



Integrated Planning and Implementation: The voice of city practitioners on working together in government

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Introduction

Global urbanisation is unstoppable. Over the past 30 years, the global urban population has doubled, while Africa's urban population is set to double over the next two decades.¹ In South Africa, cities have the additional challenge of addressing the legacy of apartheid planning, through integrating the different governance and spatial structures of the different municipalities, which were racially segregated and governed and resourced according to discrimination policies and processes. The “one city one tax base” system aimed to create more integrated towns and cities and a legislative framework that supported the collective, collaborative efforts required to integrate post-apartheid cities.² For example, the City of eThekweni (Durban) was created through amalgamating “over 40 local authorities of various forms in the city firstly into a Metropolitan authority and six local substructure authorities, and then into one municipal institution”, when eThekweni Municipality was formally established in December 2000.

The integration – spatially, economically, socially, financially and from a service delivery perspective – of cities has been extremely complex and challenging. It is a balancing act of maintaining stability, capital investment and functionality, while addressing the need to service, rebuild and restructure cities but with limited resources.

South Africa's blueprint for urbanisation, the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) calls for integrated and aligned investments in cities and a shared understanding across government and society about how to achieve spatial transformation and create inclusive, sustainable and resilient cities. However, despite the policy intentions, spatial transformation remains elusive within South African cities.

In response, since 2017 the SACN has convened the Built Environment Integrated Task Team (BEITT), “a group of practitioners involved in spatial transformation and built environment integration”. The BEITT is a safe space where practitioners are able to share concerns and approaches to built environment integration in South African cities, and identify areas for further research.³ Research outputs include *the Rules of the Game*, which found that performance management systems within South African cities do not promote integration and collaboration. These performance management systems are both formal (codified rules contained in legislation, policies, regulations and other “official” systems) and informal (uncodified rules and practices, such as bureaucratic tradition and political influence).⁴ The misalignment between the individual outputs measured by cities and the city's desired developmental outcomes contributes to the lack of progress in spatial transformation.⁵

This latest research looks at integrated planning, which refers to a “participatory and flexible management process where cities work across agencies, sectors and even jurisdictions to tackle key planning challenges”.⁶ An integrated planning approach requires collaboration and partnership among all actors.



[It's important to see how SACN can assist in resolving these issues, especially issues of collaboration and sharing information among ourselves.]

Much emphasis has been placed on local government's participatory processes and meaningful engagement of all of society and the ability to shape decisions.⁷ Yet public participation is only one component of the broader integration required to make meaningful impacts in South African cities. A whole-of-government focus is also important, which involves collaboration among spheres of government and – importantly – **within** cities. It is this last aspect – collaboration among city departments – that is the focus of this research, which examines the barriers and enablers of integrated planning and implementation between city officials and the departments that they represent, from the viewpoint of city practitioners.

¹ DCOG (Department of Cooperative Governance). 2016. Integrated Urban Development Framework. Pretoria; DCOG, page 11.

² Interesting perspective highlighting the challenges to One City, One Tax base written in 1995, describes the process in some detail: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/09/the-struggle-to-govern-johannesburg/376455/>

³ SACN. 2020. Built Environment Integration Practice. Johannesburg: SACN, page 1.

⁴ https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rules-of-the-Game-Report_final-draft-1.pdf

⁵ This mis-alignment is explored from a different perspective in the investigation of Spatial Transformation indicators research paper.

⁶ <https://thehagueacademy.com/news/the-building-blocks-for-successful-urban-development-projects/>

⁷ <https://www.salqa.org.za/Documents/Knowledge-products-per-theme/Governance%20n%20Intergovernmental%20Relations/Effective%20Public%20Participation.pdf>;

<https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Integrated-Development-Plan-Guidelines-Review-Support-Practice-Note-.pdf>

The inputs reflected in this report emanate from focus group sessions held with seven metros: Buffalo City, City of Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, City of Johannesburg, Tshwane, Mangaung and Nelson Mandela Bay, as well as discussions at BEITT meetings held in 2021–2023.⁸ The broader inputs from BEITT members covers all South African metros and key stakeholders such as the City Support Programme (CSP) South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and National Treasury. All inputs are anonymous, in keeping with BEITT being a safe space for city practitioners. The aim is to outline factors that reduce, inhibit and challenge the ability of cities to work in more integrated ways to achieve common outcomes.

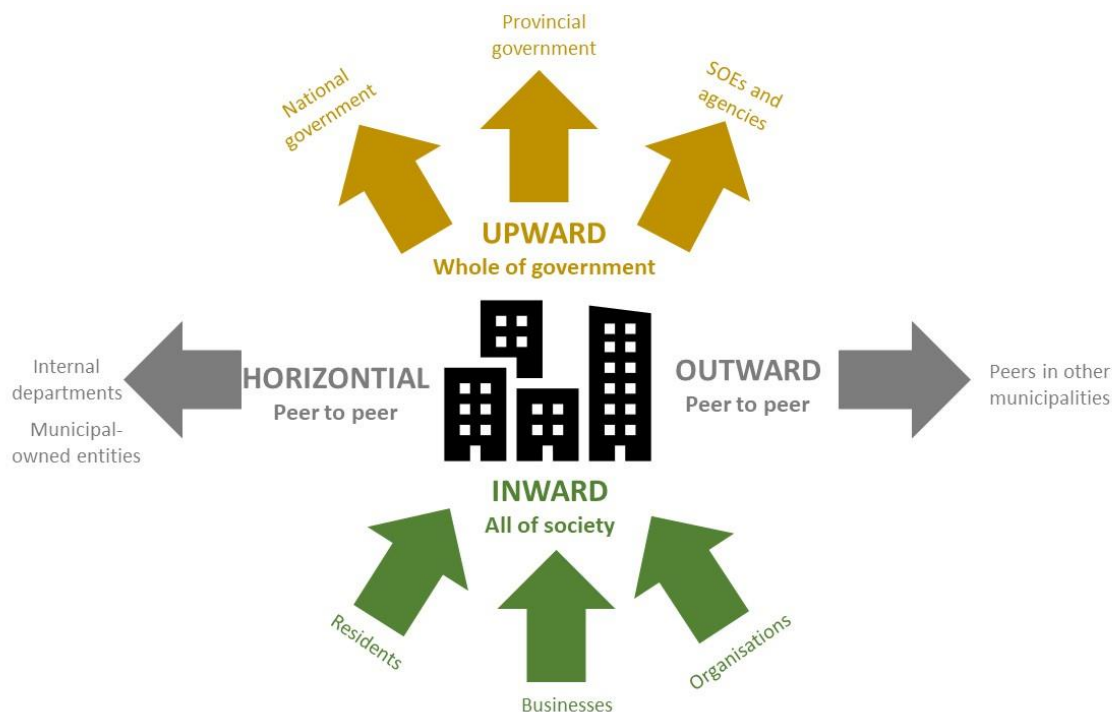
After explaining what is meant by cooperative governance or planning, the report provides examples of the impact of a lack of integration among city departments. It then describes challenges that result from the lack of integration – in the voice of city practitioners – and presents some best practices from cities that enable better integration. Based on this analysis, recommendations are provided for cities to consider implementing within their policies, implementation and operational planning. A graphic representation of the project life-cycle of projects within the built environment, specifically those focused on spatial transformation, illustrates what is required for integration and collaboration in successful programmes in South African cities.

Collaborative Governance or Planning

The implementation of complex programmes and projects across multiple sectors requires collaborative planning and governance. This new form of governance “emerged to replace adversarial and managerial modes of policy making and implementation”. It brings together public and private stakeholders “in collective forums with public agencies to engage in consensus-oriented decision making”.⁹ However, even within collaborative governance, the tendency is to prioritise collaboration between state and non-state actors,¹⁰ whereas collaboration among state actors is crucial.

Cities need to collaborate with a variety of actors, “with higher tiers of government (upward collaboration), with peers (outward) and with local stakeholders (inward) to discover innovative ways to create public value”.¹¹ Figure 1 illustrates this in the South African city context.

Figure 1: City collaborative governance



⁸ A total of 17 BEITT sessions took place (10 between July 2021 and June 2022 and seven between July 2022 and June 2023), at which discussions were held about different components of integrated planning.

⁹ <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2018.1500630>

What is most useful in this framing is the differentiation between the various actors, although the terminology may be somewhat misleading. In some cases, South Africa's Constitution gives local government the mandate to make decisions, which requires collaboration with – not approval from – other spheres of government.

South Africa's policies – the National Development Plan and the IUDF – are underpinned by cooperative governance and all-of-society approaches, and recognise the need for upward and inward collaboration:

To stand any chance of meeting their long-term development goals, cities need to adopt whole-of-government and all-of-society practices. Local government has had mixed results in working with all spheres of government and sectors of society (including civil society and the private sector).¹²

Despite the intense level of planning by cities, government's long-range planning is neither legislated nor coherently coordinated. The result is a lack of both vertical alignment (across spheres and state-owned enterprises) and horizontal alignment (across government departments within a sphere).¹³ Although the IUDF's focus is more on the engagement between spheres of government and external stakeholders (including the private sector), it does acknowledge that horizontal alignment is a challenge, as "not even municipal investments are guided and informed by the SDF" [spatial development framework] in some cases.¹⁴

Within the South African governance system, the outward focus on peers has not been emphasised because the assumption is that such collaboration across city departments is happening. The focus is on efforts to ensure upward collaboration, between local, provincial and national government for whole-of-government and all-of-society integration.

Integration Legislation: IDPs and SDFs

The development of local government structures and systems in South Africa is closely linked to the development of key policies, legislation and frameworks to ensure integration within cities. The Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Regulations (2001)¹⁵ set out the requirements for the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the SDF, the two main planning instruments for local government.

Integrated Development Plan

Introduced in 1996, the IDP is perhaps the most relevant, long-standing and significant plan. It focuses on integrating local government development over a five-year period of term and should identify:¹⁶

- (a) the institutional framework, which must include an organogram, required for-
 - (i) the implementation of the integrated development plan; and
 - (ii) addressing the municipality's internal transformation needs, as informed by the strategies and programmes set out in the integrated development plan;
- (b) any investment initiatives in the municipality;
- (c) any development initiatives in the municipality, including infrastructure, physical, social, economic and institutional development;
- (d) all known projects, plans and programs to be implemented within the municipality by any organ of state; and
- (e) the key performance indicators set by the municipality

¹² https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SoCR-V-2021-03.20_WEB.pdf, page 15

¹³ DCOG (Department of Cooperative Governance). 2016. Integrated Urban Development Framework. Pretoria; DCOG, page 44.

¹⁴ Ibid, page 45.

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.za/documents/local-government-municipal-systems-act-regulations-municipal-planning-and-performance>

¹⁶ Ibid, page 4.

Spatial Development Frameworks

The SDF is an important component of the IDP, and both plans should be conceived as two components of one integrated plan. The SDF reflected in a municipality's IDP should "set out objectives that reflect the desired spatial form of the municipality", as well as strategies and policies that:¹⁷

- (i) indicate desired patterns of land use within the municipality;
- (ii) address the spatial reconstruction of the municipality; and
- (iii) provide strategic guidance in respect of the location and nature of development within the municipality;

In addition, the SDF should contain "guidelines for a land use management system in the municipality; [...] a capital investment framework for the municipality's development programmes; [...] and a strategic assessment of the environmental impact" of the SDF. It should also be aligned with SDFs of neighbouring municipalities and "provide a visual representation of the desired spatial form of the municipality", including delineating the urban edge, identifying areas of public/private development and infrastructure investment, as well as areas for priority spending.

Community participation

The Regulations (2001) set out processes that municipalities without a regular stakeholder forum may use for community participation in respect of integrated development planning and performance management. Cape Town offers an example of best practice for communicating and working with communities in the IDP and SDF processes. In 2023, the City of Cape Town made simple animated videos that informed the public on the role and purpose of these strategic documents, shared key priorities and highlighted at various points all-of-society's role in shaping Cape Town. These videos play an important role in educating the public about the two planning instruments, which stakeholders need to understand in order to be able to engage effectively.



The legislative framework is clear on the nature of information that municipalities are required to include in these key legislative documents, but what is lacking are the systems and processes needed to ensure that collaboration among city departments is taking place.

The District Development Model

The DDM was developed in order to counter the silos found in South Africa's government spheres. It is meant to be a practical mechanism that enables all three spheres of government to work together, with communities and stakeholders, to plan, budget and implement government programmes. It has the following objectives:

- To coordinate a government response to the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality particularly among women, youth and people living with disabilities.
- To ensure inclusivity by gender budgeting based on the needs and aspirations of the people and communities at a local level.
- To narrow the distance between people and government by strengthening the coordination role and capacities at district and city levels.
- To foster a practical intergovernmental relations mechanism to plan, budget and implement jointly in order to provide a coherent government for the people in the Republic; (solve silos, duplication and fragmentation) maximise impact and align plans and resources at our disposal through the development of "One District, One Plan and One Budget".
- To build government capacity to support municipalities.
- To strengthen monitoring and evaluation at district and local levels.
- To implement a balanced approach towards development between urban and rural areas.
- To exercise oversight of budgets and projects in an accountable and transparent manner.

The DDM seeks to ensure coordination primarily between the whole of government but does not explicitly speak to fostering collaboration between city departments and practitioners prior to engagement upwards, which is crucial. However, it does include some critical aspects of collaboration aimed at addressing some of the challenges highlighted below by city practitioners.

¹⁷ Ibid, page 5.

The Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPs)

In 2017, National Treasury released Circular 88, which introduced a reporting reform to standardise and rationalise performance indicators for local government. It contained 88 performance indicators against which metros were required to report in their Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPs) and Service Delivery Budget and Implementation Plans (SDBIPs), which are developed in line with their IDPs. These indicators and BEPPs were part of a crucial initiative to achieve transversal management within cities and attempt to ensure integration among all departments focused on the built environment. Led by the CSP, this included training, initiatives and piloting of programmes, structures and systems within cities.

Since the BEPPs and city transformation indicators were withdrawn as a requirement for cities, cities have been grappling with how to collect the necessary data, and have developed different institutional arrangements, thinking and approaches.

Delving into Challenges

City practitioners recognise that cities have integrated plans but integrated implementation “is not guaranteed”. Some of the challenges to working in a more integrated fashion are highlighted below.



The idea of integration has always been a challenge especially when it comes to implementation.

Transformation is long term, but plans are short term



Planning is a long-term game, and we cannot create cities overnight. In democratic societies, where everyone must have a voice also delays progress and lack of resources limits what can be done.

Integration is not linear nor simple to actualise. Systems, such as integrated transport networks, do not “form overnight or in a linear fashion”. Integration requires consistent collaboration throughout the project’s lifecycle of planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. It also requires consistent allocation of resources toward these processes that involve tens of municipal officials at each stage, to keep everyone informed and to allow different levels of engagements depending on the roles and responsibilities of the municipal officials.

Little room to think about how competing priorities and plans connect and synergise

The pressures of the now. For example, the need for additional quality taxi ranks, which provide dignity for everyday users, versus using available resources for bus rapid transit (BRT) systems, which do not yet provide services to all areas of a City.



It becomes difficult to explain the competing plans to the public. Users are encouraged to use BRT but also using public facilities such as taxi ranks. It opens up a blind spot for integration.

The challenge of silos (1) – plans are not aligned



The City took a decision to use transport (mass-transit, BRT, rail) as the backbone of development (IPTN, SDF integration). [...] but] human settlements [were] not designed or planned according to IPTN, and rather planned for political decisions

For cities, the most challenging component of planning alignment is the integration with human settlements. The SDF process emphasises external participation more than internal participation, leading to key gaps. The SPF that is put out for comment is “a huge document, so a challenge is the internal stakeholder engagement, e.g., linking the SDF to the informal settlement upgrading plan”. In addition, political interference makes alignment more complicated for human settlements planning.

The challenge of silos (2) – lack of engagement among departments

Most cities do not have basic platforms where departments can engage and decide “on clear roles and responsibilities for appropriate depts to lead”. For instance, one department saw their budget “for the first time at a National Treasury meeting”, as officials had not been involved in the methodology and defining of the budget.



During the review process (of the SDF) we find that not all departments are on board, and not making meaningful participation during the implementation process

Best Practices

Nelson Mandela Bay: Built Environment Technical Team

The Built Environment Technical Team (BETT) is a transversal structure that brings together integrated planning among the different directorates and is spearheaded by the Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO). It is a legacy of the BEPP structure and undertakes an integrated assessment at the planning, implementation and management stages. The BETT has developed a matrix to track catalytic programmes and projects in an integrated way. Established eight years ago, it meets on a monthly basis and has the following characteristics:¹⁸

- Chaired by Strategic Planning and Coordination office.
- All directorates represented by senior members/decision makers/implementers.
- Vehicle for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and external role-players (e.g., CSP) to access senior staff, get guidance and reactions.
- Driver of transversal processes, with a suite of catalytic programmes
- All role-players become aware of their role in projects/programmes and budget links, from safety to urban management, to economic development and hard infrastructure – everyone has a role to play in every programme.

The BETT deals with *inter alia*:

- Strategic planning submissions and implementation
- Alignment
- Driving catalytic programmes
- Precinct planning – detailed plan coordination
- Grant monitoring reporting – capital budget (Urban Settlement Development Grant, Integrated City Development Grant)
- Institutionalisation of strategic processes
- Reference group for major programmes, such as the CSP’s long-term financial strategy support, sub-national doing business, housing support.
- Major projects influencing built environment – private and public sectors
- Strategic Integrated Projects
- Alignment of investments by SOE and government (Prasa, Transnet, provincial task teams) to the city’s spatial strategy

¹⁸ Presentation by former BETT Chairperson at Nelson Mandela Bay, now retired, Ms. Dawn McCarthy at the BEITT meeting of 18 August 2023.

The chairperson for the last eight years, Dawn McCarthy, believes that the BETT has been critical in driving a programmatic response to built environment development, has ensured that the built environment is everyone's business (not just planners and engineers) and has broken down decision-making hierarchical relationships to a more collaborative approach. The structure has shed light on a new kind of collaborative way of being a municipal official.

"We need people that can work in areas putting pieces of the puzzle together – putting private sector people together with public sector opportunities – making things happen – **bureaucratic navigators** across all sectors and directorates."¹⁹

City of Johannesburg: Clusters

The City of Johannesburg has perhaps one of the most complex municipal structures in South Africa, with departments and multiple municipal-owned entities (MOEs), meaning that extensive collaborative and integrated systems, committees and structures are required. The city has implemented multiple structures with different levels and engagement systems some consisting only of officials and some that are intended to enhance the political-administrative interface.²⁰

The city has adopted a cluster approach to service delivery and governance, whereby certain departments and MOEs are grouped into clusters, which are more formalised committee structures and create opportunities for regular monthly touchpoints. The city has four clusters: Good governance, human and social development, sustainable services and economic growth. This cluster system enables departments to align and collaborate on particular outcomes and ensures that any policies, plans or approval documentation are tabled at the clusters before being presented at Council meetings. The primary participants are executive directors, CEOs of MOEs, MMCs and councillors.

In addition, the city has the following committees.

Structure	Purpose	Primary participants
Integrated Planning Committee	To provide support and guidance for the IDP	All planning representatives from departments and MOEs
Technical Budget Steering Committee	To provide technical assistance to city manager on the IDP, Budget and SDBIP	City manager (Chair); chief financial officer (Co-Chair); chief operating officer; group head of strategy, policy coordination and relations (Co-Chair); group head accounting; group head treasury; group head strategic programme management office; group head risk and assurance services; group head governance; executive director, environment and infrastructure services; department directors, of spatial transformation and planning, of infrastructure planning and coordination, of accounting and of integrated and community based planning.
Budget Steering Committee	To provide technical assistance to the executive mayor in discharging his or her responsibilities set out in Section 53 of the Municipal Finance Management Act	Executive mayor (Chair), MMC finance (co-Chair), chief of staff, all Technical Budget Steering Committee members

¹⁹ Presentation by former BETT chairperson at Nelson Mandela Bay, now retired, Ms Dawn McCarthy at the SACN BEITT meeting of 18 August 2023.

²⁰ Presentation by Ms Thandeka Mlaza-Llyod at the SACN BEITT meeting of 18 August 2023.

Recommendations

A strong message from city practitioners is that intergovernmental relations and external stakeholder engagements will not be effective without sufficient internal collaboration within the city. However, collaboration within cities will not happen unless the necessary systems and processes are in place. This will require cities “to take a step back and assess the objectives for transversal management and embark on planning-led budgeting”.

In the silo mentality you are at the rock bottom – unity is a non-negotiable and you need to pull together.

Cities also need to put place engagement platforms at all levels, not only for senior officials but especially for middle management, where implementation takes place, i.e., development of plans, budgeting of projects, issuing of tenders and monitoring and evaluation reports. Governance structures, such as special task teams and clusters developed by Nelson Mandela Bay and the City of Johannesburg, should be established to ensure integration and collaboration across departments. On an individual level, officials should have incentives for working collaboratively included in their scorecards.

Transforming South Africa’s cities will require extraordinary collaboration upwards, inwards and especially outwards throughout a project’s entire lifecycle. Figure 2 attempts to demonstrate what the nature of collaboration can look like at a municipal level.

Figure 2: Collaboration at a municipal level

