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People's place in the world class city: the case of Braamfontein's inner city regeneration project

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ABSTRACT

If it is undeniable that the Braamfontein Regeneration Project has been able to bring back people to a previously semi-abandoned area. It is important to analyse who and which kind of changes are attracted and dismissed as a result of this project The study examines neighbourhood regeneration in Braamfontein in order to test the extent to which it is an example of similar regeneration developments across global cities, and especially in emerging economies. One part of current global literature suggests that such neighbourhood regeneration has been dominated in recent decades by an inversion of interests from public to private. In the Braamfontein case – situated here through detailed documentary, mapping and image research – the study finds that the border between private and public is very ambiguous. Public agencies, private businesses and developers pursue similar and different goals with varying methods. A 'profitable vision of the city' which is clear for public authorities and private developers is not necessarily perceived or shared by most of the users (residents, business owners, consumers from other zones). The overall conclusion is that Braamfontein is a contradictory example of urban neighbourhood change which partly fits with and partly contradicts the global model, but which seems to reinforce the creation of a segregated consumption space in Johannesburg.