THE CIRCLE NODE
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The Circle Node

Background

The Tswaragano area near the Circle in Galeshewe is one of the activity nodes identified in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The spot is intended for a business area in the Master Plan. The Circle Node will be called the Circle Area, while the real estate developer will be called the Circle Node. The Circle Area is considered a better alternative for this purpose.

The Circle Area is the natural centre in Galeshewe, where action is concentrated and in many ways it has a good potential to develop economically. It is surrounded by several economic activities, making the location even more central in the future.

Interviews with some traders have been done to get their opinions about trading facilities. To distinguish different areas from each other, the whole project area will be called the Circle Area and the part to the west will be called the Tswaragano Area.

The aim for the Circle Node is to strengthen the economic activities and create a centre of activities for the entire Galeshewe. This will be done through a mixed land use,use of public spaces, and attractive public spaces.

The area uses green building density and attractive public spaces in order to promote the economy. The plan is to develop several economic activities and create a centre of activities for the entire area.
From Township to Townscape

Situational analysis

In this chapter today’s situation in the Circle Area will be presented. The area has been identified as a priority area for development due to its central location and potential for growth. The land use and ownership in the area are as follows:

- Residential
- Vacant
- Open space/Park
- Business
- School
- Institutional

There are several undeveloped plots in the area, owned by private investors and the municipality. One investor is interested in having a shopping complex and a petrol station, while another is interested in starting a carwash. Map 6:4. “Car wash, shopping complex and petrol station” indicates the different interests in the area. Map 6:2. Land use according to the Master Plan

Map 6:3. The actually land use in the area

This chapter explores the potential and constraints of the area for future development. It highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to planning and development, considering the interests of various stakeholders. Map 6:5. Land use according to the Master Plan

In this chapter, the focus is on the Circle Area as well as its surrounding areas.
Business Map 6:5. Existing businesses in the area

In the Circle Area, both formal and informal businesses exist. The formal businesses consist of two small supermarkets (Pop In, TawakalShop Fish Crescent), a workshop for clothes making and some smaller businesses.

The informal activities in the Circle Node consist of a tavern, a shoe repair, two market stalls, a car wash and a car mechanics. Many of the informal activities seem to be quite successful but there is a lack of developed market stands. Some traders spoken to in the area are interested in renting stalls if such are offered.

In the Tswaragano area a small shopping complex is situated. It was subsidised by the municipality and built in 1985. Today a private company owns it. Premises in the buildings are for rent and several shops have taken them up. The concept is to have a "1-stop" service, but trendy shops are few. The shops are mainly of small size and most are empty. A few tobacco shops and a bar are open at night. The market stalls have enough space and a few "street traders" work from there.

Social environment

Map 6:6. Social amenities

The proposed land use mainly is open space/park but these are not developed and there is a lack of developed public spaces in the area. Different social amenities are situated in the area, for example a library and a community hall. The library is well used and has a nice garden. The community hall is well used and the area is clean and tidy.

In the area close to the Circle six schools are situated and some of them are only half filled with pupils. The schoolyards are in bad condition, only small parts are developed and big areas are left as grass for grazing. The entrances to the schools are not facing the Circle Area. In the area also a post office and a day care centre are situated.

In the proposed land use mapping is open space/park but there are no plans for developing any of these spaces.

Business Map 6:7. Proposed business

The formal businesses "Pop In" and a hairdresser are situated near the Circle Node. Some informal activities are also proposed, such as a hairdresser, a bar and a small workshop for clothes. The proposed land use mainly is open space/park but there are no plans for developing any of these spaces.
The north side of the park is not taken care of.

People from further afield walk through the area although a face surrounds the library and Community Hall.

Although a fence surrounds the library and Community Hall, it does not stop people from moving through the area.

Olive trees have been planted every ten meters along the main streets. The trees are today three to four meters high and do not give much shade.

The south side of Bambanani Community Park is developed.

The north side of the park is not taken care of.

Green structure

Schoolyards and fencing can look like this.

Although a face surrounds the library and Community Hall, it does not stop people from moving through the area.

Although a face surrounds the library and Community Hall, it does not stop people from moving through the area.
The Circle Node

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From Township to Townscape

**Housing**

Only one-storey single-family houses exist in the project area. The residential houses are quite large and well maintained compared to in other parts of Galeshewe. Most of the plots are around 1000 square meters. Some low-cost houses also exist, these are small, grey houses made of concrete blocks, looking the same.

**Roads and Traffic**

There are large flows of both pedestrian and car traffic in the Circle Area. The paved car roads in the area are between 18 and 22 meters wide. The plot boundaries along Sechoareng Street is about 18 meters, which is narrower than most other streets in Galeshewe.

The school buses and some routes for the public transportation start in the Circle. At some places small informal stops (ticki stops) are situated, where people stand and wait for a taxi.

In 1996 and 2001 approximately 1700 vehicles per day were counted in Sechoareng Street and 2500 in Nobengula Street. This shows that there is not a big problem with large traffic flows in the area, but the flows increases every day. With the new legislature area in the south of Galeshewe car traffic is estimated to increase even more.

Both large and small houses exist in the area.
From Township to Townscape

Analysis of the Circle Node

SWOT Analysis

**Strengths**
- Central location, in the heart of Galeshewe and eventually in one corner of the business triangle.
- Developers and investors are interested in the Circle Area.
- Public transports and large flows of people go through the area.
- Most of the land is owned by the municipality.

**Weaknesses**
- Poor implementation of plans: public spaces/parks suggested in the Master Plan do not exist.
- Bad location of the Tswaragano shopping complex, no targets of destination or paths close by.

**Opportunities**
- Its central location and unique character are good reasons for doing something special in the Circle Area.
- A starting point for public transportations, could act as a generator.
- Many vacant places that could be developed.
- More residential areas can give life to the area.

**Threats**
- Unsafe because of high crime rate.

City Structure Analysis

The concepts of the analysis are based on Kevin Lynch’s City Structure Analysis, but a concept of my own has also been presented, “targets of destination”.

**Landmarks**
- It is hard to orientate oneself in the area because of the lack of landmarks. The high mast light in the middle of the circle could be counted as a landmark, but could also be confused with other high mast lights on a long distance.

**Targets of destination**
- There are quite a lot of targets of destination in the Circle Area. Both the formal and informal businesses are located in the Circle.
- Central location and main destinations are good for the Circle Area.

**Important crossings (nodes)**
- In the area, primary streets and local destinations are considered.

**Paths**
- The major paths in the area are along Sechoareng- and Nontlatla Street. In some parts of the area accessibility is poor, which can be improved by better planning.

**Edges**
- There are a lot of enclosed areas close to the Circle. The edges that demarcate the area consist of either fencing or other structures. It is hard to orientate oneself if you never have been in the area before, as the edges of the Circle look the same all over.

**Districts**
- The character of the Circle Area is different from Galeshewe in general; the scale is larger and the streets are more open.

**Important crossings (nodes)**
- In the area primarily one crossing is of great importance, at the roundabout traffic comes from five different directions.

**Targets of destination**
- There are quite a lot of targets of destination to reach in the Circle Area. Both the formal and informal businesses are located in the Circle Area.
- Central location and main destinations are good for the Circle Area.

**Map 6.9. City Structure Analysis**
From Township to Townscape

Proposal for the Circle Node

The focus of the proposal is to create good conditions for economic growth in the Circle Area, where new and clear structures are developed. Service, business and residential areas are mixed, and workshops and neighborhood shopping are developed in conjunction to a new bus/street rank and metro. New residential areas, business and recreational areas are developed in the Circle Area, creating new green lungs and areas. The area around the Circle is developed for housing and recreational facilities.

Types of Suggestions

· Higher building density, by infill with buildings containing more than one floor, semidetached houses and apartment blocks.
· Attractive public spaces.
· Improved green structure by developing new parks and open green areas.
· Improved accessibility by creation of new streets and paths through today enclosed areas.
· Mixed land use with residential areas, service and business in the same blocks.
· A bus/taxi rank to work as an urban generator.
· A mixed land use with residential areas, service and business in the same blocks.
· A green corridor, connecting new open areas and existing parks.
· New landmarks.
· A new pool and a soccer field.

Map 6.9: Overview suggestions
From Township to Townscape

Streets and traffic

To get better accessibility in the area, more connections will be made by fitting new streets into the old network. The unique character of the area, with the five roads leading in to the town, will be maintained.

New parking facilities will be placed at the back of the buildings to prioritise pedestrians and people travelling with public transportations. In many places the parking lots are shared by day and night. The parking lots could therefore service them all. Parking along the streets is also suggested.

Green structure

A new green corridor will connect Bambanani Community Park with the two undeveloped open spaces directly outside the school. The park and roadsides will have green planting and lighting. The entrance to the park will be marked by a large sculpture that will welcome visitors.

An urban park is suggested close to the library and small green parks are planned in connection to the housing areas. The schoolyard is proposed to be a community park with playgrounds and barbeque places. The school is already grown up and will be preserved.

The park will be connected to the river with a new bridge. The river will be a natural resource for the community, providing a place for recreation and relaxation.

proposed street structure

bike lanes and pedestrian paths

4       3     2  1,5     3       3   1,5   2     3        4     meters

garden
planting zone
sidewalk
bike lane
car lane
car lane
bike lane
sidewalk
planting zone
garden

proposed green structure

playgrounds, barbeque places

park, green areas

Ramatshela Street
today

Ramatshela Street
tomorrow. Elevation, scale 1:400

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Building pattern

Some new plots for single-family households are made larger.

The suggested plan offers possibilities for many different kinds of new residential areas. Terraced houses, semi-detached houses and apartment blocks are suggested as well as detached houses. This new kind of houses in Galeshewe could be attractive and contribute with something special to the area.

The old buildings are preserved and made more visible. New buildings are designed in a way that some of them are integrated into the old buildings.

The suggested plan offers possibilities for many different kinds of new residential areas.

Some new plots for single-family households are rather large and others are small. The wide range of house alternatives is made to attract different kinds of households. The average plot size is quite large to attract middle-income households.

Building pattern

Example of houses in the area

Map 6.12 Overall building pattern, scale 1:5000

Old buildings

New buildings
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The Circle Area

New buildings for activities like a large grocery store, a cinema, a bank, offices, restaurants and cafés are suggested in the Circle Area together with apartments for residential use. In the Circle Area a station for public transport is suggested. The bus/taxi rank is planned together with a car wash and a petrol station and will generate large flows of people in the area.

In the Circle Area a station for public transport is suggested. The bus/taxi rank is planned together with a car wash and a petrol station and will generate large flows of people in the area.

New buildings in the Circle Area will create a large flow of people in the area.

The Circle Area

This picture shows what it looks like to enter the Circle Area today (from Sechoareng Street).

This picture shows what it could look like to enter the Circle Area in the future.

Picture of inspiration for the trading stalls, a tramstop in San Francisco, US.
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From Township to Townscape

Plan of the Circle with three public spaces and the combined taxi/petrol station. Scale 1:1000

Illustration of the taxi rank/filling station. Scale 1:100

The Circle with three public spaces and the combined taxi/petrol station. Scale 1:1000

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The Circle with three public spaces and the combined taxi/petrol station. Scale 1:1000
From Township to Townscape

Today the Library looks like this...
The large premises have two entrances and a rebuilding of them should therefore be quite easy to make. The complex could contain small workshops as a "nursery" for companies to grow. Eventually they could be prosperous enough to move to the Circle.

Also some new buildings for business are suggested in the area to offer less expensive space for rent. Instead of the vacant land around the shopping centre housing, streets and parking areas are proposed. This will provide more people and foot traffic for the development. Also some new buildings for business are suggested in the area to offer less expensive space for rent. Instead of the vacant land around the shopping centre this could be changed to office buildings and a swimming pool area with a pool for small children and dressing rooms situated in direct contact with the shopping complex and the new workshops in the area.

New recreational activities like a swimming pool and a soccer field are suggested in the area. The swimming pool area will contain a pool with shallow water for small children and dressing rooms situated in direct contact with the small shopping complex could be used also for other purposes.

The swimming pool and soccer field could be changed to multi-use areas for community sports and events. The existing school yard could be changed to office buildings and a playground.

New workshops and offices could be added to the Circle, providing new opportunities for economic growth. The Circle could become a hub for small businesses and community events. Even though the economic growth is encouraged to be concentrated in the Circle, the shopping complex in the Tswaragano area will still be utilised. The building contains both small and large premises and since some of the large premises are not let out today, a few of them could be changed and divided.
This is what Tswaragano Shopping complex looks like today.

Illustration plan, scale 1:400. Tswaragano shopping centre today

Proposal for improvement of Tswaragano Shopping centre with smaller shops and revitalisation of surroundings.

Proposal for improvement of Tswaragano Shopping centre with smaller shops and revitalisation of surroundings.
In the future, the Circle Area can look like this.

In the proposal 220 new residences are suggested, provided in:

- 65 terraced houses
- 45 semi-detached houses
- 70 single family houses
- 40 apartment flats