IMPROVING URBAN MANAGEMENT IN TOWNSHIPS
OVERVIEW

- The problem …it smells, its broken, its dirty, its dark, its noisy

- Why oh why? Let's blame apartheid and then let's look at what we are doing now to contribute

- Outcomes: why we need to do it well

- Some tools to help you do it better.
The core components of urban management

• The private domain:
  – demarcate and regulate private spaces (development control)
  – service private spaces (water, sewers, electricity)

• The public domain:
  – regulate the use of public spaces
  – improve and maintain public spaces and infrastructure
  – govern public spaces…enforce the rules (e.g. Durban beachfront)
THE PROBLEM

- Urban management inadequacies are one of the defining features of SA townships
- Examples of urban management problems in townships:
  - derelict public buildings
  - poorly maintained sewerage system
  - dumping and refuse
The problems manifest themselves as:

- Health and safety problems
- Nuisance to residential users
- Contestation over ‘ownership’ of the spaces
- Appropriation of public space by a specific interest group
- Public capital decays, and value is destroyed
- Public spaces and facilities lie ‘dead’ and are a liability to the municipality
- Impeded capital formation in adjacent private spaces, with exposure to public spaces
Outcomes

- Dignity: The township public and private environments are vibrant, safe, regulated, managed and maintained

- Active and involved citizens: Increased end-user/community involvement in urban management

- Equity: Higher equity standards in township services and public facilities compared to accepted standards of good practice in the overall city or town

- Sustainability: Higher rates of social and economic returns from investment in township public infrastructure

- Standards of liveability are increasingly adhered to within the private sphere
Historical factors contributing to urban management deficits

- Original township development inadequacies and the age of much of the township infrastructure
- Neglected upkeep post 1970s
- Political uprisings of 1980s and 1990s
- Inherited deficits and competing priorities for democratic local government (focus on expanding access vs maintaining access)
Factors impeding urban management in townships

- Insufficient AND inappropriate resource commitment to township urban management:
  - competing priorities for municipal budgets
  - easier to create new assets than to plan and finance asset management
  - easier to get budgets for high profile new investments than for standard maintenance expenditure
  - low rates income collected (due to predominance of low-income residential uses)

- Failure to mobilise the capacity of the community and private-sector: no culture and practice of partnerships

- No shared responsibilities between government and users (users become complacent)

- Planning and regulatory system inadequacy: ambivalence in public-sector responses to informal processes… the vast majority of economic activity is from the less-formal sector but our regulatory frameworks and by-laws don’t quite know how to deal with this
Three approaches to selecting urban management priorities in townships

1. Focus on getting the basics right

- **Premium city management service**
  - Capex
    - Broken windows
    - Slums & invasions
    - Safety & compliance
    - Illegal land uses
    - Trader & taxi management
  - All by law enforcement
    - Branding
    - Visioning & positioning
    - Marketing & events
    - Policing & crime prevention

- **Doing the basics and getting them right**
  - Opex
    - Traffic management
    - Potholes, bins, road markings, signage (too much, not enough)
    - Street lights, stormwater drains, road signs, flyposting, graffiti
    - Litter, litter, litter, parks & trees, manhole & drain covers etc.

**Key concept:** Joined up working vs Silos
2. Selecting spatial focus areas:
   - Start at key nodes
   - Key corridors

3. Selecting priority issues:
   - Issues that leverage maximum support and/or have major cascade/multiplier effects, e.g. crime, cleaning, greening
Four strategies to secure the resources needed for better urban management

1. Obtain value for money and efficiency gains:
   - Identify urban management wastages - unused public facilities, dead spaces: use what you have!
   - Double up: clustering of facilities save on security, management

2. Increase the allocation of public resources to township urban management:
   - Zero-based budgeting
   - Using leverage and gearing calculations to demonstrate the need
   - Using cost benefit analyses
3. Capture complementary revenue streams:
   • Public land and building incomes channelled into urban management activities (ring-fencing of income and revenue)

4. Mobilise urban management partnerships with the private-sector, user groups, NGOs and community organisations. Supplementary resources to be gained:
   • Financial contributions
   • Supplementary services
   • Supplementary management
   • ‘Sweat equity’
Urban management partners typically mobilised

- Property owners, e.g. CID's
- Informal traders (contracting with traders associations or cooperatives to provide cleaning, security and management services for informal markets)
- Small businesses (formal/informal agreements to provide security and cleaning services for a precinct)
- Taxi operators (contract with taxi associations to provide management and security services for taxi rank)
- Sports clubs (sports clubs provide maintenance service in return for use rights)
- Community groupings
- Church or religious groups
Intervening to improve urban management in townships

• How can township development practitioners make an impact at the urban management level?

• You must plan and budget for life-cycle costs of assets …if you can’t afford to service the hummer don’t buy a hummer!

• Regulations & bylaws…and enforce!

• You don’t have to do it all…partner with communities (sweat-equity), contract with community groups (service contracts), management partnerships with the private-sector etc

• EPWP wage subsidy: opportunities for mass cleaning, safety and maintenance employment for the benefit of townships (70% of people in townships are unemployed!)
CONCLUSION

• Urban management is a vital area of township development intervention

• It requires intervention at a number of levels, including the governance, regulation and servicing of private and public space

• Historical legacies and contemporary constraints make it a big and difficult task- constantly focusing on new capex does not address the core problem

• Focus and prioritise in order to get started - different ways of doing this

• Various strategies to mobilise the resources needed for urban management improvements need to be applied simultaneously

• Explore the full mix of institutional mechanisms for getting urban management functions executed and select ‘the best horses for courses’