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Leveraging malboro gautrain precinct (MGSP) for inclusive green urbanism ithe Gauteng city region

Ismail, Taariq

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Abstract

The MGSP has potential to be a space that develops into a precinct rooted within the principles of inclusive green urbanism. Currently the precinct is not adapting to its optimum potential given the opportunity of the Gautrain station.

With the advent of large mega-projects adjoining the precinct, an economically high income "triangle" is created with Alexandra in the centre. The value of the precinct is expected to gain momentum and the risk of socio-economic exploitation and gentrification can lead to spatial displacement of the low-income residents. This study intends to use the Precinct as a case-study in order to evaluate how one could leverage the surrounding urban development mega-projects to transform the MGSP in pursuit of enhanced inclusive green urbanism for the GCR and thus inform efforts towards integrated urban development with enhanced inclusive green urbanism as the primary goal. The sub-questions seek to understand the inclusivity value of the MGSP for the GCR; the MGSPs transformation constraining factors; and how best to transform the MGSP in a manner that mitigates the risk of gentrification and displacement. The methodology was based on a qualitative approach with primary data collected through interviews and secondary data captured from policy and planning reports and the relevant municipal and provincial policies.

The study finds that the MGSP has a high inclusivity and transformative value with vast potential for the Precinct to be transformed into a thriving inter-modal TOD precinct within Johannesburg and the GCR. However, limitations are noted, such as the uncertainty surrounding the vacant Frankenwald land within the precinct. In addition, private sector developers do not fully acknowledge their significant opportunity to contribute to the transformation of Alexandra.

If planned responsively, and especially within the framework of inclusive green urbanism, and specifically based on a TOD focus then the transformation potential for the precinct and the greater Alexandra areas is now ripe. This would optimise value and quality of life for its current and future residents.

Key words: Alexandra; Gentrification; Inclusive green urbanism; Inclusivity value; Inter-modal TOD; Mega-projects; Socio-economic exploitation; Spatial displacement; Transformation constraints; Transformation potential