INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOOD - SLOVO PARK

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Client: Gauteng Local Government and Housing / City of Johannesburg

Public Realm Investment

The public realm offers a multifaceted element to the development of neighbourhoods. The public realm shall offer choice and diversity for people who live, work or visit the neighbourhood.

The public realm shall be designed to respond to the users needs, enhance new opportunities and encourage a sense of pride and ownership. This will achieve a respect for the environment and improve economic sustainability and future economic growth of the initial investment.

The environment shall be designed to encourage activity and positive social interaction. The architectural character shall be one that responds to the local climate, demonstrates innovative use of materials, colour and texture. Public facilities shall be located so that they respond to hierarchies of transportation and are within walking distances.
Accessibility

The neighbourhood is seen as an extension to the existing suburbs of Crosby and Coronationville. The seamless linkages between the new neighbourhood and its surrounding context shall encourage accessibility of the many shared facilities within the region.

Place making

The proposed development site is geographically featureless. The changes in ground level at the man made embankment shall be utilized to create a green belt and a potential vantage point for the buildings along its east west axis.

The site falls gradually from the north to the south, making east west movement more convenient to walk and build along. The relatively small city block configuration will facilitate for a pedestrian orientated environment. The corners of blocks and street intersections become social spaces and opportunities for corner shops and architectural expression.

Social gathering spaces and places of economic activity are located along pedestrian movement corridors, becoming activity spines linking with the higher order movement system.

The major linking road that links Crosby with Coronationville becomes the 'high street' running in an east west direction. The street will accommodate buses and taxis. Buildings along the eastern section of the street shall offer shopping with possible office space and residential apartments on the upper floors. Parking shall take place behind the shopping strip within the inner courtyard. Street parking is proposed along both sides of the road with a colonnaded sidewalk fronting the shops. The 20m road reserve shall accommodate major traffic with the inclusion of a bicycle lane on the southern side of the street. The street shall be well treed with street lighting and furniture along sidewalks.

Symbolic statements and public art are important elements that should be encouraged as these objects and spaces become landmarks and places of meaning and significance.

Public spaces must be seen as primary spaces with neighbourhoods where people interact and experience urban life. Public spaces within lower income neighbourhoods are desirable spaces as they function as extensions to their private residents. It becomes an important element that compliments higher density living conditions. In most high people-density environments the public spaces including residential streets shall be designed as social spaces.

'Streets as public spaces have historically been the carriers of people. Pedestrians on foot often spend more time in street spaces than people in vehicles. The introduction of 'street courts' within neighbourhood roads offers residents a public I social space that is defined for the multi-use of vehicles and social interaction creating small scale nodes for smaller groupings.

Urban Design Sustainability
There are a number of sustainability categories that should be taken into account at the Urban Design level of development. The overarching concept of sustainability is to ensure that the initial decisions and actions embarked on create opportunity and viability for current and future generations.

**Economic sustainability.**

Develop opportunities within the public realm for economic based enterprise to take place, from informal traders, recycling and light manufacturing, small retailers and food traders to medium scaled retail and commercial facilities.

**Social sustainability.**

Create a public realm that offers well defined, friendly outdoor spaces that allows for social interaction, active events, and quiet contemplation. Include public facilities and amenities that encourage cultural, educational and recreational activities. Create accountability from community members and the local authority to ensure efficient management and long term maintenance.

**Environmental sustainability**

The green network shall fall within landscape guidelines to ensure ecological bio-diversity. The planting of grasses and shrubs in parks, street trees, streetscapes and courtyards shall be planned with hard and soft surfaces. A management strategy for landscape, waterways I storm water channels and grey water shall be considered.