

A nighttime photograph of a city street. On the left, a large, ornate, multi-story building with a prominent clock tower is illuminated. The street is paved with light-colored bricks and features a row of large, spherical stone bollards. In the background, modern buildings and streetlights are visible, creating a contrast between old and new architecture.

public-private partnerships
and urban regeneration in the central city

lessons from the
first 10 years
of the cape town
partnership

presented by Andrew Boraine, chief executive of the Cape Town Partnership
at the International Downtown Association 55th Annual Conference, Milwaukee,
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“Cross-sector partnerships involve some form of structured collaboration between organisations from business, government and civil society on the basis of converging interests, focused on achieving joint objectives. Partnerships exist on different scales and take different forms, but they have in common the expectation that the participants can achieve their objectives more effectively and efficiently through strategic alliances with others rather than acting independently.”¹



Introduction

The Cape Town Central City encountered a period of gradual decline in the 1990s. This was characterised by capital and business flight to decentralised office parks and suburban retail malls, a partial collapse of municipal systems (e.g. kerbside parking), absentee landlords and ‘sick’ buildings, rising crime and grime on the streets, a loss of property value and a concomitant decline in municipal income.

The Cape Town Partnership² was established in July 1999 by the City of Cape Town and various business and other partners to *manage, promote and develop* the Cape Town Central City. The Partnership’s vision is of an “inclusive, productive and diverse city centre that retains its historic character and reflects a common identity for all the people of Cape Town”. A specific urban management vehicle, the Central City Improvement District (CCID) was launched by the Partnership in November 2000.

The Partnership and the CCID have achieved much over the past ten years, including security, cleansing and urban management collaborations, resulting in a 90% reduction in serious crime; international recognition of the Partnership’s social development programme, especially innovative job creation schemes; investment attraction of between R14-18bn, with a further R20bn in the pipeline; upgrade and redevelopment of over 170 buildings, many of them of important heritage significance; restoration of property values and municipal revenues; revitalisation of public spaces and improved pedestrian environments; innovative cultural, sustainable development and 2010 FIFA World Cup™ programmes, and, an agenda for the future in the form of the Central City Development Strategy.

¹*What makes cross-sector partnerships successful? A comparative case study analysis of diverse partnership types in an emerging economy context*, paper submitted to a special edition of the *Journal of Business Ethics*, Ralph Hamann, Sunette Pienaar, Fleur Boulogne, Nicole Kranz, 2009, p3. Hamann and his colleagues provide a useful overview of the international literature on cross-sector partnerships, but in addition, through their research into 75 partnerships and analysis of 10 comparative case studies in South Africa (including the Cape Town Partnership), they have been able to make observations about partnerships in the context of an emerging economy, something which much of the existing international literature does not do.

² Note that the formal name is the Cape Town Central City Partnership. The Partnership is a non profit private company.



Partnership models

When the Partnership was established in 1999, it was very much in response to the crisis that existed in the Cape Town Central City at the time. Various international models of partnership and urban management were studied (in particular, the Coventry Central City Partnership in the UK and the Business Improvement Districts in New York), as well as the experience of business partnerships and CIDs in Johannesburg, but no specific model of partnership was theorised at the time. Ten years later, however, it is possible to draw lessons from the work of the Partnership about what constitutes a successful public-private partnership.

To do this, we have drawn on the work of Ralph Hamann and colleagues (cited above). Hamann *et al* provide a useful overview of the international literature on cross-sector partnerships, but in addition, through their research into 75 partnerships and analysis of 10 comparative case studies in South Africa (including the Cape Town Partnership), they have been able to make observations about partnerships in the context of an emerging economy, something which much of the existing international literature does not do.



Lifecycle approach

The history³ of the Cape Town Partnership can be divided roughly as follows:

- **Establishment (1996-1999):** Discussions take place, mainly between CBD property owners, businesses and the City of Cape Town, around the need for a collective approach to solving the problems of the Central City. Various ad-hoc initiatives are put in place (e.g. CCTV cameras, Broom Brigade) but the decision is taken to initiate a formally structured partnership to sustain efforts and communicate effectively. The Partnership is launched in July 1999 and the CCID in November 2000.
- **Implementation (1999-2002):** The focus is on improving the performance of the Central City by making the area safe and clean, and *perceived* to be clean and safe, in order to restore business and public confidence, stem capital flight and rescue dwindling municipal revenues. Emphasis is placed on marketing and communications.
- **Urban regeneration (2003-2005):** The focus is on attracting private sector investment to regenerate commercial buildings; however, significant conversion of under-utilised B- and C-grade office buildings to residential accommodation occurs. The East City Regeneration Conference takes place in order to promote investment in an under-developed part of the Central City. There is a growing focus on upgrading of public spaces to encourage public activities; however, there is still minimal public sector investment in the Central City due to the need to extend basic municipal services to more disadvantaged areas of the city.
- **Broadening the Partnership (2005-2007):** The Partnership's vision and mission is broadened to focus on inclusive development. The CCID's social development and job

³ A detailed history of the Cape Town Partnership, together with a timeline, can be found on the Partnership's website: www.capetownpartnership.co.za. Further information is contained in Greg Clark and Joe Huxley, *Organising for Local and Economic Development: the role of Agencies, Companies and Partnership Bodies*, OECD LEED, to be published in October 2009.

creation programme is strengthened. New partners from the social, cultural, environmental and educational sectors are drawn onto the Partnership's Board, as well as representation from other public sector bodies such as the Western Cape Provincial Government. New programmes, such as Creative Cape Town and the CBD Energy Efficiency Initiative, are established.

- **Building the long-term agenda (2007-2009):** While the Partnership continues to focus on improving the performance of the Central City through CCID urban management programmes and partnerships, a Central City Development Strategy (CCDS) is drawn up to build a long-term agenda for coordinated action. Massive public sector investment begins to take place, mainly due to infrastructure preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

The Cape Town Partnership has had to constantly adapt to new circumstances. In general, partnerships are not static and unchanging, and therefore need to be flexible and light. It is useful to adopt an evolutionary approach, where successive stages of the partnership require different partners and skills.



Lessons of Building and Maintaining the Partnership

A central theme within most partnerships “is the need to build and maintain trust between participants in a partnership, also because partners will need to take risks when relying on other partners fulfilling their part of explicit agreements or implicit expectations.”⁴

At the Cape Town Partnership, this is referred to as providing a ‘translation service’. The role of a partnership is to bring different ‘worlds’ together through ‘shuttle diplomacy’ and by ‘playing cupid’ at a range of levels, i.e. not just between the public and private sectors, but also between different spheres of government, city departments, owners and tenants, developers and heritage practitioners, and formal and informal retailers.

To build trust, it is useful to try and understand possible reasons for underlying mistrust. In our experience, when it comes to the public sector and the private sector, these include the following:

Public sector perceptions and attitudes inhibiting partnerships

- Given the persistent high levels of spatial inequality in the city, there is uneasiness about being seen to allocate too high a level of public resources (be it capital budget or city official's time) towards what are regarded as ‘privileged’ areas.
- There is resistance to ‘already empowered’ and ‘well-resourced’ constituencies which are seen to be successfully lobbying for preferential access and greater public resources.

⁴ Hamann *et al*, p5. They also refer to six useful criteria for effective partnerships identified in the *Partnership Assessment Tool of the UK Department of Health*: 1) recognise and accept the need for partnerships; 2) develop clarity of purpose; 3) ensure commitment and ownership; 4) develop and maintain trust; 5) create clear partnership arrangements; and 6) monitor, measure and learn.

- The private sector is viewed with suspicion as wanting to ‘take over’ the public sector’s roles and responsibilities.
- The public sector sometimes sees itself as the sole custodian and defender of ‘public interest’, which the private sector, due to its pursuit of profit, is viewed as having very little understanding of or regard for issues of public benefit.
- Private developers are often viewed with suspicion by residential and heritage groups, and public sector planners therefore often view their role as curtailing rather than enabling new developments.

Private sector perceptions and attitudes inhibiting partnerships

- The public sector is viewed as inherently inefficient, ineffective and wasteful. A belief that the private sector would inevitably do a better job pervades.
- This is reinforced by the perceived length of time for public sector decisions to be made (the so-called ‘laundromat’ effect, when discussions go ‘round and round’ within the bureaucracy seemingly with no outcome).
- Property owners are often aggrieved that they pay rates to the City in order to get service delivery, and feel that they should therefore not have to pay an additional CID levy for top-up services.
- Property owners are often suspicious that the provision of extra CID services will lead to a withdrawal of municipal services, and that what starts out as a complementary or ‘top up’ service will in fact become a substitute.⁵

How does one begin to overcome these various types and levels of mistrust? The authors Covey and Brown⁶ use the term ‘critical cooperation’ to describe partnerships that are based on learning how to manage not just cooperation or conflict, but cooperation *and* conflict in the same relationship. In other words, within a commitment to common objectives and a shared style of work, there needs to be room for differences. The relative size of partners does not matter but, rather, clarity on common objectives.

Credit should be given to the partners on a regular basis. It is preferable to promote the collective efforts of the partners rather than the organisation itself. If needs be, forego credit for a successful project in order to build stronger, non-threatening relationships.

It is essential to have a mutually agreed understanding amongst partners of communicating with the media, and it is advisable to operate ‘below the radar’ more often than not. Differences are

⁵ The CCID was originally established as part of a formal Service Level Agreement with the City of Cape Town, which included onerous penalties for non-delivery by the City. While this Agreement was useful in obtaining the initial buy-in of property owners and businesses, it never worked in practice, mainly due to the fact that invoking any one of the penalties would probably have led to an irrevocable breakdown in partnership relations. The City of Cape Town is currently piloting a new form of Service Level Agreement with the Epping CID, which, if successful, will be applied in all CID areas.

⁶ Cited by Hamann *et al*, p5. They also cite Fisher and Ury (1981) who identify four conditions for successful partnership: 1) recognise that each of the parties have an influence on each other’s well-being; 2) acknowledge the critical rights of the parties; 3) negotiate both converging and conflicting interests; and 4) manage relations with stakeholder constituencies.

best not fought out via the media. A strategy of 'name, blame and shame' does not work with the public sector (or any other organisation for that matter) and is usually counter-productive.

Partnerships need to be regularly renewed, and not taken for granted. Trust needs to be built over a period of time through openness, transparency and knowledge-sharing, as well as being able to understand the diverse work styles and organisational cultures of the partners. The role and consistency of Partnership board members in this regard is vital. In addition, stakeholder constituencies need to be continuously educated.

It is important to understand that a public-private partnership is not a municipal or public entity, nor is it a business lobby. This issue is often misconstrued. In the early days, some business partners saw the Partnership mainly as a platform to organise business pressure against the municipality, which was perceived as not delivering on its basic mandate. Political leaders and public officials tended to reinforce this perception by not fully using the Partnership as a vehicle to advance public policy and public sector interests.

It is helpful to try and strike the correct balance between organisational independence of the partnership organisation itself, and accountability to partners and stakeholders, particularly to ensure continuity through successive government 'regime changes'.

A partnership is only as strong as the partners. As important as being able to engage directly in implementation is being able to hold partners accountable for their own deliverables.

Identify roles and responsibilities and have a clear division of labour within the partnership. Don't try and do everything as an organisation, even if you do it well. In recent years, following useful recommendations made in a Review⁷, the Partnership has adopted a 'boating' metaphor in order to better define roles and responsibilities:

- **Rowing:** when you do the 'heavy lifting' yourself, i.e. direct delivery and implementation;
- **Steering:** the bulk of the work of a public/ private partnership. This is where you initiate, coordinate, facilitate and inspire;
- **Cheering:** encourage other organisations to deliver on their own mandates. Don't try and take over their role; and
- **Coaching:** share information and knowledge in a structured way. Help to build partnership and urban regeneration capacity elsewhere in the city.

It is also useful to adopt a networking approach, and to not just rely on formal structures and leaders. Create multiple entry points into organisations and government administrations, and have a keen understanding of who deals with what, and who can make things happen. Partnerships need to have an intuitive understanding of the political, social and commercial environment, and established relationships must be highly valued.

The calibre of the people working directly and indirectly for the partnership is important. They must be partnership-orientated, should place a high premium on team-work and networking, and

⁷ *Peer Review of the Cape Town Partnership* by Greg Clark, Joe Huxley and Nisa Mammon, October 2008.

need to be able to work in a flexible structure. This goes for Partnership board members and partners and stakeholders themselves. Hamann *et al* confirm this when they state: “In effective partnerships, decision-making power is not held or exerted primarily by organisational hierarchy, state mandate or market competition, but rather on the basis of legitimacy brought about by the ‘right’ people being involved in authentic and solutions-orientated dialogue”.⁸



Types of partnership

According to Hamann *et al*, two types of partnership predominate in the literature, namely *implementation partnerships* (predominately about financing and managing action to achieve particular, tangible objectives), and *innovation and dialogue partnerships* (which commonly seek to create a guiding or facilitative framework for action)⁹.

Occasionally, an initiative takes a *hybrid* form. The CTP/ CCID organisational model is a good example of this. On the one hand, the CCID focuses on the ‘here and now’. Its strength is its attention to detail, its ability to provide immediate responses to urban management problems and its visible presence on the streets. On the other hand, the Partnership concentrates on ‘what happens tomorrow’. It focuses on the broader socio-economic context, brings diverse partners (and points of view) together, and is able to initiate new ideas and longer-term programmes. One of the main reasons for the success of the Cape Town Partnership has been this ‘two-in-one’ or hybrid organisational structure, which has been able to strike the right balance between strategy and implementation.



Urban Regeneration Lessons

▪ Get the basics right

The Partnership, via the work of the CCID, concentrates on ‘getting the basics right’, such as safety and security, cleansing and precinct management (e.g. graffiti, potholes, illegal posters and illegal dumping). If the area in question is not safe, clean and well-managed, and *seen* to be these things, it is not easy to convince property investors to risk their investments (and drivers their motor vehicles and shoppers their wages). Conversely, while incentive schemes such as the SA National Treasury’s Urban Development Zone (UDZ) can have a positive impact, property and business owners usually only require the urban management basics to be in place in order to invest in an area.

The CID model in Cape Town is explicitly not a privatisation model. The CCID does not substitute the role of the City of Cape Town, but provides complementary (top-up) services, funded through an additional levy on property owners. The CCID operates the daily interface with ratepayers and members of the public.

⁸ Hamann *et al*, p24

⁹ Hamann *et al*, p10

A defined spatial focus for urban management is helpful, but boundaries should not be allowed to become rigid borders. Crime, for example, has no borders, so collaboration across boundaries is important. Issues such as housing, public transport and employment have to be addressed over a wider area.

The CID movement in Cape Town in itself is a form of partnership. The City of Cape Town, through its Special Rating Areas (SRAs) legislation, has set the legal platform for CIDs in place. The City also collects the additional levy from property owners each month, and pays it across to each CID, an essential part of the process of sustaining CIDs. The CIDs in return complement the City's service delivery through the supply of 'top up' services and urban management system that can pay 'attention to detail'.

The CCID has become expert at creating operational partnerships in its own right. The Central City security partnership, which involves the South African Police Services (SAPS), Metro Police, Law Enforcement, CCID Security, other private security firms and the Community Policing Forum is a case in point. Other partnerships have been built around cleansing, urban management, social development, and roads and pavement maintenance.

▪ **Social development and job creation are core principles of urban regeneration**

If you deal with the streets, you have to address issues of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, substance and alcohol abuse, mental illness, school absenteeism, dysfunctional homes, physical and sexual abuse, personal trauma, and many other social issues, as well as 'crime and grime'.

In the context of a developing city, faced with massive challenges of poverty, it is essential to make service delivery programmes as labour-intensive as possible to address issues of unemployment.

In 2001, the Partnership, together with the City of Cape Town, introduced a Parking Marshal System that overnight regularized most existing informal car parkers into a legal parking management system. The system now incorporates hand-held meters. This project created over 300 permanent jobs - to date one of the most successful job creation projects in the Central City.

In 2006, the CCID managed the Western Cape Provincial Government 'Walking Bus' programme, a nine-month commuter escort project which created over 70 new employment opportunities.

Subsequently, the CCID has been on a drive to develop sustainable job creation programmes within the Central City. The CCID has partnered with Straatwerk (meaning 'street work'), a faith-based NGO, to develop urban management programmes that complement the social upliftment projects that Straatwerk has in place. These programmes are for people who are not yet able to act productively in society and assist desperate (and often destitute) individuals to earn an income.

The CCID has assisted Straatwerk in developing two levels of service – basic¹⁰ and technical services¹¹. Some of the projects provide employment at basic level while others require

¹⁰ Basic Entry Level work programmes include general and specialised cleansing, 'hot spot' cleansing, big drain and gully cleaning, pavement channels and small drain cleaning, illegal poster, stickers and strings removal, public squares and events services, community court programme, entrances and exits cleansing

additional training and skills. The CCID has also assisted in developing supervisory, administrative and management structures as the programme has grown from strength to strength. The system currently employs over 200 people per month; more than 60 people are employed at any one time during a typical day.

The well-known slogan 'zero tolerance' can sometimes be misinterpreted to mean 'get the poor and the homeless off our streets' without regard of where they go or what happens to them. Urban regeneration is about people - all people - including the most marginalised.

'Zero tolerance' means not tolerating illegal and criminal activities and anti-social behaviour. However, there is a need to differentiate between criminal activities and anti-social behaviour. Two different strategies are required. There needs to be consequences for unacceptable behaviour, but diversion programmes via, for example, the Central City Community Court is better than sending social offenders into the conventional criminal justice system.

Social development programmes in the Central City differentiate between the needs of different groups, for example, homeless children, youth and adults, who all need different kinds of support. Having field-workers on the streets, particularly at night and on weekends, is essential. Social development is not a 'nine-to-five' issue.

The CCID and its NGO partners communicate a clear public message: "Give, but give responsibly. Don't perpetuate life on the streets. Support local NGOs with money, time and resources, within the context of a 'continuum of care' policy framework, rather than giving directly to people on the streets".

▪ Culture and urban regeneration

Urban regeneration is about people, not just buildings and infrastructure. People express themselves through their culture in various ways. The history and memory of a city holds the potential for shaping a new common city identity and often forms an integral part of successful urban regeneration.

The role of culture in positioning cities as drivers in the global economy draws on the role of the local creative and knowledge industries. When a city's cultural resources, embedded in its local distinctiveness, can be mobilized through a process of urban regeneration, a city can become more prosperous, innovative and inclusive.

programme, dawn cleansing patrol (graveyard shift), weeding programme, distribution of CCID marketing collateral, bakkie brigade, and recycling project.

¹¹ Technical Services work programmes include a graffiti squad, electrical light pole repair team, environmental rodent inspectors ('Rat Pack'), beautification and gardening services, secondary street maintenance, signage replacement and pole straightening, painting of street and road signs, and minor building alterations and repairs. A number of new programmes are under consideration include a cigarette cleansing team, public space maintenance, management of public amenities (i.e. public toilets) and 2010 visitor ambassadors.

The Partnership developed its Creative Cape Town programme in 2006 in recognition of the importance of culture in urban regeneration. It focuses on communicating, supporting and facilitating the development of the creative and knowledge economy. The programme is a response to a relatively spontaneous agglomeration and concentration of creative, cultural and knowledge economy industries in the Central City, including advertising agencies, architectural firms, the crafts sector, fashion, jewellery and other design-related industries, publishing and electronic media sectors, music, film, visual and performing arts, galleries, museums, music venues, festivals, universities and colleges, libraries and archives, and software and IT companies.

Culture is often reduced to being a 'soft' issue associated with art and entertainment, and its broader potentials are often poorly understood. For this reason, it is important to adequately communicate the role of culture in city strategy, and to convince policy makers and businesses to support cultural-led urban regeneration.

It is useful to demonstrate the impact of the City's creative and knowledge economy to enable the right interventions. For this reason, the Partnership conducted research that identified over 1000 creative and knowledge entities in the Central City, employing approximately 18 000 workers. Mapping these onto a GIS-enhanced database enabled the Partnership to build a case for a creative sector support strategy.

Quantitative information was backed up by interviews with industry leaders in order to understand the key issues affecting their projects and businesses. Once this information became available, various products could be introduced, such as a cultural tourism map, a Creative Annual, a community TV programme, monthly e-newsletters and social networking, among others.

Responding to calls for more information-sharing and networking, and building on Cape Town Partnership's strength as a networker and facilitator, Creative Cape Town has focused on fostering a creative milieu amongst a networked and informed group of people active in the creative and knowledge economies - creative entrepreneurs, dynamic start-ups, established institutions, relevant government agencies and universities.

It is important to acknowledge and celebrate successful local creative enterprises and innovators in order to boost confidence in the sector. Projects like the Creative Clusters Network, where organisations talk about their own success stories to their peers, has led to new collaborations and increased business.

The Central City is a hub for tourism, hosting over 50% of the city's bed-spaces as well as a number of important restaurants and tourist destinations, and serving as a gateway for the V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain National Park and in fact the whole city region. Creative Cape Town specifically promotes cultural tourism, defined by UNESCO (2006) as "travel directed towards an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place."

Visitors to the city are interested in the special and unique, rather than what is common globally. One key lesson is to get retailers to think about local distinctiveness in their messaging and products.

Storytelling is also important for a divided city like Cape Town, where people were previously 'written out' of the city's history. Local culture is a source of these stories that enable people to explore their commonalities and deal with past hurts. Public art, new memorials, renaming and exhibitions at local history museums provide opportunities for more inclusive memorialisation in the public realm. Projects like the District Six Museum, *Infecting the City*, *Sunday Times* Public Art and Heritage Project, Iziko Museum lectures, Prestwich Place Memorial, the slave memorial in Church Square, St George's Cathedral Crypt Memory and Witness Centre, and the Partnership's own Goemarati initiative have all helped Capetonians reclaim their own history and build a common city identity.

Creative Cape Town has worked at building an understanding of the Central City as a relatively 'neutral space', where various groups and communities can interact openly. This role was particularly significant at the time of xenophobic attacks in South Africa in 2007. The Central City was one of the few areas where immigrants and refugees in Cape Town felt relatively safe and were able to continue with their lives.

▪ Public space for public life

"First life, then spaces, then buildings – the other way around never works."- Jan Gehl

In any urban regeneration programme, the space between buildings is as important as the buildings themselves. The Partnership became convinced of this through our interaction with Professor Jan Gehl, of Gehl and Associates in Denmark, in 2004¹².

Traditionally, according to Gehl, public spaces performed three functions: markets, meeting places and thoroughfares. However, under conditions of industrialisation in the 20th century, new patterns of traffic, trade and communications have emerged that overwhelmed the traditional uses of public space. In particular, public spaces and pedestrian routes have become dominated by cars and car-based planning, leading to what Gehl calls the 'invaded city' and even the 'abandoned city'.

The Cape Town City Centre is structured according to a 350-year-old grid pattern of streets and public squares. Two of them, the Grand Parade and Greenmarket Square, are the oldest public spaces in the country. As a relatively small city centre, it is potentially highly walkable, with access to the surrounding mountains and the sea.

Despite efforts by the City of Cape Town during the 1980s to cater for the needs of pedestrians, (including converting St George's St into a successful pedestrian thoroughfare), by the 1990s, car-based planning had triumphed. The Cape Town Station, the main public transport interchange, was cut off from the rest of the city centre by two busy streets (Strand Street – six lanes of traffic, and Heerengracht – eight lanes), pavements were removed and pedestrians were forced into underground passages or overhead bridges. Jan Gehl famously observed during his first visit that "in Cape Town, pedestrians are a hunted race".

¹² See Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings – Using Public Space*, The Danish Architectural Press, 2001 and Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe, *New City Spaces*, The Danish Architectural Press, 2003.

Fortunately, the City and Partnership have been able to reverse these trends over the past few years, through the following types of interventions:

- Reinforcement of existing pedestrian networks (St George's Mall), and expansion of networks (Greenmarket Square, Waterkant St, Somerset Rd);
- Partial reduction of parking spaces (Church Square, Grand Parade, Greenmarket Square);
- Upgrading of existing public spaces (Pier Place, Jetty Square, St Andrew's Square, Grand Parade, Greenmarket Square), and creation of new ones (Station Square);
- Upgrading of green spaces (Company's Garden, Green Point Urban Park);
- Activation of street frontages (pavement cafes, ground floor retail) and upgrade of pavements;
- Promotion of non-motorised transport (cycle-cabs, bicycle lanes);
- Improved public transport (new Integrated Rapid Transit System and upgrading of Cape Town Station and rail system);
- Better conditions for traders in markets (Trafalgar Place flower sellers, Grand Parade, Greenmarket Square, Station Deck);
- Encouragement of multiple use of public spaces (sporting and cultural events, film, TV and commercial shoots, markets, marches and processions, civic protests);
- Weekly walking tours, aimed at Capetonians, to showcase new developments and to encourage a culture of walking.

During this period, the following lessons have been learned:

- Upgrading public spaces is not just a question of attractive landscaping and preserving heritage, but understanding the economic, social and cultural use of the space, in other words, creating *public space for public life*.
- A shift away from car-orientated planning requires a great deal of public education. Motorists wedded to car-use are nervous of shifting to public transport. Retailers are concerned if parking is reduced near their shops. Traffic planners, trained for years to speed up the movement of cars through urban areas, are reluctant to sanction moves to slow down cars. Incremental improvements that give people time to get used to change are generally the best way to make progress.
- Despite over two years of discussions within the City of Cape Town, it is still not clear which department is responsible for the maintenance, management, development and promotion of public space in the city. Consequently this function is still not adequately performed.



Communications

It is no good if you implement successful projects and programmes and do not tell everyone about them. Communicate constantly! Become a trusted source of information and an authority on Central City issues. Information collection, collation, analysis, dissemination and presentation are the lifeblood of a networked organisation. A commitment to knowledge management and knowledge sharing, internally and externally, is essential.

In the modern digital age, it is also important to have a digital media strategy. A picture is worth a thousand words, a short video clip on YouTube is worth even more. Most PowerPoint presentations are generally hopelessly abused as a communications tool¹³.

Development walking tours for your own citizens are very effective. Create local ambassadors. If locals don't believe in what you are doing, you will never convince the rest of the world.

Have a flexible media strategy and be accessible to the media at all times. They are your friends, even when they don't get the story right.



Marketing and branding

In the first years of the Partnership, there was an emphasis on making the Central City 'world class'. This was part of raising urban management standards in order to attract foreign investment.

There are a number of possible risks associated with this strategy. Firstly, what are 'world class' standards, and who defines them? Cape Town is a developing city in an emerging economy, and needs to find solutions appropriate to local conditions. Secondly, it does not make sense for Cape Town to adopt a globally homogenised culture when one of our comparative competitive advantages is our local differentiation.

The emphasis of the Partnership today is on finding ways to make the Central City meet the needs of local citizens, and, through this, to cater for visitors, tourists and potential foreign investors, and not the other way round.

Secondly, the Partnership has sought to identify the unique attributes and differentiating characteristics¹⁴ to constitute a Central City brand, which in turn forms part of a wider City of Cape Town brand.

While Cape Town has a strong leisure tourism brand, it has not developed a coherent business brand, despite being the second-largest regional economy in southern Africa. The Partnership is therefore collaborating with the City of Cape Town and other partners to create a common economic development and investment promotion platform for Cape Town.

¹³ One of the Partnership's informal rules is that PowerPoint presentations should never consist of more than 10% written words.

¹⁴ For example, topography (mountain, city and sea), maritime history, African location and history, political history, heritage, cosmopolitan nature (Tavern of the Seas), lifestyle, popular culture, seat of learning, successful urban management systems, distinctive local neighbourhoods.



Central City Development Strategy

There is still a great deal of work to be done in the Cape Town Central City. The ‘unfinished’ Foreshore freeways continue to provoke widespread debate. The city remains cut off from the sea. District Six remains a scar on the landscape, crying out for restitution and the return of dispossessed communities. Notwithstanding improvements to the public transport system, only through a greater numbers of people living closer to work will the Central City overcome its dependency on commuters navigating increasingly congested highways over long distances and be able to reduce its overlarge carbon footprint. And without a larger residential population, we will battle to achieve the goal of a mixed-use, more vibrant city centre. In turn, this depends on the provision of more affordable accommodation for a greater range of Capetonians than can currently afford to live in town.

The Partnership and the City of Cape Town published a 10-year framework for action entitled the Central City Development Strategy (CCDS) in October 2008¹⁵. The CCDS is based on the following vision: “In the next ten years, the Cape Town Central City will grow and greatly enhance its reputation as a dynamic business and people centre” and focuses on five outcomes:

Five outcomes

- Cape Town’s premier business location, recognised globally;
- A high quality sustainable urban environment;
- A popular destination for Capetonians and visitors;
- A leading centre for knowledge, innovation, creativity and culture, in Africa and the South; and
- A place that embodies the heart and soul of Cape Town.

Five ‘big ideas’

While the CCDS contains many different inter-connected strategies, it is built on five ‘big ideas’:

- To reinstate the historical connection of the City to the sea, the mountain and to water, the *raison d’être* of the City of Cape Town (Reclaim Camissa project);
- To bring the people of Cape Town back into the Central City to live, through appropriate residential densification and more affordable housing;
- To improve the public transport system, providing greater accessibility to, from and around the Central City for Capetonians and visitors (with a particular focus on the City’s new Integrated Rapid Transit System and upgrading the existing rail network);
- To provide space for future growth and investment in the Central City, in particular through the redevelopment of the Cape Town Station Precinct, the East City Design Initiative (ECDI) and the Provincial Government Property Project; and
- To divide the Central City into 20 neighbourhoods, paving the way for development protocols, based on local characteristics that reinforce the distinctiveness of the Central City, in order to reach consensus on planning issues such as appropriate densification, mixed usage, building height, parking ratios, street-frontage, heritage and conservation.

¹⁵ The full CCDS can be downloaded as a PDF from www.capetownpartnership.co.za

The CCDS acknowledges that the Central City is part of a multi-nodal Cape Town metropolitan economy, that all business nodes play a (greater or lesser) role in the development of the regional economy, and that while nodes should 'be competitive', this does not necessarily mean being 'in competition' with one another¹⁶.

The CCDS asserts that a *healthy city centre* means a *healthy city*, particularly with regard to tax revenue, concentrations of employment, business, government, local services, cultural attractions, infrastructure and logistics, and higher education institutions. The Cape Town Central City tends to provide the first destination and experience for visitors, investors, and some new populations, offering them an introduction to the place and connections to wider parts of the city or metropolitan area. The quality of the Central City as an attractor will impact on how much activity passes through the 'gateway' to other parts of the city and region.

While these points may be self-evident and accepted in many cities around the world, the City of Cape Town is a developing city, facing massive inequalities and historical spatial and racial divisions. Political opinion often differs sharply over which parts of the City should be prioritised and where scarce public resources should be channelled. These arguments sometimes result in a 'town vs township' dichotomy (similar to the 'urban vs. rural' debates prevalent at the national policy level). The City of Cape Town's inability to date to conceptualise and adopt a coherent *citywide* spatial economy policy and strategy has meant that a focus on the Central City has tended to be perceived, in certain quarters, as giving preferential treatment to one part of the City at the expense of others, rather than a legitimate intervention to ensure (at the very least) that the City's principle source of revenue is protected and enhanced.¹⁷

It is perhaps more helpful to understand that city development is about bringing resources and job opportunities to where people have been historically located *and* bringing people closer to jobs and economic opportunities, for example, through better public transport and well-located affordable housing. It is not 'either/or'. In the long run, low density urban sprawl and the continued location of poor people towards the urban periphery, is not sustainable. There is a need for a clear and strong public policy of appropriate urban densification, particularly near public transport routes.



Partnerships for development today

Which type of organisation is best-positioned to lead South African cities and towns in dealing with complex development challenges? Government organisations, including many municipalities, face grave challenges such as lack of capacity and finance, over-politicisation of service delivery, vexed inter-governmental relations, hierarchical structures and complex decision-making processes. While there is a strong argument to be made for civil society organisations to become more involved in local development processes, many have been

¹⁶ For this reason, the Partnership established the Cape Town Business Areas Network in 2007, whereby urban management and development organisations throughout the city cooperate and share information.

¹⁷ The City of Cape Town is currently in the process of compiling a comprehensive Spatial Development Framework, which will hopefully address this gap. For more information see www.capetown.gov.za/en/sdf

demobilised, have few resources or are themselves divided. The private sector has resources but is limited by market requirements, and is often out of touch with the complexities of local development processes.

Hamann *et al* point out that cross-sector partnerships are becoming “increasingly popular in areas of policy making and implementation that were previously the primary domain of the state, such as infrastructure, health, education and natural resource management...”¹⁸ Partnerships, it is argued, can be seen as a “new model of governance”, referred to as ‘collaborative’ or ‘network’ governance.

Whilst advocacy of partnerships cannot be sustained if it based simply on substituting for state limitations or gaps, there is a compelling argument that cross-sector partnerships are strategically placed to lead urban transformation because of their ability to creatively juxtapose different and even conflicting interests, objectives and organisational cultures. Hamann *et al* imply this when they refer to the “explicit embrace of tensions between partners or between perspectives as a catalytic force to identify ‘win-win’ options”.¹⁹

The Cape Town Partnership was established in an era when local government legislation relating to partnerships was relatively simple. This made it possible to structure the Partnership with equal participation from the public and private sector. Ten years later, many argue that provisions of the Municipal Financial Management Act (MFMA) and other national legislation make it almost impossible to successfully form new partnerships in the style of the Cape Town Partnership.

While the unnecessarily restrictive legislation, which was enacted to address issues of corruption within the public sector, has rightly been described as “using a sledgehammer to kill a mosquito”, there are ways in which partnerships involving municipal or public sector bodies can still be formed. This would be done through the private sector initiating the establishment of, for example, a non-profit company, and then offering Provincial government and the relevant municipality the opportunity to participate at board level. While this may offer a legal mechanism, it is hardly the way to build trust between partners at the start of the collaboration. There is an urgent need in South Africa to amend certain legislative provisions to make the establishment of cross-sector partnerships less onerous.



¹⁸ Hamann *et al*, p3

¹⁹ Ibid, p28