

DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my own, autonomous work. It is submitted in completion of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been previously presented for examination in any degree in this or any other university.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this Thesis to my one and only son: Philani Dube, he will grow wiser and smarter and my parents: Bindingwe Dube and Queen Khumalo. I am certain that the way they brought me up, gave me the courage and reasons that necessitated the completion of this work.

ABSTRACT

City Improvement Districts (CID) have emerged as a new urban management tool in response to problems such as crime and grime and the perceived failure of municipalities to deal with these challenges. CIDs are supposed to be empowering local communities in managing their urban environments. This study examines the decision-making processes and the structure of the first *residential* CID in Johannesburg, Legae La Rona, located in the low income inner city neighbourhood of Berea. The literature reveals that on one hand CIDs are successful in cleanliness, safety and security encouraging consumers and investors back to these districts leading to economic and social revival of the area and that they lead to exclusion of the poor on the other hand. Using qualitative methodology for data collection and data analysis, my findings are that firstly, decision-making processes is captured by big property owners leading to subordination of small property owners and the complete marginalization of tenants who constitute the majority of residents. The structure of decision-making of Legae La Rona is opaque, with little ability to contest decisions made by these major property owners. Secondly, the City of Johannesburg shares the CID objectives (urban regeneration) but lets the private sector independently run and implement it. Finally the processes of decision-making in Legae La Rona have multi-dimensions of exclusion of the most voiceless members in the urban environment. Decision-making processes within a CID have varied upshots to the poor communities living in urban areas implying that it is not a best tool for urban management in low-income residential areas.

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