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SPATIAL INCLUSIVITY AND TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES: A CASE OF EAST LONDON

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ABSTRACT

The inclusivity of cities has three dimensions according to the World Bank: spatial, social and economic. Spatial inclusion requires provision of affordable necessities such as housing, water and sanitation. Lack of access to essential infrastructure and services is a daily struggle for many disadvantaged households in South Africa where the majority of urban dwellers are said to lack access to essential services and infrastructure. The social dimension of inclusivity in cities refers to the guarantee to equal rights and participation of all residents, including the most marginalized whist economic dimension refers to creating jobs and giving urban residents the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of economic growth. Although these three dimensions are intertwined and tend to reinforce each other, the focus of the paper is on spatial dimension of inclusivity in that the unique South African history makes a case for spatial inclusivity to be transformational in nature.

The paper explores the dimensions of inclusivity in cities and how they are relevant to the unique South African context. With specific focus on spatial inclusivity, the paper makes arguments about the importance and relevance of spatial inclusivity and spatial transformation in post-apartheid South Africa making a case as to why spatial inclusivity should be a critical indicator of spatial transformation. It then analysis how spatial inclusivity and transformation are being implemented in the case of East London.

KEY WORDS Spatial, social and economic inclusivity, spatial transformation, dimensions of city inclusivity

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cities are the economic and social engines of the world. They are the hubs of innovation, creativity, and cultural exchange, and play an increasingly important role in shaping the future of humanity. However, cities have also been the epicenters of inequality, with marginalized groups often being excluded from the benefits of urbanization. This is where spatial inclusivity comes in, which aims to ensure that everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background, has equal access to the opportunities and resources that cities offer. The need for inclusivity in cities has therefore been long identified (Danni, 2022).

The unique history and spatial circumstances of South Africa makes a case for the cities not only to be inclusive but transformed as well so as to address the ills of apartheid spatial planning. The problem for South African cities therefore is dualistic in nature: to concomitantly respond to spatial inclusivity and transformation. Whilst the need for inclusion has been identified and acknowledged, it has focussed mainly on economic inclusion neglecting spatial inclusivity. Although spatial transformation also features prominently in South African spatial planning and urban development debates and documents (Bosworth, 2016; Harrison and Todes, 2016; SACN, 2008; SACN, 2015, Williams, 2000), the problem has been little discussion and indeed empirical analysis of spatial implementation especially how is it is applied at the city level.

Thus, the aims and objectives of the paper are to:

- discuss the importance of inclusivity in the context of South African cities and why spatial transformation is imperative;
- make a case for the transformation of South African cities;
- analyse, using the City of East London as a case study, how spatial inclusivity and transformation is being implemented; and
- make recommendations on how spatial inclusivity and transformation can be enhanced in spatial planning in the South African context.

The paper's literature review makes a case for inclusivity, presents the dimensions of inclusivity and finally argues for spatial transformation of the South African cities given the history of the country. The case of East London is used for the analysis of the research results focussing on how spatial inclusivity and transformation are prioritised (in the municipal policy and strategic documents) and implemented.

2. WHY INCLUSIVITY IN CITIES MATTERS

Cities are the economic and social engines of the world. They are the hubs of innovation, creativity, and cultural exchange, and play an increasingly important role in shaping the future of humanity. However, cities have also been the epicenters of inequality, with marginalized groups often being excluded from the benefits of urbanization. The importance of inclusivity, therefore, is in ensuring that everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background, has equal access to the opportunities and resources that cities offer. The inclusivity of cities ought to be a very important issue not only in urban planning but for all stakeholders involved in urban development and its management. Consequently, the inclusivity agenda features prominently and frequently in agencies involved in urban development or city planning and management1. The importance of inclusivity can be seen in the copious literature, the case studies, or projects and conferences2 (Douglas, 2017; Zhuang, 2021; Goltsmana, 2023).

There are several reasons why city inclusivity is important and why it matters. The first reason is the urbanisation of the world with 70% of the population said to be living in cities by 2030 that would be generating a worldwide GDP of 80% (World Bank, 2023). The economic progress of the global economy, and indeed any country like South Africa, can be derailed due to inequality and exclusion in cities in which the majority of the population lives.

Secondly, inclusivity matters because of the role it can plan in ending or alleviating poverty and achieving the global development goals such as the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 11 that calls for "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" cities or the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity (World Bank, 2023). Other regions, such as the Asian Development Bank, also have similar goals on ending poverty whilst in South Africa and the African continent, there are ambitious targets to reduce poverty (AU, 2023). The importance of functional inclusive cities in ending poverty should not only be understood from the perspective of opportunities they can provide but also in the challenges and problems that can persist in cities that are exclusive or discriminatory and how they can be a barrier to poverty alleviation or trap the poor in a cycle of poverty.

Thirdly, an inclusive city is a healthy city that enhances the quality of life of its residents as has been argued about Hong Kong (Planning Department, 2016). Fourthly, inclusivity is simply central to the core values of humanity not to exclude any human being as echoed by the World Bank's slogan '*everyone counts*' (World Bank, 2023).

The importance of inclusivity in the South African context is ably contained in policy documents (such as the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF)

[1] The Asian Development Bank has developed a toolkit for inclusive urban areas (ADB, 2022, ADB 2017) whilst the World Bank dedicated a topical issue on inclusive cities (World Bank, 2023).

[2] The 2019 Congress and World Summit of UCLG was held in Durban (11-15 November) had the theme 'Inclusive and Accessible Cities'.

that hails inclusivity: 'The IUDF marks a New Deal for South African cities and towns. It sets a policy framework to guide the development of inclusive, resilient and liveable urban settlements' (DCG, 2016). The National Spatial Development Framework echoes the need for 'inclusive and sustainable urban settlement growth' and spatial transformation (DALRRD, 2022).

The importance of inclusivity does not, nonetheless, mean that its achievement is not fraught with challenges, it requires an understanding of its dimensions. Understanding the concept of inclusive cities therefore "involves a complex web of multiple spatial, social and economic factors" (World Bank, 2023). These factors, that are the dimensions of inclusivity in cities, are spatial, social and economic.

3. DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSIVITY

3.1. Spatial Inclusivity

Spatial inclusivity is an idea that all individuals, regardless of their background or physical ability, should be able to access and use public spaces without barriers or discrimination. It is a crucial aspect of creating a truly inclusive society, where everyone has equal opportunities to participate in community life. It is about designing and managing urban spaces in a way that allows all residents to participate in the economic, social, and cultural life of the city. In exploring the concept of spatial inclusivity and its importance in creating equitable cities, this discussion focusses on three key areas: housing, water, and sanitation.

Housing is one of the most basic human needs and is a critical aspect of spatial inclusivity (World Bank, 2023). Access to affordable and adequate housing is essential for ensuring that all residents can participate in the economic and social life of the city. Unfortunately, housing is often a major barrier to spatial inclusivity (Mammom, *et al*, 2008). In order to achieve spatial inclusivity, there are several key factors that must be considered. Firstly, physical accessibility is essential. This means ensuring that buildings, footpaths, roads, and public transportation are designed in a way that allows individuals with disabilities to use them with ease. This includes providing wheelchair ramps, accessible restrooms, and adequate space for guide dogs.

Secondly, it is important to consider the social and cultural dimensions of spatial inclusivity. This means creating public spaces that are welcoming and inclusive to all members of the community, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status. This can be achieved through the use of design elements such as public art, community gardens, and interactive installations. Another important aspect of spatial inclusivity is the need to provide public spaces that cater for a diverse range of activities. This means providing spaces for physical activity, relaxation, social interaction, and creative expression. By offering a range of different activities and experiences, public spaces become more inclusive and accessible.

3.1.1. HOUSING INCLUSIVITY

Balchin and Rhoden (1995) defines housing as a process through which habitable, stable and sustainable public and private residential environments are created for viable households and communities. Housing is an important aspect of people's lives that is enshrined in the South African constitution as a basic human right that everyone has a right to. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (South Africa, 1996) recognises access to adequate housing and makes it incumbent upon the state to take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.

The quest to achieve the constitutional mandate to realise the right to housing has not been without challenges in South Africa. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was adopted in 1994 and has since been used as a tool to provide housing (free housing) to those with no income and those with low income. According to Turok and Visagie (2018), the number of households living in state subsidised housing had "increased from 7.6 percent to 28.5 percent in 2016," which is over three hundred percent increase in the supply of housing during that period. However, South Africa's cities are still facing a major hurdle in relation to the housing provision because the housing backlog is still reported to be in the region of about 2.6 million, impacting over 12 million people nationally and some municipalities, like eThekwini (Durban), said to take 90 year to deal with informal settlements (Ground Up, 2022, 2023).

The housing challenge in South Africa is part of a chain of other challenges related to spatial disparities in the country. The legacy of the apartheid system, which imposed racial segregation though different systems such as the dispossession of land, unequal access to job opportunities and education, control of movement and settlements and forced removals, still largely contributes to the housing challenge and lack of spatial inclusivity at large. Our argument is simply that if housing challenges are not overcome and people cannot be housed in suitable areas or housing informality is not decisively dealt with, spatial exclusivity will persist.

3.1.2. WATER AND SANITATION INCLUSIVITY

Water is a fundamental human need, yet billions of people around the world lack access to safe and clean water. According to the World Health Organization, 2.2 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water services, and 4.2 billion people lack access to safely managed sanitation services (WHO, 2022). These challenges are particularly acute in low-income communities or countries especially in the global south.

Access to safe water and sanitation is often depended on spatial factors such as distance from water sources or sanitation infrastructure such as waste

water treatment works. For example, rural communities may be located far from centralized water treatment facilities, making it difficult and costly to transport clean water. Additionally, natural disasters or climate change can exacerbate water scarcity issues and make it difficult for people to access clean water and sanitation infrastructure. The importance of infrastructure provision in the cities' inclusivity relates to the 'inclusive health' that can enable (and measure) inclusive urban development (UCLG, 2019).

3.2. Social inclusivity

All residents of the city should be guaranteed equal rights and afforded equal opportunities to participate in the running of the city and in making decisions about the city. Social inclusion therefore is about "promoting equality and improving participation, particularly for people who are disadvantaged" (UN, 2022). Social inclusion in cities is hinged on two cardinal requirements: rights and participation (World Bank, 2015 and UN, 2022).

Issues on social inclusion in cities is centred on four constructs: social differences in cities, sustainable cities, the inclusive city and the grand challenge (Short, 2021). Concerning differences in cities, Short (2021) argues that social differences are not simple categorizations, but complex, contested sites of meaning: "cities are sites of social difference. Differences include, but are not limited to, ability, status, age, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, and socio-economic position. These differences are neither a biological given, nor fixed nor stable. They are social constructs that are maintained and created as well as resisted and contested. They are embraced as well as disputed. Differences in the city are not simply revealed, they are created and enacted. These differences are sites of action, social mobilization and performances acted out in private and public spaces in the city."

For this discussion, it is important to note not only the social differences in the city but Short's (2021) statement that apart from the biological differences of age or gender or race, they are social constructs that are maintained and created and therefore can be uncreated or unmaintained. Other issues on the differences in cities relate to intersectionality of social differences and sources of differentiation.

Social inclusion in cities also relates to sustainability of cities promoted by the notion that the city is a site of sustainability and resilience especially in the face of global climate change. As already argued above, the importance of inclusiveness in cities is intertwined with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN's 193 countries in 2015. There is now a large body of work that looks at the impacts of social inclusion on specific elements of urban life and urban living relating to ability, status, aging, smart cities, poverty alleviation, community planning and culturalism.

Short (2021) offers a practical discourse on how to create socially inclusive cities. He suggests that the identified social differences (stated before) should be mapped onto political power relations, social status and the ability to make and remake the city, noting that social inclusion can also raise counter, social exclusion.

There are several challenges to be addressed in social inclusion of cities that can be discussed in detail. These relate to social differences (such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, citizenship, immigration status, class, (dis) ability and how they are created and contested); formal and informal sectors and how they are treated as sites of sustainability, urban policies and how they can reinforce, undermine or highlight social differences; changes in social inclusion or exclusion of different groups and re-distributional consequences of sustainability (Short, 2021).

3.3. Economic inclusivity

Urban economic inclusivity refers to the practice of creating an inclusive urban economy that provides equal opportunities, access, and benefits to all individuals and communities, regardless of their background, socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, or other characteristics. It aims to ensure that everyone has the chance to participate in and benefit from urban economic activities. Debates on economic inclusivity in cities should address three issues: the importance and role of economic inclusivity, dependencies and indicators for economic inclusivity (Turok and Visagie, 2018).

Economic inclusivity is of paramount importance and features extensively in the National Spatial Development Framework3 (DALRRD, 2022). Its importance include reduction in poverty and inequality, fostering of social cohesion, stimulation of economic growth and innovation; enhancing of productivity and human capital development; strengthening of economic resilience, promotion of sustainable development and enhancing political and economic stability. The essentiality of economic inclusivity is in creating jobs, generating higher incomes and creating viable communities and results in four things (IUDF 2016):

- Increased number and profitability of enterprises, small and large, which form the backbone for economic growth and prosperity;
- People who have self-respect, and who develop new skills and social networks, as they participate in productive work;
- Communities that are uplifted through improved skills and services, and work and livelihood opportunities; and
- Elevated national living

[3] The executive summary of the NSDF refers to valuable and hard lessons learnt concerning 'inclusive economic growth and spatial transformation' and emphasizes the importance of promoting 'inclusive and sustainable urban settlement growth' (p.87).

standards, as economic benefits (and resources) spread out.

Therefore, fostering an inclusive urban economy provides opportunities, reduces inequalities, and promotes the overall well-being of all residents. A focus on economic inclusivity contributes to sustainable development, social cohesion, and the long-term prosperity of urban areas. Studies in economic inclusiveness involves dependencies and has challenges.

Challenges in economic inclusivity that are still persistent in South African cities, according to the IUDF (2016), include neglect in urban areas, inadequate focus on creating enabling environments for innovation and economic growth, and informal sector. In responding to challenges of economic inclusivity, cities should adopt strategies and approaches that can foster an inclusive urban economy that provides opportunities, reduces inequalities, and promotes the overall well-being of all residents. A focus on economic inclusivity contributes to sustainable development, social cohesion, and the long-term prosperity of urban areas as ably summarised in the IUDF (2016): “In cities and towns, the concentration of production factors (land, labour, capital and enterprise), talent and markets provides the potential for economic growth and prosperity. The lack of an enabling environment for economic productivity and growth will compromise the possible”.

There are a number of strategies available in the creation of inclusive urban economies that should include provision of high-quality services, facilitation of business and its retention and expansion, support to labour markets and stimulating investment (City of Cape Town, 2001).

Key strategies and approaches for promoting urban economic inclusivity should include provision of affordable housing (discussed earlier,3.1.1), investment in infrastructure and basic services, elimination of discrimination and promotion of diversity, collaboration and stakeholder engagement, equal access to education and skills development; promotion of entrepreneurship and small business development (City of Cape Town, 2001).

The last construct in economic inclusivity debate relates to indicators: how do we know or measure that the city is economically inclusive. The general indicators for a city’s inclusivity broadly include access to urban services, protection of rights and participation, health, spatial cohesion, culture and identity, political representation and governance as well as human and economic development (SACN, 2008). For economic exclusivity, indicators include rate of unemployment, labour force participation and education (Turok and Visagie, 2018).

4. SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION

Since the 1990s, the transformation agenda in urban planning and practice has been quite profound (Sihlongonyane and Lewis, 2016; Harrison and Watson, 2009; Williams, 2000; Harrison and Todes, 2016). There has been extensive work on transformation of urban planning in South Africa in general and in particular transformation of cities. Research into transformation of South African urban landscape is easily available and has been published widely, such as in the South African Cities Network Report (2016), the South African Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDP) and its input paper by Harrison and Todes (2016) including the National Development Plan (2009).

Spatial transformation in South Africa should not be thought of as a simple matter, it is a complex matter with a myriad of constructs, challenges and perspectives. Discussions on South African spatial transformation in the post-apartheid era should be concerned with issues of concepts relating to land; politics and power; institutions and intergovernmental relations; and management and capacity as summarised by Bosworth (2016) based on a report by the South African Cities Network (SACN, 2016). Firstly, it should start with a question of *what* is to be transformed i.e. the spatial creation of the apartheid city and its ‘apartheid geography’ as described by the NDP (2009), Bosworth (2016), and Du Plessis and Landman (2002). Secondly, there should also be a discussion of the challenges that confront South Africa and its urban planning practice regardless of apartheid-making, i.e. the general urbanisation challenges that are not exclusive to South Africa and, thirdly, a response to the urbanisation challenges and the undoing of the apartheid geography i.e. response to the ills of apartheid planning.

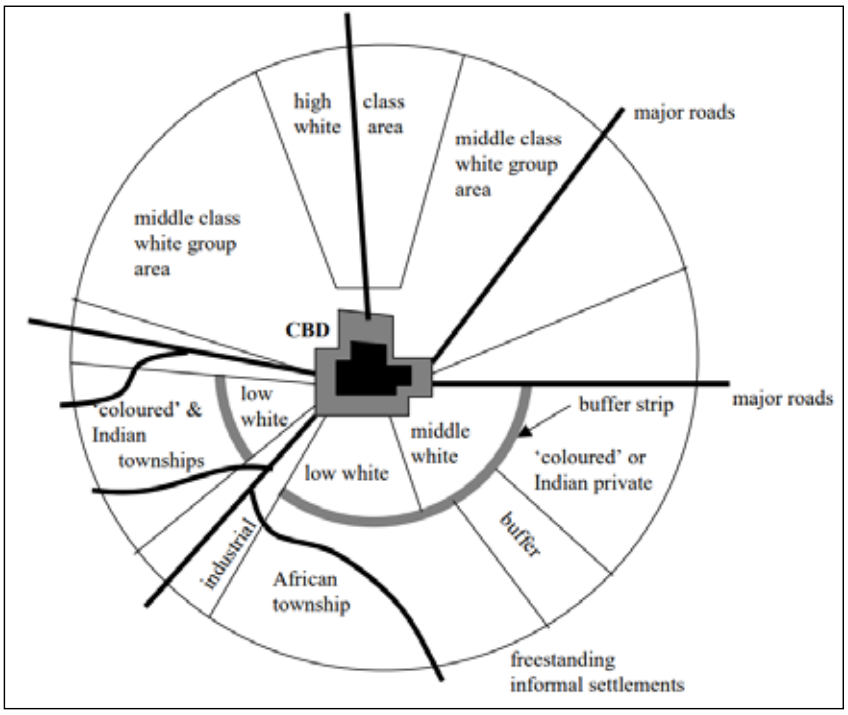
4.1. ‘The apartheid city’ – a case for spatial transformation

The structure of a typical South African city today is a product of apartheid planning and its implementation, Figure 1 (Du Plessis and Landman, 2002). The apartheid system for racial segregation was formally introduced in South Africa in 1948 through a group of laws that curtailed the rights of black majority. A spatial planning structure was created with a segregation system of land use controls (Sihlongonyane and Lewis, 2016:254, Williams, 2000). The modern South African cities and urban landscape is thus said to be “entrenched in inefficincies and inequality” (NDP,2009). Though it is important to discuss how the apartheid planning system created the cities that we have today, such a discussion is considered to be superfluous. What is of essence in this discussion is the consequentiality of the apartheid planning system that is responsible for the type of South African cities that we have today. The question therefore to be asked is, ‘What typfies a South African apartheid city and how is a typical South African City different from any other city?’ So, as we discuss spatial inclusivity in cities, the South African city is a unique case with due challenges of spatial incusivity and transformation.

According to the South African Cities Network and based on the transformation

framework (SACN, 2016:78) there are four prongs requiring spatial transformation in South Africa: space, politics and power, institutions and intergovernmental relations and transformation of management capacity. The fundamental changes to the spatial structure of south African cities is necessary and should be on the long-term agenda so as to create cities that are "more inclusive, and economically and socially just" (Bosworth ,2016).

Figure 1: The Apartheid City spatial configuration



Source: Du Plessis and Landman, 2002

4.2. Space transformation

According to the South African Cities Network, transformation of space should address four things. Firstly, it requires fundamental change in how space is structured, owned, used and developed and for whose benefit so as to address what has been described as 'immediate challenges' of sprawl, exclusion, fragmentation and inefficiencies in cities (SACN, 2016:78). Secondly, the land value or location conundrum should be confronted. Poor people should be well located in areas that are close to opportunities.

The third imperative in space transformation is the promotion and prioritisation of economic and residential activities and investments along existing public transport routes such as the Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The fourth construct is a requirement by city builders to prioritise pedestrian walkways (rather than vehicular traffic) and to create a good number of public squares and parks.

4.3. Transforming politics and power

According to Bosworth (2016), meaningful spatial transformation remains challenged by corruption, inefficiency and political power-brokering, while the private sector, and also private/public collusion, and private individuals have power over built environment decisions. Greater transparency is required, along with shared values and ethics, so that public, private and civic stakeholders can create sustainable, integrated cities.

4.4. Transforming institutions and intergovernmental relations

There are four issues identified in the transformation of institutions and intergovernmental relations: intergovernmental relations, approaches, financing and instruments. Effective intergovernmental relations that recognise the critical role played by local government is, by and large, a lever of spatial transformation and integration. In all spheres of government, the move from the traditional 'silo approach' is imperative. According to the South African Cities Network (SACN, 2016), spatial transformation cannot be achieved through fragmented approaches: "At the local level, the developmental mandate for spatial transformation cannot be met through a fragmented approach but requires institutional arrangements that can respond to the nuance, integration and coordination required" (SACN, 2016).

The third issue relate to financing for city development as a fragmented fiscal framework cannot produce a transformative outcome. There is, therefore, a need for funding and fiscal instruments that can respond to the required spatial transformation and its integrated nature. The fourth issue relate to the nature of instruments used, "cities also need to make better use of instruments, such as land value capture tools, and improve project management processes to get the maximum value out of interventions that have larger social benefits" (Bosworth, 2016).

4.5. Transforming management and capacity

The skills needed for transformation and execution of built environment functions have changed in the past two decades of post-apartheid South Africa. These changes have been brought up by the complexities of land and land reform issues and consequently require a fundamental shift in the skills and capacity needed for transformation. An example can be the change in

government policy from delivering of housing units to creation of sustainable human settlements or in the transport sector where commuter operating cultures i.e. transport services that bring people to work in the morning and take them back home in the evening, are still perpetuated. To achieve better transportation, integration may require multidisciplinary skillsets and innovative approaches that can engage with complexity. It may ultimately require building the capacity and skills of officials and, in the case of transport, the commuters and other civil society actors (SACN, 2016).

Officials need multi-disciplinary skillsets to deal with complex urban and land reform issues. Likewise, to achieve better public transport integration, particularly to integrate the minibus taxi industry, requires multi-disciplinary skillsets and innovative approaches that can engage with urban complexity.

4.6. Transformation of Urban Planning post 1994

Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, there have several responses aimed at transforming urban planning and its apartheid legacy. These have been policy responses, programmes or even legislative changes as tools to undo the spatial injustice of apartheid planning. Starting in 1994, government embarked on an ambitious Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) which aimed at 'breaking down the apartheid geography through land reform, more compact cities, decent public transport, and the development of industries and services that use local resource and/or meet local needs (Harrison and Todes, 2016). The importance of RDP housing is in its contribution to spatial restructuring of the modern South African city as well as its inclusivity for housing is a critical indicator of a city's inclusiveness.

In 1995, there were two policy documents and a piece of legislation that aimed at giving emphasis to the spatial reconfiguration of transformation of the South African planning practice. These were the urban development strategy, the Local Government White Paper and the Development Facilitation Act (DFA). The DFA introduced planning principles which, though the Act was repealed, were incorporated into the current planning legislation, the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA).

In 1998, the Local Government White Paper was prepared followed by the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework in 2001. The first policy document specifically on urban planning was also released in 2001, the White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management. Concerning human settlements, the paradigm shift in housing provision was the 2004 Breaking New Ground (Harrison, and Todes, 2016). There have been studies in the transformation of local authorities as far as planning functions are concerned in cities like Tshwane (Coetzee, 2005 and Homann, 2005) and Cape Town (Watson, 2002).

The hallmark of spatial transformation should be the only post apartheid spatial planning legislation, the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) of 2013. SPLUMA, amongst other things, seeks to provide for the inclusive, developmental, equitable and efficient spatial planning at the different spheres of government, and that is perhaps its biggest contribution to spatial inclusivity. Concerning spatial transformation, SPLUMA provisions for different Spatial Development Frameworks (national, regional and municipal) has been argued to be the 'most critical lever to achieve spatial transformation' (SACN, 2015). As it is nearly a decade since the promulgation of SPLUMA, it would be interesting to conduct emperical studies to evaluate its the contributions to spatial inclusivity and transformation.

5. CASE OF EAST LONDON

The city of East London presents and an interesting case for the analysis of spatial inclusivity and transformation because of a number of reasons that can be identified. Firstly, the city is a typical apartheid city (Figure 1) that needs transformation because of the legacy of apartheid's spatial planning. The classic example is the location of a black township, Mdantsane, 25km north west of the city's CBD. As discussed before, the apartheid city located black people away from places of employment and opportunities. The other compelling reason is the city's proximity to two former homelands of Ciskei and Transkei. Secondly, East London provides the closest opportunities that can be sought from rural areas and therefore acts as a first urban area for rural-urban migration. The increase in the city's population, therefore, comes from both natural population increase as well as in-migration. Thirdly, East London boasts of economic activities that can attract both skilled and unskilled labour to the city's employment opportunities such as the port, the industrial development zone and a motor manufacturing plant for Mercedes Benz. Fourthly, the city presents a unique case that can also affect inclusivity in that there is an informal settlement of Duncan Village that is close to the Central Business District with a walking distance of 3.5 km. The Duncan Village Redevelopment Initiative (DVRI) provides an opportunity for spatial transformation and has therefore been analysed in this research. The selected indicators used in the case study for spatial inclusivity and transformation were based on the already discussed dimensions of inclusivity (3.0) and are listed below (Box 1).

Box 1: Main City Inclusiveness and Transformation Indicators

Dimension	Indicators	Main Sub indicators
Spatial	Spatial development vision	▪ Land use patterns ▪ Connectivity and accessibility
Social	Housing	▪ Housing location and proximity to opportunities ▪ Housing availability and affordability ▪ Regeneration project (DVRI)
Economic	Economic Inclusivity	▪ Labour force participation ▪ Unemployment rate ▪ Households by income category
Transformation	Spatial transformation	▪ Number of ablution facilities ▪ Access to basic level of sanitation ▪ Percentage compliance of water treatment works ▪ Number of parcels acquired for integrated housing ▪ Number of upgraded buildings ▪ Number of completed SDFs ▪ Regeneration project (DVRI)

Source: Author

Although there have been studies on spatial indicators and their inclusivity, the quantitative measurement of them is a challenge and has not been well developed. Discussions have concentrated on qualitative indicators for both inclusivity and transformation of the South African cities. The analysis of the case study is therefore mainly qualitative in nature looking at Buffalo City Municipal strategic policy documents and an analysis of a project for urban regeneration, the DVRI, that should epitomise spatial inclusivity and transformation in the City of East London.

5.1. Inclusivity in East London

Inclusivity in the case study of East London, located on the eastern coast between Durban and Gqeberha in Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM), Figure 2, is based on the dimensions of inclusivity already presented (under 3). The focus was on analysis of the high-level Spatial Development Framework (SDF) for the City of East London (and other Local Spatial Development Frameworks (LSDFs) prepared for specific areas of the city such as Vincent Berea, West Bank, Beachfront and Mdantsane), and the municipal-wide Buffalo City Spatial Development Frameworks as per legislative requirements in terms of SPLUMA. The spatial inclusivity analysis was based on the most recent and updated SDF for the entire municipal area reviewed in 2020.

Figure 2: Locality of East London

Source: Author

5.1.1. SPATIAL INCLUSIVITY

Spatial planning approaches that are required to create inclusive cities should relate to identification and reservation of public land and buildings in the inner city, encouraging mixed land uses that can support infrastructure investment and expansion of infrastructure programmes (SACN, 2016). In assessing the spatial inclusivity of the city, an analysis of the Spatial Development Framework should be a good point of departure.

In 2020, the Buffalo City Metropolitan municipality finalised the review of its Spatial Development Framework (SDF) as required by the spatial planning legislation, SPLUMA. The SDF contains the spatial development vision for the metro over a 10 year horizon, from 2020 to 2030. Regarding spatial development vision, the SDF refers to the IDP vision and spatial development concept (Figure 3), there is no spatial development vision statement in the SDF.

Figure 3: IDP Spatial Development Vision, 2030

"Re-shaping Buffalo City: The Metro in 2030"

Buffalo City has consolidated its position as a City-in-a-Region providing a focus for socio-economic development, services and higher-order human settlement in the central part of the Eastern Cape Province. The core functional elements of the City are its roles as a hub for an evolving Knowledge Economy and sustainable infrastructure production and innovation; a centre of Industrial Development with an innovative and world-class motor industry cluster at its heart; and a city that offers a rich lifestyle experience through the quality of its natural environment, the range of social, cultural and leisure activities offered in the area, and the excellence of its public infrastructure and social institutions.

Source: Buffalo City SDF, 2020

There could be many reasons or factors that can account for the low spatial inclusivity. The first reason could be that spatial inclusivity is not identified as a critical objective for spatial development in the East London or the BCMM at large. Inclusivity is important only as far as economic inclusivity is concerned not necessarily spatial inclusivity; the IDP has a strategic objective on inclusive economy: Inclusive Economic Growth, and Falling Unemployment (BCMM, 2022). The second reason could be lack of understanding by the political decision makers. Discussions with the municipal officials responsible for forward spatial planning and human settlements gave the impression that even if the officials understood very well the need for spatial inclusivity, projects meant to achieve that received little or no support from the political decision makers; such was the case with Duncan Village Redevelopment Initiative (DVRI) in which relocation of residents to Reston, away from the city centre was supported, a move that would lead to exclusion (and was a subsequent failure).

5.1.2. SOCIAL INCLUSIVITY

Social inclusivity, from a housing perspective, requires that housing be located in areas that are close to employment opportunities, are easily accessible or on high node transportation routes. East London provides a unique case in that it is a typical apartheid city in which a black township, Mdantsane, was located more than 20 kilometres from the city centre. In a purported Public Private Partnership, the city welcomed a massive development of 6936 units in the east of the city more than twenty kilometres from the East London CBD (Daily Dispatch, 2023), equally distant from Mdantsane. Land for the city's social housing projects and informal settlements upgrading, had also been bought in the west of the city nearly equally distant from Mdantsane, in what can be seen as a creation of a poverty trap. The senior municipal officials responsible for forward spatial planning and human settlements that were interviewed expressed disappointment in failure by senior politicians in supporting the 'inclusivity' agenda by not supporting housing projects that are well located and close to places of opportunities.

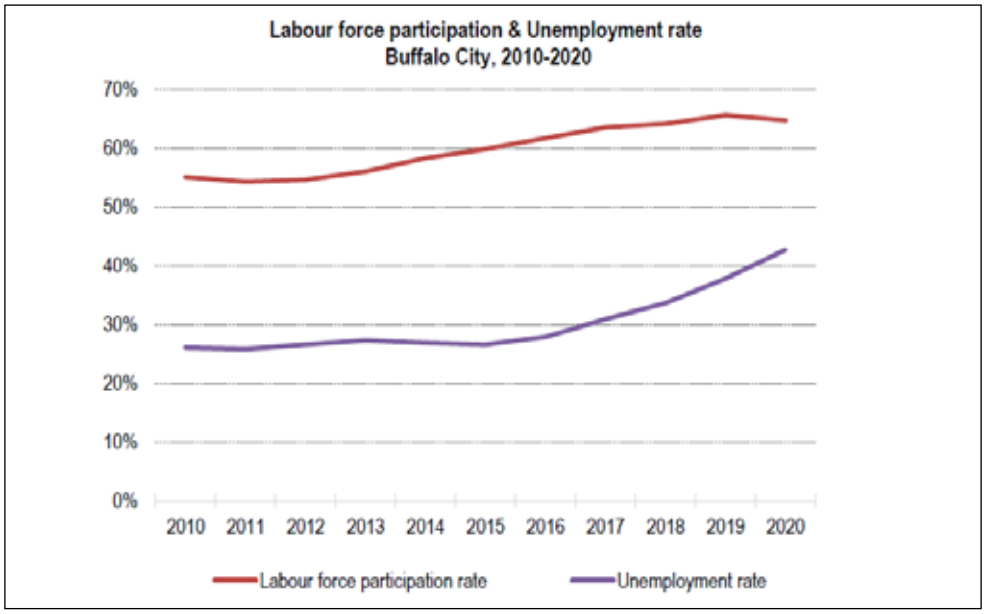
Apart from housing, projects aimed at formalising informal settlements is another good indicator of social inclusivity. The most prominent project in the city is the Duncan Village Redevelopment Initiative (DVRI) formalisation which provides an exceptional opportunity for spatial inclusivity in that Duncan Village is within a walking distance to the CBD and the surrounding industrial activities. The DVRI provides a classical opportunity for use of housing for social inclusion and it is yet to be seen how the project will be executed; it is discussed in detail under spatial transformation (5.2).

5.1.3. ECONOMIC INCLUSIVITY

The Buffalo City Municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2022/2023 identifies economic inclusivity as one of the strategic outcomes of the plan. The City's first strategic outcome, to be an innovative and productive city, has Economic Transformation and Job Creation as its second priority for its Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), 2019/2024. The IDP indicates that Buffalo City plans to improve the quality of life of the BCMM community through reducing unemployment and inclusive economic growth (BCMM, 2022).

The graphs below (extracted from the BCMM, 2022) gives information on economic indicators that may be used to consider the economic inclusivity of the city. The indicators include the rate of unemployment, household income and labour force participation (Box 1). The importance of these indicators is in determining the extent in which the city has gone towards economic inclusivity.

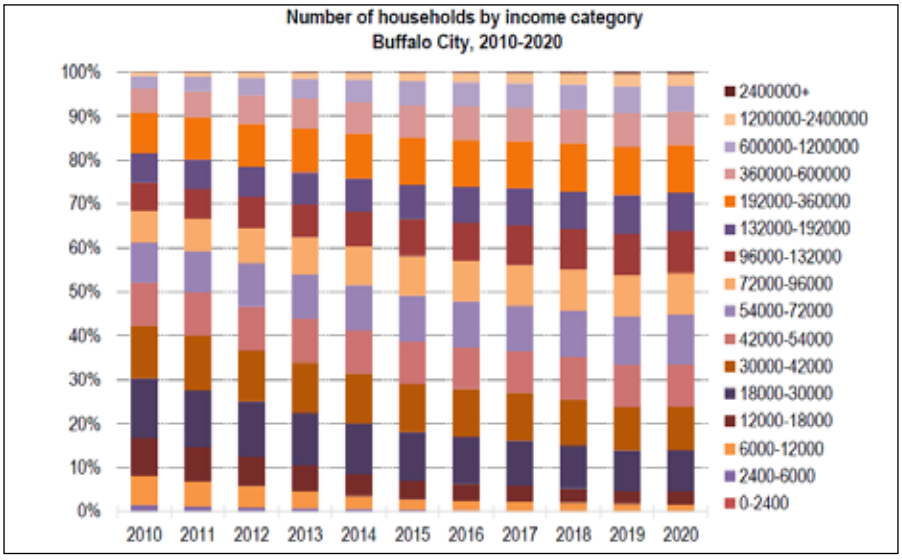
Figure 4: Buffalo City Labour force participation and Unemployment rate



Source: IHS Markit Regional Explorer version 2201

The graphs below show a significant increase in labour force participation rate for Buffalo City between 2010 and 2020. In the same breath, it exposes an unemployment rate that has significantly increased during the same period, demonstrating a negative position for the employment within Buffalo City (and East London). The number of households that live on less than R30 000 or less per annum has decreased significantly with the highest number of households falling under the R54 000-R72 000 per annum.

Figure 5: Buffalo City number of households by income category



Source: IHS Markit Regional Explorer version 2201

The data presented above shows that BCMM has indeed made some strides in relation to economic inclusivity (though the ideal targets are unknown, nor can we compare with another city). However, it is also apparent that economic inclusivity is still a “dream” that the city is yet to realise. The growing unemployment is a cause for concern that requires the efforts of more than just government. Interviews with the BCMM official shed light on the lack of forums and constant engagement with business corporations which is an opportunity that the municipality can harness to create job and grow an inclusive economy.

5.1.4. SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION IN EAST LONDON

The strategy of the BCMM for its growth and development is made up of five pillars one of which is a 'Spatially Transformed City' (Buffalo City, 2022). Spatial transformation is therefore well acknowledged and prioritised in the municipality's policy and strategic documents. The required analysis, therefore should be from implementation of spatial transformation and how the required parameters of transformation already discussed (such as space; politics and power and management and capacity) are being implemented or achieved in the city. The research focussed only on key strategic documents informing urban management and development in the City of East London, the Spatial Development Framework review of 2020.

The Buffalo City SDF (BCMM, 2020) contains key components of BCMM's spatial transformation initiative, Box 2. Although the identified initiatives are municipal-wide, some are relevant and specific to the City of East London and, in assessing their relevance to spatial transformation, an analysis was done of the budget allocation in the IDP. The following can be concluded:

- Of the capital budget of R105,340,632 and 131,616,510 for 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years respectively, there was a total of R14m (5.93% of the total capital budget for the two years) for land acquisition as a project that can address spatial transformation (assuming the properties to be bought are well located).
- The Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) 2021/22 did not have items for projects to invest in what can be considered as catalytic projects for spatial transformation.

Box 2: Buffalo City spatial transformation initiatives

- Focusing on creating a compact city
- Supporting the Smart City and opportunities in the new digital economy
- Four development corridors: MELD, North West Corridor, West Bank Economic Corridor, Bhisho Corridor
- Two Key Nodes: EL Inner City, Mdantsane CBD
- Six mass human settlement areas: West Bank, Quenera, Bhisho Precinct, Ginsberg, Amalinda Junction, Arnoldton / Reeston North
- Intensifying and densifying the urban areas
- Upgrading of urban and rural settlements
- Land release

Source: Buffalo City SDF, 2020

The fourth strategic outcome in the IDP relates to a spatially transformed city. Typical indicators are shown in Box 3 for 2021/2022. The 2022/23 SDBIP had similar indicators with a few additions such as for upgrading of tourism resorts. To determine the inclusivity or transformational nature of the implemented projects, one needs to know the locality of the relevant projects and compare with other metros. Regarding the transformation approaches discussed already (inner city redevelopment, mixed land uses, infrastructure investment programmes), the SDBIP contains some relevant projects that respond to the spatial transformation approaches (such as integrated housing). Empirical determination of the transformational nature of the city's projects and programmes can only be done once other factors are considered and evaluated such as location of projects, baseline targets and the timelines of implementation (not done for this study).

Box 3: SDBIP Projects and targets for Strategic Outcome 4 (Spatially Transformed City)

Indicator	Baseline	Annual Target
Number of subsidised housing units completed	137	65
Number of formal sites serviced	671	165
Number of new sewer connections meeting minimum standards	822	-
Number of new water connections meeting minimum standards	308	-
Percentage of water connections metered	97	
Percentage of wastewater safely treated	77	75
Average Number of days taken to process building plans (<500m2)	91.34	28
Average Number of days taken to process building plans (>500m2)	222.02	58
Number of ablution facilities constructed (seats)	200	
% Compliance of water treatment works with SANS 241	98	98
% of households with access to basic level of sanitation	94	
Number of cemeteries upgraded	5	4
Number of parks depots upgraded	4	
Number of beneficiaries registered on NHNR	2285	240
Number of land parcels acquired by council for mixed use Integration zone and densification (public and privately owned)	4	
Number of completed Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs)	1	
Number of BCMM owned buildings upgraded	14	3

Shaded bottom are BCMM targets and on top are national targets

Source: BCMM SDBIP 2020/21

The Duncan Village Re-development Initiative (DVRI), being implemented in the city, is a salient project that can be analysed for its transformation and spatial inclusivity. It is a Presidential Catalytic Programme which has the backing of the inter-spherical support of national and provincial departments of Human Settlements and BCMM, but the implementation of the programme has been hampered by several challenges (*Mail and Guardian*, 2021). Given its potential to show case inclusivity and spatial transformation because of its monumental objectives (7,714 sites and project budget of R3.6 billion, (HDA, 2023)), it is worth studying on its own as the scope of this research cannot do justice to a project of such a sheer magnitude, Box 4.

Box 4: Duncan Village Redevelopment Initiative (DVRI) summary

Duncan Village is located on the Mdantsane – East London Development (MELD) Corridor

MELD Corridor is a major development and transport corridor as identified in the Buffalo City SDF and IDP as well as aligned to the BCMM Urban Network Strategy

The focus of the Duncan Village Redevelopment Initiative (DVRI), is to incrementally establish formal housing opportunities in a predominant informal settlement area

The informal settlement comprises of about of 30 000 households (100 000 people) in approximately 18 400 informal structures within the Duncan Village

BCMM Council approved the Duncan Village LSDF in 2008 and a Provincial Restructuring Zone was also approved

The planning and incremental implementation of the DVRI is in line with the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme Intervention Program which will contribute to providing secure tenure and formalised housing opportunities to a targeted 21 325 households within DV and its surroundings as the area is overcrowded and constitutes a safety hazard to the residents

Housing opportunities will include BNG and social housing, potential for FLISP and rental opportunities is also being explored
Estimated project cost is about R3.6 billion
Approximately 9 105 potential job opportunities
7 714 sites (7 551: Single Residential; 7: Social Housing; 156: Socio-Econ Amenities and POS)

Source: HDA, 2023

The conclusion we can draw is that East London's spatial inclusivity, compared to other metros studied by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is 'limited but uncoordinated spatial transformation'; others were 'steady and planned progress' (SALGA, 2023).

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The call for spatial inclusivity and transformation in cities has long been identified and expected from cities (Danni, 2022). In the introduction, it was argued that the importance of inclusivity in cities is in ensuring that every city resident has equal access to opportunities and resources that cities offer for cities are the socio-economic engines of the world. The future of humanity has been and will always be shaped, in a big way, by cities which, if not inclusive, can be centers of not opportunities but inequality and marginalization. Therefore, the importance of inclusivity is in ensuring that the cities become centres of opportunities and not marginalization. The unique history and spatial circumstances of South Africa makes a case for the cities not only to be inclusive but transformed as well so as to address the legacy of apartheid spatial planning.

This paper sought to provide an overview on spatial inclusivity and transformation in a South African city of East London, Eastern Cape Province. The paper highlighted how the multiple dimensions of inclusivity apply to the city of East London. From the analysis of the municipal policy and strategic documents (IDP, SDF, BEPP) and focused interviews with municipal officials, it is apparent that the city has put more focus on economic and social inclusivity than on spatial inclusivity. With regard to transformation, the city's strategic documents provide a detailed strategy, however, very little translate into implementation when considering the budget (of 5.93% of capital budget) that the city allocates to projects that can facilitate spatial transformation (and inclusivity).

The spatial inclusivity and transformation lessons and insights from the city of East London identify important gaps that can be used as opportunities and lessons to help inclusivity and transformation in other cities. The other opportunities for research are: firstly, to do comparative analysis with another city and secondly to get cities to establish measurable (quantitative) targets for spatial inclusivity and transformation. Thirdly, the City of East London should assess how successful the implementation has been of its 2013 – 2023 SDF since it is a decade since it was prepared, and determine how the previous SDFs have contributed to spatial inclusivity and transformation.

At the national level, quantitative indicators for spatial inclusivity and transformation need to be identified (and tested) and municipalities encouraged to include indicators for spatial inclusivity and transformation in their policy and strategic documents and plans (and not only concentrate on economic inclusivity). Research into the relevance of SPLUMA provisions and how its implementation could have impacted, if any, negatively or positively, spatial inclusivity and transformation is also recommended.

The research was limited to one city, it would be interesting to compare the city of East London with another city or more cities to conclude whether, generally, South African municipalities (like the city of East London) are focusing only on economic and social inclusivity and neglecting spatial inclusivity and establish whether, as far as spatial transformation is concerned, there is strategy but little or inadequate budget allocation. Our recommendations for future research, therefore should be on cities' spatial inclusivity and how municipal strategic urban development programmes are focussed on spatial inclusivity as opposed to socio-economic inclusion. On spatial transformation, there have been few studies on how to measure transformation although indicators have been discussed (SALGA, 2023; Turok and Visagie, 2018). Future research and debates on transformation should involve identification of qualitative indicators, their analysis and presentation.

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Notes