Transformations in Informal Trading Areas

Stretford South Entry Orange Farm Case Study
Johannesburg South Africa

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Abstract

This paper examines a series of informal trading projects undertaken within the peripheral informal settlement and 'township' areas of metropolitan Johannesburg. The difference between informal street trading within the inner city and informal trading and economic activities in the outlying areas are examined in terms of the application of different policy implementation and both spatial and organisational strategies. A case study project; Stretford South Entry, located in Orange Farm, an informal settlement south of Johannesburg, is examined in this regard.

Introduction

Background

Informal street trading has become a feature of our urban environment in most South African cities, and symbolises the changing nature of the city in both spatial and economic terms. Informal trading is an inevitable and irreversible phenomenon and in Johannesburg it has become synonymous with the change from a restrictive Apartheid city to an African trading city. However, Johannesburg still bears the legacy of Apartheid planning, a geography of spatial segregation, with a declining inner city characterized by capital flight, and sprawling township and informal settlement areas poorly located in terms of access to the city with little or no economic, social and physical infrastructure.

Informal trade reflects the nature of Johannesburg's physically divided structure in terms of its response to context and different locational opportunities. Informal trading in the inner city is located primarily around transportation nodes or along street edges within the pavement zone, in response to busy movement routes. Thus spatial 'control' is limited to management of the 'pavement zone'. In informal settlement or township areas, such as the study areas of Orange Farm, Weiler's Farm and Poortjie, located approximately 50 kms from the CBD[1], trading is often of a 'survivalist' nature and is predominantly located along major taxi and pedestrian routes and transportation nodes such as taxi ranks and railway stations. However, it

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[1] Informal traders still need to access wholesalers and markets and therefore spend a considerable amount of time and money commuting to the city. There is therefore cross over trade between the city and outlying areas, and between the formal and informal economies.

Figure 1 : The Existing Informal Structures at Stretford South Entry

is not necessarily as spatially constrained as inner city examples. This can be seen by the fact that as traders grow in size, they often construct makeshift structures or shacks or use shipping containers as shops. In these areas, there are very few formal commercial facilities or economic opportunities and therefore informal trading presents opportunities for supporting micro economic development, as well as developing and enhancing the urban environment. This is important because whilst informal trading clusters at transportation nodes, there is a lack of facilities and services such as water and refuse collection, and the area deteriorates over time. Creating a sense of place in an otherwise bland environment is therefore also important, as supported informal economic activity has the potential to contribute to the generation of public space and amenity.

An Informal Trading Strategy

In 1997, after the introduction of new street trading byelaws, the local authorities introduced the concept of designated trading areas. The strategies behind this were three-fold; firstly the concept of designated trading areas was an attempt to 'clean up' the city, where informal trading was seen to be contributing to 'crime and grime' and therefore the decline of formal business investment, secondly, to enhance micro economic development and thirdly to educate traders on health and safety regulations and byelaws[2]. The Southern Metropolitan Local Council (SMLC)[3], which controls the majority of the inner city (a substantial capital base), portions of the former 'coloured' (Eldorado Park) and 'black' township (Soweto) areas plus the southern underdeveloped informal settlement areas, identified a series of locations (approximately 28) to develop 'informal trading structures'. These were to be designated trading areas where basic facilities for trading could be provided – regulated display areas, storage facilities, rubbish bins and access to ablution facilities. These project locations were put out to proposal tender. Tenderers had to identify their interest in specific locations and propose a suitable solution to the particular problem and context. Whilst most of the locations were in the inner city and therefore subject to the constraints described above, approximately seven were located in township or informal settlement areas. All projects were to have a public participation process, and this activity was subject to a separate bid process. Thus, two sets of consultants were appointed for each project, an Architect consultant for the design and implementation phases and another consultant to undertake the participation and facilitation process.

Savage + Dodd Architects were appointed to undertake the design phases[4] of three projects; Orange Farm Taxi Rank, Stretford South Entry Orange Farm Ext 9, and Weiller's Farm, together with *Urban Dynamics Town and Regional Planners*, who were appointed to facilitate the participation process. Subsequently another

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2   This was seen as particularly important as many traders clustered close to road junctions impairing visibility for drivers as well as the fact that many trade in raw meat, without any refrigerations or storage facilities, which may present a health hazard.

3   The Metropolitan area of Johannesburg was divided into 4 local council substructures (MLC's) with a Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (GJMC), after a restructuring process that took place after the 1994 elections. The MLC's were drawn with rather extraordinary boundaries in order to try and ensure that economically well endowed areas would sustain low income areas. The SMLC was the largest and poorest area was provided with the central city. However the affairs of the 'inner city' were co-ordinated by the GJMC, leading to some problems of co-ordination, conflict, financial and administrative difficulties. (Tomlinson,1999)

4   In these particular 4 projects, implementation was to be undertaken in the next financial year.

project in Poortjie was undertaken by the same team of consultants. The co-ordination of all projects was undertaken by the manager for *Local Economic Development (LED)* within the SMLC.

The Project Strategy

A Participation Process

In these projects consultation with end users is important in order to gain their acceptance of the project. This was important as a first step to ensure that the project would be used by them and would be sustainable in the long term, ensuring the local authority's resources were correctly allocated. Communication is often difficult because of language differences, poor visual literacy, poor understanding of processes and lack of availability of telecommunication facilities.

In all the projects discussions were held with all the traders on the particular sites, as well as other stakeholders and community organisations, in order to identify relevant stakeholders in the project and inform the broader community about the project. The first step on all the projects was to ascertain the level and nature of the trading on the site and to identify the relevant stakeholders for inclusion in future discussions. Surveys of the existing traders were done in order to understand the type of trading and the economic viability of traders.

Meetings were held with the broader community[5], who often had their own ideas about potential small business opportunities and needs. It was clear throughout the process that there was a generally lot of enthusiasm, but a poor skills base with a limited knowledge of basic business skills and few monetary resources. The need for economic empowerment through skills training and targeted business opportunities that would benefit the traders and ultimately the broader community was clear, although not generally within the scope of the project.

In most cases, the first step after identifying the relevant stakeholders and traders, was to facilitate the setting up of a Traders Steering Committee, who would be mandated to take the project discussions further on behalf of the larger group.

The issue of empowerment is important in development projects and has several aspects. Economic development needs to be addressed both in individual terms and in terms of developing future markets within the community. By developing trading opportunities within an enabling environment, opportunities are created for the economic capacitation of individual traders. The creation of an enabling physical environment ultimately empowers the community and creates a 'place' in an underdeveloped and marginal environment.

Empowerment has to be addressed within a participation and decision making process and stakeholders need to be empowered to make decisions about their environments. However, together with this comes civic responsibilities such as managing the environment, paying rentals and controlling vandalism. This should be linked to creating a sense of community ownership and pride. In the projects a variety of issues relating to the management of the trading areas were workshopped.[6]

Once the initial information gathering phase was complete, proposals were discussed with stakeholders. The proposals were communicated through a series of simple drawings, diagrams and large scale (1:20) models. Issues such as uses, stall and project location, allocation criteria as well as rental and tenure structures were extensively workshopped.

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[5] Both civic eg. SANCO and business organisations eg. Local Taxi Associations were included in these discussions. Wherever possible, the local councillor was also involved.

[6] For example, waste management - recycling bins for glass, paper, plastic, which could become an income generating activity. Also, the management of certain elements like the toilet facilities could also provide an opportunity for someone to provide security and services to users.

A Design Strategy

A design strategy was developed through the projects in order to explore the nature of providing infrastructure in developing areas with simple means. In terms of a broader strategy the following points were important :

- The emphasis of the projects was on long term sustainability in order to stimulate future growth and development around trading and transportation nodes. This implies the potential for the grouping of a series of services around an existing activity zone eg. a market linked to a taxi rank, which could also include an advice bureau, telephones, service payment kiosk, clinic etc.
- The provision of services such as water and refuse facilities.
- Facilities that could cater for a different 'levels' of trade from the weekly Saturday trader and small survivalist traders who required open shaded space with display areas to larger traders that required more formal enclosed spaces.
- The development of a sense of urban place. It was recognised that informal trading activity had the potential to be a catalyst for generating positive public space.
- Simple technology that was easily buildable, flexible, and could involve local emerging contractors and women.

The design strategy revolved around using simple means to create a typology of trading 'market' types that could respond to differing contexts. To this end, the use of ready-made **building elements** was explored within a **spatial typology** that was developed through the projects. This would allow flexibility in response to specific site conditions, use requirements and spatial configurations, while using a fixed series of building elements. It would also allow opportunities for future expansion.

Building Elements

A series of building elements were proposed by the architects for use in the projects. The emphasis was on the use of ready made or workshop made elements that could be easily assembled on site. The idea behind this was to reduce time spent by contractors on site, where the safety of their materials could not be guaranteed, as well as the fact that in most cases there was no power or water on sites. Another factor was that the projects were potentially to be able to be disassembled and moved in the future.

The following elements were used :

- Modified Shipping Containers : these provided 'ready made' space for small spaza[7] shops as well as storage facilities for traders.[8]
- Roof : a butterfly type roof made of corrugated iron sheeting provides shade and protection from the weather. Its shape allows for the drainage of rainwater into watertanks at either end of the structure.
- Structure : the structure was designed as a modular system and is made of premanufactured steel elements for easy site erection. The shape of the structure with a central column supporting a butterfly roof allows for an easy relationship between the trader and the public. It also allows easy connectivity with the container and other clip on elements. The structure is positioned to act as a verandah type frontage to the containers behind.
- Concrete Tables : concrete tables act as display surfaces for goods, which is very important in this type of trading. Each trading unit is defined by a recess in the front brick wall corresponding to the structural module. This element could easily be constructed on site by a local emerging contractor.
- Ablution Facilities : prefabricated concrete block toilet units were provided with a locally built screen wall.
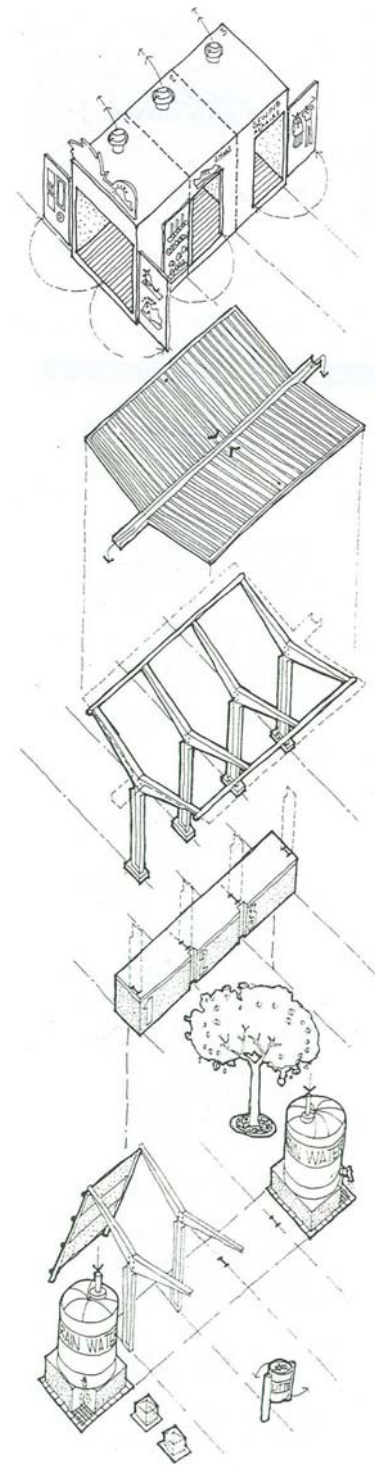

Figure 2 : Building Elements

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7   The word 'spaza' is used to describe a small informal shop in township areas.
8   Shipping Containers were chosen because there is an established precedent for their use in these areas. There were already several in use at the Taxi Rank. They also provided a quick efficient means of providing space that could be easily modified and were cheaper than providing conventional construction methods.

- Other Elements : other components of the project such as signage and murals, dustbins, bollards, trees, paving, seating and rainwater tanks completed the project. All of these elements contribute towards the amenity and the management of the project at an urban level. The provision and manufacture of these smaller elements also allows for local involvement in the project.

The use of a series of building elements assembled as a 'kit of parts' allowed various spatial configurations to be explored with the same elements, as well as the use of different procurement strategies for various elements.

A Spatial Typology

Various spatial configurations were explored in relation to the placement of containers, the spaces created between containers and the relationship between shaded spaces created by roofed verandah type areas, which mediate between indoor and outdoor space. The spatial configuration is about creating meaningful outdoor spaces.

The explorations can be summarised into 4 spatial typologies.

Linear configurations respond to pedestrian routes. The sites are usually narrow left over spaces between the road edge and neighbouring properties. Here the linear nature of the container is exploited as a strung out train, with spaces between the containers used as communal trading areas, whilst the containers themselves are divided up unto multiple 'shop' spaces. In our projects linear configurations correspond to the **'strip'** (Orange Farm Taxi Rank) and **'mall'** typologies (Stretford South Entry)

Clustered configurations respond to areas where there is more space usually at Taxi Ranks. Here containers are placed a right angles to circulation routes and containers are placed to form courtyard areas. These areas allow for protected communal working areas. In our projects clustered configurations correspond to the **'courtyard'** typology (Weiller's Farm).

The **'market'** typology combines both linear and clustered configurations as in the Poortjie example.
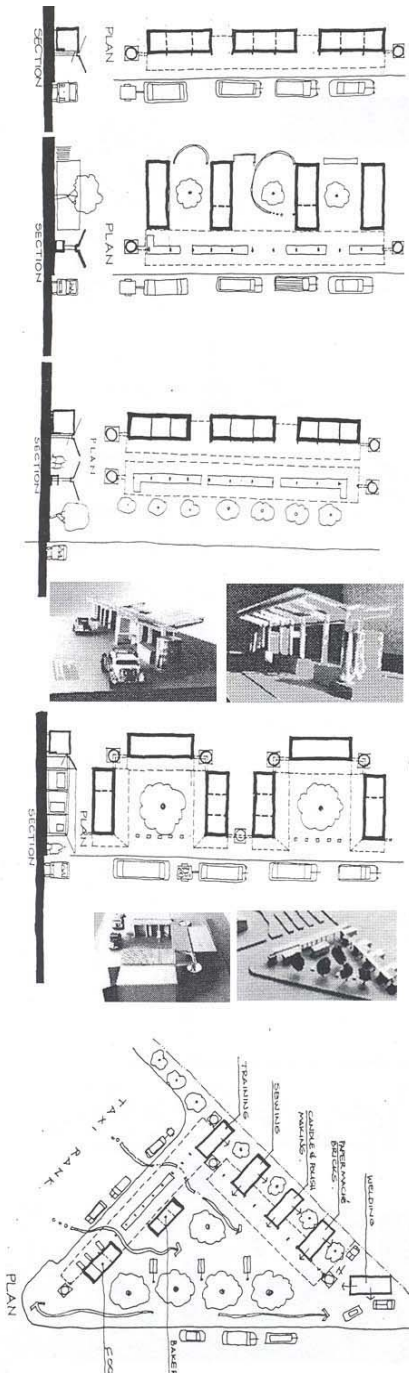
Stretford South Entry : A case study in implementation of the model.

In June 1997, all the trading projects discussed in this paper were put on hold as Johannesburg went through a financial crisis with no money available for any capital expenditure. During 1998, grant funding was applied for by the SMLC from the Vusani Amadobhla Urban Regeneration Fund administered by the Gauteng Provincial Government. Enough funding was received to implement one of the four projects. In discussions between the SMLC and the consultants, it was decided to pursue the Stretford South Entry project, as it was the most needy area with a fairly clear land demarcation[9]. Work on the project re-commenced in June 1998 and continued until March 1999.

Looking at the role of actors through the project implementation stage

The process of initiating the project and developing a strategy to tackle the project is perhaps the easiest part of the project. Everyone agrees to the project, everybody wants the project and the project is set to proceed smoothly. However, once things start becoming more real and concrete things may change.

The project was re-started after a break of over six months and contact had to be re-initiated with the traders. On the surface not much had changed in the economic

Figure 3 : Typology. From top to bottom : Orange Farm Taxi Rank "Strip" typology, Stretford South Entry "Mall" typology, Weiller's Farm "Courtyard" typology, Poortjie "Market" typology.

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[9]   Of all 4 projects undertaken, Poortjie was the most desperate situation but required to large an intervention. In contrast with Stretford South Entry, Weiller's Farm was a more needy area, with clearer group dynamics and support for the project but did not have any clear land demarcations. This is a result of the fact that this area had at the time still not been formally transferred to the SMLC from the former Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA).

or physical circumstances of the traders on the site. Some of the previous traders had stopped trading and others had taken their places. 24 traders were identified to be accommodated in the project and the project was designed within the parameters discussed above to meet the budget, whilst accommodating all the traders. Two types of accommodation were offered in the project, open roofed table space and container space with a verandah roof. The starting point of the project was the agreement on the project as a whole, the general design and accommodation parameters and acceptance that moving into the project would entail the removal of existing makeshift structures and the payment of rent to the SMLC. The latter was the most contentious issue, as traders had been trading on the site without paying any rentals and whilst they saw that the new facilities would make substantial improvements to their environment, the question of the rental amount was subject to a lot of debate and negotiation. Some traders were also keen to explore the issue of ownership of the facilities[10]. The traders were also reticent to move their location approx. 20m away from their current location, which was in conflict with vehicular visibility at a major road intersection. It was therefore agreed that discussions on allocations, rental structures and tenure arrangements would continue through the construction phase of the project. In order to facilitate these discussions a 1:200 model of the whole scheme was made.

The primary roleplayers at this stage of the project were Province as funders (a passive role), the SMLC as owners, managers and providers of services, the consultants, providing design, project management and facilitation services and the traders as users of the facilities.

The project process can be defined in terms of continual interaction throughout the project between various actors or stakeholders enacting a specific strategy. This strategy defines the roles of the various actors. However, if these actors are unwilling or unable to fulfil their roles, the project will fail.

The Construction Phase : the role of local authority, consultants and emerging contractors.

A requirement of all government projects in South Africa is an open tender procedure and the inclusion of emerging contractors and suppliers. In this project, an open tender procedure was not suitable, as we needed to target the local community in terms of their participation in the project. It was therefore realised that the procurement procedures of the local authority were not suitable to this kind of project. The only option was to use the 'buying order' system in use by the local authority. This system is designed for the purchase of items and is done on an order basis with payment being made on delivery of the specific item. The order amount is limited to a maximum amount of R 80 000 (approx. US$ 12 300)[11]. This system was modified slightly to allow a series of payments to be made throughout the project, but the restrictions on the total amount meant that the project had to be broken up into a series of identifiable packages that would be put out to a selected tender group (minimum of 3 tenders). The use of an unsuitable procurement procedure had several implications. As the overall project cost was approximately R280 000 (approx. US$ 43 000), it was necessary to break up the contract into small parcels of work. This was possible within the 'kit of parts' design strategy, however there were potential problems of overall contractual responsibility, co-ordination and additional project management responsibility for the architect. Of particular concern was the problem of co-ordination and responsibility between elements eg. the steel structure, roofing and foundations had to be separated from each other and given to three different tenderers. A system designed for purchasing of items has no flexibility, in building contracts there may be changes to the overall price and scope of work during the project. This system could not cater for this. A further implication was the lack of financial support that could be given to an emerging

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[10] This was explored in terms of a co-operative type model, with shares being allocated in proportion to the amount of space used. However, the ownership model was problematic in terms of the ownership of the land which belonged to the SMLC and future maintenance of the project. Also, the capital costs of the project could not realistically be afforded by the traders.

[11] This was raised during the implementation period to an amount of R120 000, but due to an typographic error in the government gazette promulgation was in fact reduced to R 12 000.

contractor within this system. These contractors usually have no access to credit facilities or building material accounts and rely on deposits and weekly payments to continue with their work. With the above system, the SMLC could only process accounts over a 30 day period and bureaucracy often delayed payments. This had a serious impact on the viability of the emerging contractor. Such projects can then in fact be detrimental to the contractor.

In terms of the procurement procedure the project was broken up into packages that would be put out to tender. Certain elements were clearly not suitable for emerging contractors in terms of their skill levels or were special items. Other elements were selected for their suitability for involvement of emerging contractors and the local community. The project was therefore split into the following packages :

- Formal contractors : foundations for steelwork, steelwork, roofing, supply of certain elements eg. rainwater tanks, prefabricated toilet elements, asphalt surfacing
- Local Authority : stormwater drainage, connection of services.
- Emerging contractors : bases for containers, supply and modification of containers, small building work – brickwork and concrete tops for tables.
- Local community involvement and women : painting of signage, making of steel drum dustbins, planting and caring for trees.

The role of the architect during the project implementation stage was to produce the tender documentation, which had to be simple and clear for emerging contractors, evaluate and select tenders, project management - monitor and co-ordinate the work in progress, control and monitor expenditure in terms of the overall budget and report back to the SMLC in terms of regular progress reports and budget updates.

The role of the project facilitator was to facilitate the ongoing discussions with the traders and community and manage various 'community dynamics' that emerged during the implementation phase. The architect worked together with the project facilitator in terms of these discussions.

Facilitating the role of the emerging contractor

Figure 4 : The construction of the container and watertank bases by a local contractor.

Once the procurement method and work packages were clear, inquiries were made within the Orange Farm Ext 9 area, for suitable small scale builders. The documentation of the work to be done needed to be described very clearly, in a series of elemental drawings, as well as detailed lists of materials and quantities required. All tenderers were required to attend a morning workshop facilitated by a training NGO, where the documents were explained in detail. Advice was given on how to price a tender, how to calculate material prices, labour requirements and profits. For almost all of the participants, this was the first time these things had been explained to them. The documentation also made evaluation of the tender prices very easy, as the tenderers were required to fill in the same material and labour schedules.

Facilitating involvement of the local community and women.

In terms of the above procurement procedures, it was impossible to involve the local community in small tasks, as these could not be done on a competitive tender basis and required small cash payments on completion of the job. However, the community was involved in certain tasks, and payment for these had to be made by the consultants as part of their fee disbursements. Involving the community in small tasks is important for them to feel involved in the project and ultimately take 'ownership' of the project.

Figure 5 : The painted signage on the toilet block

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Problems encountered in this process.

Problems with the procurement processes of the local authority have been highlighted above. These together with inadequate payment procedures result in anger and frustration on the part of emerging contractors and local suppliers. In some cases, workers cannot be paid on time. This can result in poor performance, time delays, and financial hardship for the contractor. Instead of supporting and facilitating the emerging contractor's performance, the entire process can be detrimental to the contractor. In several instances on this project, physical threats were made against the contractor when he could not pay his workers because of delayed payments from the local authority. Clearly, procurement procedures need to be both simple and accommodating of emerging contractors.

Putting the 'kit of parts' together.

During the construction phase of the project, two simultaneous processes took place. Whilst the steelwork and containers were being manufactured off site, all the preliminary 'wetwork' was taking place on site. All the foundations and bases had to be complete before these elements could be delivered to site. This meant that once the preliminary work was complete, the assemblage of the entire project could take place very quickly. However, once work commenced on site, acts of vandalism started to take place. This started with the filling in overnight of foundation holes that had been dug by the contractor and continued with the breaking down and stealing of brickwork. This necessitated a new round of discussions with both the traders and a new set of interested parties in order to understand the community dynamics that were behind these problems.

The Construction Phase : continuing discussions with users and other stakeholders.

Once vandalism started on the project it became clear that there were problems in the communication process and that as the project had become more real and tangible, other members of the community sought to gain mileage out of the project, claiming they had not been consulted in the process. At this point a whole new set of roleplayers came into the picture. These were SANCO, a civic organisation claiming to represent an owner of a neighbouring property and local rival political organisations including a former councillor. These organisations threatened to stop the project and managed to mobilise some of the traders into rejecting the project.

Therefore, the negotiations on allocations, rental structures and tenure arrangements now included a new set of roleplayers, some of whom sought to gain personal political advantage out of manipulating the project process. Here it becomes clear that trading in informal settlement areas where there is little influence of the local authority are often 'controlled' by the most influential (often with political association) person or organisation in the area[12]. Whilst it was clear that all roleplayers accepted that development was needed in the area and that the traders wanted the market structure, discussions revealed some critical differences in the understanding of various agreements reached during the project. These manifested themselves in a series of intimidatory acts against the local contractor, acts of vandalism and violence.[13]

It is important to realise that there is a duality in a participation process between the local authority, the SMLC as the client, and the users as the broader client. The problems encountered in the process can be summarised as follows :

- Inclusivity of the participation process : the greater the number of participants, the greater the level of discussion within the community. However, who are the most important stakeholders ? In this particular project we had sought to limit the number of roleplayers as it was a

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[12] For instance, in the Orange Farm Taxi Rank project, the traders were 'controlled' by the Taxi Association and negotiations had to start with the Taxi Association before traders could be brought into the discussions.

[13] At one point the local authority working on the stormwater drainage pipe was hijacked on the site and after that refused to continue work on their own project, preferring to supply the local contractor with the materials to finish the job.

trading project and of immediate relevance to the traders on the site and neighbouring properties.[14]

- Differences in perceptions of payment abilities with real costs : In this project real costs accrued to the council could not be matched with the rental levels that the traders could realistically afford to pay. Traders on this project had accepted certain payment levels that matched rentals being charged elsewhere on similar projects. However, fuelled by outside parties they then rejected the rental levels. This revealed a larger problem within the area, that of illegal land invasions and non-payment for services.
- Manipulation of the project for personal gain : The interference in the process of the project was in fact caused by small minority within the traders fuelled by an ex-councillor who sought to manipulate the project for political gain. This in fact amounted to a subversion of the participation process.

Because of the above problems, although construction was completed on the project, no allocations could take place. This was despite the fact that the majority of the traders wanted to move to the new market structures and that there were a lot of inquiries from other traders in the area wishing to move into the project. Intimidation and potential violence has prevented the project from being occupied.

Changes in agreements and understanding through a project process that may take place over a long period of time require that all decisions and meetings are well documented. Often photographs are the best way of keeping a record of meetings and milestones that have been reached throughout the project process.

The Role of the Architect and Community Facilitator.
The role of the architect in a project such as this is multi-facetted and extends beyond the scope of traditional architectural services. These range from design and construction management, facilitation and understanding community dynamics, financial management, brokering agreements, seeking further funding, training and documenting the process. It is clear that architecture in these cases cannot be separated from either political or social forces. The role of the facilitator is similarly broad, ranging from identifying roleplayers, communication, education and training, mediation and conflict resolution. The role of the facilitator as a fair translator[15] in meetings is very important in ensuring clear communication and understanding between all parties involved. The architect and facilitator have an interwoven relationship in communicating various processes to the community, and modifying their approach by incorporating input from the community. It is clear that the roles of both the architect and facilitator are very broad and go beyond the scope of traditional professional services. However, the professionals act on behalf of a client, in this case the SMLC, they are not independent agents but are fulfilling a mandated brief. It is clear that in some cases the architect and facilitator may not be able to fulfil their roles without support from other actors.

Is the success of the project dependent on the roles of the actors ?
The project implementation phase highlights some of the problems that can be encountered if the roles of various stakeholders are not clearly defined, or they do not or can not fulfil their role. In the above scenario, the consultants were able to fulfil their professional roles in terms of completing the physical building process but could not complete the project without major political, managerial and organisational support from the local authority. In this project the council did not take up its managerial role without the allocations having taken place and did not give political support from its elected political representatives.

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14 This was in contrast with the process undertaken at Weiller's Farm, which was included the broader community, local political parties and the local councillor from the start.

15 Participants in meetings often use more than one language and switch between them. In meetings the architect's presentation was always translated from English to another language (Xhosa, Sotho) that would be better understood by the participants.

Figure 6 : The completed market structures at Stretford South Entry.

A Critique of the Project : success or failure.

Evaluating the success or failure of the Stretford South Entry Market is difficult as the process is incomplete, and the traders have not used the facilities. However, the fact that the project has not been used indicates a failure in either the project strategy or project implementation.

It can be argued that the single most important contributor to the failure of the project was the lack of both managerial and political support from the local authority.

The reasons for this can possibly be explained as follows :

- A lack of local government capacity to engage in these types of projects, coupled with a lack of understanding of the nature of engaging in development type projects that have traditionally not been within the scope of 'city' development. Coupled with this is the fact that the process of splitting the city into four metropolitan substructures took a considerable amount of time and this hampered the ability of the local authorities to carry out their work. During 1998/9 it was decided to re-amalgamate all four substructures into a 'mega-city' model (Johannesburg Metropolitan Council). This process is still to be started but it has affected long term planning and decision making.
- A lack of political will to support the project and intervene in local political in-fighting. This needs to be seen against the background of historic struggle politics, where civic and political organisations have had more control over these environments than local authorities. These areas have only recently been incorporated into the 'formal' demarcated metropolitan area.
- The project's construction budget was funded by grant funding rather than loan funding. This means that the local authority does not need to repay this money. Perhaps they may have had a greater commitment to the project if their financial stake had been higher.
- A change in the focus in informal trading strategies away from these areas to the inner city. This has been led by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council whose main concern has been the rejuvenation of the inner city. Stretford South Entry was one of three projects that were to be

implemented in the Orange Farm / Weiller's Farm area[16] that would have provided a network of markets linked to transportation nodes. It is interesting to speculate as to whether there would have been a significant impact on trading in the area had all three projects been implemented.

It is clear from the work undertaken with these informal trading projects that support is needed in this area. This needs to be in terms of physical upgrading of the environment as well as providing a supportive environment for enhancing economic opportunities. What was seen from the case study is the intermediary nature of trading which is dependent on accessing market opportunities and is often controlled by the most influential or politically connected person in the particular area. In the case study, development was hampered by this fact as well as by a legacy of non-payment for services. Clearly, this will affect all future developments in this area, as infrastructure and services cannot be provided within this context.

A Changing Focus in Informal Trading Strategies

Whilst not implicitly stated, there seems to have been a shift in focus in the approach to informal trading within the Metropolitan area of Johannesburg. The focus seems to be almost entirely on the inner city area to the exclusion of the areas discussed in this paper. Whilst there does not appear to be a formal policy in place, the strategy has been to ban street trading in areas of the inner city and to force traders to move to designated formal trading areas or newly constructed markets (Victor, 2000). The background to this strategy has been the need to halt the decay and disinvestment in the inner city, but the Metro Council faces the dilemma of accommodating the rising informal sector together with demands for inner city rejuvenation and attracting formal business investment[17].

The ban on street trading has been enforced in Braamfontein and Yeoville and will later be extended to Hillbrow, Berea and the CBD. The council has identified eight designated areas to build markets that will be run by a Metro Trading Company. So far one market located in Yeoville has been constructed[18]. The removal of traders from the streets has been a particularly unpopular move amongst the traders whose livelihood depends on location, attracting passing trade and access to goods and services. The imposition of restrictive measures on traders' access to the city has removed the very thing that makes trading viable – the street (Ray, 1999).

The Yeoville Market, which was completed in December 1999, has faced the same problems as Stretford South Entry, a reluctance of traders to occupy the new building and the refusal to pay the rentals that have been set by the Metro Council. This again reveals a mismatch between capital expenditure and running costs and what traders expect to pay or can afford to pay in rentals[19]. However, in contrast to the Stretford South Entry case study, this project has had the full support of the Metro Council who have been determined to make the project work.

Survivalist trading is characterised by opportunism linked to location. Most traders throughout the city and outlying areas sell the same items at marginal prices.

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[16] Orange Farm Taxi Rank, Stretford South Entry and Weiller's Farm. In addition, a project was also developed by the SMLC in Finetown, an adjacent area about 10 kms from Orange Farm.

[17] The inner city has been plagued by disinvestment and falling property values. Rejuvenation strategies have been the implementation of Business Improvement Districts (BID's) including better and more visible security, harsher enforcement of bye-laws, stimulation of inner city housing and diversification of the inner city economy, together with a single management structure for the city. (Powers and and Hamnca, 1999)

[18] A second market location in Hillbrow is under construction.

[19] The Yeoville Market can accommodate 300 traders and rentals vary between R270 and R900 per month depending on size and position within the market. However, traders have complained that the rentals are as much as R 2400/month for a 10m² area, whilst income levels range from R750/month upwards. (Matlou, 2000; Victor, 2000)

This leads to intense rivalry which may be expressed politically as was seen in the Orange Farm projects. Hence moving traders to markets which rely on diversity and product specialisation, means that many of them will not survive[20].

Conclusions : Transforming Informal Trading

Given that there are estimated to be over 7000 traders in the Johannesburg inner city area alone (Ray, 1999) and that the informal sector is the only 'job opportunity' that most will have access to, it is clear that a strategy is needed that will provide support to this sector in terms of encompassing different responses to a variety of contexts. As stated in the introductory part of this paper, whilst the motivation and economic basis of trading may be the same throughout the city and informal settlement areas, the spatial and infrastructural contexts are very different. An informal trading policy must take cognisance of different contexts. It is therefore important to tackle informal trading on a Metropolitan basis, as the inner city and its peripheral areas form part of an economic whole. Transforming informal trading is thus intrinsically linked to both economic and spatial integration. The physical structure of our city is critically linked to economic and social reconstruction and change and therefore transformation of informal trading depends on the integration of trading into urban and built environments[21].

There are therefore four questions which need to be addressed :

1. How can informal trading be integrated spatially into our urban fabric and contribute positively towards changing the nature of our inherited Apartheid spatial geography ?
2. How can a balance be achieved between informal trading and city management strategies ?
3. What is the nature of appropriate and sustainable facilities and suitable environments for informal trading ? In what contexts are buildings or structures necessary.
4. How can informal trading be integrated into our urban economy ?

In the inner city, an appropriate response may be; designated trading streets linked to major pedestrian commuter routes, designated open trading areas and the already proposed 'market hall' type buildings in certain areas only. This would provide a range of trading possibilities linked to opportunities for growth and diversity. In informal settlement and township areas cognisance must be taken of the lack of quality urban environments and infrastructure and therefore the approach needs to be in terms of a more physically structured response. Historically, in many settlements and cities, the market 'square' was a result of the integration of trade, political power and social interaction. In informal settlement and township areas the provision of trading spaces should be clearly linked to 'place-making' strategies, as trading may have the potential to generate new forms of public space. Appropriate facilities need to be provided in these environments that will allow a range of trading levels, structures that are flexible to change and upgrading, and access to key services.

However, the case studies discussed in this paper show that despite clear design and implementation strategies, projects are subject to a variety of other social and political dynamics that can be manipulated by various roleplayers in the process. Therefore, the link between policies and strategies – design – process has to be clearly supported by effective city management and other supportive policies such as skills training and small business support. Given that structured informal trading facilities are not financially self supporting or sustainable at this stage, management of trading needs to balance the interests of the city whilst giving traders participation equity in their environments. Trading needs to be seen as contributing positively to

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[20] It is estimated by the Metro Council that only 40% of traders will survive in the new system (Ray,1999)
[21] Thought needs to be given to integrating small scale trading activities into building form in terms of both commercial and housing developments, which need to provide broad mixed used environments.

the city, as an activity that can contribute to the successful rejuvenation of Johannesburg.

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