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Dry port support: urban strategies for City Deep's Terrain Vague

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2012-08-13
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/11749

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DRY PORT SUPPORT

Urban Strategies for City Deep's *Terrain Vague*

ABSTRACT

Every year 310 000 containers are transported by rail into City Deep and Kazerne container terminals. By 2020, this number should increase to 500 000. (City of Johannesburg Transportation Department, 2009, 1) Although Transnet owned railway yards and truck container depots are a huge economic drive in Johannesburg, much of this space is disused and degenerate.

To make use of the undeveloped spaces of City Deep would be to 'infill' vacancies, assisting in the promotion of the idea of a compact city. (Jenks, Burton & Williams, 1996) The compact city draws parallels to the notion of the 'resilient city' in that transportation and overall infrastructure costs decrease. (South African Cities Network, 2011) The proposals of industrial or commercial activity in this area would result in the promotion of the economic growth of Johannesburg. These 'pockets' of land surrounding the marshalling yards and cargo depots are ideally located in that they exist within close proximity to the CBD. Transnet has proposed the expansion of its inter-modal container terminal Of Kazerne, along with road infrastructure and lighting masts across both City Deep and Kazerne. This 130 hectares of land is intended to meet a future demand of medium-rated space for containers. The surrounding processing industries are also forecast to grow in capacity and size. (City of Johannesburg Transportation Department, 2009, 14). What lacks amongst these expansive terrains, is any form of supporting facility, that which aids the labour force, the drivers of massive machinery, those which keep containers moving, the modern-day slave to globalization. The labour force will in the future, increase with the additional container depot space. The number of container trucks which transport these containers will consequently increase. A pinnacle 'cog' in the mechanism that is container transportation via road in Southern Africa, is City Deep and Kazerne, yet neither area yields any place regarding trucking maintenance. The road conditions of the area are subsequently threadbare and dilapidated with a great lack of coherence, signage, systematic movement and communication. Transnet previously had sole rights to freight transport from Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth into Johannesburg. Currently local road haul activity is now controlled by a variety of logistics companies. As a result, each container terminal acts independently as a smaller-scale operation. The loss of coherence and depot communication within City Deep prevails. Instead of one large container terminal, City Deep and Spoornet's Kazerne are both made up of various components which work independently from each other. This document serves to investigate the feasibility of restoring use into this terrain, a use which is simultaneously beneficial to surrounding communities, an expanding container terminal and the environment in which it wildly lies.

This thesis researches the amoung other things the specifics of a structure which has been designed to serve as a consistent resource, to give to a somewhat exploited and neglected group of transient people. The building centred primarily around the nature of a road, the massive turning circles of trucks and safe parking zones. Its accessibility and safe daytime character to provide assistance to truck drivers and additionally to City Deep service staff with access to hot meals, showers, laundry facilities, financial and medical assistance, as well as emotional support. It primary focus is truck maintenance. The facilities' importance reveals itself in that it acts as a catalytic point in this "terrain vague', in moving towards positive future transformations of the natural landscape