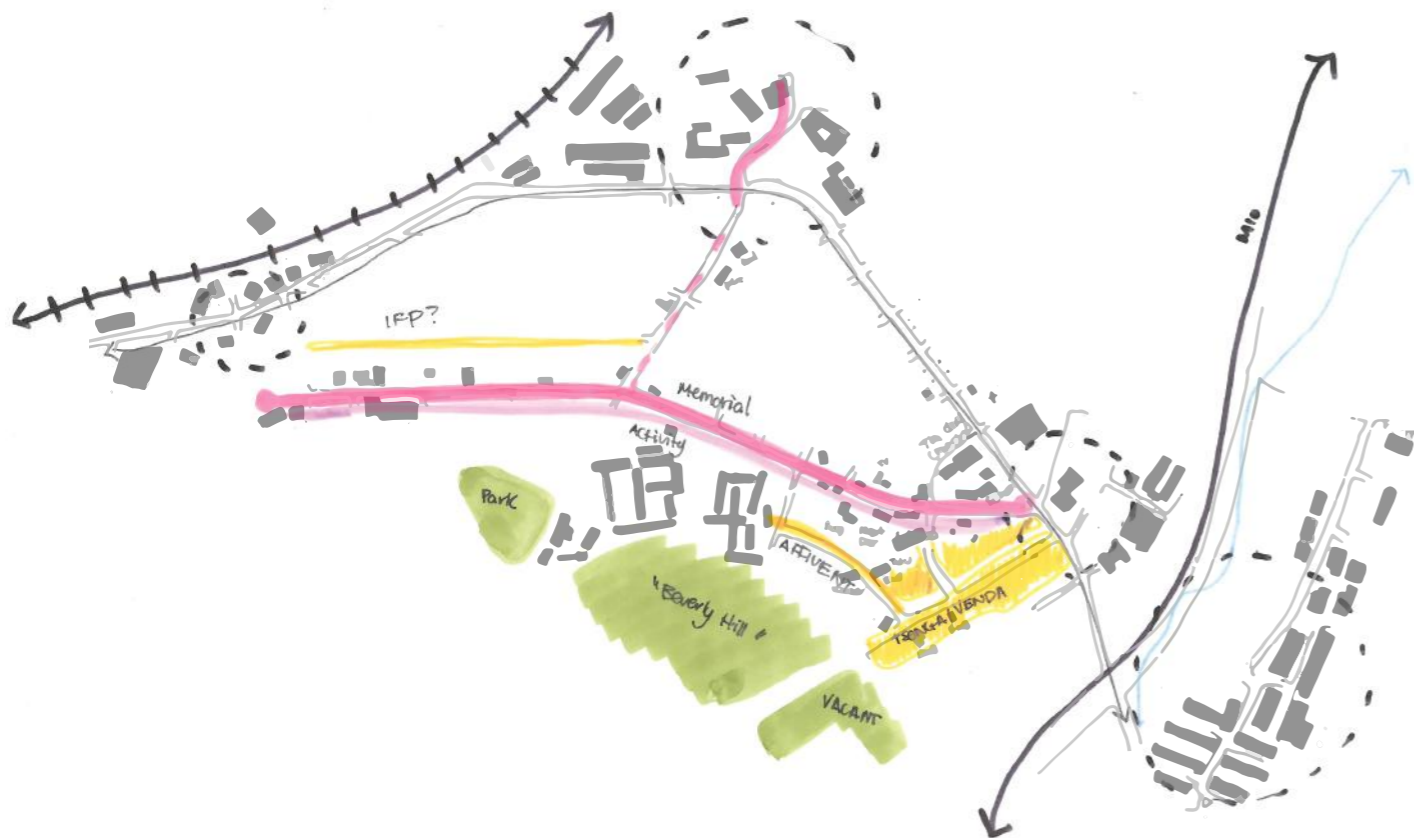


Figure 105: Narrative Map Source Author

NARRATIVE

The participants that were interviewed all expressed a sense of pride for their home and community. Important areas such as Vilakazi street where Mandela and Tutu lived on and where the 1976 student uprisings occurred. As well as Mampura street which housed affluent residents who named the adjacent hill Beverly Hills, contribute to the narrative map,

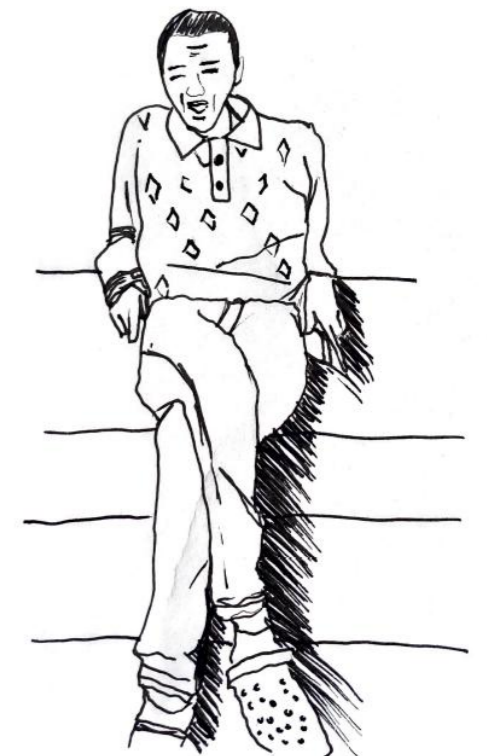


Figure 108: Figure 29: Participant 3 Source Author

Data analysis included data that was sourced from Geographical Information Systems (GIS) such as Google Earth, QGIS 3 and aerial imagery of Orlando West captured from 1938 to 2018 provided by the Department of Rural Development of National Geo-spatial Information. Further geographical mapping was sourced from VPUU NPC.

6.2.6 DESK RESEARCH

This part of the research relied on secondary sources such as books, frameworks, case studies, internet articles, extracts from the apartheid museum, data and statistics as well as government legislation which is used and referenced throughout this research paper.



Figure 110: Street Games Source Daily Maverick



Figure 109: Street Games Source Daily Maverick

THE YOUTH

The participants of this research expressed a need for healthy, productive and safe spaces for the youth. The existing parks are underutilised and under-serviced. This leaves the youth vulnerable to social ills.

This research then keeps a focus on youth as a means of improving the existing quality of life for residents of Orlando West



Figure 113: Bike Spinning Source Daily Maverick



Figure 112: Bike Spinning Source Daily Maverick

07 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Ethical Considerations

My research was set on principles of protecting the rights and dignity of the research participants, ensuring research validity and maintaining scientific integrity. Before the collection of data took place a research proposal and ethics application was submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at the University of Cape Town (UCT), which was then approved by the Head of Department.

Below I list ethical issues (Weis and Fine, 2000) that I considered and addressed before and during the time I conducted the study. The first was to attain approval from UCT to conduct the study. Followed by seeking permission from Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) to use their unpublished work as part of my research while crediting them. During the field research, before interviewing participants I disclosed the purpose of the study as a means to avoid deceiving them. I ensured I did not pressure participants into signing consent forms by assuring them their participation is voluntary. Finally, respecting participants privacy and securing raw data collected (voice recordings and photographs) using security applications to protect the data. As a researcher I have aimed to report.

These ethical principles have ensured that participation in this study was

safe, voluntary and informed for the research subjects; Protecting the privacy of participants, treating participants equitably, not causing harm to people, respecting the autonomy of participants. Participation was voluntary, participants were offered a choice to be anonymised. Participants were not discriminated against and sensitive data that has been collected from them has been kept confidential.

Furthermore, consideration was taken when photographing street scenes, buildings, public spaces in such a way that the focus was not on the recognition of individual users, unless permission had been granted. I ensured I did not raise expectations that upgrading will be a result of the research. My walkabouts and observations taken in the study area were led and accompanied by a local Sowetan resident who is a relative (facilitate this ethical interaction). Semi-structured interviews will take place with only adults who currently reside in Soweto, work in Soweto and formerly lived and grew up in Soweto.

7.2 Potential Limitations

I took into consideration that Covid-19 could disrupt the research process, thus I was open to collecting data through digital mechanisms (i.e. telephonic interviews). Furthermore, as mentioned, the on site observations with a local guide who had given invaluable insight into the area.

08 STUDY AREA

8.1 SOWETO

Johannesburg was established as a mining town in 1886 due to the discovery of gold. It's population thus rapidly increased. Over the decades it became South Africa's economic centre. The Public health committee enforced early urban segregation throughout South Africa – forcefully separating the Black, Coloured, Indian, Cape Malay populations from the White populations (Nieftagodien, Gaule, 2012).

As a result, Soweto was one of many townships that was created under apartheid. During the 1930s it was designed to accommodate the Black migrant workers who served the economic center in Johannesburg. Like most townships, Soweto was intentionally designed as a mono-utilisation residential dormitory area, where residents were segregated from socio-economic resources, opportunities and further divided from each other according to their tribes (Scheba, Turok, 2020). Sowetans had to travel a distance to get into the White areas of Johannesburg just to purchase basic amenities (Beavon, 2004).

Upon its inception it could be described as:

Threaded through by dusty, unpaved roads along which were erected monotonous ranks of identical, small, 'temporary', single-storey 'matchbox' houses (predominantly between 40 m2 and 44 m2 in size)

lit by candles and oil lamps, where cooking was done on paraffin- and coal-stoves (Beavon, 2004, p. 121).

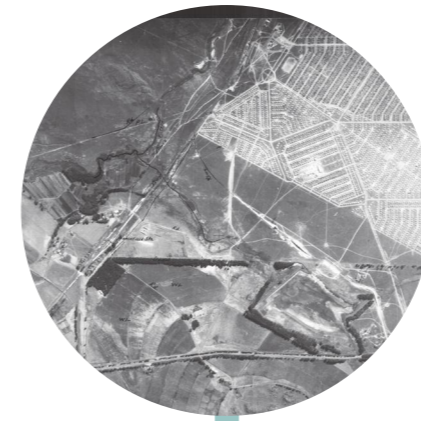
Mrs Makabela, owner of Makhelwane Restaurant on Vilakazi, moved to Soweto during the 1960s seeking work. She described her experience living in the township:

[Life during apartheid] was terrible, we were not allowed to walk in the street. Inside shops there was a special window for non-Europeans. Each and every place there was a [section] for non-whites. It wasn't nice really but what could we do? Children had to spend their time staying in the house unless they went to school. There was nothing for young children to do. They had to wait until they were 7 to attend school (Makabela, 2022).

Given the spatial inequalities and lack of urban amenities in the township, residents responded through protest. The first being the squatter camp movement lead by James Mpanza which sought out a basic human right to access housing for Sowetans that had been living in squatter camps. This was one of many forms of resistance against apartheid that occurred in Soweto (Nieftagodien, Gaule, 2012).

Baba Julius described his experience of resistance against the system as a young person living in Soweto:

The feeling was there [of apartheid]



1938

A series of aerial imagery showing the development of Orlando from 1938 to 2021.

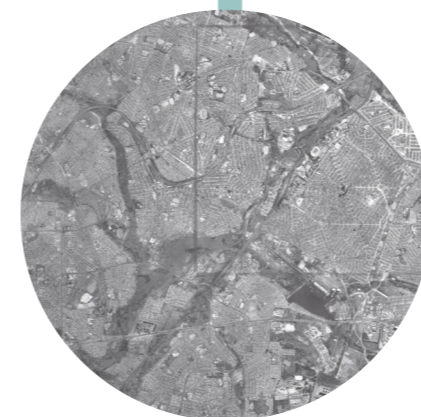


1968



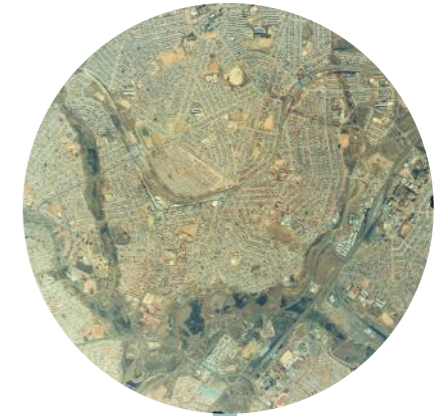
1968

June 16th student protest and uprising against Afrikaans language as a medium of instruction in the school systems.



1991

By the late 1980s middle class housing developed as home owners improved their houses



1996

The new government implemented tar roads and pavements Township.



2007

After 1994 Black people were free to travel in the country and allowed to own land they lived on.



2010

The Orlando stadium was reconstructed as part of upgrading for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.



2021

Soweto is in a transition phase on its way to becoming a more sustainable socio-economic Township.

Figure 114: Orlando Timeline Source: GIS

it was in-born, it was inculcated. As youngsters all that we knew was that whites had to be on one side, blacks had to be on one side. Activism was always there and...we were very reactionary and had attitudes towards whites.

to list a few. There is a strong sense of community and an element of safety amongst residents (Rule, 1993). In particular, Vilakazi street is an unexpected area which serves locals and tourists, with a wide range of social amenities and a pumping local economy. It's history for the fight for freedom is celebrated and memorialized. For this reason the project study area is focused on Vilakazi neighbourhood, Orlando West.

8.2 VILAKAZI STREET, ORLANDO WEST

Orlando was established during the 1930s. Vilakazi street is named after a notable isiZulu author by the name of Dr. Benedict Vilakazi. The street includes the original constructed apartheid housing typologies as well as renovated houses which are among that of Desmond Tutu, Nelson and Winnie Mandela. Just as the township has a deep historical history, Vilakazi carries a history of political activism and police brutality (Dondolo, 2018).

The fall of apartheid meant people of colour were now allowed to own land and move freely.

Today the township has been identified as a key area for intervention by the City of Johannesburg (CoJ). It has the potential to develop into district that can play a larger role in contributing to economic growth of Gauteng (SSAF, 2021). The city has heavily invested in the township but much intervention and strategic intervention is needed (SSAF, 2021). Furthermore, despite the area undergoing revitalization, upgrades and development the consequences of apartheid spatial planning still overshadow the area, leaving Soweto with high levels of unemployment, social ills, xenophobia, crime, an unsustainable local economy, poor transport connectivity, inadequate social amenities and public facilities and poor service delivery of existing infrastructure (water electricity, sanitation etc.) (Scheba, Turok, 2020), (Mlambo, Ndebele, Zubane, 2019).

Contrary, the field work conducted shows a strong and vibrant culture exists. The settlement consists of a mixture of backyard shacks, matchbox houses and middle class houses. The existing small scale businesses include spaza shops, shebeens, restaurants, cafes, clothing stores, backyard rentals, street traders and the taxi industry

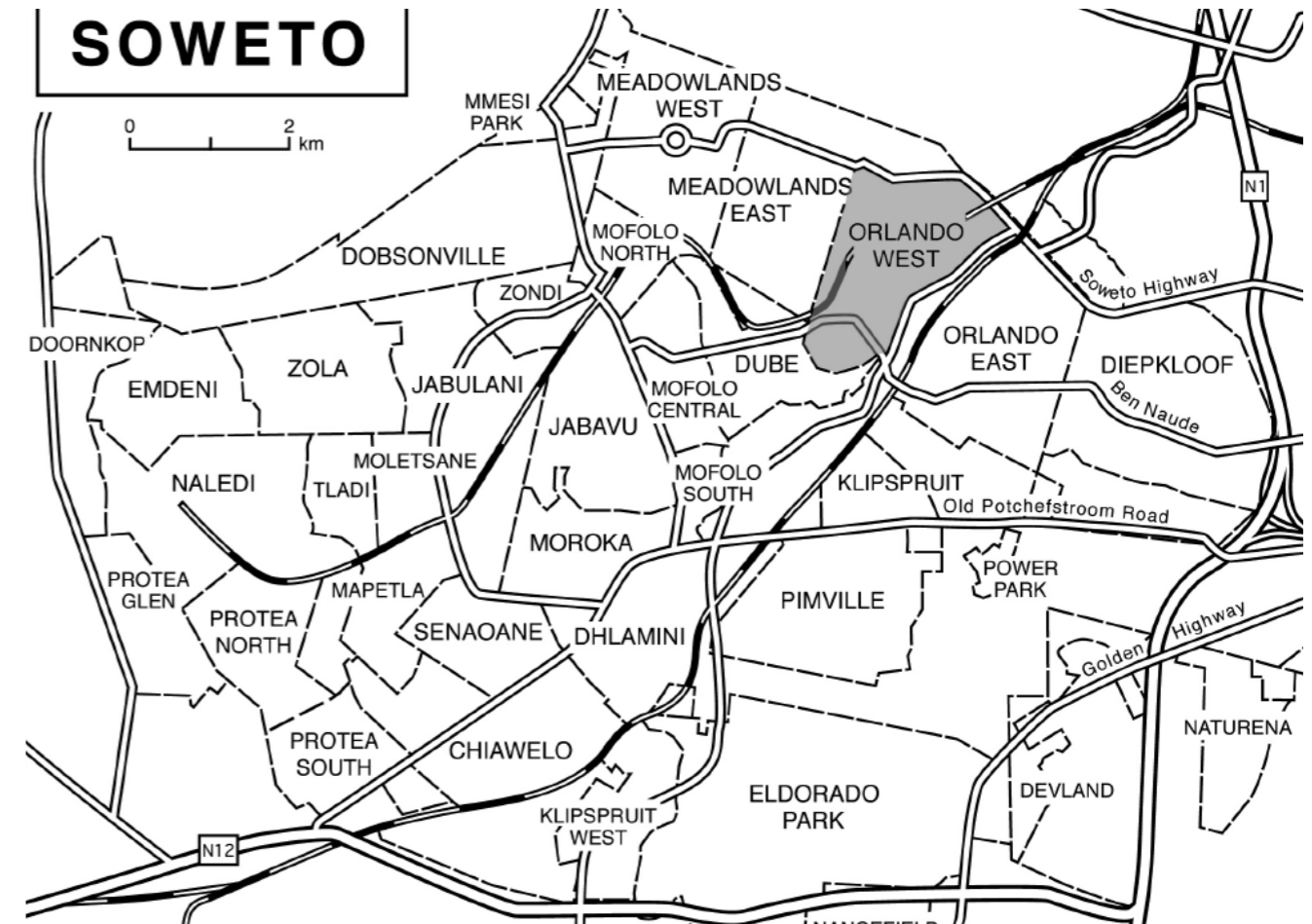


Figure 115: Aerial Image Orlando Source: Orlando Illustrated

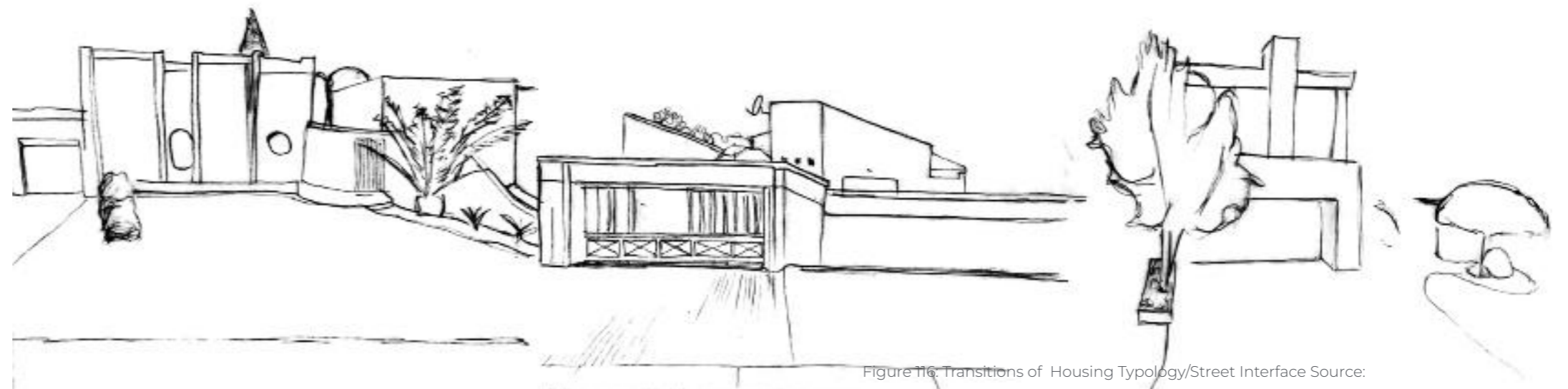


Figure 116: Transitions of Housing Typology/Street Interface Source:

The street has a vibrant energy which is carried throughout the day and night. It includes a variety of recreational and social amenities which includes a school, clothing store, museum, restaurants and artworks and arts and crafts. The range of economic traders include formalized trading, spazas, street vendors and mobile traders. The street is widely used by residents, pedestrians, cyclists and tourists.

The next chapter of this paper dives into theory which acts as a guide to explain the characteristics and urban nature of Orlando West and Vilakazi street.



Figure 118: Housing Typologies Source: Author



Figure 119: Aerial Image Orlando-West Source: GIS

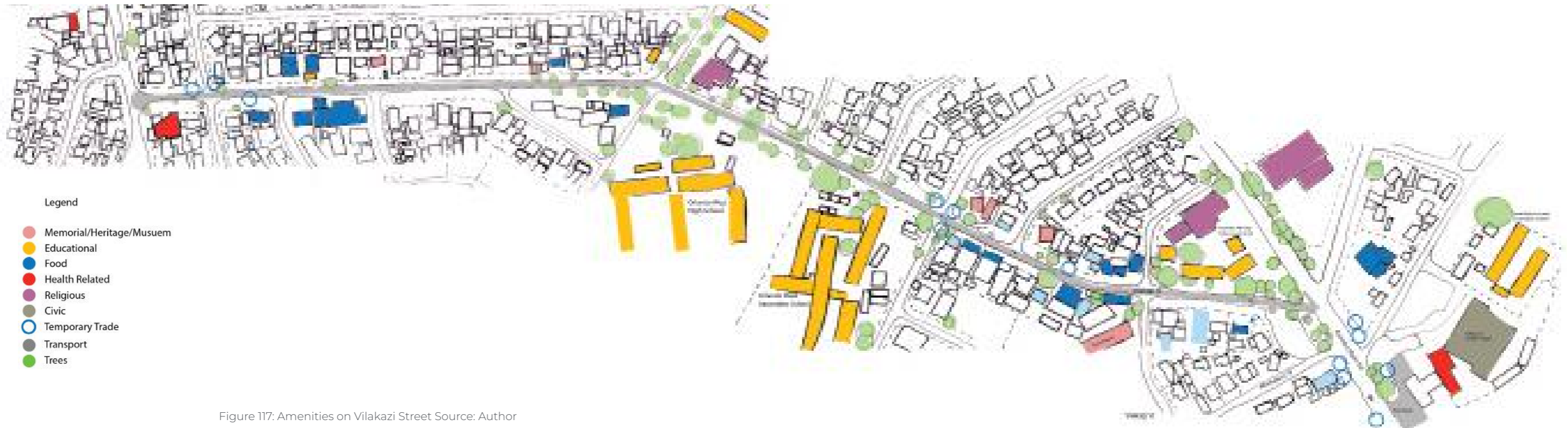


Figure 117: Amenities on Vilakazi Street Source: Author

09 Theoretical Framework

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The main reason for undertaking this study is to explore the processes that have enabled residents of Vilakazi street to reclaim their voice. The neighbourhood has undergone socio-political, economic and physical transformation and growth since its inception as a dormitory space. This predominant street of Soweto has also become a symbol of liberation and freedom which attracts national and international tourists daily. Soweto can be seen as transition area in post-apartheid South Africa with transition that is not yet complete.

The city of Johannesburg (COJ) has since put much investment into the Soweto as seen through the Corridors of Freedom and Transit-Orientated developments. COJ also intends to improve Soweto through policy reform and co-design. Responsive, hands-on approach to the prior top-down approach which was not yielding results. (SSAF, 2021).

This chapter looks at five main themes of interest that guide the research and design solution - Just Spaces, Power Dynamics, Kasi's Genius Loci, Activating Public Spaces and Maintaining Memory. These issues are relevant to Soweto and Vilakazi street in exploring what it is today, how it's come to be and its potential for the future. The first theme unpacks the Apartheid spatial planning processes which have created unjust spaces such as the Township

of Soweto while reviewing planning theory and process which may enable just living spaces. As a designer the role I would want to play would be to address the injustices faced by residents of Vilakazi St. and respond with a just design solution which enables and in the processes accounting for the voice of the residents.

9.2 LEGISLATIVE POWER ON URBAN SPACE

As stated earlier, Townships such as Soweto were never designed as commercial, industrial, mixed-use developments. They instead were intentionally designed as mono-utilisation residential dormitory areas where labourers lived. This resulted in a poor quality of life for residents as their access to socio-public amenities were inaccessible. This is due to then governance and spatial planning of the Apartheid regime which used legislation to make it legal to segregate people according to their race.

The Land Act of 1913 restricted the right to ownership of land of the Black African population (Nieftagodien, Gaule, 2012). Furthermore the Group Areas Act of 1955 divided occupation and ownership of land according to racial groups (Gambill, 2018). However, the Housing Act of 1920 and Slums Act of 1934 enforced people of Colour into the peripheries of the city, furthest away from the CBD (Central Business District) where infrastructure was limited (Harrison, et al, 2007). These areas were

separated by physical barriers such as buffer zones of open land which is illustrated in the contextual analysis.

Soweto's barriers include buffer zones of open land such as the mining belt and is further enclosed with road infrastructure which further divides the internal neighbourhoods which include Orlando West (Nieftagodien, Gaule, 2012).

Twenty years after democracy, South African cities remain stubbornly divided, fragmented, inconvenient for the poor and uninspiring. This stems from large part from the legacy of apartheid spatial planning (Provoost et al., 2016).

Africans were further divided according to their languages or culture:

apartheid planning...reinforced 'nativism' by creating residential areas that were deemed for a group of people who spoke the same language. Whites were defined by history, law and modernity while the indigenous population was defined by geography, tradition and culture (Dondolo, 2018, p. 97).

Thus it can be seen how the apartheid legislation has segregated Black people from economic opportunities allocated in the city. It has segregated Black people from accessing good

quality social amenities as the Townships were predominately consisting of residential houses. It has also further divided Black people within the townships through the use of road infrastructure and mining belts. Movement within neighbourhoods was restricted and thus created a hostile unsafe and violent environment for residents at the time. Uncle Sphiwe further elaborates on his childhood experience:

During the early 1990s when we were growing up there were a lot of Hippos (armoured personal carrier). Soldiers would patrol the streets, sometimes they would throw tear-gas at us so we can run back home because they didn't like us hanging out in groups. If we walked in groups of more than three people, we were perceived as gangsters.



Figure 120: Xitsonga Source Author

9.3 TOWARDS SPATIAL JUSTICE

The Apartheid regime eventually fell and by 1994 South Africa held its first democratic election. Democracy can be seen as a system of governing which depends on the will of its people. Jones states:

decisions should be made in the open and should be based on consent, and that institutions and organizations should be accountable' according to the principle that legitimacy of rule depends on authorization by ordinary people affected by the consequences of actions (2000, p17).

Egoz, Jorgensen and Ruggeri write on 'Defining Landscape Democracy: A Path to Spatial Justice' in which they explore various democratic theories and processes.

Lillin Knudtzon speaks on democratic theory and its influence on decision making in planning. Primarily the state aims to ensure individual's rights and freedom are part of the state's core value. The author refers to this as indirect citizen power through a system of voting. (Knudtzon, 2000)

While in a liberal democracy, citizens would vote for political representatives or bodies who then make decisions on behalf of the citizens which are aligned to citizens economic interests. As part of their rights, citizens are able to protect their interests through protesting, lobbying and written inputs which politicians should be motivated to listen to in order to be re-elected.

Participatory democracy sees citizens having direct input in decision making through public participatory processes where citizens essentially have decisive power. Knudtzon labels this as a, "direct democratic decision making... [where] people have genuine influence" (Knudtzon, 2000, p. 6). This planning approach sees citizens become a resource to developing viable solutions.

Langhorst puts together a framework for landscape democracy in public urban space in which he lists criteria which investigate the relationships between space and cultural, social, economic, ecological processes. He states that the right to the city is not just about material access to urban space, but a renewed right to urban life (Langhorst. 2000, p107-108).

Moreover, the author shows the New York High Line as an example of the important role, aesthetic visual practice plays in the design of urban public space. The urban renewal of the once industrial, freight transporting, railway line, today is a linear public space known as 'Park in the Skyline'. The public space is occupied daily by locals and tourists. The space provides views of prominent landscapes (i.e. Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building), it has become a pivotal point for artists, street art and art installations. The park is also inclusive of children who use the eccentric playground. All these factors contribute to the genius loci of the park – the urban space has meaning, memory, a sense of place and a community identity.

Similarly, Orlando has various landmarks in the forms of heritage sites,

the Orlando soccer stadium and the Soweto Towers which locate the neighbourhood. Residents have reclaimed their homes which have been upgraded from the original match box housing to now a mosaic of visually pleasing architecture which enhances the quality of the street edges. The low walls enable a permeability between residents and pedestrians in which to interact. Furthermore the additions of tuck-shops, cafes, restaurants, backyard rentals and other forms of trade contribute to the local economy of the neighbourhood.

9.5 RECLAIMING PUBLIC SPACE: STREETS

The UN-Habitat (2013) lists criteria for a prosperous street and the results from such. Prosperous streets can enhance the quality of life, equity and social inclusion, promote economic growth, safeguard environmental sustainability, clear the way for access to basic services and accommodate non-motorized and motorized forms of transport.

Factors which contribute to good street design include its ability to ensure pedestrians can walk to a direct route. The quality of walkability factors such as the side walk, street width and street connectivity must be good. The street should be able to access basic services such as electricity, piped water and sewerage. The street should also enable economic productivity which can contribute to the economy on a local scale. Social capital is also an important factor and should include education, public space, health related services and safety and security. Moreover the quality of the natural environment can be measured through the air quali-

ty and CO2 emissions. (UN Habitat,).

Vilakazi street meets most of these criteria but it is only effective on a very small scale spanning just over 1km. It thus would not adequately service the neighbourhood of Orlando West but can act as a catalyst for expanding prosperous streets.

9.6 MEMORY & MEMORIAL (HERITAGE)

This theme highlights the importance of retaining and remembering the painful struggle of the past and its importance in guiding a better future.

Soweto has been culturalized by the vibrant and diverse residents who occupy the space, in turn recreating a sense of place. Furthermore, Vilakazi street is unique for its heritagisation and museumification of the historical socio-political events against the fight for liberation. Dondolo defines heritagisation as "the process and its output of remembering and rewriting of the past in post-1994 and the giving of a new meaning to the old both by the state and the previously oppressed communities." (Dondolo, 2018, p. 96).

9.7 CONCLUSION

The theoretical framework serves as a guide or lens in which this research project focuses on. The research methods include participatory process where a voice is given to residents in the form of face-to-face interviews where their expertise and experience of the change of Vilakazi over time were collected and analysed.

10 CASE STUDY

10.1 AMANDLA SAFE HUB

The centers are a safe-hub located in Khayelitsha, Gugulethu Mannenburg in Cape Town and Diepsloot in Johannesburg. The safe hubs are focused on youth development. The Safe-Hub provides “a physically and emotionally safe space where young people can access quality after-school programmes, strong role models, and a range of services, opportunities and support” (Amandla, 2021).

The centre address challenges and issues that the youth face such as drugs, violence, teen pregnancies and a lack

of academic support.

The Safe Hubs provide various programmes for youth such as safe space support, play-based learning, life skills and employment and skills training.



Figure 122: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org



Figure 123: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org



Figure 124: Safe Hub Source: SafeHub.org

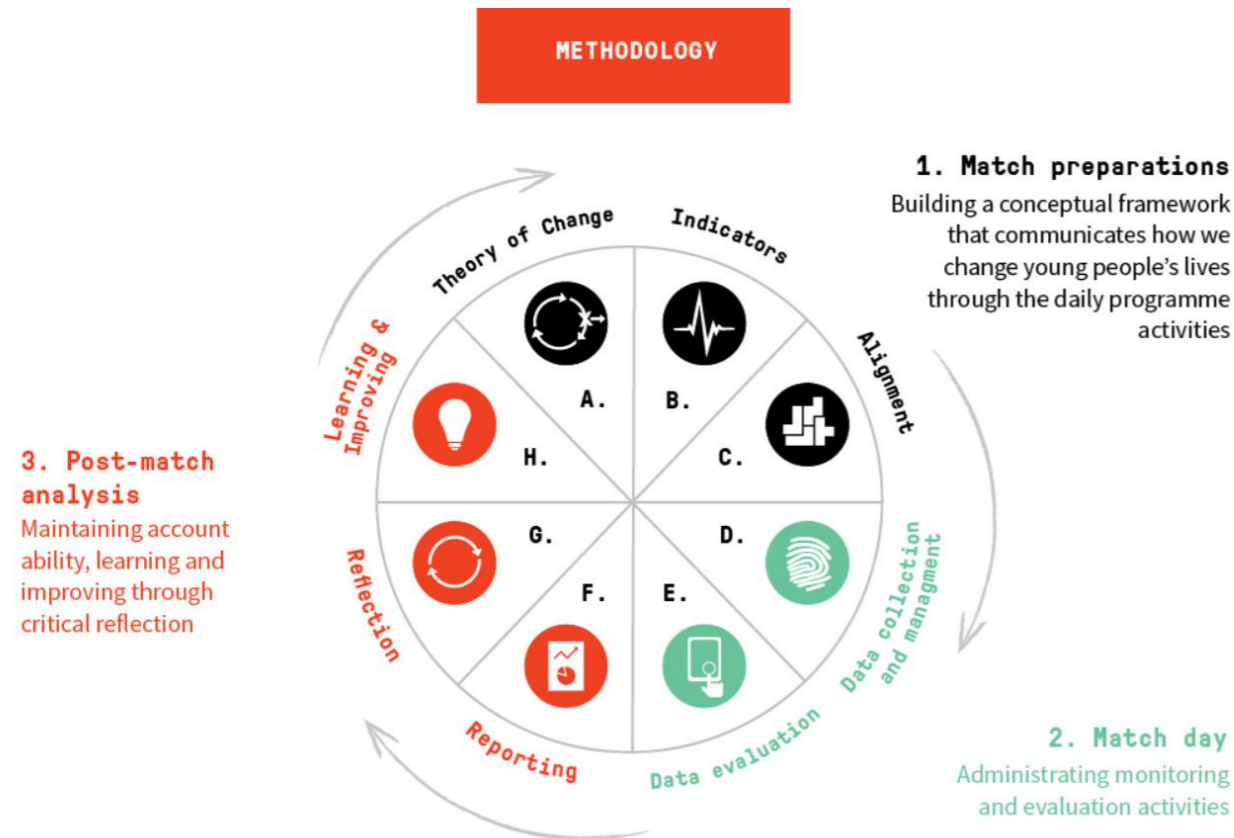


Figure 121: Methodology Source: SafeHub.org

11

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Metro and Regional Scale



Figure 125: Metro Scale

The metro scaled mapping looks at Soweto in relation to Johannesburg and illustrates the physical barriers of road infrastructure, buffer zones of public open space and separation of races. The existing road barriers create

a boundary surrounding Soweto. The main roads being Randfontein street in the north (R41), the N1 on the west side, Moroka Bypass (N12) in the south and Adcock street on the east.

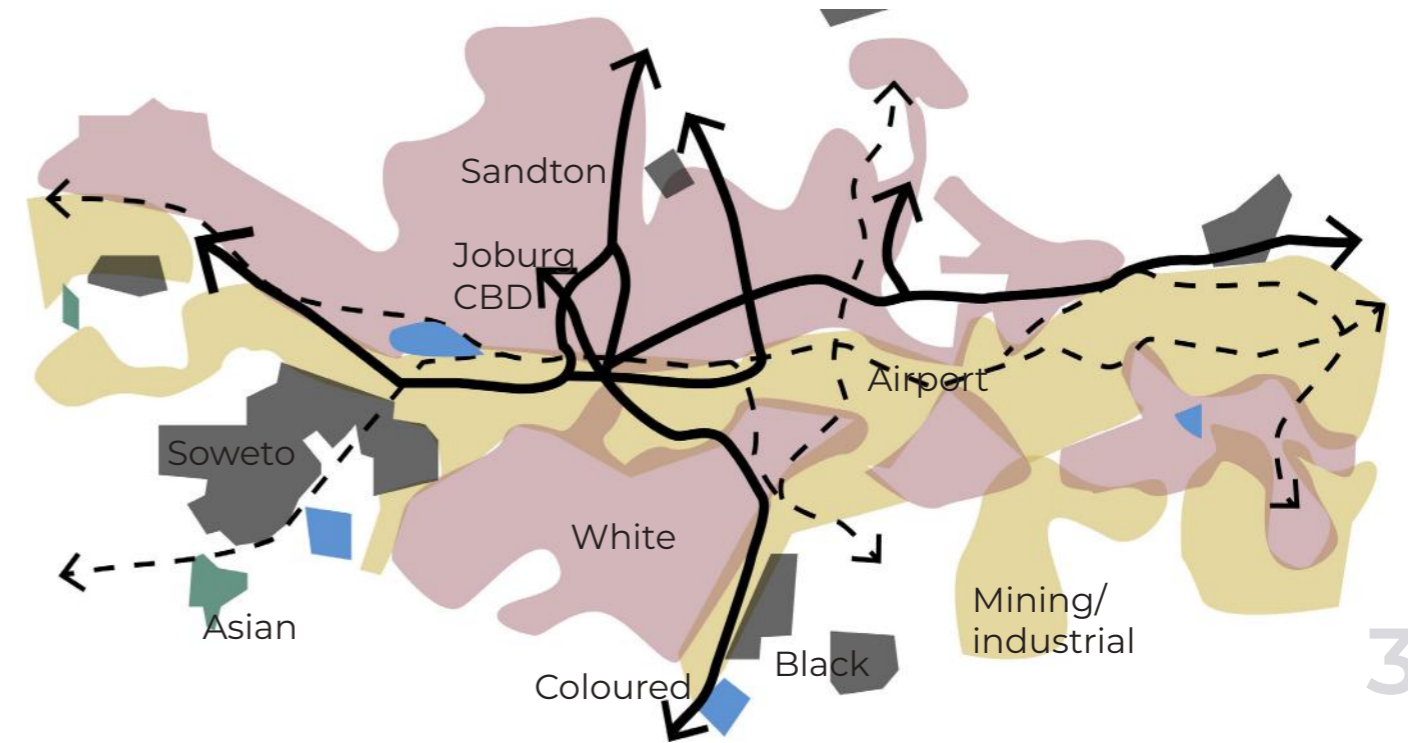


Figure 126: Racial Segregation

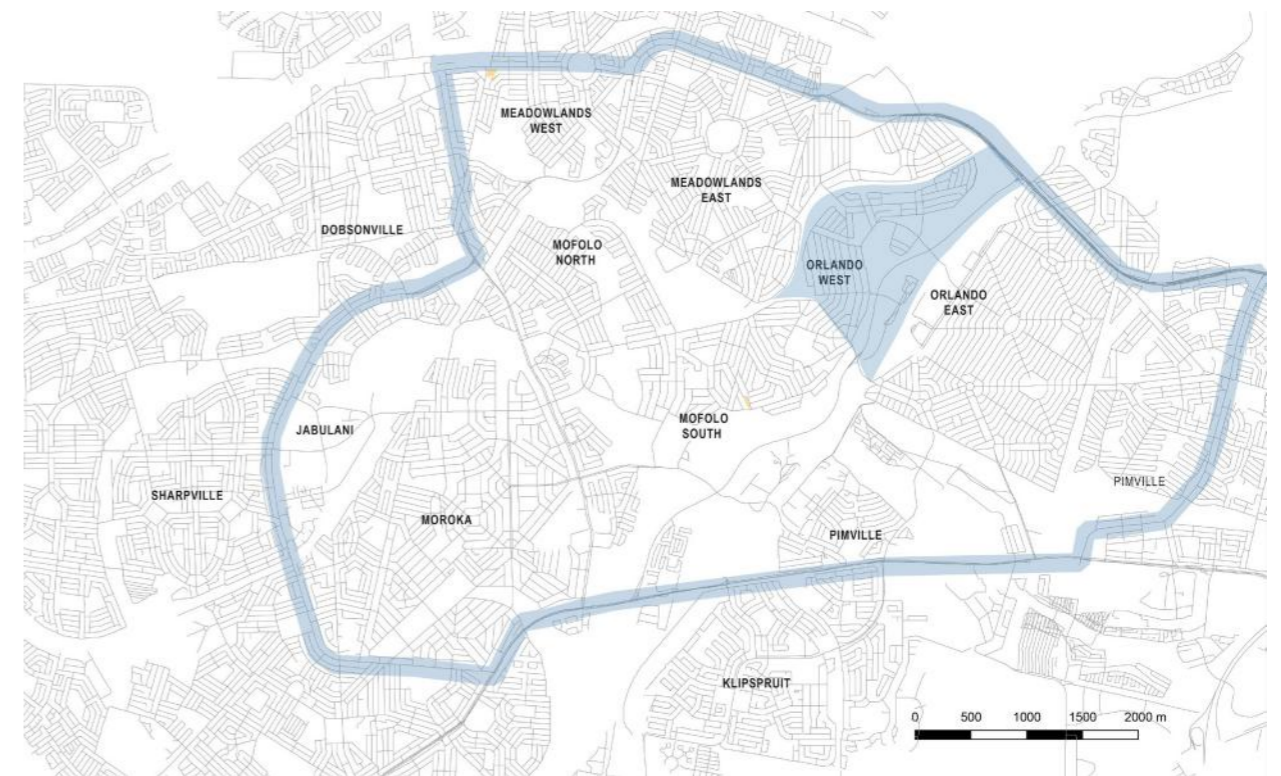


Figure 127: Soweto Study Area

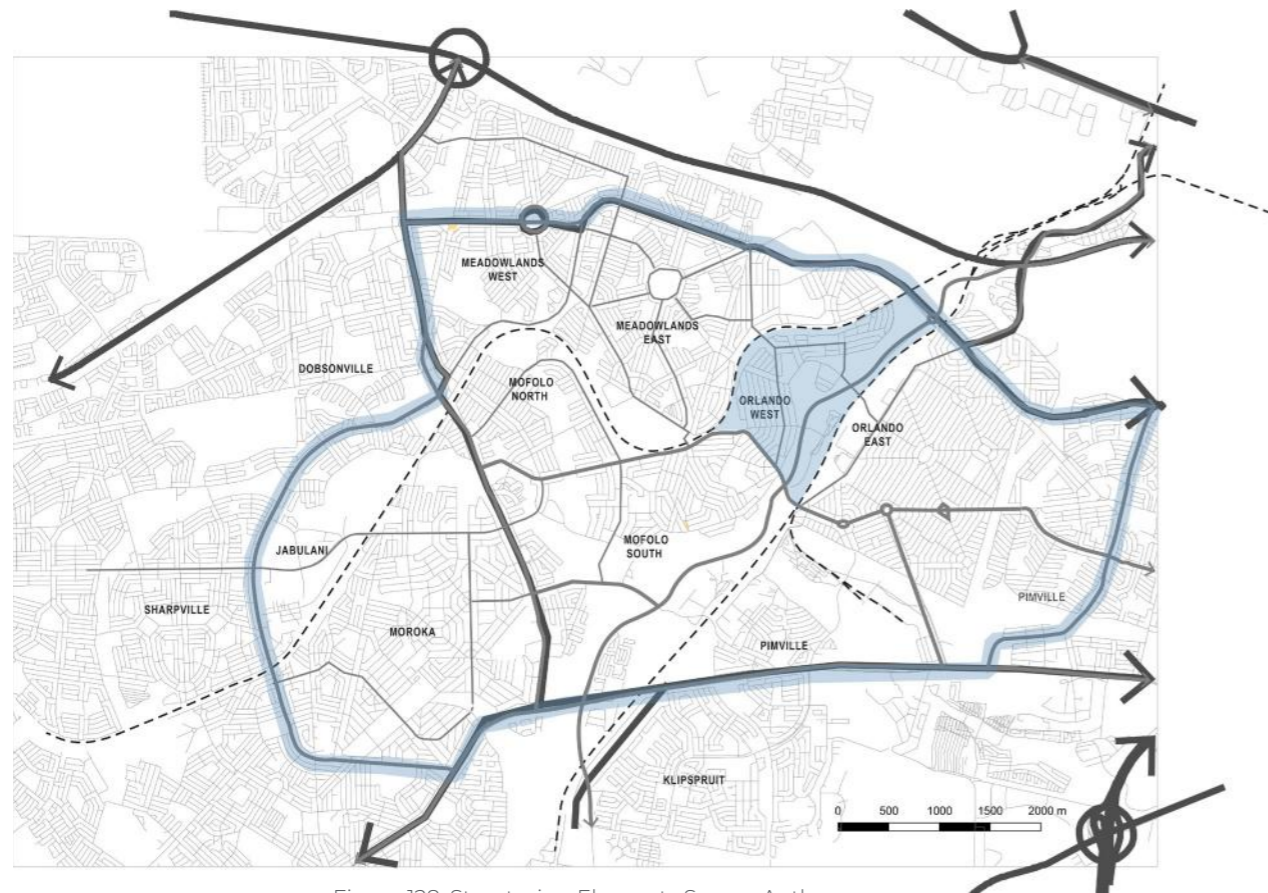


Figure 128: Structuring Elements Source Author

The mapping continues to show internal barriers of separation which divide the neighbourhoods of Soweto through highways, roads and railway lines. Furthermore there are limited entry and exit points into the township. The minimum distance to Johannesburg’s Central Business District from Orlando West is 22km or 25 minutes via private transport (Google, n.d.). The shortest route via bus, starting from Khumalo main road (adjacent to Vilakazi street) to Johannesburg CBD is 55 minutes on average (Google, n.d.).

The contextual mapping continues on to show the current zoning in Soweto. The majority (48%) of the township is zoned as Residential, followed by Community Facilities (22%) and Public Open Space zoning (15%). The rest of the area is zoned as either Business (9%) or Municipal (6%) (SSAF, 2021).

The existing ecology includes the Klip River which runs along wetlands, in addition to parks (SSAF, 2021).

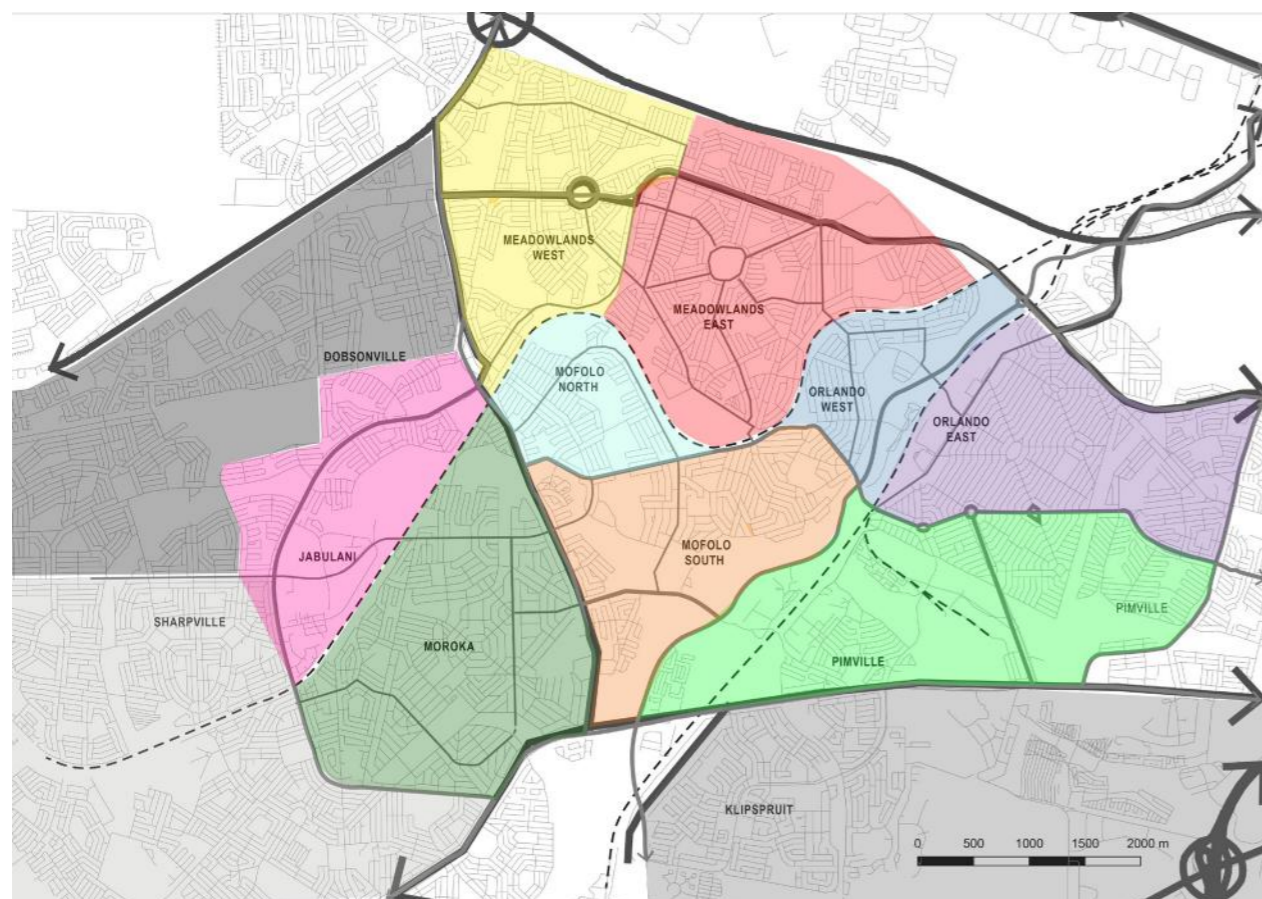


Figure 129: Neighbourhood Divide

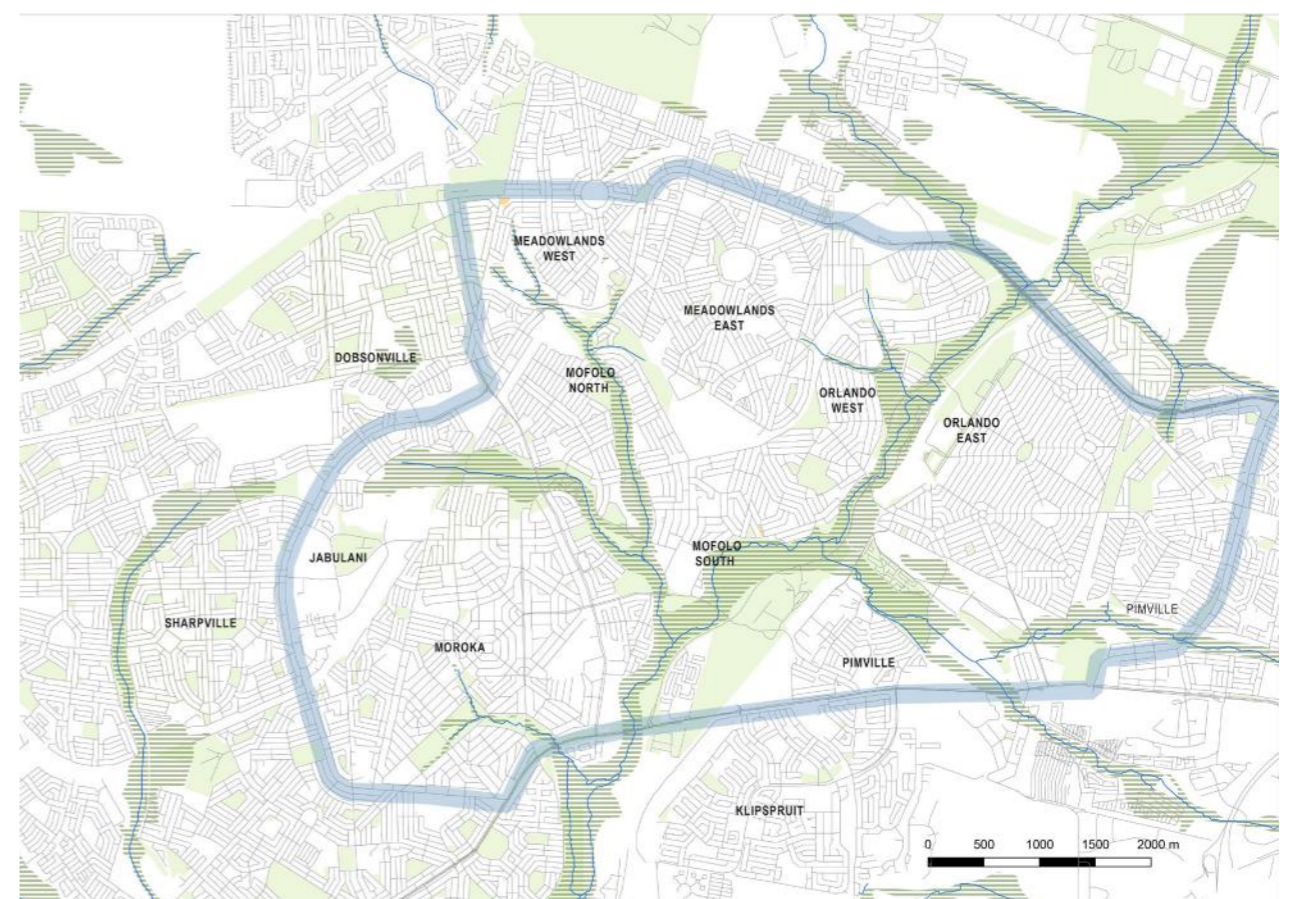


Figure 130: Ecological Assets

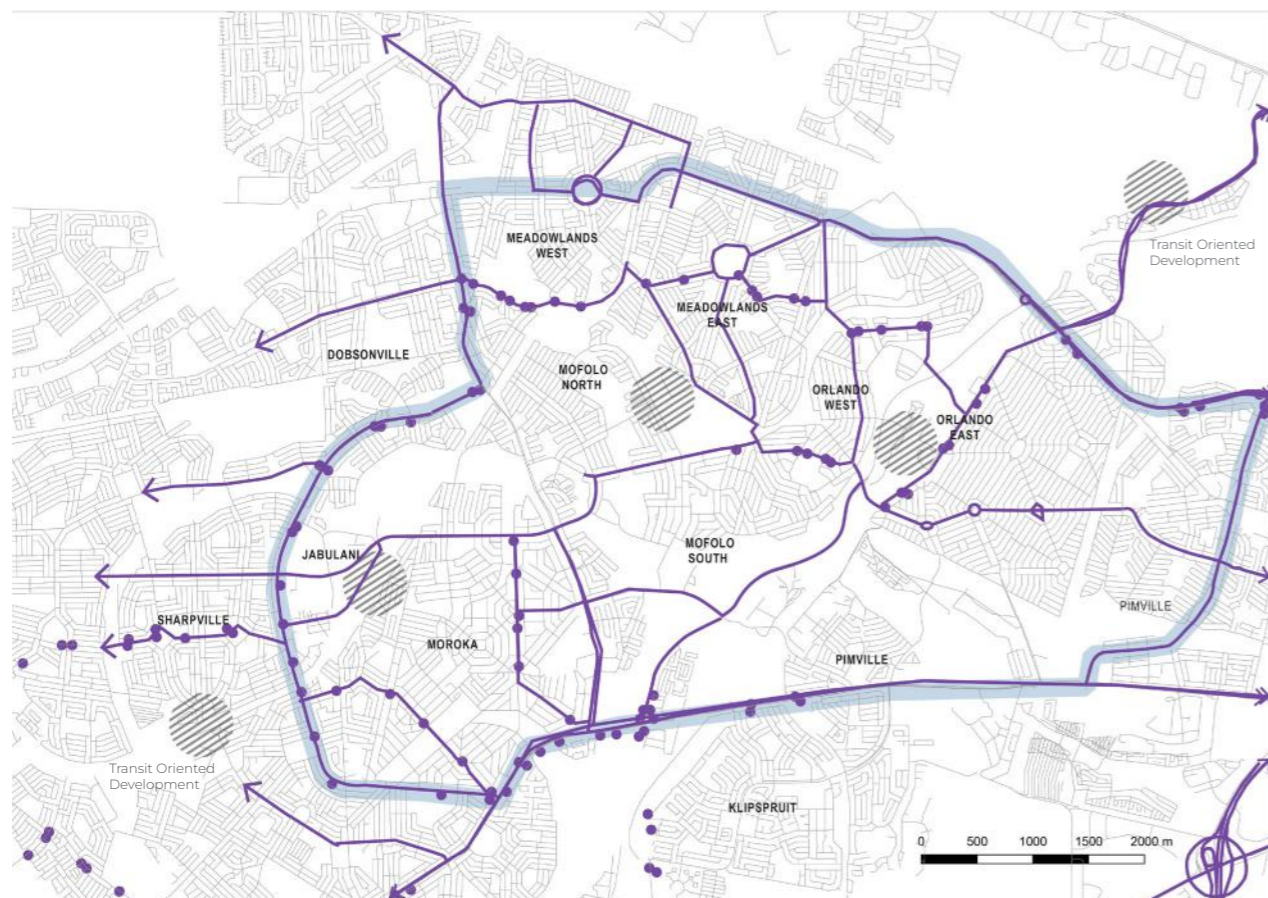


Figure 132: BRT Network & Transit Oriented Development

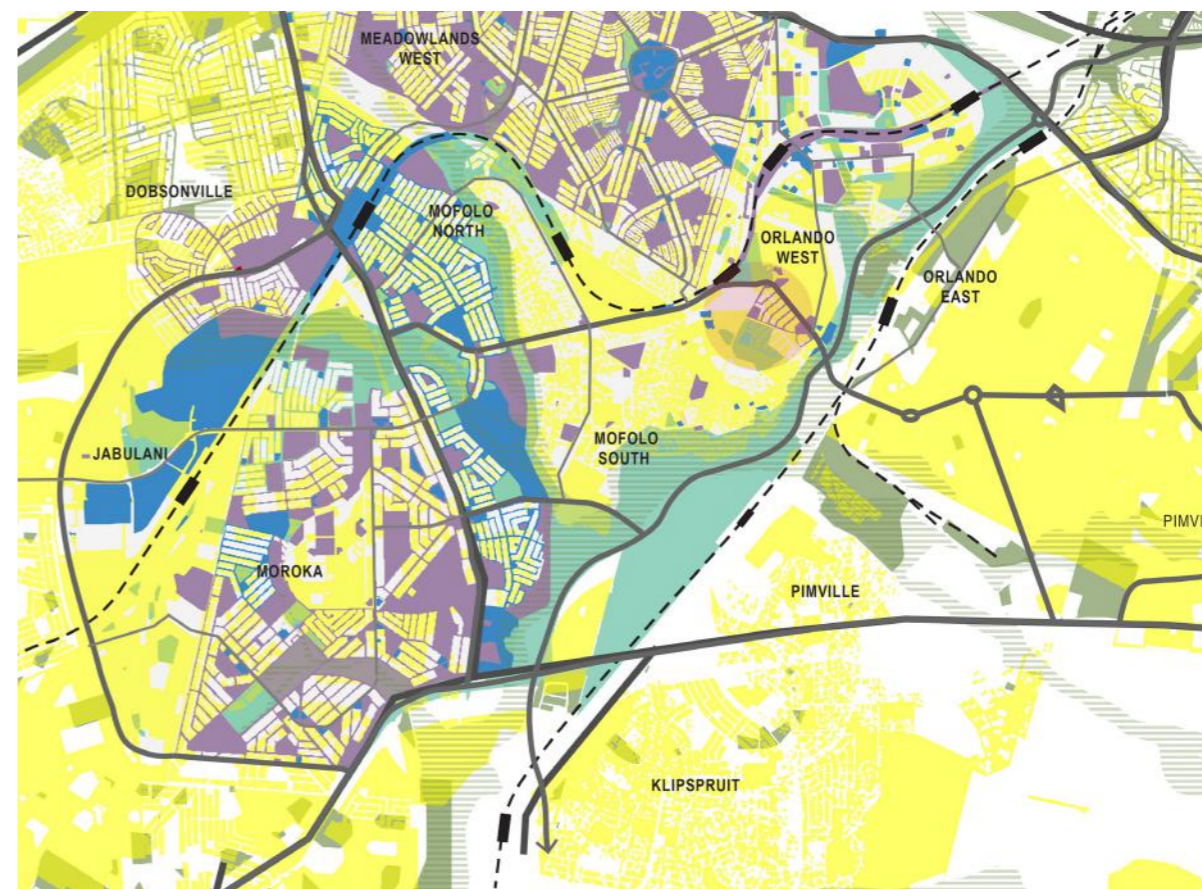


Figure 134: Zoning

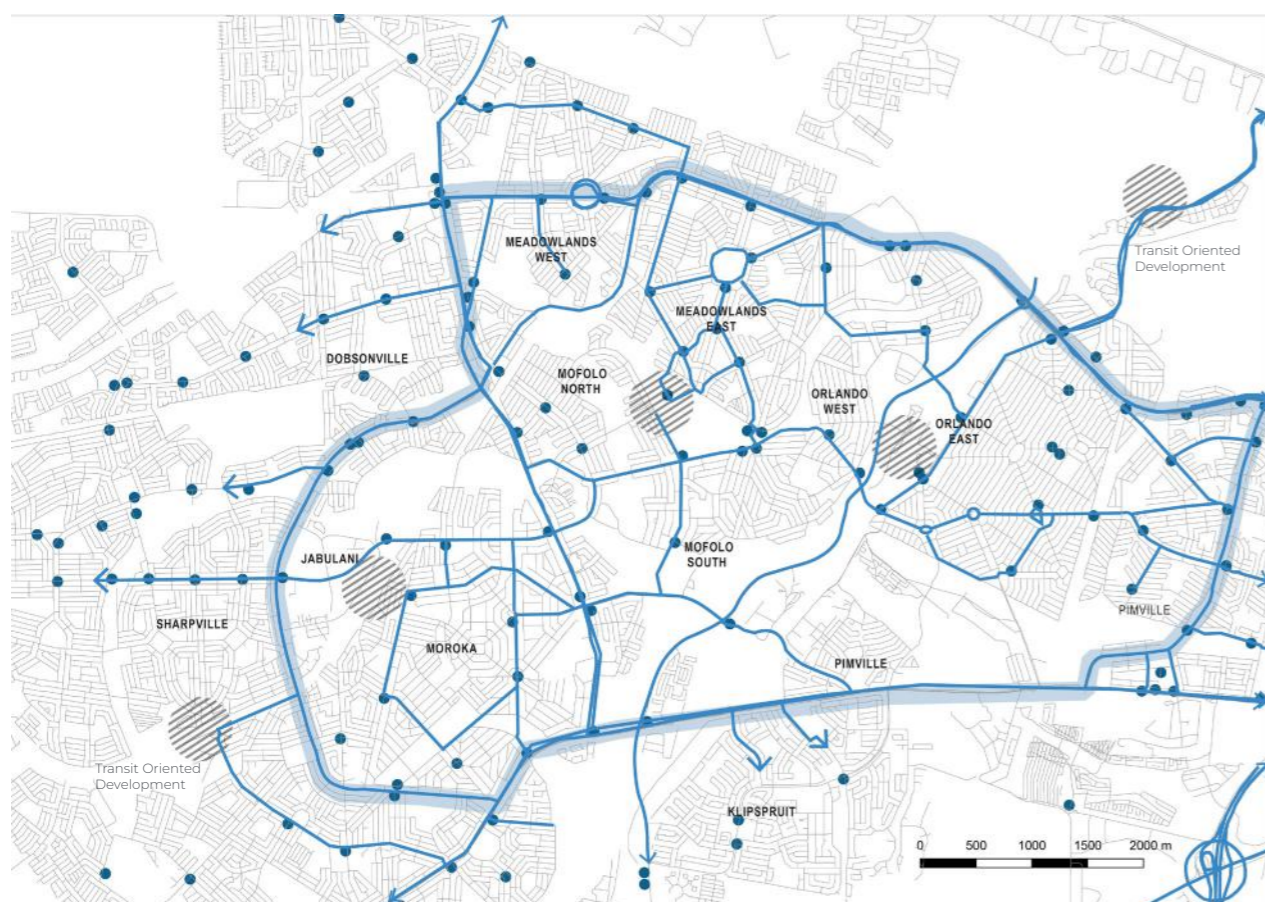


Figure 133: Taxi Network & Transit Oriented Development



Figure 135: Opportunities

12 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Neighbourhood and Street Scale

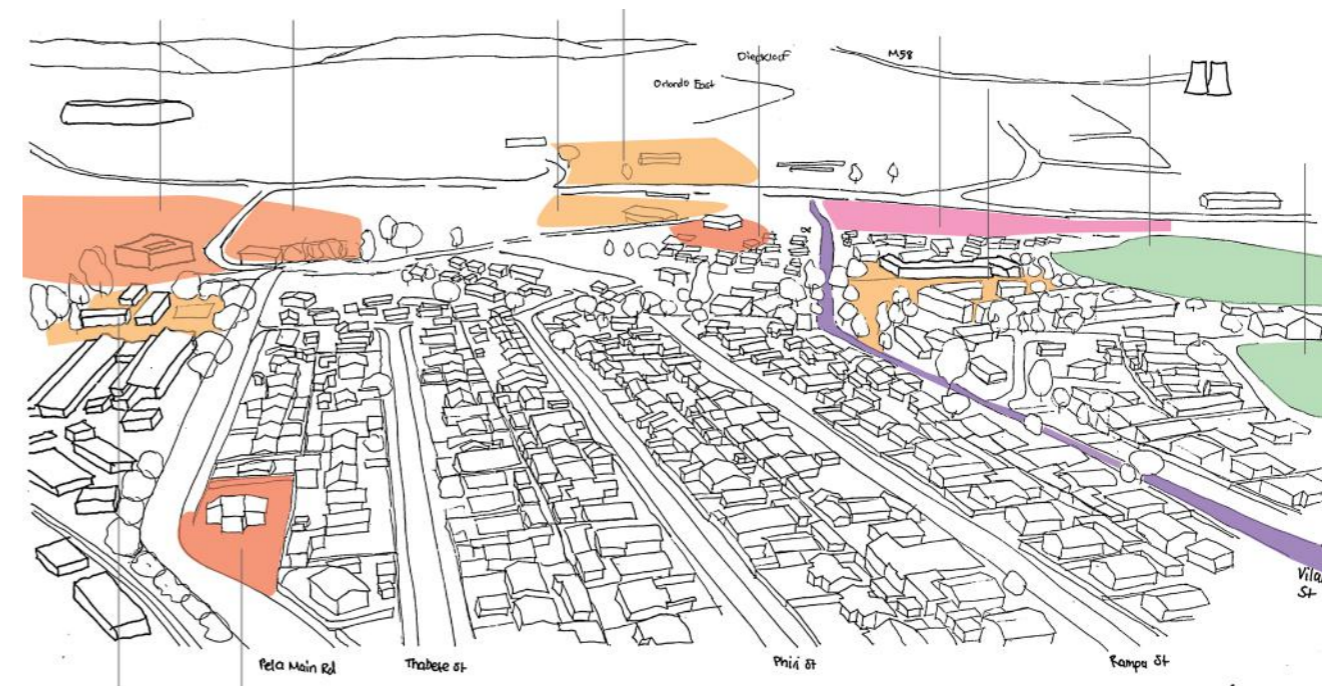


Figure 138: Orlando West



Figure 136: Constraints



Figure 137: Orlando West Landmark

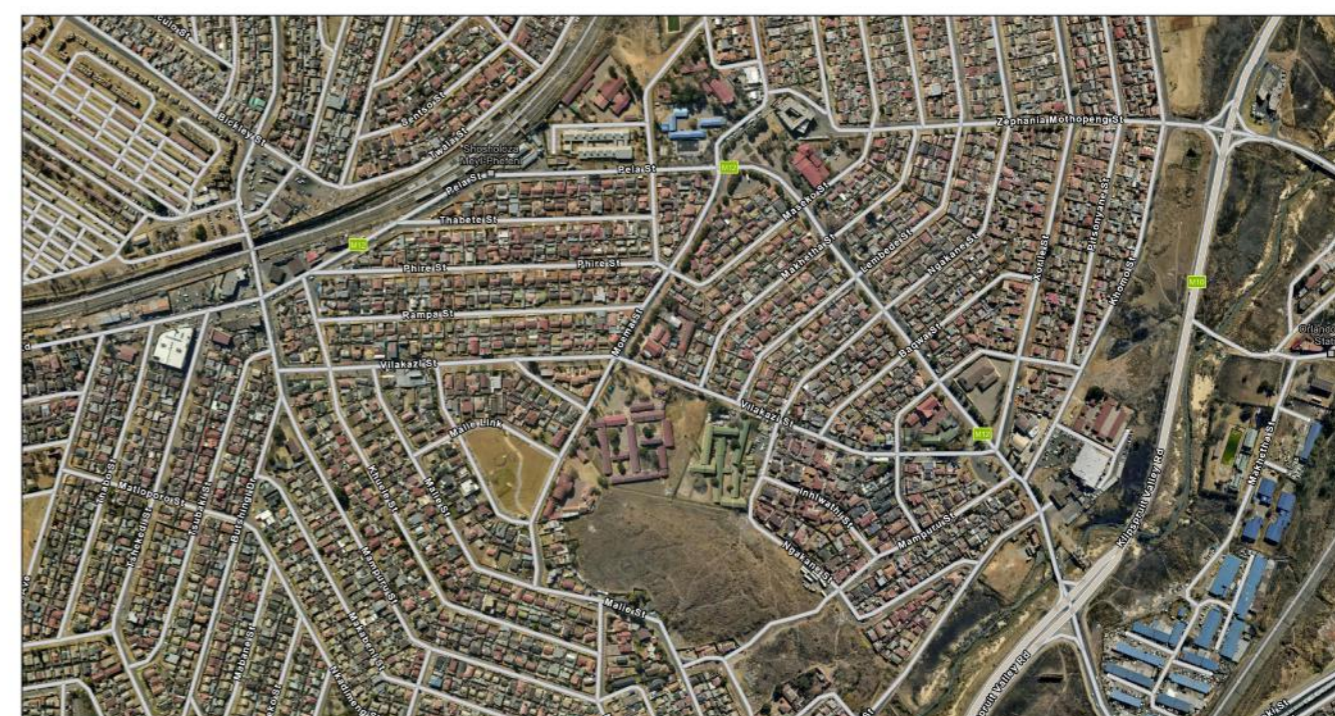


Figure 139: Vilakazi Surrounds

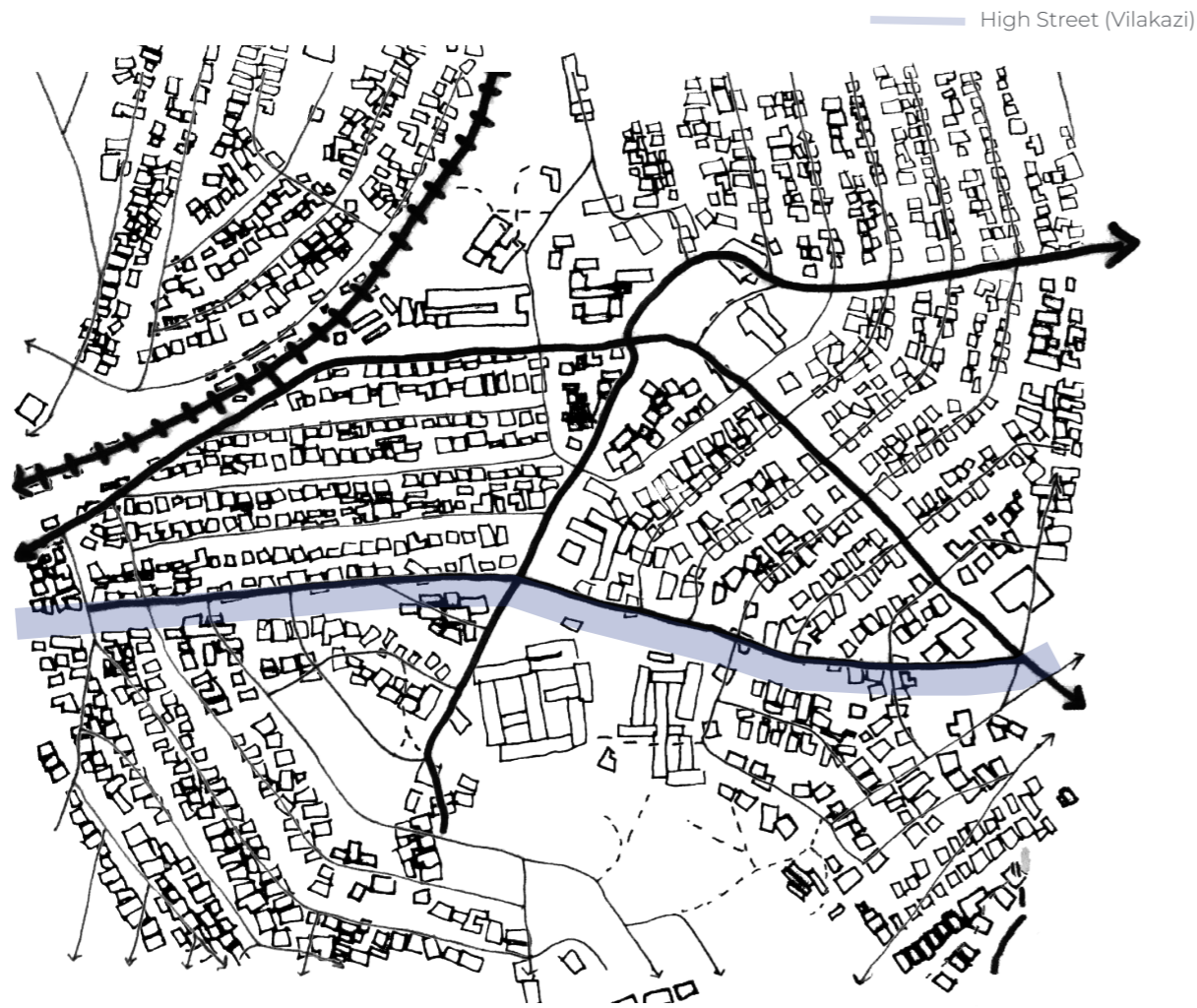


Figure 140: Vilakazi Surrounds Built Fabric

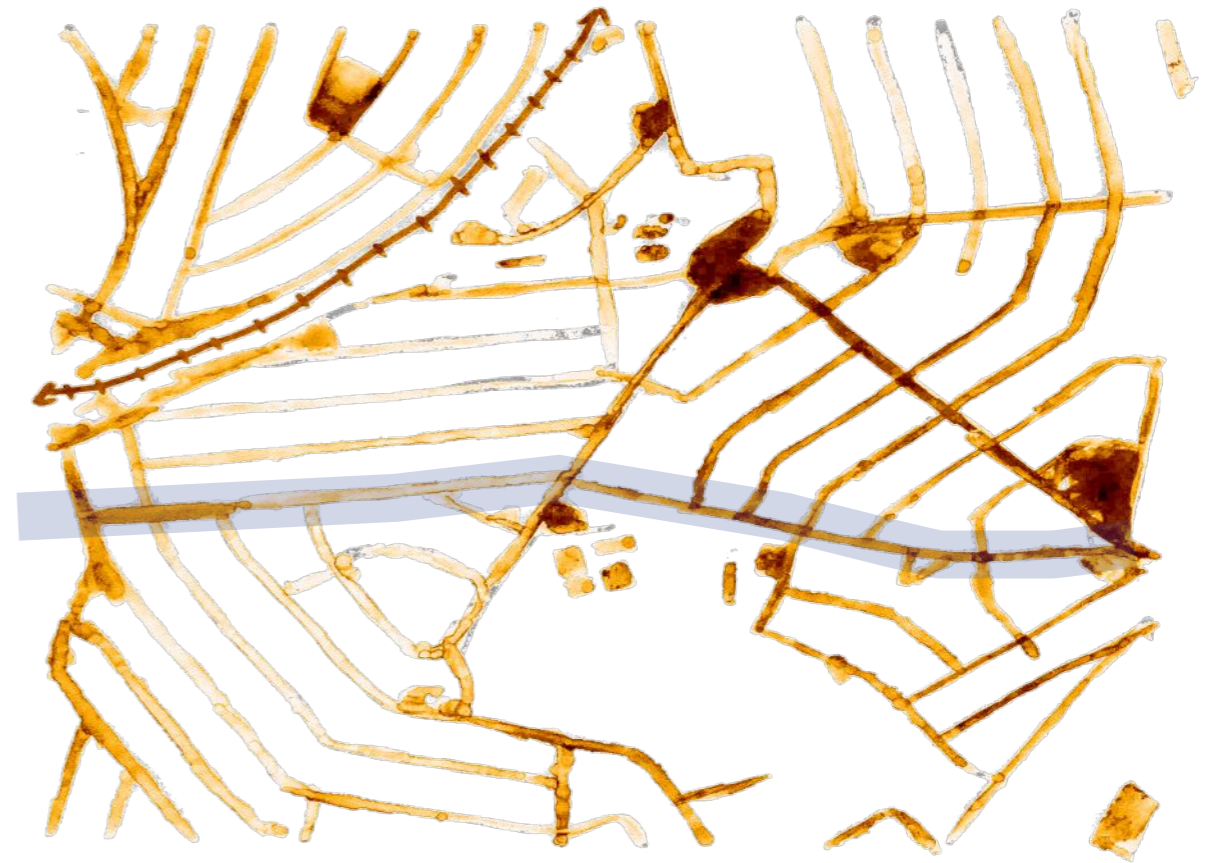


Figure 142: Vilakazi Surrounds Hard Open Public Space

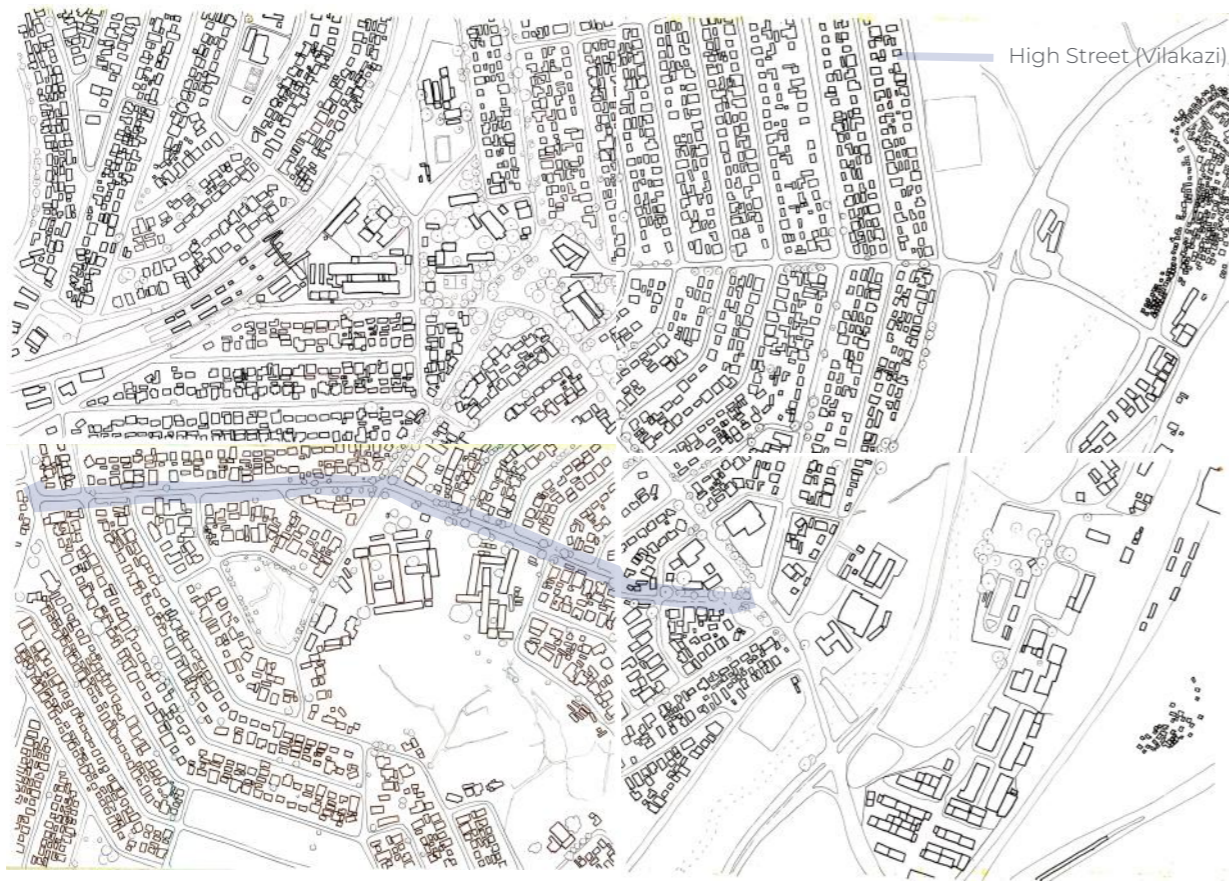


Figure 141: Vilakazi Surrounds Source Author

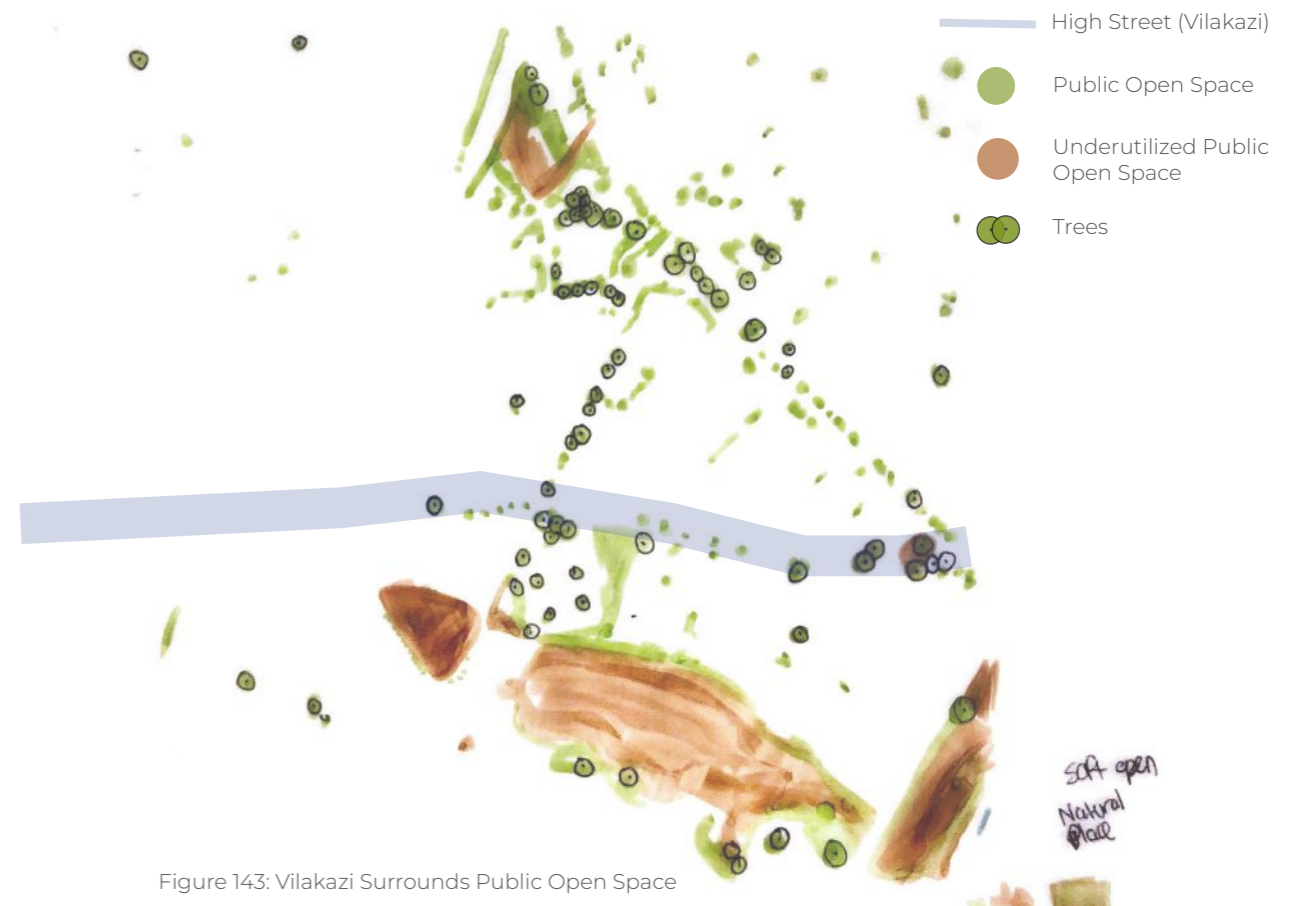


Figure 143: Vilakazi Surrounds Public Open Space

13 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities

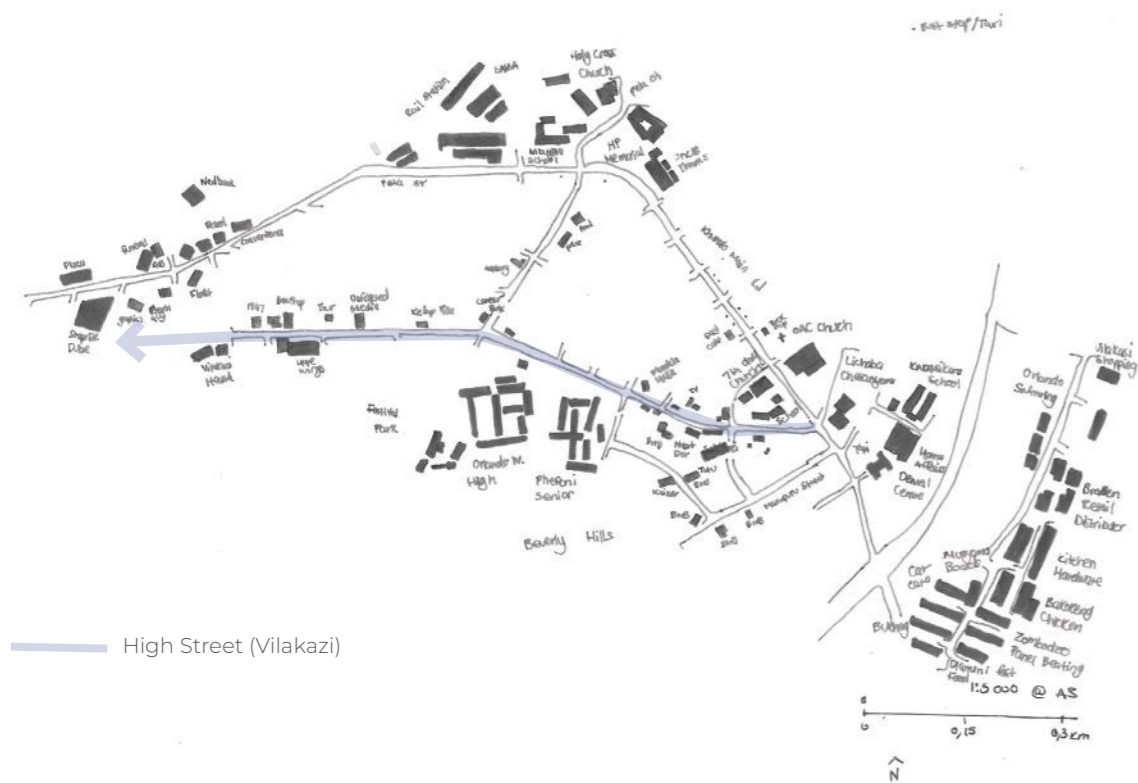


Figure 144: Social Facilities Source Author

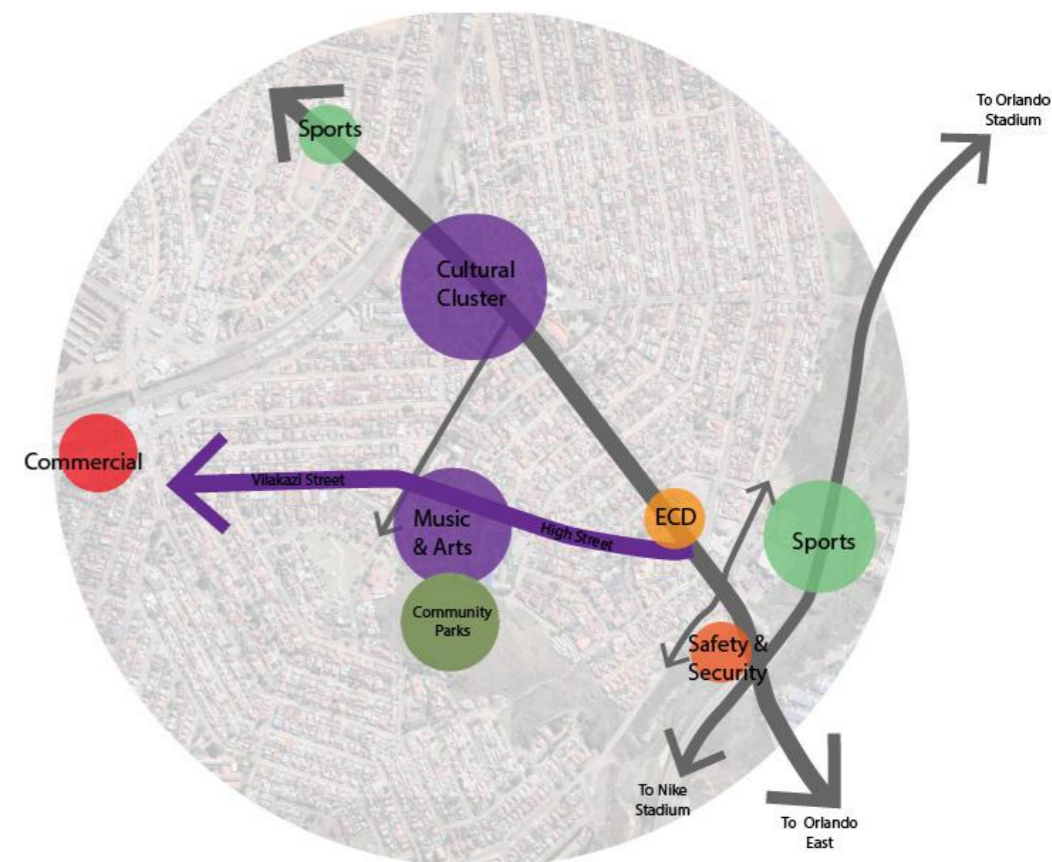


Figure 146: Social Clusters Source Author

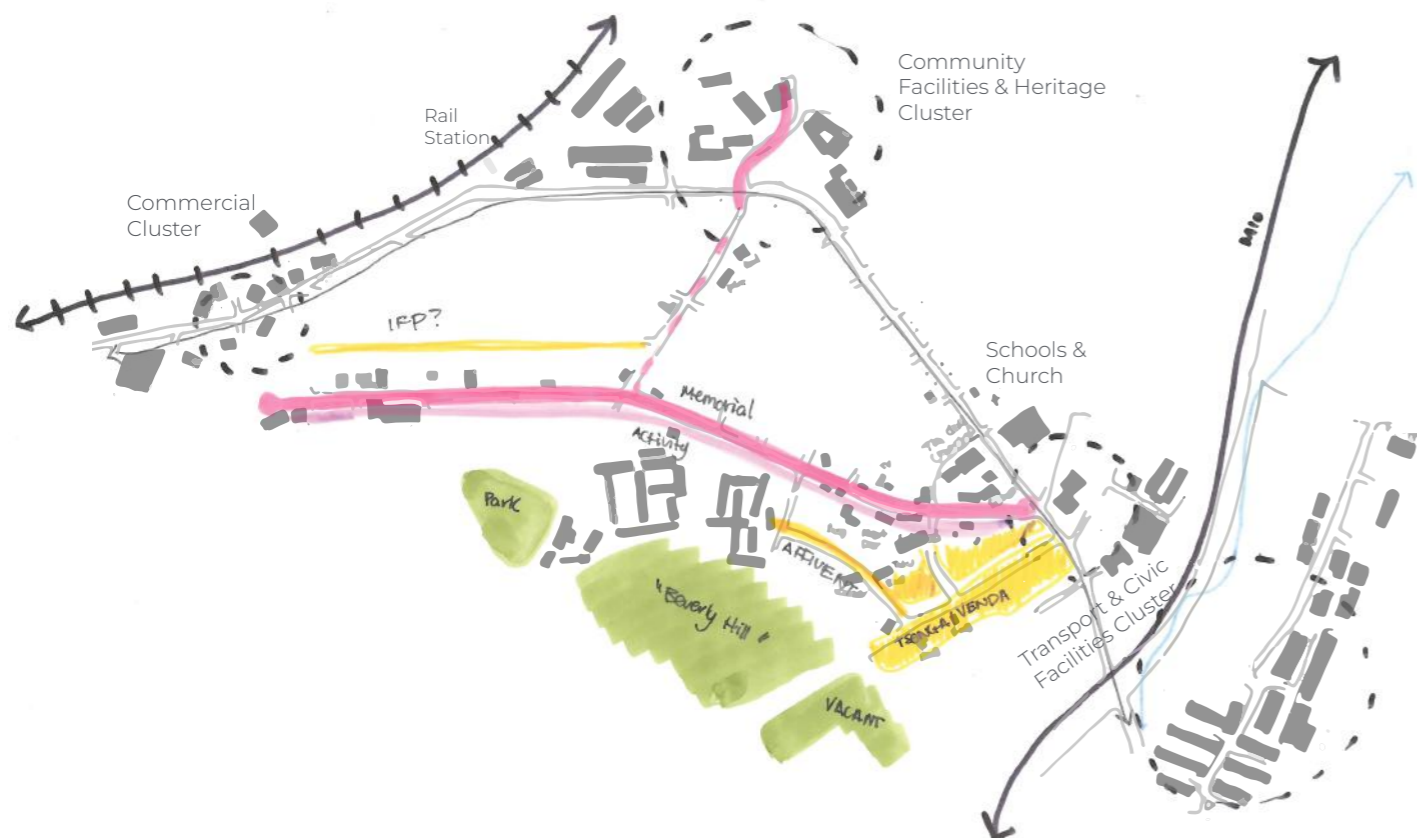


Figure 145: Cultural Narrative Source Author

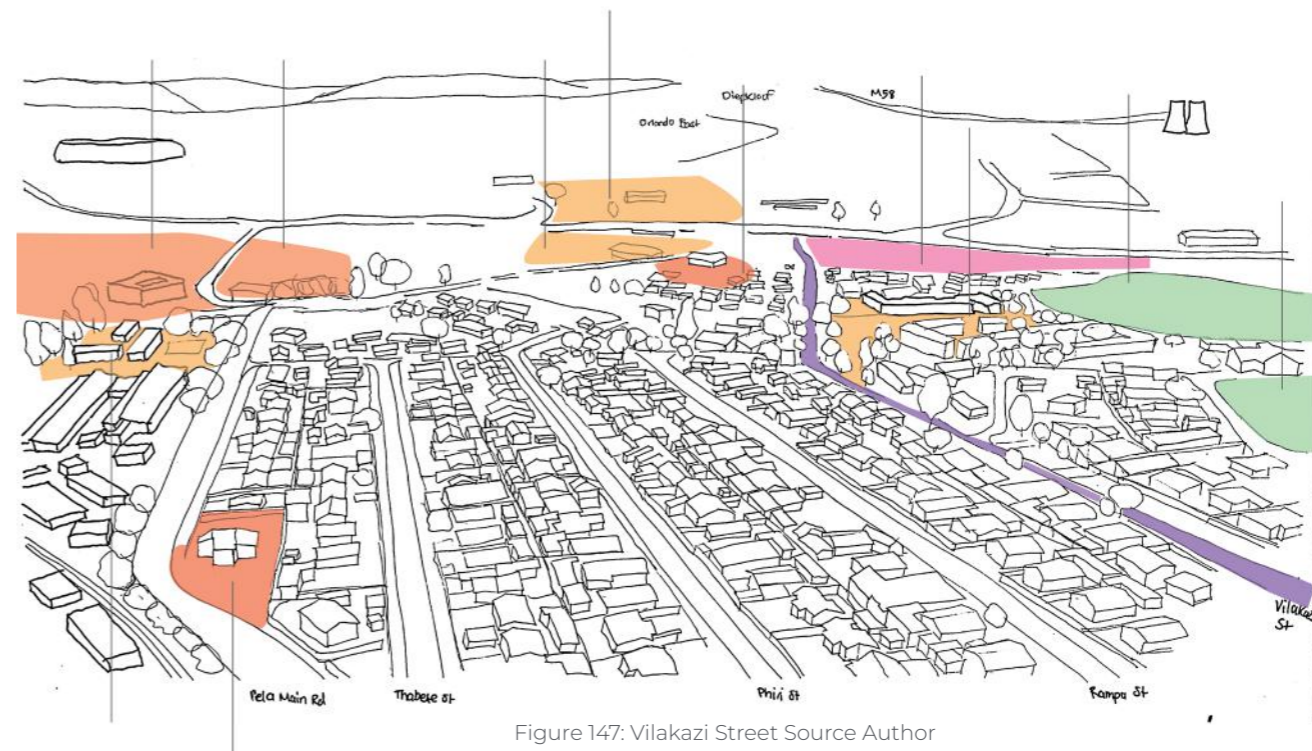
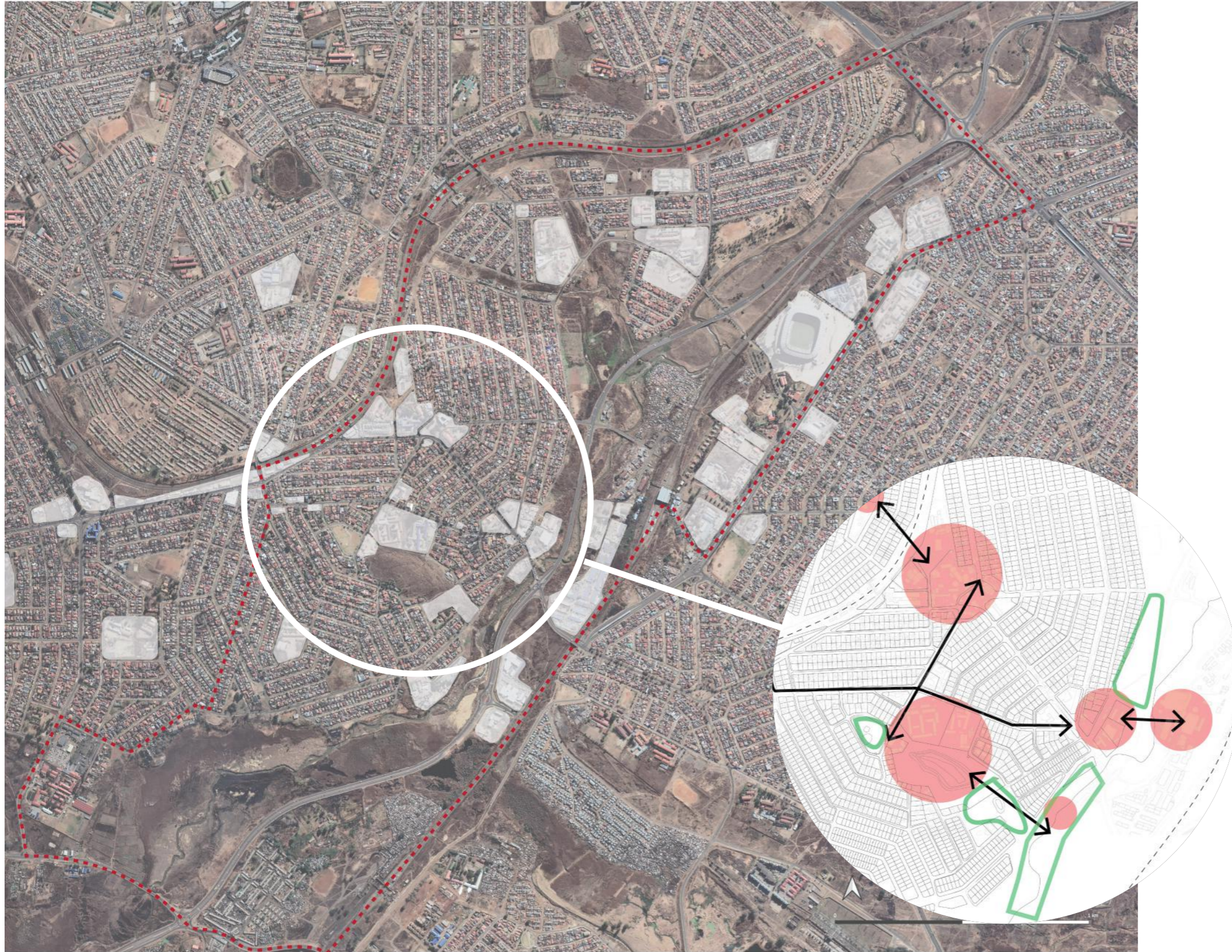


Figure 147: Vilakazi Street Source Author



Through the contextual mapping of the Orlando West and Vilakazi area, the main findings show a high cluster of community facilities such as churches and community centers. This is followed by primary and secondary schools such as Orlando West High School, Orlando West Secondary School, Mbuyisa Makhubu Primary School, Shomang Primary School and Umbuyisa School of Arts and Culture which fall within a 1km radius within Vilakazi street. In addition, the cultural mapping picks up on notorious streets such as Inhlwathi Street which is where affluent members of the community like Kaizer Motaung (former football player and founder of Kaizer Chiefs). The students of 1976 marched towards what is today the Hector Pieterse memorial. The area also includes public open spaces that are underutilized such as the hill along Inhlwathi Street which is also located behind the Orlando West schools. Another open space includes an underutilized park on the east side of the Orlando West schools. And lastly, further open space exists along the Klip river which runs through Soweto.

These areas have been identified as areas of opportunity and intervention which is further explored in the design framework.

Figure 148: Key Areas of Opportunity Source Author

14 FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

Concept

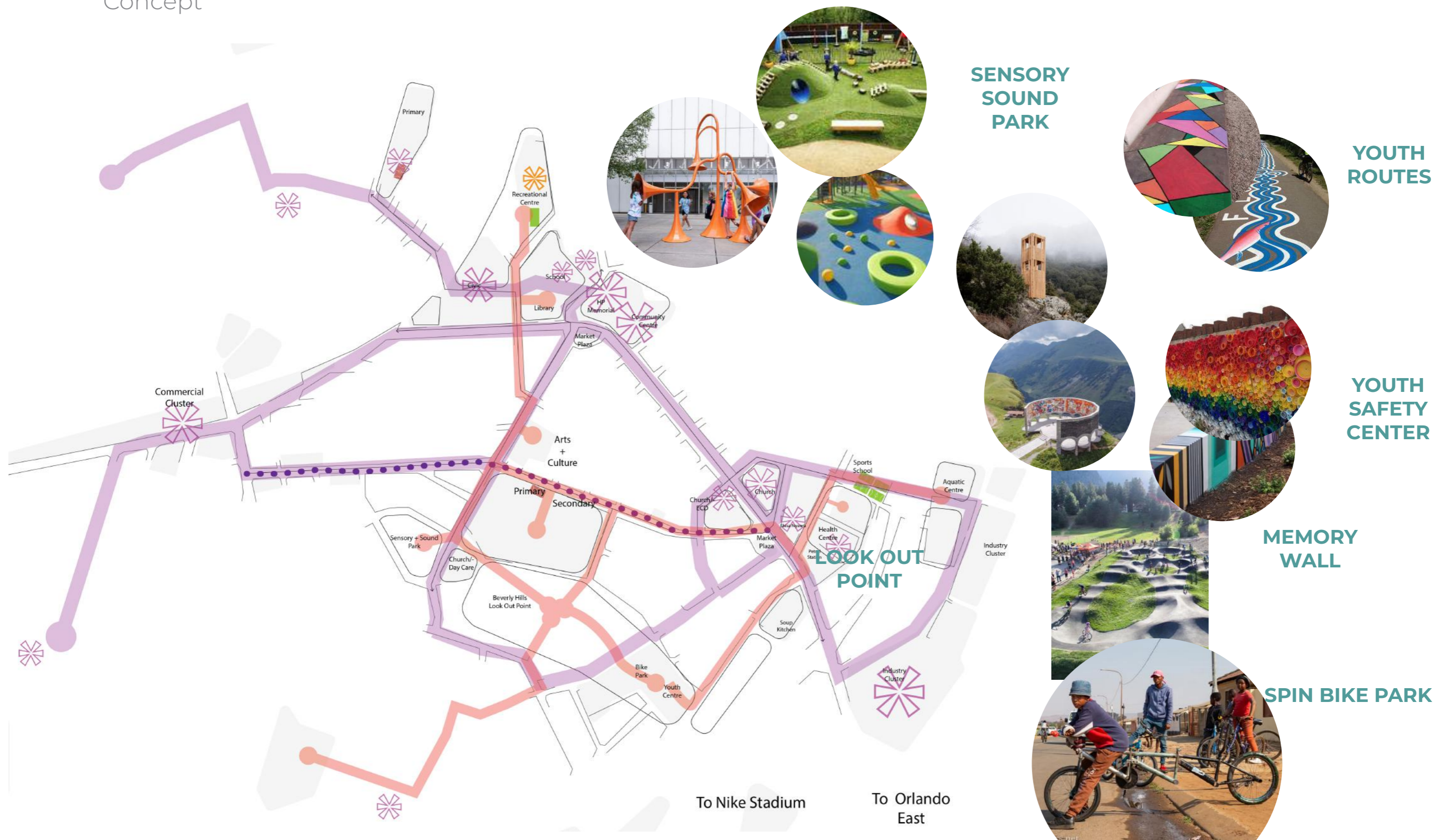


Figure 149: Conceptual Framework Proposal Source Author

14 DESIGN STRATEGIES

- 01 DESIGNING SPACES FOR YOUTH
- 02 RECLAIMING UNDERUTILISED SPACES
- 03 ENABLING ACCESS THROUGH THE CONNECTION OF YOUTH AND PUBLIC SPACES

Using the many existing schools as an opportunity of a network of skills which provide life long learning in Orlando West, key schools are identified to be upgraded for specific skills such as Arts and Culture, Sports, Computer and Technical skills. The schools will then also operate night schools for adults to improve necessary skills. These schools will be connected virtually through Wifi and youth routes – designated and safe pedestrian routes.

Using the public open space that are underutilized, these spaces will be upgraded to included designated youth spaces such as a bike park, youth centre, play park and aquatics centre. On a larger scale these spaces work with existing youth and community centers in Orlando with the Nike Academy and soccer stadium located towards the south of Vilakazi.

Along with the designated youth spaces, the framework proposes a green park and walking route along the Klips River just below the proposed youth centre. This route will make use of community gardening and reconnect to the Sports School. All these proposed spaces will work together with the existing public facilities to only improve quality of life for the youth but the Orlando West community as a whole.

15 DESIGN FRAMEWORK

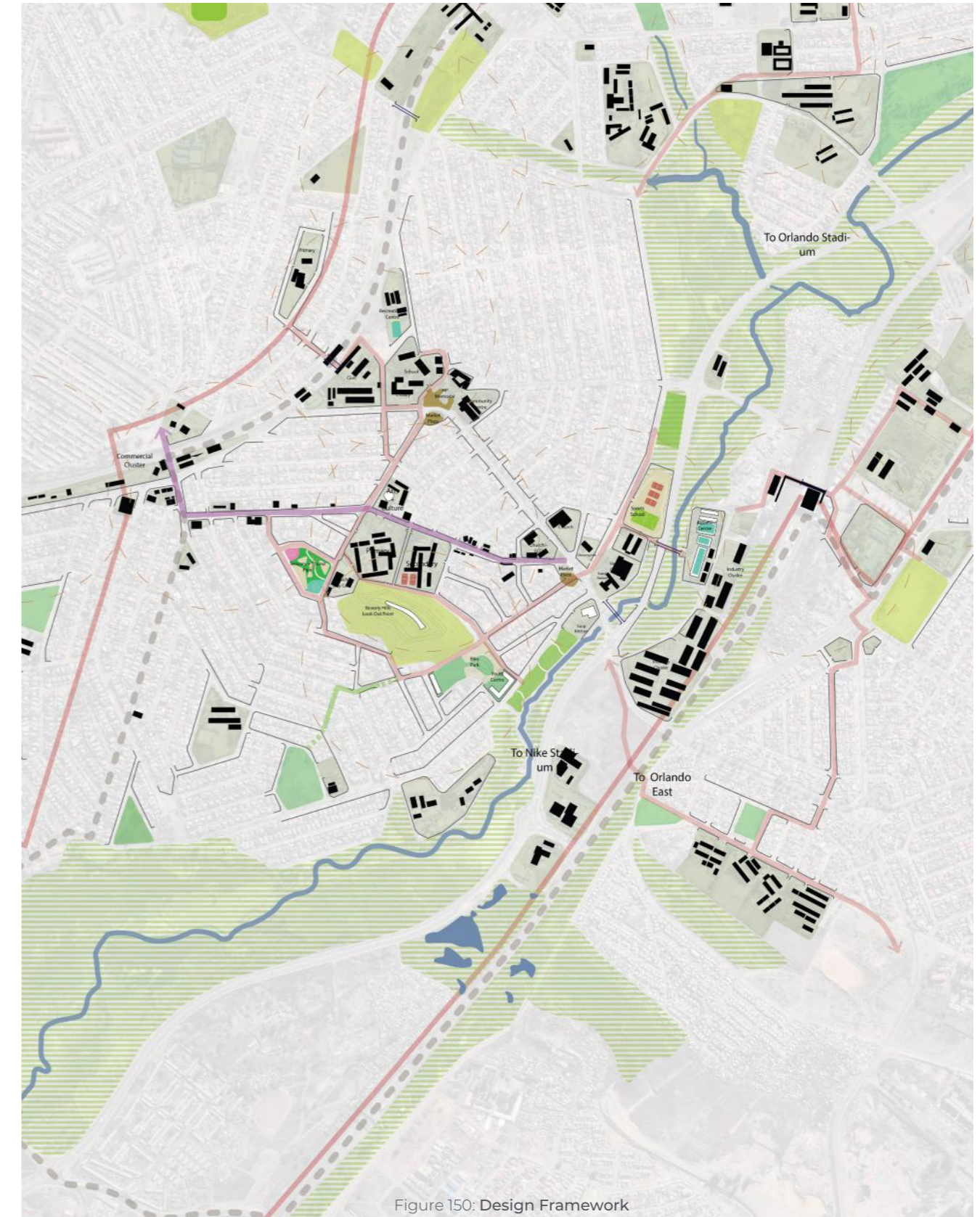


Figure 150: Design Framework

Proposals

Programmes

- Skills development/night schools
- Day-care for preschoolers
- Media studies offered at arts & culture school
- Debating
- Tshivenda and Tsitonga 2nd additional languages offered at schools

Infrastructure:

- Access to free wifi at schools
- Library center at HP school
- Aquatic center at local swimming pool
- Sports grounds at schools
- Courtyards at schools

Youth Centre:

- Community garden & soup kitchen
- Bicycle and skate park

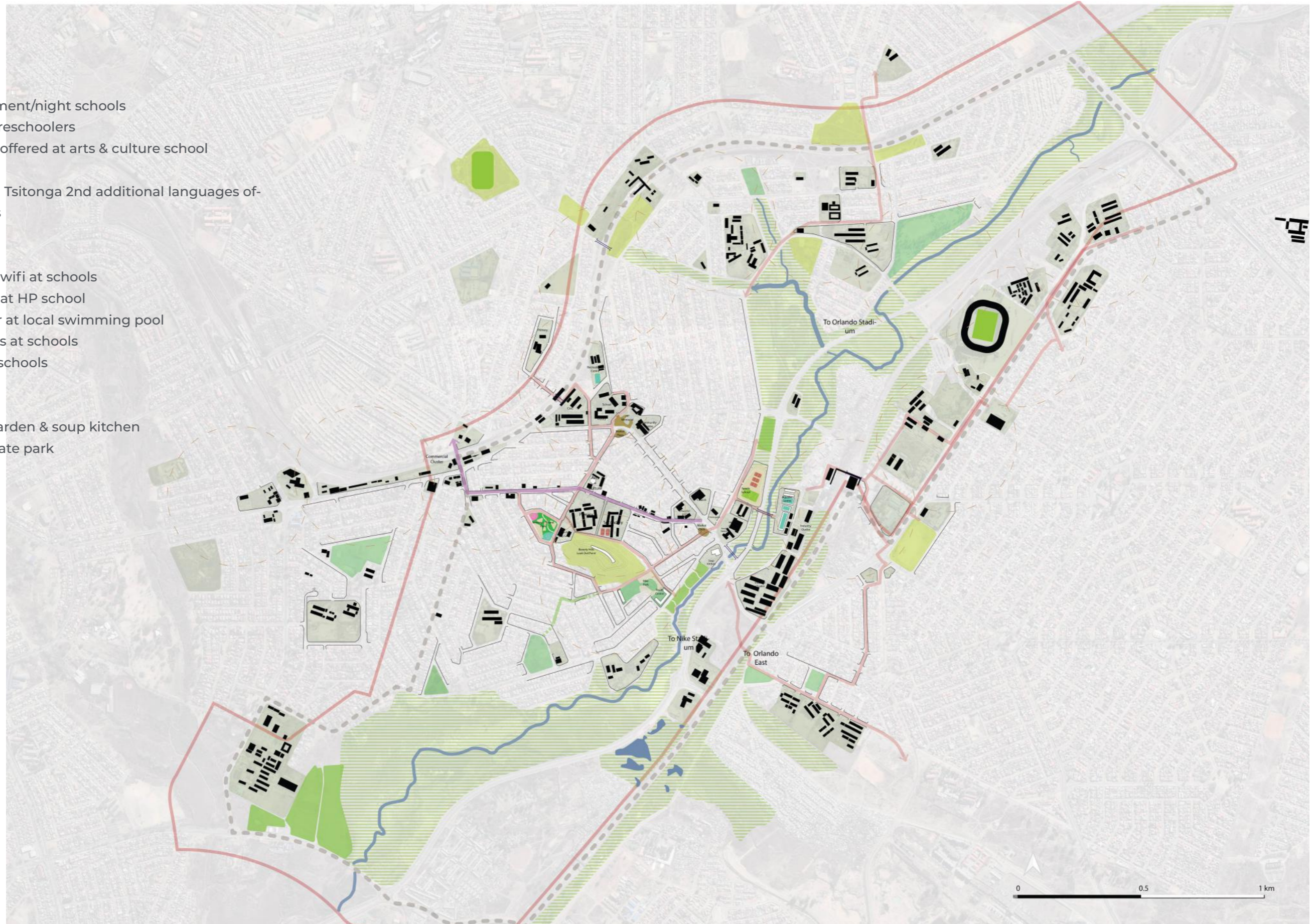


Figure 151: Design Framework

Strategy 1:

Designing spaces for youth

Creating safe walking routes which provide access to youth recreational facilities and skills



Figure 153: Design Framework

Strategy 2:

RECLAIMING UNDER USED SPACES

Enhancing public open green spaces and re-connecting them to public facilities

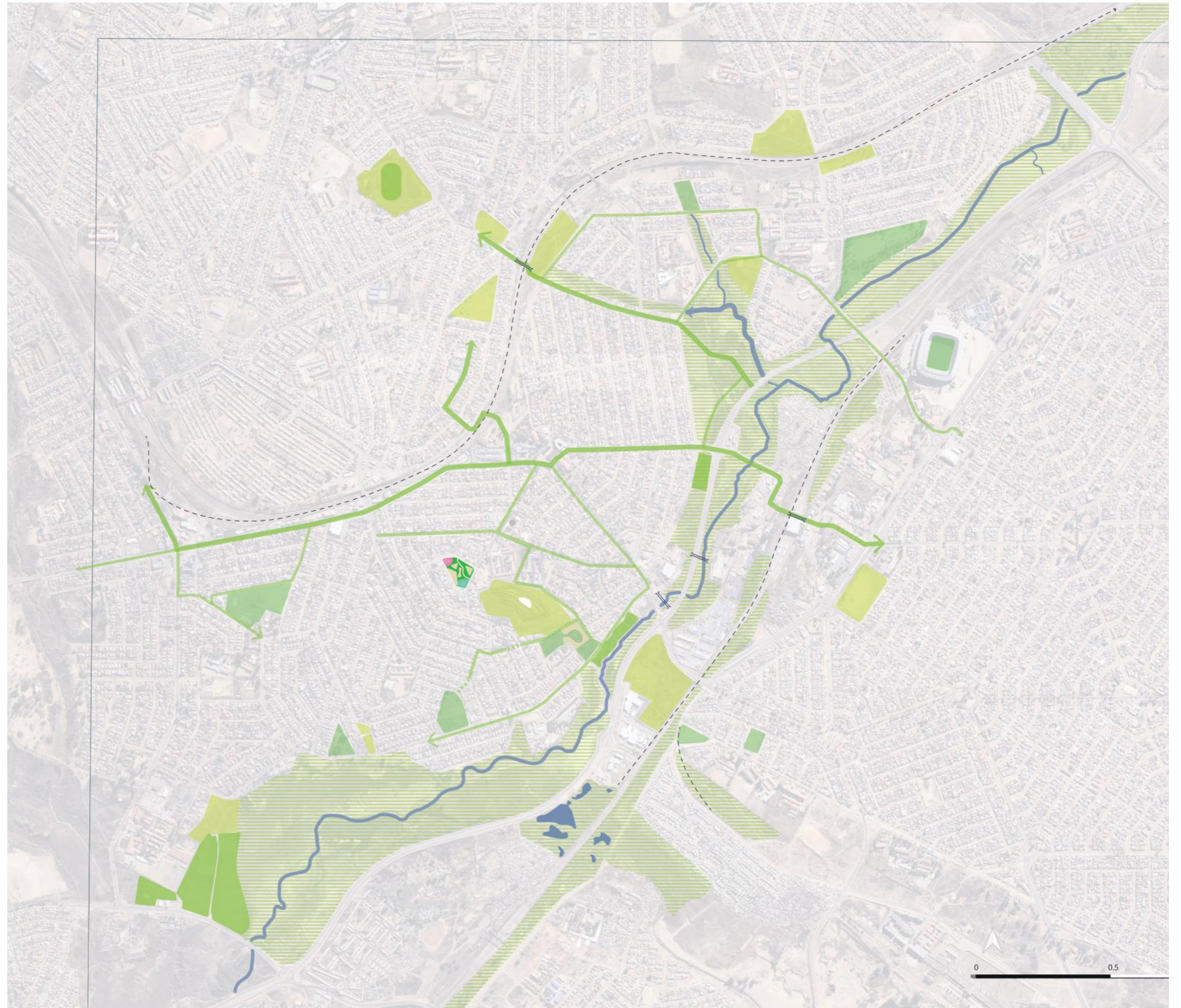


Figure 154: Design Framework

06 PRECINCT DESIGN

Programs & Material



Figure 155: Precinct Plan

SECTION B-B: Play Park

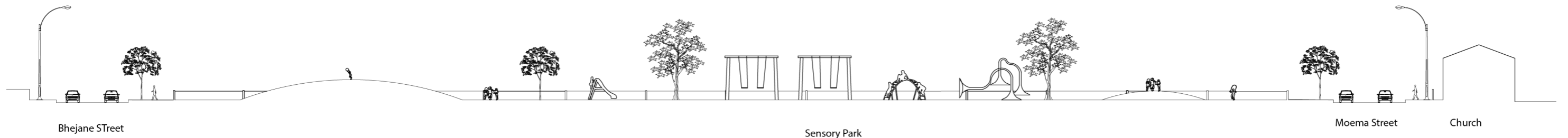


Figure 156: Design Precedents

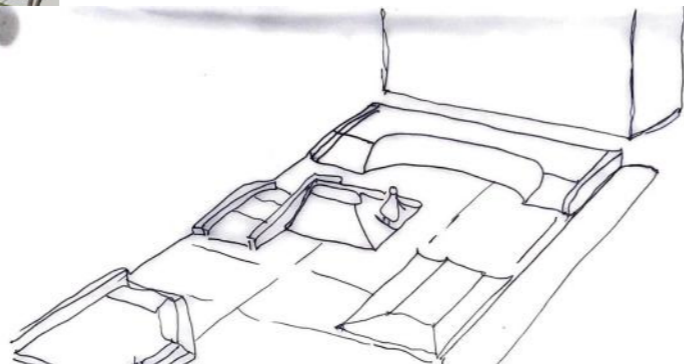
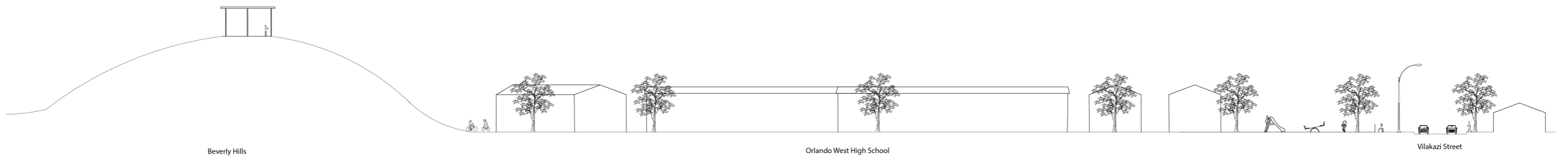


Figure 157: Design Precedents

SECTION A-A: Look Out Point



79

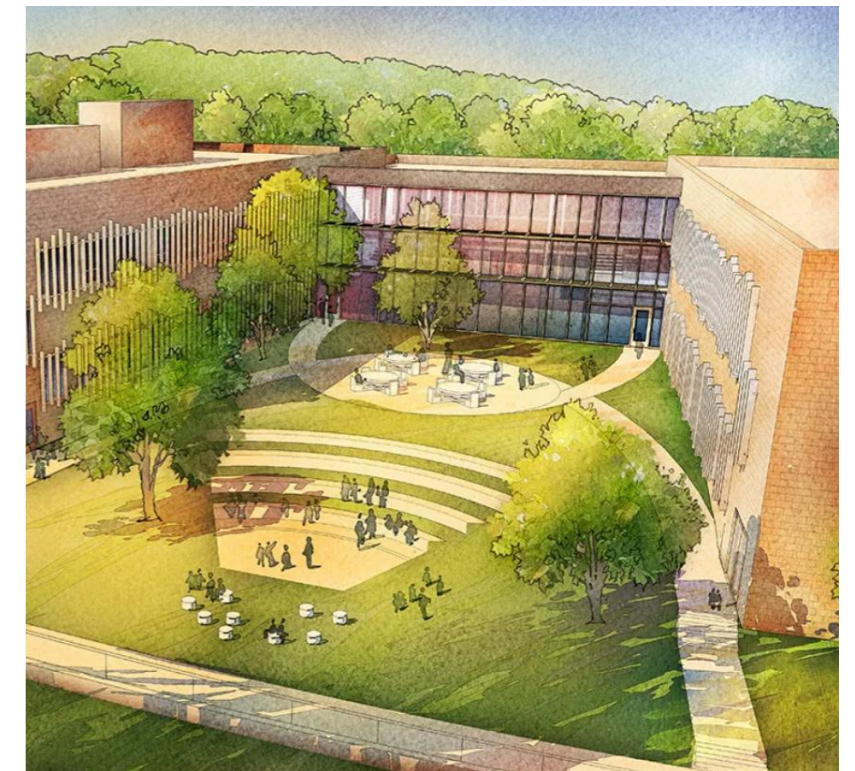


Figure 158: Design Precedents

INTERVENTION: Sports Centre

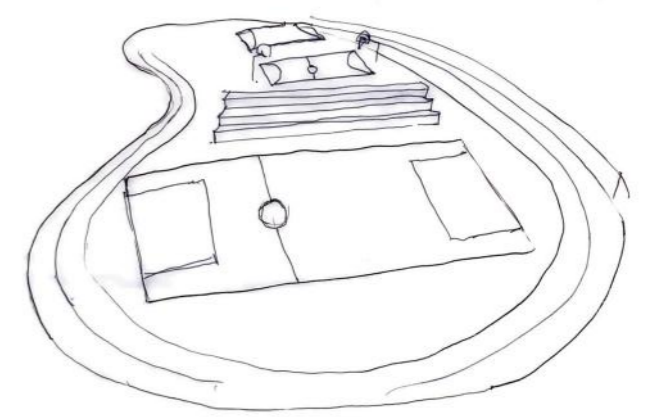
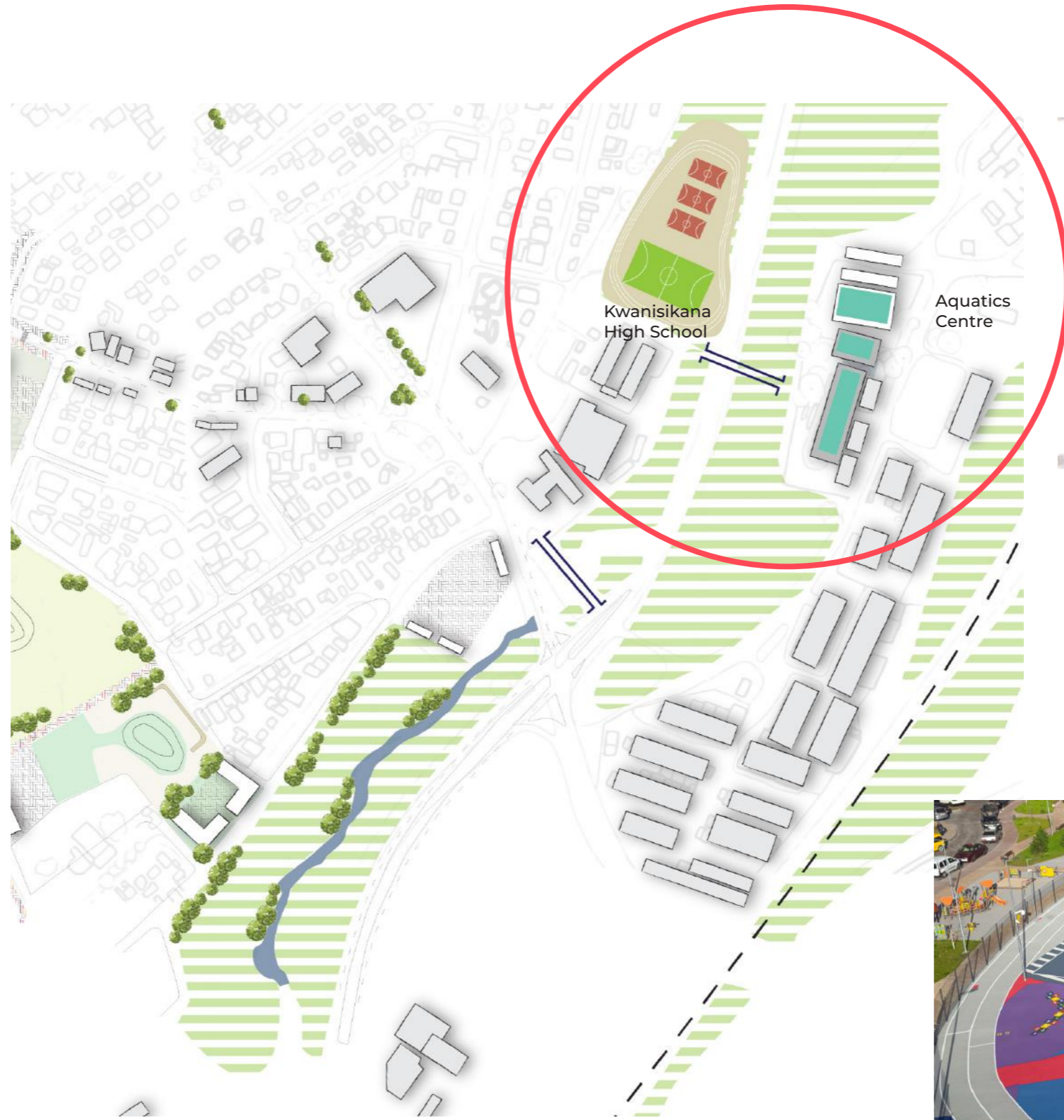


Figure 159: Design Precedents



Figure 160: Design Precedents

Figure 161: Precinct Plan

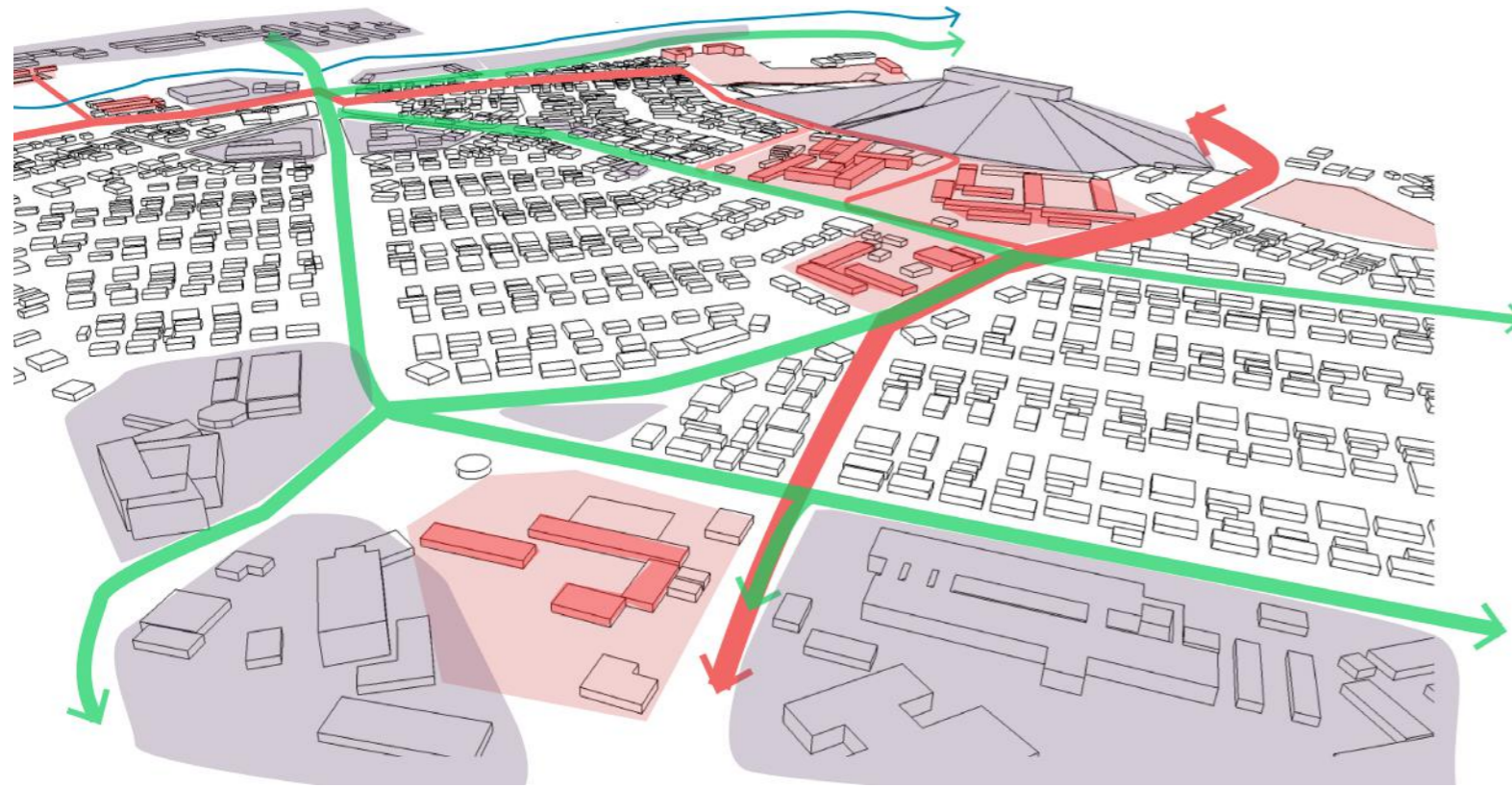


Figure 162: Implementation Plan

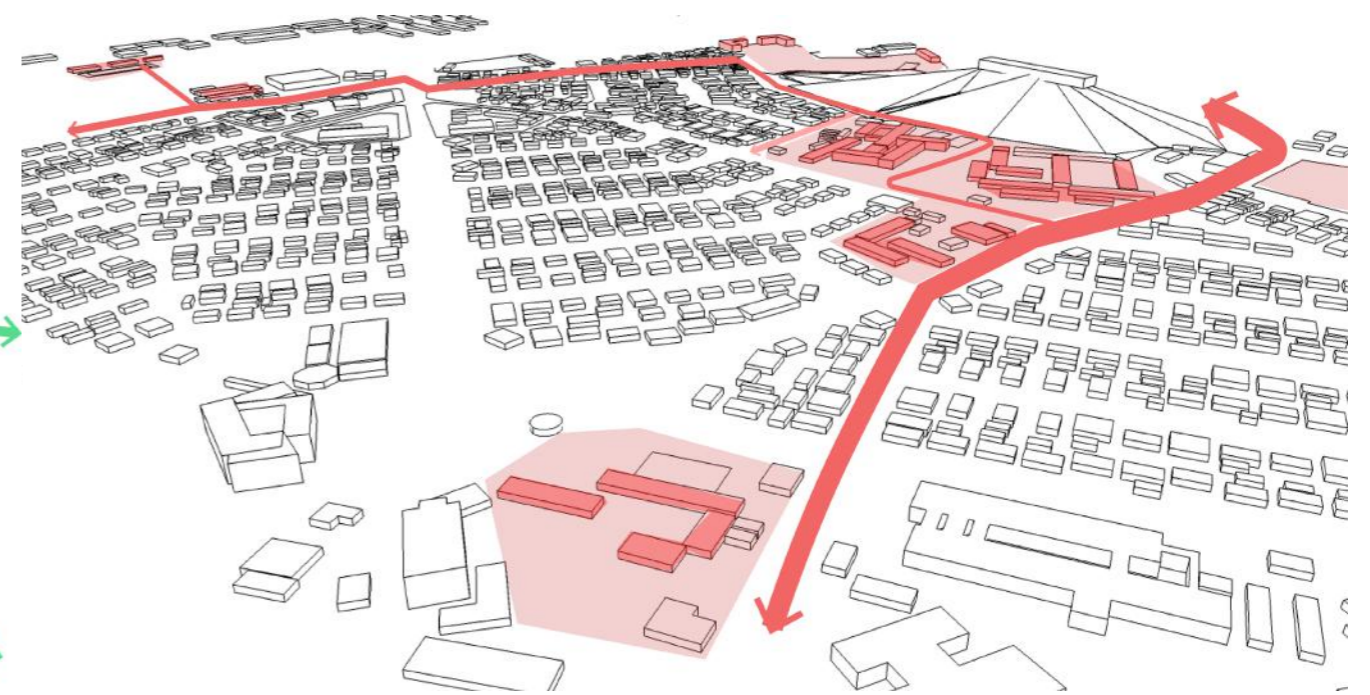


Figure 163: Implementation Plan

Implementation Timelines

Short Term

- Skills development/night schools
- Youth Routes
- Access to free wifi at schools
- Safe Walking routes along river

Medium - Long Term

- School Upgrading
- Youth Centre & Maintenance
- Lookout Point
- Community Garden & Recycling Centre



Figure 164: Implementation Plan

17 ETHICS APPLICATION

17.1 APPLICATION FORM

Application for Approval of Ethics in Research (EIR) Projects
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of Cape Town

ETHICS APPLICATION FORM


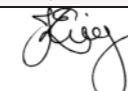
Please Note:


Any person planning to undertake research in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (EBE) at the University of Cape Town is required to complete this form **before** collecting or analysing data. The objective of submitting this application *prior* to embarking on research is to ensure that the highest ethical standards in research, conducted under the auspices of the EBE Faculty, are met. Please ensure that you have read, and understood the **EBE Ethics in Research Handbook** (available from the UCT EBE, Research Ethics website) prior to completing this application form: <http://www.ebe.uct.ac.za/ebe/research/ethics1>

APPLICANT'S DETAILS		
Name of principal researcher, student or external applicant		Sinqobile Setshego Dakile
Department		Engineering and the Built Environment (EBE) Architecture, Planning and Geomatics
Preferred email address of applicant:		sdakile01@gmail.com
If Student	Your Degree: e.g., MSc, PhD, etc.	Master in Urban Design
	Credit Value of Research: e.g., 60/120/180/360 etc.	60
	Name of Supervisor (if supervised):	Kathryn Ewing
If this is a research contract, indicate the source of funding/sponsorship		N/A
Project Title		Exploring spatial reform in Vilakazi Street: a vibrant African urban space in a township shadowed by an unjust legacy

I hereby undertake to carry out my research in such a way that:

- there is no apparent legal objection to the nature or the method of research; and
- the research will not compromise staff or students or the other responsibilities of the University;
- the stated objective will be achieved, and the findings will have a high degree of validity;
- limitations and alternative interpretations will be considered;
- the findings could be subject to peer review and publicly available; and
- I will comply with the conventions of copyright and avoid any practice that would constitute plagiarism.

APPLICATION BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Principal Researcher/ Student/External applicant	Sinqobile Setshego Dakile		17 May 2022
SUPPORTED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Supervisor (where applicable)	Kathryn Ewing		17 May 2022

APPROVED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
HOD (or delegated nominee) Final authority for all applicants who have answered NO to all questions in Section 1; and for all Undergraduate research (Including Honours).			
Chair: Faculty EIR Committee For applicants other than undergraduate students who have answered YES to any of the questions in Section 1.			

17.2 PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM

Consent to take part in research

[Exploring spatial reform in Vilakazi Street: a vibrant African urban space in a township shadowed by an unjust legacy]

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study taken by **Sinqobile Setshego Dakile**.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves an interview, possibly using my name and direct quotations from the interview in the research paper.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded and photographs being captured.
- I hereby declare the following restrictions on the use of these recordings

(My supervisor is Dr. Kathryn Ewing, and her contact details are: 083 408 0808 Kathryn.Ewing@uct.ac.za)

.....
Signature of participant Date

.....
Signature of researcher/student & student no. Date

17.3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questionnaire

The semi-formal interview guide will be used during the participatory methodology process (focus groups and storytelling). I plan to make use of semi-structured interview questions to ask fifteen research participants. In the event that Covid-19 restrictions occur I will send the questions to research participants on Whatsapp. Data will be allocated fairly amongst the research participants to enable access and communication. The semi-formal interview questions will be administered in the English, IsiZulu or SeSotho language depending on which language participants are most comfortable with and translated in English at a later stage. I will then collect the data and group it into categories, after which I will analyse and summarize it.

Tell me about experience living in Soweto.

1. How long have you lived in Soweto?
 - a. When did you arrive in Soweto?
 - b. Where were you coming from (which province/which part of Joburg)
2. Which area/s in Soweto did/do you reside in?
3. What was your first impressions of the township?
4. What did a typical day entail?
5. What did children do for fun? Where?
6. What did adults do with their free time?
7. Are there any special places in the area that had meaning to you or where special events occurred (during apartheid)
8. What do like about your neighbourhood, what don't you like?
 - a. What would you improve?
9. What was the atmosphere/mood like when you were outside your home (during apartheid and after apartheid)?
10. Are you a business owner? Were your parent's or relative's business owners?
 - a. What type of business do/did you run and where about in Soweto?
11. What forms of transport do you use to move around Soweto?
 - a. What are your opinions on the transport system
12. How has your experience of Soweto changed from when you first moved here to now?
13. What has contributed to the change in your neighbourhood?
 - a. What parts of your neighbourhood have changed or remained the same?

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