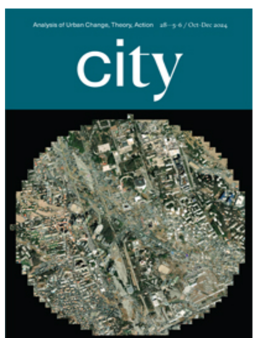

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Towards the *desired* city of compromise: the politics of negotiating large-scale transformation across diversity in Johannesburg

Romain Dittgen, Allan Cochrane and Jennifer Robinson

How to reinvent Johannesburg, a metropolis whose geography of inequality has remained stubbornly entrenched since the end of apartheid? By launching the 'Corridors of Freedom' (CoF) initiative in 2013, the municipal government decided to take bold and deliberate steps towards conceiving and promoting a more inclusive and people-centred city. The goal was to disrupt the prevailing spatial and social pattern by connecting different parts of the city via a large public transit network and altering these same areas through increased levels of (affordable) accommodation, density, and mixed-use development. Cutting across the existing urban fabric and affecting a significant number of distinct neighbourhoods, both in terms of socio-economic and racial characteristics, this ambitious project, unsurprisingly, triggered a wide spectrum of reactions. To successfully embed this initiative required securing support (or countering opposition) from

Keywords **large-scale urban developments, transformation, public participation, diversity, transport-oriented development, Johannesburg**

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both the majority poor and black electorate demanding accessible housing and jobs, and the highly mobilised middle-class groups on whom the City authorities were financially dependent. Taking the CoF public participation process as analytical entry point, we reflect on the diverse power relations of 'building consensus' across highly divided neighbourhoods and populations to take forward this large-scale urban transformation. While there was widespread agreement on the broad vision outlining the need for transformation, interpretations of the 'good' or 'desired' city, views on priorities to be considered, and acceptance of required adjustments, varied greatly. Through this case, the paper offers insights into the uneven landscape of politics associated with large-scale urban developments which stretch across highly differentiated urban areas. We note the initial scope for building shared visions and a 'consensual arena' between state and society across such diversity, but as the project unfolded the varied challenges of implementation at scale saw a diversity of forms of power relations shaping the dynamic processes of urban development along the multifaceted landscape of the Corridors. Initially, a powerful vision, innovative technologies of planning and fast paced consultation sought to corral actors into a tight delivery schedule driven by electoral cycles. But over time actors engaged in persuasion, contestation and collaboration, as well as moments of violence and heated disruption as the development process unfolded. Drawing theoretical insights from the geographies of power and learning from analyses of the close entwining of state-citizen relations in South African urban politics, the paper suggests that in assessing the politics of large-scale developments, an agile analytical lens is needed to reflect on the diversity of power relations associated with governance and decision-making, as well as engagements and contestations, in the light of shifting political terrains, and diverse urban environments.

Introduction

The Corridors of Freedom initiative in Johannesburg was launched in 2013, during ANC (African National Congress) Mayor Parks Tau's term in office (2011–16). It was aimed at breaking with the legacy of apartheid spatial planning and sought to challenge Johannesburg's entrenched and sustained geography of social inequality and uneven development. The local administration decided to take bold and deliberate steps to change the trajectory of the city by seeking to (structurally) alter the ways in which people relate to the built

environment and to each other by encouraging densification and low-income housing in central parts of the city, along the route of a new Bus Rapid Transit system. Ambitious in scale and impact, and with a strong political branding associated with the then Mayor and the ANC, the underlying intention was to 'create a different future for [the] residents [of Johannesburg]' by conceiving these 'Corridors of Freedom' as making 'a people-centred city where the needs of communities, their safety, comfort and economic well-being are placed at the core of planning and delivery processes' (City of Johannesburg n.d.(a), 1).

The proposed transformation of the built environment and associated visuals were not particularly spectacular, yet a highly ambitious societal metamorphosis was being promoted. From the outset, the CoF were underpinned by a strong moral and developmental agenda with the objective of bringing the poor and economically marginalised, thus far confined to living on the badly serviced urban peripheries, closer to the urban core in the belief that it would improve their access to economic opportunities and, subsequently, to a better life (Harrison et al. 2019). If the CoF initiative seemed morally indisputable, given its aspiration to producing an alternative vision of the 'good city' alongside a more integrated and just society, the actual support for and success of the implementation was always more uncertain. The City of Johannesburg as the instigator, engineer, and main driver of the Corridors, took responsibility for carrying out the necessary bulk infrastructure and maintenance work (the underlying engineering of the project) but relied heavily on the interest and involvement of the private sector to ensure the provision of affordable housing units and business spaces at scale. It also needed the support of local residents to adapt to, accommodate and also to drive densification of the built environment as well as the new social relations this implied.

Due to its extensive spatial footprint and insertion into an existing urban fabric, the project included a significant number of neighbourhoods with distinct socio-economic characteristics, sociabilities and ways of living (Ballard et al. 2017). An undertaking of this nature and scale unsurprisingly triggered numerous reactions and emotions: from degrees of resistance, anger, scrutiny, endorsement, disbelief, indifference to scepticism, noticeable in condensed form during the various official public engagement sessions. The process in itself not only uncovered a tension between different visions of what the city should be (and look like), and the multiple realities and contradictions of the existing city, but also posed a dilemma regarding whose voices and which priorities were to be considered in the (re)shaping of the urban and society at large, and more specifically in determining the pace and scope of the Corridors development. Against this background, achieving and maintaining a workable agreement amongst all parties involved was laborious and seldom guaranteed.

When pitted against a long-term timeframe, the visuals and aesthetics of the Corridors of Freedom seem subtle and almost unassuming. Futuristic mega-projects tend to spark more flamboyant imaginaries. In several metropoles throughout Africa, new urban visions and development plans often 'suggest a revived Corbusian modernism' with 'glass tower buildings and landscaped freeways reflecting images of Dubai, Singapore and Shanghai' (Watson 2013, 215). The drive towards the coveted status of 'world-class' city is usually determined by a competitive positioning strategy rather than by focusing on the well-being

of (all) its citizens with, as a result, 'major exclusionary effects on vulnerable income groups' (Watson 2013, 225). If similar aspirations of *worldliness* have prominently featured as part of the Corridors of Freedom project—submitted for international policy awards before it had even begun (Robinson 2018)—achieving 'a more socially equitable and racially harmonious city [has also been] at the heart of city-building practices after the end of apartheid' (Murray 2013, 120) and strongly informed the Corridors project.

By 2023, ten years after its official launch, the Corridors initiative had lost its status as a core policy in the wake of political changes at municipal level but had left a tangible footprint in the form of both the existing bus routes and specific projects (including clinics, community centres and apartment blocks). In the Johannesburg context, the challenges of the apartheid spatial legacy remain of pressing concern for any government, as do the sustainability implications of this inherited sprawling urban form. These long-term agendas reinforce the need to look more closely at the experience of the Corridors of Freedom project, because it offers a means of considering the constraints and possibilities associated with attempts to develop radical initiatives to transform the city (Pieterse 2019). In other publications we have reflected on the lessons to be learnt from the financing of the development, the innovations in governance, and the model it offered for densification and developer-led low-income housing (Harrison and Rubin 2020; Robinson et al. 2020; Todes and Robinson 2020). Here, we consider the initiative from the perspective of urban politics—the forms of power relations, from persuasion, negotiation and collaboration, to the contestations and violent confrontations, which shaped the compromises involved in implementing the vision of a large-scale intervention in the urban form in a divided and unequal city like Johannesburg. Our paper also builds on a rich body of literature on state-citizen engagements which is aware of the varied dynamics of participation in different contexts (e.g. Brownill and Parker 2010; Bénit-Gbaffou 2012; Watson 2014; Wolf and Van Dooren 2017; Sihlongonyane 2015). More generally, and in contributing to this Special Issue, we argue that attending to a wider variety of contexts, such as Johannesburg, and here specifically considering the complex nature of engagements across the spatial and social diversity of neighbourhoods affected by the Corridors development, a nuanced analysis of the power relations and politics of large-scale urban development is necessary (see Introduction to this Special Feature, Robinson, Wu, and Wang 2024, this issue).

The politics of large-scale urban developments: bringing power back in

In social and political terms, the landscape of the Corridors is multi-faceted and layered. The challenges of bringing a project to fruition across diverse and divided political constituencies, common to many large-scale projects (e.g. Flyvbjerg 2007; Shatkin 2011; Ballard and Harrison 2020) is starkly posed in the case of Johannesburg's Corridors of Freedom because of the (apartheid) spatial form of social and political difference. We are, for the purposes of this paper, less concerned with identifying and critiquing the wielders of power than with exploring the complexity of power relations which emerged amongst

the variety of actors drawn into a large-scale urban development. These are manifested not only in the specific outcomes—for example, in the exclusion of very low-income housing from the project (Charlton 2024)—but also through the active practices of local statecraft in which, 'the state is constantly being (re)made by actors attempting to cohere and stabilize its structures and devise, sustain, and implement its imaginaries, strategies and projects' (Pike 2023, 32) in specific geographical and historical settings. South African scholars, along with those from a range of African contexts, have emphasised that the achievement of stateness (let alone state ambitions) is a negotiated outcome (Hagmann and Péclard 2010; Zack and Landau 2022; Fourchard 2023), in which close and often informal relations cultivated between officials and community leaders (Bénit-Gbaffou and Katsaura 2014; Wafer and Oldfield 2015), electoral and financial calculations as well as legal challenges (Beall, Crankshaw, and Parnell 2002), engagements across dual authority structures (Sihlongonyane and Simelane 2017; Sim et al. 2018) and violent confrontations (Landau 2021) are variously present (Brown 2015). Claire Bénit-Gbaffou describes the role played by local public officials as not 'isolat[ed] from the rest of society[, but] built through conflict and compromises, adaptation and iteration—enmeshed as they are in various types of interactions with their own administration, City politics, and social dynamics' (2024, 5). These ideas are closely related to this paper's core focus, drawing attention to the need for a more layered analysis of power relations and the politics of urban development which shape the diverse and complex engagements along the Corridor initiative. To appreciate the politics of urban development in Johannesburg means, as Lipietz noted in relation to Johannesburg's evolving experiments in participatory approaches to strategic planning, 'to interrogate the complex political and institutional dynamics inevitably at play in the process of devising long-term strategies for cities' futures' (2008, 157).

It was Johannesburg's long term strategic visioning process (Parnell and Robinson 2006; Robinson 2008) which was one of the pre-conditions for taking a project of the magnitude of the Corridors forward—offering a widely agreed vision and framework inside which it was hoped that a constructive dialogue would be possible and capable of leading to 'dense, reliable networks of mutual expectations' (Mead 1986; cited in Dean 2002, 39). In this context, as in others, 'the ways in which actors construct and articulate the rationales and stories of what they are doing, where, with whom and why are critical to their self-justification as well as part of enrolling, persuading and undermining political-economic rivals' (Pike et al. 2019, 92). However, marked by very different ambitions, attitudes, and reactions along its length, the implementation of the Corridors provides a counterpoint to the idea of a 'critical utopia', with 'the presumption that [an] agreement [would] be reached, [which] assumes agreement over the terms of the debate, the procedures of discussion, the frame of the argument' (Levitas 2013, 112). Securing such consent in highly fractured contexts requires optimism—the hopefulness of the post-apartheid moment is relevant here—but also an agile pragmatism which reaches far beyond consent or pre-agreed terms for negotiation. In turning to the notion of radical incrementalism, Edgar Pieterse points to some of the tensions underlying any initiative of this sort, aiming to develop

and pursue a shared vision for urban development across deep differences. He identifies 'the existential core of urbanism' as being 'the desire for *radical change* to bring all the good implied in the original utopian association of "the city"'. But he goes on to acknowledge that 'this radical impulse stands in contrast to the necessary prudence and constraints of *incremental change*, which is the only way of intervening in conditions of profound complexity and entrenched power dynamics embedded in capitalist modernities' (Pieterse 2008, 6, emphasis in original; Wright 2019 raises similar points in his discussion of ways to be an anti-capitalist in the twenty-first century).

Learning from contextualised realities in China (as our wider research project was eager to do) where the limits of contestation have been more or less firmly set since the modernisation era (Lee and Zhang 2013), Luigi Tomba suggests that what matters is 'the setting of boundaries of a 'consensual arena' of interaction between state and society' to provide the 'framing arguments' around which 'bargaining and contestation' may take place. The aim is to obtain a 'convergence between state-produced discourses of morality and social order, on the one hand, and discourses reproduced and elaborated by community [members or representatives]' on the other (2014, 20–21). Creating a defined space for 'bargaining', Lee and Zhang (2013) suggest, has wider ramifications, notably a strong backdrop of state intention to contain destabilising critique and mobilisation in that context. Taking such an overarching view of the achievement or not of consensual grounds for governing urban developments, though, can lead to limited and singular interpretations of the political meaning of such developments (Swyngedouw 2009). Alternatively, Chantal Mouffe's espousal of 'agonism' as a positive political process (in contrast to that of antagonism in which different actors simply set up in opposition to each other) postulates that the grounds for collective political outcomes are to be located in contestation itself. Agonism recognises the tensions and differences between political actors but presents the possibility of working across them, articulated around a we/they relation between conflicting parties, in which the unattainability of a *rational* solution to a conflict is acknowledged, while, at the same time, recognising the legitimacy of the 'opponent' (Mouffe 2005, 20).

Mouffe's initial theorisation not only generated wider debates but also a gradual application to participatory planning practices. John Pløger (2004), for instance, advocates for embracing conflict in urban planning processes, arguing 'that 'the art of strife' is what is to be expected in public planning in a world of agonistic pluralism' (2004, 72) and that disagreements should be approached as a democratic resource rather than as a problem. Indirectly, this aligns with Hillier's focus on 'provid[ing] channels of expression in which conflicts can be expressed while limiting the use of abusively confrontational antagonistic behaviour' (2003, 43), and Huxley's assessment that 'understanding does not necessarily mean agreement, and conflict of some sort may be inevitable and, indeed, may be positively productive of change under conditions of inequality and oppression' (2000, 373).

Specifically focused on Johannesburg, Li Pernegger's work on state-society strife explores 'agonism's practical possibilities for the state's future engagements in processes of conflict' (2022, 8), While there may sometimes be a danger of imagining agonism as a relatively unproblematic and more or

less unitary concept, in her discussion of what she calls 'state-society strife in Johannesburg' Pernegger (2022, 3) persuasively differentiates between 'hard' and 'soft' agonism—between an approach that seeks a closure of debate following the achievement of an over-arching consensus and one that, although facilitating consensus around particular issues, allows continuing disagreement around others. In the case of the Corridors of Freedom as a project directed toward enabling extensive spatial change, it may be helpful to reflect on the extent to which, while presenting as enabling 'soft' agonism, seeking agreement on an issue-by-issue basis amongst conflicting interests, the local state's initial approach came closer to 'hard' agonism. In Johannesburg, the CoF as vision coupled with transport infrastructure as material base were seen as a framework around which consensus and broadly shared agenda amongst a range of urban actors might be constructed. However, as the project unfolded, securing 'buy-in' and limiting conflict relied on a much wider array of tactics and negotiations—a 'soft' agonism was evident across different neighbourhoods, and different issues, including officials working towards 'brokering' agreements across sharply divergent interests (Schiller et al. 2023).

To grasp the politics of large-scale urban developments more generally, we propose an analysis which can appreciate the fractured and fragmented form of negotiated governance, rather than offering an overarching assessment. Here we suggest that a focus on power relations is beneficial. Rather than searching for any overarching source of power 'over' others (by those who are set on implementing the project), exploring the power 'to' achieve particular ends, and the often uneasy ways in which power finds its material expression as an outcome of complex and overlapping sets of relationships could be useful (Allen 2003, 5–6). John Allen's work challenges the notion of power as an 'embodied entity' (Allen 2003, 4) necessarily flowing top-down from specific hierarchies, elites or socio-economic groups, and rather draws attention to a wide array of registers of power by stressing the need to 'distinguish between the exercise of power and the resource capabilities mobilized to sustain that exercise' (Allen 2003, 4). Power cannot be taken for granted but relies on a continuing process of assembling the arrangements through which it can be exercised. Instead of simply associating power with those identified as powerful, Allen argues that power is expressed as a relational effect with different modalities—or ways of being brought into effect. He highlights those of domination, manipulation, seduction, negotiation and persuasion (Allen 2003, 5–6).

Power, he says, 'is never power in general, but always of a particular kind' with its 'own relational peculiarities' (Allen 2003, 2), so that 'the many and varied modalities of power are themselves constituted *differently* in space and time' (Allen 2003, 3, emphasis in original). In this context, we can also bear in mind John Allen's warning that the frustrations of government mean it is all too easy to slip from a focus on 'the power 'to' secure or influence outcomes [...] into one where the 'power over' others takes precedence, manipulating and [at times] closing down possibilities rather than enabling them' (Allen 2020, 2). In this paper, we take as our focal point the different modalities of power evident in the participatory process associated with establishing the planning frameworks for the CoF. In this way, we can open up the analysis of the politics of large-scale development beyond singular assessments to appreciate the

fragmented, uneven, and tenuous power relations which enable, sustain or lead to the stalling of these projects (Pinson 2009; Cochrane 2020, 527; Salet and Gualini 2017).

Sentiments towards public participation are generally divided. If, at one extreme, it can be perceived as a 'compelling imaginative force' tied to 'a seductive appeal in the idea that people can co-create urban life for the better' (Beebeejaun 2016, 7), at the other, 'participation is in practice often dismissed and considered as nuisance' (Bénit-Gbaffou 2008, 27), or seen as serving the interests of post-political quiescence (Swyngedouw 2009). In her discussion of the experience in Johannesburg, Bénit-Gbaffou points to on-going difficulties of measuring the actual influence of the general public on planning decisions and development outcomes. She argues that 'the failure of institutional channels to incorporate meaningful participation' has led to a 'ruling by exception', where 'the inclusion of people's concerns or demands into policy-making at the municipal level happens as an exception and as a response to (media—or judiciary-driven) urgency, much more than through the current management of daily affairs' (Bénit-Gbaffou 2008, 5). Indeed, although consultation over the CoF, articulated as 'giving rise to a people-centred city', was a *statutory* requirement, as this process unfolded it gave rise to new channels of engagement and invented spaces of negotiation. The objective of creating 'integrated' neighbourhoods required the initiative to deal with strong social difference as well as varying modalities of making claims on the city, ranging from indifference, to conflictual and violent interactions. (The related paper in this Special Feature, Makwela, Dittgen, and Rubin (2024) explores this in more detail).

If the City government's vision was for an urban environment that allowed for greater accessibility, inclusivity and, ultimately, more freedom, the actual implementation required the imposition of a series of decisions and directions. How was that achieved? This paper focuses first on how the administration drew on and sought to inculcate a widely circulating version of what the 'good' city should be as a means of incorporating diverse constituencies into the process. But it also reflects on the contestations and compromises involved in such attempts at consensus building, as well as practical implementation. Overall, we assess that the processes of consultation, participation and negotiation significantly shaped the outcomes of the development. We highlight the various modalities of power that were in play through this process, which opens to a more general perspective on urban development as the compromised product of emergent configurations of different kinds of power relations.

The following two sections in turn explore the early processes of 'hard' agonism in which the local authorities and planners assumed a broad consensus, and sought to rapidly implement their ambitious plans. Power relations which relied on the infrastructure of government—technical innovations in financial planning, and forging a tight consensus across formal government structures—worked alongside a broadly persuasive approach. In the second phase (and section of the paper), much tougher 'bargaining and contestation' unfolded within the broadly shared framework of the CoF, as processes of consultation and participation sought to incorporate communities and populations into a promised future. These broadly map onto two phases of planning, the broad-brush planning of precincts around all the BRT stations through Spatial Area

Frameworks (SAFs); and the detailed planning of strategic nodes during the Corridors implementation phase, through Spatial Development Zones (SDZs). Our analysis therefore follows the timeline of the development, from the launch of the Corridors project in 2013 and the vision of the *desired* future city promoted by the then Mayor —which might be understood as Levitas' 'critical utopia'— through two heightened phases of consultation and contestation in 2013–14 and 2016–17, to the low level of ongoing development and accompanying tensions sustained up until 2019, following a period of political uncertainty.

This study forms part of a two-year ESRC-funded research project (2016–18), entitled 'Governing the Future City: A comparative analysis of governance innovations in large-scale urban developments in Shanghai, London, Johannesburg', jointly undertaken by scholars based in the U.K. China, and in South Africa. In Johannesburg, we worked in partnership with Planact, an NGO with a primary focus on community support and capacity building. Between February 2016 and November 2017, we conducted over 70 formal in-depth interviews (with government officials, property developers and financiers, as well as community members in specific segments of the Corridors), organised several focus group engagements, carried out transect walks and attended a wider range of community and official meetings. The collaboration between Planact and the team of scholars is further detailed in Makwela, Dittgen, and Rubin (2024).

A politics of persuasion: making the 'good' and 'just' city

The CoF's initial blueprint aimed to engineer the connection of several areas of the city via long transport arteries and transform these (pre-existing) neighbourhoods by promoting mixed-use developments and increased levels of accommodation density (Harrison et al. 2019). A bus-rapid-transit system (BRT), known as Rea Vaya, was gradually rolled out along selected routes, after being initiated in response to the FIFA World Cup in 2010 (see Todes 2014; and Wood 2015 for a discussion of the origins of the BRT). The vision behind the Rea Vaya bus system was highly ambitious and, once the different phases would be completed, the network was expected to 'include 330 km of bus routes across Johannesburg with 85 percent of [the city's] population within 500 m of a Rea Vaya Trunk or feeder service' (Wood 2022, 39). This formed the backbone of the Corridors project with the belief that an effective and interconnected public transport system would improve people's access to amenities, work and leisure activities. All of this was driven by the ambition to generate an inclusive and socially just society, drawing on longstanding planning ideas about how to overcome the inherited segregated city, and generate a more compact urban form (Todes, Weakley, and Harrison 2018; Charlton 2024).

Despite a collective understanding that Johannesburg, with the inherited apartheid structure, is spatially highly dysfunctional, which changes—whether in terms of nature, intensity, speed or cost—are considered imperative, 'good' and 'just' depends on the rationalities and priorities of both implementing agents and the diverse recipients. Yet, state-citizen encounters in Johannesburg, across different income and racial groupings, have often been conflictual (Beall,

Crankshaw, and Parnell 2002; Bond 2010; Murray 2011; Pernegger 2022). The City's initiatives, couched in a technical vocabulary, not always decipherable to the general public, alongside a panoply of well-intentioned and idealistic planning visions and documents, are often met with acts of defiance such as litigations or service delivery protests meaning that projects of a certain size and character get altered (not necessarily in a bad way), delayed, toned down or even shelved. The seasoned planners within the Department of Spatial Transformation, championing the CoF, were fully aware of this risk and the necessity to reach some sort of compromise in order to allow for this initiative to be implemented.[1]

The story of the Corridors of Freedom is, therefore, also the story of an attempt to build shared visions, and to create effective mechanisms for reaching consensus. At the outset, when the project was launched during the public 'State of the City' address in 2013, Mayor Tau and the Department of Spatial Transformation sought to seduce other actors through visions of a quasi-utopian future linking different areas in the city through initial investment in transport infrastructure. This, they argued, would challenge existing patterns of social inequality and generate opportunities for further development. These ideas had a long provenance within anti-apartheid activism and planning discourses in South Africa, and evoke considerable popular support (Todes 2014). This is clearly not an example of top-down power through which a vision is manufactured independent of the ambitions of ordinary citizens. On the contrary the political vision of the Corridors was one in which progress was imagined to be achieved through an underpinning consensus and where conflicts would be managed through persuasion and negotiation.

The assumption of consensus was not misplaced, according to our interviewees. Those who ended up in protracted conflict with the council over the Corridor plans routinely prefaced their comments with their general support for the initiative. However, for the City of Johannesburg, one of the fundamental challenges was to move from an idea and planning stage towards actual implementation. Among a variety of prerequisites, this also required obtaining sufficient support and buy-in; both internally, across the different City and provincial departments, and externally, from various user groups. Aiming to transform the city at such an unprecedented scale, required the mobilisation of significant powers of persuasion as well as detailed practical negotiation to keep the project on track. When it came to implementation, the Corridors vision in practice had differential impacts in different areas. Also, an early mis-step by the authorities in presenting the most ambitious ideas for densification to the public, in the face of pressure from the Mayor to progress the project within a very tight timetable, was linked to the need to demonstrate achievements according to electoral timetables. As a result, this required the mobilisation of significant powers of persuasion as well as detailed practical negotiation to keep the project on track, as a planner on the project recalls below. The quote also gives a flavour of the issues which drew strong attention from some residents:

> Because we were in such a hurry, we already had [prepared] a plan for the first participation [engagement] that we presented, and it was sort of testing the theoretical limits of densification. So, it upped an area that currently [in 2016] has around 7,000

people per square kilometre with an additional 400,000 units or people…I can't remember exactly, but it was huge, just on Empire-Perth. […] Our analysis was really about looking [at] where we could densify and what would be an appropriate density. We still wanted to have some sort of human scale, yet at the same time we really wanted to push it. If we were really radical, where can it go to? And that's what we were presenting to this *poor* community.[2] […] They went ballistic. They could actually do density calculations and pretty much understood what we told them. They were ready to lynch us. So, it doesn't matter how many times we said look this is just…, and then the timing also didn't help, and it's at that time we went back to the Mayor and said listen, this thing is going sideways if we don't do this properly and we need time to do this. […]

At one stage we got the Mayor into one of the public meetings and he did the speech that we got on tape that was impromptu, off the cuff speech about what the Corridors mean, and I think it is still one of the best descriptions ever of what the intentions of the Corridors are. So that, sort of, got people to think slightly in a different way. And then from that process we said okay, this last forum is too big, let's break it down, so we started to break it down in terms of different areas we had mini workshops with people, it is a bit easier to work with a round table of people rather than this *mob* (Interview with City Officials, 29 July 2016).

Initially, public participation did not receive a lot of attention from the administration and was intended to be brief. At first, stakeholder engagements were internal, limited to various City departments, with external stakeholders (e.g. resident associations, businesses) excluded from the preparation of the draft SAF document (interview with City Official, 16 August 2016). Once public participation was initiated, residents' groups often felt that participation was reduced to a 'tick-box' exercise, with all the major decisions already made (this was repeatedly mentioned to us during community-based focus groups). The initiative was announced in May 2013, but public participation only kicked off in September that year and was expected to be over in time for a council decision on the project in November. Negotiations and conflicts with different resident groups saw this extended to April 2014.

In August 2013, the first external briefing meeting was held between City officials and Councillors whose wards were affected by the project. General public meetings presenting the strategic area frameworks (SAFs) which had been prepared by an external consultant based on secondary data, with no public input, were held in September and October 2013. Advertisements for these sessions were placed in local newspapers and on the consultant's website, and in some township areas networking amongst community organisations and roving loudhailers encouraged attendance. Ward Councillors were also informed about the meetings and asked to notify their wards.

Levels of attendance were mixed across different areas, and some meetings in low-income areas were cancelled for lack of participants. In our interviews with community-based activists in these areas, there was almost no knowledge or recollection of CoF participatory processes. Moreover, there was a marked lack of diversity at the largest of these initial meetings which were mostly comprised of white property owners in middle-class neighbourhoods. Generally, these

meetings involved high level presentations given by technical experts who shared information in a lecture style. Opportunities to engage were brief due to issues of time and a high level of control by the project team. Participants were not able to influence the corridor routes because it had already been decided that they would be based on the existing and proposed BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) routes. Residents also were not invited to comment on where and how social housing would be located or on the design guidelines. In these initial meetings, then, there was little scope for the public to participate in the foundational aspects of the CoF.

In response to the time frame imposed by the Mayor, the City's Planning Department, while remaining deeply involved and in control, had outsourced the whole policy development to external consultants. Furthermore, public participation was approached as a separate item of work from the broader policy process conducted within the City administration (Peens 2015, 77). The tender included a requirement for the appointed consultants to hold a minimum of eight focus groups with key stakeholders, to present the SAF on at least four occasions, and organise three half-day workshops with interested parties (Peens 2015, 74–75). While these figures presume genuine participation, both the targeted stakeholders and the nature of interactions were kept vague.

When significant objections were raised, especially by those challenging the key pillars of the initiative, such as densification and social mixing, City officials and consultants would argue that these points had been thoroughly discussed during previous rounds of consultation. From their perspective, the main features of the CoF were nested within several broader national and local policy directives, which were also tied to moments of public engagement. For instance, the city-wide 'Joburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy' (GDS), centred on the promotion of a 'sustainable city for all its citizens as the foundation for a resilient and adaptive society' (City of Johannesburg 2011, 35), included an extensive and wide-ranging nine-week outreach process (Peens 2015, 73; Planact 2018, 11).

If, overall, the City's initial strategy can be read as an attempt to meet (or even go beyond) basic statutory requirements for consultation to achieve buy-in for a widely supported initiative, residents' groups in some of the affected neighbourhoods used a range of means to try and shape the Corridors Initiative. More established middle-class suburbs were able to draw on the professional expertise of some of their residents to navigate the technicalities of the City's planning vision (Interview with City Official, 26 October 2016). Along one of the corridors—the Empire-Perth corridor—the residents' associations joined together to set up a task team, made up of residents with skills in urban planning, law, design or heritage, to 'fight knowledge with knowledge' (Peens 2015, 112). The team reworked the original plans and managed to convince the City to reduce the density levels and maintain the character of the suburb.

In response to the highly negative reactions, mainly voiced by affected middle-class residents, the City held additional meetings to defuse the tension, primarily articulated around densification, and the location of anticipated high rise and social housing (Interview with City Official, 8 May 2017). These voices had to be considered, not only because the long-term success of this initiative partly depended on their level of acceptance, but also due to their non-negligible

role as taxpayers and voters (Beall, Crankshaw, and Parnell 2002; Rubin 2021; Pernegger 2022). Apart from remaining concerns about the urban management of higher densities, the interviewed senior City planners felt that, over time, they managed to gain some traction and support through several smaller focus groups, partially by referring to the need to create a more just and equal society relating back to the broader socio-spatial vision associated with the CoF.

> We started to make headway in the more localised processes and what I realised that after the Mayor's speech, everyone that started to talk said 'we are not against the Corridors of Freedom idea', so everyone started with 'we are not against it, but ... ', until one evening we said, 'here is a map and here are markers and given that you're not against the Corridors, I want you to start the sentence with 'we are in favour of the Corridors of Freedom and here is what we are not agreeing with, here are our density parameters. Here is the map. What part of this do you not agree with? Because you start this thing by saying, we are in support of it, so draw the line up to where you support it in terms of density and height and all of these things'. Once we did that in a smaller group format, we sort of exactly saw where the points of misalignment were. (Interview with City Officials, 29 July 2016)

With specific projects gradually beginning to emerge in a more material form (e.g. clinics, bus stations, pedestrian bridges, sports facilities), concerns were increasingly directed at some of these infrastructural interventions, notably in some of the poorer communities affected by the Corridors. Criticisms ranged from pointing towards a lack of consideration for the practical realities at the affected neighbourhood level, projects not responding to the most pressing needs, or not providing (sufficient) local employment opportunities [see Makwela, Dittgen, and Rubin (2024) in this issue for a more detailed discussion]. In parallel, public engagement and outreach were also increasingly focused on a more local scale, exemplified by the next and more detailed phase of the planning process, the Spatial Development Zone plan. At this stage, the City administration was confident enough that the initiative would not risk getting derailed, at least not at a recipient level, and that people's reactions (whether of contestation, collaboration or *laissez-faire*) could be contained within the limits of a broader consensual arena.

Composing 'power to': managing tensions, finding ways to proceed

Once the SAFs were approved in 2014, the project's general direction of travel seemed to be secure. City planning officials made significant progress in the technical capacities to implement the project. Financing had been secured from external donors (through the Agence Française de Développement), and a creative process of streamlining and coordination of financing across City departments aimed at securing the infrastructural investments needed to bring forward the proposed corridor development. This relied on a significant political initiative centring financial planning control in the Spatial Planning department (Pieterse 2019; Interview with City Official, 8 May 2017). Medium-term plans for

investment in bulk infrastructure were put in place in support of the intensified development (Harrison et al. 2019).

Given the nature of the public engagement for SDZs, implicitly understood as a continuation of the already completed SAF process, the City's Planning Department had to think of creative ways to achieve buy-in from the affected population groups. A large proportion of these efforts focused on middle-class neighbourhoods as residents in these areas perceived the on-going and projected changes as fundamentally altering their ways of life, impacting on property values and potentially security. But the Orange Grove area, for example, included many other residents whose views were more difficult to access, including a substantial migrant population and low-income residents in often highly sub-divided properties. Both formal and informal businesses would find their activities strongly affected by the BRT route itself, and plans for developing the corridor. A range of initiatives to reach out to these groups were also put in place and the city's project management unit, the Johannesburg Development Agency, became involved (Appelbaum 2017; Mhkize and Mosselson 2019). In light of this complexity and criticisms of the earlier public participation process as perfunctory, the City planners and the appointed consultants used different techniques during engagements in this phase to facilitate the achievement of the City's desired vision.

There were also concerns about how to increase the pace of implementation, and to ensure a return on the Council's infrastructure investments. In practice, this led to a focus on two strategic precincts which showed the biggest potential in terms of development (the old suburb of Orange Grove along the Louis Botha Corridor, and the 'Knowledge Precinct'—labelled as such due to the existence of two universities—along the Empire-Perth Corridor). The aim was to put in place new overall zoning schemes for these areas based on anticipated infrastructure investments (Interview with City Official, 8 May 2017). With these SDZs in place, planners would be able to fast-track the approval of development rights and speed up the processing of individual development applications conforming to the design codes generated in the previous round of plan development negotiations (Harrison 2017; Interview with City Official, 8 May 2017).

Indicative design codes which reflected the possibility for incremental densification of existing plots were prepared as a result and became a central element of the next detailed phase of planning (Interview with City official, 8 May 2017). The drive to more in-depth negotiation and an extended period of public participation which followed represented an attempt to draw in a range of disparate communities behind the initiative. In parallel, it also meant keeping on board the private development actors who had indicated they were ready to invest in the opportunities promised by the delivery of transport infrastructure (Todes and Robinson 2020).

Given that these were precisely the areas where conflict had been most intense in 2013–14, the City opted for a more interactive approach to achieve buy-in from the middle-class owners. New consultants were appointed in February 2016 to organise public engagement meetings in each of these pilot areas along similar lines to previous events but focused on developing more fine-grained and detailed plans (from the neighbourhood scale all the way down to the level of the street and the dwelling unit). This would mark the

end of the official engagement process, as within the framework of the SDZs, consultations over individual developments would be restricted in scope. While City officials may have considered the public engagements tied to the Corridors to be a continuation of a longer participation process, in practice the temporal disjuncture between the different stages of planning, not always involving the same participants, triggered some frustration. This was especially the case in the time lag between the general development of SAFs and the SDZs, as a member of the team of consultants during this phase noted:

> The problem with this project was this: it was the fact that it was a follow-on to a previous process, the previous process being the SAFs where there was more heavy public participation than the SDZ [Special Development Zone] over design; it didn't deviate at all from the previous SAFs, it only developed it in more detail. So, in a sense it wasn't public participation, it was more public information, dissemination, rather than public participation because the SAF on which everything is based was already done. I think this is the thing that was frustrating not only for the team, but also for the people attending because you have people that have moved into the area, after the SAF was done and now this is all new, and they go, 'but hold on, pull the brakes, we don't want this in our neighbourhood', and you know, and then it's kind of explaining to them, that it's not about the brakes, there are no brakes. It's also about, if you leave these neighbourhoods to themselves, in five years' time you are going to sit with more and more illegal backyard shacks and dwellings, more and more blocked services because of that. Already the area [referring to Orange Grove] is over densified for the amount of people living in it. (Interview with consultants, 23 August 2017)

If the visualisation of the CoF Initiative (including 3D renderings, interactive story map and detailed plans) was used as an important tool to gain support in the early phase of the project (both within the various departments of the City administration and the recipient population), one of the core aspects of this phase of consultation was the presentation of detailed design plans indicating how densification of the neighbourhoods could take place incrementally, within the financial and technical constraints of private-led developments. To some extent these mirrored some of the informal processes of backyard infill developments and subdivisions of suburban houses which had been causing the rapid decline of these neighbourhoods (Interview with consultants, 23 August 2017). With the bulk of the land in private hands, and expropriation considered only a last resort, the City's aim was to get (middle-class) owners to be more actively involved in the process of urban change. In each SDZ, public engagement was structured around a once-off presentation followed by a weeklong exhibition, which offered an opportunity for residents to grapple with the projected changes in a more personalised manner, and in a less intimidating setting:

> … the beauty of having the manned exhibition created an opportunity for people to come back, to have a discussion or a fight with me or my colleagues. The ones with the biggest mouths at the presentation, you could see how they turned, as they got to know and started talking to us and gaining a better understanding. Every night they would bring different people with them. The nice thing is that the reach was quite high. We enjoyed that. That first night, it's a shock for people, the things you are

> trying to do, but then they start getting used to it and they start looking at the detail and you are there to answer their questions. Some people won't change their minds, but then you can start engaging them on a more practical level, what is it that's good about this and then you guide them through the process. Or they come with their neighbours and they start making plans together; we would see little groups, you join them, then you realise, they are planning a joint development on two or four stands. (Interview with consultants, 23 August 2017).

Residents were invited to consider whether they wanted to develop their own plots. In parallel, they were also encouraged to leave comments in boxes set out at the exhibition, green for positive aspects, yellow for possible improvements, and red for points of disapproval. While temporarily uploaded onto the City's dedicated Corridors of Freedom website (no longer active), comments would only be considered if dealing with pragmatic and design-related aspects. Wider views and social opinions (such as objections to inclusionary housing or correlations between densification and crime) were seen as not relevant given that the overarching plan had already been adopted by Council (Interview with consultants, 23 August 2017). At the same time, with the plan mainly aimed at attracting developers with an interest in low-income rental housing and new kinds of built form (Todes and Robinson 2020), only a few of the current residents would realistically have the necessary skills, capital and interest in getting involved in the process. But the planners hoped that the prospects of more formal models and procedures for densification would be welcome in a context where the extensive informal subdivision and rack-renting of properties was of concern to these residents.

Small scale developers, though, saw strong opportunities. One developer who had, since 2009, gradually been buying up or leasing stand-alone houses in Orange Grove and adjacent neighbourhoods to refurbish and subdivide them into smaller low rent and self-contained units for single occupants and couples, was initially quite excited about the prospect of advantageous development incentives offered by the SDZ. He referred to the main document, lying on his desk during our interview, as 'paradise, front page to back page', although he also noted the difficulties of investing in bigger developments along the Corridors, from terrible soil conditions to the onerous contribution requirements of the City Council (Interview with developer, 9 February 2017). A few years later, when the capital budgets for the CoF initiative had been reduced, the limited upgrade of electrical capacity caused severe challenges for the larger apartment blocks which had been built in anticipation of adequate bulk infrastructure and services provided by the City.

The City's aim to develop sizeable numbers of social housing in these affected middle-class areas remained a major point of contention throughout. In Norwood, an upper middle-class neighbourhood, and Orange Grove, the bulk of this anger was directed at the Paterson Park development, initially projected to host 2,000 new social housing units and to be built on open space in-between those two adjacent neighbourhoods. The mostly white residents' associations produced counter plans, lodged over a thousand formal objections, threatened litigation and insisted on having numerous and time-consuming meetings with City officials (Mhkize and Mosselson 2019, 26), already severely overstretched by

the gigantic task of handling the entire Corridors Initiative (Harrison and Rubin 2020, 262). Consultants for this phase of participation reported that exchanges became, at times, heated and even threatening. In 2017, the project was taken to a municipal tribunal, which ruled in favour of the CoJ (Appelbaum 2019, 16).

By this time, the configuration of the project had undergone several alterations through extensive negotiations with different groups. The building heights were reduced and the total number of units limited to a maximum of 1,457 or 837 (according to different sources),[3] but with a projected minimum of 20–30 per cent to be reserved for inclusionary ('affordable') housing. As Charlton (2024) notes, this kind of housing would still be out of reach for many employed individuals seeking housing in the area. An additional upgrading initiative was brought forward along Grant Avenue, Norwood's busiest commercial artery, which was developed as a side-project seeking to pacify the area's resident groups; but also to find ways (often via arduous exchanges with formal business owners) to facilitate the integration of informal traders and the neighbourhood's homeless population into the area (Mhkize and Mosselson 2019; interview with City Official, 21 April 2017).

As Allen (2003) has argued, power can easily and mistakenly be conflated with resources and status (whether class privilege, wealth, social capital or knowledge), while other forms of power relations might be significant. As such, while diluted, the Paterson Park project is set to proceed (Appelbaum 2019, 21), realising a moderate (if incomplete) penetration of a more inclusive dimension into the realm of middle-class neighbourhoods in that area. By 2023, hard infrastructure enhancements have been undertaken, and social and fitness infrastructure has been constructed in Paterson Park as part of the social infrastructure for the already constructed and planned housing developments. Informal negotiations, conflict management, and as we saw in the planning consultation processes, the adoption of 'more subtle and quieter registers of power' (Allen 2020) directed towards engineering transformation at scale brought forward elements of an overall project whose capacity for embeddedness was fragile from the outset. Achievements unfolded in a context of competing visions and hopes about the ideal (future) city. In some cases this meant hindering, delaying or diluting the effects of projected transformation; in others the strategy was to take advantage of stakeholder interests, and encourage them to seize potential opportunities.

If middle-class suburbs can rely on resources, capital and the professional skillsets of individual residents, in less privileged neighbourhoods there is often a need to resort to a strength in numbers. For example, the Greater Sophiatown Development Forum, made up of different community organisations from lower-income areas of Claremont, Westbury, Bosmont, Newclare and Coronationville, managed, due to a greater pull, to get the City's JDA to attend a public meeting it had convened and to receive feedback on the project implementation in the area (Focus group with residents from the Greater Sophiatown area, 23 September 2016; see also Planact 2018, 50). In lower-income neighbourhoods, the Corridors Initiative was predominantly associated with immediate work opportunities linked to various construction projects or, in the longer run, with a chance for improved living conditions.

More generally, a number of interviewees from different segments of the Corridors felt that the City had been forcing changes in mobility patterns by

discouraging people from using private cars and minibus taxis (Planact 2018, 28). For the City, the taxi industry stood out as a crucial stakeholder, given that taxi users would also potentially be the primary target group for the Rea Vaya. However, while invited to BRT information meetings, it was only when the construction phase along Louis Botha Avenue (past Orange Grove and Paterson where middle-class reactions had been so contentious) became tangible that members of the Alexandra taxi association realised how mobility patterns would be altered. Representatives from this association met with a senior planner at CoJ, who showed them plans and admitted that relevant stakeholders had not been consulted adequately due to time and delivery pressures (Planact 2018, 43). In 2017, news circulated that affected minibus taxi owners would receive compensation to give up their vehicles as way to make room for the City's preferred mode of public transport. Upon completion, the 17 km BRT route was expected to be run by a bus operating company whose shareholders would mainly consist of minibus taxi owners (primarily the Alexandra Taxi Association, as well as the Alexandra, Randburg, Midrand and Sandton Taxi Association) active along Louis Botha Avenue (Cox 2017). Taxi owners complained that information did not trickle down from their own leadership to those actually running the taxis, and that the limited work prospects associated with the new bus company would not compensate for the loss of livelihoods.

However, in 2019, JDA announced the temporary suspension of construction work along Louis Botha Avenue. This followed an escalation of violent protests since July 2019, targeting Rea Vaya construction sites, reportedly related to angry taxi operators (City of Johannesburg n.d.(b)). As a result, it was reported to us that ANC youth activists in the (primarily) black and poor township of Alexandra sought to bring developments to a halt which did not offer employment or investment opportunities to local residents, necessitating time-consuming and irregular arrangements to keep the development on track (Interview with a local politician in Alexandra, 16 December 2016). In instances where projects failed to predominantly recruit among a local workforce, some of the construction sites were halted by community members until these employment requirements were considered.

At present, the BRT stations along Louis Botha remain unfinished and the route along Louis Botha inactive. It is unclear if and when this part of the network will be finalised.

Conclusion: the uneven politics of large-scale developments

The City government's vision for the Corridors of Freedom, widely shared by residents, was for an urban environment that allowed for greater accessibility, inclusivity and, ultimately, more freedom; the actual implementation of the project required the imposition of a series of decisions and directions with strongly divergent implications for different individuals and neighbourhoods. Given the City's aim to 'destabilise the existing untransformed patterns' (Interview with City Official, 8 August 2017), this counter-social engineering project—borrowing from James Scott's (1998) vocabulary—to undo the social and spatial engineering plan of the apartheid era incited different responses:

from a lack of engagement, concerted social mobilisation to try to secure local benefits, an enthusiastic welcome or a patient search for common approach, to at times raised voices, legal proceedings and threats as well as the reality of violence. We have highlighted the various modalities of power that were in play throughout this process in order to propose a more general perspective on urban development as the product of emergent configurations of different kinds of power relations.

During one of the research-related focus groups, we asked participants to express their opinions regarding the existing or future physical transformation along the Corridors. One resident from Orange Grove felt that the majority of people in his area were 'happy in an unhappy way', displaying strong discomfort and resistance, voicing fears about planned alterations in their neighbourhood while also acknowledging the need for change. Diverging from this view, a representative from the dense black township of Alexandra started by reciting a poem on the metamorphosis of a butterfly, 'fearless and aware of the necessity of change,' before drawing a direct parallel to the intended urban alteration associated with the CoF (Focus group discussion, 27 October 2017). Whether change is perceived as an opportunity or an obstacle, in the course of its implementation people in different areas and from distinct backgrounds worked towards advancing their own standpoint, shaping the outcomes of the project in numerous ways.

The story of the Corridors of Freedom is therefore also the story of an attempt to create effective mechanisms for reaching consensus. At the outset, when the project was launched during the public 'State of the City' address in May 2013, Mayor Tau and the Department of Spatial Transformation sought to draw in other actors (in a process that echoes what Allen (2003) identifies as power as seduction) through visions of a quasi-utopian future, linking different areas in the city through initial investment in transport infrastructure. This, they argued, would challenge existing patterns of social inequality and generate opportunities for further development. These ideas have a long provenance within anti-apartheid activism and planning discourses in South Africa, and evoked considerable popular support (Todes 2014), at least in principle. This is therefore not simply an example of top-down power through which a vision is manufactured independent of the ambitions of ordinary citizens but rather one in which progress was to be achieved through the building of consensus and efforts at persuasion and negotiation where conflict arose—an active process of politics rather than an example of 'post-politics' (Swyngedouw 2009; Wilson and Swyngedouw 2014; see Robinson, Wu, and Wang 2024, this issue). The analysis presented here has resonance beyond the Johannesburg case. Pike et al. (2019, 91) note, for example, that 'city infrastructure is a site for social and political contestation and accommodations between actors with differing interests. City statecraft acknowledges there is not necessarily a coherent or planned governance process nor one only ever guided by objective and rational utilisation of evidence to inform political-economic decision-making'.

Through the implementation process, then, state-citizen relations emerged as 'a complex and contentious terrain' (Wafer and Oldfield 2015, 238), materialising in 'spaces of contestation, but also of collaboration and co-operation' (Piper and Navdi 2010, 214; cited in Wafer and Oldfield 2015, 233). The objective of creating

'integrated' neighbourhoods required the initiative to deal with difference, in its many forms and varying modalities of making claims on the city, including conflictual ones. Informal negotiations, conflict management, alongside the adoption of 'more subtle and quieter registers of power' (Allen 2020) during the public consultation process reveal the City's cautious and yet calculated approach towards controlling the overall outcome of a project whose nature and level of embeddedness was highly contingent on a range of different actors. In some cases, this meant hindering, delaying or diluting the effects of projected transformation; in others the aim was to take advantage of stakeholder interests, and encourage them to seize potential opportunities. We observed how a general acceptance of the need for radical change was often combined with a reluctance regarding the material implementation in practice in middle class and poorer communities alike. The various community, private and real estate actors sought to defend their own interests and take advantage of specific opportunities or swerve the project and its impacts in different directions. State actors and their consultants attempted to bring them together around the planning vision of the Corridors of Freedom and to secure support for a technical process which could ensure its realisation.

In a nationally and locally shifting political landscape, the direction of this large-scale project remains uncertain, highlighting the importance of 'understanding long-term projects in conjunction with a volatile and uncertain environment in which they are shaped and implemented' (Majoor 2018, 1). The grand visions of the Corridors of Freedom as a political project may not have been realised in the ways that its initial protagonists hoped, partly as a result of electoral transitions, and partly because the extant BRT is still only used by a small proportion of the city's population (0.95 per cent in 2019) with the overwhelming majority still using mini bus taxis or private cars (Wood 2022, 145; Robinson et al. 2020; 2022). But their legacy in the urban environment is nevertheless tangible. Building the *desired* city was predicated on moving from a broader (and widely shared) vision to detailed implementation, initially drawing on that vision in order to try to build consensus through a process of 'hard' agonism, asserting one perspective as shared, in the collective interest. But, as that fragmented, the process rather brought forward the desired city *of compromise* through forms of participation and consultation, requiring a 'soft' agonism, open to negotiation of cross-cutting positions (Pernegger 2022). The process through which the Corridors were pursued highlights, then, the diversity of power relations which emerge in the course of implementing large scale urban developments across a complex and differentiation urban landscape, emphasising the need for analyses of urban development politics that can move beyond binary positions to account for the many different modalities of power at play.

Notes

1 Series of interviews with senior planners at the City's Spatial Transformation and Planning Department (Johannesburg, various dates between February 2016 and January 2018).

2 'Poor' is used here in a metaphorical sense. It refers to the magnitude of projected change coming to the neighbourhood, not to the socio-economic status of these *community* members.

3 The first figure was mentioned in a tender advert by the Johannesburg Property Company for the Paterson Park Precinct in April 2019 (see also Appelbaum 2019, 20); the second one refers to an online article in the Rosebank Killarney Gazette (18 June 2019) entitled: 'Paterson Park redevelopment approved'.

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