

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF SPARKS,
ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

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DECLARATION

The work described in this thesis was carried out in Durban during the period of February 2007 to April 2011, under the Supervision of Dr. Rosemary Awuroh, of the School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Howard College campus.

This thesis represents original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form, in part or whole, to any other University. The use of work done by others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Chantel China
April 2011

Supervisor
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ABSTRACT

The concept of revitalization made its début within the localized context between 1993 to 2003 and is evident in Cato Manor, Warwick Junction and iTrump initiatives in the Durban South African context. The concept and its benefactors encourage others in and around the city to utilize it as a tool promoting self sufficiency and sustainability within developing and developed neighborhoods. Sparks, as an example of a neighborhood within the jurisdiction of the Ethekwini Municipality, has played a part in the process. The difficulty of the area is that it has all the facilities and services of a functioning neighborhood but when one looks closer, a different reality exists.

The study proposes to examine the blockages preventing an effective functioning of a cohesive, co-ordinated and harmonious community.

The examination of revitalization taking place in Sparks is an attempt to identify factors which explain the partial revitalization observed in the neighbourhood. This study identified role players and established the characteristics of the local residents and their contribution to the revitalization process. Qualitative information was obtained through interviews with key role players including the ward Councilor, Municipality officials, residents and business owners of the area.

The finding of this study revealed that Sparks as a node has all the elements to function successfully to make a good neighbourhood. The study found that the residents are not included in the revitalization decision making processes by the municipality and that there was little public participation the revitalization in the neighborhood is occurring sporadically in the form of upgrading roads, renovations on private property, installation of traffic lights and speed breakers. The revitalization in Sparks is problematic and needs to be addressed more systematically in the Municipality and by the residents of the area. The research revealed that public participation needs to be encouraged in Municipal initiated projects. The researcher concluded that revitalization needs guidance from the municipality, and that proper public participation strategies should be put in place for successful implementation.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Statement of the Problem

Neighbourhoods both internationally and locally, can become plagued with violence, crime, dilapidated structures and neglected infrastructure (Bedderson, 1995). Neighbourhood deterioration often forces local governments to negotiate with relevant departments, officials and neighbourhood networks to get involved with revitalization projects. Relevant policies and strategies, for example; redistribution and social housing policies and urban renewal strategies, have been adopted by these governments to overcome the decline of neighbourhoods around the world (Clay, 1979). In various international experiences neighbourhood revitalization was mostly conducted by the local community and supported by relevant government departments to develop the residential areas by focusing on its strengths and challenges then formulating action plans that should benefit the entire community (Wates, 2000).

South African urban strategies of the past, sought to remove the African poor from urban residential areas and racially separated people in an attempt to "improve" the living conditions of the urban poor (Smit, 1988). In recent times and under the democratic government, the revitalization process was expected to involve members of a given community (ibid). Communities were now able to get involved in planning initiatives and the implementation of developmental projects. The White Paper of 1994 stipulates that it was a South African citizen's right to have access to adequate housing and related services. To have adequate services involves getting the community's advice and ideas on how to implement projects that improve their quality of life and encourages optimum usage. By involving the community and educating them on revitalization, they become receptive and enthusiastic to the change and were then able to maintain their living environment beyond completion of the project. The maximum involvement of a community also encourages transfer of skills, economic and social empowerment which was characteristic of a satisfactory end product for the revitalization of an area (Govender, 1997).

Within the South African context, neighbourhood revitalization is occurring. Cape Town, Tswane and Durban are cities in context that have experienced the deterioration of neighbourhoods. South Africa has a history of racial segregation, which started during the time of colonialism. This was institutionalized during the apartheid era (1948-1994) and resulted in a struggle for the control of urban space. In essence, apartheid provided an ideology of segregation that was

legally enforceable. Through spatial separation, influx control, and a policy of „own management for own areas’, apartheid aimed to limit the extent to which affluent white municipalities would bear the financial burden of servicing disadvantaged black, coloured and Indian areas (White Paper on Local Government, 1998). For such a system to function properly, it required a very complex and deliberate approach to local urban planning and management. Well-developed, traditionally white, suburban areas developed around the central business districts, where most of the facilities and job opportunities were located, while numerous townships grew on the peripheries of cities. Later, many informal settlements also developed in and around the townships. These areas were separated from the well developed suburbs through buffer strips in the form of green belts, industrial zones and rapid transport routes. It therefore created a pattern of segregation through distance.

Ethekwini Municipality has undertaken various upgrading projects which led to the revitalization of such areas, for instance, the Inner City Thekwini Regeneration and Urban Management Programme (iTrump). The iTrump area extends from the Umngeni River in the north, the Beachfront and Point to the East, Victoria Embarkment to the South and Warwick Avenue, Umngeni Road to the west.

The ITRUMP ABM was established as a response to the urgent need to prioritise the regeneration of the inner city. ITRUMP places the strategic value of the inner city at the core of its business and seeks to maximise its multiple opportunities. It focuses on six key outcomes, increasing economic activity; reducing poverty and social isolation; making the inner city more viable; effective and sustainable urban management; improving safety and security and developing institutional capacity.

The initiative strives to be proactive rather than reactive, working to stimulate private sector interest while fulfilling the needs of individuals that use public spaces by revitalizing the Inner City. It is also noted that various neighbourhoods have also been upgraded in the municipality.

1.2. The Main Objective

The aim was to show that community participation, if thoughtfully implemented and based on the principles of sustainable revitalization of neighbourhoods, can make a contribution towards providing an acceptable social and physical environment for Sparks.

1.2.1. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- a) To identify the role players in the Revitalization process in Sparks.
- b) To establish the extent of community participation in the revitalization of the neighbourhood.

1.2.2. Research Question

The main research question posed is what are the factors that explain revitalization that may be occurring in Sparks?

1.2.3. Subsidiary Questions

- a) What are the attributes of the neighbourhood of Sparks?
- b) How is the community contributing to the revitalization process in Sparks?
- c) What role does the municipality play in the revitalization process?

1.2.4. The rationale

The aim of this study was to examine neighbourhood revitalization. The Colored communities made little contribution on the upgrade of housing projects. Instead, delivery was focused on the amount of services ultimately estimated by professionals.

This proposed study capitalizes on the opportunities that can arise and contribute to positive outcomes and end results of revitalization in a neighbourhood when focusing on the different aspects of the development process. In an attempt to address developmental issues, the study focuses on the social, economic and physical aspects of neighbourhood revitalization. In assessing the reasons why revitalization was occurring unevenly in the neighbourhood one would also be able to identify the views of the people. This study has identified the differences and similarities; the strengths and weaknesses of Sparks as a residential neighbourhood as well as to identify its social, economic and physical needs and its potential.

1.3. Location of the Study Area

Sparks is a pre-dominantly Coloured area surrounded by previously White-owned areas namely; Sherwood, Musgrave, Westville and Essenwood. It is located approximately six kilometres away from Durban's Central Business District (See Map 1). Sparks has Sherwood bordering its north and Overport and Asherville on the eastern boundaries. It had an overdue need for revitalization for it to be or at par with its neighbours according to the people that live there. The national freeway (N3) runs alongside the area on the western boundary and Brickfield Road in the south of the area. The area was situated northwest of the CBD and part of the Central entity (see Map 1). It was surrounded by commercial and employment areas as well as major shopping nodes. Sparks had a hub of social and economic activities in which diverse people participated, some from neighbouring areas. The area had a population of 10 291 people with 2 694 households, 71% of the population were Coloured people, Indian and African were 14% and the White population was 2% (Ethekewini Municipality: 2008). Major bus and taxi routes run through the area. It mainly consists of privately owned houses and flats, land used for commercial, educational, religious, public and private purposes.

1.4. Thesis Structure

a) Chapter One – Introduction

Chapter One introduces the study area and outlines the research problem.

b) Chapter Two – Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter Two has provided the conceptual framework for the study and briefly discusses the theories and concepts upon which this study is contextualised.

c) Chapter Three – The Research Methodology

Chapter Three examines the outline of the methodology used to collect the data is presented and the case study area, Sparks, is introduced.

d) Chapter Four - The Analysis of Sparks as a Residential Neighbourhood

Chapter Four was largely descriptive, dealing with Spark's history, location, population, land uses, economic viability and environment. An analysis of existing situation is undertaken.

e) Chapter Five - The Analysis of Sparks through Opportunities and Constraints to Revitalization.

Chapter Five identifies the opportunities and constraints affecting the revitalization of Sparks. It also presents the residents' attitude and perceptions on revitalization in the area.

f) Chapter Six – Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter Six draws the previous chapters together, summing up findings and conclusions of the study. The recommendations lists the different views which would encourage neighbourhood revitalization and can hopefully lead to sustainable development for Sparks on a whole through the adoption of a holistic and/or comprehensive revitalization process in which both the community and the municipality work together.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter provides a conceptual framework for the study. It examines literature that deal with revitalization, neighbourhoods and community participation. The theories, case studies and lessons learnt explain how a neighbourhood within a community can influence revitalization in a given area. Relevant literature was used to identify elements of successful neighbourhood revitalization process.

2.1. Revitalization: The Definitions

A number of terms have been used to describe revitalization; they were renewal, upgrade, regeneration and redevelopment. According to Walker et al (2003), these terms differ between “nations, states, governments, academics and texts” (Pg.i). The use of the word revitalization was adopted in this study, but references to upgrading, urban renewal and urban strategy have also informed the study. Revitalization usually occurs in urban environments when an area had decayed substantially and the local government with the community aim to upgrade it. The government may initiate the changes when a community raises the concerns of degradation even if it was a small area of the suburb, village, town or city. According to Walker et al (2003) the aim of revitalization is to improve not only the physical aspects of an area but inevitably the social aspects of a community. Normally blight does not ascend onto a whole community or area at once; it takes time, section by section, if it was not dealt with quickly. *Bedderson (1995:25)* argues that:

Revitalization means, *“To rouse a community from a state of inactivity, to awake and make a change of getting involved with what was happening around them.”* Ellingson (2006) states that Urban Renewal on the other hand means, *“The improvement of slum, deteriorated, and underutilized areas of a city; generally implies improvement realized through city, state, and, particularly, federal programs, including the clearance and redevelopment of slums, the rehabilitation of relatively sound structures, and conservation measures to arrest the spread of deterioration.”* This is that the definition that this study has related to throughout the text.

Many cities around the world have been involved in trying to renew inner city decline that show a high density of people with low socio-economic backgrounds and high unemployment ratings. Examples were cities such as New York,

London and Sydney in the USA, the United Kingdom and Australia (Walker et al 2003). Likewise political forces play an instrumental role in cities in that they define, fund and set policy targets for renewal of areas that were of high interest. The revival of a neighbourhood improves the suburb as a whole, can increase property values and improve and change the existing building stock for an area.

2.1.1. Revitalization Theories, Approaches and Strategies

The neo-Marxist school of thought focused on the reasons for neighbourhood decay and was of the view that the decline was due to political and economic forces at any given time (Smith, 1979). Smith (1979) argued that the government was responsible for neighbourhood development and by directing funds away from poorer neighbourhoods, they encouraged out-migration. Likewise appropriate incentives were to improve the declining areas promote revitalization. Potential buyers become interested in these areas and invest in property and residential structures while they continue to receive public funding and investment. The neo-Marxists have been criticized for simplifying the issues surrounding development and making capitalism the main reason a neighbourhood can flourish or decay (Preston, 1996).

In the South African context, during the Apartheid era, the decline of residential areas was partly due to the lack of positive political involvement in these areas. The National Party government did not improve the poorer areas and in fact froze development in residential areas, relocated them, leaving the residents and investors uncertain about the future (Smit, 1988). The neo-Marxist theory gives a more tangible explanation of the reasons for decay and decline in a neighbourhood, which were applicable in the South African context. Areas surrounding Sparks were good examples of how the political forces of the past influenced the physical environment. This theory provides possible explanations for the need for revitalization in declining neighbourhoods that need change, such as Sparks.

More recent theories of urban renewal include the following: "physical determinism, concentration poverty social inclusion/exclusion and social capital" (Walker, et al 2003:3). These theories dealt with concepts that were relevant to this research. The theories also deal with social problems that people experience when living in overcrowded areas. Physical determinism dealt with the physical environment and how it can be used to "manipulate and control" social behaviour. Preston (1996) argues that physical determinism can be useful for political purposes but it can prove to be difficult to control. This was similar to

how the past South African Apartheid system dealt with the forced removals and how it affected the people who obeyed the law. Their physical environment was changed and this led to social and economic problems. Indeed when the physical environment was changed it affects the community's health and well-being including "social isolation, poor nutrition, lack of secure employment, unequal power relations, levels of stress and frustration" (Walker, et al 2003:3). Forced removals and legal segregation determined the physical attributes of South Africa in history. One race group was allowed many privileges and another denied access to fair governmental influence and aid. Places where African people had to move to were referred to as „Block Spots', Locations, Bantustans and rural areas. Remnants of the apartheid planning are still evident in the South African physical environment.

Social inclusion deals with social policies, affirmative action, social justice and measures well-being and social capital. The integration of the community was important for this theory to succeed. Kothari and Minogue (2002) argue that the right to development enabled all people of a community to be included in economic, social, cultural and political aspects of development. Getting people involved within the community contributes to its success, allowing people to participate and decide what was best for them encouraged them to initiate change that benefited them in the long run. Community participation began common in the South African planning in the Post Apartheid years. It became important to the government to include the community from the initial stages of development of a neighbourhood.

Social capital can lead to the strengthening or weakening of a community over time. It cannot have an impact on its own; other preconditions must be met including adequate transport networks, enabling environments and incentives for the poor to produce for the local market (Kothari and Minogue 2002). Social capital promoted integration and social inclusion in a community. They argued that social capital theory supported and facilitated the various elements that made up the necessary community infrastructure. It depended on community action and challenged the government to facilitate, empower and resource communities to define their own solutions and directions. These concepts were useful in explaining reasons for a need to revitalize a neighbourhood and ideas on how it could be successfully done. They were useful in explaining how development could occur and how to achieve a realistic end result in a neighbourhood like Sparks.

The phrase “top-down” means that all the decisions come from the top (Filev, 2009). Project objectives were most likely to be established by the top management of a company or authority. It was the top managers who provide guidelines, information, plans and fund processes. All of the project manager’s expectations were clearly communicated to each project participant. Following this approach, ambiguity opens the door for potential failure, and the managers should be as specific as possible when communicating their expectations. While this approach was a good way for upper-level leaders to visualize and articulate the creation of an inclusive environment within the organisation, the actual implementation of these concepts throughout an organisation was hard work and requires the ability to "see" the workplace from the bottom up (Matsamura, 2005). Top-down approaches were often based on "programmes" and “projects” whereas bottom-up strategies were more process focused.

According to Filev (2009) the vision would not be realized if the plan does not ensure that everyone was involved. Top-down thinking can cause a diversity initiative to be stopped in its tracks, or before it starts work. By the time the flow of information reaches the lower levels of the company, the message may have changed, the issues may be misunderstood, and what once was a comprehensive stream of goals and strategies may now only be a sea of random thought (ibid). Or, it may never get to the bottom at all. And if that happens, the organisation would be cycled back to the beginning stages of planning its diversity model, which would be both costly and time-consuming for everyone involved.

Top Down Approach	Bottom Up Approach
Ethekwini Municipality: The local authority	Community stimulated to involvement with the local authority during decision making process
Local Economic Department arranges the budgets for different projects	Community awareness programs created by the local government
Notices appear in the local newspapers for objections or concerns	Setting up meetings on a monthly basis and getting people involved with the upkeep of their neighbourhood.
Implementation occurs	Community and Local official Representatives elected from different districts and departments respectfully.
Community either happy or upset about the changes being made. They are allowed to voice their opinion and concerns	Projects, documents, surveys, observation, studies done to create a background for the revitalization process
Studies and surveys are collected to create a documents that must be seen by	Areas pointed out that have a desperate need for attention. Phases created by the

Councillors and committees that determine whether the process should continue or not.	team focusing on implementation.
Process completed.	Implementation strategies discussed with the community before going on site.
	Maintenance and upkeep provided by the local authority with the help of the community. Community forum continuous assessment monitored by the local authority.

A conceptual interpretation of the Ethekewini Municipality's top down approach versus the ideal bottom up approach in Neighbourhood Revitalization. Source: Researcher (2008).

The bottom-up approach implied proactive team input in the project executing process. Team members who were the community, the business owners, the ward councillors and the local municipality were invited to participate in every step of the management process. The decision on a course of action was taken by the whole team (Matsamura, 2005). Bottom-up style allows managers to communicate goals and value, e.g. through milestone planning. Then team members were encouraged to develop personal to-do lists with the steps necessary to reach the milestones on their own. The choice of methods and ways to perform their tasks was up to the team. The advantage of this approach was that it empowers team members to think more creatively. They feel involved into the project development and know that their initiatives were appreciated. The team members' motivation to work and make the project a success was doubled (Matsamura, 2005). The planning process was facilitated by a number of people, which makes it flow significantly faster. The to-do lists of all the team members were collected into the detailed general project plan. Schedules, budgets and results were transparent. Issues were made clear by the project manager to avoid as many surprises as possible. Bottom-up project management can also be viewed as a way of coping with the increasing gap between the information necessary to manage knowledge workers and the ability of managers to acquire and apply this information. According to many experts, the bottom-up approach was not the perfect solution, as sometimes it lacks clarity and control. The best way was to find a balance between the two opposite approaches and take the best practices from both of them.

Urban renewal had taken place in countries for example the United Kingdom, USA, and Australia (EIB: 2005, Walker, 2003). In the UK these programmes tend to focus on inner city neighbourhoods. These were areas with high densities of

people with low socio-economic backgrounds and high unemployment ratings. The government played an instrumental role in defining areas as well as funding and setting policy targets for renewal strategies (Clay, 1979). One of the key aims of urban renewal in the USA and the UK was to lower crime rates in low socio-economic areas (EIB, 2005). However, this had not been successful in areas of concentrated poverty and limited job opportunities. Studies in Australia show that while infrastructural and renewal programmes promise to trigger new growth and employment; it can also destroy vibrant neighbourhoods (Walker, et al 2003). Therefore it was important to include the community in the developmental programmes.

Studies in Australia show that gentrification and urban renewal tend to increase property values in ex-public housing areas which have significant impacts on the affordability of housing for low income groups. Gentrification was a process through which the working class and derelict property were rehabilitated by higher income groups with the displacement of original residents (Clay, 1979). This was often accompanied by an increase in property prices, a decrease in density because there were more individual households and changes in socio-economic structures and transfers of rental to ownership of land (Clay, 1979).

2.1.2. Precedent Case Studies

In the built environment, case studies already exist that demonstrate the vast potential of the urban regeneration approach. The case studies below introduce examples of cities that have successfully dealt with neighbourhood revitalization and can provide valuable information and ideas on their lessons learnt during the process.

a) Brussels

The Brussels revitalization processes focuses on the environment and the quality of life for the residents. Studies undertaken in Brussels by government officials focused on the population of the neighbourhood, its characteristics and demographics to understand the type of situation they were working with. In Western Europe, around four out of every five citizens were currently living in what can be described as an urban environment (RICS, 2008). The high intensity of human activities in cities had led to a number of challenges, including climate change, rising energy consumption and fossil fuel prices, contaminated land, uncontrollable urban sprawl, social instability, urban poverty, increasing disparities, crime and alienation.

The delivery of successful urban regeneration was achieved for those were part of the process from the beginning (Brussels Planning Department, 2006). The community's involvement in Brussels created acceptance and good, innovative ideas. Any urban development must therefore take into account a deliberate construction and involvement of the local citizens and other stakeholders (Brussels Planning Department, 2006). Although economics was essential, environmental and social concerns should be considered simultaneously, the focus was on the ways in which urban design and regeneration can shape local identities and manage co-existence in a shared space. The community cohesion and communication were key elements without which urban regeneration would most likely fail (RICS, 2008).

Currently, the provision of more roads to accommodate more cars in the city were only put in place to maintain a neighbourhood, rather than to reroute the direction of the traffic flow (RICS, 2008). For sustainable urban regeneration to happen, the politicians needed to show leadership, private stakeholders needed to see the financial and long-term benefits and citizens needed to be given and seize opportunities to get engaged and take responsibility.

The lessons learnt in the Brussels urban regeneration projects practiced today, a qualitative study was a standard and practical practice was:

- a. Good quality housing in itself was not sufficient to ensure successful urban regeneration if, for example, quality of services or the perception of their quality remain low. Therefore any analysis must contain quality of life indicators, such as, unemployment, safety, neighbourhood satisfaction, public space, community cohesion and the environment.
- b. To enhance and increase a sense of community it was also essential to have an amount of pride for place (Brussels Planning Department, 2006). Therefore, sustainable urban regeneration needs to always consider environmental, social and economical aspects simultaneously.
- c. A simple cost-benefit analysis which focused on economics and profitability had proven from past studies not to be enough.

b) Leeds city Center

The aim of the renewal process in Holbeck was to create a mix of uses that includes residential, business, leisure and community uses (Provoost, 2004). The focus was on a better quality of life through revitalization with amenities such as bars, cafes, and convenient shops form the key focus for ground level development. Healthcare, primary and nursery schooling, together with recreational and cultural facilities were also provided. The regeneration of the area was expected to create investment of around £800 million (RICS, 2008). Along with this investment, developers suggest that thousands of new jobs should be created in the high value digital and creative media sector and support services (RICS, 2008).

One of the pressing challenges affecting the understanding of suburbia was the lack of definition and classification. In the UK, for example, a place was defined as either urban or rural (RICS, 2008). The term „suburban’ does not exist, although 84% of UK citizens call suburbia home (RICS, 2008). Drawing a boundary between rural and urban spaces implies a sharp separation between countryside and built-up area that does not exist in most places in reality (Provoost, 2004). At the same time, suburbs were often regarded as unsustainable because of the dependency of the private. Indeed, the theory of the walking or cycling town was desirable, but often unattainable (RICS, 2008).

The lessons learnt from Leeds was that an integration of land uses can function well in an area defined as a neighbourhood, however, a dependency on one sector could prove to be unsustainable in the long run.

c) Docklands

The revitalization process in the Docklands was to stimulate the economic aspect of the area. Creating an environment that was both conducive to commercial and residential land uses. The name for an area in East and South East London, comprising parts of several boroughs namely; Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Greenwich (Royal Docks Website: 2008). The docks were formerly part of the Port of London, at one time the world's largest port (Williamson, 1998). They have now been redeveloped principally for commercial and residential use.

There were three kinds of docks existed, namely; the Wet docks, this was where ships put down their anchors and to load or unload imports and exports (Rule, 2009). The Dry docks, which were far smaller and repaired and serviced ships

(Royal Docks Website: 2008). Ships were built at dockyards along the riverside (Royal Docks Website: 2008). The river was lined with innumerable warehouses, piers and jetties. The various docks specialized in different forms of produce. The Surrey Docks concentrated on timber, Millwall took grain; St Katharine took wool, sugar and rubber (Rule, 2009).

The docks required workers, who carried loads between ships and quays and who also dealt with the goods once they were ashore (Royal Docks Website: 2008). Some of the workers were highly skilled and had their own livery company or guild, other workers who carried timber, were famous for their acrobatic skills (Williamson, 1998). Most were unskilled and worked as casual laborers. Therefore it was important to investigate the neighbourhood before implementing plans to revive and rectify. One area might be susceptible to an economic revamp or stimulation and another for an environmental upgrade.

Lessons learnt from the Docklands were that it was important to have a strong economic base in an area. Not only for the creation of employment but also healthy competition between adjoining areas. It allowed for an area to be more flexible and dynamic for the community that inhabits it.

d) Brazil

Curitiba is the capital of the State of Paraná, a mainly agricultural state in southern Brazil (Conrad, 2000). The city had few outstanding historical or natural features, but its architects and urban planners have transformed it into a vibrant center with good quality of life that draws many tourists. Curitiba's population had doubled to 1.6 million over the past 30 years (Freund, 2009). Curitiba's strategy focused on putting people first and this was apparent in all aspects of the city through the revitalisation process (Conrad, 2000). The strategy established the projects system that improve the environment, pollution and waste, and made the overall quality of life in the city better. Curitiba's strong leadership helped in the successful, long-term implementation of this kind of integration.

The result of the strategy which puts people at the center and emphasized integrated planning was that the city had become a showcase of ecological and humane urbanism, with ongoing improvements over the past 38 years to social, economic and environmental conditions for its residents (Conrad, 2000 and Freund, 2009). Curitiba had become one of the most sustainable of cities, in the process proving that applying a city-strategy with strong values and a focus on

integrated systems can harness the actions of planning departments to meet common strategic objectives.

The city had 200 kilometers of bike paths, and 52 square meters of green space per person (MacLeod, 2007). There were more car owners per capita than anywhere in Brazil, and the population had doubled since 1974, yet auto traffic had declined by 30%, and atmospheric pollution was the lowest in Brazil (Freund, 2009).

Commitment to local values such as accessibility, transparency, social justice and poverty reduction and efficient resource management were what resulted in Curitiba's sustainable development, which was more than simply environmental. The integration of different elements of urban development avoided problems associated with piecemeal development such as pollution, traffic congestion and unsustainable fuel consumption rates (MacLeod, 2007). Creative, cheap solutions that fit the city provided better solutions to Curitiba's urban problems than more expensive approaches e.g., the bus system's low infrastructure investment versus a more expensive subway; having residents recycle at home versus operating an expensive separation plant; using old buses as offices in areas with no infrastructure instead of building (Freund, 2009). Some important lessons learnt have been identified by Freund (2009) and Macleod (2007) for successful revitalization are;

- Communication of strong, local core values in a city plan.
- Creation of an independent municipal authority to provide continuity and implementation of projects, as well as to monitor planning and research to improve future efforts.
- Integrated planning processes structured to assure that officials in all areas know the strategy and were working with a shared vision and developing their plans together. This way, many problems of inconsistent development can be avoided.
- Establish a close relationship between public transportation and land-use legislation as a guidance and development tool. Cities' environmental quality and economic efficiency were highly dependent on transportation systems that were well-integrated with urban form because this lets them avoid weak transportation systems and unsustainable dependencies on private cars.

- Create urban solutions and reflect local values were an alternative standard to development.

2.1.3. Revitalization in South Africa

Revitalization does occur in communities in the South African environment. The process often requires a full range of both engineering and social infrastructure in an effort to create viable communities. Tshwane, Cape Town and Ethekewini Municipality have individual success stories of revitalization that made a difference to the people working and living in the area. Any two neighbourhoods have different characteristics therefore a variety of needs. The success was to get the community themselves involved and place them in key positions had proven to the fundamentals for sustainable development to occur.

a) Hatfield

The Hatfield Metropolitan Core Development Framework within the Tshwane Municipality was created to ensure that all future development that takes place in the area responds to an integrated and distinctly urban development approach (City of Tshwane, 2009). The project aimed to establish a desired spatial structure for the Metropolitan Core as well as to facilitate and guide development occurring in the area. There were four Precincts that have been allocated and structured for different land uses according to their dominant function and according to the Tshwane Municipality (2009); namely;

- Precinct 1 had been structured to include a mixture land uses in the area. Mixed land uses operate predominately from houses and include embassies, guest houses, restaurants, shops, offices. Street than in the comparative streets in precinct 1, similar to that of the Brussels example.

- Precinct 2 was the core business area, having retail and office development as the most prominent land uses in the core area of Hatfield. Being the traditionally activity streets, intense retail activity occurs along Burnett and Hilda streets, comprising the Hatfield Square Centre, the Hatfield Plaza Centre and a linear strip of retail stores including restaurants, book stores, hardware, clothing stores along the two streets. Duncan Street was characterised by an intense development of high quality motor showrooms and motor dealerships and some offices, similar to that of the Leeds example.

- Precinct 3 – Residential, this area was characterised by single residential units, many of which, along South and Burnett Streets, have now been converted into

dwelling house offices, communes and guesthouses. This part of Hatfield also features a number of medium density flats, similar to that of the Curitiba example.

- Precinct 4 – University of Pretoria, this part of the study area comprises the main University of Pretoria campus, along with student accommodation (hostels and flats). The majority of properties along South Street belong to the University of Pretoria. As a measure for management, the Hatfield City Improvement District (CID) had been established to enhance the physical, cultural, economic and social environment of a part of Hatfield. A part of a community participation endeavor that maintains a close relationship with Council and its management and services were brought down to street level enhancing these services already offered by council (City of Tshwane, 2009). The focus was on urban management issues such as security, cleaning, informal trading and marketing of the area for investment purposes. The CID had in the past three years improved security measures and created a cleaner and better environment for its residents and property owners through increasing the number of cleaners in the area and the registration of informal traders. Through this, Hatfield primarily car orientated - existing developments followed the arterial routes (City of Tshwane, 2009).

b) Cape Town Municipality

Tourism in Cape Town was the focus for revitalization and there was consensus within the industry that strong leadership was necessary (City of Cape Town 2004). Product quality and service delivery were becoming increasingly important. Attracting tourists in a competitive market requires ingenuity and commitment. The challenge was to manage industry change in a way that supports transformation and continued strong growth and development, and equipped the tourism industry for the ultra-competitive global environment in which it finds itself. The City of Cape Town was committed to working alongside partners in the industry to ensure that Cape Town's tourism development goals were achieved (City of Cape Town 2004).

The City of Cape Town's Dignified Places Programme as an example of implementation-focused urban design and the quality of the public environment. The land area of Cape Town had almost doubled in size since the mid-1980s. In addition, the number of people in Cape Town was growing; in the next 15 years the city's population – already at 3.2 million – could reach 4.2 million people (City of Cape Town 2004). It was vital that economic growth continues, and that it does so in a way that creates and sustains jobs. But this same vital growth means increased, and ongoing, demand for land, water, transport and energy resources. It also means pressure on Cape Town's already threatened

indigenous plants and animals (Miraftab, 2006). Roads were congested, landfill sites were filling up, and the coastal water and air was polluted. These changes affect the quality of life of everyone who lives here, and threaten many people's livelihoods (Morange, 2006). The Western Cape would probably be more affected by climate change than anywhere else in South Africa, and it's clear that the City needs to get better at planning for the future.

c) District Six

The N2 Gateway Housing Project was an initiative which was started in March 2005 by the three tiers of government – the national Department of Housing, the Western Cape Provincial Government, and the City of Cape Town. All three tiers were, at the time, led by the African National Congress government. The project was aimed at replacing informal settlements along the N2 highway with formal houses and flats. This may in part have been a public relations exercise. The first things many visitors saw as they landed at the Cape Town Airport were the shacks along the N2 highway. Formal housing forms the basis for adequate sanitation, electricity, and clean water. Characteristics of informal settlements which were discussed at the Major Urban Poverty Challenges Identification (MUPCI) workshops held in the City of Tshwane and City of Cape Town, included health issues, overcrowding, and crime.

Located just east of downtown, the area was home to over 55,000 mostly colored residents in 1966. As part of the apartheid policies of the South African government, District 6 was deemed to be a white neighbourhood (Pretorius, 2004). At that time, the non-white residents were moved to other communities, many of which were more than 15 miles away (Pretorius, 2004). District 6 was mostly demolished as part of a slum clearance program, with only a few churches left standing. Instead of renovating and revitalizing the neighbourhood, the bulldozed land of District 6 was left untouched for over 30 years, however, with the apartheid policies gone in the 1990's, South Africa was making plans to return the District 6 land to the original owners or their descendants. Progress had been slow, and only a few apartments have been completed (Pretorius, 2004).

The District Six development, that which formed part The N2 Gateway Project, was a Western Cape government pilot project to upgrade existing informal settlements. The Project currently includes 124 hectares of land and was home to 10 000 households. There would be two pilot projects to upgrade informal settlements per province, with the aim of doing away informal settlements within the next 10 years. The N2 project encompasses areas along the national road

stretching from Cape Town International Airport to District Six. Nxumalo said 4 000 mixed incomes and mixed-use housing units would be developed in District Six over a five-year period. An estimated 1 500 restitution claims by former residents would be settled through the N2 Project, she added. So far, 763 claims have been settled, while a number of claimants have opted for financial compensation for 7 200 households, the project could lead to the integration of communities with industry, transport, open public spaces and other elements of city development (Pretorius, 2004).

d) Ethekwini Municipality

The regeneration of Durban had included the upgrade of existing streets, creation of squares and parks as well as key development sites and special precincts (Schaffer, 2008). The focus for revitalization was the quality of life and environmental awareness with getting the community involved at the grass-root level. The design components have included paving materials and patterns, layout design of trees, street furniture and layouts, lighting and signage based on the analysis of the site characteristics including topography, soil conditions, natural and built features and local climate (Thumboo, 2008). An important feature was to include the use of indigenous and endemic plant species, and continual maintenance of the landscaped space both publicly and privately owned.

- Cato Manor

An example of a revitalization process that had occurred in the Ethekwini Municipality was the Cato Manor Development Programme. According to the Together Foundation (2002), Cato Manor is located near Durban's central business district (CBD) and was expected to house over 100 000 people. This area was known for its turbulent history of forced racial removals and currently land and home invasions, violence and the lack of urban services. In the early 1990's and NGO, the Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA) was formed, it helped stabilize the area socially; it helped introduce service upgrades, improved housing, increased economic opportunities and general neighbourhood quality. Its main focus was to improve the quality of life for the residents. It was able to attract international and national funding and was able to take on permanent staff and grew accordingly (Ethekwini, 2009).

The process was a difficult one because during this time the government was undergoing major transformation and the approach was that of bottom-up participatory planning with the sole governance of the NGO, who was using

external resources to upgrade living conditions of the area. Priorities were established by the CMDA, they also reflected the views of the local communities, planning experts and democratic local and provincial government representatives. The interests were to develop physical services and upgrade the expansion of economic opportunities. Land and homes were allocated to the community who had existed and followed by the establishment of local economic development programmes, including small businesses and skills training programmes which focused primarily on women.

Revitalization in neighbourhoods like Sparks would need the theories, approaches and strategies to base its proposal on. Another very important aspect for revitalization to work in a neighbourhood would be for the local government to prioritise and invest into case in point. It can be argued that revitalization has brought about rejuvenation or the rehabilitation of an area that needs to be enhanced if there had been a decline in investment within the area and if there were parts of an area that was old and neglected (Bedderson, 1995). Revitalization in South Africa was a process within an urban renewal strategy, which dealt with more than just physical change; it can be a process where the local government or the private sector invested in an area therefore increasing employment and consumption to enhance the quality of life for the area's community (Ahlbrandt and Brophy, 1975).

2.2. Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhood decline and physical deterioration, were arguably, caused by reduced social status and lack of economic opportunities (Bedderson, 1995). This was further exacerbated by the out-migration of more affluent members of society or by in-migration by poorer sectors of the society (Ahlbrandt and Brophy, 1975). The theories underpinning neighbourhood revitalization deal with factors that affect societies of a particular neighbourhood and analyze them according to their individual characteristics.

2.2.1. Definition

“A neighbourhood was a residential area with a population of 4000-6000 people supporting a primary school and local centre. Some neighbourhoods blend into one another on a wider urban continuum. A neighbourhood was a residential or mixed use area around which people can conveniently walk. Pedestrian access was essential, it may or may not have clear edges or boundaries and it does not need local facilities but does have an identity which people recognize and value”

Ahlbrandt (1984:15).

In Ebenezer Howard's original theoretical diagram of his Garden City, published in 1878, he divided the town up into „wards' of about 5000 people each of which would contain local shops, schools and other services. This was the origin of the neighbourhood unity idea which according to Hall (1992) was pragmatic due the other fact that certain goods and services which provide for everyday groups of population that cannot or do not want to travel very far for example; housewives and young children were provided an accessible central place for a fairly small local community within walking distances of all homes in that community. Depending on residential densities the idea of convenience walking distance would dictate a limit of a few thousand people for each of these units. It makes psychological sense to give such a unit a clear identity for the people who live in it, by arranging the houses and streets so that they focus on the central services and providing same obvious boundary to the outside.

In the United States, the concept of the neighbourhood was taken much further during the preparation of the New York Regional Plan in the 1920's. Clarence Perry, one of the first contributors to the plan, according to Hall (1992), developed the idea of the neighbourhood unit as a deliberate piece of social engineering which would help people achieve a sense of identity with the community and with the place. In terms of the physical planning, Perry's work did give firmness to the neighbourhood idea. He suggested that it should consist of the catchment area of a primary school, extending about half of a kilometer in any direction and containing 1000 families or about 5000 people in terms of an average family size of four people. It could be bounded by main traffic roads which children should not be expected to cross.

The essential idea of the neighbourhood unit, according to Hall (1992), as developed by Perry though not in so much detail, such as putting shops at the corners of the units at the junctions of traffic roads was enthusiastically taken by British Planners in new towns and in some cities after the Second World War. Since the early 1960's however, it had come under increasing criticism. A newspaper article written by a young Englishman said sociologically the whole idea was false (Hall, 1992). Different people had varied needs for local services and the principle of choice was important. He suggested that cities that had grown naturally demonstrated a more complex settlement structure with overlapping fields for shops and schools and he suggested that planners aimed to reproduce this variety and freedom of choice. A close associate of Perry-Clarence Stein, an architect-planner had taken the neighbourhood concept

further (Hall, 1992). Perry-Clarence Stein was one of the first physical planners to face fully the implications of the age of mass ownership of the private car. He took the principle that local residential areas needed to segregate the pedestrian routes used for local journeys, especially for housewives and children from the routes used by car traffic to pedestrian walkways. He applied these ideas by developing a separate system of pedestrian ways, reached from the back doors of the houses which pass through communal open space areas between the houses and then cross under the vehicle streets. The vehicle streets in turn were designed according to a hierarchy principle, with main routes giving access to local distributors and then in turn to local access roads designed on the cul-de-sac principle, serving small groups of housing. The Radburn Layout as it became known was applied by Stein in other developments in the US in the 1930's (Hall, 1992).

Neighbourhood decline and physical deterioration were, arguably, caused by reduced social status and lack of economic opportunities. This was further exacerbated by the out-migration of more affluent members of society or by in-migration by poorer sectors of the society (Ahlbrandt and Brophy, 1975). The theories of neighbourhood underpinning neighbourhood revitalization deal with factors that affect societies of a particular neighbourhood and analyze them according to their individual characteristics. For example, according to Ahlbrandt and Brophy (1975), the neo-classical school of thought focuses on the market oriented approach. This approach dealt with the area declining due to economic matters therefore less money was spent towards the upgrading of the area. In the South African context, during the apartheid era, the poorer communities were forced to take up residence in the "dormant" townships. These communities were far from places of employment, transportation costs increased, there was a lack of disposable incomes, poor maintenance of properties and fast deterioration of residential structures, which inevitably discouraged potential buyers from investing in the areas (Smit, 1988). The neo-classical theory provides explanations for the decline of an area and influences strategies that can be adopted to revitalize a given area in a cost-effective way.

There were three examples of different kinds of neighbourhoods according to Ahlbrandt (1984), these include;

- 1 The functional neighbourhood: it was seen as the locality that forms a base for home life, educational, retail, leisure and employment activities.
- 2 A neighbourhood as a place: the aesthetic value, historic association as well as way residents perceive the area that leads to the quality of life for

- individuals and how they relate to the area.
- 3 A neighbourhood as a community: this was made up by people who often belong to diverse interest-based groups, be it sports, reading, cooking and security groups. Many households also have locally based activities which intertwine to give a sense of a local network of mutual support.

The minimum facilities required for a neighbourhood's everyday functioning was shopping and schooling to at least two primary schools, some public buildings, a library, a clinic, a church etc., open space and some industries, mainly service industries (ibid). The term neighbourhood had come to be applied to residential areas that had a fair measure of these facilities. The amount of land required for an entire neighbourhood would depend on the density of dwelling units within the neighbourhood and the amount of land used for other facilities. These other facilities would be for the use and enjoyment of the residents and the space required for them would depend on the amount of people using them (Ministry of Housing and Local Government Paper 1952).

The neighbourhood context was important in terms of the uses made of the residents for grocery shopping, shopping of small items (such as bread and milk) and needs being met by the availability of basic services. The quality of life increased when there were available shopping facilities, services and stores that were located within the neighbourhoods (Ahlbrandt, 1984). The lack of income limits people's choices of where to live and their mobility once they were in place therefore people who earn less depend more on their place of residence to meet their needs than do those who have greater economic resources. In addition, a supportive environment may be provided by neighbours, friends or family living in the area and the nearby institutions that contribute to the successful functioning of a neighbourhood (Ahlbrandt, 1984).

2.2.2. The Neo-classical Approach

According to Kaplan et al (2004) the basic argument was that living or growing up in poor neighbourhoods have negative consequences. Poor neighbourhood residents' do worse in school, have greater problems finding stable work and were more likely to engage in criminal activity. Ahlbrandt and Brophy (1975) stipulated that the neo-classical school of thought focused on the market oriented approach. This approach dealt with the area declining due to economic matters therefore less money was spent towards the upgrading of the area. In the South African context, during the apartheid era, the poorer communities were forced to take up residence in the "dormant" townships. These communities were far from

places of employment, transportation costs increased, there was a lack of disposable incomes, poor maintenance of properties and fast deterioration of residential structures, which inevitably discouraged potential buyers from investing in the areas (Smit, 1988). The neo-classical theory provided explanations for the decline of an area and strategies that could be adopted to revitalize a given area in a cost-effective way.

2.2.3. Peer effects

The neighbourhood effects theory was that neighbourhoods exert peer effects, especially on young people. It suggested that growing up in a neighbourhood where more the peers engaged in problematic behaviour it would increase a young person's chance of also engaging in those behaviours. An example of the "common sense" way of evaluating neighbourhoods was a parent having no faith in raising their children in a „bad' neighbourhood (Kaplan et al 2004). Some studies suggest that only in most heavily impacted neighbourhood does this effect seem to play out. Other studies suggest that the presence or absence of advantaged neighbourhoods were more important than the concentration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Kaplan et al 2004).

2.2.4. Social control

The nature of social relationships that dominated in poor urban neighbourhoods refer to 2 key mechanisms; role modelling and supervising public behaviours, according to Clay (1979). The role model argument suggested that in neighbourhoods of concentrated poverty young people did not see grown-ups engaged in conventional activities that help socialize them into the behaviour to values that the labour market rewards. That was growing up in an environment where adults get up and go to work each day demonstrating the discipline needed to succeed in getting a job. When there were no adults going to work, youths were deprived of positive role models and thus never exposed to the small yet important behaviours and values necessary to find and keep jobs (Clay, 1979). Poor neighbourhood historically have a mixture of residents, some poor and some not. Another variant of this approach focuses on neighbourhood's economic opportunities than on their social relationships (Bedderson, 1995). In the early 1990's within South Africa, jobs were being lost in the central cities due to deindustrialization and at the same time that new jobs were being relocated to or created in the suburbs (Bedderson, 1995). One of the greatest ironies of the late 20th century urbanization was the special disjuncture between where poor

people lived and where job opportunities were located. Another argument revolved around the way that government institutions reacted to and service poverty neighbourhoods. Police and other emergency service agencies were less responsive to calls from poor neighbourhoods (Bedderson, 1995).

Sanitation services did not keep these neighbourhoods as clean as wealthier neighbourhoods (Alhbrant, 1984). Moreover recreational departments did not provide the same services that they do in richer neighbourhoods. Indeed central city schools were severely under-funded relative to their suburban neighbourhoods, (Kaplan, et al, 2004). Poor and minority neighbourhoods had the oldest buildings in the worst repair and of teachers who were not qualified or the least prepared and least supported by the administration in South Africa. Poorer neighbourhoods also lacked access to reasonable rental opportunities. One of the most enduring controversies surrounding poverty revolved around the issue of individual responsibility. Some political platforms were centred on assumption that individuals were responsible for their own behaviour and thus their own poverty. Other platforms were centred on the assumption that individuals were not responsible for their own poverty or at least not fully responsible (ibid).

2.2.5. The Eco-system Approach

The eco-system theory applied to human settlements, recognized the complexity of an open system with living and non-living elements, cyclical processes and complicated network of relationships (Barton, 2000). The eco-system approach had expressed the purpose of improving quality of life as well as the quality of the natural environment. The basic principles are:

- 1) Increasing Local Autonomy
- 2) Increasing Choice and Diversity
- 3) Responsive to Place
- 4) Connection and Integration
- 5) Flexibility or Adoptability
- 6) User Control.

It was argued that the needs of the residents be met locally, reducing the input of the wider environment. Housing choices suggested that a range of locations be available to suit household needs and wants. Facility of choices created options for shopping, school and socializing without a car. Development should have been more responsive to the particular geological, landscape, hydrological,

biological and microclimate conditions (Alhbrant, 1984). One neighbourhood links to another in complex ways and to the town or city region as a whole. The local activities gained strength from association with each other, permitting dual or multifunctional spaces and trips which were beneficial to providers and users (Barton, 2000).

The ecosystem approach thus strived to achieve the complexity, richness and robustness of a climate culture with each neighbourhood linked and a part of a wider urban system. It sought to reduce the ecological foot print of each neighbourhood while providing more choice and opportunity for local people and it looked to local resources where possible, but recognized the reality of interdependence with wider areas and communities (Barton, 2000).

The neighbourhood context was important in terms of the uses made of the neighbourhood for grocery shopping, shopping of small items and attending religious services. Neighbourhoods were shown to be unique along a number of neighbourhood dimensions including their institutional base, personal networks, housing stock, characteristics of residents, specific problems and the attachment felt by the population. The individuals within urban areas who were the most vulnerable to the stresses of everyday living were those who not only have inadequate economic resources but who also lack strong institutional and social support. Lower income individuals depend more on their place of residence to meet their needs than having greater and economic resources. A supportive environment may be provided by neighbours, friends or family living in the area and the nearby institutions (Ahlbrandt, 1984).

2.2.6. The Neighbourhood Cycle

The neighbourhood cycle was developed by Laskay et al. (1980) to explain the process of how a neighbourhood life cycle develops, ideally flourishes and matures, then deteriorates and if revitalized, to restart the process again. The neighbourhood cycle divided the neighbourhood ideal into five stages: and is briefly described below in an attempt to understand how change occurred in a neighbourhood.

The 1st stage in the neighbourhood cycle according to Laskay et al, (1980), in a American setting, vacant land was developed with houses in the popular style or period namely; Victorian gothic, brownstones, row houses, terrace apartments or split level single family homes (this can increase the demand of the area). At this stage the neighbourhood attracted middle and high income households and

families with children. The second stage marked the continued growth of the residential building in the area, usually with apartments and houses, because land values have increased and the continued growth of the city had given the area a more central location. Population density increased and single individuals and childless couples were more frequent residents.

At the third stage there were signs of down grading in residential land use the conversion of apartments into smaller units, the appearance of “Rooms to Let” signs on private homes and the result of an increase in population density (Laskay et al, 1980). It was at this point that lower income families or ethnic or racial minorities begin to invade and already declining the area. The minority groups were usually the child bearing ages and this added to the congestion and over taxing of neighbourhood facilities. Blight, which had been underway before these groups move in, was accentuated (Bedderson, 1995).

The fourth stage involves the maturing of the area in a low income minority group place of settlement. Often the population density ultimately declined as the children marry and leave (Laskay et al, 1980). The area may then be ripe for invasion by another low-income group. If the area was close to the city centre it may be residentially upgraded again. Luxury apartments were likely to result from private development and low or middle income housing if there was government assistance. This sequence was not inevitable; a neighbourhood may remain at any stage almost indefinitely. Equally important was that if change occurs it was likely to be in the direction of neighbourhood deterioration. Few urban neighbourhoods ever obtain the „renewal’ of stage 5 (Bedderson, 1995).

2.2.7. Reinvasion

According to Laskay et al, (1980), demographic-ecological approaches tend to emphasize the variables in the ecological complex population, social organization, environment and technology. One variation was the hypothesizing that certain recent changes in both population composition and basic demographic processes have contributed to reinvasion. He argued that the percentage of the American population falling between the ages of 25 and 35 years placed tremendous demands on the housing supply, these residents was met by the recycling of the inner-city neighbourhoods. For example; the rising age of first marriage, improved contraceptive devices and declining fertility rates, later birth of 1st child, increasing entry of both single and married women into the labour force and rising number of dual wage earner families were well documented, in recent demographic changes (Laskay et al, 1980). These factors taken together

may represent a decline of the sort of families that played an important part in the post war flight to the suburbs. The relatively affluent, young, child free couple, not having to worry about the quality of inner-city schools and the shortage of playgrounds, was likely to choose to live in the city, close to places of work and recreation (Laskay et al, 1980).

Social cultural explanations focus on values, attitudes, ideas and choices. They contributed to the new migration of middle and upper middle class people to the city centre. Some people want to be in the suburbs but near to employment and services of the city. People often did what was fashionable. If urban pioneers define the inner city as an appropriate place to live and then proceeded to demonstrate its viability, many others may follow their lead. The core cultural values such as economic success, individuality and independence contribute to the reinvasion of people to certain areas. It was important to note that the social cultural aspects of a community must be taken into consideration to fully understand reinvasion (Kaplan et al, 2004).

What can be gathered from the study is that inevitably, there would be deterioration and decay but as the neighbourhood cycle depicts, it is the way they have previously survived. The neighbourhood theories and approaches dealt with the social aspect of an area and how people relate to each other and their services, facilities and environment. They dealt with concept of the quality of life that involves the natural environment and relates to the communities well being. Therefore it can be concluded that neighbourhoods have a purpose in society and that is to accept decay and deterioration but to allow revitalization to slowly yet inevitably occur.

2.3. Participation

Community participation gave people the opportunity to be involved in decision-making that includes them in economic, social, political and geographical environments. They can be integrated into development planning at a local level, with the submission of petitions at provincial and national levels or through decision-making in public hearings at provincial levels. In order for participation to succeed it needed citizens who were informed and who could engage meaningfully in the decision-making process. Therefore educating people about a particular process linked them to the implementation of action plans and hopefully a better quality of life.

2.3.1. Definitions of Community Participation

“Community participation was a process of involving community members in decision-making process about their own social, physical and political views, setting priorities and addressing quality issues relating to the delivery process” (www.parliament.gov.za:1).

The majority of South African people had been disempowered and deprived of the opportunity to participate in the previous Apartheid government. (Ndlela, 2005) argued that the South African public did not have the ability to engage meaningfully in decision-making instead they depended on receiving basic needs from the empowered democratic government. It had been assumed that by empowering the public to participate, the process was enable people to make way for sustainable development. Getting people involved has proven to be difficult. There were methods that have to be followed through to ensure that the correct procedures were carried out and the people who were supposed to benefit were the ones who actually benefited. Community participation was seen as a way to incorporate the public’s needs into the local government’s strategy so that implementation was practical and useful for their everyday lives. Citizens had to engage with professionals, councillors, government officials and stakeholders in order to receive adequate services for their environment.

Participation could be used to maintain delivery that had been a success or to change and transform a present system. The importance of participation was to introduce local grassroot knowledge and understand local needs. If an area was in need of development or revitalization, that areas uniqueness must be evaluated in order to ascertain the need and the strategy that can be used to deal with it. The generation and regeneration of ideas broadened debate that led to more satisfied outcomes. If people were involved in the process, they were more likely to be satisfied with the result. This not only contributed to capacity building, it could also be used to transfer skills for income generation purposes.

“Participation occupies a central place in development thinking and practice. Governments, funding agencies, donors and civil society actors including Non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) and multi-lateral agencies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have all arrived at a near consensus that development cannot be sustainable and long lasting unless people’s participation was made central to the development process” (Kumar 2002:23). In other words development with participation was fundamental for the success of a project. Participation can bring important information that can lead to public

acceptability of government decisions. However, getting to the two together was not always easy. It was better to be more flexible, understand that each case was different from the next but also recognize lessons that have been learnt in the past. Participation in theory could help foster a positive image about development in practice. It also, however, be a vehicle of manipulation or intervention through which governments, professionals and stakeholders may act because of their own interests or financial gratification that may be in the form of international funding.

According to Cooke and Kathari (2001), the stakeholders in some processes were not passive facilitators of local knowledge production and planning. They shaped and directed these processes at the most basic levels. Project staff members owned the research tools, choose the topics, record information and abstract and summarize according to the project's criteria of relevance and clearly influencing the way in which people construct their needs. In this case the community's needs were significantly shaped by perceptions of what the agency was able to deliver. This type of intervention could be seen as manipulation. The agency was working according to what they view as a need and by doing so, shut out the grass-root voice of the community. Through participatory learning, it was the agency that acquired new planning knowledge and learnt how to manipulate the situation, rather than the professionals acquiring local perspectives. This could be seen as a top-down approach. People or villagers who agreed to participate, gain from these activities in their neighbourhoods because the project staff, by the delivery desirable goods and schemes and wage labour, as well as supplied their demand and both participants benefit from the intervention (ibid).

To establish what the people want in the community, which would mean moving along the path that local communities have chosen, may prove to be more costly than implementing development interventions. The specific needs of the community could be important to one group of people and not to another. Professionals involved with participation must be aware of traditions, values and specific problems that the community as a whole experience or different sections of the group could have individual and maybe trivial requests that do not affect the majority. Professionals have had to be aware of traditional structures in a community and vice versa. The participating community must be aware of municipal structures. If both the traditional and municipal structures served and facilitated the community's issues without healthy co-operation and with distrust, the process was slow or even non-existent. Participation could be successful in some cases but if it was not what the community needs, all sorts of problems can

arise. Problems arise when the service providers did not liaise with the community and the delivery and provision of basic needs was inadequate place. It might have looked presentable and obtainable on a map but if it does not relate or contribute in delivering to the entire community as a whole, nobody benefits. The aim and main goal of participation was to facilitate service delivery based on the community's most pressing needs optimum usage and not only for the present community but also for the one's that follow.

Participation could be a process of empowerment that could help amplify small voices in a community. Community empowerment implied a constant and ongoing exchange of information and conflict management. The intervention of empowerment was to move the control of resources from stakeholders to disadvantaged groups, who were previously excluded from such controls. If community participation had a delayed start, it more often than not progresses slowly and this delayed achievements of physical and financial targets. Expectations were still generated due to involvement and may not be realized which leads to unfulfilled and dissatisfied participants who may be reluctant to start the process again (Kumar: 2002). Empowerment had instrumental value because it was described as the expansion of freedom of choice and action. This meant it could increase a community's authority and control over resources and decisions that affect their everyday lives. As the exercise and practice their decision-making skills, they gained increased control of their lives (World Bank, 2004). However, poor people's choices were very limited because of their lack of access to resources and their powerlessness to negotiate better deals for themselves during the initial stage of participation.

Gender insensitive policies had previously had women excluded from participatory in many development activities. In post democratic South Africa, both men and women have equal rights to economic resources, which include access to ownership, control over land and other properties, natural resources and appropriate technology. Women had gained economic independence that had increased their credit worthiness (Chiliza, 2004). Tenure security enabled women to challenge male oppression within the home and in the wider society. Men and women in the USA had the right to participate in the decisions made in planning projects that occur in their community, according to the Constitution. Since women have multiple roles of being, a mother, a wife and a provider who more often than not was the head of the household, they were most affected by decisions made about housing or land in their area. They had to be involved in planning and decision-making as well as in the implementation and management of projects that could affect their lives. Problems stem when they were not

included and did not respond to development as was anticipated. The project may have been adequate from a professional's point of view but became unsuccessful when it was not used by the local inhabitants. Women's participation was a means to improve project results and because of their triple role in society may not be able to attend meetings because of time, it was therefore up to the planning committee to incorporate the relevant people and work around their lives and not the other way around.

2.3.2. Participation in Development

Participation in development had been understood as an active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation processes, programmes and projects, which would affect them. It could be argued that participation as a process of empowerment could help to amplify traditionally unacknowledged voices. It could also strengthen the confidence of members of a group in the knowledge leading them to question and contribute both local and international systems of knowledge. Slocum, et al, (1995) have identified a number of issues, which affect participation in development which are summarized below:

- a) People's organizations have a wide range of people activities that include relief and welfare organisations for disaster victims. Non-governmental organisations (NGO's) fall under this category extending financial help and is often viewed as having a top-down approach.
- b) Community development that promoted participation by local residents addressed the problems of development with limited resources. It was not very popular and it was regarded as homogenous with local interests that promoted government funded projects. It is known to ignore underlying causes of poverty.
- c) Guided participation created a working relationship between development authorities and the population. Although ultimately it was the professional planners who determined levels of community participation in the process.
- d) Participatory action research involved research, education and socio-political action. Working with people who were at the grass-root level of a community. This system allowed the community to carry out research, planning, implementation and management.
- e) Participation and learning methods involved people collecting large quantities of accurate data, ordering it, correcting it, analysing it and eventually starting the process of development on their own.
- f) Methods of active participation and learning methods dealt with day to

day planning seminars, where participants consider the vision, views about the strategy that can address the obstacles during implementation.

The most obvious criticism of the traditional approaches to participation concerns were when they become manipulative and focus on power and control. It was concerned about the nature of the society in which programmes and projects were developed, rather than the technical and managerial aspects of organizations and participation within them. For people's organizations, community organizers and facilitators the major challenges remain: and these include to empower without being paternalistic, to enable without being top-down, to eliminate structural constraints along with patterns of passivity, to find realistic options and to organize practical action (Kumar, 2002).

Participatory research had attracted growing attention and enthusiasm since the late 1960's. It became fashionable in the 1990's, which was a problem because less was being achieved. Participatory research meant a job or consultancy to non-participatory client in a thesis. As long as the participating community was not given false expectation, it was not harmful. Poor and marginalized people usually viewed processes primarily as a means to secure something that improved their circumstances.

One of the most common problems that may have been experienced was the lack of developmental experience within the community and decision-making without proper understanding of participation. People have been taken through awareness campaigns and training to improve their education levels for a particular process before effectively participating. The proper methodology of community participation was to do a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity and threat) analysis, design implementation strategies, plan and monitor the entire process together with the community who was to be involved from the beginning (Kumar, 2002). This could be effectively achieved through meetings, presentations, document formulation and most importantly educating the community on how to gain successfully from community participation.

Methods in promoting facilitating participation included gathering a number of people to develop a vision for their community in such a way that it inspired and encouraged the rest to act and to realize it. Flyers, posters, notices on notice boards in libraries or local shop, postage of letters and greater the media resources (radio and local newspapers) were a few ways to get the attention of a community. The people who participate attended meetings that occur throughout

the area, submitted their ideas, established a vision through common goals and worked towards obtaining them. Action groups provided a structured way of involving citizens in the decision-making process and were involved in making public bodies accountable. "Community appraisal was a survey of the community, by the community, for the community and an action plan or list of recommendations for the future of the community" (New Economic Foundation, 2000: 65).

Action planning involved carefully structured events with which all sections of the community worked together with specialists from different disciplines to deal with planning and urban issues. Communities were encouraged to get together in halls or any kind of meeting place to put their ideas through to a panel of professionals who were present to facilitate the meetings and add their input of possible projects and their feasibility. For a project to work effectively and efficiently in an area it had to be an ongoing process that was managed by the community.

2.3.3. Community Participation in Neighbourhood Revitalization

According to Wates (2000), community participation played a significant role in the planning and implementation of development projects, even though professional planners may have determined the levels of people's participation in the process of action. Community participation was important for the effective implementation of neighbourhood revitalization of an area because the local community had a history with the area. (Slocum et. al, 1995).

Participatory action was one of the approaches that can be used as a strategy to get people to co-operate and get involved in the developmental process (Wates, 2000). The approach included dealing with all kinds of people in the community and its vision was to educate, organize and provide for basic socio-economic needs (Wates, 2000). Wates argued that this kind of system required the community to carry out research to help with the implementation strategies of the given project scope of the problems presented by the community. As such the data was collected and returned to the participators for analysis, correction and modification. Slocum et al (1995) concluded that as long as the participating community was not given false expectations, the process could not be harmful.

Participation means different things to different people, depending on who defines it and uses it and to what end. Past experiences suggested that participatory development could bring about both positive and negative change and at its best to consult different approaches and lessons, and then flexibly work

on a way forward. Community participation was viewed as the organization of people within a locality who dealt with problems and opportunities close at hand that mainly affects the lives and patterns of living. As a result development needed participation if the end result is to be sustainable. Although public participation is an ongoing process with constant monitoring and the awareness of opportunities, it could work toward the greater good for a community. Community participation may encourage the participants to try harder and make a difference and experience and enjoy a better quality of life and by doing so, hopefully encouraging their neighbors, colleagues and friends to be involved with the process.

2.4. Conclusion

It is therefore important to focus on the uniqueness, strengths and challenges of an area before formulating the action plans. Moreover revitalization can bring about change in the socio-economic aspects of an area and increase employment and consumption that helps to enhance the quality of life. The community can focus on appreciating the area they live in and investments of the area can increase. From the review it is clear that community participation can be used to get the people of a given community involved in the revitalization process and educated them on how to make informed decisions on the project's outcome to ensure adequate provision of their needs. Within this research, the main objective would be to find out if public participation does take place in the revitalization process in Sparks and whether the people involved in the decision-making process, include the community.

CHAPTER THREE – THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out to establish how the researcher will conduct the survey in the study area of Sparks. It explains how the demographic profile of the community was created, how the data was collected and whether there were consequences thereafter.

3.1.1. Spark's History

Issues examined in this section included year of occupation of present dwelling, previous place of residence, reasons for last residential move, reasons for present residential location and reasons that precluded the household from moving out of area.

Included in this section was information pertaining to home ownership and the potential market value of the house.

Sparks began as a farming estate owned by Captain Sparks, a British man who relocated to Durban when he realized there were better prospects for a young working class Englishman in Colonial Natal (Rankin, 1982). Although parts of Sparks remained a farming area until the 1920s, by the 1930s many Indian market gardeners, newly out of indenture, had settled on small lots of land. It was also around this period and into the 1940s that people who referred to themselves or were designated in the local bureaucratic documents, as Coloured, settled in Sparks. In the 1950s, with the development of apartheid planning and residential segregation, Sparks was classified as a Coloured Group Area along with Wentworth, in the South of Durban. Although Sparks was classified as a Coloured Group Area, it was never totally exclusively populated by people classified as Coloured.

The Department of Coloured Affairs had been responsible for the administration and development of houses and flats for these poorer groups for many years (Schlemmer et al 1978). Some residents could afford to extend and modernize their dwelling units by converting them into spacious homes. In a 1978 assessment, major problems in the area were those of housing and services (Schlemmer et al, 1978). Housing shortage was a growing problem and so was the quality of the dwelling units and the administration of the area was questioned (Rankin, 1982). This past study done by Schlemmer et al, (1978) focused on social deviances such as heavy drinking, juvenile delinquency, serious family and marital issues, drug abuse and crime. Teenagers' behavioural

patterns were discussed as well as educational problems. The study also showed that there were education-related problems, general disobedience, children disliking school and lack of aptitude. Unemployment played a major role in the way people respond in the community; this was shown as a major problem in the study of the area as well (Schlemmer et al, 1978).

3.1.2. Social Analysis

In assessing the housing needs of a family the following factors should ideally be considered:

1. The size of a family, level of education
2. The age and sex structure of the family
3. Marital Status
4. Socio-economic status
5. Population size
6. Employment
7. Densities

The age structure of the population is an important factor influencing future demand for housing. Land uses need to accommodate the population, according to the predominant age group. Necessary facilities and services should be implemented to encourage extracurricular activities. These are the people who can be expected to desire their own homes. Predominantly, Sparks has a predominantly medium density, married couples and accommodates a low-middle class income group. This information will play an important role in the development of the Sparks area.

The arithmetic average family size for a sample, as a whole was 6 persons per household. Either single or married couple homes who have children that are still in, high or primary school.

3.1.3. Methodology

A qualitative approach was adopted in this study. The focus was on an insider's perspective and an attempt to understand the individual's experience of how planning takes place in a residential area (Mouton, 2001). The qualitative analysis was used by the researcher in an attempt to understand how neighbourhood revitalization takes place in a residential neighbourhood such as Sparks. By using a case study, the research sheds light on neighbourhood revitalization and used a subjective approach of accumulating information by using in-depth interviews and observation techniques. Obtaining the data was time consuming and it was not easy to generalize, even though, adequate data to answer the research questions were obtained (Neil, 2007). Descriptive statistics was used to classify features, analyzed using graphs and charts to explore, for

example, population statistics, neighbourhood characteristics, economic, social and leisure features of the area.

3.1.3.1. Secondary Sources of Data

This research focused on utilizing and analyzing relevant secondary sources of data (library books, published journals among others, government reports. Sources of data that was used were published books and journals. The research has used concepts that focus on neighbourhood revitalization and community participation and information on Sparks itself. It was acknowledged that the literature review forms a foundation for the research that inevitably provides the study with a strong background from which the researcher has put forward ideas, compared and examined ways which could inform recommendations for the neighbourhood revitalization in the study area. This qualitative approach can potentially influence the way the relevant parties, for example, the Sparks Residents, perceive neighbourhood revitalization.

3.1.3.2. Primary Sources of Data

Primary data were those data which were collected for the first time. It was not published data, it was problem specific data collected by the researcher. The data collected enabled the researcher to achieve the study's aims and objectives, which were used to examine the revitalization in Sparks and analyze how the community understands the revitalization process. Some primary sources offer an insider's view of a particular event.

3.1.3.3. Sampling Procedure

Stratified random sampling involves the division of a population into smaller groups, known as strata. In stratified random sampling, the strata are formed based on their members sharing a specific attribute or characteristic (Mouton, 2001 and Brause, 2000). A random sample from each stratum was taken, in a number proportional to the stratum's size when compared to the population. These subsets of the strata were then pooled to form a random sample (ibid). The main advantage with stratified sampling was how it captures key population characteristics in the sample. Similar to a weighted average, this method of sampling produces characteristics in the sample that were proportional to the overall population. Stratified sampling works well for populations with a variety of attributes.

The researcher identified the different groups based on the streets they lived on. There were three blocks estimated in the area and each of them were analysed and separated into partially revitalized and dilapidated areas, according to the physical condition of the infrastructure and the housing stock, as seen in 3. The quality of the housing stock, with the use of random selections from the residential area; people relevant to the study were chosen to represent the community. This kind of sampling was used to make sure that all members of the community were represented in the sample.

3.1.3.4. Sample Size

The neighbourhood was divided into two categories, namely; the areas within Sparks that have dilapidated environment and the area that was partially revitalized. An equal sample size was obtained from each category. The researcher interviewed 50 respondents, which was calculated to be 2% of the total number of households 2694 in the area. The head of each household who contributes to the upkeep of the property and had lived in the area for more than 10 years was included in the sample. Mouton (2001) suggests that because the sample size would be determined by costs and the desired level of accuracy, it would be understandable to use a small percentage of the total household population. Brause (2000) argues that if a sample was too large it could become difficult to manage, clumsy and exhaustive. On the other hand if it was too small, it could disappear with time. The main reason for this small sample of participants was due to time and cost constraints. A larger sample was not feasible in this study.

3.1.3.5. Data Collection

The researcher undertook a reconnaissance survey through which the dilapidated and partially revitalized areas were identified. A total of five days was spent in the process. This enabled the researcher to divide the area into three major blocks, from which the respondents were selected. Questionnaires were used to collect information from the residents of Sparks (see appendix D1). The questionnaires were administered in the form of face to face interviews so that the researcher could have an in-depth appreciation of the issues raised by the respondents. The respondents were assured of confidentiality by the researcher and were free therefore to answer the questions as fully and truthfully as possible. In total 50 of the respondents; eight key informants; the ward Councillor, three business owners and four officials of the municipality were interviewed. Interviews were conducted generally during the day and, where absolutely necessary, follow-up visits were made either in the evenings or on the week-end.

The observation method was used to record information by the researcher as she studied the neighbourhood. Comprehensive field notes were taken throughout the research survey period. During the visits, the researcher also assessed the areas condition and visually displays the findings in the form of photographs and maps.

3.1.3.6. Data Analysis

Firstly the data had to be organised by coding, separation and reconstruction. Secondly, the data was analysed according to the blocks. The data was collected was labelled according to set characteristics, namely, dilapidated or partially revitalized environments. This helped the researcher to revisit the objectives and the research questions for the study. Thirdly, the data collected was interpreted through graphs and written analysis to explain the current occurrences in the area of Sparks. By doing this, the respondents' attributes and views were collectively summarised and the open-ended interviews were condensed to draw conclusions on Spark's revitalization. Information about membership and active participation in organizations and the degree of awareness of such organizations was sought in this section, the rationale being that these are indicators of improving neighbourhoods.

3.2. Problems Experienced

Although no major obstacles were encountered during the fieldwork and administration of the questionnaire, the following problems are of interest:

- Although the confidential and academic nature of the study was emphasized during the interview, the interviewer still found that respondents were hesitant or refused to provide information about income and the number of residents in a house;
- Certain respondents were concerned about how their homes had been selected from among the neighbours. An effort was then made to explain the machinations of random sampling and the fact that to interview all households in the public housing units would be both expensive and time consuming.
- To ensure optimum co-operation, it was necessary to ensure that the least number of interviews took place over week-ends and during prime television viewing time.

3.3. Conclusion

The general response to the questionnaire was satisfactory and there was a 100 percent return. When necessary, call-backs were arranged to suit the respondents. The questionnaire took an average of 45 - 60 minutes to complete which was a little longer than expected. Despite the length of the questionnaire, respondents were generally found to be sincere and frank about their perceptions of the revitalization processes in Sparks.

CHAPTER FOUR –THE ANALYSIS OF SPARKS AS A NEIGHBOURHOOD

4.1. Introduction

The research undertaken and the visual appraisal, was the basis for the material content in this chapter. The questions were transparent and required input directly from those affected, and that being the residents, the shop owners and the regular visitors to the area. This has been further categorized into age, gender, marital status, ownership, education levels, skills and income levels, thereby creating a non biased approach in determining an expected quality to those affected. The variants in those interviewed in the process will ultimately determine the potential of the revitalisation. In order to unwrap the process methodologically, a brief history of Sparks will assist.

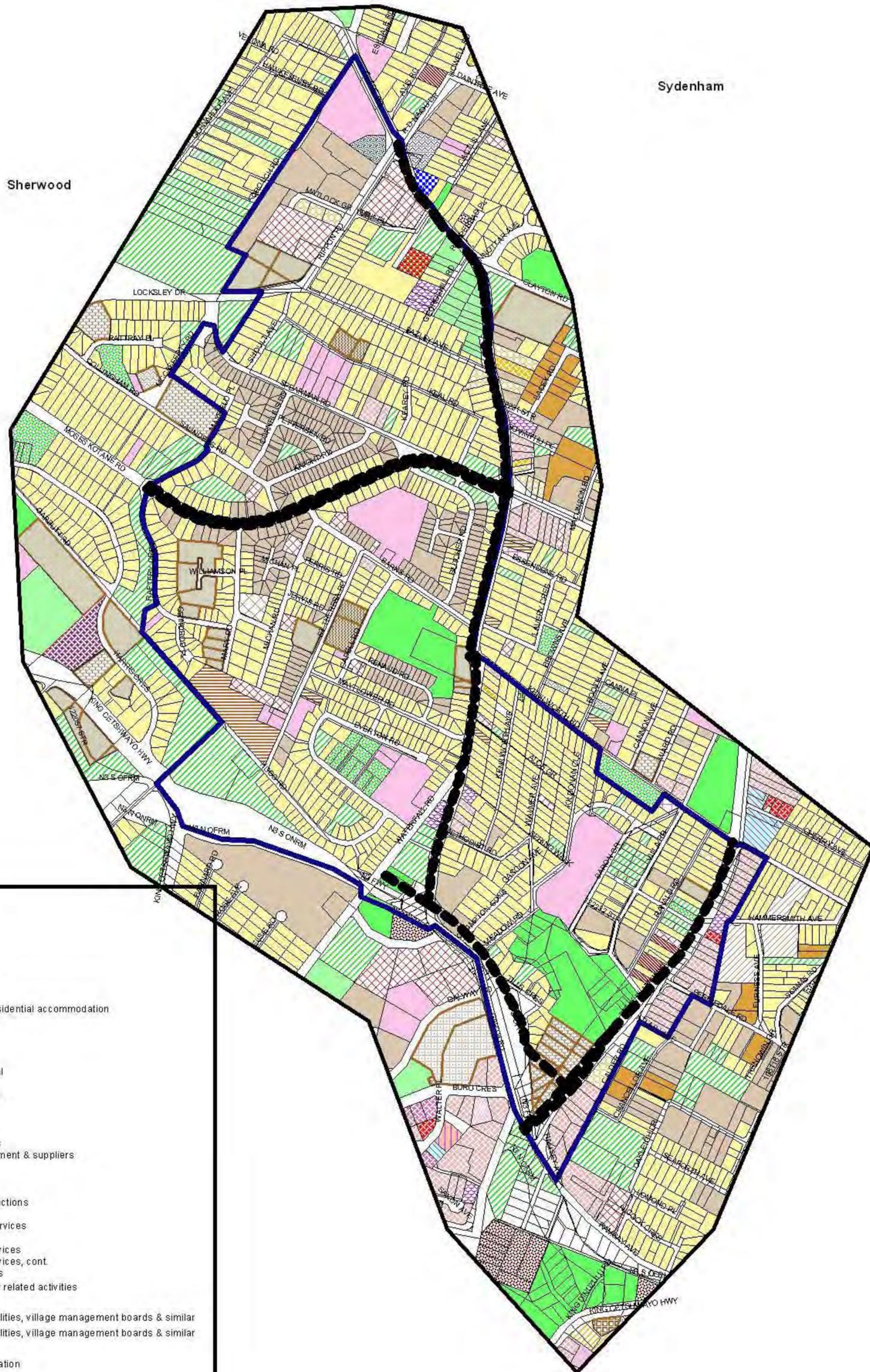
4.2. Situation Analysis

Social inclusion as one of the revitalization theories stated that the integration of social capital, social justice and affirmative action were important if a community wants to succeed. Aspects of these theories were relevant to prevailing conditions in Sparks and relate directly to the available zones that can be utilized by everyone who lives in the area. The land uses within the area include residential, commercial, industrial, offices, service stations, crèches and schools. There were also open spaces in and around Sparks which have been kept vacant for environmental reasons for the area (see Map 2).

The activity corridor comprising of Sparks, Brickfield and Randles Road plays host to range of commercial, semi industrial and service industrial related activities. The Sparks Road activity corridor (see Map 2) has experienced substantial growth with the resultant increased traffic volume as per the research survey (2008). The activities on this road offer a service to both the locals and the neighbouring communities.

These Economic nodes namely Randles, Sparks and Brickfield are an important component to the residential area as they provide the basic necessities to the inhabitants of the area, thereby making them extremely busy during the course of the day. While the abovementioned roads are of equal importance, some are used more than others because of the convenience they offer. These roads are frequently used and need constant upgrading and widening for easier access (see photographs 1 and 2).

Land Use Map & Sparks' Neighborhood and Economic Nodes



1:10000

- Main Economic Nodes
- Study Area
- Landuse**
- Dwelling house
- Flats, apartments, duplex
- Cluster housing
- Group housing
- Other quarters used for residential accommodation
- Boarding & rooming house
- Hotel accommodation
- Welfare homes
- Printing and publishing
- Medicinal & pharmaceutical
- Non-metallic products
- Motor vehicle parts/repairs
- Fabric manufacturing
- Access roads & streets
- Parking facilities
- Wholesale electrical goods
- Hardware, plumbing equipment & suppliers
- Other retail food
- Other retail trade
- Other retail trade
- Banking & bank related functions
- Business services
- Warehousing & storage services
- Personal services (cont)
- Medical & other health services
- Medical & other health services, cont.
- Other professional services
- Protective functions & their related activities
- Postal services & Telkom
- Local authorities (municipalities, village management boards & similar)
- Local authorities (municipalities, village management boards & similar)
- Local authorities
- Natal Provincial Administration
- Religious activities
- Welfare and charitable services
- Education
- Mixed use
- Sporting activities
- Sports activities (cont)
- Sporting activities (cont)
- Parks (Open Space)
- Open land reservation
- Under construction/demolition/abandoned - residential
- Under construction/demolition/abandoned - non-residential
- Other undeveloped land & water areas

Musgrave Centre ★

Berea Centre ★

Another major problem identified was insufficient parking space as observed during the research survey (2008). Road side parking makes it difficult for vehicles to move easily in the area. The widths of the roads made it difficult for two cars to pass through at a time, and drivers had to compromise and exercise courteousness.



Photograph 1: A broken drain on Randles Road depicts the poorly maintained of the neighbourhood. A pedestrian would either have to walk into the long grass on the one side or step into the road on the other.



Photograph 2: Randles Road had damaged surface area as well as faded road signs. It was obvious from this picture that the road had not been maintained in a long time.

A response from the recipients of the questioners has confirmed that service provision as relates to the basic services in most instances is not timeous and in some instances is not existent at all.

4.3. Convenience and Accessibility

Physical determinism deals with the physical environment and the relation to social behaviour. Convenience and accessibility contribute to the way people behave and which can be positive or negative. It is general norm and practises that when convenience is compromised to provide for easy access, people in general are usually dissatisfied, as in the case of the upgrade of the N3 freeway. Despite all the disgruntled ratepayers, the end product however has resulted in a more visually and aesthetically pleasing environment.

Sparks is viewed by its residents as a convenient place to stay in due to its close proximity to the Durban Central Business District (CBD) and to surrounding suburbs that have major shopping malls. Most malls are within a 5-10 kilometre radius, for example; the Pavilion, Musgrave Centre, Westwood Mall and Gateway (See map 2). The links to the different areas were afforded by the N2 freeway which lies adjacent to the area, convenient public transportation that works well for the residents of the area because taxis and buses frequently pass through the main roads of Sparks.

Convenience and accessibility is a contributing factor as to why people would rather visit other areas that offer the same facilities that are better managed and more user friendly. The upkeep of the basic infrastructure within a neighbourhood ensures a sense of belonging a need to contribute by the inhabitants to ensure sustainability.

4.4. Sparks' Residential Population

This section deals with the characteristics of the respondents that took part in the survey and how they relate to the environment they live in. The study had been divided into partially revitalized and dilapidated areas (see map 3). The study has randomly chosen people from both sides of the scales to achieve an equal evaluation and to ensure equal representation. For the purposes of this assessment and evaluation and to have achieved the best inputs, categories have separated into age, gender, marital status, ownership, educational levels, skills and income levels.

Partially Revitalized & Dilapidated Areas in Sparks

SHERWOOD

SYDENHAM

MUSGRAVE



1:7500

Legend

-  Study Area
 -  Dilapidated Areas
 -  Partially Revitalized areas
- ZONING
-  SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL 900
 -  SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL 650
 -  SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL 400
 -  MAISONETTE 900
 -  EXTENDED RESIDENTIAL 650
 -  DUPLEX 900
 -  GENERAL RESIDENTIAL 1
 -  GENERAL RESIDENTIAL 2
 -  GENERAL RESIDENTIAL 3
 -  PLACE OF WORSHIP
 -  SPECIAL SHOPPING
 -  PETROL SERVICE STATION
 -  GENERAL BUSINESS 2
 -  INDETERMINATE
 -  CEMETERY
 -  EDUCATIONAL 1
 -  GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
 -  GOVERNMENT & MUNICIPAL
 -  PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
 -  EXISTING STREET
 - NEW STREET
 - NEW STREET TO BE DONATED
 - SPECIAL

4.4.1. Age

Figure 1 is represented of 19 people interviewed between the ages of 36-50, all of whom have been living in Sparks have for a substantial amount of time and are very familiar with the area and were able to comment on issues that relate to upgrading Sparks. The study revealed that regardless of age, most participants have lived in the area for a very long time. Even though there are many youngsters living in the area from birth and who choose not to move, it is generally the older residents that have more history and are able to contribute effectively to the process.

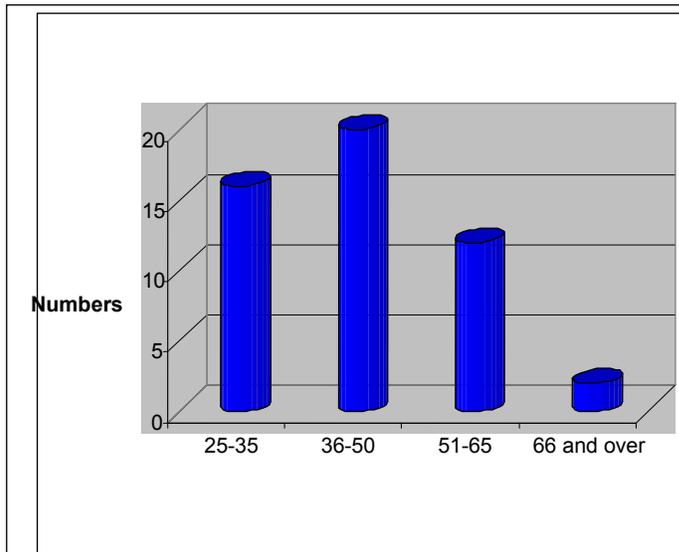


Figure 1: Respondents by Age Group

4.4.2. Gender

The high number of male headed households, 60%, was unexpected (see figure 2), where the father was the head of the household and 40% were female headed households. Twenty of the respondents who have households were single and had to take on most of the upkeep so it was difficult to interview them. The females in the survey complained more than the males about the upgrading of the neighbourhood occurring only in areas where people with money can afford to upgrade themselves.

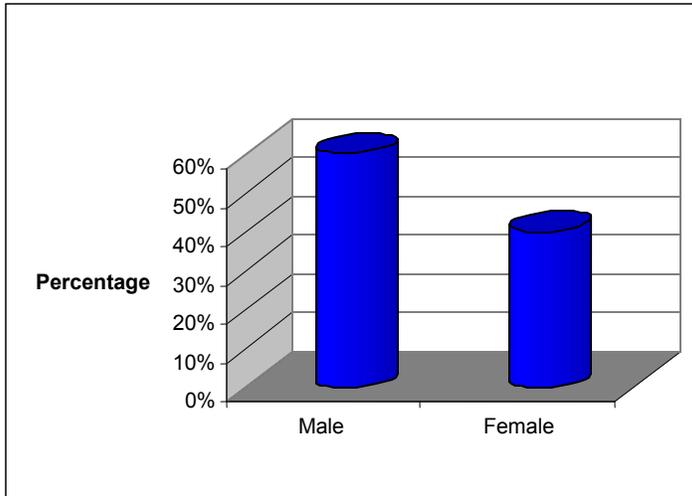


Figure 2: Gender of the Residents interviewed

4.4.3. Marital Status

Thirty married people were interviewed (see figure 3). The diagram below represents the percentage of married couples in the study area, from which it can be concluded that the enthusiasm in contributing to a more vibrant environment is greater. Those married persons interviewed had expressed great zeal in wanting to contribute to any proposals to upgrade the area.

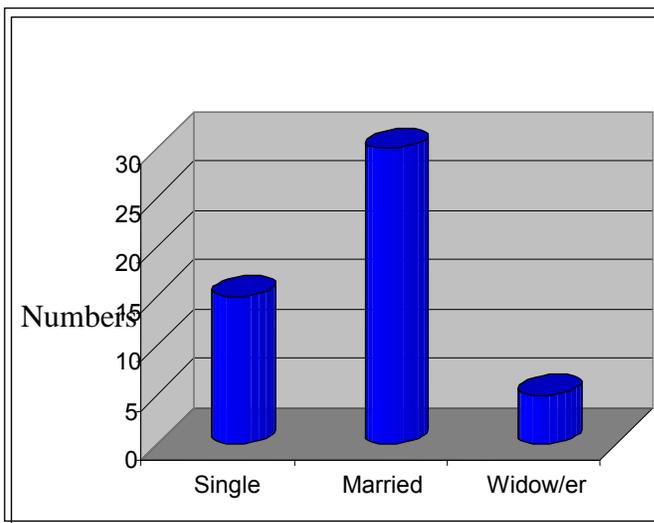


Figure 3: Marital Status

4.4.4. Ownership

The pictorial evidence is that the home owners are more conscience of the state of being and place of living rather than those that are renting, and from the interviews conducted with land owners. They have expressed more sincerity and willingness to any upgrade processes. The individuals that are renting are rather restricted in terms of any commitment as they have confirmed that it rather come from the land owners.



Photograph 3: Kenilworth Road: This house was in a poor condition. The walls were not painted, it appears to be renovated but this was not the case. It had the same façade to date. It had been built on the boundary of the property, the municipality stipulates that a building in a residential area needs to be 7.5m away from the boundary.



Photograph 4: Jervus Road was one of the roads considered to be partially revitalized. The home had unique architectural features; it had been recently painted and designed to suite personal needs and preference and the upgrades and improvements impacts on the entire street.



Photograph 5: Michan Road depicts individual owner's preferences and styles. It was noted that the verges were also tended to by the owner of the house.

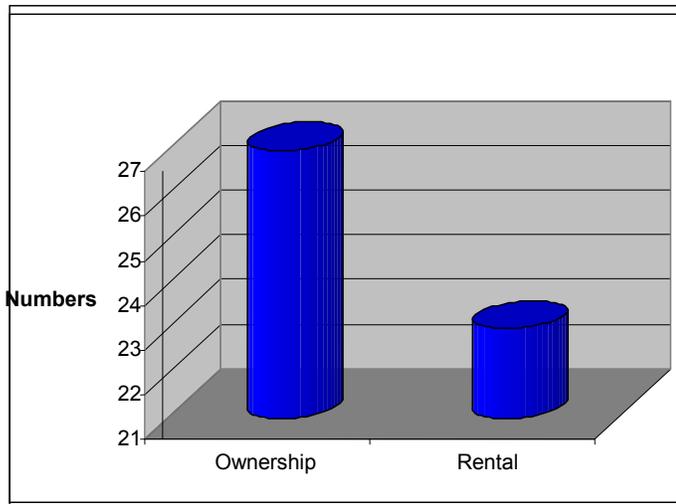


Figure 4: Tenure Status

4.4.5. Education Levels

The education, occupation and income levels were directly related to each other because financial independence depends on the level of education a person had been through in order to live a comfortable life in a good, safe neighbourhood (see figure 5).

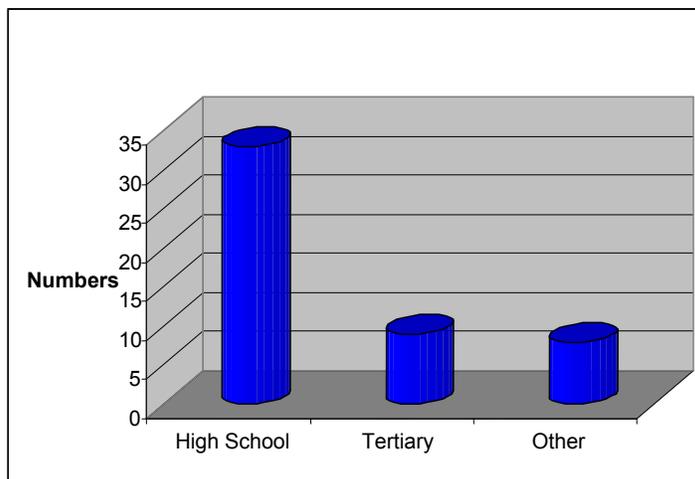


Figure 5: Education Level

4.4.6. Skills

Figure 6 illustrates the levels of skills and the study area comprises largely of unskilled persons, which is a task especially if decisions are being made that directly involve and affect them. The level of skilled persons varies from administrative assistants, sales-consultants and assistants, dentist assistants,

tellers in banks to librarians. The levels of skilled persons within a community will ultimately decide the type and quality of environment.

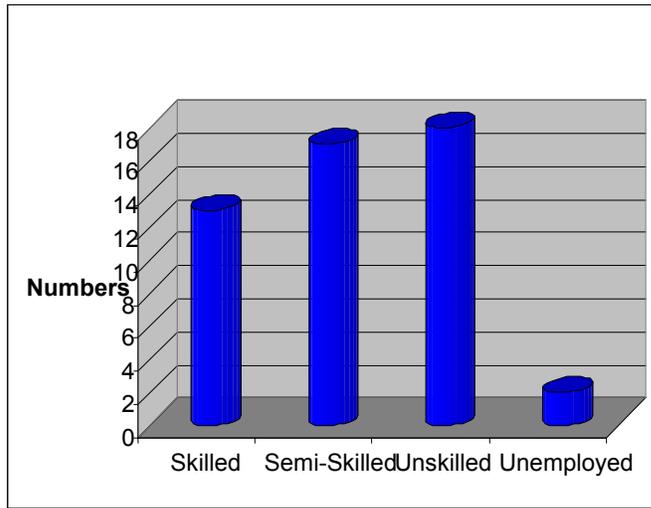


Figure 6: Skills

4.4.7. Income Level

Income relates to higher satisfaction levels because higher-income households have the opportunity to select their place of residence therefore able to choose the location that best meets their needs (see figure 7). The levels of income do dictate to an extent the geographic location of one's habitat. Ideally a lucrative income package would allow many within the study area to locate to better areas. For the purposes of the survey undertaken, it confirms that of the many persons that were interviewed, the lack of earnings thereof is a prohibiting factor when it comes to individuals making a decision.

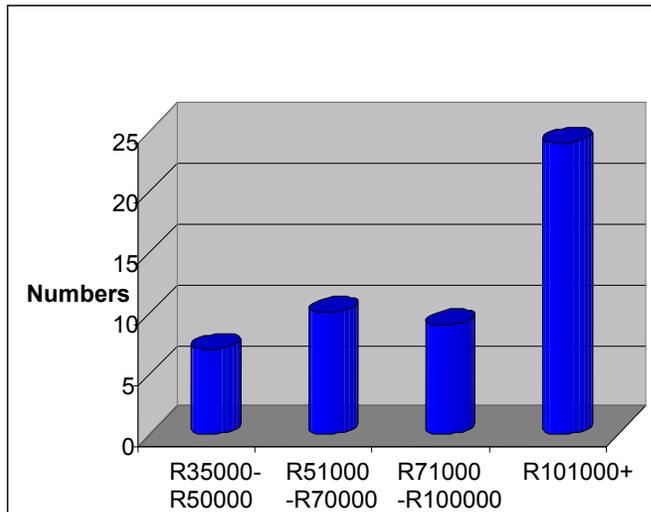


Figure 7: Income Bracket per Annum

4.5. Residence and Safety

4.5.1. Residence

All of the respondents have lived in the area for a substantial number of years (see figure 8). Some have been in Sparks all their lives and do not plan on moving. The older respondents especially were determined to stay because they consider Sparks a good and fairly safe neighbourhood. They have seen the changes, have their views and opinions about the upgrades that occur. According to the respondents, Sparks had become a popular neighbourhood in recent years and had people moving into houses and flats from surrounding neighbourhoods. In terms of the interviews conducted, it is confirmed that the residents that have been living in the area for 21 years or longer have created their sense of place and are rather content with the environment. The rest of the respondents, agree that while they would move to higher income area, this is dependent on the levels of their personal income. To the many others, Sparks is an environment that is safe and secure for their families.

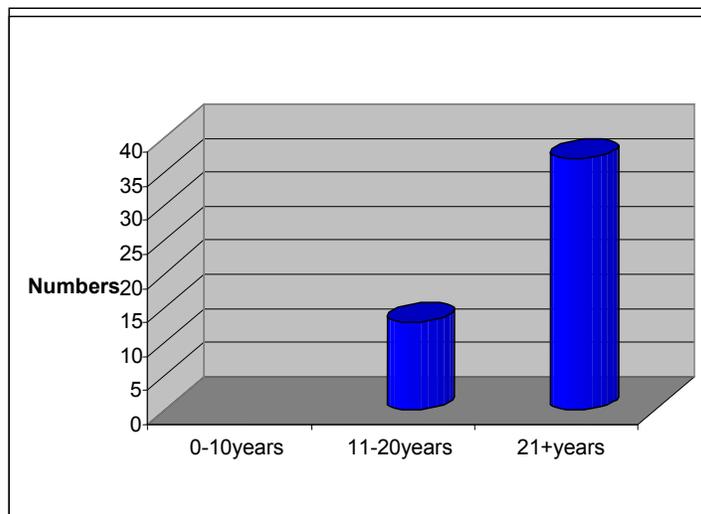


Figure 8: Length of Stay in Sparks

4.5.2. Safety

Sparks was a relatively safe neighbourhood, according to three of the respondents interviewed (see figure 9). Safety in this respect cannot be looked at in isolation, as the levels of safety that a community may offer is dependent on various factors, but the one that stands out in this regards is the location. The study area is almost exposed to all the main routes connecting the study area to

the outer lying areas. However the positives far outweigh the negatives in that the built form of the area provides the protection that many residents are looking for. The community can be viewed as a close knit scenario and irrespective of the race, colour, creed, sex, age and education levels or income levels, it offers a sense of safety.



Figure 9: Safety

4.6. Partial Revitalization

On a micro level, partial revitalization begins with a single household with the upgrades and the regular maintenance that is ongoing to their personal properties. As the visuals present themselves, it can be seen that many attempts have been made by individual homeowners to maintain their aesthetic appearance of their homes. However as time progressed it appears that the condition of individual houses deteriorated, the reasons could be too many to mention. When viewed accumulatively within a suburb, this could ultimately lead to urban decay, and what exacerbates the problem is when the basic infrastructure is rarely attended to.

From the areas that were partially revitalized, it appears that these were cosmetic upgrades and there was nothing done to improve or better the quality of life within these areas. While it is acknowledged that yes improvements have been done within the area, these have not necessarily and directly affected the inhabitants of Sparks.

From the surveys undertaken, it is clearly evident that the facilities that are privately owned are better looked after than those that are owned by the Municipality. These facilities however cannot be fully utilised due to restrictions imposed by the unmaintained or incomplete Council facilities, and these include

uncut Council open spaces, unmaintained roads, improper access to these facilities and this could have resulted by the partial revitalization that had once occurred. While there may have been good intention when the revitalization started, an incomplete project merely prejudices other obliging bodies.

According to the officials of the Ethekeeni Municipality, partial revitalization had occurred in Sparks. Upgrading of roads, renovations on private property, installation of robots and humps have made life easier in the area. However, according to all the respondents of the survey, they were not consulted as to help with decision making processes with the municipality to find out what the problems really were in the area. And because of this residents prefer to use external facilities such as schools, shopping centres, pools and parks for their recreation and education. It was concluded by the researcher that partial revitalization in Sparks was problematic and because the residents were not utilising available resources in the area, according to the literature review on neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods deteriorate if it was not functioning substantially independently.

4.7. Community Participation

Almost all of the residents interviewed were not aware of the publication participation process that exists when it came to projects as urban upgrades or renewals undertaken within their area. Community participation is all about educating the public in knowing whats happening to the area they live in. Unfortunately, from the interviews conducted, it was sad to note that many people were unaware of the function and responsibilities of the area Councillor. It is critical to note that while people are interested in the happenings of their communities and their well being, not many are familiar with the process involved of having their voice heard.

According to the councillor service delivery was provided on a staggered basis but where possible it was done almost immediately. He described the residents as stable, responsible citizens who display pride in the ownership of their properties. He described the area as neat and tidy but lacking facilities for the poorer residents. He argued that the deteriorating roads and the sprouting of taverns lessen the quality of life in the area. The councillor knows that the residents of Sparks do not participate in the development processes on a regular basis. He believes that if they did, service delivery would be timeous and continuous. He believes that Sparks needs to be upgraded especially where better road lighting, road humps and crime were the pressing concerns at

present.

The study of Sparks had been a rich and deep one for the researcher who has experienced how people interpret their surroundings and how much they were willing to learn and take part in making it a better place to live in. There have been negative and positive impacts on the residents of the neighbourhood, the negative impacts were mostly because of a lack of renewal or upgrade and the positive was shown where people were taking the initiative to make things work for themselves. 90% of the respondents who took part in the study have enjoyed living in Sparks but with some reservations due to the partial renewal taking place in the area. The ones who want to move out of the area would do so not because of a dislike of the area but to improve their way of life, protect themselves and their families and to ensure a better life for their children. They would stay if the area if there was a complete revitalization of the neighbourhood where their concerns and issues were considered in the participatory process led by the municipality.

The social aspect that had kept people living in the area for as long as 60 years was a strong sense of family ties, friends and neighbours, those interviewed explained. They have created strong bonds throughout the years and have established a sense of identity, culture, belonging, understanding and closeness. The negative impacts were congestion, crime, degraded areas, drugs and the realization of little or no community participation. These factors contribute to people locking themselves and their children up in the house; they make people feel uneasy and unsafe. The idea of positive impacts of proper revitalization of an area was that it should create a liveable environment for the residents, where public facilities were in good condition and maintained as such with proper updated equipment; roads were resurfaced or tarred, creating easier and safer travel, speed humps and proper signage with wide roads and off road parking. Revitalization should encourage residents of a community to be happy to reside, work and procreate in the area. Certainly not made to look into other areas for their daily use of services and facilities, the residents interviewed explained.

4.8. Quality of Life

The quality of life cannot be summed up better than defined as, “The quality of life can be measured by individual feelings of what makes a person reasonably safe, happy and content in their environment “(Bentley et al, 1995). This was closely linked to whether or not an area had been upgraded. It may be concluded that the quality of life within an area as such is dependent on what is happening on

the neighbouring sites and the surroundings.

Residents cannot afford upgrades of all types; some were left for the government to deal with, such as roads, signage, pavements and bus shelters. The improvement of roads, lighting, pavements, landscaping and architectural typology can be done by the Ethekwini Municipality, according to key informants interviewed. The above mentioned facilities were in need of repair according to the 100 % of the residents of the area interviewed. They feel that the government had neglected Sparks as a neighbourhood to a certain extent, if it was compared with its surrounding neighbourhoods, such as Sherwood, Morningside and Glenwood.

4.9. Conclusion

Sparks is a residential neighbourhood experiencing partial revitalization in small sections of the area. There was a need for further revitalization to take place in other parts of Sparks as well, it had been established by this survey that partial upgrades have been done and were incomplete. The need for revitalization in the area can increase the sustainability of the area. This will encourage people to stay longer in the area and contribute individually to the upgrade processes of the area. Through this, the residents' quality of life was likely to get better because they have already improved their houses, now they need the Ethekwini Municipality to meet them halfway and complete the improvement of the area, this was the view of the residents interviewed.

Community participation was very low in Sparks as established by the survey (see 3.9 in this chapter). In an area like Sparks that needs further revitalization, it may be essential to get the people together to speak with one voice and make their opinions heard. The purpose of the research was to find out whether or not Sparks had been revitalized in recent years (2004-2008). It is concluded that parts of Sparks had been upgraded and revitalized: by the residents themselves and the implementation of robots and road humps and extensions by the Municipality. However, there were areas in Sparks that had not been revitalized and remain in a dilapidated state, such as, Rippon Road, Baizley Avenue, Shoult Avenue, Keal Road, St. Theresa's Road, Butcher Place, Mayflower Road, Raftery Crescent, Tills Crescent, Baron Grove, Barns Road, Knight Road, Everton and Hugo Road (block C) (see Map 3). It has been established in this study that people who were highly skilled (13%) have good jobs and live in the better parts of the area such as in Cornelius Road, Saunders Road, Hay Place, Renault Road, Waterfall Road, Jervus Road, Crompton Gardens, Mary Road and

Michan Road (block A and B) (see Map 3), whereas the people with less skills (17%) were mostly renting and living in the areas that were poorly maintained by the Ethekewini Municipality. The respondents have helped to identify the level of upgrade that was needed in the area, the positive and negative aspects of Sparks as a neighbourhood and the role which the community needs to play in the dynamics of the area. Overall, it has become clear from the findings that partial revitalization has taken place in Sparks. What needs to be targeted were the upgraded areas that lack adequate and proper services, facilities and the dilapidated buildings, housing stock and public areas in order to allow for a better quality of life such as enjoying all services and facilities in the area without having to find them elsewhere.

CHAPTER FIVE – THE ANALYSIS OF SPARKS THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS TO REVITALIZATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the opportunities and constraints for revitalization in Sparks as a residential neighbourhood. It includes the analysis of the physical attributes, land uses and opportunities as well as the attitude of the residents, unemployment, crime and pollution to name a few. The main aim of this chapter was to identify elements which can promote sustainable development in the area. This chapter had examines the opportunities and constraints of how revitalization can be inhibited in an area such as Sparks.

5.2. Physical Attributes

The study area of Sparks was fully serviced. Services ranges from water reticulation, sewer, storm-water removal and electricity (Ethekwini Municipality, 2009). The present bulk infrastructure had already accommodated certain types of new development (extension of the freeway and Brickfield Road) occurring in the area. Access to these types of services was a prerequisite to the usefulness of any typical block of space. The laying out of these types of services (water reticulation, sewer, storm-water removal and electricity) was primarily dependent on the street pattern design. These services were laid underground, to ensure minimal interference to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic (Ethekwini Municipality, 2009). They perform a major role in the functioning of the study area.

Surrounding neighbourhoods to the study area, each have varying facilities, goods and services that were easily accessible to the residents of Sparks (see map 2). These include;

1. Springfield (5 kilometres way) had industrial zones.
2. Musgrave, Berea and Morningside (2-3 kilometres away) a wide range of offices and commercial land uses.
3. Sherwood and Overport (2 kilometres away) have residential areas.
4. The Pavilion shopping centre (7 kilometres away) plays an important role as a shopping node for the surrounding areas.

Springfield, Musgrave, Berea, Morningside, Sherwood, Overport and the Pavilion shopping centres all contribute to the study area directly and indirectly therefore form part of the daily function of Sparks as a functional residential area. The upgrade of Brickfield (see photograph 6) Randles (see photograph 7) and Sparks

Roads (see photograph 8) were three of the vibrant driving forces that have promoted development in the area. This led to increased mobility, a reduction in congestion as confirmed in the views of those interviewed and observed by the researcher.



Photograph 6: Brickfield Road had been extended to accommodate the congestion problems in the area. The road previously had two lanes but now has four as shown in the photograph since revitalization of the area was introduced. Also note that the Municipality had to expropriate some of the business owners' land.

5.3. Land Uses within Sparks

Sparks generally has a mixture of land uses that can promote revitalization to benefit the whole community, not only the residential component of the area as confirmed by the researcher's observation (2008). There were different characteristics of residential areas including dwelling units, commercial, offices and industrial land uses as well. There are five educational establishments, two petrol stations, and industrial warehouses offering a variety of motor related services; factories manufacturing a variety of goods; recreational and social venues, and a variety of worship zones, restaurants, shops, and service activities. Due to this type of land use system which had been created, the area had proven to be robust to its residents. Not only were the residential units in need of visual and physical improvements, the industries, shops and other forms of businesses need it too, as observed by the researcher. The dilapidation of the building stock and roads had not been improved for more than 10 years and this makes Brickfield Road look worn out, old and unappealing. These included

Rippon Road, Baizley Avenue, Shoult Avenue, Keal Road, St. Theresa's Road, Butcher Place, Mayflower Road, Raftery Crescent, Tills Crescent, Baron Grove, Barns Road, Knight Road, Everton and Hugo Road were identified as areas in need of revitalization (Map 3). The roads were three and a half metres in width; there was no space for pedestrians and they were in bad conditions by being riddled with potholes, litter and bad lighting; the housing stock was in need of repair with cracks and unpainted walls; the verges were overgrown and cars were parked on the street and interfere with the traffic and pedestrian flow. The shops and the municipal buildings such as the library, the pool, community centres, schools and places of worship were dilapidated; the open spaces were overgrown and neglected.



Photograph 7: Randles Road was one of the busiest roads in Sparks due to the high traffic flow and prominent economic, commercial hub that it caters for. It had different zones on either side co-existing with the residential neighbourhood. This road had been considered by the researcher an important path and node of Sparks.



Photograph 8: Sparks Road was the busiest road of the area. Private businesses occur on both sides of the road. The businesses successfully co-exist with residential aspect component of the area.

The researcher found that the residential section of Sparks had a variety of dwelling houses which include, detached houses, semi-detached single and double storey units, duplexes, maisonettes, walk-ups (blocks of flats that were three storeys high) and blocks of flats that were higher than three storeys and therefore contain lift shafts. The dwelling houses were generally well maintained because of the good visual appearance these houses have due to recent paintwork, manicured gardens and verges, unique architectural designs and features, with the exception of the houses in Kenilworth Road. Most flats and residential buildings were owned under sectional title, and provide a valuable high density residential component in the study (see photographs 9 and 10). By observation a 10% were in poor condition and were in need of improvement to enhance the area.



Photograph 9: The block of flats in Butcher Place was part of the ward Councilor's housing projects to help people receive housing. They cater for the lower income groups and had not been kept in very good condition. They have no security gates, there were no allocated parking spaces for residents or visitors, no recreational areas and they have not been painted in the past 10 years, according to the residents that live here. There were also gangs of boys that drink and cause problems therefore affecting the quality of life in this estate.



Photograph 10: The blocks of flats in Kenilworth Road were privately owned and in relatively good condition. There was a shop at the bottom of the flats that caters for the residents day to day needs. These flats had parking space, a home owners committee and had been painted in 2007.

Business owners interviewed complained that the commercial areas were in a poor condition. The building stock show signs of old age, the paint was peeling and changing colour, there were not appealing frontal features to encourage people to consume, the inside of the shops were untidy and unkempt and the windows were rusty and stained with dirt (see photograph 35: page 114). Most business had their names on their walls and windows and signage thereof plays an important role especially in Sparks Road. The shopping nodes in Randles Road were in relatively good condition and accommodate many uses: for example, there were banking facilities, franchise chains, a chemist, shops, doctors, lawyers, dentists, optometrists, beauty therapists, and a number of restaurants (see photographs 14-17).

There were worship sites in the study area. These included churches, temples and mosques. Parking was a problem and on days for services or prayers the roads were congested and become a difficult throughway, as confirmed by the business owners interviewed. Four of the worship zones have significant architectural value linked to them, they had been designed and built over a number of decades, reflecting the architectural periods of the Victorian and Edwardian times as well as the Gothic era. These sites were not part of the revitalization public process; however contribute substantially to the neighbourhood's facade of buildings that were well-kept. Other sites like the library, garages, the schools and the parks were in need of proper maintenance, there were obvious signs of neglect for example, unpainted buildings, unkempt vegetation and inappropriate parking spaces.

There were four primary schools and two high schools in the study area that were funded by the government. The schools were kept in relatively good condition, for example, the buildings have been painted and renovated often, the equipment that they do have was functional but they lack facilities that other schools in different areas have such as proper sporting grounds and equipment, libraries, computers and vehicles. Some schools were short staffed and this impacts negatively on students who need individual attention. This does not occur in schools such as Glenwood High, Durban High School, Durban Girls High, in the better neighbourhoods in the Ethekewini Municipality, such as Morningside and Glenwood (Survey, 2008). Having 45 children to one teacher reveals the fact that there were insufficient facilities in Sparks. If the area had sufficient schools with adequate facilities, good equipment and a 20:1 children: teacher ratio. This would and help enhance the area by making it more appealing to the residents, argued the key informants interviewed. Some primary schools were in close proximity to the places of worship, allowing for more parking

spaces if it was needed. There were a number of other institutions in the study area, such as an old age home on St. Theresa's and Randles Road, a children's home on St. Theresa's Road and a home for disabled people in Mary Road.

The open spaces and recreational areas with their large trees and a variety of vegetation allow the area to have an increased aesthetic value. They were not well used or appreciated by residents or by people passing through (Survey, 2008). More open spaces were required for natural processes and to create "urban lungs", reduce heat islands, act as a buffer against pollution (air and noise), assist in the absorption of water runoff, help with storm water management and reduce the effect of floods. It also adds to the aesthetic environment of the area. The open space system in the area acts as a buffer zone between the residential area and the industrial zone. It also conserves the natural area in the steeper topography. This area had eco-systems that need to be preserved and can act as an environmentally friendly node, according to the Environmental Department of the Ethekewini Municipality (Ethekewini Municipality, 2009).

It was argued by the business owners (2008) that the industrial strip in Brickfield Road had warehouses and factories that were kept in good condition most of the time. The buildings and immediate surrounding areas were kept clean and tidy, refuse was neatly stacked for weekly removal, no debris or spare parts were seen from the street view, according to the above business owners and observation (2008). However, five out of 20 factories were unkempt and in need of a revamp. Conditions like these need the owner's initiative to maintain a building to the proper standards of a residential area. When an industrial strip was close to a residential area, there needs to be strict conditions so that the amenity of the area was not jeopardized. Industrial usage of any land was located on the flattest land in the area for easier and cheaper access and management. The land designated for industry was designated to increase and promote development in the area. The forms of industry were mainly light industry and high tech innovations to increase employment and economic development. The industrial warehouses in Brickfield Road render the area harsh. The petrol filling station on this road creates a busy atmosphere. The existence of service industries, which were regarded as being essential for the day to day needs of the community and the businesses contained within the area, were important amenities.

5.4. Opportunities: Positive Strategies for Revitalization in Sparks

5.4.1. Employment

The current road works on Brickfield Road (see photographs 11 and 12) had brought about employment in the area. Industrial land was proposed in the structure plan (Ethekewini Municipality, 2008). The reconstruction of Brickfield Road had generated employment as well as jobs for skilled, semi-or highly skilled workers. Although some of the people of Sparks have jobs elsewhere in the municipality and have access to adequate transportation routes. Other workers from parts of the municipality come into the area for employment. 33% of the Spark's potential work force was employed in the light industrial area as revealed by the interviews conducted by the researcher.



Photograph 11: Brickfield Road had industrial and commercial land uses that cater for the residents of the area as well as for people that live in neighbouring suburbs. The noise, land and air pollution was high on this road. The few residential properties had converted to doctors offices, there was a temple and a park on this road as well.



Photograph 12: Brickfield Road under construction had impacted on the traffic flow during the time period. On the right hand side of the road there were factories and warehouses, as well as shops, garages and service stations.

Sparks was an area of mixed land-uses. A range of activities occurs within ranging from professional to personal services that creates employment. The researcher argues that there are a number of retail outlets, restaurants as well as industries and warehouses which give Sparks its distinctive economic character as confirmed by the findings of this study. The location of bed and breakfasts in Sparks caters for a tourist market thus contributing to and boosting the local economy. The central location of Sparks in relation to the surrounding areas and its close proximity to Durban and beaches makes it an ideal destination area in terms of its accessibility to other parts of the city. The area was a prime site to internal and external investors to lay their claim some residents argued. But without any appeal, or no improvements or initiatives, the area was not attractive for any kind of growth, whether economic or social as confirmed by key informants interviewed.

5.4.2. Shops and Flats

The Sparks shopping facilities act as a major node in the area, which attracts a concentration of people in terms of local consumers, tourists, and business people and outside consumers from surrounding areas. Its accessibility offers a high level of convenience to its end-users. It was also interesting to note that there were numerous blocks of high rise flats that realize the densification that

the local Integrated Development Plan (IDP) envisions (Ethekewini Municipality, 2008). These flats, such as those on Sparks Road, cater to the needs of the residents of Sparks giving them the ability to afford to live in the area (see photograph 13). These flats have recently been developed; they were a good example of what should be occurring consistently within the neighbourhood. Since their appearance the streetscape on Randles and Sparks Roads had changed, there was more vegetation, the neighboring sites were copying the style and repainting creating a uniform affect that was appealing to the consumer. All the residents interviewed stated that they enjoying living in the area because of the convenience of the shops and restaurants. They would not want to stay anywhere. The shops in the area have also been designed and arranged in a way that it was within a walking distance of properties which it was intended to serve.



Photograph 13: Sparks Road had blocks of flats in that were in good condition and were visually attractive. They had been painted in 2008, unique architectural designs, boundary walls, plenty of parking spaces, recreational areas and cater for the housing of families in Sparks.

5.4.3. Office and Business Location

There were the many conversions of residential homes to business premises and office space (see photograph 14), which reflects the changing patterns of movement amongst businesses, as revealed through observation by the researcher during the field survey. This trend was apparent especially in Randles and Sparks Road. The decentralization of businesses and offices away from the city centre to areas such as Sparks was due to businesses wanting to escape from the crime and grime of the city, according to the business owners of

the area. When comparing it to the city centre, there was less traffic congestion, more security and less crime, more parking space available, and moreover a better quality of environment away from the hustle and bustle of the city in an area such as Sparks according to the residents of the area. An added advantage was that Sparks was a very accessible place, which had a good transport network system. Employees and workers can get to their jobs with considerable ease (Photograph 15).



Photograph 14: Randles Road had many residential houses that have been converted to offices. The Ethekwini Municipality requires that the house must maintain its residential form. There were doctors, optometrist's, dentist's rooms and beauty parlours along the road.



Photograph 15: Randles Road depicts the dentists and doctors rooms in between residential dwelling houses.

5.4.4. The Local Community and other Businesses

As mentioned earlier, the existence of Bed and Breakfast lodges in Sparks cater largely for the tourist market as confirmed by key informants interviewed by the researcher (2008). This had important implications and effects on the surrounding businesses located within the area, whilst generating employment opportunities in the related sectors such as the personal services and catering industry. The tourists who use hotels for accommodation also support local restaurants, coffee bars, cafes and other general eating places thus both contributing to the local economy and generating employment opportunities through the multiplier effect. In Sparks the wide array of restaurants, cafes and bars such as Debonairs, Chicken Cottage, MXIT, Nandos, and Barcellos, give Sparks its distinctive characteristic as a node or destination especially in places in Sparks Road and Randles Road (see photographs 16 and 17).



Photograph 16: Sparks Road had places of worship, offices, shops and restaurants that were old and rundown at the time that the research was taking place. The latest restaurant, Debonairs, had a clean and neat appearance but the rest of the buildings were dilapidated. Parking space was a critical issue in the area. The space in the photograph was supposed to cater for two restaurants but there were only four parking bays, which does not comply with the central town planning scheme.



Photograph 17: Depicts Sparks Road's coffee shop and pharmacy. This popular pharmacy was always full. Parking space was also a problem here and the customers have found other places to shop if they cannot park safely on the property. The property that was currently used for parking does not belong to the owner of the property; they have cornered off part of a proposed road.

5.4.5. Economic Elements in Relation to Cost and Access to the Area

Sparks can be classified as low to middle income area. This was partly attributed to the value of houses, which range from R300, 000 to R800, 000 and to the people who occupy them, according to the field survey conducted by the researcher. Higher rentals were however affordable to these professionals and businesses as they occupy a smaller floor space and have a high turnover, according to the business owners interviewed. Most of the Bed and Breakfast lodges were privately owned (Ethekewini Municipality, 2007). The cost of flat rentals were considerably cheaper than that of houses as the developers still make huge profits due to the small sizes and the high-rise nature of flats, more dwelling units were built resulting in more profits being made. Sparks, according to most residents, was a vibrant area which was characterized by a mosaic of interrelated and interdependent activities, confirmed by observation and key informants interviewed. The residential and business characteristics of the area blend very well together, creating a harmonious environment to live and work in. The different land uses have been observed to complement each other and this was demonstrated in a cohesive way in which the residential and businesses coexist and interact on a daily basis. An overall assessment of the area was that it was a good quality environment, according to the observation undertaken for the study. It was not only visually appealing but also the social and economic fibre of the area was very pleasant. There was almost a unanimous agreement by the residents that they enjoyed living and working in the area and thus the neighbourhood satisfaction of most dwellers was rated as being high.

The space economy of the area had proved to be a diverse one. The land uses vary from residential to industrial, attracting homeowners and employment (Ethekewini Municipality, 2009). The socio-economic aspects of the area were mainly from the lower to middle income groups in the districts of Sparks.

There were different nodes of concentration for employment and other activities in Sparks and other surrounding areas, such as, residential and tourist attractions. The communication and social networks were linked to service and trade. The trends of the area come from the circulation of the community within. There were existing residential and industrial developments with shopping centres that have the potential to benefit the area.

5.4.6. Roads and Transportation

The town planning designed layout was uncomplicated and allows for free traffic flow (Ethekewini Municipality, 2009). The existing transport routes in the area play a dominant role as they obviously were an essential part of the movement of people to and from the area. Due to the different modes of transport (namely, cars, buses, taxis) there were a variety of people using the road system for different functions. Commuting for domestic workers, school-children and office workers in the area was not a problem (ibid).

Service trucks and vans providing goods and services to offices and other forms of businesses generally use the main arterial roads. Garbage disposal trucks utilise the roads once a week and they move along the roads parallel to the contours, thus avoiding steep roads to ensure maximum cost efficiency, according to the interviews with the Ethekewini Municipality officials. The pavements on the main roads were wide and clean and generate much pedestrian movement. The roads with less impact have narrower pavements and less pedestrian movement. The small shopping enclave provides parking on two levels of building and share parking space with each other, although some cars do park on the road as well observed by the researcher during the field survey.

Private residential houses, flats and other forms of accommodation have their own parking spaces. The converted houses which were now offices do not have adequate parking space allocated due to site size, this creates road side parking, Ethekewini Municipality officials interviewed. Overall, there was limited off-street parking. Most customers were forced to park on the road and this increases congestion on Brickfield, Sparks and Randles Roads. The cars that were parked in the street cause congestion and it become difficult to pass through the main roads during peak hours as confirmed by key informants interviewed. The widening of these main roads could calm the traffic generated in these areas. As part of the revitalization process, wide roads, easy pedestrian traffic and adequate off street parking, can enhance the area and make it more accessible and appealing for the residents and the external consumers. Thus improving traffic flow was a major opportunity for the upgrading of Sparks.

5.5. Constraints: Aspects that Hinder the Revitalization Process in Sparks

5.5.1. Attitudes amongst the Residents

It had been established that 70% of the residents had a negative attitude towards neighbourhood revitalization. They said that it was not occurring and if it was, did not affect them at all, as revealed by field survey by the researcher. They were reluctant to join groups or programme that may enhance their living environment on a larger scale and complained about limited time and resources to continue such endeavours. The negative attitudes stem from not having a “perfect” neighbourhood, where no crime, accidents, unemployment and poverty occurs. These negative attitudes hold back on any kind of public participation and inevitable revitalization of the neighbourhood. The residents complained that no upgrade occurred in the area. (Photographs 18 and 19 demonstrate these points)



Photograph 18: St Theresa's Road had the area's library and community centre, the building in the picture shows graffiti on the wall of the public building that had not been painted and the doors were closed.



Photograph 19: The entrance to the library had not been painted for more than 10 years, there were no signs to show that there was a library, it was small and had limited resources. These buildings have not been maintained by the local municipality.

5.5.2. Negative Internal Pressure

External investors do not want to invest their capital in Sparks due to the negative attitude that the residents have, according to the councillor of the area as established from interviews with the residents. The residents (in some cases, internal investors) want to make sure that their houses and properties look good and were not interested in what happens around them. The investors have a number of things to contend with if they invest their money in the area such as narrow roads, dilapidated buildings that occur haphazardly throughout the neighbourhood neglected public buildings and facilities and limited shopping facilities. The neighbourhood had the responsibility to take the initiative and be more interested in their surroundings. Internal investors include entrepreneurs view an area as a source of profit, as confirmed by the LUMS Co-ordinator, 2008. The business owners also choose an area that was conducive to a marketable business. There were restaurants, shops, warehouses and the like, but they have been in the area over 20 years. There were very few businesses that have started up in the past five years and most of them were internal investors (Ethekewini Municipality, 2007).

5.5.3. Pollution

Air, noise, water and land pollution have negative impacts on the social function of an area. There was air, noise, water and land pollution from some of the industries located in Sparks. For instance land pollution was a negative feature in some areas (see photographs 20 and 21). Smoke and extracts from the factories and warehouses contribute to the air pollution substantially in the Brickfield Road area. The emissions were not toxic or noxious; they emit what was allowed to be emitted in a residential area. The smoke was usually white and evaporates into the atmosphere very quickly. There were dark grey emissions that occur at regular intervals according to the residents that live nearby.

According to the residents who live close to the freeway and the major roads in the area suffer most. The noise comes from the continuous sound of cars, hooters and loud music from taxis and trucks. Most of the water and land pollution occurs from the businesses in the area, according to the residents of the area. Refuse leakages for example, block the storm water drainage systems and contaminate streams that flow in the area, according to the residents of the area and the Ethekewini Municipality officials. Business refuse accounts for the majority of the pollution on the streets in the major roads in Sparks. The litter remains on the street until the Durban Solid Waste employees clean up once a week. This was very unsightly during the rest of the week, as was evident during the field survey.



Photograph 20: Land pollution in Randles Road shows that people dump their refuse during a building exercise and do not clean up after themselves. The impact on the environment both physically and visually would not be a positive one.



Photograph 21: Refuse Leakage on Randles Road show that the municipality's department of waste leave the bins in a disarray. It was difficult as a pedestrian to walk past these unsightly and often smelly bins.

5.5.4. Increase of Traffic and On-Street Parking

Sparks had inherent narrow road-width and the increase of traffic causes all kinds of problems. Residents of Sparks have confirmed that congestion on Sparks, Randles and Brickfield Roads had worsened through the years. More people own cars and the need for more parking had not been addressed by the local authority yet, this view was confirmed during the interview with LUMS Regional Coordinator. The traffic build up was unbearable during peak hours when residents were leaving or returning to their place of residence, according to the residents interviewed. This problem was exacerbated because of on-street parking (see photograph 22). Buses and taxis do not have proper slip lanes to manoeuvre into and therefore become an obstruction to the flow of traffic.



Photograph 22: The corner of Randles and Sparks Roads parking spaces were built on the proposed road. These two cars in the photograph were parked next to a taxi stop. There were no proper taxi and bus shelters for the residents to use. The traffic in the middle of the day shows a busy intersection which gets much worse during peak hours.

5.5.5. Crime

Hijacking, rape, household theft, murders, drunken driving and domestic violence had a negative impact and holds the community back from freely moving and interacting in their home environment (EtheKwini Municipality, 2008). South Africa had been dubbed the second highest crime capital of the world; the highest statistics were hijackings and rape (The Star, 2007, SAPS, 2008). It was the reason why many people have left the country. Criminals were not only targeting the more affluent, they were attacking low-income communities as well as confirmed by the respondents and the Councillor. Some insurance companies do not insure certain makes of cars anymore because they were the most frequently hijacked and restaurants have become easy targets for armed robbery (The Star, 2007, SAPS, 2008). Many of the residents of Sparks have experienced crime in the neighbourhood or have heard of a neighbour or family member who had been the victim in violent criminal activities (Daily News, 2008). Children cannot play in the small streets anymore in fear of their safety and lives (Daily News, 2008). Residents want to feel safe in their environments, with an increase of police surveillance or neighbourhood watch groups the quality of life increases and an area was revitalized emotionally with a sense of well being and safety.

5.5.6. Unemployment (2000-2008)

Government's preoccupation with controlling inflation had contributed to the large increases in unemployment (Aron and Muellbaue, 2000). The recent increase in prices, since early 2007, including land, petrol, inflation rates and electricity had exacerbated the problem. People who have been retrenched have to sustain their households with pension monies that they have accumulated during their working years or depend on a child, sibling or friend. According to newspaper articles, people were losing their houses in the thousands, cars were being repossessed and people were becoming desperate for some form of relief (Aron and Muellbaue, 2000). The respondents argued that Sparks had been affected too; people were finding more excuses to leave the area to find greener pastures. The increase of prices also makes it difficult for the local municipality to work alone in upgrading neighbourhoods. It had becoming increasingly expensive and demanding to renew and widen roads, install robots and speed humps, to expropriate land for parking space and to encourage small businesses for local economic development.

5.5.7. Limited Capacity of Local Government

There had been formal applications by the stakeholders and business owners of Sparks for the revitalization process to occur for Sparks per say as the interview with the Framework Manager revealed. The Ethekewini Municipality deals with neighbourhoods as a whole. If a road needs upgrading in a particular area, an evaluation was conducted of how desperately the upgrade was needed, how much it was going to cost and who was going to pay for the cost that was incurred. A person cannot go to the municipality and say that their area needs an upgrade and it occurs. A study was usually undertaken by the municipality who then conducts research and relies on the findings as to whether or not the area was in need of an upgrade explained the Framework Manager during the interview session. As such the areas that were more in need of revamping and facilities for example, Warwick Junction or Cato Manor, would be given the project rather than investing capital in an already established neighbourhood like Sparks. Ethekewini Municipality had to make a decision on who needs the revitalization more. Limited funds and capacity plays a big part in which area was allocated for a revamp and which was not.

5.5.8. Durban's Metropolitan's Open Space System (D'MOSS)

Hilltops not only have a limited amount of space for development, but were costly to develop as well. For example, for a middle-income group the hills could be advantageous because of the spectacular views. In the lower income areas development becomes too expensive and land was left for D'MOSS. The streams and riverbeds that were in Sparks were also considered as a constraint to development and were included in the D'MOSS in the area. A further constraint was that clay soils were difficult to develop on (Ethekewini Municipality, 2007). It was important in any revitalization process to consider the natural environment in the area. Without it, there would not be any aesthetic to the area, it would be bleak and mundane. Therefore, the D'MOSS of an area does not only have an environmental significance for the city but for the residents of the area as well. Pavements lined with trees, open and green parks, flowers and sport fields were important for any neighbourhood. It was important for the natural environment to coincide with the built environment, it enhances the area positively.

The D'MOSS in the area can be seen as both a constraint and an opportunity. As a constraint because that land cannot be developed due to environmental reasons and the flood plains in the area. As an opportunity because the residential development that occurs close to it would benefit because of the greenery and vegetation that adds to the aesthetic value to the land (see photograph 23).



Photograph 23: Sparks Road had a park that had swings and sliding boards that were not used during the time of the research. The parks were empty and quiet; the residents leave their area of habitation and go to other parks in neighbouring areas, such as Michel Park, Botanical Gardens and Japanese Gardens.

5.6. Conclusion

The integrated development plan for the Ethekewini Municipality (2008) focuses on housing accommodation and industrial development. The linkage of the Sparks to the city centre was through the N3. The corridor as a route and road with activities alongside it acts as a good planning mechanism for promoting linkages and economic enterprises. However the constraints hamper the way forward significantly and in most cases were external forces that cannot be controlled. Current development in the area plays an important role as does the emphasis on investment, job creation, training and enhancing community management of resources rather than the consumption of them. However the most serious constraints were the lack of an organised community to pressurize the local authority to initiate revitalization, the negative attitudes of the residents, internal pressure, pollution and curb the severe traffic congestion in the area. Whereas the opportunities were founded increased employment, diverse shops and accommodation available, the location of businesses, the existing transportation network and on residents positive feelings about living in the area and what local property owners have achieved in improving their individual properties.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of this study. The broad aim of this study was to examine the revitalization process in the Sparks area and to identify factors which explain the partial revitalization taking place in the neighbourhood.

6.1. Summary of Findings and Conclusions

6.1.1. The Partial Revitalization in Sparks

The location of the area was a positive aspect of Sparks because of its accessibility in and out of the area. It was observed that revitalization occurs sporadically in the area, in the form of added robots, road humps and the expansion of Brickfield Road. It was established that most of the revitalization occurs because of personalization in the form of painting the house, well maintained gardens and architectural features of individual property owners (see chapter 5). It was evident from the observation in the area that the narrow, broken roads, broken drain pipes, polluted streets and congestion due to on-street parking contribute to the rapid decay of the dilapidated area of Sparks.

Revitalization was occurring via ad hoc strategies which were in response to the need for improvement. It was established that due to an increase in road accidents, speed humps and robots were implemented improve safety in the area. The robots were installed because of the speeding of road users and the need for pedestrians to get across busy roads safety (see chapter 3, 4 and 5). The expansion of Brickfield Road was in response to the congestion that became unbearable. The improvements were as a result of constant complaints and criticism that came from the residents of the area. Business owners, whose vested interest was in the accessibility of the area and onto their properties, needed the municipality to intervene through improvements of the road.

Partial revitalization occurs in Sparks on an ad hoc basis, through individual efforts (personalization) of dwelling houses and as a response to crisis. It has become clear through this study that there is no planned revitalization of the area by the Ethekwini Municipality.

6.1.5. Role Players in the Revitalization Process:

a) The Ethekwini Municipality

The Ethekwini Municipality facilitates development in five regions as viewed in the locality map 1. Sparks falls under the Central Region jurisdiction and the Central Spatial Development Plan (CSDP) whose plans for revitalization considers the entire area, focusing on the most pressing needs. Presently the upgrading of the Brickfield Road to accommodate the high traffic flow and easier pedestrian movement was part of the Land Use Management Projects (see chapter 4). The installation of robots and speed humps had eased the traffic substantially. The researcher argued that these upgrades and installations were hardly considered to be the revitalization of the area. They had occurred on an ad hoc basis with no attention to the poor condition of the infrastructure of the area. According to the Municipal officials there had been no revitalization project for Sparks per say.

An examination of how the municipality undertook neighbourhood revitalization helped identify the weaknesses of this process. The municipality has worked within the unicity and did not revitalize a neighbourhood simply because the residents were complaining for an upgrade for the area. The municipality focused on revitalizing areas that were in dire need of relief or change. The community played an important role to present valid reasons as to why revitalization needed to occur in their area. It should be stated that there were other areas in the unicity that were in more need and those were the ones which would have greater potential for the process to occur (Ethekwini Municipality: 2007). Sparks needed the Municipality to mainly maintain their services in the area as confirmed by the residents interviewed.

Some of the infrastructure in the neighborhood was dilapidated and in need of repair, for example, the number of arterial roads, public buildings and offices, that need to create a visually appropriate environment (see chapter 3). Accumulation of domestic, retail and industrial waste from businesses and households, impact negatively on the area. The researcher argued that the Municipality should not neglect the areas that need revitalization and regular, periodic maintenance. It should be part of their initiative to contribute to all the neighbourhoods, regardless of their current state. Decay and dilapidation should not be occurring because of the Municipality's inability to act soon enough.

The Ethekwini Municipality had not identified Sparks as a priority in terms of upgrading neighbourhoods in and around the Durban CBD. Hence the sporadic intervention observed in the neighbourhood.

b) The Community/Residents/Respondents

The respondents in the research were the people who were interviewed and represented the community and residents of the area. The respondents were divided into two groups which were determined by the quality of the area. Two groups were created, the dilapidated and the partially revitalized area (see chapter 3). The districts were labelled according to the street name. Some of the roads for example, the better parts of the area were in Cornelius Road, Saunders Road, Hay Place, Renault Road, Waterfall Road, Jervus Road, Crompton Gardens, Mary Road and Michan Road. The respondents in the partially revitalized area had taken personal to maintain the roads. The personalization which has been undertaken by the community is in the form of well kept verges, different architectural styles and features created on their houses and have taken care of their properties. Whereas the people from the other areas have previously Council-owned flats; or have narrow, dilapidated roads and no verges or have not painted their houses for more than 10 years.

The residents were also of a specific character such as similar age group, division of gender, their marital was important for provision, that directly relates to the ownership of the property, education and income levels and occupation. The residents have not come together as a community to raise concerns and petition the Municipality. There were no community forums or committees in place that may contribute to the revitalization of Sparks. The Ethekwini Municipality was left to its own decisions. All the respondents noted the expansion of Brickfield Road and the installation of robots and speed humps which occur in Kenilworth and Randles Road only.

The Sparks community did not participate in the process of revitalization. There was a need for an organisation or group that would encourage the immediate community to participate in canvassing the revitalization process to the Municipality by showing initiative and a need for the process to occur in the neighbourhood. The community was at the moment complacent with the partial revitalization in the area and the people that were upset about the sluggish process do not do anything about it. Time constraints and family responsibilities hampered the process substantially. The people that were interviewed used a number of excuses as to why they were not a part of a process to start

revitalization in their area. Some worry about the financial implications, such as a further increase in the rates, others were waiting for an election to vote a councillor in who would deal with the process without them themselves getting too involved.

The study found that there was no established forum for the community to present and identify issues relating to the mismanagement of the Sparks neighbourhood. There was a ward Councillor but no functionally active ward committee in Sparks. A high proportion of the residents interviewed did not attend a ward committee which is therefore largely not functional. The researcher argued that this could partly explain why Sparks is not a priority area of focus for the Ethekeeni Municipality, since there was no pressure from the residents. The neighbourhood revitalization process in Sparks was slightly problematic as revealed by the evidence of this study in that the community did not play a significant role in the decision-making process.

c) The Ward Councillor

The ward councillor of the Sparks area dealt with issues concerning the upgrade of the area. He had been involved in projects that had occurred in the past. The success of the projects related to the constant interaction with the local government. Many people received housing at the time with facilities to accommodate their needs. However he explained that there had been no process or projects relating to the revitalization of Sparks that have taken place recently. The reason for this was the lack of communication between the local government and the community. He confirmed the lack of community participation and he stated that this was a growing concern because without it, “nothing would be done with regards to the revitalization of the area”. He communicated more with the municipality as the Councillor than the community does.

d) Business Owners

The business owners of Sparks enjoyed working in the area. Their business did relatively well especially in peak holiday seasons. There were franchise chains, a chemist, shops, doctors, lawyers, dentists, optometrists, beauty therapists, and a number of restaurants (see chapter 4). Their complaints were about a need for revitalization and the increasing crime in the area. They agreed that community participation was needed in the area. Parking was a growing problem and an increasing need for the local government to accommodate issues regarding the

revamp or upgrade of the local infrastructure (see chapter 4). The business owners should be a “separate entity” because of their function in the neighbourhood was different, argued the residents. They stimulated the community’s financial and economic development. Without them the neighbourhood would not function well and the quality of life would deteriorate. The researcher argued that the business owners should create a forum of their own to ensure that their premises add value to Sparks thus to the benefit of the community as a whole.

6.1.6. Community Participation

Neighbourhoods accommodate a number of people for which networks and functions were created. The proper and efficient delivery of public services was important to a neighbourhood because it increases the community’s quality of life, service delivery and facilities for harmony. It was important to realise the social relationships that were created and that need to be maintained. The values, attitudes, ideas and choices of a community were important aspects for a neighbourhood to function well.

Community participation encouraged the empowerment of the public and a neighbourhood could flourish if the correct procedures were put in place. Not only could proper community participation maintain service delivery but it can also ensure the correct, efficient and effective development takes place in an area. It is argued that the importance of understanding local needs starts from the bottom, at the grass-root level. It was also important to include all kinds of households namely; the female headed household. It was important to know a community first before any development implementation takes place. A researcher would have to find out the characteristics of a community, their needs and desires before contemplating change in a neighbourhood. Without the community being actively involved in the development initiated by the local government it was doomed to fail.

The researcher argued that revitalization in Sparks will increase the quality of the area and add to its attractiveness. Through this, the residents’ quality of life will increase because they have already improved their dwelling houses and attract investments. They now need Council to meet them halfway and complete the improvement of the area. Community participation was almost nonexistent in Sparks and needs more encouragement within the revitalization process that the local government was responsible for implementing, it was essential to get the people together as one voice and make their opinions heard (see chapter 3). The

objectives to this study were to find the kind of revitalization occurring in Sparks. The findings of the study revealed that parts of Sparks have been upgraded and revitalized and therefore maintained with fully functioning facilities. However, there were areas in Sparks that had not been revitalized and remain in a dilapidated state (see chapter 4). It had been established that people who were highly skilled have good jobs, live in the better parts of the area, whereas the people with less skills were mostly renting and living in the areas that were not maintained by the government (see chapter 4). The residents have helped to define the level of upgrade that was needed in these visually attractive areas. Overall, it had become clear from the findings that partial revitalization does take place in Sparks and that the upgrade occurs in the areas that have been upgraded previously. What need to be targeted were the areas that lack adequate and proper services and facilities to allow for a better quality of life.

The researcher argued that the Ethekewini Municipality needed to recognise the efforts made by the community and to ensure that the areas where residents have revitalized their areas, did not deteriorate through the lack of proper maintenance of municipal maintenance facilities. It was also established that the community lacked an organised forum which would enable them to speak with one voice and to promote co-ordinated revitalization of their neighbourhood.

6.1.7. The Opportunities and Constraints of Neighbourhood Revitalization

The linkage of the area to the city centre was through the N3. The corridor as a route and road with activities alongside it acted as a good planning mechanism. The industrial and commercial nodes of shops, offices and businesses were in close proximity to the CBD and enhance Sparks' functional attributed as a neighbourhood that could cope in present South African times. The physical attributes of Sparks had a range of services and facilities that were provided by the Municipality for the area. The infrastructure (drains, pipes, roads, lighting, etc.) alone catered for 10 291 inhabitants. All major shopping malls were in close proximity, Sparks had different neighbourhood surrounding it to give the support it needs when it lacks a particular attribute. The mixed land uses catered for the residents as well as the outsiders needs. The different components of the area were in a poor condition according to the above research undertaken.

The opportunities in the area focused on the employment aspect, it catered for people living in the area as well as people from the outside of the area. The employment ranged from unskilled to semi-skilled to skilled. There were domestic workers, shop-owners, doctors, nurses, optometrists etc. all in one area. Another

opportunity were the shops, the shopping area was a major economic node and attracts all kinds of consumers. It was highly accessible and thoroughly used. The issue arises when considering parking space and an upgrade of the buildings and premises. Sparks road had all the restaurants, coffee shops, bakeries and pharmacies in one place. The most convenient aspect of the road was that it was in walking distance for most residents. The new flats adjacent to the economic uses were part of the partial revitalization process and have improved the area on the one side of the road. The location of offices and businesses on Randles Road were convenient and accessible, but here too, there was no parking space and during peak hour the road was congested.

The constraints in the area were the attitudes of the residents concerning neighbourhood revitalization. The study concluded that it did not occur. There was a reluctance to join groups and develop a relationship with the local authority. The negative internal pressure from the external investors exacerbated the problems and they would not invest in Sparks. Their concerns were validated when considering the narrow roads, dilapidated buildings, neglected public buildings as well as neglected facilities and services. The residents had to also deal with pollution, an increase of traffic, on-street parking, crime, unemployment, local government's reluctance and open space system that cannot be invested in.

Current development in the area played an important role and emphasis on investment, job creation, training and enhancing community management of resources rather than the consumption of them. The Municipality must have give the inhabitants a variety of choices and mobility to enhance the standard of living by providing urban revitalization of dilapidated areas within Sparks. Programs must be developed from within the community to monitor the urban processes properly and ensure that revitalization takes place. And as in most cases, revitalization had to be taken into consideration to ensure a viable environment for future generations.

6.2. Recommendations

The recommendations for the neighbourhood of Sparks to encourage a holistic revitalization process as identified by the study includes the following:

a) A successful program of neighbourhood revitalization will contribute to the transformation of Sparks into a decent socially acceptable neighbourhood, with a viable housing market. Revitalization can take place by improving the existing infrastructure by creating an easier transportation circulation system that would

enhance development by way of easy accessibility to employment, shops and recreation in the area and basic necessity. Roads as well as drainage, electricity poles, refuse collection and other services supplied by the Municipality need to be improved. The minimising of pedestrian/vehicular conflict by the careful routing for through-traffic away from the housing areas and creating wider roads (Brickfield, Randles and Sparks Roads) and pavements for the easier and safer flow of pedestrian traffic. It is important that road design coincides and compliments the safety of the community.

b) Strategies within the revitalization process for example housing, shopping and recreation should add to the attractiveness of the area. This could work with existing infrastructure through careful consideration of transportation and communication networks and of the social environment. Other strategies would be to ensure affordable housing for lower to middle class households. In an area like Sparks, with easier access to the shops, offices and services, the neighbourhood will be conducive for its residents and to create a liveable environment. It would also establish an attractive environment with a full range of social facilities in parallel with the housing area and within walking distance.

c) The use of open space in the revitalization process allows residential areas and the D'MOSS to complement each other. The residents of the area close to the D'MOSS would benefit from it if they keep it clean and not use it as a dumping ground as well as incorporating some of the open space in their yards. Recreational needs, for example, areas such as parks, play lots and playgrounds must be well maintained, conserved and preserved for effective usage. Community participation in this area would ensure that the environment does not deteriorate.

e) The local government together with the local community must endeavour to lower crime with neighbourhood watches and policing among the community. Increased employment can be encouraged by small businesses promoting commercial nodes in the area. It not only increases social networking but encourages community building and the refurbishment of public buildings. The community will take pride in what belongs to them and the things that interest them and produces remuneration in the long run. The upgrading and refurbishing of public housing and encourage private ownership may improve the appearance of the streetscape and public amenities; enhance physical and social infrastructure and encourage a sense of added security. This can only happen when the two entities work together as a team by helping financially and physically. Local government can assist substantially in the neighbourhood revitalization of Sparks as a residential area. Low income households in urban

areas have to cope with changing conditions and urban management and the land and housing markets may stunt or facilitate household strategies.

A municipal task team may be tasked to work on an area that they know nothing about but assume problems or benefits because of previous knowledge of some other place. If the community does not voice their opinion in the development planning process, there would not be any local support for such projects. With little or no influence of the community in the planning process, as in the case of Sparks, the area's opportunities were be limited, isolated and not fully exploited. Hence the need to promote community participation at all stages.

The needs of the community must be met, but at the same time their demands must be coherent with what the community can afford. Therefore they need the help of the experts and professionals, to work with them and to advise them on the best way to look after the land and the issues that would be most effective to get the most out of their communities. The widespread distrust of experts was a common feeling among the residents of Sparks which needs to be eradicated immediately for the process of planning to be a valuable one.

From this study, the community must be educated on how the process of development plans that take place in their community. The encouragement of different viewpoints and open exchange of different opinions were of vital importance of community participation. Secondly, the community must place its leaders in positions of importance, such as, a chairman, a vice chairman and a treasurer, for them to get extensive information especially in areas where there are no clear leadership at the local level, for example some residents did not know the ward councillor. These leaders were sometimes left vulnerable because they may not be able to make changes and promises were left empty because of inefficiency of the experts. Local government have the time and the resources for such endeavours, it might be time consuming but it ultimately works for the quality of life for the residents of the area. Programmes must be developed from within the community to monitor the urban processes properly and ensure that revitalization takes place. And as in most cases, sustainability had to be taken into consideration to ensure a viable environment for future generations.

When delivering developmental products, decision-making may list all the alternatives and the courses of action, then identify and evaluate the consequences. The rational comprehensive planning model examines everything in detail, which was from identifying problems and needs to evaluating and managing programme. Participation must be vividly evident at the beginning,

during and at the end of any planning process. The public must be a part of the testing, refining, reduction and evaluation of the planning process. This was depicted in detail in chapter two of this study.

Community participation adds the credibility to decisions that were made during the planning process. By achieving a communication structure, the planning process would be efficient and successful. The aims of community participation were the education of the people, which would inevitably lead to a self-sufficient community. Conflicts would be resolved most easily and projects would work efficiently. The participants' experience, values, beliefs, prejudices and attitudes were vital in the process of community participation. Furthermore;

Finally it was concluded, through this study, that effective neighbourhood revitalization needs local government's involvement and relevant community participation for successful implementation. It had not been occurring in Sparks due to partial revitalization occurring haphazardly in areas and not in others. Neighbourhood revitalization needs local government and the local community to work together for more effective and efficient results.

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Questionnaires for the Residents of Sydenham:

Demographics:

Age: 25- 35 36-50 51-65 66 and over

Sex: Male or Female

Marital Status: Single Married

Residential Status: Ownership or Rental

Occupation: Skilled or Semi-skilled

Income Bracket: 35-50k 51-70 k 71-100k 101k +

Education level: High School or Tertiary

Opinions about the area:

1. How long have you lived in the area?

- 0 - 10 years 11 - 20 years 21 + years

2. Where did you live before then?

- neighboring suburbs within the Ethekwini Municipality

- another Province (please specify)

3. How do you feel about the neighborhood you live in?

- safe unsafe

4. How would you like to change it?

5. Do you like living in this area? Yes No

If yes explain,
if no explain.

Neighborhood Revitalization:

3.6. Do you think that Sydenham has physically improved during recent years?

3.6.1. What have the changes been?

3.7. Have the changes or improvements increased the quality of life for you as a resident?

3.7.1. How?

3.8. Do you think more work needs to be done in the area?

3.8.1. What would you like to see?

3.9.1. Sparks, Randles and Brickfield Roads are economic nodes, do you use any of these roads to shop in? Please specify below;

	SHOPS	OFFICES	WAREHOUSES	FACTORIES
ROADS				
Sparks				
Randles				
Brickfield				

3.10. Do you shop in the area for daily necessities?

If yes, please explain, if no, please explain.

3.11. What is the present condition and level of services provided in the area? namely; Roads, Stormwater Drainage, Sanitation pipes, Electricity, Refuse Collection.

Please fill in the table below;

	Roads	Stormwater	Sanitation	Electricity	Refuse
Excellent					
Very Good					
Good					
Satisfactory					
Unsatisfactory					
Poor					
Very Poor					

3.12. What is your view on the extension of the N3 freeway adjacent to Randles Road?

3.13. Is crime a problem in the area?

3.13.1. Have you had any personal experiences with crime?
If yes, please explain.

3.13.2. What do you think can be done about it?

3.14. Do you plan on staying as a resident in the area?

Yes

No

If Yes explain, If no Explain

3.15. Are you aware that some improvements have been made by Council?

3.15.1. Are you aware of private improvements that have been made in the area?

3.16. Do you own the house/flat that you are living in at the moment?

3.17. What do you estimate its market value to be?

3.18. What would you like to do to improve your house/flat?

3.19. Do you use any of the public facilities (parks, sports fields, libraries, etc) in

the area? Yes No

If yes, please fill in the Roads' Name in the table below;

	LOCATION OF AVAILABLE AMENITIES
AVAILABLE AMENITIES	
PARKS	
SPORT FIELD	
LIBRARIES	
SWIMMING POOL	
TENNIS COURTS	
OTHER	

3.20. Do your children (assuming you have any) school in the area?

Yes

No

3.20.1. If no, how do they get to school?

Community Participation:

4.1. Are there any committees that you are familiar with in the area?

4.1.1. Are you a member of any committee or organization that deals with the upgrade of your residential area?

4.1.2. If yes, what is your contribution to the organisation?

4.1.3. If no, do you know of any groups in the area?

4.2. What is your role in the Sydenham community as an inhabitant of the area?

4.3. Do you know who the Ward Councilor is and what is his/her function in the area?

4.4. Have you ever approached the Councilor in charge with any concerns?

4.5. Did you know that he is the voice of the community to the Ethekewini

Municipality?

4.6. Sydenham is situated along main arterial Roads, namely; N3, Brickfield Road, Sparks Road, Randles Road, etc. do you think that it is ideal as a residential node?

Thank You

Questionnaire for the Businessman Owners

1. Name of the shop:
2. Owner: Yes or No
3. What do you sell?
4. Do you live in the area?
5. What role do you play in the Sydenham area?
6. What are your views on the area?
7. Do you think it requires revitalization?
8. When last have you made improvements to your property?
9. What else do you think can be done?
10. Do you take part any community forum?
11. Are there any that you are aware of?
12. What do you think would happen if you had a business forum?
13. Do you know any of the surrounding businesses?
14. Do you have any other businesses outside of Sparks?
15. What problems do you think affects a residential area like Sydenham at present?
16. Is Sydenham growing and changing or has it stagnated for the past few years?
17. Crime has become a concern, what are your views on how people have responded to it?
18. How would you say the area links itself to surrounding areas economically and commercially?
19. Do you think the community has the potential to thrive socially and economically as an residential area should?
20. How do you think you contribute to the area as a shop owner?

Interview for the Local Municipality's Officials

1. Position held:

2. What are your views, as a planner, on areas like Sparks for example?

3. Do you think that suburbs need constant upgrading?

4. What makes an area a target for neighborhood revitalization?

5. Who do you think aids the revitalization process?

6. What role does the local government play within the developmental process in the area?

7. Are there private initiatives, for areas like Sparks, to revitalize the area that you are aware of?

8. Who are the
a) non-profitable

b) profitable stakeholders?

9. How is community participation undertaken in established residential areas such as Sparks?

10. Do all residents have (a) a say in the developmental process, (b) if no, explain?

11. What are the current problems affecting a residential areas such as Sparks?

12. Is Sparks growing and changing?

13. Has it stagnated in the past few years?

14. Do you think road safety is an issue? And if so, how is Council addressing it?

15. Crime has become a concern, what are your views on how residents have responded to it?

16. Are there any social, environmental or physical problems linked to the developmental processes that have occurred already?

17. How would you say the area links itself to surrounding areas economically and commercially?

18. Do you think the community has the potential to thrive
(a) socially
(b) economically?

19. What is Spark's position in the urban context of Durban as a whole?

Questionnaires for Councilor Baig

1. How does one become a Ward Councilor?
2. When did you start your appointment?
3. Prior to you taking the position, were you involved in similar activities?
4. How do you assist the community?
5. Which areas are parts of your jurisdiction? Can you only belong to one district or suburb?
6. Could you name the projects that you've been actively involved in?
7. How would you describe service delivery for the kind of work that you do for Sydenham?
8. How would you describe Sydenham as a neighborhood?
9. Could you list a few Strengths and Weaknesses of the area?
10. Which areas do you think needs to be revitalized in the neighborhood?
11. When you sit with Council, is Sydenham part of the capital budget?
12. What is expected of you as a Councilor from the residents?
13. How do you deal with community pressures?
14. Are there Community meetings that take place for the upkeep of Sydenham?
15. When are these meetings?
16. How does one get involved in these meetings?
17. How can a person become actively involved in community participation and actually make a difference?
18. What happens with the exhorbiant rate fees that are paid by residents yet no visible improvements are been made?
19. The highly published "Sydenham Heights revamping" of R9 million took place recently and yet nothing has changed except for cosmetic improvements. Should there have been an improvement in the existing

facilities as well as painted buildings, upgraded parking areas, upgraded clinic and security features?

20. On a personal level, what would you change about the area?