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21. HOUSING, CITY PLANNING AND LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING
DEPARTMENT (CITY PLANNING DIVISION)
REPORT ON THE TSHWANE COMPACTION AND DENSIFICATION STRATEGY,
2005
(From the City Planning Committee: 12 July 2005)

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy, which was compiled during the first half of 2005, to the City Planning Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

The Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy is the second phase of a project aimed at addressing the need for densification and compaction within the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Area.

The first study, namely the Macro Perspective on Residential Densities and Compaction in Tshwane, was aimed at providing the City of Tshwane with information on trends and approaches around residential densification and urban compaction in the South African and international arena.

The Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy, 2005 was compiled by the City Planning Division in collaboration with the University of Pretoria's Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

3. AIM OF THE STRATEGY

The purpose of this study is to provide an integrated strategy for urban compaction and densification in Tshwane, in accordance with the directives from national and provincial legislation.

This strategy is aimed at addressing the structural composition of the metropolitan area as a whole from a densification point of view, rather than making any detailed proposals for densification in specific areas.

This strategy can also be seen as an attempt to give realisation to the Tshwane City Strategy, as far as issues related to urban form and residential development are concerned.

The central questions that the strategy aims to address are:

- How do we need to address residential development over the long term in order to create a more efficient, sustainable and equitable city?

- How/...

- How can the intensification and densification of certain areas further the aims of the Tshwane City Development Strategy?
- How do we best harness the existing development energy in the city at this point in time, given current constraints, to contribute to a compact and intensified city structure?

4. CONTENTS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy deals with the following issues:

- the current legislative and institutional frameworks that govern the question of compaction and densification
- the rationale for and objectives of compaction and densification
- the approach that forms the foundation for the Tshwane Compaction and densification Strategy and the principles that will govern the implementation of the said approach
- defining specific density zones and density criteria
- design guidelines for higher density housing
- implementation framework

5. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF STRATEGY

5.1 Legislative Framework

In this section, an interpretation is provided of the current legislative directive with regard to compaction and densification. The key directives for compaction and densification which were drawn from the legislative and institutional frameworks are:

- Minimise unmanaged or unfocussed urban growth
- Create opportunities for the densification of existing low density areas
- Promote higher density and integrated environments with typical urban characteristics to balance suburban developments
- Ensure that residents have access to a range of choices with regard to housing typologies as well as locations
- Integrate residential development, movement systems, social facilities, employment opportunities and activity areas
- Focus residential densification around areas of opportunity (employment opportunity, activity areas, transport opportunities etc.)

5.2 Rationale and objectives

This section aims to qualify the need for compaction and densification in our city, and set out certain objectives that need to be achieved in order to make the city more functional, equitable, convenient and attractive.

This section also deals with those threats to a more compact city that arise from current development trends.

The rationale for densifying the city (i.e. increasing the gross overall density), stems from the following needs:

- managing the spatial growth of the city
- increasing efficiency and cost effectiveness
- increasing convenience and quality of life
- creating the necessary population thresholds for economic growth and healthy businesses in specific areas

It is important to understand that densification and compaction is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve an overall efficient, integrated and sustainable metropolitan area.

Densification should therefore not be done for the sake of densification, but to achieve a range of other goals.

5.3 Approach and Principles

The Strategy proposes that the City follows a Smart Growth approach towards densification. This section explains the concept of smart growth, and also sets out a comprehensive list of normative principles that need to form that foundation of all development actions in the City in the short to long term, in order to ensure that the objectives of compaction and densification are met.

The proposed approach of Smart Growth is not a single approach, but rather a collection of urban development strategies aimed at reducing sprawl and promoting growth that is balanced and fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible. Smart Growth tries to promote growth and development in areas with optimal opportunity, and offers an antidote to the sprawl that has resulted from unlimited low-density development further and further away from the city centre.

Smart Growth is therefore not a densification approach or strategy per se, but rather a holistic way of looking at growth and development.

In short, "Smart Growth" can be explained as "doing the right thing in the right place in the right way".

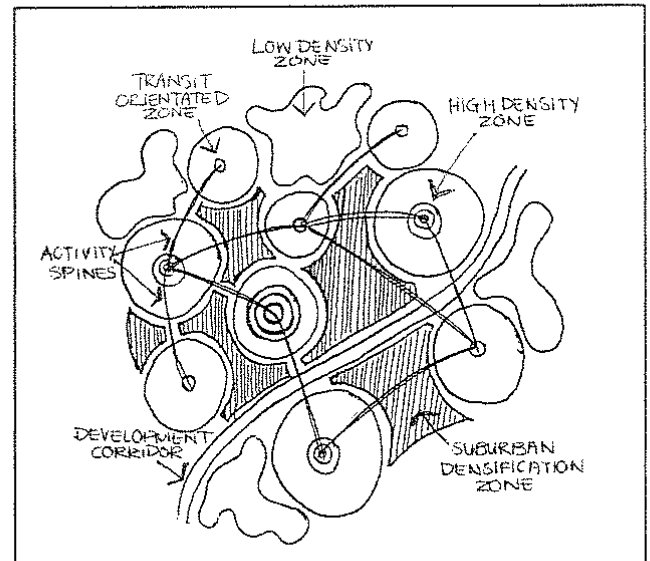
The approach of Smart Growth is most appropriate within the context of the City Strategy, as the principles address the question of restructuring the city around areas of opportunity, and bring people closer to those opportunities, while at the same time promoting high quality living environments.

5.4 Density Zones

In line with the principles of 'Smart Growth' of providing for density diversity and a range of densification efforts around strategic locations in the city, the strategy have identified four general density zones within the municipal area that can be applied to areas with varying characteristics and density.

These zones are:

- Concentration Zones
- Linear Zones
- Suburban Densification Zones
- Low Density Zones



This section provides guidelines for each of those zones in terms of general characteristics, density, typologies and urban design guidelines.

5.5 Design Guidelines for Higher Density Housing

For many years, the only question that governed higher density housing was the actual density of the development (expressed in terms of units/ha). In practice however, design considerations should be considered as much more important, as very high densities could, through appropriate design and integration, be much more desirable developments than lower densities without appropriate design, It is therefore important that the design aspects in future receive just as much, if not more, attention during the consideration of development applications for higher density developments.

The guidelines are structured around five design elements:

- Urban Context
- Building Envelope
- Building Layout and Design
- Streetscape
- Open space and Landscape Design

5.6 Implementation Framework

This section provides guidelines for the practical implementation of the principles set out in the strategy, i.e. – how do we ensure that the proposals made in this document realise within the city?

The densification and compaction strategy implies an intervention into the current way in which the city is developing. Urban Planners and local government have long been accused of being experts at drafting plans, but lacking in the ability to implement those plans.

The developmental role of local government means that government needs to lead the way in the implementation of its plans. Planners within the local authority should not only deal with densification in a re-active manner (i.e. dealing with densification proposals), but also in a pro-active manner through planning, budgeting and the implementation of pilot projects

Although the section dealing with the implementation is not a comprehensive implementation framework, it begins to identify the most important components that will assist in the successful implementation of the Strategy, namely -

- The role of Regional Spatial Development Frameworks
- Direct Public Investment and Budget Alignment
- Incentives and Disincentives
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Targets and Timeframes

The most crucial decisions or actions that need to be taken in the short term, are:

- The Regional Spatial Frameworks must incorporate the proposal made in this strategy.
- Council must devise incentives and disincentives to promote densification and compaction.
- The Infrastructural Budget must be aligned to the principles and needs that arise from increased densification of our city.
- Strategic planning around the provision of infrastructure must align with the Regional Spatial Development Frameworks in terms of priority areas for densification.
- Institutional housing must be provided in co-operation with the above mentioned zones and strategies.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR DECISION MAKING IN TSHWANE

In order to ensure that we as a municipality direct the growth of the city in a direction that is sustainable in the long run, and which will also ensure that the lives of its residents become more convenient in many ways, it is necessary that a coordinated effort be made to densify and compact strategic locations in the city in a constructive manner.

- The first important step in this direction is to ensure that all the regional spatial development frameworks, and all subsequent more detailed framework plans, adhere to the approach and principles set out in the Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy.
- Secondly, it is important that there is consistency in the way in which land use applications are dealt with, so that the market out there will understand that the city is serious about its efforts.

- Thirdly/...

- Thirdly, ad hoc densification applications which are not consistent with the aims and principles of the strategy, and do not adhere to the spatial logic which is proposed by the Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework and the Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy, should not be approved.
- Lastly, in dealing with land use applications, the contribution of the proposed development to an entire environment should be considered, and not only the site specific aspects of the development. Strict guidelines should be set for the design functionality of buildings and their integration with adjoining public areas and properties.

Once approved, it is important that this Strategy be communicated to all roleplayers who have an impact in the way in which the city is shaped spatially and how it functions, including the engineering departments, public transport managers, environmental role players etc.

7. COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Comments on the draft strategy were requested from the following departments:

- Housing, City Planning and Environmental Management: Environmental Management Division
- Housing, City Planning and Environmental Management: Housing Division
- IDP Unit (City Strategy)
- Service Delivery (Roads and Stormwater)
- Service Delivery (Water and Sanitation)
- Tshwane Electricity
- Social Development
- Economic Development: LED
- Economic Development: Public Transport

Only Tshwane Electricity and Environmental Resource Management commented on the Strategy.

7.1 Tshwane Electricity

"The Department Tshwane Electricity is in concurrence with the proposed Compaction and Densification Strategy for the City of Tshwane especially regarding the utilisation of vacant land. However, very little is said in the Strategy

Document regarding the development and funding of the necessary strengthening of the Engineering Services infrastructure which will be a real consequence of the implied compaction and densification drive.

To what extent will developers be kept responsible for these costs?

However, should the Municipality opt to fund these projects, the prime initiators of these densification projects will need to budget for the total cost thereof, inclusive of infrastructure upgrading, and Council will have to give the necessary support. It is impossible to indicate the expected costs as no information on this is currently available."

7.2 Environmental Resource Management

- “1. The basic concept of the proposed compaction and densification is in line with the Tshwane Integrated Environmental Policy (TIEP).
2. It is therefore suggested that the TIEP be included as one of the legislative drivers of the process in the first part of the document.
3. It is further suggested that the strategy should include references to the following:
 - a. The mitigation of possible increased noise levels in a densified city.
 - b. The optimisation of tourism opportunities.
 - c. Identification of and mitigation measures related to possible negative alterations to the historic and cultural fabric of residents.
 - d. Active measures to promote urban greening.
 - e. The informing role of the MOSP in terms of open space management.
 - f. Active measures to promote more than a reduction in the physical footprint of the city, but also the ecological footprint of the city through the promotion of aspects such as green building design.
 - g. The fact that densification can lead to increased urban pollution from diverse sources such as storm water run-off and that an integrated process is required to adequately manage the integrated nature of environmental aspects.
4. It is also suggested that greater public participation in the strategy be considered than merely informing residents of the new plan, since urban densification and compaction is a concept not without its share of debate and controversy.
5. A strong emphasis is placed on public transport development and rightly so as compaction and densification are offered as an antipode for excessive private based transport, however it is suggested that the strategy also aims to create more opportunities for users of bicycles, as well as catering for pedestrian safety.
6. Lately it is suggested that environmental incentives for developers be investigated along with the other possible incentives mentioned with the aim of promoting densification and compaction.”

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public participation process will form part and parcel of the public participation process of the Regional Spatial Development Framework, as that is the level on which specific densification proposals will be made for specific areas, where the public could be affected.

During/...

During the discussion of this matter at the City Planning Committee Meeting of 12 July 2005, Councillor Subesh Pillay requested that this report be taken to Council for cognisance, which request was unanimously supported by the Committee. Therefore the City Planning Committee resolved to recommend as set out below.

ANNEXURE:

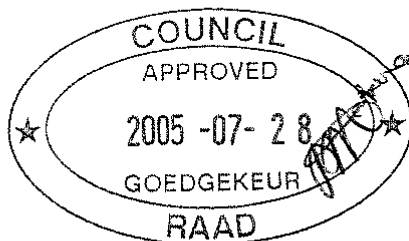
1. Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That cognisance be taken of the Tshwane Compaction and Densification Strategy.

(Remarks:

1. At the Council meeting of 28 July 2005, Cllr JJ van Noordwyk requested that this document be submitted to the Ward Committees for their comments to enhance participatory democracy.
2. Cllr FP Nel concurred with Cllr JJ van Noordwyk and further urged the Municipality not to underestimate the importance of this fundamental principle which in his view was going to be influential on the City Development Strategy. He also expressed concern over the fact that only two departments commented on the report in stead of all the affected departments.
3. In response to Cllr FP Nel's concerns, Cllr KD Ramokgopa mentioned that the policy wouldn't influence the City Development Strategy since it was guided by the City Development Strategy and not vice versa. He further explained that the policy didn't tell where this densification would occur but only determined the principles guiding that decision.)



CITY OF TSHWANE COMPACTION AND DENSIFICATION STRATEGY

May 2005

Prepared for:
The Department of Housing, City Planning and
Environmental Management, City of Tshwane Metropolitan
Municipality

Prepared by:
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City of Tshwane

In collaboration with
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