

**Reconceptualising Urban Public Open Spaces:  
A Case of Freedom Square in Mangaung,  
South Africa**

**Mildred Lindelwa Sinxadi**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the doctoral degree

**Doctor of Philosophy**

in the

Department of Urban and Regional Planning

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

University of the Free State

Promoter: Prof Maléne Campbell

Co-promoter: Prof Gerhard Bosman

January 2020

# Declaration

---

---

I, **Mildred Lindelwa Sinxadi**, declare that the thesis that I herewith submit for the doctoral degree Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Free State, is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

.....

**Mildred Lindelwa Sinxadi**

Student number: 2004059735

Date: .....

# Abstract

---

---

Urban public open spaces play a critical part in sustainable neighbourhoods. In recent years, urban public open spaces are gradually disappearing, and this affect the spatial patterns of urban land use. Enabling extensive interaction of all urban stakeholders has been described as a panacea for curbing the incidence of encroachment. However, the existence of different perceptions by these stakeholders concerning the value and usefulness of these spaces poses a challenge to effective management. This has resulted in planning, economic, environmental, recreational, and housing value conflicts. Also, available evidence indicates that the value of urban public open spaces has been neglected by urban stakeholders as the focus is on planning for other land uses. To bridge this gap, the study sought to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value, as well as to develop a framework for managing value conflicts, thereby enabling effective urban open space management in Mangaung, Free State province in South Africa.

This study adopted a case study research design and deployed a variety of techniques such as focus group discussions, face-to face semi-structured interviews and personal observation for data elicitation at different intervals. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposively recruited town planning, human settlements and environmental management professionals from local government. The focus group discussants included community members who have encroached upon urban public open spaces and those owning properties around open spaces. Also, observations were conducted around the study area. The data was then analysed thematically, and the findings were used to test the propositions through intra-case and cross-case study analysis. The study identified barriers in planning and management of urban public open spaces in Mangaung. These included lack of understanding of the value and utilisation of urban public open space; lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment as well as communication to engender community participation; evidence of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders; and absence of the management of the variety of perspectives during the planning and management of urban public open spaces.

It was observed that lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces led to urban public open space encroachment. The findings gave rise to the development of an Urban Public Open Space Management Framework. This framework indicates that effective community participation and effective value conflict management can lead to effective urban public open space management that will help to curb the incidence of

urban public open space encroachment. It is expected that the framework would guide planning professionals, other professionals and policymakers involved in urban planning to plan and manage urban public open spaces effectively within the province and beyond.

**Key terms:** Cross-case analysis; Freedom Square; Spatial patterns; Intra-case analysis; Urban public open space encroachment; Sustainable neighbourhoods; Urban public open spaces; Urban Public Open Space Management Framework; Value conflict management

## List of publications

---

---

The following papers have been published in conference proceedings and were done to add value to the research but does not contribute to the credit value of the doctoral qualification. (Note that Toba was the surname of the author when she was still married. She took back her maiden name, Sinxadi, when she got divorced.)

Sinxadi, L. (published as Toba, L.) 2019. Perceptions of urban stakeholders concerning the value of urban open spaces in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Paper presented at the *11<sup>th</sup> Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Postgraduate Research Conference*, 28-30 July 2019, Johannesburg, South Africa. [First published online in 2019 as conference paper and in 2020 included as a chapter in the book *The construction industry in the Fourth Industrial Revolution*.]

Sinxadi, L. (published as Toba, L.) 2020. Perceptions of urban stakeholders concerning the value of urban open spaces in Bloemfontein. In Aigbavboa, C. & Thwala, W. (Eds.), *The construction industry in the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, pp. 440-449. CIDB 2019. Springer, Cham. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-26528-1\_44

Sinxadi, L. (published as Toba, L.) & Campbell, M. 2018. Factors influencing urban open space encroachment: The case of Bloemfontein, South Africa. In: *Proceeding of the 6<sup>th</sup> Smart and Sustainable Built Environment Conference*, 4-7 December 2018, Sydney, Australia.

# Acknowledgements

---

---

Thank You, Almighty God, for your goodness and mercy. It would have been impossible for me to finish this doctoral journey without You. All Glory belongs to You.

As a child, I longed to be called Dr Sinxadi when I grew up, little did I know that the doctoral journey would not be as easy as I thought. For years it remained as just a dream to be achieved, until I embarked on it. It has not been an easy journey for me but it was achieved through the support and efforts of different individuals. I would therefore like to acknowledge the following individuals who walked this journey with me:

- My promoter, Prof Maléne Campbell, for encouraging me to do my doctoral studies and for believing in me. I thank her for unwavering support, guidance and words of encouragement. I appreciate all her efforts, critical insights, timeous feedback. Thank you for encouraging me to persevere and work even harder. Thank you for being more than a supervisor to me.
- My co-promoter, Prof Gerhard Bosman, for his continued guidance and support
- My mentor, Prof Bankole Awuzie, for not giving up on me. I appreciate all his academic support and effort because I would not been where I am today if it was not for his unwavering support. I am grateful for the various academic opportunities he created for me in the research world.
- The research participants for setting time aside to assist me with interviews as well as the GIS unit at MMM for rendering support with all the maps. This study would not have been successful without them.
- The University of the Free State for the academic support through sessions at the Post-graduate School as well as for funding my studies.
- My daughters, Katleho and Kutloano, for their understanding and patience. I am grateful for all their support and continued encouragement, especially when I felt that this journey is getting tougher. I thank them for walking this journey with me. I therefore dedicate this study to them.
- To my sister, Prof Phumla Zuleika Sinxadi, for being an inspiration to me. She made me believe in myself and believe that walking and succeeding in this journey is possible. I am indeed grateful of her continued support.
- My technical editor, Mrs Dora du Plessis, for not only editing my research but also ensuring that it is well presented. I appreciate everything she has done for me.
- To all my family members, spiritual family and friends, for their prayers, encouragement and support.
- My colleagues at the Central University of Technology, Department of Built Environment, for making me realise that I am not alone in this journey. Thank you for your support.

# Table of Contents

---

---

<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of publications</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>xii</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>xiv</b>
<b>List of Boxes</b> .....	<b>xv</b>
<b>List of Acronyms and Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>xvi</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Chapter introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the study .....	1
1.3 Problem statement.....	7
1.4 Research question and sub-research questions .....	9
1.4.1 Research question.....	10
1.4.2 Sub-research questions.....	10
1.5 Research propositions .....	10
1.6 Aim and objectives of the study.....	11
1.6.1 Research aim .....	11
1.6.2 Research objectives .....	11
1.7 Relationship between research objectives and research questions.....	11
1.8 Research methodology .....	12
1.9 Scope and limitation of the study .....	16
1.10 Contribution to knowledge.....	16
1.11 Thesis structure .....	17
1.12 Chapter summary .....	18
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>UNDERSTANDING URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES – A REVIEW</b> .....	<b>20</b>
2.1 Chapter introduction.....	20
2.2 Defining urban public open spaces in sustainable communities.....	20

2.3	Planning and design of urban public open spaces .....	22
2.4	Theoretical lens .....	24
2.4.1	Benefits and opportunities of urban public open spaces .....	24
2.4.2	Value conflicts of urban public open spaces .....	29
2.5	Urban public open spaces and sustainable neighbourhoods – A review .....	30
2.5.1	Sustainable neighbourhoods and open space planning.....	31
2.5.2	Sustainable development in the planning practice .....	32
2.6	Encroachment of open spaces as a societal malaise .....	34
2.6.1	Causal factors of urban public open space encroachment.....	34
2.6.2	Measures to curb the incidence of encroachment.....	39
2.6.3	Challenges hindering implementation of the management of urban public open spaces .....	41
2.7	'Nature-based Solutions' and urban public open spaces – Connecting the dots.....	41
2.8	Chapter summary .....	43
<b>Chapter 3</b>		
<b>RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES AND PLANNING .....</b>		<b>45</b>
3.1	Chapter introduction.....	45
3.2	Urban public open space planning .....	45
3.2.1	What is planning? .....	45
3.2.2	Different theories of planning – A review .....	46
3.2.3	Planning models associated with urban public open spaces.....	51
3.3	Community participation in planning.....	55
3.3.1	Defining community participation .....	55
3.3.2	Arnstein's ladder of participation .....	56
3.3.3	Drivers and opportunities of community participation .....	61
3.3.4	Challenges of community participation in planning .....	62
3.3.5	Different contextual perspectives of community participation .....	64
3.4	Value conflicts and urban public open spaces.....	66
3.4.1	Urban stakeholders .....	67
3.4.2	Values of urban stakeholders on urban land.....	68
3.4.3	Influence of value conflicts on urban public open spaces.....	69
3.5	Conceptual framework – Urban public open space management framework .....	70
3.6	Chapter summary .....	71
<b>Chapter 4</b>		
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....</b>		<b>73</b>
4.1	Chapter introduction.....	73
4.2	Background to the study .....	73

4.3	Research methodology .....	74
4.4	Philosophical assumptions .....	76
4.4.1	Epistemological stance .....	76
4.4.2	Ontological stance .....	77
4.4.3	Axiological stance .....	77
4.4.4	Justification of the research study's philosophical stance .....	77
4.5	Research approach.....	78
4.6	Research strategy .....	80
4.6.1	Case study research strategy .....	81
4.7	Study research design (Methodological choice) .....	88
4.7.1	Rationale for qualitative research design .....	88
4.7.2	Data collection techniques and procedures .....	89
4.7.3	Pilot testing.....	93
4.7.4	Qualitative data analysis.....	94
4.8	Ethical considerations .....	94
4.9	Constraints and limitations .....	95
4.10	Chapter summary .....	96
<b>Chapter 5</b>		
<b>PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN FREEDOM SQUARE, MANGAUNG – A RESEARCH CONTEXT .....</b>		
		<b>97</b>
5.1	Chapter introduction.....	97
5.2	About Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.....	97
5.2.1	Brief historical background .....	97
5.2.2	Spatial patterns of Mangaung.....	100
5.3	Background of the Case study area – Freedom Square.....	103
5.3.1	Origin of Freedom Square .....	103
5.3.2	Urban public open spaces in Freedom Square .....	107
5.4	Incidences of urban public open space encroachment in Freedom Square.....	109
5.4.1	Quality of urban public open spaces .....	110
5.4.2	Challenges facing urban public open spaces.....	114
5.4.3	Position of urban public open spaces in the Spatial Development Framework of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality .....	116
5.5	Community participation.....	117
5.6	Sustainability literacy levels and urban public open spaces in Mangaung.....	119
5.7	'Nature-based Solutions' application in Mangaung.....	119
5.8	Chapter summary .....	121

<b>Chapter 6</b>	
<b>INTRA-CASE ANALYSIS BASED ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF URBAN STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES .....</b>	<b>122</b>
6.1 Chapter introduction.....	122
6.2 Description of the research propositions .....	123
6.3 Information of the research participants interviewed .....	124
6.3.1 Directorate: Planning .....	125
6.3.2 Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries .....	126
6.3.3 Directorate: Human Settlements.....	127
6.3.4 Political office .....	127
6.4 Research multiple cases (intra-case analysis) .....	129
6.4.1 Case 1 (UPOS1).....	129
6.4.2 Case 2 (UPOS2).....	149
6.4.3 Case 3 (UPOS3).....	166
6.4.4 Case 4 (UPOS4).....	179
6.5 Summary of the findings from the different cases.....	191
6.6 Chapter summary .....	194
<b>Chapter 7</b>	
<b>CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS BASED ON THE VALUE CONFLICTS BY DIFFERENT URBAN STAKEHOLDERS.....</b>	<b>195</b>
7.1 Chapter Introduction .....	195
7.2 Discussion and analysis of the findings (cross-case analysis).....	196
7.2.1 Research proposition 1.....	198
7.2.2 Research proposition 2.....	202
7.2.3 Research proposition 3.....	206
7.3 Analytical generalisation .....	212
7.3.1 Lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces lead to urban public open space encroachment .....	212
7.3.2 Fostering community participation during planning processes poses significant challenges for municipalities .....	213
7.3.3 Varying value conflicts among the different urban stakeholders relate to poor management of urban public open spaces .....	214
7.4 Framework development and validation.....	216
7.4.1 Proposed conceptual framework .....	216
7.4.2 Application of the proposed conceptual framework.....	220
7.4.3 Validation of the proposed conceptual framework.....	221
7.5 Chapter summary .....	222

<b>Chapter 8</b>	
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>223</b>
8.1 Chapter introduction.....	223
8.2 Review of the research process .....	223
8.3 Reflection of the major findings of the study .....	226
8.3.1 Research question 1.....	226
8.3.2 Research question 2.....	227
8.3.3 Research question 3.....	228
8.3.4 Research question 4.....	229
8.3.5 Research question 5.....	230
8.3.6 Research question 6.....	230
8.4 Recommendations of the study.....	231
8.4.1 Recommendations for practice and policy .....	231
8.4.2 Recommendations for future studies .....	233
8.5 Research contribution to the body of knowledge.....	234
8.6 Final conclusions .....	235
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	
<b>ETHICAL APPROVAL.....</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>Appendix B</b>	
<b>CONSENT LETTER FROM THE MUNICIPALITY .....</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Appendix C</b>	
<b>RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM.....</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Appendix D</b>	
<b>SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>Appendix E</b>	
<b>FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOL .....</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Appendix F</b>	
<b>FRAMEWORK VALIDATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....</b>	<b>262</b>

## List of Figures

---

---

Figure 1.1:	Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality: Locality map .....	8
Figure 1.2:	Encroached urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Freedom Square).....	14
Figure 1.3:	Unbuilt urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Freedom Square) .....	14
Figure 1.4:	Functional urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Kagisanong).....	15
Figure 1.5:	Organisational classification of the study.....	18
Figure 2.1:	Effect of rapid urbanisation in South Africa.....	36
Figure 2.2:	Effect of rapid urbanisation in African countries.....	36
Figure 3.1:	Howard's garden city model and its relationship with sustainable neighbourhoods .....	54
Figure 3.2:	Arnstein's ladder of participation .....	57
Figure 3.3:	Urban public open space management framework.....	71
Figure 4.1:	Nested research methodological framework.....	75
Figure 4.2:	Basic types of case study designs.....	82
Figure 4.3:	Urban public open spaces in Freedom Square that are encroached for residential purposes .....	84
Figure 4.4:	Urban public open space used as an active park in Mangaung .....	85
Figure 5.1:	Plans of the origin of Bloemfontein from 1846 to 1880 .....	98
Figure 5.2:	Plans of the spatial growth of Bloemfontein from 1904 to 2015 .....	99
Figure 5.3:	Map of the location of the study area.....	99
Figure 5.4:	Spatial patterns of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.....	101
Figure 5.5:	Characteristics of the apartheid city in comparison with Bloemfontein.....	102
Figure 5.6:	Map of the Old Bloemfontein indicating the location of the study area.....	104
Figure 5.7:	Location of Freedom Square .....	105
Figure 5.8:	Layout plan of Freedom Square in 1992 .....	106
Figure 5.9:	Aerial photo of erf 37321, Freedom Square.....	111
Figure 5.10:	Aerial photo of erf 36502, Freedom Square.....	112
Figure 5.11:	Aerial photo of erf 35180, Freedom Square.....	113
Figure 5.12:	Aerial photo of erf 50763, Kagisanong, illustrating the quality of the urban open space .....	114

Figure 5.13: Urban open spaces that were encroached by dwellers and are rezoned for residential purposes .....	115
Figure 5.14: Position of urban open spaces in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality Spatial Development Framework .....	117
Figure 6.1: Relationship chart of the different urban stakeholders involved in urban open space planning .....	128
Figure 6.2: Amendment of the general plan, rezoning and subdivision on erf 32371, Freedom Square .....	130
Figure 6.3: Portion of the general plan for UPOS1 .....	131
Figure 6.4: Photo of a portion of erf 32371, Freedom Square, indicating the nature of the area.....	131
Figure 6.5: Photos of different portions of erf 32371, Freedom Square, indicating the nature of the area.....	149
Figure 6.6: Photos of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area.....	150
Figure 6.7: Photo of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area.....	155
Figure 6.8: Portion of the general plan for UPOS2 .....	155
Figure 6.9: Photo of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area.....	156
Figure 6.10: Photo of Magashule Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area.....	167
Figure 6.11: Portion of the General Plan of UPOS3 before the closure of a park and rezoning .....	170
Figure 6.12: Aerial photo of the recreational park (UPOS4) in Kagisanong .....	180
Figure 6.13: Photos of the recreational park in Kagisanong .....	184
Figure 6.14: Photo of the recreational park in Kagisanong .....	184
Figure 6.15: Photo of the recreational park in Kagisanong .....	185
Figure 6.16: Photo of the adopted park in Kagisanong.....	187
Figure 6.17: Conceptual framework .....	194
Figure 7.1: First draft of the proposed conceptual framework.....	217
Figure 7.2: Second draft of the proposed conceptual framework.....	219
Figure 7.3: Final draft of the proposed conceptual framework.....	220

## List of Tables

---

---

Table 1.1	Relationships between research questions and research objectives .....	12
Table 2.1:	Summary of the different terminology and definitions of open spaces .....	21
Table 2.2:	Environmental values of urban public open spaces.....	30
Table 3.1:	Comparison between planning theories and levels of participation.....	60
Table 4.1:	Research approaches .....	79
Table 4.2:	Basic characteristics of a case study as a qualitative approach.....	80
Table 4.3:	Zoning and permissible uses.....	83
Table 4.4:	Summary of the sample size for the study.....	87
Table 5.1:	Zoning and permissible uses: Erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 in Freedom Square, Mangaung .....	109
Table 6.1:	Research participants – Planning.....	126
Table 6.2:	Research participants – Human settlements .....	127
Table 6.3:	Summary of the findings for different cases.....	192
Table 7.1:	Relationship between the new propositions and sub-research questions .....	197
Table 7.2:	Research participants .....	197
Table 7.3:	Value conflicts of different urban stakeholders .....	209
Table 7.4:	Factors influencing urban public open space encroachment .....	210
Table 8.1:	Summary of the review of the research process.....	226

## List of Boxes

---

---

Box 6.1:	Respondents views regarding the understanding of urban public open space .....	136
Box 6.2:	Respondents views regarding the poor management of urban public open space .....	138
Box 6.3:	Respondents views regarding their perception regarding the value of urban public open space .....	148
Box 6.4:	Respondents views regarding the poor management of urban public open space .....	157
Box 6.5:	Respondents' views regarding absence of profound support of the municipality and budget constraints of urban public open space .....	159
Box 6.6:	Respondents' views on their perception regarding the value of urban public open space .....	165
Box 6.7:	Respondents' views on their perception regarding the value of urban public open space .....	179

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

---

---

BEPP	Built Environment Performance Plan
CBD	Central business district
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
MLM	Mangaung Local Municipality
MMM	Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality
MOSS	Metropolitan Open Space System
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
PSC	Public Service Commission
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SPLUMA	Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

---

---

### 1.1 Chapter introduction

Chapter 1 provides an orientation of the study. The review of the background of the study forms the basis of the study, followed by the problem statement. The research questions and sub-research questions are also highlighted, followed by the initial research propositions. Other sections of this chapter outline the following:

- Research aims and objectives of the study.
- Relationship between research objectives and research questions.
- Review of the research methodology.
- Scope and limitations of the study.
- Detailed contribution of the research to practice and policy.
- Organisational structure of the study.
- Chapter summary.

### 1.2 Background of the study

Rapid changes in land use and the occupancy patterns on urban public open spaces have created value conflicts in terms of the quest for sustainable neighbourhoods. Different urban stakeholders involved in planning have different values and perceptions on the use and values of urban public open spaces. These value conflicts include economic, public good or recreational, environmental and housing values. The differing perceptions make it difficult for planners to achieve the planning objectives for urban public open spaces and other issues such as housing and land use management. Urban public open spaces also display a component of sustainable development in that they promote social community inclusion and they possess environmental, social and economic benefits. The planning and development of urban public open spaces in neighbourhoods are important for its sustainability. Open spaces in neighbourhoods are defined as “any unbuilt land within the boundary or designated envelope of a village, town or city which provides, or has the potential to provide, environmental, social and/or economic benefits to communities, whether direct or indirect” (Kit Campbell Associates, 2001:62). This is an indication that these open spaces play both a social and ecological role in structuring sustainable neighbourhoods. Berke and Conroy (2000:22) highlighted that the key role for sustainable development is to create equity and fairness to

the future generation. This is achieved by the values of sustainable development towards the environment, the economy and society. Also, sustainable development includes economic, social and environmental dimensions. Watson (2006:33) identified interrelated axes of differences that are crucial in planning, namely 'inter-group' and 'state–citizen' differences. These differences indicate that planners are confronted with conflicting rationalities and this make any consensus on planning issues difficult.

Urban public open spaces are an integral part in land use planning and are viewed to be critical to the environment and the quality of life. In terms of a town planning perspective, developments must constitute open spaces even though there are no criteria on the number, location and usage of these spaces in any development. The terms 'open space', 'urban open space', 'green space', 'public open space' are used interchangeably in planning. Different scholars used different terminologies to define urban public open spaces and the differentiation is in terms of the space, location, development and function. The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act (United Kingdom, 1972), define open space as "land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground". Furthermore, Turner (1992:366) mentioned the importance of the usage of the term 'open space' which was employed for the first time in the London 1833 Select Committee on Public Walks. The Open Spaces Act, 1906 (United Kingdom, 1906:11) defined an open space as "any land, whether enclosed or not, on which there are no buildings or of which not more than one-twentieth part is covered with buildings, and the whole or the remainder of which is laid out as a garden or is used for purposes of recreation, or lies waste and unoccupied".

In this study, the researcher employs the term 'urban public open space' because it suits the description of the study that focuses on the non-built environments dominated by the natural environment. An urban public open space refers to the public land that is undeveloped but has been zoned for a specific future use. In terms of the Mangaung by-laws regarding open spaces (Mangaung Local Municipality [MLM] 2007:2), an open space is defined as "any open space in ownership of the municipality which is situated outside of normally built-up areas ... but is not limited to nature reserves, game farms, riverine vegetation and private open spaces". These by-laws also state that where an urban public open space is used for urban development, the developer is obliged to provide and develop a portion of an open space elsewhere (MLM, 2007:8). Consultation with the different urban stakeholders in such development is crucial. Furthermore, Mashalaba (2013:40) defined an urban open space as "a piece of land, either developed or pristine, that is either existing or planned to maximise the ecological integrity of an urban area by sustaining both urban and natural ecosystems; while

improving the quality of human life in both social and economic terms". This definition is a combination of different explanations of what urban public open spaces are and can include spaces such as parks, gardens, wetlands, allotments, trees and forests, or grasslands. Currently, urban public open spaces play a social, economic, cultural and environmental role in sustainable development. In order to accommodate sustainable development, Hag (2011:602) reminded that urban public open spaces play a protective role for plant and animal species; they conserve plants, soil and water quality; reduce noise pollution and enhance biodiversity. Cilliers (2015:2) elaborated on this notion that urban public open spaces enhance community cohesions, social interactions and betterment of neighbourhood relationships. This implies that urban public open spaces are related to leisure and recreation, social contact and sustainability in general.

The CSIR (2005:22) identified the human-centred and nature-centred approaches to urban and regional planning. The human-centred approach focuses on the developmental needs of the humans through a democratic process. The nature-centred approach emphasises the need for a synergy between the needs of humans and how they relate to their natural environments. Planners and conservationists react on this synergy through the planning of open spaces on contradictory approaches, namely supply and demand. While planners mainly focus on human demands for the recreation, amenities and environmental quality, conservationists focus on the conservation of open spaces. Furthermore, the demand approach to open spaces focuses on the fulfilment of human needs. This implies that planning for open spaces needs to focus on the attributes of the targeted community with reference to its size, values and preferences, residential distribution and density. The supply approach in planning for open spaces focuses on conserving the natural environment. Aspects to target include the selection of the site, the size and number of open spaces in that community, recreational activities and the design of the site. Moreover, the demand approach to open spaces supports the fulfilment of human needs. Buttrressing the foregoing statement, planning for open spaces needs to focus on the attributes of the targeted community with reference to its size, values and preferences, residential distribution and density. Furthermore, the supply approach in planning for open spaces is linked to conserving the natural environment. Aspects to target include the selection of the site, the size and number of open spaces in that community, recreational activities and the design of the site. (Kit Campbell Associates, 2001; Maruani & Amit-Cohen 2007:10). Open spaces can also be quantified by physical approach with the aim of conserving and protecting biodiversity whereas the demographic approach focuses on human recreational consumption of open spaces. Nega, Fu and Vritis (2010:745) stated that the open space index was introduced within physical and demographic approaches

with the aim to measure the size and distribution of open spaces that can be used during the planning process.

Existing studies indicated that the quantity and distribution of open spaces on the target population during land use planning decisions must be taken into account. Abbasi, Alalouch and Bramley (2016:195) viewed open spaces as critical places where people spend their time on a daily basis. These spaces have a positive impact on people's sense of quality of life, as well as their physical and psychological well-being. Open spaces play a crucial role because they provide the community with spaces for interaction, relaxation, restoration, as well as contact with nature, and they offer many opportunities for leisure purposes. Abbasi et al. (2016:195) highlighted three main factors related to the effective use of open space which include the needs of the users, quality of the physical features, and the spatial structure of the space. The understanding of these needs is seen as a cornerstone of a well-designed open space in which the design must attract the user, facilitate their activities and it must be a space that will encourage them to spend more time if they are involved in any envisaged activity. Also, an open space must display features that will enhance satisfaction to the community in order to promote better use of open spaces.

However, different planning models and theories have been used in planning for urban public open spaces. These include communicative planning theories, garden city models, park systems, space standards and opportunistic models. Steyn (2015:24) defined planning as the "action directed to the future in which human insights and values are taken into consideration in decision-making in an attempt to achieve harmony between man and nature as well as between people themselves". This shows that planning is influenced by values and it has become more democratised to an extent that it involves different participants. This confirms that there is a link between planning and community participation. Watson (2009a:2260) viewed "planning as a central tool through which government manages spatially defined territories and populations: the issue of power is therefore inextricably linked to an understanding of planning systems". This implies that planning is not only seen as a human activity but is also societally-based.

This research study was concerned with the interaction of different urban stakeholders involved in planning for urban public open spaces. Even though there is a vast number of planning theories, this study was motivated to employ the communicative planning theory. Some of the components of the communicative planning theory include the interaction of participants aiming at decisions and actions found within a range of specialised authoritative systems, and mutual reconstruction of what constitutes the interests of the various participants. In this way, participants will learn new relations, values and knowledge as they

interact with each other. Furthermore, different urban stakeholders have the potential to change the existing conditions in their environment. This is crucial for diverse people from different societal conditions, and cultural communities recognise each other and negotiate their shared concerns (Healey 1992:242).

Planning models have been known since the early 1900s through the work of Sir Ebenezer Howard (1902) who regarded a *garden city model* as a comprehensive planning model. Howard regarded it as the major landmark urban utopian model with the emphasis on the importance of urban public open space preservation and that it forms an integral part of development. The garden city model addressed the unhealthy lifestyles between the late Victorian city and the countryside, and these two areas have advantages and disadvantages to the lives of humans and the natural environment. According to Howard (1902), a town and a country can be integrated to form a *town-country* which will provide new hope and life to the community. The *park system model* was defined as a functional unit of open spaces interconnected physically, and it includes gardens and parks with different sizes and uses (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:6). The park system model is mostly suitable for newly developing areas. The emphasis on the park system model was based on the population needs rather than the protection of the natural environment (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:6).

During the twentieth century, Raymond Unwin introduced the allocation of open spaces. When planning for open spaces, the size and function of the parks must also be related to the travelling distances from the residential properties and the open spaces (Turner, 1992:372). A *quantitative model* serves as a guiding model for the allocation of open spaces in connection with the potential users. This model considers the space standards when allocating land for spaces, that is, the size and number of the people in a given area. According to Behrens and Watson (1996:80), the location of open spaces and the design of the movement system are key elements in facilitating urban environments. This encourages the creation of better opportunities for commercial investment, including informal generation of income. In some instances, land acquisition arise due to opportunities rather than in a proper planning process. The opportunistic planning model arise in such instances and sometimes the land may be donated to the municipality for other uses such as ecological and educational purposes. Maruani and Amit-Cohen (2007:4), as well as Wang, Mateo-Babiano and Brown (2013:2), stated that the opportunistic model refers to open spaces that developed due to left-over spaces after the land was allocated for other land uses. These spaces can either be irregular, small, inaccessible and unsuitable for other land uses. The only land use to be allocated to these spaces is a 'park'. Abbasi et al. (2016:196) indicated that such opportunistic models

arise to provide opportunities for comfort, relaxation and sociability to the users of urban public open spaces.

Moreover, this research study focused on the objective of planning, which is building sustainable neighbourhoods. A sustainable neighbourhood is concerned with developing communities that are connected to the dimensions of sustainability. These include environmental, social, economic and institutional aspects of sustainability (Sharifi, 2015:2). The environmental aspect focuses on the ecological constraints and enhancement of intergenerational equity of development. This is achieved by encouraging the end-users to use resources smart and wisely and develop measures to curb or reduce climate change. Concerning the economic aspect, creating better job opportunities and attracting investments are encouraged. The social aspect intends to improve liveability of communities by responding to the needs of the communities. The institutional aspect ensures that all the urban stakeholders are involved in the planning process and assist in improving the acceptability and viability of the developments (Sharifi, 2015:2). However, planning for sustainable neighbourhoods is essential for achieving sustainable development. Also, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat, 2014) identified five principles of planning for sustainable neighbourhoods. These include adequate space for streets and an efficient street network, high density, mixed land use, social mix, and limited land use specialisation. These principles foster sustainable urban development by creating liveable and efficient neighbourhoods. Urban public open spaces also play a major role in achieving sustainable neighbourhoods. This involves consideration of key issues, namely space management, space function and landscape. Space management refers to the sustainable lifestyle, community participation, sense of space and resource management. The space function focuses on car reliance and the need to travel, while a sustainable landscape promotes self-sustaining and regulatory systems (Al-Hagla, 2008).

Urban stakeholders must be involved in planning for sustainable neighbourhoods with the inclusion of urban public open spaces. Silva (2010:38) stated that urban areas are not just spaces, but they also involve social, cultural and environmental dimensions. This implies that urban planning is a multidisciplinary process that involves plans that allow flexibility and cooperation of different urban stakeholders. These stakeholders have different values and perceptions regarding the use and values of urban public open spaces. De Groot (2006:177) emphasised that these values are based on ecological sustainability, equity and cultural perceptions as well as cost-effectiveness. Their values and perceptions lead to value conflicts which affect the quest for sustainable neighbourhoods. The value conflicts of different stakeholders contribute to rapid changes in land use and occupancy patterns on urban public

open space. Evidence is displayed by gradual disappearance of urban public open spaces, emergence of informal settlements and urban sprawl. Most countries in Africa are experiencing extinction of open spaces due to rapid urbanisation and urban sprawl (Mensah 2014a:6). This has led to challenges in terms of the value of urban public open spaces, land use management, preservation and sustainability of urban public open spaces. The Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (MMM) in the Free State province of South Africa is also experiencing extinction of urban public open spaces in the form of illegal occupation of land for housing purposes and this motivated the study (MMM Integrated Development Plan [IDP] 2017-2022, 2017:69).

The focus of the study was on the perception of the different urban stakeholders regarding the utility and value of urban public open space. These perceptions include planning, economic, environmental, recreational, and housing values. Their different values led to value conflicts around urban public open spaces in the Mangaung townships. These value conflicts have made it extremely difficult for planners to achieve the objectives of planning.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Mangaung is one of the eight metropolitan municipalities in South Africa. The MMM has a population of approximately 787 929 and measures an area of 9 887 km<sup>2</sup> (MMM IDP, 2017:51). It comprises three prominent urban centres and is surrounded by an extensive rural area. Mangaung is centrally located within the Free State province (Figure 1.1). It is accessible via national infrastructure, including the N1 which links Gauteng with the Southern and Western Cape, the N6 which links Bloemfontein to the Eastern Cape, and the N8 which links Lesotho in the east and the Northern Cape in the west via Bloemfontein. In terms of the historical background of the municipality, the municipality amalgamated with four former transitional councils in 2000. In April 2011, the MLM became part of a metropolitan municipality. In 2016, the MMM merged with the former Naledi Local Municipality (Dewetsdorp, Vanstadensrus and Wepener) and the town of Soutpan and Ikgomotseng that was part of Masilonyana Local Municipality (MMM IDP 2017:61). The new status of the municipality brought challenges and opportunities to the MMM. These challenges include rapid urbanisation, urban public open space encroachment which leads to gradual disappearance of spaces that were zoned for recreational purposes and as parks. This is evident in the mushrooming of informal settlements in the Mangaung townships, specifically Freedom Square. With regard to opportunities experienced by the municipality, Mangaung is the largest contributor to the gross domestic product of the Free State province (MMM IDP 2017:55).

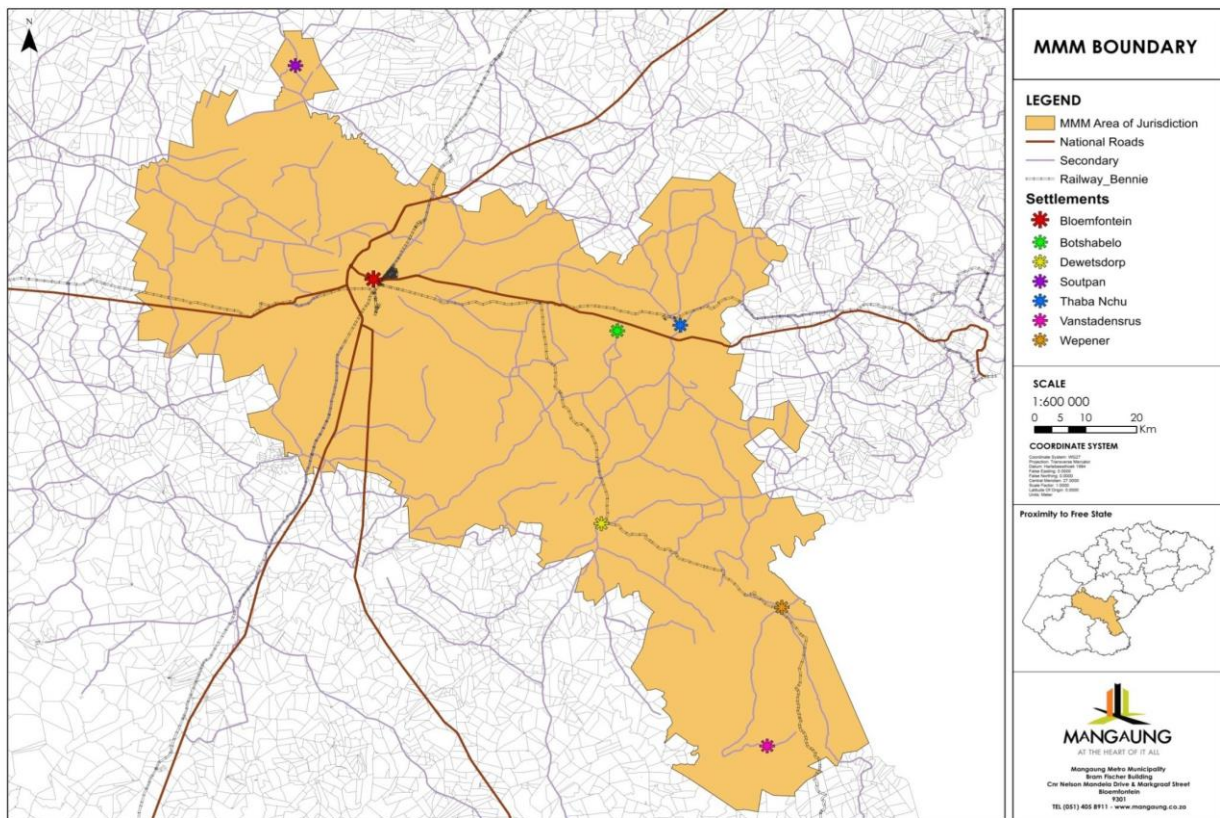


Figure 1.1: Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality: Locality map  
Source: MMM Integrated Human Settlements Plan (2017)

Due to the MMM being the economic hub, rural migrants are arriving in the city in search for better job opportunities and most of them settle on undeveloped urban open land earmarked for future use. This presents the planners with vast challenges which hinder planning and management of urban public open spaces. As such, these open spaces in Mangaung townships are becoming extinct due to rapid urbanisation and this is affecting the spatial patterns of urban land use. With rapid urbanisation experienced countrywide, Mangaung is not immune to such a challenge and it has a huge housing backlog as compared to other Free State municipalities (MMM IDP, 2017:69). A community survey that was done in 2016, indicated that current housing backlog in Mangaung is approximately 31 149 houses, and that most people are residing in townships. However, the municipality is quite aware of the illegal occupation of municipal and privately-owned land for residential purposes. This is a service delivery challenge, but the municipality has prioritised mixed housing development for its residents (MMM IDP, 2017:79).

Other causal factors of urban public open space encroachment include poor enforcement of land use regimes, and poor sustenance and management of urban public open spaces (Mensah, 2014a:6). Different urban stakeholders involved in the use of urban public open

spaces have different perceptions on the use and values of these spaces. These include planning, economic, recreational, environmental, public goods and housing perceptions. All these different perceptions lead to value conflicts which make it almost impossible for the planner to achieve the planning objectives, especially when planning for sustainable neighbourhoods. Planning for sustainable neighbourhoods can be achieved through economic, social and environmental goals in a balanced perspective. Urban public open spaces form one of the most important infrastructures for a sustainable neighbourhood (Vikneswaran, Mohd & Zakaria, 2010). Planners are faced with the challenge on how to manage these conflicts and achieving their objective of planning sustainable livelihoods.

Furthermore, causal factors such as rapid urbanisation refocus the attention on planning and leave planners with challenges to plan for informal settlement upgrading. In addressing this challenge, planning must involve communities in the planning processes to avoid conflict and safeguard the lives of the poor (UN-Habitat 2009). These can be achieved through effective community participation, which is also lacking in Mangaung when planning for sustainable communities. Some researchers highlighted that some West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone, have lost urban public open spaces due to rapid urbanisation (Li, Sun, Li, Hao, Li, Qian, Liu & Sun 2016:2; Mensah 2014a:6). The UN-Habitat (2016:34) stated that rapid urbanisation plays a key role in eradicating poverty when it is planned and managed properly. Countries that are highly urbanised are always associated with low levels of poverty and many people escaped from poverty because of urbanisation. This is due to higher levels of productivity, employment opportunities, improved quality of life and access to improved infrastructure and services. The impact of urbanisation is evident in East Asia where the increase has caused a decrease in poverty. In China, urbanisation helped a vast number of people out of extreme poverty. In India, research indicates that there is also a decrease in poverty (UN-Habitat 2016:36). This clearly states that the management of urbanisation is an important component in nurturing growth.

#### **1.4 Research question and sub-research questions**

Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014:25) described research questions as the facets of enquiry used by the researcher to explore concepts. These can be general, precise, descriptive or explanatory. Research questions serve as a guide that points the researcher towards a specific area of theory and are helpful in designing the study (Agee, 2009:443). From the main research question, emerge the sub-questions. Creswell (2007:109) described sub-questions in the context of an 'issue' and as 'procedural'. Both these categories focus on a specific issue or phenomenon.

### **1.4.1 Research question**

*What practical and theoretical difficulties do planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa?*

### **1.4.2 Sub-research questions**

1. How is open space understood in the literature?
2. What theories relate to planning of open spaces?
3. What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung?
4. What are the perceptions of open spaces, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?
5. What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?
6. How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key planning objectives to create sustainable communities?

## **1.5 Research propositions**

The research propositions for the study included:

1. Urban stakeholders play salient roles in the planning practice, management of urban public open spaces and creation of sustainable communities.
2. Effective planning for the utility or usefulness of urban public open spaces by different urban stakeholders needs extensive interaction of all the stakeholders involved.
3. Involvement of all urban stakeholders and community participation in the planning of urban public open spaces would lead to the management of encroachment on these spaces.
4. There are different perceptions from the different urban stakeholders about the value and use of urban public open spaces and this leads to value conflicts; hence, planners struggle to achieve the key objectives of planning for these spaces.
5. Different value conflicts influence urban public open space encroachment.
6. A reconceptualisation of urban public open spaces is needed to maximise its value for planning and the community.

## **1.6 Aim and objectives of the study**

### **1.6.1 Research aim**

This study sought (i) *to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community*, and (ii) *to develop a framework which can be used by planners to manage value conflicts and achieve the objectives of planning*.

### **1.6.2 Research objectives**

To achieve the set aim, the study was guided by the following objectives:

1. Determining the different terminologies and definitions of open spaces.
2. Exploring the different theories related to planning of urban public open spaces.
3. Identifying the challenges affecting the planning of sustainable neighbourhoods in Freedom Square, Mangaung.
4. Identifying the perceptions of urban stakeholders on urban public open spaces, its uses and values.
5. Exploring what value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the planning objectives.
6. Developing a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives.

## **1.7 Relationship between research objectives and research questions**

Each research objective is a response to a research question. Table 1.1 indicates the relationship between the underlying research questions and objectives of the study.

**Table 1.1 Relationships between research questions and research objectives**

<b>Research objectives</b>	<b>Research questions</b>
1. Determining the different terminologies and definitions of open spaces.	How is open space understood in the literature?
2. Exploring the different theories related to planning of urban public open spaces.	What theories relate to planning of open space?
3. Identifying the challenges affecting the planning of sustainable neighbourhoods in Mangaung.	What are the key planning challenges in Freedom Square, Mangaung?
4. Identifying the perceptions of urban stakeholders on urban public open spaces, its uses and values.	What are the perceptions of open spaces, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?
5. Exploring what value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the planning objectives.	What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?
6. Developing a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives.	How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key planning objectives to create sustainable communities?

## **1.8 Research methodology**

To achieve the research objectives and the aim of the study, a qualitative stance is employed. Different authors defined qualitative research in different ways, but a common feature is that all of them revealed that it is an enquiry or investigation of something in a systematic way. Qualitative research is naturalistic, descriptive, process-based, inductive and has meaning (Bogdan & Biklen 2007:4). Furthermore, Yin (2016:9) identified the distinct features of qualitative research which include (i) the study of the meaning of people's lives in a real-life setting; (ii) the focus on the views and perspectives of the participants; (iii) the real-world contextual conditions it embraces; (iv) the existing or new concepts it concentrates on that may assist in explaining the social behaviour and thinking; and (v) the value of collecting data from multiple sources of evidences that are acknowledged. The qualitative research chosen for conducting this exploratory study included the use of four case studies. There are four cases that formed the case study research: three urban public open spaces in Freedom Square township and one urban public open space in Kagisanong township in Mangaung in Free State province (see Figure 1.2 and 1.4). These case studies gave the researcher an opportunity to identify the various stakeholders involved in the planning and management of urban public open space in Mangaung, South Africa. This research approach also assisted the researcher in identifying the perceptions of the urban public open spaces, its uses and value in the minds of urban stakeholders, as well as focusing on the value conflicts that these

differing perceptions cause for the planner. The selection of the case studies for the purpose of the research consists of the different urban stakeholders who are involved in planning and managing urban public open spaces, namely, municipal officials (planning, environmental, human settlement practitioners and ward councillors) and community members who are the rightful owners of the properties surrounding the case study area and those who are encroached on urban public open spaces that form part of the research.

The study employed the 'nested approach' as the methodological framework, as indicated by Kagioglou, Cooper, Aouad and Sexton (2000:143). This framework indicates the research philosophy, approaches and techniques. In this case, the researcher adopted the taxonomy as stated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019:130) in explaining different aspects of the 'nested approach' used in the study. In terms of the philosophical assumption, the researcher adopted an interpretivist, subjective and value-laden approach in conducting the study. An abductive research approach was selected because the data collected assisted the researcher in exploring the phenomena being studied. Constructs were identified to generate a new theory or to change an existing theory. The abductive approach also allowed the researcher to develop a conceptual framework from the key concepts, namely, urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts.

The rationale for selecting Freedom Square in the Mangaung township, is that it is one particular area in the township that best suit the study. The selected area best represented the challenges faced in terms of urban public open space encroachment. Initially, this area created about 24 urban public open spaces and most of these spaces have been encroached for housing purposes. Some of these spaces have been rezoned for residential purposes, others have been illegally occupied by people for housing purposes (Figure 1.2), while others have been left vacant (Figure 1.3). The study area is experiencing gradual disappearance of urban public open spaces due to rapid urbanisation. Furthermore, other concerns included poor enforcement of land use regimes, poor sustenance and management of urban public open spaces, and the level of prioritisation of urban public open spaces. Due to the involvement of different urban stakeholders in planning and management of urban public open spaces, different value conflicts have been identified by the researcher in the selected case study area and this motivated this research.

In comparison, a functional park in Kagisanong (Figure 1.4) also formed part of the four cases identified for the study. All the cases selected for the research were initially earmarked for the land reservation of a 'public open space' for recreational purposes.

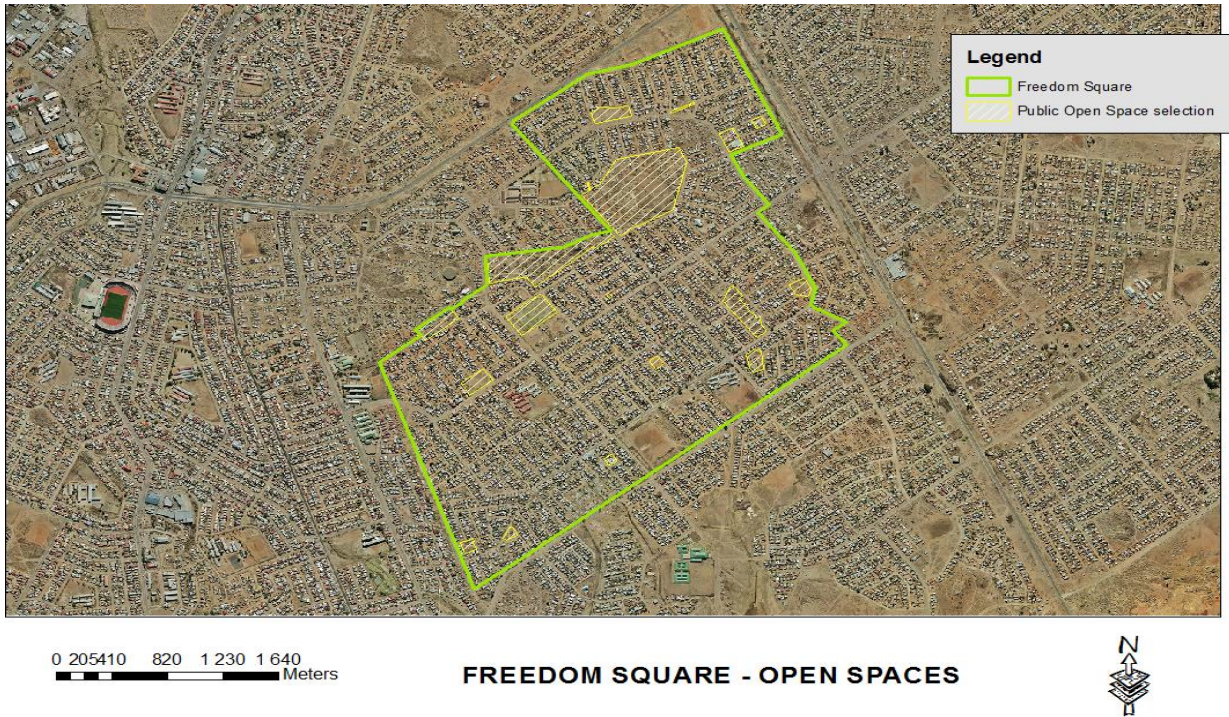


Figure 1.2: *Encroached urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Freedom Square)*  
 Source: MMM Geographic Information System (GIS) Division (Retrieved 2018)



Figure 1.3: *Unbuilt urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Freedom Square)*  
 Source: MMM GIS Division (Retrieved 2018)



Figure 1.4: Functional urban public open spaces in the Mangaung township (Kagisanong)  
 Source: MMM GIS Division (Retrieved 2018)

Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that a case study approach explores a contemporary bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection through the deployment of techniques such as observations, interviews and documents. The case study approach helped the researcher to employ multiple data collection methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, review of documents and personal observation. This study commenced with an in-depth review of literature on topics that were relevant to the subject matter, namely reconceptualisation of urban public open spaces. The literature review provided the researcher an opportunity to gain theoretical insight into the key factors that are involved in urban public open spaces. From this theoretical foundation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces and included town planning, environmental management, land invasion and human settlements. The political office (ward councillors), as part of the stakeholders, also formed part of the interviews. These urban stakeholders were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The semi-structured interview protocol was drawn from the sub-research questions and the emergent data was analysed thematically. Focus groups were also conducted with community members. Participants in the focus group discussions consisted of the community members who have encroached on the urban public open spaces and those who are the rightful owners of the properties around the urban public open spaces.

Personal observations were conducted around the study and memos drawn therefrom. The recommendations made by the researcher that are based on the findings from the data collection, included the development of the framework that may assist the different urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of urban public open spaces.

## **1.9 Scope and limitation of the study**

The study was based in one of the Mangaung townships of the Free State province in South Africa. This contained the study geographically. The participants used for the interviews were limited because of lack of capacity of staff or personnel dealing with informal settlement upgrading at MMM. Securing schedules or times for interviews has also been a challenge. Also, the focus group discussants were only for the community members who encroached on urban public open spaces and those residing around such open spaces. This research was based on the value conflicts that emerged for the different perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the utility and value of urban public open spaces in Mangaung townships.

In this research, the term 'urban public open space' refers to public land that is undeveloped but has been zoned for a specific future use. At MMM, such spaces are either zoned as a 'park' or 'public open space' for recreational purposes. The value conflicts based on the value, perception and use of the urban public open spaces make it difficult for planners to achieve their key planning objectives, namely the development of sustainable neighbourhoods. The current theories around urban public open spaces and communicative planning theories were of very little use to help planners to manage the conflicting demands of urban stakeholders around urban public open spaces. Value conflicts by different stakeholders concerning urban public open spaces included the different categories of perceptions such as economic, public goods or recreational, environmental and housing values. In addition, the level of community participation during the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Mangaung led to the encroachment of urban public open spaces, thus causing gradual disappearance of these spaces. Therefore, a reconceptualisation of urban public open space was needed to maximise its value to planning and the community.

## **1.10 Contribution to knowledge**

Urban public open spaces play a critical role in sustainable development of communities. As such, different scholars conducted research on urban public open spaces; however, such information is fragmented and not convenient enough for planners to achieve their key planning objectives. Also, urban public open spaces have been addressed in different contexts and several frameworks were developed and validated. However, according to the

researcher's knowledge, no mention was made on how valuable the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces is in helping planners manage the value conflicts from the different urban stakeholders regarding their different perceptions on the value and usefulness of open spaces, as well as in achieving their planning objectives. These value conflicts include planning, economic, recreational, environmental and housing conflict which make it difficult for planners to achieve their key planning objectives of building sustainable communities. Creating of sustainable communities needs to include the participation of the community members or other urban stakeholders involved in planning projects. Therefore, it was the intention of the researcher to fill this gap in the body of knowledge. To achieve this, research Objective 6 – To develop a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open space in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives – was explored. This was achieved by developing a framework for urban public open space management that would assist the planner in the planning and management of open spaces. This framework sought to interconnect urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts displayed by urban stakeholders. The framework will serve as a guide to the planner and other professionals regarding effective planning and management of urban public open spaces. It is expected that the research would help planners and other professionals involved in planning and management to understand that there is a relationship between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflict management. Also, the research will broaden the mind of the planner regarding the different perceptions that lead to value conflicts of urban stakeholders and how to manage them.

### **1.11 Thesis structure**

This study consisted of two distinct parts that were further classified into eight chapters for clarity and ease of comprehension. This structure is displayed in Figure 1.5.

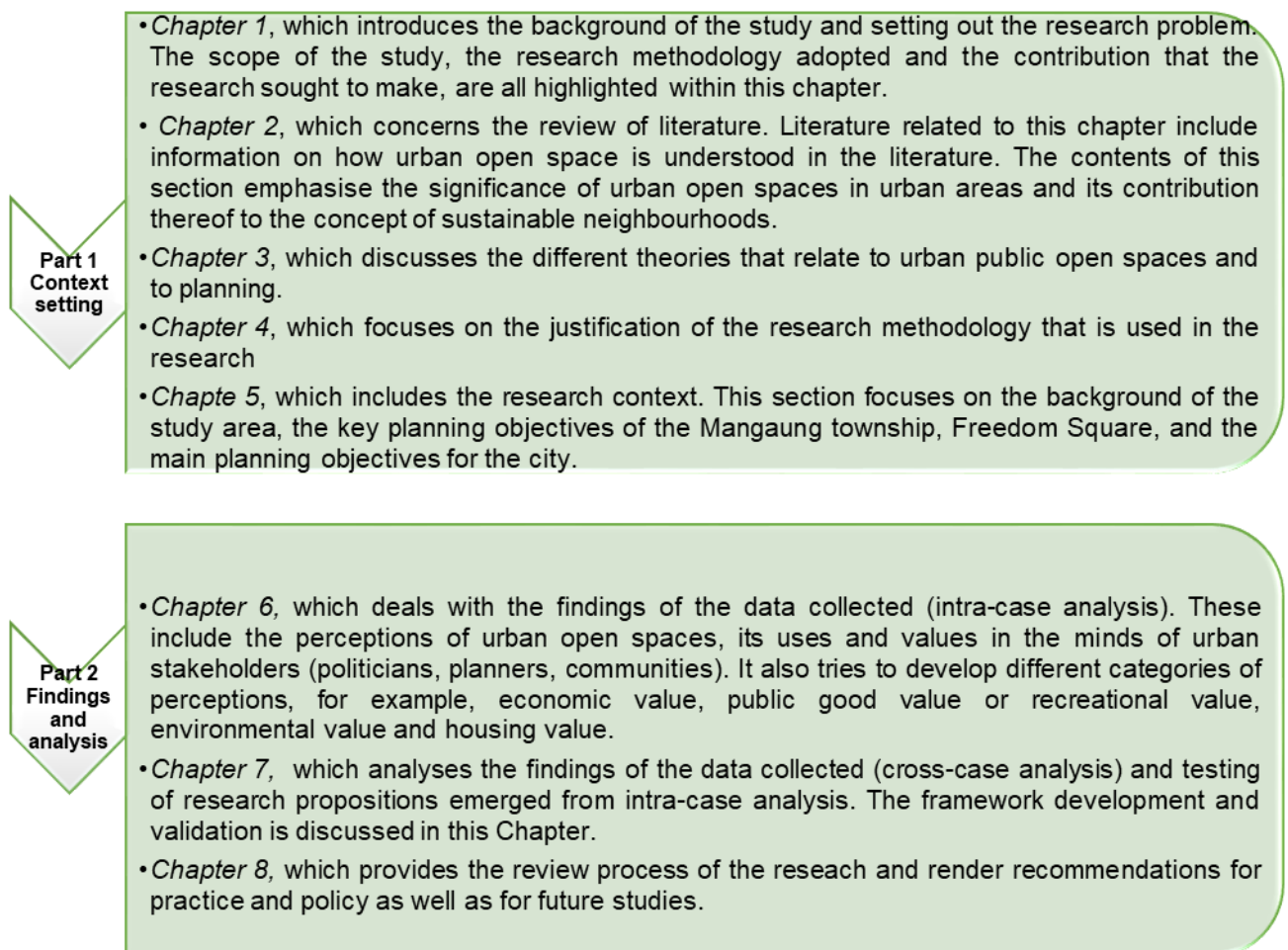


Figure 1.5: Organisational classification of the study  
Source: Author's own (2019)

## 1.12 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the background of the study and the problem statement. The focus was on the understanding of urban public open space, value conflicts by different urban stakeholders on their perceptions, values and uses of urban public open spaces, and community participation. These value conflicts create challenges for the planner to achieve the key planning objectives, which is planning of sustainable neighbourhoods. Furthermore, the research question, aim and objectives of the study were articulated within this chapter to give further clarity. A relationship between the research questions and objectives was also expressed in building up the research context. Within this chapter, the research methodological approach, namely qualitative research, was justified. This included a case study approach that deploys a variety of techniques such as focus groups discussions, face-to-face semi-structured interviews and personal interviews for data elicitation at different

intervals. Additionally, this chapter gave a proper delineation of the actual boundaries of the study as well as the limitations of the study. A contribution to the body of knowledge was also highlighted within this chapter. To conclude the chapter, an understanding of the organisation of the entire research was pointed out.

The next chapter comprises the review of literature that includes information regarding the understanding of urban public open space. The contents of this section emphasised the significance of urban public open spaces in urban areas and its contribution thereof to the concept of sustainable neighbourhoods.

## Chapter 2

# UNDERSTANDING URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES – A REVIEW

---

---

*There are in reality not only, as is so constantly assumed, two alternatives – town life and country life – but a third alternative in which all the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination ... the Town-Country which are seen to be free from the disadvantages of either.*

Sir Ebenezer Howard (2011:8).

### 2.1 Chapter introduction

Having introduced the context of this study in the previous chapter, this chapter intends to provide an in-depth description and understanding of urban public open spaces in the literature. Chapter 2 answers the first sub-research question, namely ***How is open space understood in the literature?*** Overall, the chapter presents a theoretical lens of urban public open spaces and how they are understood in literature. It resumes by reviewing the different definitions of open spaces as understood by different scholars. This chapter also looks into the planning and design of these spaces and their classification. It then reviews a theoretical lens of urban public open spaces with the focus on benefits and opportunities, perceptions of different stakeholders about the use and value of urban open spaces as well as the role of urban open spaces in planning. In addition, attention is drawn to various ills associated with the encroachment of open spaces in urban areas, highlighting the causal factors, measures taken to curb the incidence of this malaise globally and nationally, and the challenges hindering the implementation of these measures on both scales that has led to the proliferation of such encroachment incidents in the society. All these aspects are vital to the sustainability of open spaces and to the theoretical lens of the current study. Finally, a summary of the chapter and its link to the next chapter is presented.

### 2.2 Defining urban public open spaces in sustainable communities

Different definitions regarding open spaces have been explored and reviewed by different scholars. Open spaces, in general, are considered as an integral part of sustainable communities. The terms ‘open space’, ‘urban open space’, ‘green space’ and ‘public open space’ are used interchangeably in planning. Different scholars use different terminologies to

define urban open spaces and the differentiation is in terms of the space, location, development and function. Table 2.1 summarises the different definitions as perceived by different authors.

**Table 2.1: Summary of the different terminology and definitions of open spaces**

Terminology	Explanation	Literature
Urban open space	Open place that is easily accessible to the public and is designed to accommodate human activity and enjoyment. Examples of urban open spaces include parks, neighbourhood playgrounds, community gardens, downtown plazas, streets and malls, regional parks, squares and plazas, and playing fields.	Francis (1987:76) Lynch (1981) Mashalaba (2013:40) Woolley (2003)
Open space	Open space as a portion of the urban area that contributes to its amenity and is a combination of green and civic space. Open spaces include spaces such as parks, gardens, wetlands, allotments, trees and forests or grasslands.	Kit Campbell Associates (2001:8) Swanwick, Dunnet and Woolley (2003:97)
Green space	Open space comprise any vegetated land or geological feature within an urban area. A greenspace can be either privately or publicly owned or the public cannot access it. These include parks and gardens, children’s play areas, outdoor sports facilities, natural green spaces, and green corridors.	Al-Hagla (2008:164) Kit Campbell Associates (2001) Mensha (2014:2)
Public open space	Land that is publicly or privately owned or partially open for use by the public. These include public parks, playgrounds, amusement centres, residential green spaces, sports and recreational facilities.	Gondo (2012:1383) MLM (2004:4) Republic of South Africa (RSA), Department of Human Settlements (2019) Annexure F, Land use conditions, of the Regulations relating to Township Establishment and Land Use (hereafter Annexure F, RSA, 1986)

Source: Author’s own (2019)

With these different definitions, the researcher employed the term ‘urban public open space’ because it suited the description of the study that focused on the non-built environments dominated by the natural environment. Furthermore, in terms of Annexure F (RSA, 1986) – a policy document used by the MMM to control land use in the townships – open spaces have a land use reservation (zoning/land use) of ‘public open space’. This zoning permits parks, sports and recreational facilities. In the light of the above, planning and design of these spaces is crucial and the following section gives an in-depth explanation on the planning, drivers and opportunities and challenges associated herewith.

## 2.3 Planning and design of urban public open spaces

Kit Campbell Associates (2001:70) stated that quality urban open spaces are viewed as the key factor causing urban areas to be attractive and viable places where people live, work and play. It gives an opportunity to the citizens to play an active role in the management and enhancement of their environment. Effective planning and implementation, quality design of urban public open spaces and good management are key factors. The Department of Human Settlements (RSA, 2019:n.p.) set out the key objectives that serve as guidelines for planning and design of public open spaces. These include:

- Conservation and protection of the natural environment which includes that urban public open spaces should be planned in such a way that they enable ecological processes to occur in a sustainable and safe way. These spaces should be maintained through careful stewardship, protecting biodiversity and minimising of waste.
- Urban public open spaces to be integrated into the surrounding neighbourhoods; they must be compatible to the surrounding land uses and be clearly demarcated.
- Urban public open spaces should be easily accessible to all the residents in the particular community. These spaces must be safe and comfortable with paving, toilet, facilities, ramps and handrails.
- The needs and requirements of all the urban public open spaces must be taken into account. These requirements and needs include comfort and protection, safety from crime and violence, healthy spaces and facilities that should be maintained.

In addition to the objectives stated above, Kit Campbell Associates (2001:69) identified key objectives that can function as guiding principles for open space design and management of urban public open spaces. These include the character of a place; continuity and enclosure which refer to the distinction of whether the space is private or public; quality of the public realm where focus is on the attractiveness of the space; easy access and movement in that space; legibility of the space; adaptability of the space; and diversity of the place.

Herzele and Wiedemann (2003:111-112) highlighted the basic principles for urban public open space planning which are used for monitoring the provision of urban public open spaces. These include the following:

- *Citizen-based*: Urban public open spaces are significant for the health and well-being of citizens and they support the quality of life for the urban population. This implies that, as urban areas or the city is seen as liveable space, all residential areas should

be provided with urban public open spaces that are easily accessible and attractive to the citizens.

- *Functional level:* Urban public open spaces fulfil different functions at different levels. Different standards and indicators have been developed to quantify accessibility and attractiveness to urban public open spaces. This includes the area-based level (open space area per person) or open space area ratio which is calculated by dividing the open space area by the total floor area instead of by the number of people. Focusing on functional levels assists in monitoring urban public open spaces in terms of the needs of the community.
- *Preconditions of use:* The distance and safety attached to urban public open spaces determine the visit by the community members to such spaces. They operate as the preconditions for the use of urban public open spaces. Depending on the satisfactory level of the users, the naturalness, historic character and accessibility contribute to the successful use or functioning of the urban public open space.
- *Variety of qualities:* The appearance, accessibility, safety and the use of urban public open space motivate a variety of quality on the user's side. Research indicated that users seek a diversity of natural and social facilities in an urban public open space. There is a relationship between the supply of urban public open spaces and the frequency of visitation by different users. From a perception dimension, aspects instilled include explorative, instrumental, existential and cultural.
- *Multiple use:* Urban public open spaces have multiple uses and are defined differently by users. They can be used as parks, gardens, sports fields, cemeteries, and golf courses. These can be used to promote physical activity, psychological well-being and the health of urban residents (see also Stessens, Khan, Huysmans & Canters, 2017:329).

In the planning and design of urban public open spaces, their classification needs to be considered because these spaces are an integral part in land use planning. Classification of urban public open spaces relies on the size, quality, function, value and location. In its planning guidelines, the CSIR (2005) classified open spaces into hard (built spaces) and soft (unbuilt) open spaces. The research focused on soft open spaces which are defined as “open, or unbuilt, spaces within a settlement, with a predominantly vegetated or porous surface” (CSIR, 2005:1).

Kit Campbell Associates (2011:62) identified three typologies of open spaces, that is, open space, greenspace and civic space. The research focus was on open space and greenspace. An open space is described as “any unbuilt land within the boundary or designated envelope of a village, town or city which provides, or has the potential to provide, environmental, social and/or economic benefits to communities, whether direct or indirect” (Kit Campbell Associates, 2001). Greenspace refers to the sub-set of an open space, comprising of any vegetated land or geological feature within an urban area. A greenspace can be either privately or publicly owned or the public cannot access it. Furthermore, there are seven identified sub-sets of greenspaces that are accessible to the public which are classified in terms of a specific and primary functions. These include parks and gardens, children’s play areas, outdoor sports facilities, green corridors (for walking, cycling, hiking, horse riding or linking towns and cities), other functional greenspaces such as allotments, religious buildings and cemeteries (Al-Hagla, 2008:164; Kit Campbell Associates, 2001:53).

## **2.4 Theoretical lens**

This section reviews the literature concerning the concept of urban public open spaces in urban context and contributions to the concept of creating sustainable communities.

### **2.4.1 Benefits and opportunities of urban public open spaces**

Urban public open spaces have many different benefits and opportunities that contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in urban areas. These spaces provide a relationship between urban stakeholders using urban public open spaces and nature. The benefits and opportunities of urban public open spaces can range from environmental, economic, social, cultural and health wise. The aim of this section is to explain the reason why urban public open spaces are of utmost importance in the planning of sustainable communities.

#### **2.4.1.1 Environmental lens and urban public open space**

The environmental benefits and opportunities of urban public open spaces focus on three main components, namely, maintenance of biodiversity through the conservation and enhancement of urban habitats, landscape and cultural heritage; reduction of pollution, moderation of extreme temperatures and contribution to cost-effective sustainable urban drainage systems; and provision for sustainable management practises (Swanwick et al., 2003:104; Wooley, 2003:49). Cilliers, Diemont, Stobbelaar and Timmermans (2011:216) stated that urban open spaces contribute to habitat protection, lower air pollution levels, flooding alleviation and water management. These lead to several changes to urban environments. The environmental

changes identified include aspects such as airflow, air pollution, radiation and sunshine, temperature, humidity and precipitation. Furthermore, CABE Space (2005:9) is of the view that urban public open spaces play a significant role in the natural environments because they provide habitats for wildlife. Urban public open spaces provide more opportunities for the recycling of organic matter. They help reduce storm water run-off and drainage infrastructure. They also provide a link between the natural world and the urban environment and they help biodiversity. Urban public open spaces support environmental sustainability and promote ecologically sensitive urban areas (CABE Space, 2005:9).

#### **2.4.1.2 Economic lens and urban public open spaces**

Cities are seen as the economic entities with the aim of creating sustainable environments. For a city to be successful, it has to relate to its environment. Urban public open spaces have an economic impact of urban areas, thus making them attractive (Cilliers et al., 2011:215). Furthermore, urban public open spaces enhance tourist spending, property prices, competitiveness of places and their economic development. The economic component plays an integral part in the physical and built environment of the city because it attracts external visitors and investment (Cilliers & Timmermans, 2013:148). CABE Space (2005:9) highlighted the aforementioned aspects about urban public open spaces as improvement of the neighbourhood identity and sense of belonging; attraction of an economically active workforce and businesses for investment purposes; creation of job opportunities, recreation and enjoyments as well as cultural festivities that attract visitors; and have a positive impact on the value of the surrounding properties. CABE Space (2005:80-82) further highlighted different factors that influence the economic benefit of urban public open spaces, especially with the notion of property value. These include:

- The height of a building and the layout can impact positively or negatively to urban public open spaces. For instance, if a building is tall and is blocking the views, it leads to less of a value impact to the area.
- The houses must face the urban public open spaces in order to promote safety and security.
- Older and well-established urban public open spaces have more value when compared to the renovated or new ones. This refers to the property value in the surrounding area.
- Urban public open spaces that are enclosed by boundaries have less visual impact than those that are not in enclosed in boundaries.

- The size of the urban public open space has a positive impact on property value, especially with a larger open space.

### 2.4.1.3 Social lens and urban public open spaces

Swanwick et al. (2003:103) highlighted that urban public open spaces provide social benefits to the community. Urban public open spaces provide social inclusion, social integration and interaction (Bromell & Hyland, 2007:13). Zhou and Rana (2011:175) highlighted the following social benefits of urban public open spaces that can be useful for the citizens:

- *Recreational opportunities:* Urban public open spaces play an important role in providing places that are attractive, vibrant, joyful, exciting and relaxing to the minds of the urban stakeholders. This depends on the type of the urban open space and its function. The nature of the urban public open space displays an element of attractiveness to the users. Furthermore, accessibility, good management and safety of urban public open spaces are the key factors for attractiveness.
- *Aesthetic enjoyment:* Urban public open spaces affect different senses that differ in change of seasons or the time of the day. For instance, they can display a certain colour, shape, texture or sound and these can give different experiences to each individual. People often experience pleasure and gratification through the visual experience of an urban open space. This also promotes a sense of tranquillity and peace as urban public open spaces can calm emotions.
- *Enhancing social ties:* Urban public open spaces promote social contact and social interaction. This can create or motivate the sense of community.
- *Reduction of social ills:* The beauty, attractiveness, cleanliness, safety and control of an urban open space are major aspects for the control or reduction of social ills. A city with beautiful movement encourages beauty because it is an effective tool for social control. Good management of urban public open space reduces the level of crime. Environmental awareness and education about the uses and values of urban open space also reduce social ills.
- *Social inclusion and participation:* Since urban public open space accommodates every person, regardless of background; it represents an element of social inclusion and it represents a democratic form where every individual can participate in the different activities or engagements.

- *Social cohesion and identity:* Urban public open spaces are referred to as social catalysts because they bring people together. People from different social, political, economic, cultural, age and ethnic groups meet and interact for different reasons and activities. This interactions reveal the local identity and a sense of community and belonging (see also CABE Space, 2005:9; Wakaba, 2016:26).

The manner in which communities interact with each other in a given space, promotes the sense of belonging and sense of community. Urban public open spaces are a social platform that combines a diversity of people, from different walks of life where they can socialise. Most importantly, the accessibility of these open spaces plays an integral role in planning and management. Furthermore, this promotes unity and an open communication among the different citizens.

#### **2.4.1.4 Link between urban public open spaces and the cultural component**

Urban public open spaces can be used as a cultural focus but they are also linked to social and environmental benefits. A variety of approaches in planning, design and management of urban open spaces are utilised to encourage more ethnic groups to use these spaces. The approaches include “symbolic reference, experiential reference and facility provision, with the proviso that the approach taken should respond to the local community, the site and the context” (Woolley, 2003:31). The above-mentioned approaches are important for people from different cultural backgrounds and they use them for different purposes. The cultural and symbolic aspects for urban public open spaces influence the perception and preferences of the users (Özgüner, 2011:600). In this case, planners need to understand the different cultural contexts for the communities they are planning for. This will assist in developing appropriate planning, design and management strategies for urban public open spaces in sustainable neighbourhoods. Research that was conducted in Turkey by Özgüner (2011:616) has shown that there are different cultures and traditions on the use of urban public open spaces as compared to that of other countries. For instance, people perceive urban public open spaces as spaces where they can have direct contact with nature. They use them for recreational purposes and social interaction with friends and families. One outstanding factor is the perception of safety for women to be alone in urban open spaces. It is perceived not to be safe for women to visit urban open spaces alone. Therefore, the planning of urban public open spaces must consider the cultural background of women and their relationships to the value and usefulness of these spaces.

#### **2.4.1.5 Link between urban public open spaces and the educational component**

Education is the key factor for community involvement regarding urban public open space issues. Urban public open spaces are viewed as educational resources and different users or urban stakeholders must be educated on how to manage and preserve urban open spaces. The National Conservancy Council (cited by Woolley, 2003:31) encourages that the planning of social amenities, specifically schools, must be located within a few minutes' walk to an ecological area that will add value to their educational component. Community members in the local neighbourhood must have easy access to the facilities such as nature trails, field study sites and information centres. Furthermore, environmental education and awareness must be taught in schools to assist children to explore their values and attitudes regarding urban public open spaces (Zhou & Rana, 2011:176).

Urban public open spaces are not only meant for recreational purposes but they are also seen as the learning experience which enhances the quality of self-growth and development. They improve the sensory platform in children's lives and their motor skills are refined (Rakhshandehroo, Mohdyusof, Tahirholder & Yunos, 2015:64). In addition, urban public open spaces improve the sensory perception, social and cooperative skills and work patterns. They enhance outdoor learning opportunities and improve children's behavioural patterns, especially their emotions. Lastly, urban public open spaces display a variety of patterns of play, both in a physically demanding, adventurous sense and in the provision of quieter, restful opportunities (Wooley, 2003:33).

#### **2.4.1.6 Link between urban public open spaces and health**

Urban public open spaces are main contributors to both physical and psychological health. Woolley (2003:37) stated that our health is of utmost concern in terms of quality of life. Lee and Maheswaran (2010:213) also suggested that people should be encouraged to partake in physical activities for health purposes. Children in schools engage in physical education and they make use of playgrounds, parks, playing fields and school playgrounds. The use of urban public open spaces should also be associated with sports, the community and health programmes within a community, and they offer an opportunity for physical activities such as walking. Walking, as stated by Sugiyama and Thompson (2008:42), is as an effective, convenient and inexpensive way to promote an active lifestyle in older people and it is currently a focus of public health campaigns. Since recently, many people engage in 'health walks' and 'parkruns' to improve and boost their physical well-being. Furthermore, Gehl (2010:120) describes walking as a "forum for the social activities that take place along the way as an

integral part of pedestrian activities”. He further stated that walking varies from “the quick goal-oriented walk from A to B, the slow stroll to enjoy city life or a sunset, children’s zig-zagging, and senior citizens’ determined walk to get fresh air and exercise or do an errand” (Gehl, 2010:120).

Continuing, good health in association with physical activities comprises benefits such as improved maintenance of muscle strength, joint structure and joint functions; weight loss and redistribution of body fat; improved physical functioning for poor or deteriorating health; and boosts the cardiovascular, respiratory and endocrine systems. In addition, engagement in physical activities enhances psychological health as it relieves stress, depression, anxiety and changes mood swings. This is an indication that urban public open spaces have a major impact on the physical and psychological well-being of urban stakeholders (Hag, 2011:603).

#### **2.4.2 Value conflicts of urban public open spaces**

Different urban stakeholders such as community members, planners and politicians, view urban public open spaces differently. Their perceptions of the values and usefulness of urban public open spaces range from economic value, public good value or recreational value, environmental value, and housing value. The different perceptions regarding the value of urban public open spaces lead to value conflicts which make it difficult for the planner to achieve the key objectives of planning. For instance, urban public open spaces display an economic value for investors. Cilliers and Timmermans (2013:146) believed that the economic value equals market value and is categorised under direct values. The understanding is that urban public open spaces increase the value of properties that are in their proximity. They add value to properties, not only residential but also commercial properties.

In addition, from an economic perspective, urban public open spaces boost business sales, attract tourists and investments to the area, encourage job opportunities and promote production values. Planners are concerned with achieving the creation of sustainable communities; therefore, they place a recreational value on urban public open spaces. Furthermore, the planner focuses on the attainment of improved quality of life for human beings and this includes meeting demands for recreational space and environmental quality. In terms of the *environmental value*, urban public open spaces contribute to the protection of biodiversity, reduce air pollution, and alleviate flooding and waste management. This can incorporate a number of intangible values of urban public open spaces that relate to human interest. These are illustrated in Table 2.2 which indicates how humans value urban public open spaces.

**Table 2.2: Environmental values of urban public open spaces**

<b>Environmental values</b>	<b>Description of the values</b>
Scientific value	It refers to understanding the nature of urban open spaces and its uses
Aesthetic value	Its focus is on appreciating the beauty of natural features on the natural environment
Genetic diversity value	This is where humans maintain the capacity to adapt to any environmental changes
Historic value	Human interest is understanding themselves as individuals, by having an understanding of their natural heritage
Cultural-symbolisation value	Sense of identity and belonging is enhanced
Spiritual value	Enhancement of the deep introspection by wildlands and sanctuaries

Source: Fausold and Lilieholm (1999:15)

Community members who do not have proper housing, place the housing value on urban public open spaces. This is demonstrated by the illegal occupation of municipal land for housing purposes. Some of the urban public open spaces, specifically in African countries, with the MMM included, have lost urban public open spaces for housing purposes. This affects the land use and occupancy patterns on urban public open spaces. This has led to the value conflicts in terms of the quest for sustainable communities. The invasion and illegal occupation of land is a threat to stability and development (RSA, White Paper on South African Land Policy, 1997:51). Other community members affected by the extinction of urban public open spaces are concerned with safety and security in urban open spaces. However, they are more concerned with increased cultural and social vitality, better quality of life, including better and improved health, more inclusive open spaces, sense of place and accessible environments (Carmona, De Magalhães & Edwards, 2002).

All these different perceptions from different urban stakeholders regarding the value and utility of urban public open spaces have led to value conflicts which cause theoretical and practical difficulties for the planning, hence the reconceptualising of urban public open spaces.

## **2.5 Urban public open spaces and sustainable neighbourhoods – A review**

Urban public open spaces play an important role in the quality of life of urbanised society. The quality of urban public open spaces gives an overview of the identity of urban areas and improves their attraction for living, working, investment and tourism. Urban public open spaces are located within or adjacent to built-up neighbourhoods to satisfy human's recreational needs. If these open spaces are well-managed, they contribute well to the social justice

because they attract different urban stakeholders and users. When planning for urban public open spaces, the demographic aspects, density, values and preferences of the community must be considered. This section reviews literature pertaining to the significance of urban public open spaces in urban areas and the contribution thereof to the concept of sustainable neighbourhoods.

### **2.5.1 Sustainable neighbourhoods and open space planning**

Urban public open spaces have a component of sustainable development in that they promote social community inclusion and they possess environment, social and economic benefits. The presence of open spaces in neighbourhoods is important for its sustainability. According to Kit Campbell Associates (2001:61), open spaces in neighbourhoods are defined as “any unbuilt land within the boundary or designated envelope of a village, town or city which provides, or has the potential to provide, environmental, social and/or economic benefits to communities, whether direct or indirect”. In structuring neighbourhoods, open spaces play both a social and ecological role. Socially, a neighbourhood is seen as a ‘community’ whereas the ecological stance focuses on the unique qualities of a target property. Both the social and ecological perspective cover unique perspectives regarding the sustainability application to neighbourhood scale. The social perspective states that sustainable neighbourhoods are communities that “meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice”. Achievement of sustainable communities happens through effective use of natural resources, enhancement of the environment, promotion of social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity (Al-Hagla, 2008:2; Egan, 2004:7).

From the above definition, Kit Campbell Associates (2001:103) highlighted different components, namely, governance, transport and connectivity, services, environment, economy, housing and the built environment, sociology, and culture. Furthermore, the principles of sustainable neighbourhoods include adequate space for streets and an efficient street network, high density, mixed land use, social mix and limited land use specialisation. All these main principles of planning play a key role in fostering sustainable neighbourhoods as they draw three key features, namely, a vibrant street life which provides a safe and vibrant neighbourhood life, and encourages walkability and affordability (Dehghanmongabadi, Hoşkara & Shir Khanloo, 2014:21). In addition, urban public open spaces play a significant role in achieving sustainable neighbourhoods. In achieving a sustainable neighbourhood, the following key issues need to be considered: space management, space function and landscape. The *space management* involves encouraging sustainable lifestyles, community participation and habitat creation and native planting; strengthening the sense of place;

management of resources; reducing inputs of non-renewable resources; and eliminating the use of herbicides and resources that affect other ecosystems. The focus of the *space function* is on car reliance, the transport system and the security of the community. *Sustainable landscape* involves self-sustaining and self-regulating systems, character of site design and the resilience and stability of the landscape (Al-Hagla, 2008:166).

### **2.5.2 Sustainable development in the planning practice**

The concepts 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are regarded as the main issues over different sectors. According to the Brundtland Report of 1987, sustainable development is defined as the development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland, 1987; World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). In this concept, the need of the world's poor must be prioritised to ensure improved quality of life. Filho et al. (2019:679) indicated that planning for sustainable development requires a vision which focuses on changing the development to be better, and a strategy for the vision must be developed.

What then should planners do to include sustainable development in planning practice? During the planning process, planners must focus on future development and look into the existing and emerging needs of the community. Communication of knowledge to different stakeholders about what needs to be sustained and developed should be one of the roles of planners in promoting sustainable development. Planners must formulate and implement alternative measures that are compatible to sustainable development. Community members are the responsibility of planners in terms of conveying knowledge about sustainability (Næss, 2001:517). Questions that come to mind are: What is the sustainability literacy level of planners? Do they consider sustainability issues or sustainable development when planning for urban public open spaces or even planning for sustainable neighbourhoods? Are urban public open spaces a priority during the township development process?

For planners to achieve sustainable development, they need to build that character of future developments by identifying the needs of the community and ensuring that these needs will be met; create a balance between environmental, economic and social values in order to promote sustainability; and encourage a linkage between local and global concerns. Community focus should be beyond what is happening in their vicinity but also on the global context and encourage community participation and educate the community about building sustainable neighbourhoods (Berke & Conroy, 2000:23). These characteristics formulated a definition of sustainable development as a "dynamic process in which communities anticipate and accommodate the needs of current and future generations in ways that reproduce and

balance local, economic and ecological systems, and link local actions to global concerns” (Berke & Conroy, 2000:23).

It is the responsibility of planners to promote community sustainability. Community sustainability must form part of the planning education. Planning education involves decision-making where planners must employ negotiation and dispute resolution skills to promote sustainable development. During the planning practise, cognisance should be taken in the use of land use and urban design solutions and these must include protection of urban open spaces. Community plans should incorporate sustainability principles (Berke & Conroy, 2000:31). The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA), Act 16 of 2013 (RSA, 2013:10) accommodates spatial sustainability which applies to spatial planning, land development and land use management. Spatial sustainability indicates that prime and agricultural land must be protected. Land development in areas that are sustainable must be encouraged in order to limit urban sprawl. Environmental management instruments should be aligned with land use and this can curb the incidence of encroachment on urban open spaces. Lastly, spatial sustainability encourages the promotion of sustainable communities and that there must be a balance in rural and urban areas (SPLUMA, 2013:10). Moreover, planners have a role to play in protecting and managing urban public open spaces. This can be achieved if the planners can formulate and implement a framework or guidelines that they can use in planning for urban public open spaces. Also, this research aimed to develop a framework or guidelines that can be used by municipal town planners to curb the incidence of urban open space encroachment.

In addition to sustainable development and urban public open spaces, Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals is to “[m]ake cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (United Nations, 2016). It also states that by 2030, the goal intends to “provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities” (United Nations, 2016). Other goals that relate and accommodate the provision of open spaces is Goal 3: “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” and Goal 15: “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” (United Nations, 2016). In terms of the economic dimension, urban public open spaces relate to economic and financial benefits. This involves investment in an urban area for employment opportunities. The economic dimension impacts positively on the property value, urban open space value and the proximity of neighbourhoods to natural areas (Cilliers, 2015:2).

Thompson (2002:60) indicated that urban open spaces play an important role in the democratic society and in social space. In a democratic society, urban open spaces are regarded as “places where democracy is worked out, quite literally, on the ground, and therefore, the way such spaces are designed, managed and used demonstrates the realities of political rhetoric” (Thompson, 2002:60). This implies that urban open spaces as a democratic society involve different cultural groups, with different perceptions interacting as a society for recreational purposes. Also, in a democratic society, the society has access to urban open spaces, especially the public spaces that are not created for monetary value. Urban public open spaces as a social space aim at achieving urban integration rather than seeing these spaces as isolated entities. A relationship must be established between the urban open spaces and the users (Thompson, 2002:61). In addition, urban public open spaces play a crucial role in the planning practice. This involves different stakeholders working together in planning, managing, sustaining and protecting urban open spaces. Community participation and consumer education are key factors in planning for urban open spaces. Should urban areas lose urban public open spaces, they will never regain them; hence preserving and sustaining them for future generations is necessary.

## **2.6 Encroachment of open spaces as a societal malaise**

This section draws attention to various ills associated with the encroachment of open spaces in urban areas, highlighting various causal factors, the measures taken to curb the incidence of this malaise globally and nationally, and the challenges hindering the implementation of these measures on both scales which has led to the proliferation of such encroachment incidents in the society.

### **2.6.1 Causal factors of urban public open space encroachment**

Li et al. (2016:1) highlighted that urban public open spaces play a significant role in the urban environments because they foster resilience in urban areas. However, rapid urbanisation has resulted into extinction of these open spaces. Urbanisation is caused by a variety of factors that include rural–urban migration, natural population increase, expansion of the metropolitan periphery and illegal occupation of land (Cohen, 2006:69). Furthermore, rapid urbanisation has refocused attention on planning. Planners are faced with challenges to plan for informal settlement upgrading. In addressing this challenge, planning must involve communities in planning processes to avoid conflicts and safeguard the lives of the poor (UN-Habitat, 2009). Literature highlighted that West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone have lost urban public open spaces due to rapid urbanisation. Beijing, for instance, has experienced a similar challenge in 2014 where it lost some urban open spaces due to rapid

urbanisation (Li et al., 2016:2; Mensah, 2014a:6). Urban public open spaces are faced with challenges that include rapid urbanisation, poor sustenance and management, poor enforcement of land use regimes, and a low level of prioritisation. These challenges have led to gradual disappearance of urban public open spaces and have threatened sustainable planning of urban areas. In addition to the challenges affecting the transformation of urban public open spaces, Landman (2019:183) highlighted factors such as fear which relate to safety and security, negligence or mismanagement, as well as survival pertaining to the poor who are homeless or need shelter.

### **2.6.1.1 Rapid urbanisation**

Urbanisation refers to the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas in search for a better quality of life. This is a major resultant of urban public open space extinction and a human rights-based approach which can have a major impact on environmental sustainability policies (UN-Habitat, 2016). Urbanisation is an increase in the population size of an urban area and this is caused by the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas. It is high in developing countries and estimations indicate that a vast number of people by 2050 will be living in urban areas (Jiboye, 2011:178; Watson, 2009b:160). Urbanisation involves “the improvement of urban quality including renewing the city, optimizing urban spatial organization and improving urban function” (Jiboye, 2011:178). Fuwape and Onyekwelu (2011:81) concurred with this statement in that they indicated that urbanisation focuses on spatial dimensions and change in urban space. This is due to growth of cities where the periphery expands. This can also be related to densification which refers to the population density and the volume of the built-up structure. It is highlighted that most countries grow through densification and urban sprawl. In addition, urbanisation has resulted in informal settlements, especially with encroachment of urban public open spaces.

The UN-Habitat (2010:4) highlighted an estimation of the increase in population size by the year 2030, even in countries such as Asia and Africa. Urbanisation is not only characterised by the movement of people from rural to urban areas or the natural population growth of an urban area, it is also characterised by different factors such as the employment sector, societal values and modes of governance, spatial scale and the composition of different social, cultural and ethnic groups. Countries with an indication of wealth are mostly affected by urbanisation. This also indicates that there is a link between urbanisation and economic growth. The eastern part of China is a good example of urbanisation (UN-Habitat, 2010:7). Urban public open spaces have become extinct due to rapid urbanisation. This is evident in some African countries, including South Africa, because of the mushrooming of informal settlements in

Mangaung in the Free State province. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 indicate the estimation of the population moving to urban areas for various reasons which are causal factors for urbanisation. South Africa's urbanisation trends are higher than that of other African countries.

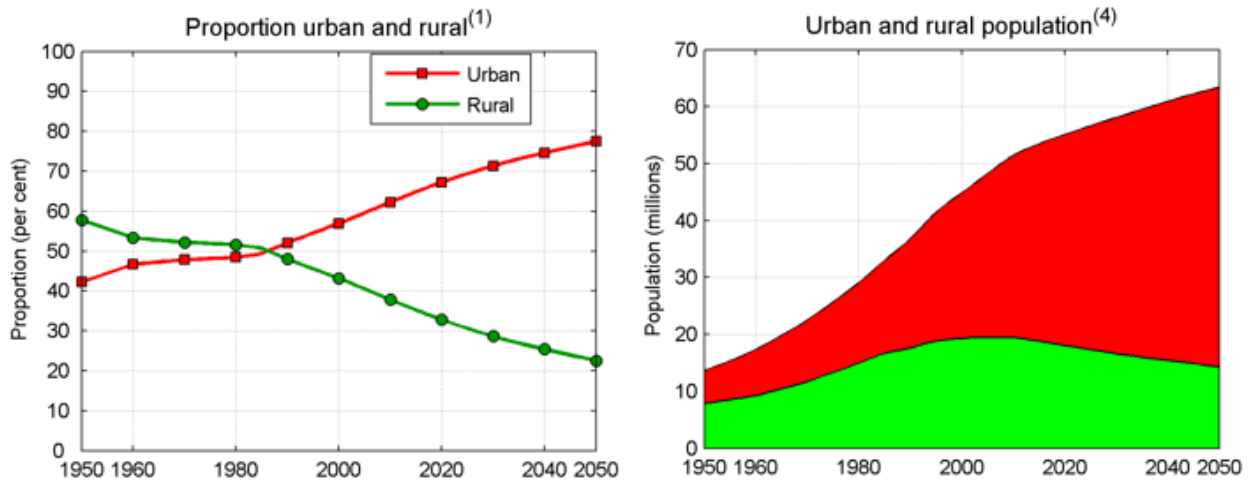


Figure 2.1: Effect of rapid urbanisation in South Africa  
Source: UN-Habitat (2010)

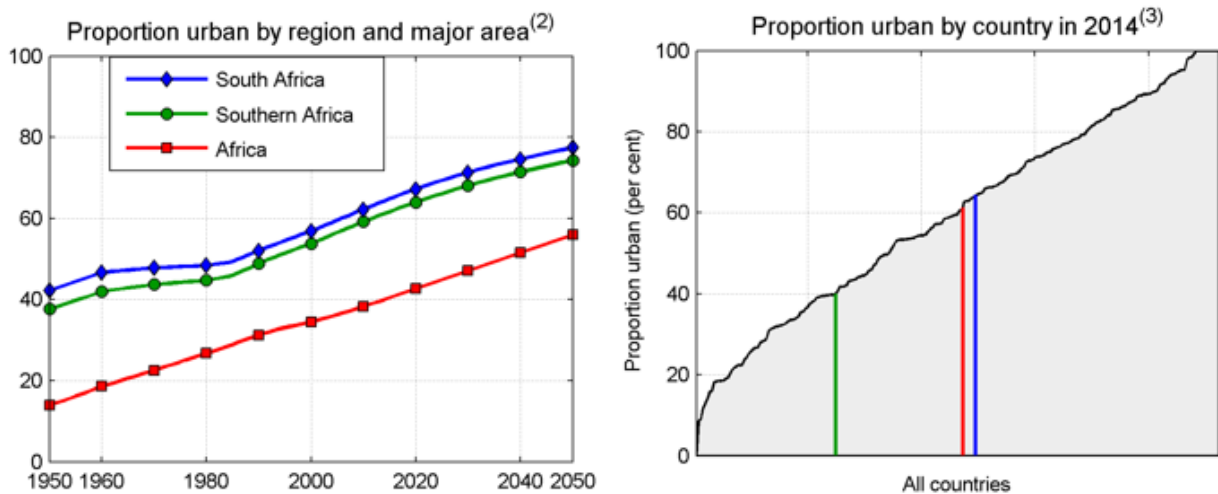


Figure 2.2: Effect of rapid urbanisation in African countries  
Source: UN-Habitat (2010)

### 2.6.1.2 Poor sustenance and management of urban public open space

Poor sustenance and poor management of urban public open spaces have created a gap for encroachment and have changed the spatial patterns of land uses. Most of the open spaces that are encroached are parks that are not properly managed. To avoid conflict, the community

must be recognised as the key stakeholders in the management of open spaces. Mashalaba (2013:98) highlighted that all the urban stakeholders must be part of the management of the urban public open spaces. This will assist in achieving sustainable and meaningful contributions in decision-making. Kit Campbell Associates (2011:55) argued that authorities responsible for management of urban public open spaces should consider open space audits. Factors to consider during the audit include the “location, size, characteristics, quality and purpose of all areas of open spaces in their area, together with details of wildlife habitats”. This must also include the type and functioning of those urban open spaces. In essence, authorities will be able to know their space and manage them better. Key objectives that serve as guiding principles for management of urban public open spaces include character and identity; distinction between public and private spaces; quality of the public realm; easy accessibility; legibility and adaptability; and diversity or choice (Kit Campbell Associates, 2011:69).

Management of urban environments, especially urban public open spaces, should aim at improving the quality of life of humans, promoting sustainable neighbourhoods and natural environments, as well as effective use of resources. Behrens and Watson (1996:11) also emphasised different normative concerns that guide the layout planning in the South African context. These include place-making, scale, access, opportunity, efficiency and choice. Emphasis of these concerns is on the quality of urban environment. Proper planning and management of urban open spaces is crucial. Municipalities, especially in planning practice, must have guidelines or a framework on how to manage urban public open spaces. This should be inclusive of community participation or involvement of the different stakeholders involved in management and sustaining urban public open spaces.

### **2.6.1.3 Poor enforcement of land use regimes**

The SPLUMA (RSA, 2013:19) states that the municipality must have a land use scheme to enforce law to all stakeholders. Issues that lead to poor enforcement include the dysfunctional nature of land use regimes and delays in decision-making processes in planning applications. Some African countries such as Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Ghana, Cameroon, and even cities in South Africa, have experienced poor enforcement of land use regimes that led to encroachment in urban public open spaces (Mensah, 2014a:6). Some authorities are still using old town planning schemes in regulating land use. For instance, the MMM in the Free State province of South Africa was still using an outdated town planning scheme to regulate land use. Delays in decisions on town planning applications that are lodged to the authorities pose major challenges in land use management. Mensah (2014a:7) mentioned Tanzania,

Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon as examples of countries facing challenges with urban public open space encroachment due to delays in taking decisions regarding land use applications. Among other challenges is lack of capacity in relation to personnel. This also includes financial constraints, political interference and poor coordination among authorities. South Africa is facing similar challenges regarding enforcement of land use regimes. Some municipalities do not even have planners and they have to outsource all the planning applications. If there is a planner in the municipality, they have to multitask and this poses a challenge in the planning practice.

#### **2.6.1.4 Level of prioritisation of urban public open spaces**

Abbasi et al. (2016:195) highlighted three main factors related to the effective use of open spaces and these include the needs of the users, quality of the physical features and the spatial structure of the space. These spaces have a positive impact on people's sense of quality of life, as well as their physical and psychological well-being. Open spaces play a crucial role because they provide the community a space for interaction, relaxation, restoration, contact with nature, and they offer many opportunities for leisure purposes. Another causal factor of urban public open space encroachment is the value conflict in terms of awareness and level of prioritisation of open spaces by both the residents and municipal officials. On the other hand, urban public open spaces are less prioritised as concentration is on other land uses such as residential, educational and health facilities. This has led to mismanagement or negligence of urban open spaces (Mensah, 2014a:8). According to Landman (2019:183), negligence is one of the drivers of transformation of urban public open spaces in South African cities. Similar cases of negligence are evident in some African countries and this result in poor implementation of planning projects.

Cilliers, Timmermans, Van den Goorbergh and Slijkhuis (2015:349) indicated that urban public open spaces are not prioritised because they have no monetary value. This has resulted into value conflicts in terms of different land uses, conservation and development. Other land uses such as residential, commercial and community facilities are highly prioritised because they have monetary value. Low prioritisation of urban public open spaces has led to under-provision and amendment for residential purposes. Furthermore, authorities and decision-makers put more emphasis on other land uses as the environment is considered mostly for leisure. This has led to a challenge in balancing the importance of building a sustainable future and addressing the need to prioritise and manage urban open spaces (Cilliers & Cilliers, 2016:22). The level of urban open space prioritisation is very low in many countries, including South African municipalities, and this has led to urban open space encroachment. Awareness and

educating different stakeholders about the importance of urban open spaces is key. Once implemented successfully, urban public open spaces will regain their value. This also include the evaluation of these open spaces in terms of monetary value and accessibility analysis.

## **2.6.2 Measures to curb the incidence of encroachment**

*The creation of a network of high quality and inspiring open spaces which helps ensure an attractive, healthy and sustainable and socially cohesive place for all the City's communities and visitors.*

City of London (2017:4).

Urban public open spaces have been challenged with illegal occupation due to various factors as indicated in Section 2.6.1. Authorities therefore need to develop measures or solutions to curb incidences of encroachment. Notably, effective planning for urban open spaces is significant in order to curb incidences of encroachment. Strategic and holistic plans, as well as legal frameworks, need to be formulated and implemented by authorities. Planners need to integrate urban public open space infrastructure needs to their urban frameworks. Involvement of different stakeholders and community participation also play a crucial role in planning for urban public open spaces thus managing encroachment in that it increases the sense of place and ownership among the residents (Haaland & Van den Bosch, 2015). When planning for urban public open spaces, the social dimension of sustainability must be considered. This can be achieved by linking neighbourhoods, open spaces and community assets to address accessibility. The community members must be educated about protection and conservation of these open spaces in order to address the ecological dimension of sustainability. Urban public open spaces must fulfil the goal for environmental sustainability and create opportunities for recreation and health and thus indirectly achieving the economic dimension of sustainability (Lindsey, 2003). In this instance, planners play a critical role in evaluation of the environmental and social impact on the environment. The plans done by planners during the planning process must support the principles of sustainability and must be shared with the community during the community participation process with the aim of promoting community sustainability (Berke & Conroy, 2000).

Other countries such as Beijing have a variety of policies for the management of urban spaces. This includes policies such as the Afforestation Project for the Plains of Beijing and the Urban Green System Planning of Beijing (2004–2020). These policies failed to achieve the goal of controlling urbanisation. Other policies used for the use and management of open spaces include the Urban Green Space Work Plan. This was also used in Beijing to increase urban open space areas through implementation of the 2016 Urban Greening Work Plan. Beijing

also used the Green Line Management System to control the changing of urban public open spaces into other land uses (Li et al., 2016:9). The City of London's Open Space Strategy Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Draft (2014:13) identified core issues that should be addressed in all future open space creation and improvement schemes. The aim for this initiative was ensuring long-term sustainability of urban public open spaces. These core issues include maximising opportunities to address lack of urban public open spaces; ensuring that the existing and new urban open spaces are accessible to the entire community; urban open spaces must be safe and inclusive; when planning is done for new urban public open spaces, long-term maintenance costs must be considered; plants that will be planted on the urban open spaces must be drought tolerant, resistant to diseases and withstand extreme climates; and encouraging community participation in management of urban open spaces.

Bengston, Fletcher and Nelson (2004:275) outlined public policy instruments that are used to manage and protect open spaces and they are classified in three categories, namely, public ownership and management, regulations and incentives. The United States uses public acquisition and management as a policy instrument for protection of urban open spaces. Public acquisition of urban open spaces takes place at different spheres of government and is used for the creation or expansion of different form of open spaces. It is the most appropriate policy for managing urban open spaces but it is an expensive form as it involves finances. With the regulatory approach, subdivision of land in protection of environmentally sensitive areas is promoted. Building on wetlands is also prohibited in order to protect endangered species as well as areas of critical environmental concerns. Another regulatory approach involves cluster zoning where residential buildings are clustered together, allowing the remaining land parcel as an urban open space. The incentive-based approach includes the right-to-farm laws where the farmers are given incentives to keep land for agricultural purposes (Bengston et al., 2004:279).

Officha, Onwuemesi and Akanwa (2012:11) suggested ways on how to address the management issues of open spaces in Nigeria which has also been facing urban public open space encroachment. These suggestions include the need for proper planning and efficient use of open spaces in Nigerian cities; an effective and efficient approach in achieving urban development and this should include the formulation of an urban planning policy; a strategy for enforcing statutory guidelines for development; a strategy for urban land monitoring, development control and effective management of urban open spaces; urban open spaces must be designed in a way that will enhance the aesthetics of the urban environment; formulation and implementation of urban open space policies; rezoning of unused and vacant

land to urban open spaces in addition to the existing ones; and community participation, consumer education and awareness programmes on the management of urban open spaces.

### **2.6.3 Challenges hindering implementation of the management of urban public open spaces**

Urban public open space management has faced challenges with the implementation process. Bengston et al. (2004:279) named the following challenges:

- Lack of evaluation of the policies governing the management of urban open spaces. These programmes, if any, are not properly evaluated and this affect the land use management. Sometimes these programmes do not have clear targets.
- Lack of specific details on how the policy or programme will be implemented. An administrative aspect is crucial as it relates to the effectiveness of the implementation process.
- Outdated town planning schemes and even the absence of zoning to protect urban open spaces.
- Lack of coordination of the policies for the management of urban open spaces among the different spheres of government.
- Lack of stakeholder involvement or community participation in planning and management of urban open spaces. The cornerstone of effective implementation and management of urban open spaces is community involvement.

These challenges mostly affect planners and policymakers in managing and protecting urban public open spaces. There is a need for the improvement on the existing policies or even formulating new policies that will assist in managing urban open spaces to avoid incidences of encroachment. Local government spheres have a critical role to play in planning, managing and protecting urban open spaces. Once urban public open spaces are lost, they will never be regained; hence protection and management is critical. The focus should be on the development of spaces that are environmentally and socially sustainable.

## **2.7 'Nature-based Solutions' and urban public open spaces – Connecting the dots**

Based on the challenges facing the planners and policymakers in managing and protecting urban public open spaces, the concept 'Nature-based Solutions' (NbS) offers solutions for tackling socio-environmental challenges. According to the European Commission (2015:5),

the NbS concept is defined by the European Union as the solutions or actions inspired and supported by nature. These are cost-effective and provide environmental, social and economic benefits. In addition, the NbS also assists in building resilience. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (2016:2) defined NbS as

actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges (e.g. climate change, food and water security or natural disasters) effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

From the foregoing, the NbS aims at supporting the development goals of the society with the focus on their societal values. The specific societal challenges include water security, food security, human health, disaster risk reduction and climate change. Referring to the context of the research and connecting the dots between NbS and urban public open spaces, the natural environment, climate and biodiversity play an integral part on human health, well-being and social cohesion (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016:13). These aspects, namely human health and well-being, promote sustainable competitiveness. Urban public open spaces influence the health of human beings, enhance social interaction, inclusion and cohesion. Based on NbS and the enhancement of urban open spaces, urban stakeholder collaboration is needed.

In continuing NbS intentions is to assist societies to curb environmental, social and economic challenges in a sustainable manner. They involve innovative governance and promote involvement of all the urban stakeholders. Focusing on the stakeholder engagement, their perception of the value of urban open spaces is changing because policymaking recognises the inclusion of all urban stakeholders in planning projects. This makes the community members to recognise the value and utility of urban public open spaces. The European Commission (2015:8) recommended the following goals for promoting a sustainable NbS: promoting sustainable urbanisation; focusing on restoration of degraded ecosystems; climate change adaptation and mitigation; and refining risk management and resilience. From the aforementioned goals, actions to meet the societal challenges have been identified. Sustainable urbanisation challenges can be solved through improved residential design and transport systems, new technologies and business models, as well as healthy urban environments. In this case, all the urban stakeholders are encouraged to use the NbS from inception of any planning project. The restoration of degraded ecosystems may lead to economic and social regeneration through an improved environmental quality of life. In attempting to mitigate climate change through NbS, innovation through investing new technologies is needed. Risk prevention can be beneficial as it has benefits such as reduction

of pollution, carbon storage, and biodiversity preservation, as well as recreational and economic opportunities (Nesshöver et al., 2017:1217).

## **2.8 Chapter summary**

Urban public open spaces form an integral part of sustainable environments and they are at the heart of sustainability. Different scholars in terms of space, location, development functions and values defined them differently. Regarding planning and design, urban open space provision, design, management and protection are important. Guiding principles for urban public open space design and management were highlighted, which include the character of the place, attractiveness, accessibility and legibility of the space. Furthermore, urban public open spaces are classified according to the size, location, function and values. There are different benefits and opportunities attached to urban public open spaces that contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in urban areas. They range from environmental, economic, social, cultural, educational and health benefits. All these benefits can be used interchangeably. In addition, different urban stakeholders have different perceptions regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. These different perceptions lead to value conflicts which make it difficult for the planner to achieve the key objectives of planning and the creation of sustainable communities. These value conflicts can be perceived as economic value, public good or recreational value, environmental value and housing value.

Planners should focus on future developments when planning for sustainable neighbourhoods. They need to build the character of future developments by identifying the needs of the community and should ensure that these needs are met. Community participation and awareness on the value, management and sustenance of urban public open spaces should be encouraged. The planner should promote community sustainability which forms part of planning education. Different countries lost some urban open spaces due to rapid urbanisation, poor enforcement on land use regimes, poor management and a low level of prioritisation by the municipal officials. However, there are several ways on how to manage urban open spaces. Involvement of all the urban stakeholders in sustaining and managing the urban public open spaces is crucial. Also, if all the municipal officials work together during the planning process it will assist in building sustainable environments. Planners have a critical role to play in terms of promoting sustainable neighbourhoods and this includes formulation of policies that would curb the encroachment of urban public open spaces. Effective planning, strategic and holistic plans need to be formulated and implemented by authorities. The concept of sustainable development should be considered by planners, other professionals involved in the planning practice and the community members.

The next chapter reviews the relationship between the theories in planning and urban public open spaces. Concepts such as urban open space planning, community participation and value conflicts are presented and the initial conceptual framework for the study is introduced.

## Chapter 3

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES AND PLANNING

---

---

### 3.1 Chapter introduction

Chapter 2 presented an extensive review regarding urban public open spaces and how they are understood in literature. This chapter reflects on the relationship between urban public open spaces and planning. It answers the second sub-research question, namely: *What theories relate to planning of open space?* Furthermore, this chapter reviews the relationship between urban public open space planning, community participation and value conflicts of different urban stakeholders involved in planning for sustainable communities. To achieve this, the major areas of discussion in this chapter involve theories of planning and planning models associated with urban public open spaces. It further reviews community participation in planning and how it relates to the planning theories. Drivers, opportunities and barriers that influence community participation are also highlighted. Also, value conflicts of different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces are reviewed. Additionally, a conceptual framework indicating the relationship between the concepts 'urban public open space', 'community participation' and 'value conflicts' are discussed. Finally, a summary and link to the next chapter is presented.

### 3.2 Urban public open space planning

The contents of this section discuss different theories that relate to planning and to urban public open spaces in urban areas as its contribution to the concept of sustainable neighbourhoods.

#### 3.2.1 What is planning?

The planning practice has not changed over time, but its scope has been widened. Todes (2011:120) saw planning as a strategic activity that put emphasis on the intervention of making a difference to the future of areas over time. He further explained that planning is shaped by explicit values and is concerned with making ethical judgements. In all this, planners are the main actors in the planning system. Steyn (2015:24) defined planning as the "action directed to the future in which human insights and values are taken into consideration in decision-making in an attempt to achieve harmony between man and nature as well as between people

themselves". This shows that planning is influenced by values and it has become more democratised to an extent that it involves different participants. This confirms that there is a link between planning and community participation. Watson (2009a:2260) viewed "planning as a central tool through which government manages spatially defined territories and populations: the issue of power is therefore inextricably linked to an understanding of planning systems". Based on this definition, this implies that planning is not only seen as a human activity but is also societally-based. Alexander (1981:135) stated that planning is based on how humans think and act. Again, this demonstrates that planning revolves around the human actions and understanding. Actions are based on human insights, values and future thoughts. With this thought, different theories forming the basis of planning are reviewed.

### **3.2.2 Different theories of planning – A review**

#### **3.2.2.1 Blueprint planning**

In an attempt to define blueprint planning, Faludi (1973:131) explained it as "an approach whereby a planning agency operates a programme thought to attain its objectives with certainty". Both Patrick Geddes and Sir Ebenezer Howard, as the earliest and most influential early thinkers in planning, made major contributions to blueprint planning. Howard, the brainchild of the garden city concept, proposed the integration of employment and a healthy environment (Hall, 2002:32). Geddes, on the other hand, as the father of regional planning, proposed that planning should involve a certain sequence which includes the survey of the region, analysis of the survey and the development of the plan (Lane, 2005:287). With both their notions regarding blueprint planning, these early thinkers in planning were not concerned with planning as a continuous process but their vision focused on the planner as the omniscient ruler. To Geddes and Howard, a planner is supposed to create new settlement forms without the involvement of urban stakeholders.

The theory of blueprint planning was exclusive of community participation and a planner was viewed as a technocrat as no consultation with the urban stakeholders was done. Planners decided if development should be including the allocation of different land uses. Khan and Swapan (2013:184) stated that the blueprint approach "lead to inefficient urban planning, non-participatory decision-making, underestimating of stakeholders' demand, under-performing development authorities, and non-cooperative service provision". On the contrary, good governance rectifies the failure of blueprint planning. This approach clearly defines the role of a planner who is not considerate of the community. If this is compared to Arnstein's ladder of participation, it indicates that the community did not have a voice. It falls under the level of

therapy and manipulation, as well as under the planning tradition of societal guidance. The blueprint theory has been criticised and this led to the conception of synoptic planning.

### **3.2.2.2 Synoptic planning**

Synoptic planning, also referred to as rational comprehensive planning, started in the 1960s as its emergence followed the criticism of the blueprint planning. Lane (2005:293) pointed out that synoptic planning was the conception for more pragmatic planning models. These included incrementalism and mixed scanning. This approach is also viewed as an opportunity for community participation in the planning practice. In terms of community participation, two important developments have been identified in this approach, namely, institutionalisation of a limited role of the community in planning and the inclusion of different urban stakeholders outside of the formal policymaking dimension. These developments during the synoptic planning display significant changes in the planning practice; hence community participation today (Lane, 2005:292). Hudson (1979:388) named four main elements of synoptic planning: identification of goals and targets, identification of alternative policy options, evaluating means against ends and implementing the policy.

Models included in synoptic planning include incrementalism and mixed scanning. Hudson (1979:389) pointed out that incremental planning involves negotiations among different decision-makers. It dwells more on the experience and the perception of the planner. Lindblom (cited by Lane, 2005:291) calls incremental planning the “science of muddling through” because it involves different conceptions of decision-making. According to Lawrence (2000:611), incremental planning involves policy-making as a means of bargaining and negotiations. Furthermore, mixed scanning, which was developed by Etzioni (1968), encouraged decision-making on both strategic and tactical levels. Organisations are expected to “scan their environments over different decision-making levels, choosing from both tactical operational issues and fundamental strategic choices” (Lane, 2005:291). This implies that planning and decision-making are taken as two sides of the same coin. Still, the planner is in control in the mixed scanning approach. Community participation is limited in synoptic planning.

Lawrence (2000:608) highlighted the assumptions made about synoptic planning, namely a single set of goals and objectives, available ends and means, controllable environment, the planner being an independent expert advisor in planning processes, and the product of the process. Despite these assumptions, there are also major negative aspects attached to synoptic planning, namely:

- Planners are autocrats and do not consider the public.
- Resource and cognitive limits are not taken into cognisance.
- It overestimates the ability to predict and control the environment (weak on implementation).
- There is no consideration in the collective nature of planning and the central role of dialogue.
- There is failure to consider inequities and the political nature of planning.
- Integration of social and environmental need is lacking (Lawrence, 2000:610).

Both the incremental and mixed scanning approach provide opportunities for community participation. When synoptic planning is compared to the role of community participation, it falls under the planning tradition of societal guidance. Within the levels of participation by Arnstein (1969), it operates under informing, consultation and placation. However, synoptic planning was also criticised and led to a search for a new planning approach.

### 3.2.2.3 Pluralistic planning

As stated above, synoptic planning was severely criticised by the late 1960s and a range of new planning approaches was suggested. Due to the inception of the new planning approaches, Watson (2002:29) believed that social transformation was a solution to the problems experienced by cities. The new planning approaches included the transactive, advocacy, Marxist, bargaining, and communicative approaches.

In 1973, Friedmann developed the *transactive planning theory* as a solution to the failures of synoptic planning. The emphasis in this approach was the direct contact with the community. The main objective for transactive planning theory was mutual learning and the emphasis was more of personal and institutional development. It also allowed active community participation. The community at this stage was encouraged to engage in the policy and planning processes. This is where the new era of community participation began (Hudson, 1979:389; Lane, 2005:293).

Hudson (1979:389) stated that *advocacy planning* “grew up in the sixties rooted in adversary procedures modelled upon the legal profession, and usually applied to defending the interests of weak against strong-community groups, environmental causes, the poor, and the disenfranchised against the established powers of business and government”. According to Davidoff (1965:425), the planner act as an advocate. Faludi (1973:137) stated that the main issue that was addressed by advocacy planning is the image of the society. Advocacy planning is built upon inequality of bargaining power between the different urban stakeholders involved

in planning. It stood in the gap for unequal access to the political structure. In addition, it tried to bridge the gap for people who are not represented by interest groups. The main aim of advocacy planning was to “aspire to equality of representation and accommodation of all people in planning processes”. In this case, community participation was highly favoured and the community formed part of decision-making (Lane, 2005:293).

The *Marxist planning approach* emerged due the increasing problems of large industrial areas. Planners were powerless at this stage. The emphasis on this approach was on the criticisms based on the planning practice. Planning focused more on the capitalist form. Community participation was not encouraged at this stage and the community played no role (Lane, 2005:294).

With *bargaining*, two or more stakeholders make a transaction. It is about the principle of ‘give and take’ between active stakeholders in the planning process. Its focus was more on the analysis of the decision-making process. In terms of Arnstein’s ladder of participation, the pluralistic approach involved partnership, delegated power and citizen control. It falls under the societal transformation.

Lastly, the new approach include *communicative planning* which completes the role of community participation. This approach, which is discussed in detail below, views community participation as fundamental for planning. This implies that planning cannot process with the entire urban stakeholders involved in planning.

### **3.2.2.4 Communicative planning**

#### **1.1.1.1.1 Theory of communicative action and rationality**

Jurgen Habermas is the brain behind the ‘Theory of Communicative Action’. This is where this philosopher examined the concept of rationality and its relations with actions, inter-subjective communication, problem of social actions, as well as social and political changes. According to Habermas (1984:xxv), communicative action is rooted in three structural components of speech actions: propositional, illocutionary and expressive actions. All these components allow communicative action to perform different functions that act as symbols of reproduction in the lifeworld. A society is seen as a concept of the lifeworld of a social group where their actions are grouped together with the aim of achieving a harmonious environment. A society is also viewed a self-regulating system where actions are put together with the focus on functional interconnections of end results. Healey (1996:20) stated that a “communicative conception of rationality replaces that of self-conscious autonomous subject using principles of logic and scientifically formulated empirical knowledge to guide action”. Habermas (1984:8)

stated that there is a relationship between rationality and knowledge. Knowledge involves statements viewed as unreliable and rationality refers to “disposition of speaking and acting subjects that is expressed in modes of behaviour for which there are good reasons or grounds” (Habermas, 1984:22).

Communicative rationality is explained in terms of comprehension of language. Reaching understanding is motivated by an agreement between different actors. This is measured against validity claims that characterise different forms of knowledge. Also, communicative rationality relates to discursive rationality as well as the manner in which the stakeholders express themselves in the society. On the other hand, communicative action displays itself through language with the aim of the expression on how stakeholders relate to the world (Habermas, 1984:75). Furthermore, Habermas (1985:6) stated that communicative action is more than just focusing on understanding. Its emphasis is on the importance of language which plays a crucial part in organising activities that are goal-oriented. Also, Habermas (1985:127) was of the opinion that action is taken to deal with the situation at hand. It is either the stakeholders carrying out a plan of action or analysing the situation and reaching an agreement. Participants follow their plans based on the collective description of the situation. For instance, it is impossible for the participants to achieve goals if they do not reach an understanding. Moreover, communicative action offers clarity on the culture, society and personality. Communicative action focuses on intersubjective understanding, on the actions undertaken through discussions as well as on how the community socialises. Communicative rationality, on the other hand, focuses on understanding of the competent actors. There is always daily conflict between the lifeworld and the system. Assumptions have been made in communication and conveyance of knowledge from person to person. Agreement is always tried to be reached on the basis of understanding, shared knowledge, mutual trust and accord. Communicative action and rationality has been criticised because it is seen to be too abstract.

#### **1.1.1.1.2 Habermas and Foucault's viewpoints on communicative planning theory**

Habermas is a philosopher of *Moralität* (morality) based on consensus, whereas Foucault is a philosopher looking at real history in terms of conflict and power. Both their works highlighted tension in modernity (Flyvbjerg, 1998:211). Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones (2002:18) explained Foucault's perspective regarding power, knowledge and rationality as a perspective where power can define and redefine knowledge through the rationalisation of decisions. Using Matthews' (2013:143) point of view on Foucault's work, planners follow the regulations stipulated by government in the planning process. Allmendinger (2001:38) stated that Foucault saw power in two forms, that is, an ordering and normalising force. As an *ordering force*, it

gives direction and shape instead of restriction and obstruction. A *normalising force* influences and shapes the subject through public institutions. Foucault linked power with knowledge and they are inseparable. According to Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002:45), there is an agreement between Foucault and Habermas regarding planning being democratic but there must be mutual understanding. Furthermore, Foucault is more practical as focus is on what *should* happen, and Habermas theoretically focuses on what *is* actually done. Foucault (1984:337) was of the opinion that power symbolises relations between two persons. Distinction must be made between the relations of power and communication; this can either be linguistic or symbolic. Communication is important as it involves a way of action among people. Also, power and knowledge are inseparable. According to Foucault (1982:786), power refers to the manner in which actions transform other people. It becomes of existence once it displays actions.

Foucault's perspective supports a bottom-up approach, whereas Habermas' perspective supports a top-down approach. The 'bottom-up' approach focuses on the role of a planner who is a mediator among the stakeholders. In this instance, focus of planning is more on the process of planning rather than the outcomes. This approach is also on the main actors during debates, negotiations and discourse. In a 'top-down' approach, decisions regarding planning processes are taken by the planners, local authorities and politicians (Mohammadi, 2010:19). Both approaches have their own potential and limits. Top-down planning focuses on governmental authority, whereas the bottom-up planning puts the local authority as the main actors. Therefore, communication is power and planners should interact with the public in reaching consensus.

### **3.2.3 Planning models associated with urban public open spaces**

Various planning models associated with urban public open spaces have been identified and include the opportunistic planning model, the quantitative planning model, the park system model and the garden city model.

#### **3.2.3.1 Opportunistic planning model**

This model relates to land acquisitions arising due to opportunities instead of a proper planning process. These opportunities may arise because of land donations to the municipality or state for ecological and educational purposes, demolition of informal settlements to create recreational and leisure spaces and transformation of recycling sites. Furthermore, the opportunistic model refers to open spaces created because of spaces that are left over after the land has been allocated for other land uses. Such land uses can be small, irregular,

inaccessible and unsuitable for other land uses except for open spaces and be zoned as 'parks' (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:4; Wang et al., 2013:2). Understanding the needs and expectations of the end-users of urban open spaces is key. What is important is to provide an opportunity to the end-user needs, namely, comfort, relaxation, sociability and fun (Abbasi et al., 2016:196). The opportunistic model is very common in most municipalities and has increased the incidence of encroachment on these urban open spaces. The level of priority for planning of urban open spaces is very low. This is evident that such spaces are always left unprotected and result in poor sustenance and management.

### **3.2.3.2 Quantitative planning model**

The allocation of open spaces was introduced by Raymond Unwin in the twentieth century. In planning for open spaces, the size and the function of the parks must also be related to the travelling distances from the residential properties and the open spaces (Turner, 1992:372). The quantitative model serves as a guiding model for the allocation of open spaces in connection with the potential users. This model considers the space standards when allocating land for spaces, that is, the size and number of the people in a given area. The main aim for this model is to allocate spaces that will accommodate the population size; it is about the minimum area size of an open space versus the given population (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:5). Behrens and Watson (1996:80) believed that the location of open spaces and the design of the movement system are key elements in facilitating urban environments. They create better opportunities for commercial investment, including informal generation of income. The principle of choice in allocation of open spaces is important because these spaces are utilised as a mechanism of relaxation in intense developed areas. They provide vibrancy and interest, thereby creating a sense of uniqueness, balance and comfort to the residents. However, Wang et al. (2013: 2) stated that this model has been criticised for not considering social and environmental systems. In comparison with the opportunistic model, the size of the open space is not necessarily considered if the spaces are allocated because nothing can be done with the left-over land. It is important to include different stakeholders when planning for urban open spaces in order to promote community sustainability and sustainable neighbourhoods.

### **3.2.3.3 Park system model**

This model was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century as a functional unit of open spaces interconnected physically. It includes gardens and parks ranging from different sizes with different uses. Maruani and Amit-Cohen (2007:6) stated that this model is mostly suitable

for newly developed areas. A park system can be in a hierarchical form where gardens and parks of different size are arranged in terms of their functions. Emphasis on the park system model is based on the population needs rather than the protection of the natural environment. This implies that the park system does not focus on ecological and environmental functions. However, the size of open spaces should be large enough to accommodate the regenerative and restorative power of that geographic area (CSIR, 2005). The examples of park systems include Prospect Park in New York and the Abercrombie 1943/1944 plan which is located in London (Maruni & Amit-Cohen, 2007:6). Furthermore, the planning of parks should involve the different stakeholders with the aim of protecting and sustaining the environment, rather than concentrating on the population needs. The communities need to be educated about the value, benefits, management and sustenance of urban open spaces.

#### **3.2.3.4 Garden city model**

The garden city model is regarded as a comprehensive planning model. It is the urban utopian model that was conceived by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the nineteenth century, with the emphasis on the importance of urban open space preservation and that it forms an integral part of development. After witnessing the rebuilding of Chicago which experienced a great fire, he was inspired to contemplate different ways on the improvement of cities. The main aim was to remedy social and health ills such as overcrowded and polluted industrial cities of that century. These ills emerged during the Industrial Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. In addition, the focus was on achieving social reform through comprehensive urban planning. This includes socio-economic, environmental and structural principles (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:4). The concept 'garden city' was formulated in Howard's book known as *To-morrow* which was later republished as *Garden cities of To-morrow*. The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (1919) defined a garden city as "a town designed for healthy living and industry; of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life; but not larger; surrounded by a rural belt; the whole of the land being in public ownership or held in trust for community". However, Howard further explained the garden city concept in his book entitled *Tomorrow: A peaceful path to real reform* which was first published in 1898 and then later revised in 1902 under the title *Garden cities of tomorrow* (Hall, 2002).

The garden city model addresses the unhealthy lifestyles between a town and the country. These two areas observed advantages and disadvantages to the lives of humans and the natural environment. Howard (1902) envisaged that a town and a country can be integrated to form a town-country which will provide new hope and life to the community. This brought about Howard's 'The three magnets' diagram (Figure 3.1) that includes the town, country and

the town-country. It proposed the creation of new suburban towns of limited size, intended to be planned, self-contained communities that are surrounded by greenbelts. The use of greenbelts were introduced by garden cities with the intention of the preservation of agricultural and rural life, nature and heritage conservation, recreation, pollution minimisation and growth management (Hall, 2002:93-94). Vernet and Coste (2017:54) added that the garden city models serve as tools that connect cities. From their perspective, this model can be utilised in a sustainable approach to address aspects such as housing, governance, economy, transport, health, community and energy. It also has potential to curb the incidence of environmental degradation. Figure 3.1 illustrates the garden city model and its relationship with sustainable neighbourhoods.

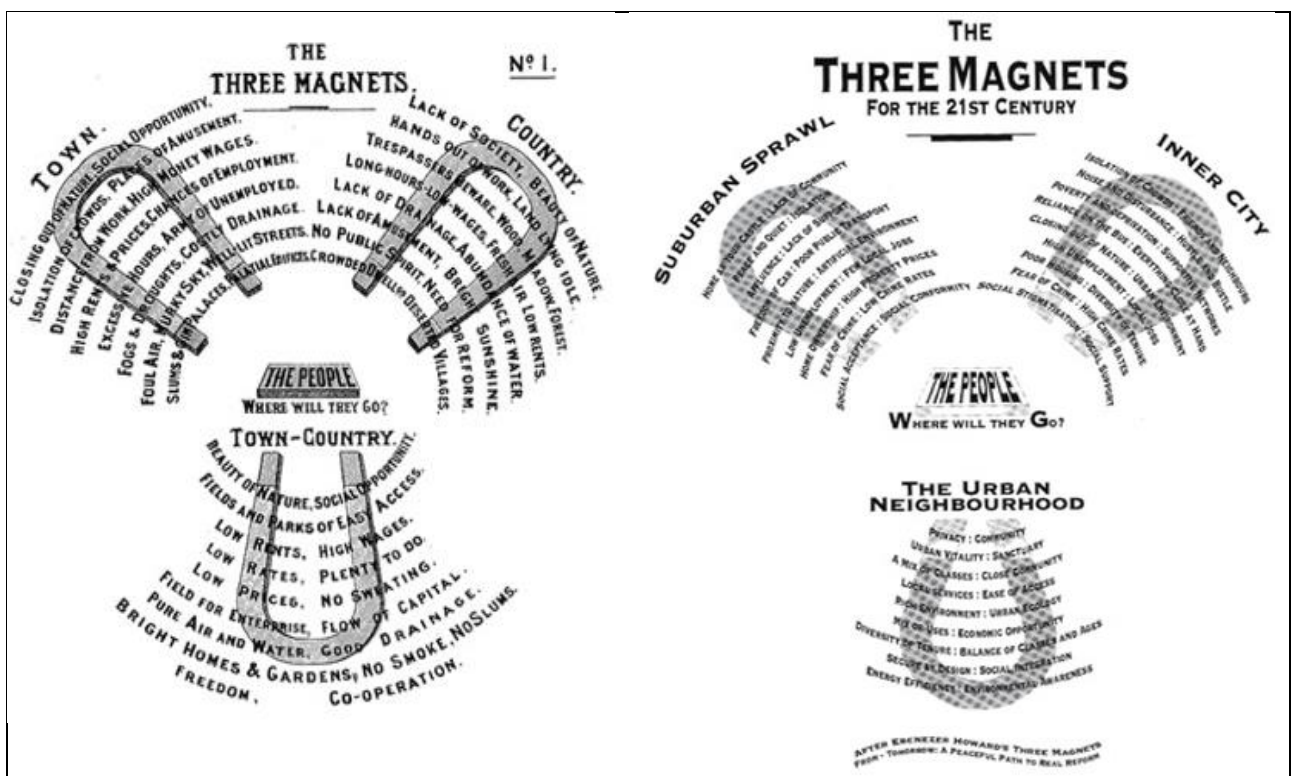


Figure 3.1: Howard’s garden city model and its relationship with sustainable neighbourhoods  
 Source: Vernet and Coste (2017:52)

Hall (2002:94) indicated that a garden city provides a polycentric social city made up of self-sufficient and self-governing small towns that would be linked by rail and contain many open spaces. The features of these towns include the beauty of nature, social opportunity, accessibility to open spaces that includes fields and parks, low rental and rates and flow of capital, good air and water quality, free slum places, freedom and cooperation in the community. Alexander (1992) considered a garden city model as a cornerstone of modern

urban planning in general but an open space planning in particular. It has shaped green belts and green fingers.

In addition, all these models associated with urban open spaces influence the planning practice. In planning for urban open spaces, all the urban stakeholders must work together. Engagement must be from the beginning of the planning projects to be initiated. This is done through community participation.

### **3.3 Community participation in planning**

During the 1960s, there was a debate regarding the theories of community participation especially in the academic world. Community participation is central to planning and it involves the community and participation. It refers to the direct involvement of the community members in planning, governance and development issues at grassroot level. Planners must be actively engaged with the community in planning processes. This section discusses the definition of community participation by different researchers, the ladder of participation by Arnstein (1969), drivers and opportunities, challenges of community participation and the different contextual perspectives (international and South African context) of community participation.

#### **3.3.1 Defining community participation**

At the core of communicative planning theory is community participation in the decision-making process which needs to be open and should be based on consultations with different stakeholders. Community participation has recently become a debated thought in planning. There is a strong belief that every community member has a right to partake in decision-making processes (Wilson, Hannington and Stephen, 2015:64). Community participation is central to planning and policy reforms worldwide. It promotes democracy, justice and sustainability. Planning plays a huge role in enhancing democracy as it helps in addressing social and economic inequality through the inclusive planning processes (Alexander, 2008:7). Mahjabeen, Shrestha and Dee (2009: 46) considered community participation as a significant element in achieving sustainable development. Rowe and Frewer (2000:6) viewed community participation as a process of a group of procedures aimed at consultation, involvement and rendering information to the community for them to take part in decision-making. Mafukidze and Hoosen (2009:385) stated that community participation is the direct involvement of the community members in planning, governance and development issues at grassroots level. This permits for cost reduction with local skills, implementation of the decisions made by the community and use of scarce resources towards the poor people identified by the powerholders or the community as a whole.

Khosla (2015:28) stated that community participation combines two concepts, namely, community and participation. In support of this notion, community is categorised into described geo-spatial and territorial boundaries. It also has common socio-cultural power and identity. Community participation is also seen as “the involvement of local actors in the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects, in practise it sometimes tends to be confined to specific activities” (Mafukidze & Hoosen, 2009:385). This demonstrates that the involvement of the community on issues involving the community is important. Planners need to engage with the community in planning and implementation. Better communication within the community will lead to good governance and this can be achieved if there is common understanding in the issues related to planning and policy processes. Ismail and Said (2015:358) were of the view that an effective community participation will increase cooperation among planners and community members. This will assist in achieving the set goals and all the stakeholders will benefit. This can be achieved if people are empowered and there is mutual trust during the participation process. It is important that the needs, concerns and values of the community be taken into account and form part of decision-making.

The International Association of Public Participation (2013:9) explains community participation in terms of different core values. These values state that community participation indicates that people who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. The values promise that the contribution of the public will influence the decision. The values promote sustainable decisions where the needs and interests of all participants are valued. The values facilitate the involvement of people affected by the decision. The values look for the inputs from participants in designing how they participate. The values capacitate the participants regarding the need for them to participate in a meaningful way and gives feedback to the participants regarding their input on the decisions taken. All these core values play an important role in community participation.

### **3.3.2 Arnstein’s ladder of participation**

*The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you.*

(Arnstein, 1969).

Sherry Arnstein developed the theoretical work on community participation in 1969. According to Lane (2005:284), Arnstein shared her critiques regarding community participation in different planning forums. Her concerns are still debated today. Her work grew when she recognised that there are different levels of participation, named the *ladder of participation*. These levels of community participation came as a result of social and political turmoil,

followed by several criticisms regarding the manner in which policymakers and planners handled community participation. Arnstein (1969) raised an important phenomenon – redistribution of power – as a critical necessity for the success of community participation in planning. Citizens need to be given an opportunity to be part of decision-making in all aspects affecting their well-being. The distribution of power assisted in raising fairness during community participation. The imbalance of power in the decision-making process creates unequal access. Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation is divided in three categories, namely non-participation, degree of tokenism and degree of citizen power (Figure 3.2).

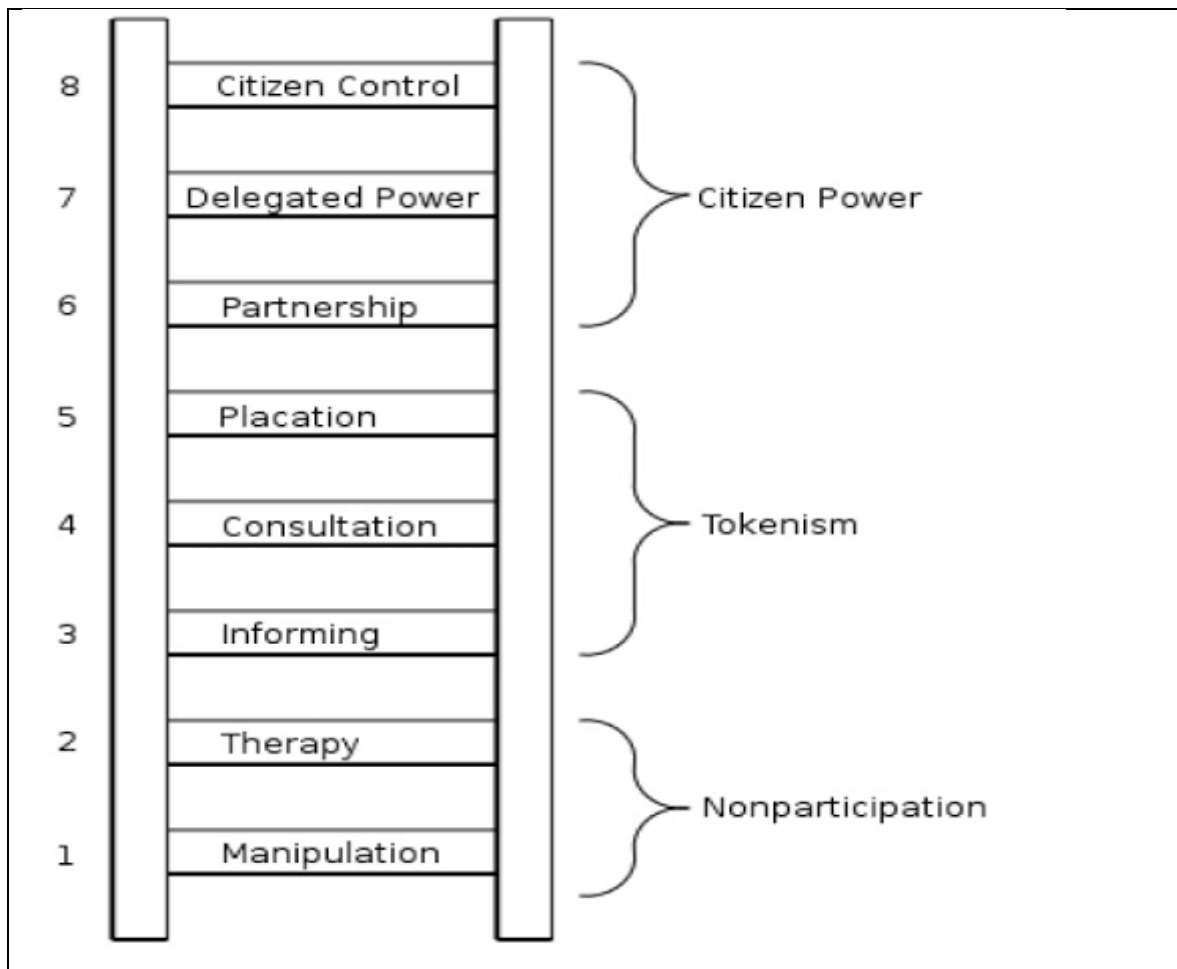


Figure 3.2: Arnstein's ladder of participation  
Source: Adapted from Arnstein (1969)

### 3.3.2.1 Non-participation level

This level is concerned with ‘therapy’ and ‘manipulation’ of participants. Arnstein (1969:218) stated that these two rings limit the power of citizens as they do not influence decision-making. The public is restricted to form part of the planning processes but the opportunity is granted to the planner to educate the participants. She explains manipulation as the “distortion of

participation into a public relations vehicle by powerholders”. Mahjabeen et al. (2009:48) stated that this level of participation refers to powerholders who try to educate the community members but do not grant them an opportunity to be actively involved in participation. In a nutshell, community members are not involved in decision-making, they are passive. The participants do not have a voice in the planning process and decisions. It is not that they are ignorant about what is happening around them but those in power exclude them in planning issues. This later leads to conflict between the powerholders and the community members, especially in terms of planning projects where plans are made and the community only sees the end-results.

### **3.3.2.2 Degree of tokenism**

According to Arnstein (1969:219), tokenism stems from informing, consultation and placation. At this level, the information given to the participants allows for negotiations and feedback. Citizens are given an opportunity to raise their voice, they can hear and be heard. Citizens still have no power and participation is restricted (consultation and informing). Informing is regarded as crucial in community participation where citizens are informed of their rights and responsibilities. Consultation is a legitimate step towards full participation but it will only function if it is used with other levels of participation. Furthermore, they have no power to ensure that their views will be heard by those in power. There are no follow-ups and there is no assurance that the status quo of their livelihoods will change. This therefore implies that consultation is good as it allows active participation of the citizens. Under placation, which is the higher level of tokenism, those in power have the right to make decisions but the citizens can influence the decision since ground rules are laid (Arnstein, 1969:220). At this level, citizens’ opinions are taken into account as they are given the information and allowed to render comments but this does not mean that their voice will be part of decision-making (National Policy Framework for Public Participation, RSA, 2007:16).

Lane (2005: 285) viewed consultation as a dominant approach in participation. It is used by government officials to get information from citizens regarding the proposals of the programmes to be considered. There must be differentiation between consultation and participation. Decision-making always lies with those in power during consultation and participation in planning should include formal and informal power. In this case, during decision-making in planning, models of planning must be considered. The role of the planner and the environment are of significance in defining the role of community participation (Lane, 2005:286). According to Alexander (2008:59), consultation is viewed as a form of participation in the planning process. It takes place at different stages in planning and its timing affects the

quality and consequences of planning decisions. According to Mahjabeen et al. (2009:48), the level of the degree of tokenism permits the community members to advise but they cannot take part in the decision-making process. They can voice their opinions but there is no guarantee that their viewpoints will be considered during decision-making. Decision-makers do not take community members into account at this level, even though they are allowed to advise.

### **3.3.2.3 Degree of citizen power**

This level comprises of partnership, delegated power and citizen power. It is interesting to note that citizens have power at the partnership level. Arnstein (1969:221) pointed out that during the stage of partnership, there are negotiations between the citizens and those in power. At the stage of delegated power, negotiation is key. Officials need to bargain with the public (Arnstein, 1969:222). Lastly, citizens take complete control, hence the citizen power level. Aitken (2010:253) argued that meaningful participation needs citizens to be empowered. Power is useful in decision-making as it prevents conflict through shaping the interests of the citizens. Ismail and Said (2015:359) were of the opinion that it is important that citizens be involved in the planning process in order to ensure that the plans will be accepted by future users. This is very crucial specifically during the preparation phase. Citizens have the right to be informed in the planning process. Therefore, community participation is an important phenomenon which will ensure that the needs of the citizens are taken into account. According to Mahjabeen et al. (2009:48), at this level of participation, community members are fully engaged in participation and decision-making processes. In practice, this level is important in the planning process. Community members must form part and be made to understand all the planning processes so that they can make informed decisions. Their involvement in all planning processes allows them to have insight and be fully involved in the smooth collaboration with planners. This, on the other hand, assists the planners in having a good working relationship with the community members, especially the ward councillors and ward committees. Shuib, Hashim and Nasir (2015:312) stated that the involvement of the community in planning help them to analyse and solve the problems they are faced with and render support in any community strategies. The voice of the community in the decision-making process is crucial in that their well-being is highly affected and the service delivery will fulfil their needs and demands. This will create a proper way which is more responsive to the different needs of the community.

### 3.3.2.4 Relationship between the planning theories and community participation

Stejn (2015:202) indicated that there is a strong link between community participation and planning theories. On the other hand, Lane (2005:296) stated that “conceptions of planning have changed from the highly normative, rational models emphasising the pre-eminent role of the planner, the application of scientific method and logic, and future desired end-state blueprints that dominated in the early part of the last century”. The concern, however, is the appropriate model to be used to evaluate the success of community participation in planning. The question can be asked: What is the appropriate planning model to be used to evaluate the success of a community participation process? Community participation progressed with planning theories and there is a correlation between the planning theories and Arnstein’s ladder of participation (1969). This correlation is outlined in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Comparison between planning theories and levels of participation**

Planning theory	Level of participation in community participation
<p><b>Blueprint planning:</b> The planner used to work as a technocrat and would not consult other stakeholders but make decisions that affect the community.</p>	<p>Therapy Manipulation</p> <p>} Non-participation level</p>
<p><b>Synoptic planning:</b> Decisions at this stage are tactical and strategic. Planning is restricted to consultation and other stakeholders are involved. This includes incrementalism and mixed scanning models.</p>	<p>Placation Consultation Informing</p> <p>} Degree of tokenism</p>
<p><b>Pluralist planning:</b> There is direct contact with the community; ideas are exchanged between the planner and the public. There is active engagement in policy and planning processes. Planners work as advocates for public interests. Participation is central to decision-making and it involves negotiations, bargaining and debate. All the concerned actors in the planning process are involved.</p>	<p>Citizen control Delegated power Partnership</p> <p>} Degree of citizen power</p>

Source: Author’s own (2019)

With the comparison made above between the planning theories and the levels of participation, drawing them closer indicate that they share a common value in the effectiveness of community participation. With the failure of blueprint planning initiated by planners who focus on city layout and designs, non-participation of the public symbolises that the planning system is failing the public because their views are not taken into account. Planning without community consultation still influences the planning process. Even though

the synoptic planning model indicates a departure from blueprint planning, challenges are still experienced because the community is engaged in negotiations. The role of public comments, to some extent, is limited and the planner is still in control. Consultation of the public for their views and opinions, informing them about the planning processes and engaging them in decision-making on matters affecting their lives is crucial. It is important that the public is educated on all the planning processes rather than seeing the end results which in most cases is not satisfactory. Planners have a role to play in ensuring that the public is well informed, especially with all the town planning procedures. With the new legislation (SPLUMA, RSA:2013) in place, all concerned actors in land use management and planning, should be well informed in order to make informed decisions.

### **3.3.3 Drivers and opportunities of community participation**

Innes and Booher (2004:422) identified purposes of community participation that incorporate claims used to justify community participation. It is significant in that it helps the decision-makers to get information on the preferences of the public in order for them to take part in making decisions. It also helps improve decisions by incorporating the knowledge of community members into the calculus. It promotes fairness, justice and legitimacy for the public. According to the *Guide on public participation in the public service* (RSA, Department of Public Service and Administration, 2014:20), community participation is beneficial to all citizens in that:

- It plays a role on the enhancement of the quality and legitimacy of decisions taken by different stakeholders in planning processes.
- It prohibits conflict between stakeholders which can lead to protests at municipal level.
- It allows different stakeholders an opportunity to voice their concerns in issues affecting their well-being.
- It assists stakeholders to attain skills that include active listening, problem-solving and creative thinking that they can use in other areas of their lives.
- It permits openness and responsibility and promotes a higher quality of democracy in South Africa.
- It boosts trust and confidence for all the decisions taken by government, including different programmes.

To achieve the above, all urban stakeholders need to work as a team in order to achieve a common goal of understanding the significance of community participation. There needs to be a paradigm shift on the methodology of community participation, especially at local level. From

a town planning perspective, the above benefits play an important role in community participation. If community members form part of the planning processes and decision-making, their lives will be enhanced, they will be able to make informed decisions on the planning of their environments. For example, there is always a problem with public spaces being invaded illegally. If the community has obtained knowledge or consumer education, the government will not be facing the problem of land invasion. The more people that are not involved and uninformed, the further the problem will continue. The questions can be asked: How does the national level ensure that these benefits are achieved? How does it ensure the success of community participation, particularly at local level? From the local sphere of government, the concern is the representativeness of the community members, the nature of the community participation and if their voice is heard.

### **3.3.4 Challenges of community participation in planning**

Gilbert (1987:75) stated:

*The only valid conclusion that can be drawn is one of tempered enthusiasm for the idea of community participation, and then always subject to local circumstances. Community participation is worthwhile and can help improve the living conditions of low-income communities. But, since it can also be used to their disadvantage the poor are often well-advised to limit their involvement.*

According to Botes and Van Rensburg (2000:42), the challenges affecting community participation have an enormous impact to the community. These challenges can be internal (that is, conflicting interest groups) and external (that is, factors outside the community that can have a negative influence on the community participation process). The challenges that affect community facilitation are discussed in the following subsections.

#### **3.3.4.1 Role of professionals**

People who do not know the project area start many community projects and it is only in rare cases where the community initiated the projects themselves. This may be the cause of failure for many projects since they are externally induced projects and are managed by outsiders. Botes and Van Rensburg (2000:43) referred to this concept as the “paternalistic role of development professionals”. These development professionals dominate decision-making and manipulate the planning processes. According to Arnstein’s ladder of participation (1969), this challenge is linked to a non-participatory level where the community does not have a voice. In addition, Dudley (1993:150) criticised professionals in that they own the development without considering the needs and priorities of the community. Moreover, community participation does no longer serve its purpose but rather informs the community about what

will happen and what their opinion on the development project will be. It is just about convincing the community about what is best for them.

#### **3.3.4.2 Role of the state**

The state views community participation as a means to maintain the existing power relations in the community, thereby suppressing the voice of the poor. Government use this process as a means to legitimise the political system and social control (Gilbert & Ward, 1984:770). On the contrary, in the South African context, a variety of tools within various levels of government are used to facilitate community participation. These different tools are used where stakeholders participate in decision-making regarding planning processes. Those affected by decision-making need to participate in all the planning processes. Tools to facilitate community participation are also used as a form of communication on how to formulate and implement policies, whereas government sometimes lack commitment and regard community participation as time-consuming (RSA, Public Service Commission [PSC], 2008:9,11). Furthermore, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele White Paper) (RSA, 1997) emphasised that “a transformed South African public service will be judged by one criterion above all; its effectiveness in delivering services which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens”. One of the principles of Batho Pele is consultation which states that citizens must be consulted about planning aspects that affect their livelihood. Sisk (2001:152) proposed that the local government must build coalition and be transparent, negotiate and mediate among the social forces, listen to different points of view and make decisions pertaining to consensus. To be concise, nothing should be decided and implemented without involving the citizens as they are part of decision-making, therefore, decision-makers in planning processes. In our societies, community participation is lacking or it is inappropriately done, if done at all. Corrective measures need to be taken on how to facilitate community participation.

#### **3.3.4.3 Role of community members**

Gelderblom and Kok (1994:50) stated that community members need to be protected from themselves, as they tend to disengage from planning processes. It stems from a lack of interest and knowledge about the needs and priorities of individuals. Therefore, the community needs to be led in the right direction where the planners empower communities, hence the importance of consumer education in communities. Hosea 4:6 says that people perish because of a lack of knowledge (New King James Version, 1982:792). Lack of willingness to be involved in a participatory planning process results in the public’s needs not being fulfilled.

Certain factors such as non-attendance of community participation meetings show that the public is satisfied with their way of life, especially if communication channels are clear. This results in the reluctance of the government in building participation into project designs (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000:51). Furthermore, communities need to be empowered and know what is happening in their surroundings, they have to be encouraged and educated about development planning and they should participate in community participation meetings. Proper education and channels need to be clearly indicated to them in order to build sustainable communities. Planners should avoid giving out proposals to the public; instead, they must engage them in all the planning actions, keeping in mind that communication and participation is the key.

### **3.3.5 Different contextual perspectives of community participation**

Community participation functions at global level and has been a challenge internationally and locally. It is used to engage all actors in the planning process, inclusive of all spheres of government. The following subsection focus on community participation at an international level as well as locally in South Africa. At international level, the study looks specifically at the case of Brazil which has similar challenges as in South Africa. Different tools are used to facilitate the success of community participation and these also engage the features of communicative planning theory. In South Africa, different tools are used for successful community participation which are supported by legislation. Hassan, Hefnawi and Refaie (2011:211) proposed the following strategies that can be used in the participation process, both at international and national level: (i) implementing small projects that will be provided during the preparatory phase of the project; (ii) formulating budgeting workshops which will assist the citizens with better opportunities for accessing the services, this can be done through the strategy formulation phase; (iii) conducting workshops that will enhance the learning capacity of the participants; and (iv) sustaining communication channels by allocating more time and resources for all stakeholders. These strategies will enhance transparency, and partnership between stakeholders and decision-making can be implemented with team effort.

#### **3.3.5.1 International context**

Community participation is used to promote the involvement of the community in governance. All spheres of government should be involved in the inclusive, participatory and consensual models of participation. Different strategies of community participation should be used in order to engage the public in the planning processes (RSA PSC, 2008:11). Brazil and India had similar challenges as South Africa regarding participatory processes. These countries formed

community forums that meet on a regular basis to address challenges such as poverty, hunger and homelessness. Different organisations work together in organising community meetings. The community leaders ensure that all issues raised during the meetings are taken up with government authorities to address them. Furthermore, they organise feedback sessions between the government authorities and the communities to allow the flow of information. For instance, Brazil is involved in a municipal participatory budgeting initiative with the aim of addressing the gaps in the living standards of the public and this assists the public to be on par with what is happening in their surroundings during community participation. This process is done annually at different levels and groups of stakeholders. The different stakeholders involved are allowed to identify and implement their priorities. This brings all stakeholders to the realm of negotiating, compromising and prioritizing development projects. Transparency and capacity building are key elements during this process for communities to have a better understanding of the authorities and all programmes involved.

### **3.3.5.2 South African context**

The Post-1994 era brought changes in terms of community participation in that it focused on the importance of consultation and participation by citizens. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) made community participation a key priority, and specific White Papers were formulated to address consultation and participation. It gave opportunity to the public to be engaged in matters concerning their lives. All spheres of government were mandated by the Constitution to create mechanisms that involve participation of the public in government-led initiatives. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (RSA, 1997) included mechanisms on how the public should be engaged in participation processes. One of the key principles was *consultation*, emphasising that the citizens must be consulted about the services they receive, including the level and quality of public services. Consultation is critical because it invites active participation of the role players in service delivery. Furthermore, the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, emphasise the need to develop a culture of community participation. This Act enforces municipalities to encourage and create conditions that will allow the public to participate in the affairs of the municipality. For instance, the public should be involved in the preparation, implementation and review of the IDPs.

Municipalities must also contribute to capacity building of the public so that they can actively participate during the participatory process. Since 1994, different structures were formulated to assist with participation in socio-economic issues, for example, the National Economic Development and Labour Council, and the National Anti-Corruption Forum. Both these structures create a platform for community participation. Various initiatives have been used

for implementation of community participation, namely, Imbizos (gatherings or community meetings), public hearings, ward committees, community development workers, citizen satisfaction surveys, citizen forums, open government partnerships and African peer review mechanisms. Other government departments use different consultation initiatives to initiate community participation, such as workshops, seminars, summits, public awareness and community outreach campaigns (RSA PSC, 2008:14-15). Section 195 (1) (e) of the Constitution states that “[p]eople’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making”.

The South African government has also documented policies guiding community participation and when these are compared to the levels of participation, informing and consultation are dominant. In addition to the existing legislation on community participation, the SPLUMA (RSA, 2013), was enacted with the aim to inform spatial planning and land use processes. It indicates that there is a “relationship between the spatial planning and the land use management system and other kinds of planning” (SPLUMA, 2013:1). Section 7 (e) of the SPLUMA (2013:16) relates public participation with one of the development principles – good administration – which states that policies, legislation and all planning processes must be perfectly set with the aim of informing and empowering the public. It also emphasises “the preparation and amendment of spatial plans, policies, land use schemes as well as procedures for development applications, including transparent processes of public participation that afford all parties the opportunity to provide inputs on matters affecting them” (SPLUMA, 2013:16).

### **3.4 Value conflicts and urban public open spaces**

Urban public open spaces play a critical role in sustainable development of communities. They provide a wide range of benefits, opportunities and challenges worldwide. Urban open spaces assist in defining the sense of space, image and competitiveness of urban areas. They contribute to the social, economic, ecological and planning dimensions of urban areas. A value of an urban open space is described by its functionality and how it affects the quality of life in urban context. These values are based on different point of views, that is, ecological, economic, social, planning and multidimensional values. Different urban stakeholders involved in planning and managing of urban public open spaces display different perceptions regarding the value and usefulness of these spaces. This creates theoretical and practical difficulties for a planner to achieve the creation of sustainable communities. Therefore, this section presents the different stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces,

how they value urban land and the different value conflicts that influence urban public open spaces.

### **3.4.1 Urban stakeholders**

In his attempt to define the term 'stakeholder', Freeman (1984:46) stated that it refers to "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives". He further stated that individuals capable to contribute to the organisation are qualified to be stakeholders. In his further research on a stakeholder approach, he stated that the stakeholder concept is categorised into normative theories of businesses, corporate governance and organisational theory, corporate social responsibility and performance; and strategic management (Freeman, 2004:234). The term 'stakeholder' refers to "individuals or groups who have an interest or some aspect of rights or ownership in the project, and can contribute to, or be impacted by either the work or the outcomes of the project" (Walker, Bourne & Rowlinson, 2008:73). The term 'urban stakeholder' refers to a group of individuals who have different backgrounds, roles and expertise and they represent different aspects of the urban complexity (Campbell, 2016:41). In the urban context, it includes a planner, developer, politician, community member, environmentalist and economist; all these persons have an interest in planning practice or even in the creation of sustainable communities.

Stakeholders are classified into primary and secondary stakeholders. They are also classified into two groups, that is, internal and external stakeholders. Primary stakeholders refer to stakeholders where the organisation cannot survive without them. The activities they perform form the core functions of the organisation. In general, they consist of shareholders, investors, employees, customers and suppliers. In an urban context, planning practice will not survive without the skills or activities performed by the planner. Awuzie (2013:124) defined secondary stakeholders as "those stakeholders whose activities affect or are affected by the operations of the organisation, even though they are not actively engaged in any direct transaction with the organisation, thus not affecting the organisation's survival". The secondary stakeholders can have a positive or negative impact on the image of the organisation even though they are not directly involved on the activities performed by the organisation. In terms of the urban context perspective, these stakeholders include the host community, the politicians, and the developer.

Walker et al. (2008:73) identified four groups of stakeholders, namely upstream stakeholders who are paying customers and end-users of services; downstream stakeholders comprising of suppliers and sub-contractors (supply chain); external stakeholders made up of community members as well as the independent minded individuals thinking that the project conducted

and its outcomes will affect them; and invisible stakeholders who engage with the project team to deliver the project benefit. Furthermore, Campbell (2016:41) maintained that the following could be categorised as stakeholders within an urban environment: national, provincial or local government, politicians, education, health, law enforcement, emergency services, religious and traditional authorities, financial institutions, service providers, housing associations, international firms, the media and the community. All these different urban stakeholders play different roles in the urban context. These differences also include their perceptions on the value and uses in creating sustainable communities, including urban open space. The values of the different urban stakeholders include economic, social and environmental values about the urban environment.

### **3.4.2 Values of urban stakeholders on urban land**

Carmona et al. (2002:147) highlighted that different urban stakeholders display different perceptions about the urban environment in general. This makes different stakeholders to meet their different objectives and these include managing urban developments. The urban stakeholder perceptions range from economic, social and environmental values in planning. In terms of economic values, the concern of *investors* about the urban environment, which also include urban open spaces, is to secure investments. This do not only include unbuilt urban open space but all typologies of urban open space. For example, most investors focus on the increasing sales and rental values of their properties, new market potentials and properties that have good quality leases. Their decisions are based on accessibility, safety and security, environmental control and quality. With the *developers*, their main concern is business venture and to attract investors. Furthermore, there is an assumption that their developments lead to urban regeneration, creation of job opportunities and increase in the property market.

The local authority, especially *the planner*, have the responsibility to create sustainable environments. The focus is on urban management, increased economic viability for neighbouring developments, increased tax revenues and environmental management. In terms of the urban open space planning, planners focus on providing quality of life to human beings. This includes human demands of urban open spaces for recreational purposes and environmental quality. Furthermore, ecologists and conservationists concern themselves with open space conservation by protecting the existing natural values. This refers to the demand approach and supply approach (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:4). The demand approach refers to the satisfaction of the community needs. The supply approach focuses on the conservation of the natural environment. The main concerns of the *community members* include safety and security, increased cultural and social vitality, better quality of life that

include better and improved health, more inclusive open spaces, sense of place and accessible environments (Carmona et al., 2002:167). In addition, all these urban stakeholders have a role to play in the planning practice, management of urban open spaces and creation of sustainable communities. It is important that a common *value* be established in order to achieve the objectives of planning.

### **3.4.3 Influence of value conflicts on urban public open spaces**

The values of the different urban stakeholders, as mentioned in Section 3.4.3 lead to value conflicts and these affect the urban public open space management. Planners therefore find it difficult to achieve predetermined levels of planning objectives for these spaces through effective management of these variances. Therefore, when planning urban public open spaces, there are different perceptions. Haaland and Van den Bosch (2015:764) emphasised extensive interaction of different urban stakeholders involved in planning projects. This can be achieved through effective planning for the use of urban public open spaces. The interconnection of the stakeholders involves effective community participation and this can curb the incidence of urban public open space encroachment. However, urban stakeholders view the value of urban open spaces differently. Conflict may arise due to lack of understanding regarding different existing perceptions about the value of urban land. The different value conflicts influence urban open space encroachment. For instance, the drivers for placing a housing value on urban open spaces are homelessness or lack of shelter. Other factors resulting in the encroachment of urban open spaces include failure to manage and implement land use regimes by the planners, use of outdated town planning schemes by planners, and delays in approval of land use change applications (Haaland & Van den Bosch, 2015). The major cause of concern is non-participation of community members during the planning of projects for sustainable neighbourhoods.

In light of the above, Luomala, Laaksonen and Leipamaa (2004:568) emphasised the implementation of the attribution and balance theories for value conflicts among the different urban stakeholders. The attribution theory states that an urban stakeholder needs understanding of the events and to discover how they occurred. Relating this to the context of urban public open space planning and encroachment, it is imperative to search why people encroach on urban land. A value conflict between the recreation value and housing value can be resolved if the planner has an understanding of the reason behind urban public open space encroachment. As such, the balance theory “considers relations among elements a person perceives as belonging together” (Luomala et al., 2004:568). The balance theory is used to understand how urban stakeholders resolve value conflicts they perceive regarding urban public open spaces.

### **3.5 Conceptual framework – Urban public open space management framework**

Various studies have been conducted on urban public open spaces with the emphasis on different aspects. Value conflicts around urban public open spaces in urban environments make it extremely hard for the planners to achieve the objectives of planning. The current planning theories and models associated with urban open spaces and a communicative planning theory do very little in assisting the planner to manage the conflicting demands of various urban stakeholders around urban open space. A reconceptualization of urban public open spaces is required in order to maximise its value to planning and to the community. Having discussed and understood the concept 'urban public open space' and the different theories and models of planning to create sustainable environments in Chapters 2 and 3, the research study developed a conceptual framework on the value conflicts from various urban stakeholders concerning the use and value of urban open space. The key concepts underpinning this study's conceptual framework is urban public open spaces, value conflicts and community participation.

The urban public open space management framework is a representation of the relationship between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts. The planner's role is to achieve the key objective of planning which includes creating sustainable communities. Urban public open spaces form an integral part of sustainable communities. They are gradually disappearing and this has affected the spatial patterns of urban land uses. The gradual disappearance of these spaces is evident in the mushrooming of informal settlements in the townships. Causal factors of the incidence of urban public open space encroachment include rapid urbanisation, poor management of urban public open spaces, low prioritisation of urban public open spaces, low levels of community participation, lack of collaboration and disconnect among the urban stakeholders. In addition, there are different urban stakeholders who are involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces and these include those that are directly affected by the planning projects and those indirectly affected. These stakeholders display different perceptions on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces, namely, planning, economic, environmental, recreational and housing values. All these different perceptions have led to different value conflicts among the urban stakeholders. It has been observed that Mangaung townships has lost some urban public open spaces due to value conflicts by different urban stakeholders. This makes it difficult for the planners and other professionals to achieve the planning objectives for urban open space and for other issues such as housing and land use management.

In addition, the urban public open space management framework forms a contribution to the study and it draws insight from the literature and the data collected. The researcher commenced with the initial conceptual framework where the planner is at the centre of planning for sustainable neighbourhoods (Figure 3.3). The framework displays a connection between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflict management. From the data collection and analysis of the results, amendments were made in the second draft of the framework and this showed challenges in the municipality. Further information on the framework will be discussed in Chapter 7 and this will include the final draft and the validation of the framework.

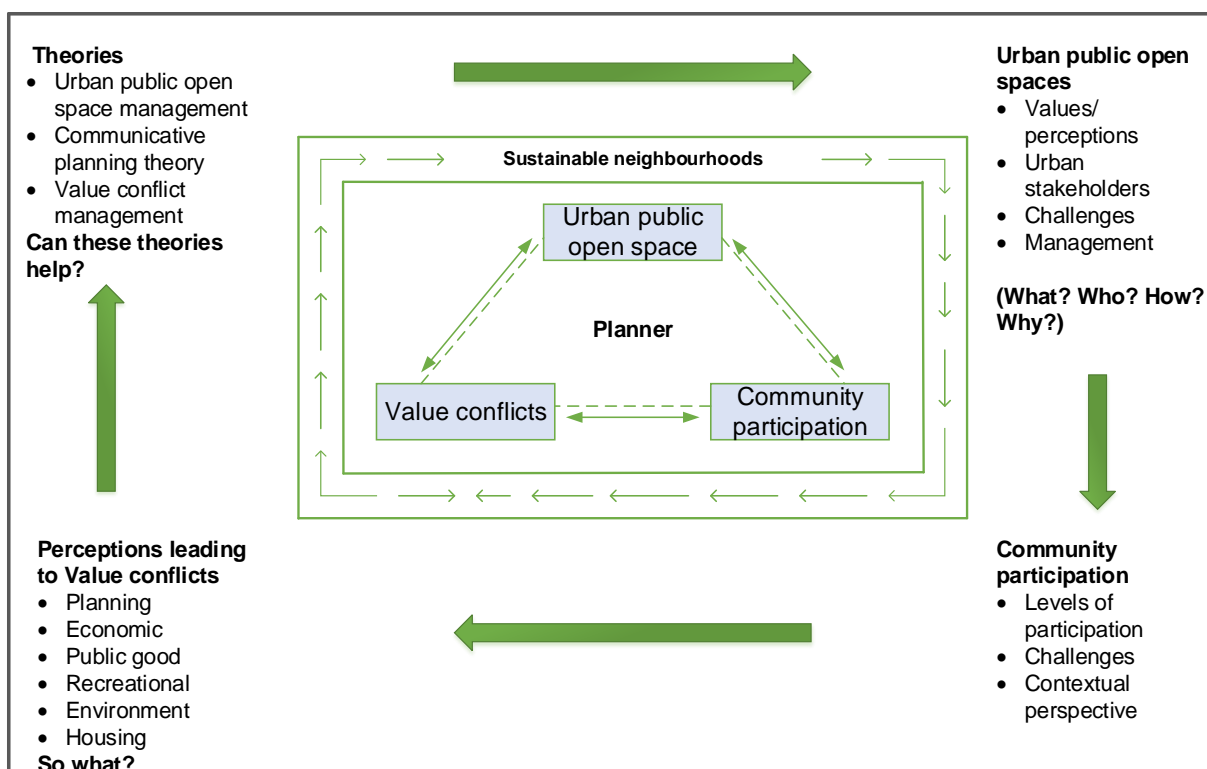


Figure 3.3: Urban public open space management framework  
Source: Author's own (2019)

### 3.6 Chapter summary

Research has shown that there is a relationship between planning theories and urban open spaces that result in the creation of sustainable communities. There are different planning theories, namely blueprint, synoptic and pluralistic planning which include communicative planning theory. Communicative planning theory is the core of this research study. It involves the engagement of various actors with different perceptions or values on how to build sustainable communities. Furthermore, planning is faced which challenges and opportunities that affect urban environments. These challenges include the value conflicts from diverse

urban stakeholders involved in the planning process. These conflicts are categorised under economic, environmental and social aspects. Conflict can be with the development, resources and the property. Urban stakeholders involved in planning are the planners, economists, developers, investors, environmentalists, politicians and community members who all view the value and uses of urban public open spaces in various ways.

Urban public open spaces play a significant role in promoting sustainable environments. In addition, there are different planning models related to urban open spaces. These include the opportunistic model, the quantitative model, the park system model and the garden city model. There is a relationship between these models and sustainable neighbourhoods. Planning for urban public open spaces is important for sustainability and it involves all the urban stakeholders. This is achieved through community participation. Community participation, which is central to planning, also has challenges and opportunities. It forms the core of the communicative planning theory in the decision-making process. In addition, there is a relationship between planning theories and the levels of participation as initiated by Arnstein. The ladder of participation involves non-participation (therapy and manipulation), degree of tokenism (placation, consultation and informing) and the degree of citizen power (citizen control, delegated power and partnership).

The next chapter focuses on the research methodology adopted in this research study. The attainment of the aim of the study is discussed and the research methodology is also highlighted for the justification of the use of particular philosophies, strategies, methods and approaches within the realm of this research study.

## Chapter 4

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

---

---

### 4.1 Chapter introduction

The previous chapters discussed the key concepts of the research study, namely, planning, urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts, including the related theories. This chapter aims at describing the philosophical paradigms and the research strategy for the study. Furthermore, techniques used in collecting and analysing data will also be discussed. The objective of this chapter is to provide an in-depth justification of the methodological framework adopted by the researcher in conducting the study. Different sections for discussion in this chapter include the following:

- Background to the study.
- Brief explanation of the research methodology.
- Philosophical deliberations.
- Research approach, strategy and design.
- Ethical considerations.
- Constraints and limitations of the study.
- Chapter summary.

### 4.2 Background to the study

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009:5) defined research as a systematic way in which people increase their knowledge. This implies that research focuses on logical relationships rather than beliefs. Research explains the methods that are used in collecting data as well as the purpose for conducting research. Description, explanation, understanding, criticism and analysis of data are inclusive in research. In conducting research, there must be an aim, objectives and the research questions posed to be answered. All these are driven by personal experiences of the researcher regarding a specific concept within a specific community.

Prior to the in-depth justification of methodology in this chapter, a brief explanation of the research aim and objectives are looked into, as a support structure of the methodological stance of the study. The research aim for the study sought (i) *to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community*, and (ii) *to develop a framework which can be used planners to manage value conflicts and achieve the objectives*

*of planning* (Chapter 1, Section 1.6.1). To achieve this research aim, the set of research objectives includes: (1) to determine the different terminologies and definitions of open spaces; (2) to explore the different theories related to planning of urban open spaces; (3) to identify challenges affecting the planning of sustainable neighbourhoods in Freedom Square, Mangaung; (4) to identify the perceptions of urban stakeholders on urban open spaces, its uses and values; (5) to explore what value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the planning objectives; and (6) to develop a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives.

Each research objective stated above is a response to the research question of the study (Chapter 1, Section 1.4). Previous studies have explored different angles about urban public open spaces but the researcher's focus is on the practical and theoretical difficulties planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Mangaung, South Africa. The argument of the research is therefore based on the value conflicts experienced by the different urban stakeholders around urban public open spaces in Freedom Square Township, Mangaung. These value conflicts make it extremely difficult for municipal planners to achieve the objectives of planning which involves creating sustainable neighbourhoods. Furthermore, planners are struggling to manage the conflicting demands of urban stakeholders around urban public open spaces. This poses a need to reconceptualise urban public open spaces for maximisation of its value to planning and the community.

### **4.3 Research methodology**

Research methodology lies at the heart on any research and care should be taken in adopting appropriate approaches and research methods from the beginning of the research. Different definitions have been used to explain research methods and methodology. These terms have been used synonymously or been confused when used by researchers. Differences have been highlighted between the methods and methodology when conducting research. Methods are defined as specific techniques used in research, namely, surveys, interviews and observations and should be consistent with the logic in the methodology. These are techniques used in collecting, generating and analysing data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:35; Pathirage, Amaratunga & Haigh, 2005:480; Swain, 2017:228). Methodology refers to a set of guidelines that can be used to solve a given problem. It can also be explained as a logic and theoretical perspective of any research study. Swain (2017:228) defined methodology as “a framework that offers principles of reasoning, which are informed by particular theoretical positions”. Other authors described methodology as a strategy, a plan of action that forms a connection between the

methods chosen for the study and the conceptual assumptions. In addition, methodology indicates how the research design responds to the research questions posed in a particular study. Research methodology focuses on the use of a particular philosophy, strategy, method and strategies within a given study. The main aim is to achieve the set research aim and objectives of that particular study. This study therefore employs the 'nested approach' (Kagioglou et al., 2000:143) which illustrates the research philosophy, research approaches and the research techniques. Figure 4.1 highlights the various aspects of the research methodological framework which served as a guide to the study. It illustrates the interrelations between the research philosophy, approaches and techniques.

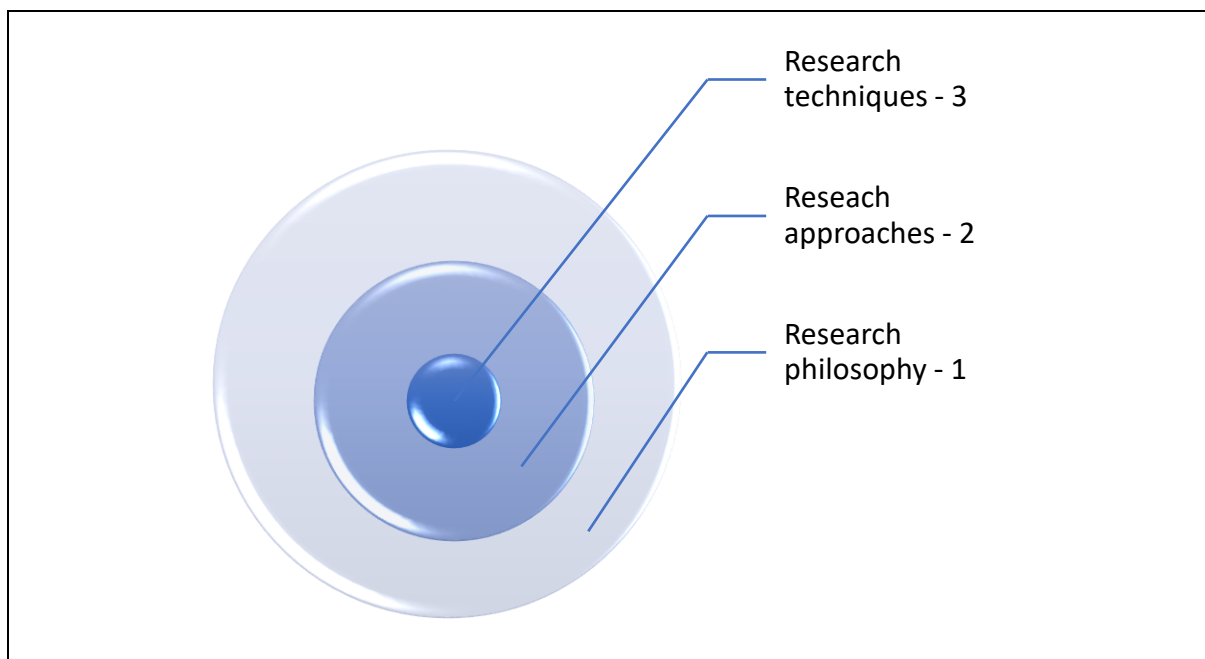


Figure 4.1: *Nested research methodological framework*  
 Source: Reproduced from Kagioglou et al. (2000)

The researcher adopted the taxonomy provided by Saunders et al. (2019:130) to explain the various aspects of the nested approach used in the study. The research philosophy create the outer ring and it involves the epistemology, ontology and axiology assumptions. The research approaches form the immediate inner layer of the framework and they incorporate deductive, inductive and abductive approaches which are discussed later in this chapter. The innermost part accommodates the research techniques which comprise data collection tools that include the interviews, documents, observations, questionnaires, surveys and experiments. The succeeding sections of the research provide the descriptions of these aspects, including the justification of the choices made by the researcher. All these approaches are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

## **4.4 Philosophical assumptions**

Different researchers view the philosophical perspective of research in different ways. Merriam (2009:8) indicates that scholars are not consistent in their discussions of qualitative research, including the research terminology used. This shows that the philosophical perspective is then understood as traditions and theoretical underpinnings, theoretical underpinnings and orientations, research paradigms and perspective, philosophical assumptions and interpretive frameworks or epistemology. Saunders et al. (2019:130) defined research philosophy as a “system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge”. This can be associated with addressing a particular problem in a body of knowledge as well as how the researcher views the world. Research philosophy is based on the development of knowledge and what that knowledge entails. Every step of research involves different forms of assumptions or considerations which includes ontology, epistemology and axiology. These assumptions focus on how the researcher understands his or her research questions, the methods used in collecting data and how the findings are interpreted. Therefore, the following subsection discusses the philosophical assumptions and how they relate to the study.

### **4.4.1 Epistemological stance**

According to Saunders et al. (2009:112), epistemology is referred to as any knowledge that is acceptable in a field of study. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014:6) stated that epistemology involves “ways of knowing and learning about the world and focuses on issues such as how we can learn about reality and what forms the basis of our knowledge”. Epistemology focuses on how best the knowledge is acquired, the nature of knowledge and truth, sources of knowledge and its reliability and validity (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012:51).

Epistemology has three categories, namely, positivism, interpretivism and realism. The positivism stance is taken by the natural scientist whose focus is on the credible data that is generated by observing a certain phenomenon. Interpretivism develops from phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology refers to the way in which human beings make sense of the world around them, whereas the symbolic interactionism focuses on the process of interpreting actions of other people. The use of interpretivism gives an overview of the views, perceptions and actions of the research participants in real-life contexts (Ritchie et al., 2014:12; Saunders et al., 2009:119). Realism relates to the scientific enquiry and is concerned with the fact that reality exists which is independent of the human mind (Saunders et al., 2009:115).

#### **4.4.2 Ontological stance**

Creswell (2013:20) indicated that the use of the different realities allow the researcher to report on different perspectives as different themes develop in the findings of the research conducted. According to Saunders et al. (2009:110), there are two aspects of ontological assumptions, which include objectivism and subjectivism. On the other hand, Bryman (2012:32) alluded that the ontological position comprises of objectivism and constructivism. This indicates that researchers use different terminology in support of the context being studied. Objectivism is an “ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. It implies that social phenomena and the categories that we use in everyday discourse have an existence that is independent or separate from actors” (Bryman, 2012:33). Subjectivism states that “social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of those social actors concerned with their existence” (Saunders et al., 2009:111). With constructivism, as stated by Bryman (2012:32), attention is centred around the social world and the knowledge evolving around the social world.

#### **4.4.3 Axiological stance**

Axiology allows the researcher to understand and recognise the role their values and opinions play in the collection and analysis of the research as opposed to eliminating or trying to balance the influence of it. Saunders et al. (2009:116) viewed axiology as a deliberation that is based on judgements about value. For instance, its main focus is about the role our values play in our research choices. This is consistent with Bryman (2012:39) who stated that values depend on the personal feelings of the researcher. Researchers use this skill by articulating their values as the basis for judging how they will structure their research, that is, they know the entire research process they will follow. The values of the researcher can be value-free and value-laden and this also implies that the philosophical stance chosen by the researcher indicates the kind of value they intend to bring to the knowledge gap or research study.

#### **4.4.4 Justification of the research study’s philosophical stance**

For the researcher to select a suitable research philosophy for the study, effort should be taken to look at the research aim, personal views on the creation of knowledge, as well as the nature of reality. Cognisance should be taken that the study is based on social interactions within a certain setting (Bryman, 2012:41). The study is based on the perceptions of the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. As previously stated in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4.1), urban stakeholders are classified as primary and secondary stakeholders, and in this case, reference is made to the community members

who are the owners of the properties around the case study areas, community members encroaching on urban public open spaces and practitioners (planning, human settlements and environmental management). Their differing perceptions on urban public open spaces range from social, economic, environmental, educational and cultural perspectives. These different perceptions lead to value conflicts which make it difficult for the planner to manage such conflicts and to create sustainable communities. This allows the researcher to make a comparison between the key concepts employed in this research, namely, urban public open space planning, community participation and value conflicts.

Having a background as a town planner and knowing the drawbacks in managing urban public open spaces by the planners at municipal level, the researcher has great belief regarding the contribution of societal factors to her views of knowledge and reality. This, therefore, labels the researcher as the interpretivist as the focus is on the nature of reality and knowledge. Real-life situations are interpreted as they stand. This gives the researcher an opportunity to present the nature of urban public open spaces in the study area, how they are perceived by urban stakeholders, how the planners struggle to manage the value conflicts that emerge from the different stakeholders. With the in-depth knowledge and investigation on value conflicts and urban public open spaces, the researcher is given an opportunity to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community. In addition, the researcher developed a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of the urban public open space in helping planners to manage conflict and achieve the planning objectives. All these considerations led the researcher to adopt an interpretivist, subjective and value-laden approach in conducting the study.

#### **4.5 Research approach**

A research approach addresses the research problem in order to respond to the formulated research questions. Saunders et al. (2019:153) identified three research approaches, namely, deductive, inductive and abductive. Blaikie (2000:86) added a retroductive approach. The deductive approach comprises the development of a theory which has to be tested via a number of propositions. It is mostly used by natural scientists to test theories and test the hypotheses by matching them with the data collected. The inductive approach aims to establish generalisations that has to be used as pattern explanations. The abductive approach intends to describe and understand social life by having a clear understanding of the views and actions of social actors. The retroductive approach focuses on discovering the underlying mechanisms in order to give meaning to regularities that are observed. Table 4.1 is an adaptation of the research approaches by Saunders et al. (2019:153).

**Table 4.1: Research approaches**

Functionality	Deductive	Inductive	Abductive
<b>Logic</b>	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
<b>Generalisability</b>	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
<b>Use of data</b>	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection, and so forth
<b>Theory</b>	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build a new theory or modify an existing theory

Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2019:153)

The choice of a suitable research approach to theory development is critical. It helps the researcher to make informed decisions about the research design to be adopted for the study. Also, it assists the researcher to make the right choices in the research strategy and methodological choices to be employed in the study. Furthermore, the knowledge of different research traditions help the researcher to adopt a research design that will cater for all the challenges encountered when conducting the study. From this view, the researcher can adopt the research approach that best suits the study.

The abductive approach was adopted for this study. It provided the researcher with a deep understanding on the phenomena to be studied. Within this approach, the data collected helped the researcher to explore the phenomena to be studied. The researcher identified the themes in order to generate a new theory or change the existing theory. This can often be achieved by collecting additional data (Saunders et al., 2019:160). In this research, the researcher's interest was on the value conflicts of different urban stakeholders who have different perceptions on the use and value of urban open spaces. The researcher's focus was on gaining a deeper insight of the key concepts of this study, namely, community participation, value conflicts and urban public open spaces. In addition, the abductive approach allowed the researcher to develop a conceptual framework from the key phenomena to be studied. All these concepts will be combined to create a conceptual framework, the urban public open

space framework. This framework indicates that there is a relationship between urban public open space planning, value conflict management and community participation. Further clarification on this framework is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 where the conceptual framework is developed and validated.

## 4.6 Research strategy

Yin (2003:5) described a research strategy as a strategy a researcher can use to respond to the research questions posed. Each research strategy can be used for exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research. In choosing the appropriate strategy for a particular study, it must answer the research question(s) and research objectives. Saunders et al. (2009:141) stated that the researcher's choice of the research strategy is guided by research questions, research objectives, existing knowledge, time and resources, and philosophical stance. The different research strategies included experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. The research study adopted the case study strategy whose characteristics are outlined below in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Basic characteristics of a case study as a qualitative approach**

<b>Defining characteristics of qualitative research</b>	<b>Exemplification of the characteristic in a case study</b>
Focus	Development of an in-depth description and analysis of a single case or multiple cases. <i>This research study focused on the multiple cases in Freedom Square township in Mangaung.</i>
Type of problem best suited for design	Providing an in-depth understanding of a single case or multiple cases.
Discipline background	Drawing from psychology, law, political science and medicine. <i>The study is drawn from the planning discipline.</i>
Unit of analysis	Studying an event, a programme, an activity, or more than one individual. <i>In this research, the value conflicts of different urban stakeholders regarding their perceptions on the use and value of urban open spaces formed the unit of analysis for this study</i>
Data collection forms	Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents and artefacts. <i>The researcher employed semi-structured interviews, focus groups, personal observations and documents.</i>
Data analysis strategies	Analysing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes. <i>The data in this study was analysed thematically.</i>
Writing the report	Developing a detailed analysis of one and more cases. <i>This study employed a qualitative content analysis.</i>

Defining characteristics of qualitative research	Exemplification of the characteristic in a case study
General structure of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entry vignette</li> <li>- Introduction (problem, questions, case study, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</li> <li>- Description of the case(s) in context</li> <li>- Development of issues</li> <li>- Detail about selected issues</li> <li>- Assertions</li> <li>- Closing vignette</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2013:104)

#### 4.6.1 Case study research strategy

Different researchers employ different concepts in a case study, some describe it as a methodology, or research strategy or approach. Yin (2003:13) defined a case study as an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident”. A case study is therefore concerned with providing answers in any investigation of a phenomenon. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011:443) defined a case study as a qualitative research approach focusing on a bounded system or unit of study. It is a strategy that includes the design, data collection techniques and data analysis approaches. It is viewed as a study of a phenomenon focusing on a unit of study or bounded system. A case study is used to answer a descriptive or explanatory question. The choice of a case study depends on the phenomenon to be investigated in understanding a specific problem in a real-life situation. It is crucial for the researcher to indicate the case situation and this involves determining whether the unit of study will be a single case or multiple cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018:96; Gray, 2014:274).

Creswell (2013:99) highlighted three types of case studies, namely intrinsic, instrumental and multiple or collective. Under an intrinsic case study, the researcher is interested in understanding a particular case. With an instrumental case study, the researcher is interested in understanding something more general than a particular case, which is creating a generalisation, whereas a collective case study involves studying a number of cases jointly with the aim of investigating a phenomenon, population or general issue. A collective case study is referred to as a multiple case design (Gray, 2014:274; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:396). Yin (2003:39) proposed four basic types of case study designs which are categorised into two distinct designs, namely a single case study or multiple case studies (number of case studies that will be used) and holistic or embedded case studies (the

proportion of the case showing the unit of analysis). Figure 4.2 pinpoints the basic types of case study designs.

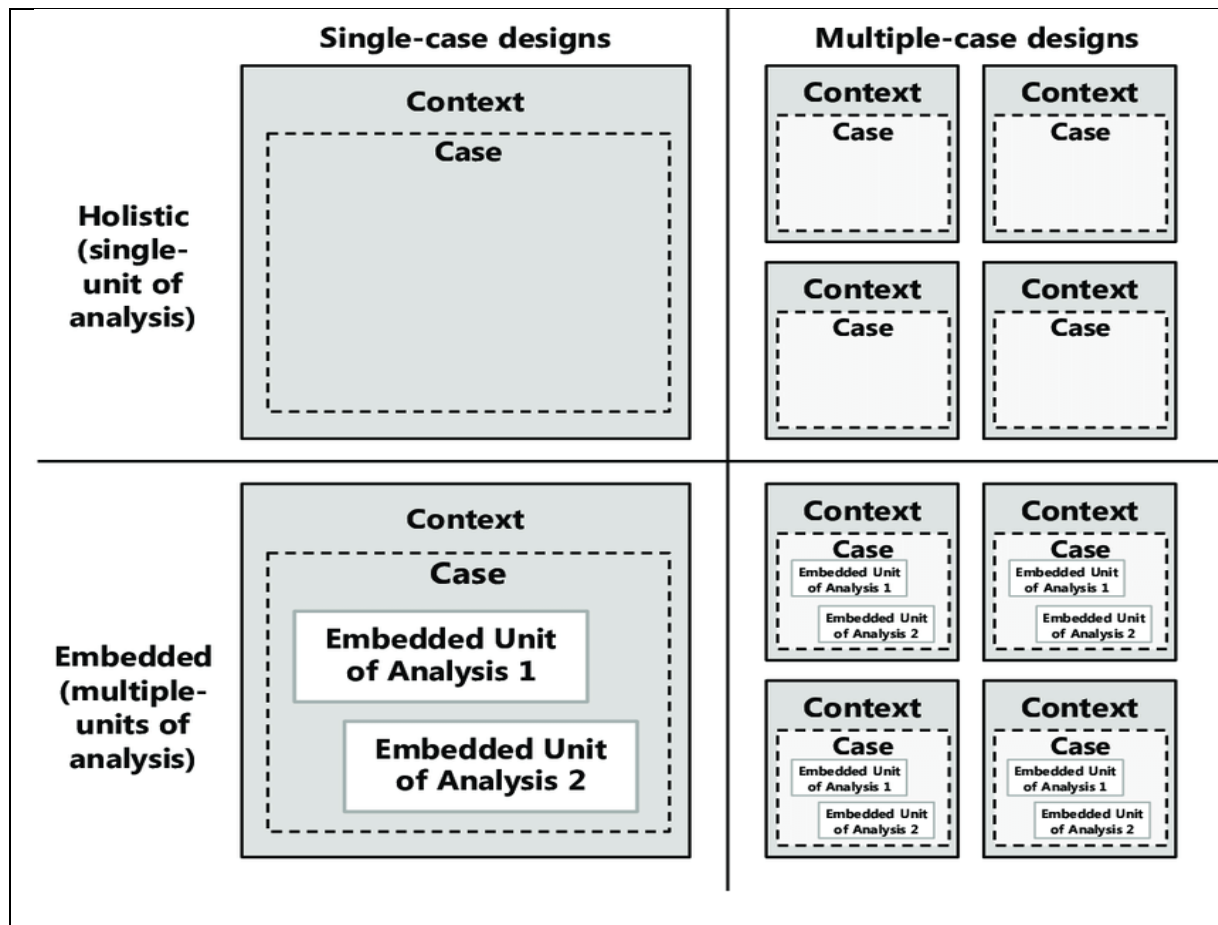


Figure 4.2: Basic types of case study designs  
Source: Yin (2014:50)

From Figure 4.2, it is clear that a single case design refers to a critical, unique, representative, revelatory and longitudinal case. It can be selected when a hypothesis or theory will be developed (Gray, 2014:275; Yin, 2003:45). On the other hand, a multiple case study design serves as a platform to explore the phenomenon to be investigated. It helps the researcher to explore the differences within and between a number of cases. Baxter and Jack (2008:548) reported that the main rationale for a multiple case study approach is conducting research through the replication strategy where a number of cases are studied. It focuses on replicating the findings across the cases studied and it also allows the researcher to analyse the case within a particular setting and across settings (intra- and cross- case analyses). According to Yin (2014:61), the replication strategy is carried out under the literal and theoretical stages. Literal replication refers to a case where two or more cases are selected and similar results are obtained. The theoretical replication refers to more complicated case studies which predict

contrasting results. Therefore, the replication strategy to the multiple case study design should consist of the “theory development and then shows that the case selection and the definition of specific measures are important steps in the design and collection process” (Yin, 2003:51).

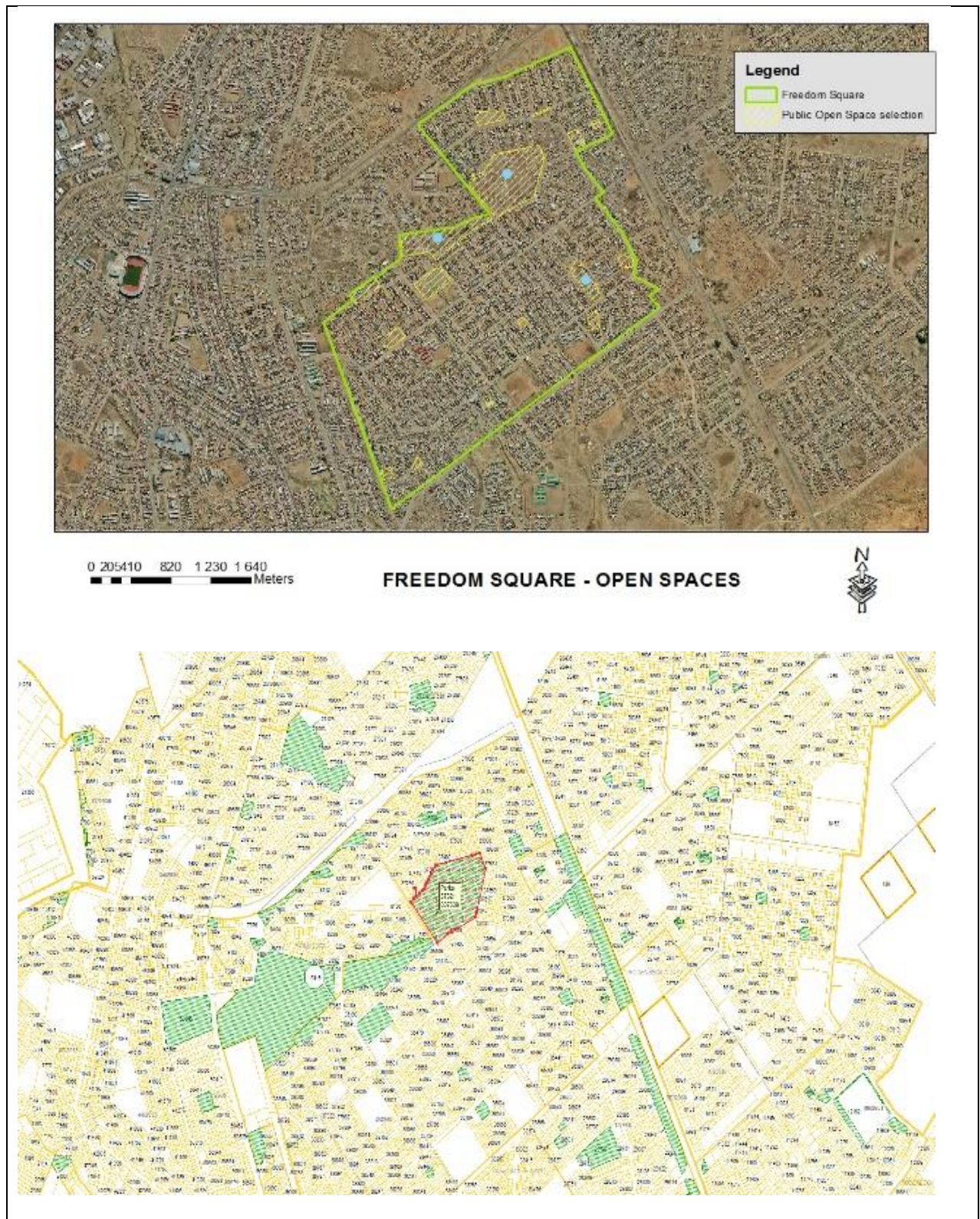
#### 4.6.1.1 Research case study selection

Saunders et al. (2009:146) highlighted that a case study strategy can use more than one case study. This is used to justify whether the results found in the first case can also occur in other cases. A multiple case study approach has been selected for the study. The research study is based in Freedom Square township in Mangaung, in the Free State province in South Africa. (Chapter 5 gives more detailed information on the study area.) Three urban public open spaces which were earmarked as urban public open spaces in Freedom Square were selected to serve as multiple cases for this research. (Table 4.3 illustrates the zoning information of the different cases selected for the study.) These include Thabo Mbeki Square (formerly known as erf 36502 Freedom Square), Saliva Square (formerly known as erf 35180 Freedom Square) and Zuma Square (formerly known as erf 37321 Freedom Square) and are currently used for residential purposes. The afore-mentioned case study areas have been encroached by community members for housing purposes (Figure 4.3 indicates a Map of Freedom Square with the multiple cases including other urban open spaces that are encroached for residential purposes.)

**Table 4.3: Zoning and permissible uses**

Property description	Use zone	Permitted uses	Permitted uses with the consent of the municipality	Current use
Erf 50793 Kagisanong	Public open space	Parks, sports and recreational facilities and buildings used in connection therewith	Residential buildings and special purposes	Park
Erf 37321 Freedom Square	Public open space	Parks, sports and recreational facilities and buildings used in connection therewith	Residential buildings and special purposes	Residential
Erf 36502 Freedom Square	Public open space	Parks, sports and recreational facilities and buildings used in connection therewith	Residential buildings and special purposes	Residential and religion (church)
Erf 35180 Freedom Square	Public open space	Parks, sports and recreational facilities and buildings used in connection therewith	Residential buildings and special purposes	Residential

Source: MMM zoning certificate information (Retrieved May 2019)



**Figure 4.3:** *Urban public open spaces in Freedom Square that are encroached for residential purposes*  
 Source: MMM GIS Division (Retrieved November 2018)

A fourth urban public open space, namely, erf 50793 Kagisanong (Figure 4.4) was also selected as part of the cases which is currently used as an active park for recreational purposes. The park in erf 50793 Kagisanong is used by the public and can be accessed by the community at certain times as it is securely fenced and has a security guard at the entrance. The researcher chose four urban public open spaces she was conversant with because she was previously employed as a town planner at MMM and these were part of her planning project areas. These projects formed part of informal settlement upgrading. The researcher experienced the extinction of these urban public open spaces with the intent to accommodate the housing backlog within the municipality. In the case of urban public open space encroachment in Mangaung, the municipality resort to informal settlement upgrading. According to the MMM IDP (2018:187), the municipality has developed an informal settlement upgrading strategy with the aim of preventing further mushrooming of informal settlements within the municipality. This strategy is championed by the Human Settlement Directorate.

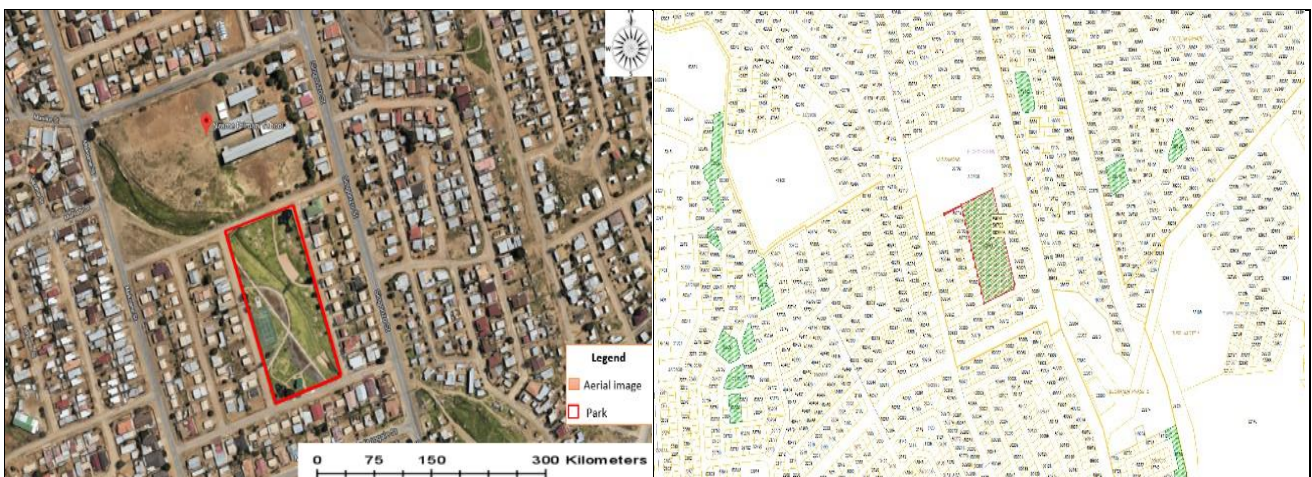


Figure 4.4: Urban public open space used as an active park in Mangaung  
Source: MMM GIS division (Retrieved May 2019)

#### 4.6.1.2 Population targeted for the study

Johnson and Christensen (2012:218) referred to the target population as large group of participants which the researcher intend to use in generalising the sample results. The focus was directly on the research participants that the researcher had an interest in investigating and learning more information from them. The targeted population included staff from the MMM, namely, town planning, environmental management, human settlements, GIS, parks and cemeteries as well as ward councillors of the affected areas. It also included the residents of Freedom Square, that is, the property owners residing on the lost urban open spaces, as well as those who illegally occupied municipal land. From the town planning division, the town planners responsible for the establishments in the townships as well as the informal settlement

upgrading were selected. They had in-depth knowledge of Freedom Square, Mangaung and how it was established. They also had a better understanding of the town planning procedure, including the legislation used in land use management.

The GIS division supports the functions of the municipality in terms of service delivery. They are responsible for sharing spatial information and promote the use of geographic information. One of their future projects is to assign and issue the 'identifiers' of informal settlement households. The MMM human settlements division includes personnel responsible for informal settlements upgrading and land invasion. This division has a few land invasion officers who work with law enforcement and are responsible for investigation, inspection and verification of the land ownership. They also inspect the affected areas and issue notices to land invaders to vacate within 24 hours. Informal settlement staff monitor and manage development in and around informal settlements in accordance with the provisions of the specific By-law. They also monitor and control all informal settlements and take the necessary steps to prevent land invasion within the area of jurisdiction of the municipality (MMM Land Invasion Strategy, 2015).

The ward councillors and ward committee members of MMM (Freedom Square) who also formed part of the targeted population, play a role as gate-keepers in the study area. Their responsibility is to call community meetings of residents to inform them of matters concerning the informal settlements. They are also expected to immediately report any incident of land invasion to the manager: informal settlements (MMM Land Invasion Strategy, 2015). The environmental management at MMM integrates the sustainable development practices within the municipality. They are responsible for the environmental education system as well as management of urban public open spaces in the MMM. The MMM parks division selected for the study provides a sustainable healthy environment for MMM residents through sustainable service delivery. Within the three areas of the study, residents owning the properties around the urban public open spaces were selected, including those who have occupied the urban public open spaces for residential purposes.

#### **4.6.1.3 Sample selection in case study research**

Gay et al. (2011:448) described qualitative sampling as the "process of selecting a small number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals chosen will be able to help the researcher understand the phenomenon under investigation". With the case study research, selection is aimed at a unit of analysis and this depends upon the research question. This study adopted the purposive sampling method. With this sample selection, the researcher hoped to gain more knowledge from the selected sample about the research problem.

According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2015:332), purposive sampling is used in qualitative research as a process to intentionally choose a site and the individuals who will participate in a research. The individuals forming the purposive sampling are chosen because they are the appropriate sample for the study phenomenon. Patton (2002:230) believed that the selected sample can deliver in-depth information for the study as they are the experts of the phenomenon studied.

Wagner et al. (2012:93) further explained that purposive sampling permits the researcher to rely on his or her own experience or previous research in selecting the sample. In most cases, the researcher is familiar with the study area and the participants. In this case, the researcher was familiar with the study area, which is Freedom Square township, and with the MMM employees. The researcher was working as a town planner at the municipality and the study area formed part of her project areas. Creswell (2013:157) alluded that the sample size is equally important to the sample strategy in the data collection process. It assists in collecting detailed information about the study area. In this case, the sample selected was considered to be information rich, included town planning, environmental management, GIS, parks and cemeteries, human settlements, ward councillors and ward committee members, residents of Freedom Square occupying urban open spaces and those staying around the encroached urban open spaces. Residents staying around or adjacent to the park in Kagisanong were selected for the study as they benefitted from the secured and managed urban public open space in their vicinity. According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2015:332), purposive sampling is useful both on the research site and for the research participants. It works best in that it allows the researcher to identify the best case study and participants to obtain more information about the phenomenon to be investigated. Table 4.4 illustrates a summary of the sample selected for the study.

**Table 4.4: Summary of the sample size for the study**

MMM research participants		Freedom Square and Kagisanong residents	
Town planners	4	Zuma Square (formerly known as erf 37321 Freedom Square)	192 households
Human settlements	4	Saliva Square (formerly known as erf 35180 Freedom Square)	123 households
Geographic Information Systems	3	Thabo Mbeki Square (formerly known as erf 36502 Freedom Square)	70 households
Environmental management	2	Park (erf 50793 Kagisanong)	30 households
Parks and cemeteries	2		
Ward councillors	3		
Total MMM participants	18	Total households	415
<b>Total sample</b>			<b>433</b>

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

## **4.7 Study research design (Methodological choice)**

Different explanations about research design are offered by many researchers. Among others, Gray (2014:128) defined research design as an overarching plan that is employed in collecting, measuring and analysing data. It gives a complete version of the purpose of the study, the research questions, research techniques for data collection, data sampling and analytical framework. Gray (2014:168) supported Saunders et al. (2009:136) who viewed a research design as a general plan which assist in responding to the research question(s). Research design is positioned between the research questions and data, including how they will be addressed. It gives a clear indication of the research objectives, sources and the procedure of data collection, constraints and limitations of the study, as well as the ethical considerations. The justification or rationale behind the methodological choice is also crucial. The justification for the methodological choice is based on the research question(s) and research objectives and these must be consistent with the research philosophy.

Research designs are categorised into three different designs, namely, qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research (Saunders et al., 2009:151). Qualitative research refers to the collection of qualitative data, that is, non-numerical data which includes words and pictures. Quantitative research entails the collection of quantitative data, that is, numerical data which is quantified. This includes data collection such as questionnaires or data analysis procedures such as statistical processes. Mixed methods research mixes both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:33). All these research designs assist in choosing the method to be employed in the data collection and analysis.

Following from the brief explanation of the different research designs, the qualitative methodological choice was adopted to conduct this research. The choice of adopting the qualitative research design is justified below. The use of the qualitative research design allowed the researcher in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, namely, reconceptualising urban public open space and development of the framework that may assist the planner in planning and managing these spaces in Mangaung.

### **4.7.1 Rationale for qualitative research design**

Yin (2011:7) pointed out that qualitative research studies the nature of reality of people's lives, and captures the views, perceptions and social behaviour of the research participants. It also attempts to collect and analyse data from multiple cases, using different research techniques. Bogdan and Biklen (2007:2) alluded that qualitative research is naturalistic in context and its application is based on the actual setting as the main source of data. Qualitative research

permits the researcher to employ the techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing in order to be exposed to the phenomenon being studied. In addition, the researcher strives to have a clear understanding of the people he or she is observing from their perspective.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016:17) agreed with Bogdan and Biklen (2007:6) that qualitative researchers analyse data inductively as data is collected from the observations and understanding of the fieldwork in order to build concepts or theory. Data is gleaned from interviews, observations or documents and is combined and structured in different themes. The findings can be organised in the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts and theories. In addition, qualitative research is descriptive in nature as the researcher gathers data in the form of words and pictures. Data also includes quotes from the documents, interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, videos, memos and official records. Data can therefore be presented as the findings of the research study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:17).

In light of the above, the research study took a qualitative stance as it sought to explore, in its entirety, the practical and theoretical difficulties planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in the Freedom Square township in Mangaung, Free State province of South Africa. The study adopted a case study approach which deployed a variety of research techniques such as focus group discussions, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, archival records, documents and personal observations for data elicitation at different intervals. The accruing data was analysed manually, using the pre-set themes. This study will impact positively on different professionals and policymakers involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces.

#### **4.7.2 Data collection techniques and procedures**

Qualitative research often employs multiple sources of data in any single study. With the study focusing on the case study strategy, a variety of data sources are used in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:158) asserted that the different forms of data used in qualitative research assist in answering the research question. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:78) further noted that research questions are not only used to determine ways of data collection, but they identify areas of inquiry which guide the researcher about what to observe on site. They give guidance to the interview protocol. Interviews, focus groups, observations, archival records and documents were used to collect data to answer the research question of the study: *What practical and theoretical difficulties do planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa.*

The researcher employed multiple sources of evidence as a major strength of collecting data for a case study strategy. This is referred to as *triangulation* because it uses multiple methods for collecting data. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:245) described triangulation as the best strategy to buttress the internal validity of the research. It employs the use of multiple methods, sources of data, researchers or theories. In addition, triangulation can be used with a combination of interviews, observations and documentary data. Triangulation increases credibility or internal validity of the research. It also focuses on thorough analysis of the participants (respondent validation), understanding of the phenomenon, researcher's position or reflexivity and peer review (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:249). The different data collection techniques employed for the study are discussed in the following sub-sections.

#### **4.7.2.1 Interviews**

Interviews serve as one of the crucial sources of data collection for a case study strategy. It is a process that involves both the researcher and the participant as they interact in a conversation in response to the questions that relate to the research study. As noted by Saunders et al. (2009:318), interviews gather valid and reliable data that is relevant to the research question and research objectives. They further noted that interviews should be consistent with the research questions, research objectives, research purpose, and the research strategy that the study have adopted. Robson and McCartan (2016:285) agreed with Saunders et al. (2009:318) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016:110) that interviews are categorised into different forms based on the degree of structure or standard. These include structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Structured interviews permit the researcher to make use of pre-determined questions with fixed wording. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to use the interview protocol with identical questions asked to the same participants. With unstructured interviews, the researcher asks open-ended questions and it can be informal (Robson & McCartan, 2016:285).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted at various intervals in this research. Similar questions (see Appendix D for the semi-structured interview protocol) were asked to different professionals (town planning, environmental management, human settlements), depending on the participants' expertise. Probing questions were also used by the researcher in order to gain more insight from the research participants. This helped the participants to provide further explanation to their responses. The semi-structured interviews with different professionals and ward councillors lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour. These questions assisted in gaining in-depth information about the study area because the ward councillors know Freedom Square and how it was established, including how or what caused encroachment on urban

public open spaces for residential purposes, and the professionals had the expertise of the cases. This provided the researcher an opportunity to access the focus group participants for the subject case study areas.

#### **4.7.2.2 Focus group method**

Bryman (2012:502) explained focus group method as a form of group interview which involves different research participants where a particular topic is discussed. This method comprises two elements, namely, group and focused interviews. Group interviews involve several participants discussing a particular topic, whereas a focused interview involves a selected group of participants who have been involved in a particular situation. Questions asked in focused interviews are focused on the details of the event that occurred to the participants who form part of the interview. In addition, the discussion must be done with people who have knowledge of the topic. In this case, the researcher gets an opportunity to understand the feelings of the participants. Focus groups can be done face-to-face or online. It is important to choose a topic that is of interest in order to attract the participants (Flick, 2014:256). In addition, the focus group interviews function best if they are recorded and transcribed (Bryman, 2012:504; Cooper and Schindler, 2014:305). Researchers such as Bryman (2012:507) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016:114) suggested that participants in a focus group should range from six to ten, whereas Creswell (2014:240) and Patton (2002:385) remarked that six to eight participants are sufficient.

In this research, the main purpose for using focus groups was to determine the perceptions of the residents regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces in their area. Focus group discussions for the study were conducted with the residents of Zuma Square (formerly known as erf 37321 Freedom Square), Saliva Square (formerly known as erf 35180 Freedom Square), Thabo Mbeki Square (formerly known as erf 36502 Freedom Square) and those staying around a park in erf 50793 Kagisanong. The ward councillors and ward committee members in these cases played a role as gate-keepers. A group of six to ten participants, as recommended by Bryman (2012:507), were interviewed. (See Appendix E for the focus group interview protocol.)

#### **4.7.2.3 Qualitative observations**

Plano Clark and Creswell (2015:342) described qualitative observation as the “process researchers use to gather open-ended, first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site”. This implies that the observations are useful because the researcher records the information according to the occurrence on the research setting. The researcher

can also record the behaviour of the participants on site. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:137) attested that observations are two-fold, namely: “they take place in the setting where the phenomenon of interest naturally occurs rather than the location designated for the purpose of interviewing”. In addition, data collected through observations is obtained first-hand because the researcher goes for fieldwork. As the researcher gathers information making use of observations, he or she can also be an observer or a participant. As an observer, the researcher can play a non-participant observational role when visiting the site and recording the information without forming part of the activities for research participation. The researcher can also play a participant observational role when partaking in the activities performed at the research site and the researcher can play a changing observational role where the researcher changes roles during the investigation (Flick, 2014:309; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:144; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015:344).

The researcher obtained a written consent (Appendix B) from the municipal manager of MMM to interview the municipal officials involved in planning projects. Also, consent was given to get the necessary archival records from the employees of the municipality. This included ward councillors who would act as the gate-keepers to Freedom Square and Kagisanong. The researcher was helped by the ward councillor to use a venue at a local school where the focus group discussions were held. Notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews and the discussions were recorded with the consent of the community members who formed part of the discussions. Also, the researcher managed to observe what is happening at the case study areas and several photos were taken as evidence for personal observations.

#### **4.7.2.4 Documentary data**

The researcher adopted a documentary evidence as another valuable source of collecting data. Flick (2014:353) described documents as “standardized artefacts”. Documents consist of public and private records about the phenomenon to be studied. Plano Clark and Creswell (2015:345) indicated that public documents include minutes from the meetings with the community, memos, handbooks and archival records. Personal journals and diaries, letters, medical charts, personal notes are examples of private documents. Documents are important sources of evidence because they provide the researcher with information regarding the evolution of the phenomenon of interest. Bryman (2012:544) agreed with Flick (2014:255) that documents used for research purposes should be authentic, credible, representable and meaningful.

The researcher reviewed policy documents of the MMM. Some of these documents included the historical evolution of Freedom Square; Council Resolution minutes from the meetings

held by the planning department, human settlements and MMM Council; as well as zoning certificates of the properties of the case study area. These documents were easily accessible to the researcher as a written consent was already issued by the municipal manager.

### **4.7.3 Pilot testing**

Cooper and Schindler (2014:85) asserted that pilot testing is the beginning stage of data collection in any research process. Some researchers do not do a pilot test but condense the project time frame. According to Yin (2014:96), a pilot case study is designed to assist the researcher in improving the data collection plan. This is accomplished by putting more emphasis on the data and procedures to be used in collecting data. Cooper and Schindler (2014:85), simply regarded pilot testing as a way of detecting weaknesses in design and instrumentation. Yin (2011:39) alluded that pilot testing assist “to test and refine one or more aspects of a final study – for example, its design, fieldwork procedures, data collection instruments, or analysis plans”. This is a stage where the researcher can practice the research, and the information obtained can be arranged from logical to more substantive topics. Participants of pilot testing should be given full information about the study to be conducted. This can also give participants an opportunity to request feedback on the study.

The researcher conducted pilot testing by means of interviews with professionals involved in urban planning, as well as focus groups with the ward committee members of Freedom Square, Mangaung. Challenges experienced included the professionals who were not willing to participate in the study. This made the study difficult, especially in terms of how the municipality is managing the urban public open spaces in the township.

Other relevant urban stakeholders could not provide the researcher with the policy documents and this was a constraint in other aspects, especially the environmental management issues. Shortage of personnel, especially those working directly with urban open space planning posed another challenge. Focus groups conducted with ward committee members included those occupying urban open spaces and those who own properties around the urban open spaces. This is where the researcher gained insight on why people illegally occupy open spaces. Some indicated they clearly understood the different values of urban open spaces but their main concern was the housing backlog and they did not have housing or did not own any residential property. Some were economically challenged and had no money to buy land or houses, and with land invasion, they knew that government would build houses for them. Others did not have an idea that urban open spaces have to be managed and protected. This indicated a gap in the optimal level of community participation by professionals working within urban planning, human settlements and environmental management. This led the researcher

to formulate different themes that assisted in pursuing the current phenomena being investigated.

#### **4.7.4 Qualitative data analysis**

The analysis of qualitative data requires clear “understanding how to make sense of the text and images so that you can form answers to your research questions” (Creswell, 2015:235). The data collected was narrative in nature as it consisted of semi-structured interviews, focus groups, personal observations, documents and case studies. This research study was based on a case study in the Freedom Square township, Mangaung in the Free State province. Creswell’s (2009) process for data analysis was adopted in this study as it included the following: transcription of interview data, organisation and presentation of data for analysis, thorough reading of data, coding of data and discovery of constructs, as well as analysis of the data collected. Transcriptions were performed manually and the findings were categorised in different constructs which included the main concepts, namely, urban open space planning, community participation and value conflicts. Further details on the analysis of data are presented in Chapter 6 (intra-case analysis) and Chapter 7 (cross-case analysis). Eisenhardt (1989:539) indicated that the intra-case analysis involves the in-depth description and understanding of each case that forms part of the research. It helps the researcher to manage huge amounts of data and each case is understood as a stand-alone entity. During analysis, different patterns emerge from each case. These patterns are then generalised in cross-case analysis. In addition, Eisenhardt (1989:539) described cross-case analysis as the process where patterns are selected to look for similarities and differences between cases. New patterns or proposition can also emerge from this analysis. The researcher can also generalise the analysis of data from the cross-case analysis.

#### **4.8 Ethical considerations**

Research ethical issues are crucial for every research undertaken. Saunders et al. (2009:184) highlighted that research ethics “relates to questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topic, design our research and gain access, collect data, process and store our data, analyse data and write up our research findings in a moral and responsible way”. With Merriam and Tisdell (2016:237), research has to produce valid and reliable knowledge. To ensure that the knowledge is valid and reliable in qualitative research, the research should be conducted in an ethical way. Also, for ethical practices, the research study should display authenticity and trustworthiness which are viewed to be compatible with the philosophical assumptions.

The research study has adopted the validity and trustworthiness of qualitative research because these are the key issues in conducting any research. According to Meriam and Tisdell (2016:253), trustworthiness follows the strategy of transferability (external validity) which is concerned with whether the findings of one study can be generalised to other situations. One of the strategies of transferability is the thorough selection of the population sample for the research. Inclusion of different participants and case study areas will allow the readers to apply the information to other avenues. The researcher applied for ethical approval from the University of the Free State (see Appendix A) and an ethical clearance letter which was granted by the MMM (see Appendix B). Different urban stakeholders who are involved in urban open space planning were interviewed and the emphasis focused on their views regarding the value and utility of urban public open spaces. The findings from the interviews were generalised.

#### **4.9 Constraints and limitations**

The research encountered several constraints and limitations from the onset. Prior to the research, the researcher conducted telephonic interviews with different metropolitan municipalities. The aim was to make a comparison of the case studies of different municipalities in terms of how they handle urban open space planning and management. It was difficult to find the relevant personnel at these municipalities and this led to getting interviews with only the City of Cape Town and eThekweni. The researcher was supposed to visit the municipalities but finances were a constraint. Pilot testing was done for the study and certain challenges were encountered. Limited information was gained, especially regarding the management of the urban open spaces by the municipality. Also, getting the expected number of interviews within the professionals involved in urban planning was a huge drawback. Expected participants do not actually have time because of their work schedules. Some of the targeted sample population were the managers and senior managers, which made it difficult to even to secure interviews with them. With the pilot study with the focus groups, language was a barrier as most of the participants Sesotho speaking and the researcher is not much conversant with the language.

The intent for the completion of the doctoral programme is within three to four years and this limited the researcher in conducting time horizons. The nature of the work that the researcher was doing when she commenced this programme was limiting her in terms of time and the skills to perform the research itself. There were still limitations to be encountered during the investigation in that the staff, who was supposed to form the population sample at the municipality was limited. Also, it was generally not easy to get information from other sub-

directorates at the municipality, especially those who would have a huge impact on the study itself. Despite all these challenges, the researcher managed to achieve theoretical saturation from the interviews that were to be conducted.

#### **4.10 Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the justification of the methodology that was adopted for the research. The research methodology, research philosophical deliberations, research approach, strategy and design, ethical considerations as well as the constraints and limitations of the study were discussed in detailed. The researcher adopted an interpretivist, subjective and value-laden approach in conducting the study. The research took a qualitative stance. A case study strategy has been selected with interviews, focus groups, observations and documents as the research sources of data collection. The data collected will be analysed thematically. The next chapter focuses on the research context where the researcher gives an overview of the study area. This includes the historical background of Freedom Square, its locality, maps and images of urban public open spaces (occupied and unoccupied). In addition, key planning objectives for the city will be discussed.

## Chapter 5

# PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN FREEDOM SQUARE, MANGAUNG – A RESEARCH CONTEXT

---

---

### 5.1 Chapter introduction

In the previous chapter, the selected methodology to be used for the study has been presented and justified. This chapter answers the third research question, namely: What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung? The study area, Freedom Square in Mangaung, was highlighted under case study selection (Section 4.6.1.1 of Chapter 4). This chapter is the substratum of the research study as it reveals where the investigation lies. The whole research design and methodology chapter is based on the study area (Freedom Square). In view of the above, this chapter's focus is on the following sections:

- About the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.
- Background of the case study area – Freedom Square.
- Incidences of urban public open space encroachment.
- Community participation.
- Sustainability literacy levels and urban public spaces in Mangaung.
- Chapter summary.

### 5.2 About Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality

#### 5.2.1 Brief historical background

Bloemfontein as a city was previously known as the “dorpiest dorp (hamlet or small town) in the Union” (Schoeman, 1980:230). It was founded in 1846 by Major Henry Douglas Warden on the farm that was owned by Johan Nicolaas Brits. The MMM is currently known as Mangaung, which is a Sesotho name implying the place of a leopard. Drawing back to the history of Bloemfontein, Naval Hill, Signal Hill, Fort Hill and dolerite ridge (located between Signal Hill and Fort Hill) motivated the development of the City of Bloemfontein. Figure 5.1 displays the images of the origin of Bloemfontein from 1846 to 1880.

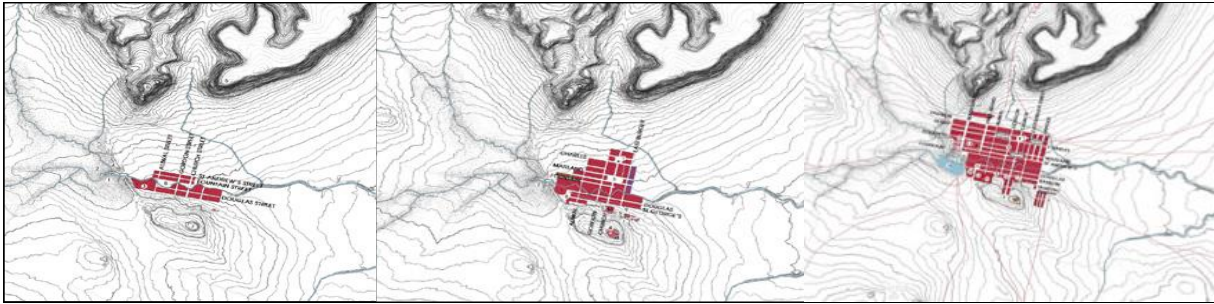


Figure 5.1: Plans of the origin of Bloemfontein from 1846 to 1880  
Source: Auret (2016)

According to Auret (2016:197), the early history of Bloemfontein is associated with the geological features and the availability of water. Its growth in population size was experienced in the 1850s. With the growth of the city, important developments include the Warden, Baumann and Market Square (currently known as Hoffman Square); Tweekoringkerk (church with two towers); Basotho War Memorial; President Square; Waaihoek neighbourhood; churches such as the Lutheran, Trinity Methodist, Anglican and Catholic churches; schools that included St Michael's School for Girls, Eunice Girls School; Greenhill Convent and School; St Andrew's College and Grey College. When Bloemfontein was founded, it was a small town but the South African War (also called the Anglo-Boer War), that took place between 1899 and 1902, put Bloemfontein on the map as it was "at the centre of one of the most devastating periods in the history of South Africa" (Auret, 2016:201).

Other developments include the building of the railway station, the Fourth Raadzaal, King's Park, Victoria Park, Batho Location, statue of President Brand, National Women's Memorial, Queen's Fort, the University of the [Orange] Free State, Second Waaihoek quarry, High Court and the Government building. Figure 5.2 indicates the images of the spatial growth of Bloemfontein since 1904 which was regarded as the aftermath of the South African War, and the flood when Bloemspruit (creek) flooded and destroyed a portion of Bloemfontein downtown. This is also a period where the city showed rapid growth and it allowed the city to have different land uses (Schoeman, 2015:168). Other landmarks in the growth and development of Bloemfontein that formed part of the spatial growth of the municipality, include the Appeal Court, Fire Station and the City Hall which was built in 1936. In addition to these, the Bram Fischer Building, CR Swart (currently known as Fidel Castro Building) and the Sandu Plessis Theatre, were built.

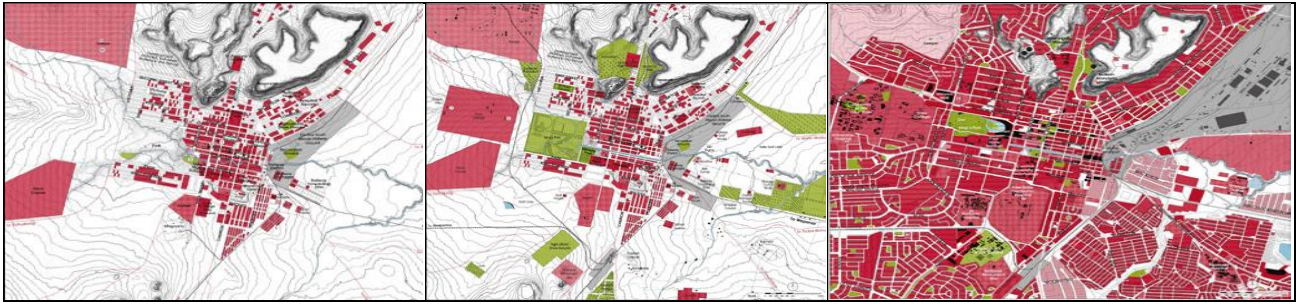


Figure 5.2: Plans of the spatial growth of Bloemfontein from 1904 to 2015  
Source: Auret (2016)

With the growth since 1846, Bloemfontein is regarded as the sixth largest city in South Africa that is centrally located in the Free State Province, the third largest province in South Africa. It covers about 10,6% of the surface area of South Africa (Figure 5.3).

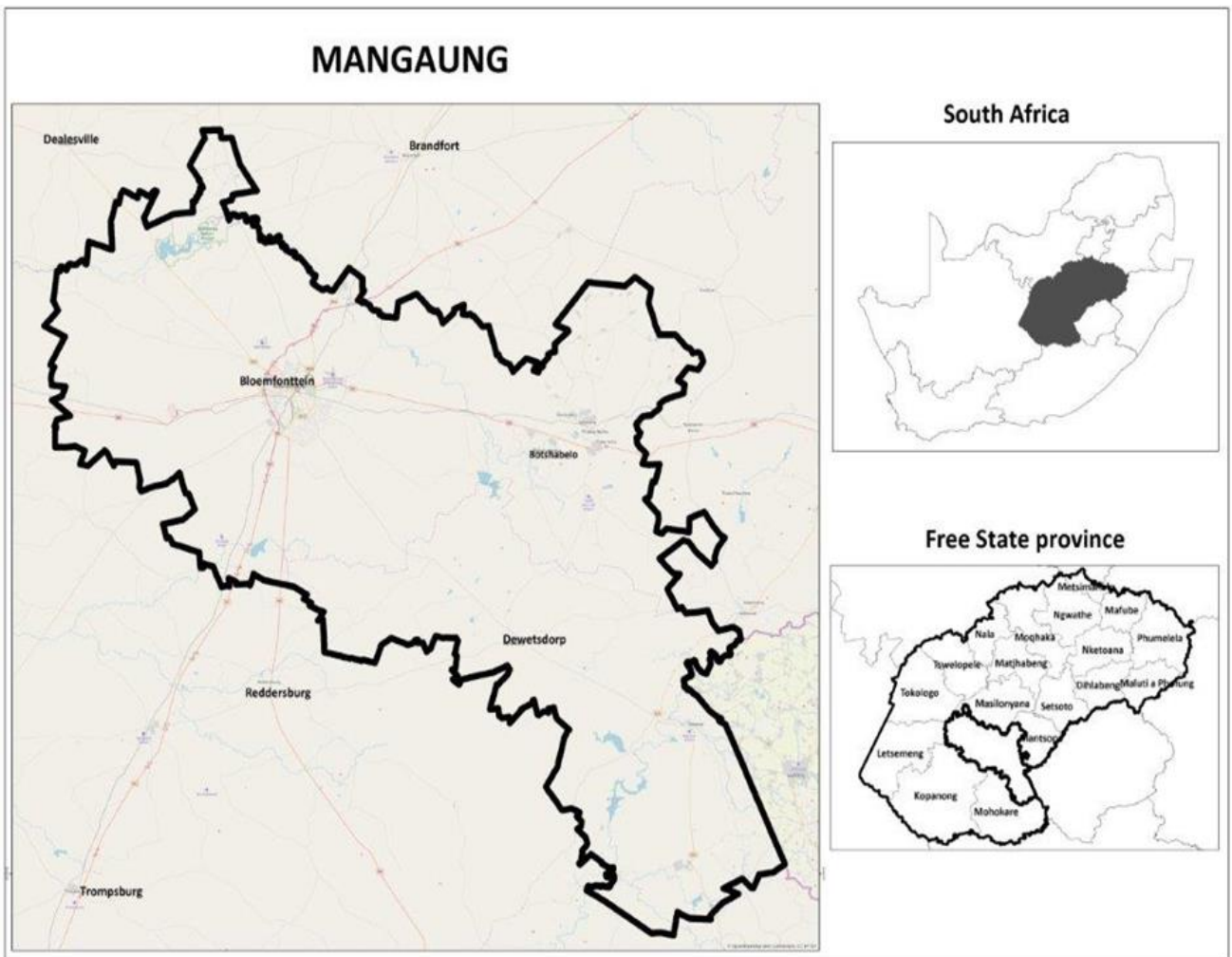


Figure 5.3: Map of the location of the study area  
Source: MMM GIS Division (Retrieved May 2019)

Bloemfontein hosts the administrative headquarters of the provincial government and also serves as the judicial capital of South Africa (MMM IDP 2011/2012:16; Toba, Campbell, Schoeman & Lesia, 2012:1). The City of Bloemfontein is also regarded as an economic hub of the local and regional economy. It is also known to possess a rich history pertaining to the establishment of the African National Congress in 2012 and this movement eventually liberated the country since the first democratic election of 1994. The township of Bloemfontein, known as Mangaung, a former black township, is located towards the south-east and this is where most of the spatial patterns are affected and urban public open spaces are lost due to rapid urbanisation (MMM IDP 2011/2012:16; Toba et al., 2012:1).

### **5.2.2 Spatial patterns of Mangaung**

Bloemfontein falls under the jurisdiction of the MMM, together with Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu, Wepener, Dewetsdorp, Vanstadensrus and Soutpan, including large rural areas. The entire municipality has a population of 787 929 (MMM IDP, 2018:39). South Africa is experiencing skewed spatial patterns and MMM is not immune to such a challenge as it was developed under the apartheid era. In line with this challenge, certain areas in the Mangaung township limit economic activity because they are located away from the economic employment centres. Due to the skewed spatial patterns, poor people, especially blacks, are forced to travel long distances to access basic services, and economic and employment centres. This is a resultant of poverty and unemployment within the municipal area (MMM IDP 2018:67).

In addition, the spatial pattern during the apartheid era prohibited blacks from migrating to urban areas (Marais, cited by Marais & Visser 2008:2). The spatial pattern of Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu (as indicated in Figure 5.4) reflects the incidence of black people who were channelled to Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo. This happened because the land expansion in Bloemfontein (Mangaung) was frozen in 1968.

Spatially, Bloemfontein displays the characteristics of an apartheid city. Davies (1981:61) and Marais and Visser (2008:2) described the apartheid city a city whose structure takes the shape of a wheel, with different population zones linked to the central business district (CBD). It is characterised by white residential areas placed at high and better residential zones, whereas black residential areas are ethnically divided. There are buffer strips that separate the different population groups and each group owns its own municipal offices.

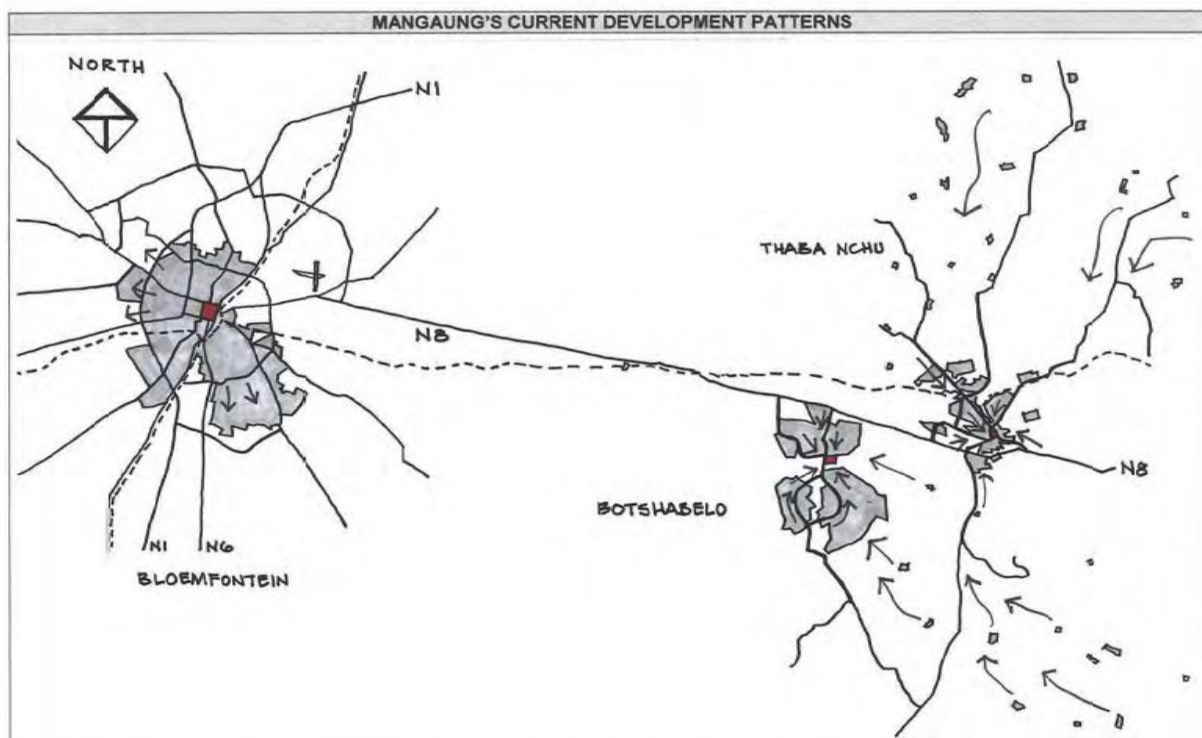


Figure 5.4: Spatial patterns of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality  
Source: MMM IDP 2017-2022

Spatially, Bloemfontein historically displays the characteristics of the apartheid city because; it is divided into residential zones for different population groups (for example, zones for white people in the suburbs, black people in Mangaung and coloured people in Heidedal); there is enforcement by buffer strips between Mangaung townships and the suburbs, and ethnic segregation between different population groups; as well as development of municipal offices per area (Mangaung had and still has different municipal offices in different areas) (Marais & Visser, 2008:2). Krige (1991:113) alluded that apartheid planning led to fragmented spatial development of Bloemfontein. The spatial trends failed to address the economic principles because the economic development was decentralised. Furthermore, Malin (cited by Smith, 2001:21) was of opinion that Mangaung fostered the invasion of open land.

It is viewed as though the land invasions in Mangaung were planned because people were encouraged to occupy the municipal land close or within the existing settlements. The illegal occupation of land did not assist to remedy the situation; instead, it reinforced the apartheid geography of Bloemfontein which has stretched to the current spatial patterns. Figure 5.5 indicates the characteristics of the apartheid city when comparing it with the spatial trend of Bloemfontein.

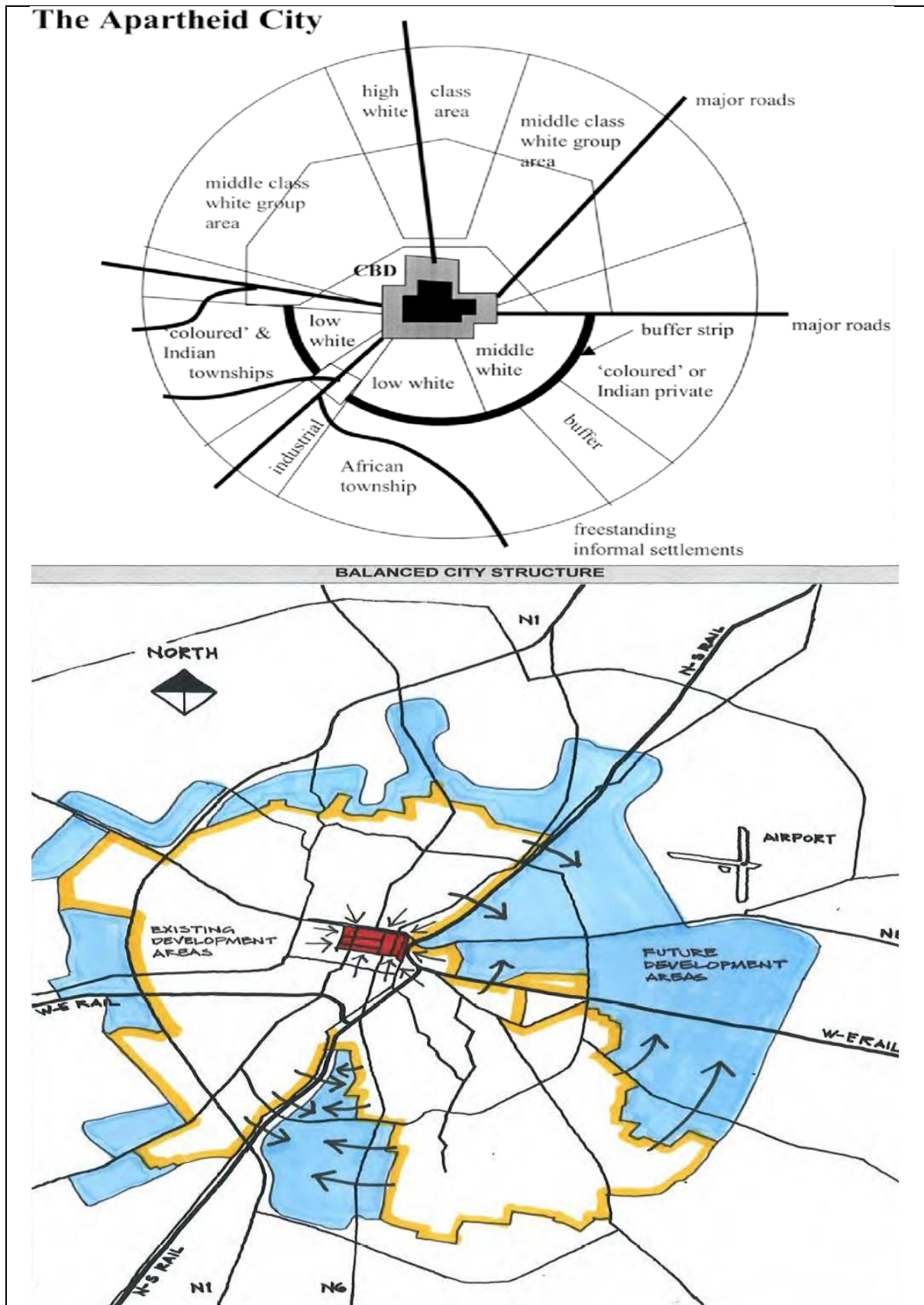


Figure 5.5: Characteristics of the apartheid city in comparison with Bloemfontein  
 Source: Adapted from Du Plessis, Irurah and Scholes (2003:244) and MMM IDP (2017–2022:170)

With the current spatial development trends in Mangaung, some patterns have not changed, that is (i) distance between the place of residence and the workplace (people are still commuting long distances to work as they travel from Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu to Bloemfontein and vice versa; others travel from the outskirts of Bloemfontein to the city centre); (ii) provision of housing subsidies on the periphery is still ongoing; (iii) mushrooming of informal settlements around Bloemfontein and within the existing settlements in the township is still reinforcement of the apartheid spatial patterns (Marais & Visser, 2008:9). According the MMM Draft IDP (2017–2022:156), there has been a continuation of illegal occupation of land, especially on the outskirts of town. People still occupy land that is far from places of employment or along the public transport routes. Others encroach on the urban open spaces that are found within the existing settlement. This has been a challenge in Mangaung, especially in Freedom Square, as the urban open spaces are gradually disappearing and this changes the spatial pattern altogether (Toba & Campbell, 2018:306).

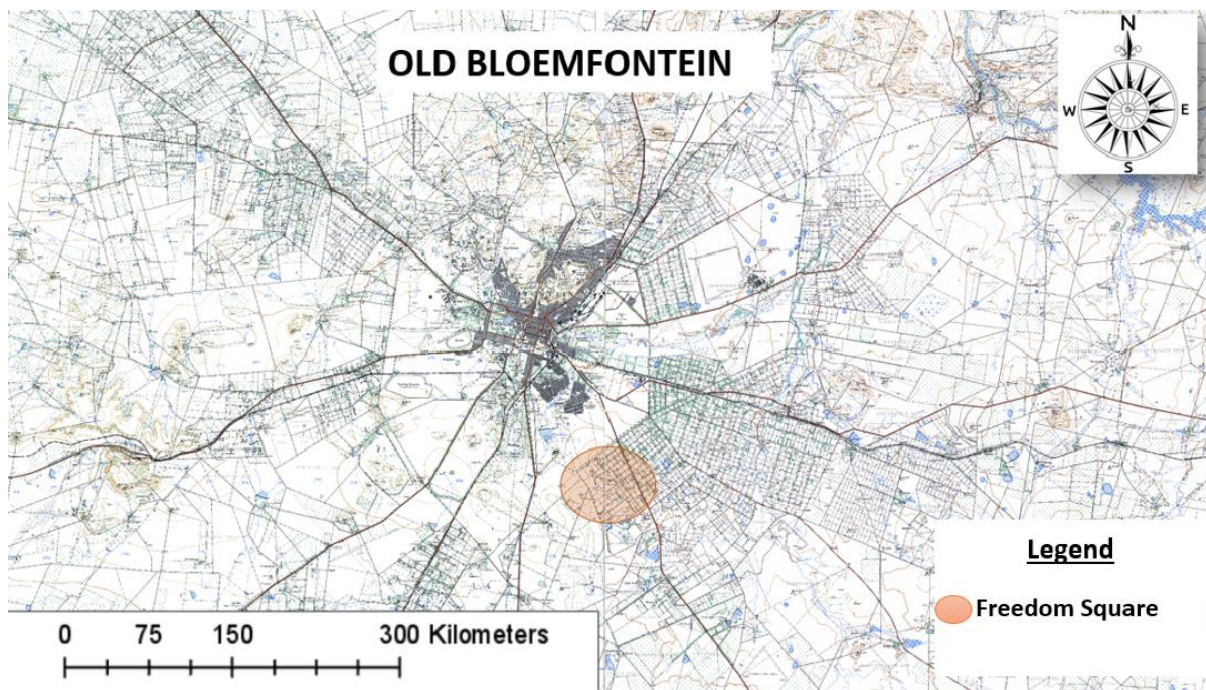
### **5.3 Background of the Case study area – Freedom Square**

#### **5.3.1 Origin of Freedom Square**

In the history of Bloemfontein since 1968, no land development continued in Bloemfontein townships and this led to urbanisation in Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu. Between the 1960s and 1970s, black urbanisation took a turn to Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu instead of Bloemfontein (Ntema, Massey, Marais, Cloete & Lenka, 2018:7). This formed part of the apartheid era where the black communities had to reside within the homeland boundaries. During the 1980s, houses were developed in the southern parts of Bloemfontein for the middle income black population and very little was done in terms of low-cost housing until early 1990s (Ntema et al., 2018:7). It is a well-known history that on 2 February 1990, the former State President of South Africa, Mr FW de Klerk, announced the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC). This led to political and social cohesion and illegal occupation of public and private land for residential purposes. Jürgens, Donaldson, Rule and Bähr (2013:257) confirmed that the early 1990s was a period of the political transformation of South Africa which led to the opening of townships. The Mangaung Civic Association encouraged people to occupy the vacant land around Mangaung townships. This led to eight informal settlements at that time. These mushroomed in Mangaung townships in 1990.

Furthermore, people occupied the farm Rodenbeck which was then named Freedom Square and Namibia. The informal settlement Freedom Square was assumed to have been founded for political reasons as well as the challenges in the provision of proper housing in Bloemfontein. According to Marais and Krige (1991:181), Freedom Square originated from the

apartheid spatial policy of Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu. Freedom Square is situated on the eastern boundary of Mangaung (Ntema et al., 2018:7). Figure 5.6 indicates the old map of Bloemfontein and where Freedom Square is located in Mangaung. Freedom Square is located in an area that was earmarked for the extension of Heidedal, which is a suburb mostly occupied by a coloured community. There were several attempts to remove people who occupied the land illegally until a land exchange agreement was reached between the municipal council and the House of Representatives. The main aim for this agreement was to secure land where houses would be developed for people who encroached the vacant land.



*Figure 5.6: Map of the Old Bloemfontein indicating the location of the study area*  
 Source: MMM GIS division (Retrieved May 2019)

Since then, encroachment on open land became a culture of entitlement and jumping the waiting list for houses for low-income families in the Mangaung townships and this has led to informal settlement upgrading. Figure 5.7 indicates the location of Freedom Square in Bloemfontein which was illegally invaded for residential purposes. Some residents who invaded Freedom Square were previously based in Botshabelo and their main reason for relocation was access to public transport. A trust named the Independent Development Trust was founded in order to assist with housing provision in Freedom Square. Marais et al. (2014:152) mentioned that Freedom Square is viewed as one of the largest projects in Bloemfontein that was funded by the Independent Development Trust between the years 1990 and 1994. There are several reasons for people to settle in Freedom Square which include the following:- family or marriage; accessing the property, serviced or unserved; being closer

to work rather than commuting long distances from the place of residence to the place of employment (Marais & Ntema, 2013:89).

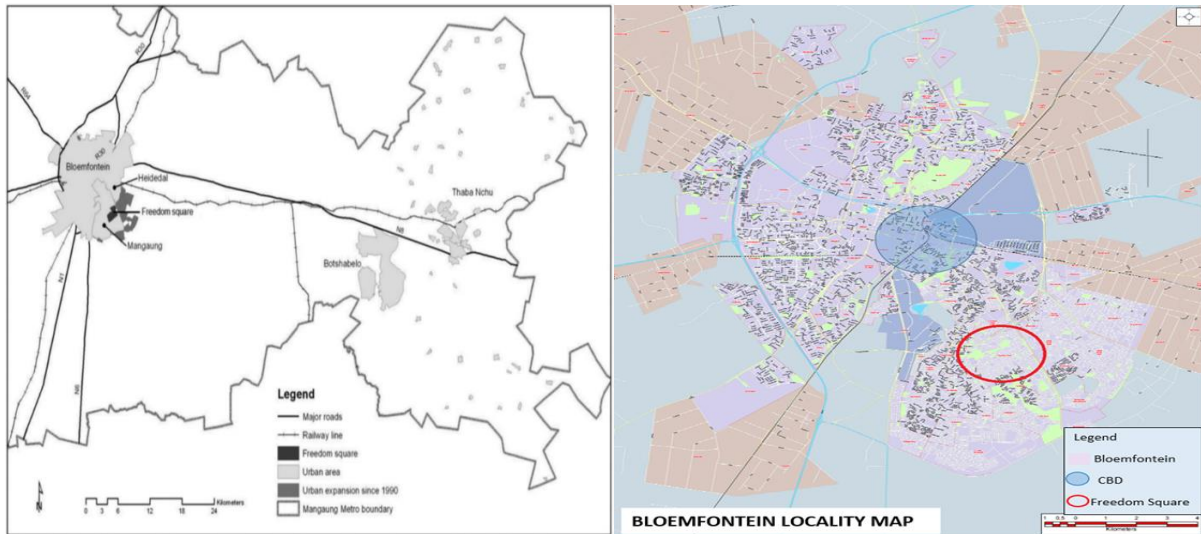


Figure 5.7: Location of Freedom Square  
 Source: Adapted from Marais and Ntema (2013) (Retrieved from MMM GIS Division, May 2019)

### 5.3.1.1 Township establishment of Freedom Square

As mentioned above, the occupation of land in Freedom Square was encouraged by the Civic Association in 1990. According to Marais and Ntema (2013:88), the establishment of Freedom Square comprised of four time periods: the period between 1990 and 1992 which was the occupation of land; the period between 1992 and 1994 which involved the establishment of a proper township and residents were provided with basic services; the period between 1995 and 1999 where the focus was on the implementation of a site-and-service scheme and a low-income housing project; and the period since 2000 and beyond which was the upgrading of informal settlements that included the challenges of the extinction of urban public open spaces and infill planning.

Marais and Krige (1997:179) indicated that during 1992 and 1994, when Freedom Square was established, about 4 132 erven were developed through a capital subsidy scheme of R7 500 (about 530 USD) per household. To access the funding, the Urban Foundation requested help from the Independent Development Trust that was introduced in 1990. The subsidy scheme provided for a serviced stand and ownership (title deed). At this stage, Freedom Square was formalised and the residents were provided with basic infrastructure services. The property sizes of the initial settlement ranged from 180 m<sup>2</sup> to 2 000 m<sup>2</sup> per property but some of the erven had irregular patterns, with single rows of which some could not access the street and public places (Botes, Stewart & Wessels, 1996:459). This needed to be adjusted to a cost-

effective layout which included back-to-back residential sites which varied from 240 m<sup>2</sup> to 400 m<sup>2</sup> each. The size of the houses provided was 24 m<sup>2</sup>. Some of the meetings held to discuss the project, was an indication of community participation (which will be discussed later in this chapter). Furthermore, the establishment of Freedom Square included residential sites, community facilities (clinics, schools and churches), business sites, as well as urban open spaces and streets. Figure 5.8 indicates the layout plan that was done in 1992 for the development of Freedom Square.

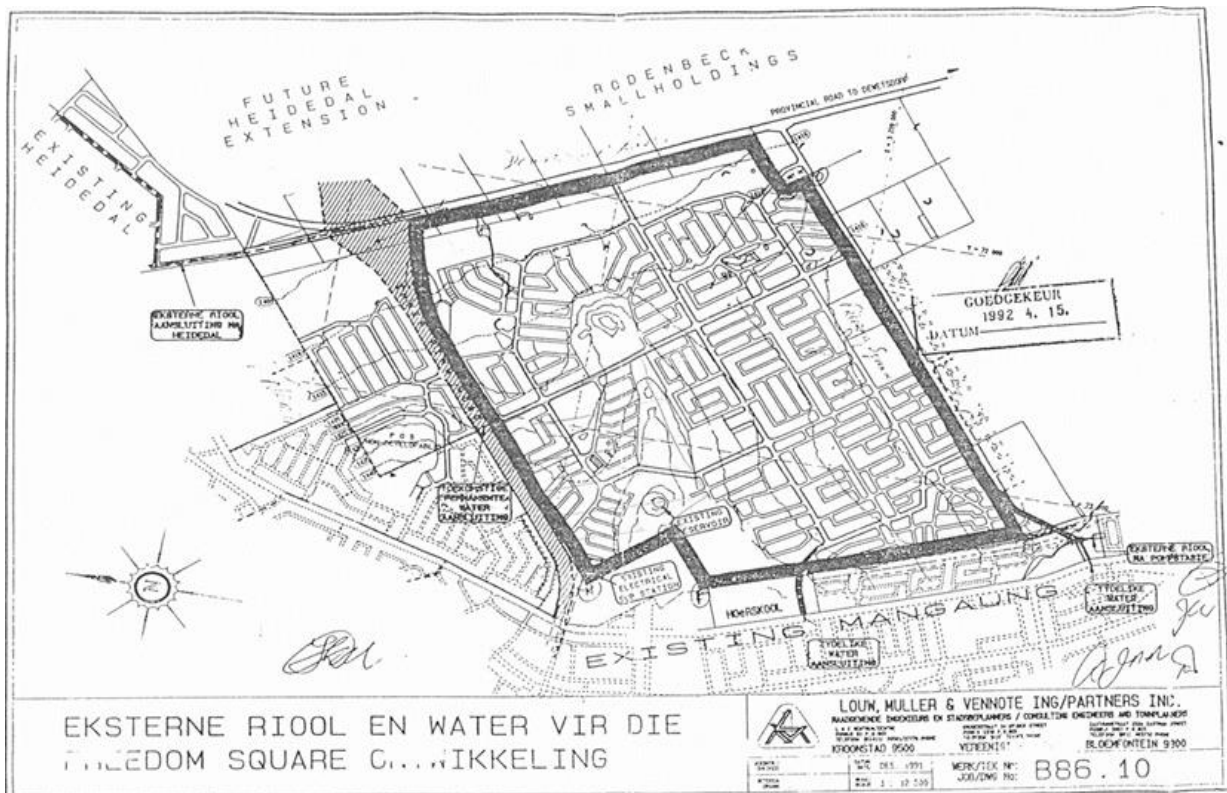


Figure 5.8: Layout plan of Freedom Square in 1992  
Source: MMM archives

### 5.3.1.2 Legislation – Then and now

Van Wyk (2012:25) indicated that land use planning was different in Black townships as compared to the White suburbs. Blacks were controlled by separate legislation, namely the Blacks Consolidation Act, Act 25 of 1945. Later, the township establishments in Black townships were managed using the Black Communities Development Act, Act 4 of 1984. To date, some South African municipalities still apply the land use conditions stipulated in Annexure F (RSA, 1986) for land use management. MMM also employs the land use conditions of Annexure F as a land use management tool. Since 2013, urban public open space planning has been managed by the planning tools that include the Spatial Development

Framework (SDF) which is part of the IDP as mandated by the Municipal Systems Act; land use management schemes as mandated by SPLUMA, Act 16 of 2013; municipal by-laws with policy regulations regarding governance; environmental management frameworks and urban open space frameworks. The use of outdated town planning schemes or documents contributed to poor management of urban public open spaces.

Currently, the SPLUMA, Act 16 of 2013, is a national law passed by parliament as a tool for spatial and land use management and it also facilitates and enforces land use and development. SPLUMA concentrates on development principles that apply to land use management and they include spatial justice, sustainability, resilience, efficiency and good administration (SPLUMA, 2013:10). Nel (2015) indicated that SPLUMA concentrates on redress, social justice, equity and inclusion, community participation and environmental management. Section 50 of SPLUMA (2013:27) deals with land development for urban open spaces. It indicates that urban open spaces should be provided in residential developments. According to SPLUMA (2013:27), the land required for parks or open space should be provided within the land area to which the development application refers or may be provided elsewhere within the municipal area, at the discretion of the municipality.

Although this is clearly stated, there are challenges facing this legislation. Introducing SPLUMA in informal settlements is a challenge because of their informality. Also, these settlements are not serviced and surveyed. In enforcing the land use regimes in informal settlements, the municipal officials are concerned about their well-being and safety (Nel, 2015). When residents occupy urban open spaces in Freedom Square, Mangaung, they reside in those settlements without services.

### **5.3.2 Urban public open spaces in Freedom Square**

Urban public open space are viewed as an important aspect of sustainable development of cities. They differ in sizes, shapes as well as functions and values. Also, these open spaces refer to parks, woodlands, green fields and gardens (Anguluri & Narayanan, 2017:59). Van Herzele and Wiedemann (2003:110) identified the guiding principles attached to the monitoring of urban open space provision. These include citizen-based, functional levels, preconditions of use, variety of qualities and multiple uses. By further explaining these guiding principles and linking them to Freedom Square, urban open spaces are crucial in the sense that they play an important role in the health and well-being of the citizens. Emphasis is on the value, usage and accessibility of urban open spaces. In terms of sustainable environments, neighbourhoods must be liveable places with attractive urban open spaces (Van Herzele & Wiedemann, 2003:111). This links with the vision on MMM, namely a “globally safe and

attractive municipality to work, invest and live in by 2030” (MMM IDP, 2017–2022:viii). When Freedom Square was initially developed, about 24 urban open spaces were created in this township establishment which were accessible to the citizens. There is no indication of the guidelines used when planning for these urban public open spaces. Some of these urban open spaces are still unoccupied, whereas others have been illegally invaded for residential purposes. Freedom Square does not have any urban open spaces that are used for the intended purpose for recreation. Erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 in Freedom Square form part of the properties that were encroached illegally for residential purposes and are selected as case studies for the research. All three of them have a land use reservation of ‘public open space’ in terms of the land use conditions stipulated in Annexure F (RSA, 1986). The researcher is of the opinion that such spaces can still be managed and used for their initial purposes for recreational facilities. One solution to this opinion is that the community needs to be educated and capacitated by the experts.

The monitoring of urban public open spaces is very important because it includes their functional uses. Open spaces, in general, are used for different functions and can be categorised as soft and hard open spaces. Hard open spaces have social, movement, economic and political or symbolic functions. Hard open spaces include mixed-mode streets, pedestrian-orientated streets, squares, markets, parking areas and public transport stops (CSIR, 2005:2). Soft open spaces refer to unbuilt spaces that are located within a settlement. They play an important role in achieving sustainable neighbourhoods. They should be appropriately located, large enough and interconnected as well as vegetated. They provide comfort, safety, and active and passive engagement to the users. Aspects such as the location, access, size and dimensions, capacity, boundaries, surfaces and furniture need to be carefully considered when planning and designing soft open spaces. Soft open spaces include parkways, parks, sports fields, play spaces, urban agriculture (CSIR, 2005:10). Freedom Square planning and design of urban open spaces is categorised under soft open spaces. Table 5.1 gives an overview of the zoning information for the erven that are selected for the study.

**Table 5.1: Zoning and permissible uses: Erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 in Freedom Square, Mangaung**

Land use reservation	Permitted uses	Permitted uses with the consent of the municipality	Current land use
Public open space	Parks, sports and recreational facilities and buildings used in connection therewith	Residential buildings and special purposes	Residential

Source: MMM zoning certificate (Retrieved May 2019)

In 1998, the MMM council took a resolution which stated that the municipality would not accommodate and provide infrastructural and town planning services for people who occupy land which is not earmarked for residential purposes. A number of erven occupied illegally for residential purposes have been formalised in terms of infill spatial planning or informal settlement upgrading. The MMM Built Environment Performance Plan [BEPP] (2017) states that Mangaung is experiencing a huge demand for housing at different socio-economic levels and it is faced with a backlog in housing. There has been an indication that there is a relationship between the demand for housing and the unemployment ratio within the municipality and people opt to gain access to land or housing by occupying urban open spaces. Mangaung currently has 34 informal settlements, including the three case study areas. This stimulates urban sprawl because of the continuous pressure on the municipality to formalise these settlements (MMM BEPP, 2017:19). In developing sustainable human settlements, the municipality has therefore developed an Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy with the help of the Housing Development Strategy. According to the MMM BEPP (2017:20), the Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy is a “developmentally focused strategy which seeks to bring about more rapid, equitable and broad based responses to the challenge of informal settlements in the Metro”. The aim of the strategy is to change the situation of the people who are trapped in informal settlements and formalise the area where they can access proper housing and basic infrastructural services such as water, sanitation and electricity.

#### **5.4 Incidences of urban public open space encroachment in Freedom Square**

Urban public open spaces form the most fundamental part of sustainable neighbourhoods. Toba and Campbell (2018:308) alluded that the incidence of urban open spaces can be controlled by effective planning. Authorities, including planners, need to formulate strategic and holistic plans in the management of or preventing the incidence of urban open spaces. Currently, Mangaung, with Freedom Square included, has a high rate of urban open space

encroachment. One of the causal factors of urban open space encroachment in Freedom Square is rapid urbanisation and this has just been a common practice in Mangaung. In such cases, the Planning and Human Settlement Directorates in MMM follow all the planning processes and formalise the in-situ settlements (Toba & Campbell, 2018:310). The municipality has developed the Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy to solve the challenge of urban open space encroachment (MMM BEPP, 2017/18–2019/20:20).

#### **5.4.1 Quality of urban public open spaces**

Urban public open spaces play a vital part for the quality of life of the users because they provide social interaction and support personal, health and the community well-being (Abassi et al., 2016:197). In achieving sustainable neighbourhoods, urban open spaces allow the users to use the urban public open space for social interaction, relaxation, direct contact with nature and leisure. Furthermore, Abassi et al. (2016:195) associated urban open spaces with the needs of the users, and the visual and spatial characteristics of urban open spaces. Emphasis on the needs of the users is based on the design of the urban open space which should attract the users. This can encourage them to plan and implement activities they intend to engage in on those spaces. Users need to be satisfied about the physical features of the urban open spaces as this can encourage better or improved use of these spaces. The physical nature of these spaces enrich the social, environmental and economic values of urban areas. The spatial form motivates the way in which the users move, gather and socialise in urban open spaces. Abassi et al. (2016:195) were of the opinion that the most disadvantaged areas are prone to a very low quality and poor management of urban open spaces.

In linking the above literature with the nature and quality of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square, the aerial photos in Figures 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11 display the physical nature of the urban public open spaces in that area. This is an indication of poor sustenance and failure to maintain or manage urban open spaces. Erven 37321, 36502 and 35180 in Freedom Square were earmarked as a park for recreational purposes. These urban open spaces are easily accessible to the users but their nature is not reconcilable with their land use reservations, namely that of urban open spaces. Some urban open spaces in Freedom Square have been encroached for housing purposes. The unoccupied portion is rocky and hilly; hence people have not occupied it.

Figure 5.9 illustrates erf 37321 in Freedom Square which is zoned for a public open space. It has been illegally squatted on for residential purposes for a number of years. This has changed the spatial trend of this neighbourhood as it affected the value and use of urban open

spaces. A portion of erf 37321 in Freedom Square, is currently used for residential purposes, another part for business purposes and the central part is left vacant because it is not developable. A proposal was made by the planners at MMM to develop medium density housing on this property but it failed due to low levels of community participation. The planners had to redo the whole application to accommodate single residential sites because the residents were not happy with the initial proposal.

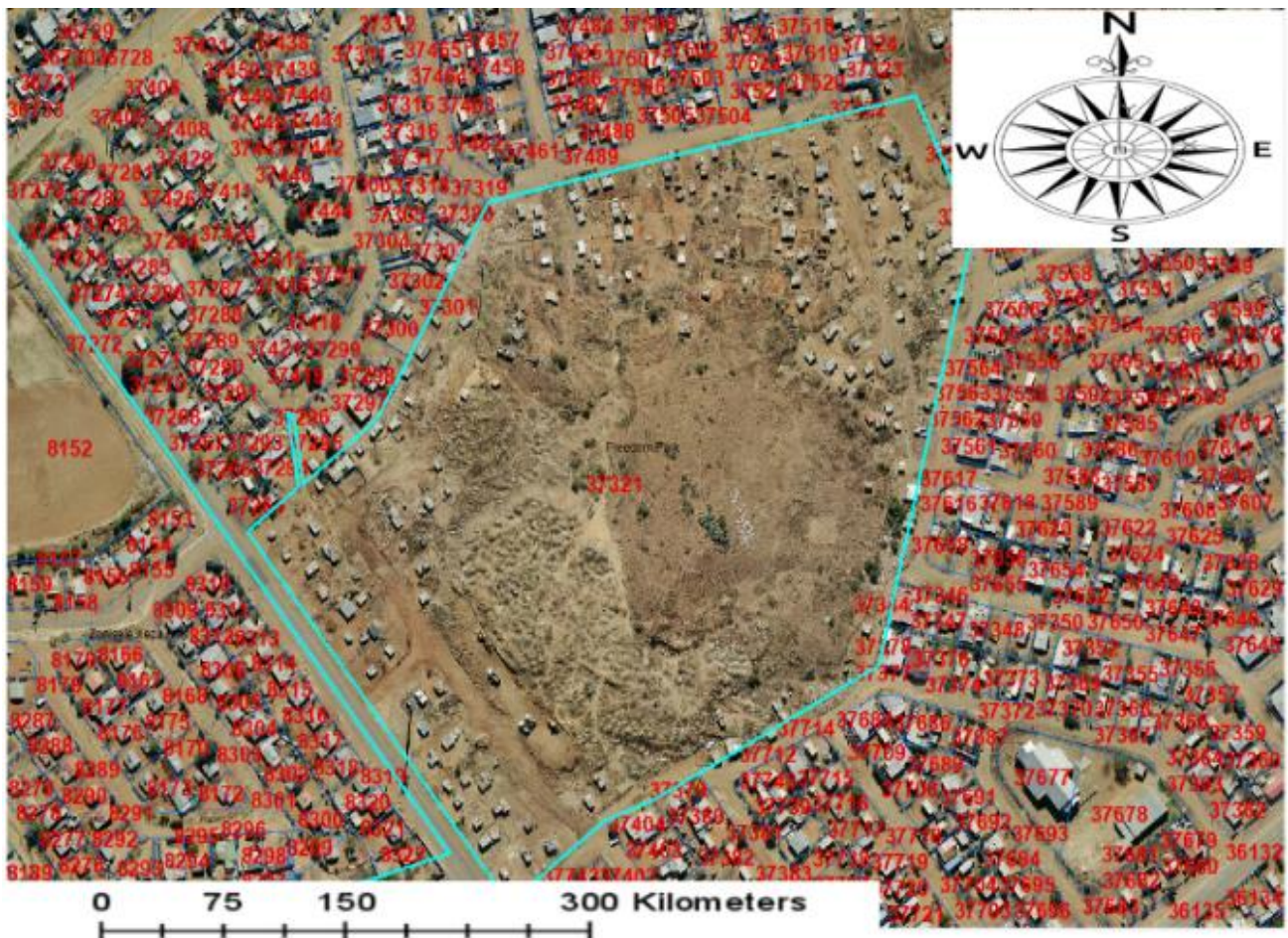


Figure 5.9: Aerial photo of erf 37321, Freedom Square  
 Source: MMM GIS (Retrieved on June 2019)

Figure 5.10 is an illustration of erf 36502 in Freedom Square, which has also been encroached for residential purposes. With regard to erf 36502, Freedom Square, people occupied it for residential purposes but a portion of it accommodated a church building as well.

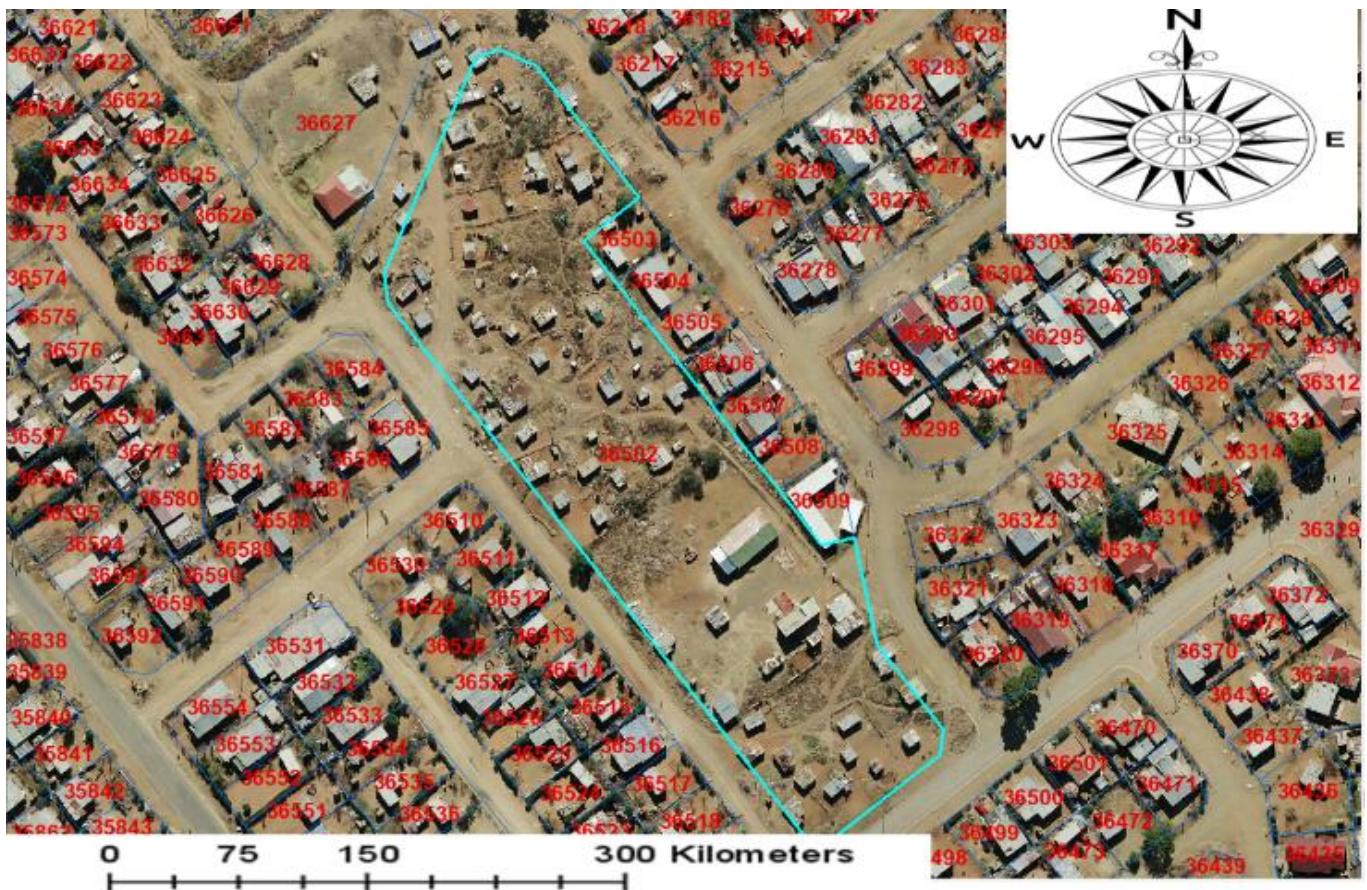


Figure 5.10: Aerial photo of erf 36502, Freedom Square  
 Source: MMM GIS (Retrieved June 2019)

Figure 5.11 indicates erf 35180 in Freedom Square illegally occupied for residential purposes. Most of erf 35180 in Freedom Square is occupied for dwelling purposes, the small portion that is not used up is also hilly and rocky and cannot be developed or it can be very costly to develop such an area.

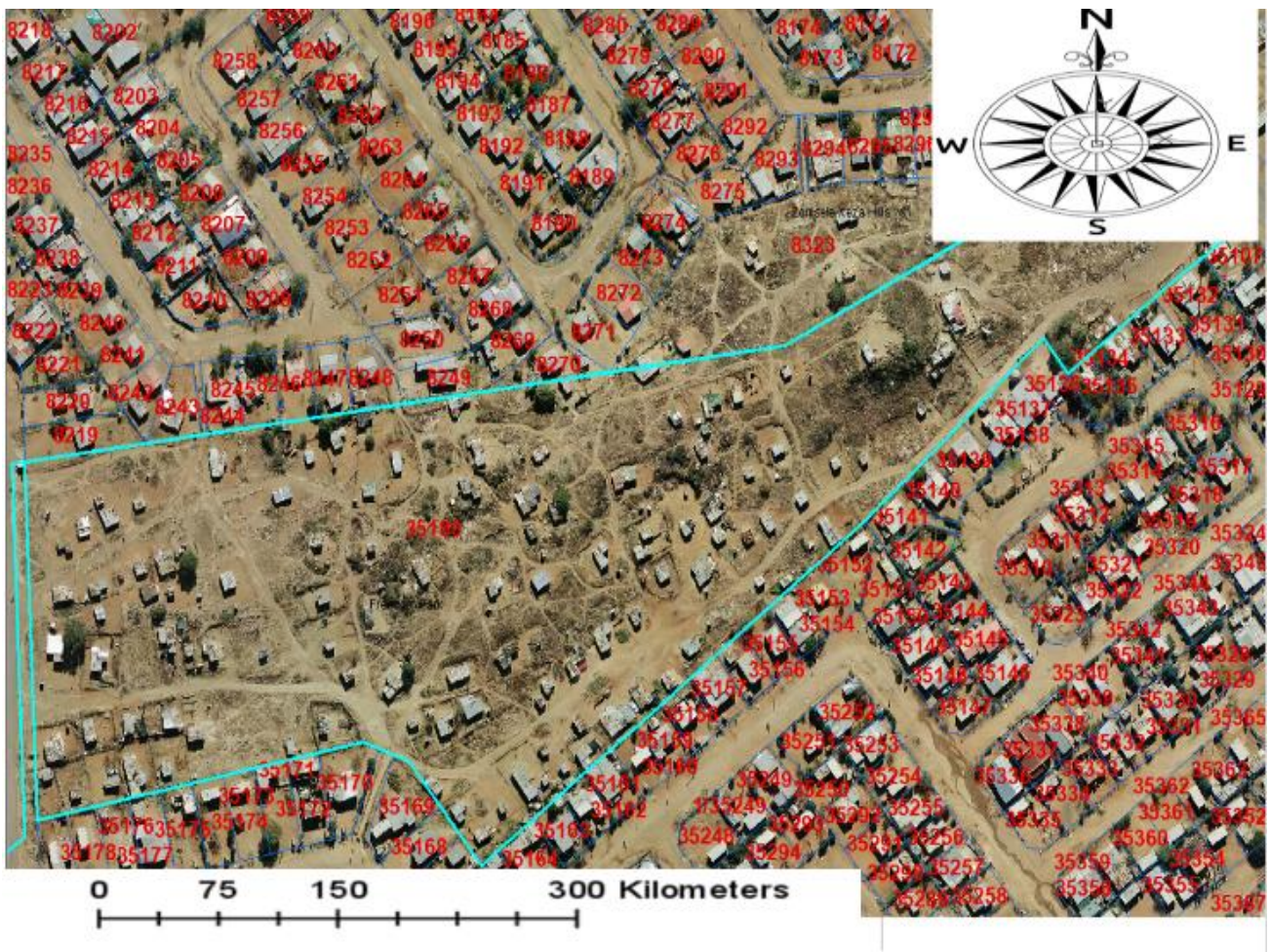


Figure 5.11: Aerial photo of erf 35180, Freedom Square  
 Source: MMM GIS (Retrieved on June 2019)

From a planning perspective, the physical quality of urban open spaces is critical because these spaces are planned and designed for people to carry out different activities. These activities differ in terms of the type, quantity and duration. According to Abassi et al. (2015:195), people use urban open spaces for recreational activities which are either a necessity, optional or for social purposes. With the necessary activities, users engage in them regardless of the environmental conditions of the urban open space. Also, users sometimes volunteer to partake in activities for enjoyment and self-fulfilment and other activities need the involvement of other users. In the case of the Freedom Square urban open spaces, occupied urban open spaces cannot be used for any activities. Unoccupied urban open spaces still stand a chance of being active, provided that they are properly managed by the relevant authorities, including the users of urban open spaces. This can be compared with an urban open space in Kagisanong that is active and currently accessible and attractive to the users. Figure 5.12 illustrates erf 50793 in Kagisanong which reflects a high standard for users' benefits because it is secure, safe and properly managed by the municipality.



Figure 5.12: Aerial photo of erf 50763, Kagisanong, illustrating the quality of the urban open space  
 Source: MMM GIS (Retrieved in June 2019)

#### 5.4.2 Challenges facing urban public open spaces

Urban public open spaces have been faced with various challenges associated with encroachment. This has led to the extinction of urban open spaces worldwide, including Mangaung. Landman (2019: 187) used the concept “death of public space” to describe the challenge faced by urban land in South Africa. In literature, countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Beijing lost some of the urban open spaces due to rapid urbanisation (Li et al., 2016:2; Mensah, 2014b:6; Landman, 2019: 183). Challenges facing urban public open spaces (which were discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.6.3) also include poor enforcement of land use regimes, poor sustenance and management as well as low levels of prioritisation. Freedom Square in Mangaung is no exception to these challenges in that certain urban open spaces have been lost and mostly used for residential purposes. Erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 in Freedom Square had a land use reservation of public open spaces. People invaded these open spaces illegally and resided there for several years without formal housing and basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. Because

of poor enforcement of land use policies, the municipality apply the Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy for in-situ (on site) purposes.

Applications for land use management have been lodged to the municipal council by the Planning Directorate of MMM to amend the general plans of erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 by means of rezoning from 'public open space' to 'residential', as well as subdivision of these properties. This is also linked to poor sustenance and management of urban open spaces because erven 37321, 35180 and 36502 in Freedom Square were not used for the initial purpose as a 'park'. This is also an indication of the low level of prioritisation for urban open space, hence the incidence of encroachment and gradual disappearance of these spaces. In addition, evidence of encroachment in Freedom Square indicate negligence of urban open spaces by the relevant authorities and the priority is based on other social amenities.

Figure 5.13 illustrates the evidence of the challenges faced by urban open spaces which were encroached for residential purposes. This is an indication of poor management, low prioritisation and poor enforcement of land use regimes.

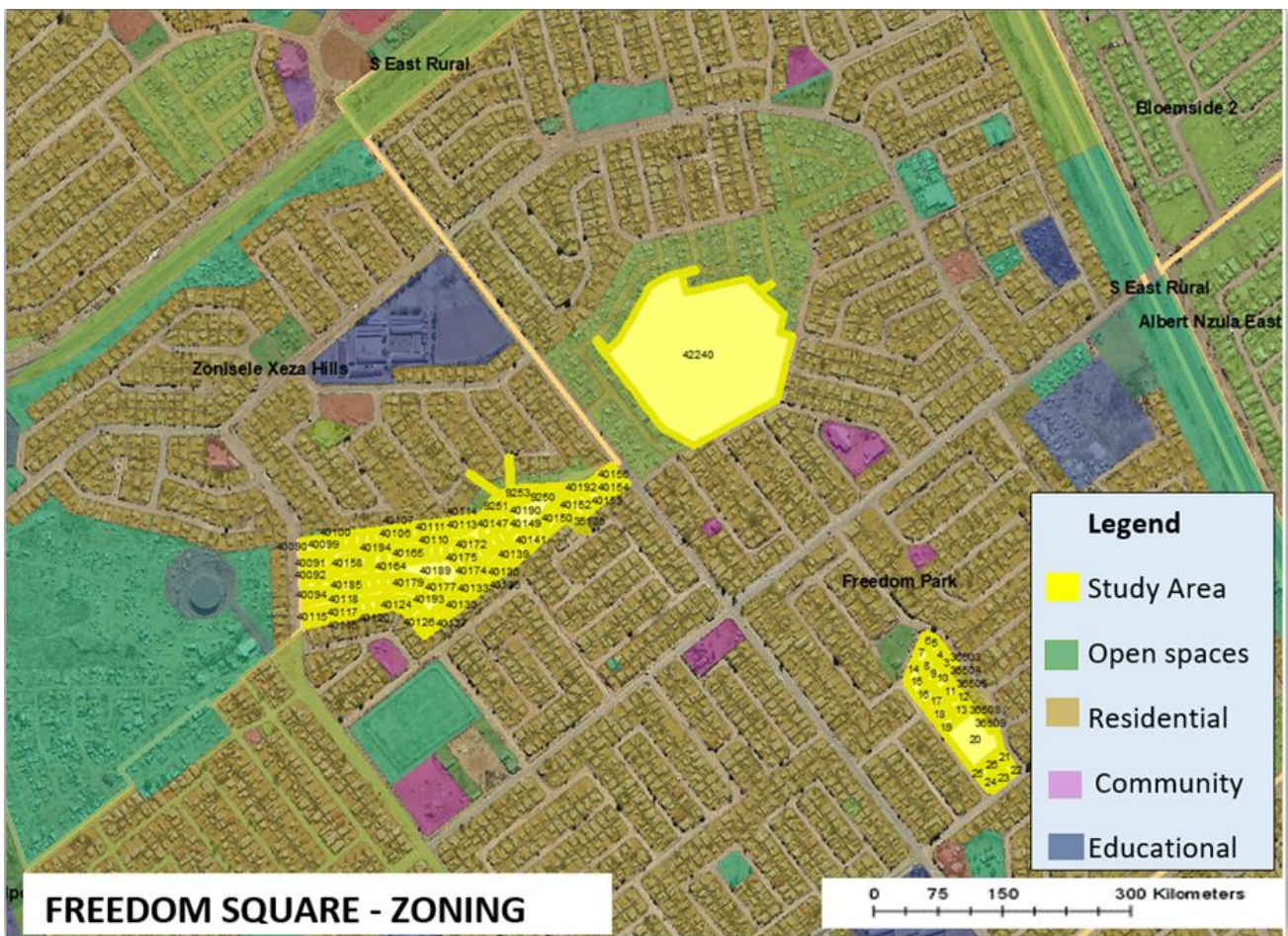


Figure 5.13: Urban open spaces that were encroached by dwellers and are rezoned for residential purposes

Source: MMM GIS

The municipality has Urban Open Space By-laws which do not indicate much about the management and protection of urban open spaces; instead, Section 17.2 of the By-Law stipulates:

*Where a public open space is alienated or used for urban development, the municipality may require from the developer to provide and develop a proportionate sized public open space else and as may be needed to develop the urban open space system in consultation with the immediate community, the respective ward councillor and the relevant directorates of the municipality (MMM Urban Open Space By-Law, 2007:8).*

#### **5.4.3 Position of urban public open spaces in the Spatial Development Framework of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality**

The MMM Draft IDP (2017/22:189) has a section which addresses urban open spaces, namely Metropolitan Open Space System (MOSS). The MOSS is defined as “a rationalised network of open spaces aimed at complementing the built fabric by providing the urban environment with natural open space for recreation and general amenity, protecting biodiversity in urban areas and providing animal and plants species with habitats and protecting heritage or cultural sites where possible within the system”. This forms part of the SDF of the municipality. In Figure 5.14, the MOSS is an indication of the position of the open spaces on the SDF map and they are indicated in green. The municipality has also identified the Metropolitan Open Space Framework. This includes physiographic aspects such as river systems, dams and hillocks that portray the topography of the area (MMM Draft IDP, 2017/22:198). Some of the urban open spaces in Mangaung are in the flood line areas. The municipality, in its Draft IDP (2017/22:199), indicated that such areas should be kept open, and illegal occupation on that land is prohibited.

Furthermore, the framework has been incorporated into the Municipal Urban Open Space Policy. According to the MMM Draft Urban Open Space Policy (2004:32), the municipality developed a 2020 vision for urban open spaces for the development and management of urban open spaces within the municipality. The MMM vision 2020 states that urban open spaces within MMM will be managed in a structured and efficient manner in order to ensure a better quality of life; partnerships will be built between the municipality and the community regarding the development and management of urban open spaces; the community will be educated about urban open spaces in order to achieve sustainable neighbourhoods; the quality urban open spaces will be improved in terms of the well-being of the community; and the cultural aspect of urban open spaces will be taken into cognisance in order to enrich the social fabric of the municipality (MMM Draft Urban Open Space Policy, 2004:33). This policy also states that the community will be consulted in addressing space development.

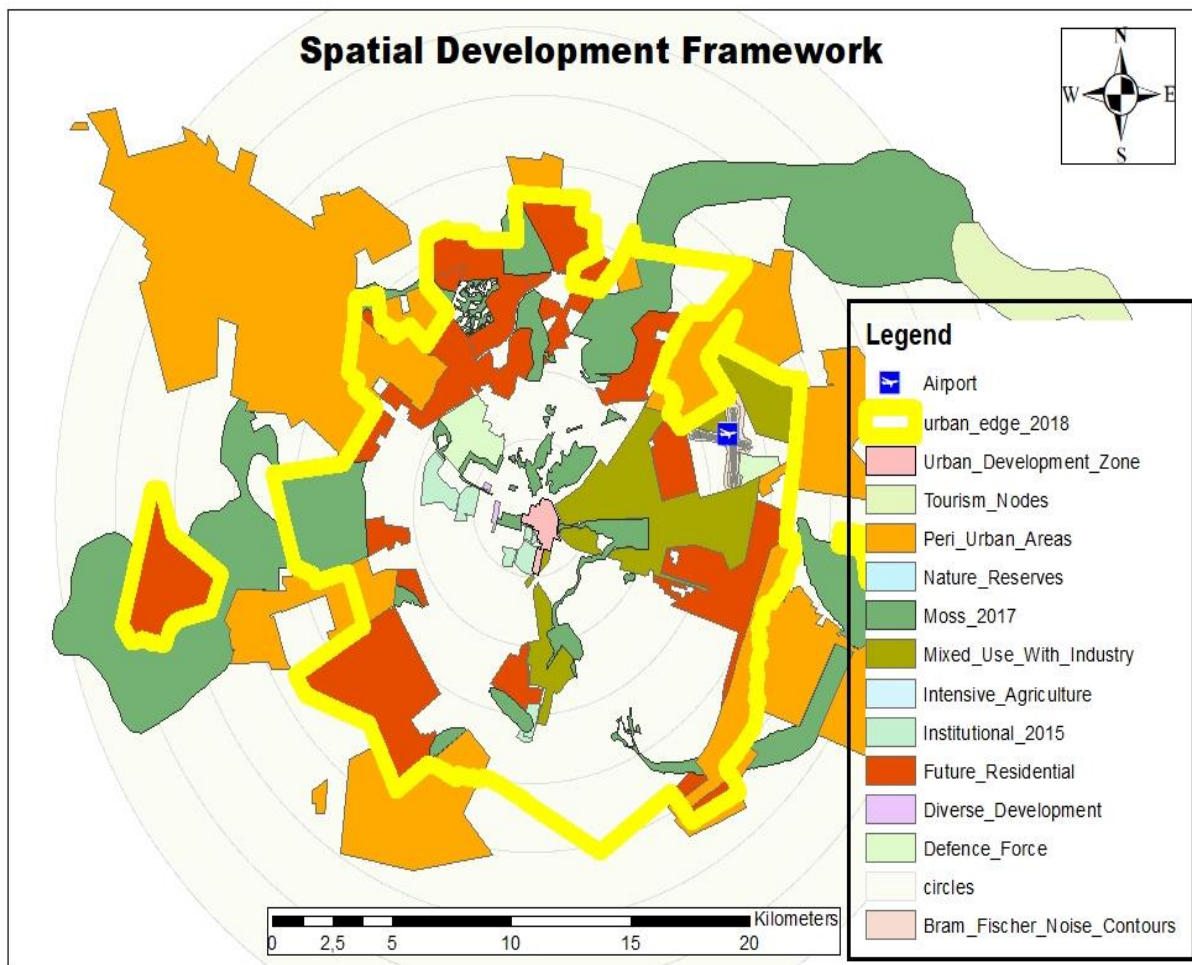


Figure 5.14: Position of urban open spaces in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality Spatial Development Framework  
Source: MMM GIS

## 5.5 Community participation

South African municipalities are challenged with facilitating community participation during planning processes. As such, considerable levels of public apathy have been observed and have continued to undermine the quest of municipalities to provide sustainable neighbourhoods. Community participation is a significant element in achieving sustainable development and is viewed as a process of a group of procedures aimed at consultation, involvement and rendering information to the community for them to take part in decision-making (Alexander, 2008:7; Mahjabeen et al., 2009:46; Rowe & Frewer, 2000:6). Community participation allows the community to be directly involved in planning and implementation from the initial stages of the projects to be conducted (Mafukidze & Hoosen, 2009:385). Sowman and Gawith (1994:563) stated that meetings, whether with small or large groups, form part of community participation.

However, according to the MMM IDP (2017–2022:33), the municipality is mandated by law to involve the community in all matters affecting the municipality. This includes municipal services and service delivery. However, community members have the right to make decisions, do recommendations (written or oral), representations and complaints. These can be presented to the authorities. Also, the community members have to be informed of the decisions taken by the Council if they affect their rights and properties. Most of the community participation sessions are held during the review of the municipality's IDP on a yearly basis and this does not make it feasible for planning projects.

However, Botes (1999:113) conducted a study regarding the community participation in Freedom Square where he analysed the optimum levels of participation during the establishment of that settlement. His research was based on his personal experiences as well as an analysis of the existing documents which included the minutes of the meetings held with the residents at the time of the township establishment of Freedom Square. Firstly, the Independent Development Trust (funder of the development) mandated the formation of a community-based organisation to run the Freedom Square project. The Upgrade Bloemfontein East Community Trust was formed and it consisted of one member from the Bloemfontein City Council, the Mangaung City Council, the Mangaung Civic Association, two members from the Regional Board of the Urban Foundation and the Freedom Square Building Centre, four representatives from the Freedom Square and Namibia Square (which is located close to the subject project). This committee held meetings and workshops on a monthly basis to discuss the progress of the project. Sometimes there would be conflicts but, after several meetings, consensus was reached regarding how the projects would be finalised.

With the study conducted by Botes (1999:123), the majority of people were engaged in community participation, especially in the choice of the location of the property. Also, the majority of people attended the meetings where the project was discussed. With the advancement of the projects and the growth of the settlement, community participation was problematic because there were dissatisfaction regarding the direct involvement in the projects. Some residents did not regard public meetings as a part of personal engagement in the project. Community members were satisfied with the stakeholders involved in the establishment of Freedom Square. The community was involved at all the levels and the phases of the project. During the invasion of the land, community participation was informal but became formalised during the site and service as well as the low-income housing phases. Botes (1999:128) indicated that community participation in the Freedom Square project played a crucial role in processes such as the resettlement, the sizes of the erven and sites, blockages of the sewer system, housing and infrastructural services.

## 5.6 Sustainability literacy levels and urban public open spaces in Mangaung

*In order for the development of land use, patterns of built-up land and infrastructure in an area to be characterized as sustainable, it must secure that the inhabitants of the area can have their vital needs met in a way that can be sustained in the future, and is not in conflict with sustainable development at a global level (Næss 2001:506).*

Urban public open spaces play a key role in sustainable neighbourhoods. Al-Hagla (2008:163) described sustainable neighbourhoods under the social perspective as communities that “meet the diverse needs of the existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to the high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice”. In achieving sustainable neighbourhoods, Al-Hagla (2008:166) stressed that community participation must be encouraged. In planning for sustainable neighbourhoods, sustainability literacy levels of the participants must be considered, especially during community participation. Sustainability literacy relates to environmental literacy. Focus is on the knowledge, values, skills and awareness levels about the environment and related issues. Planners have been challenged with the community members with lack of sustainability literacy regarding achievement of sustainable communities. Sustainability literacy levels can hinder the outcomes in planning projects, including implementation (Cohen, Wiek, Kay & Harlow, 2015:8710).

With the gradual disappearance of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square for residential purposes, residents’ sustainability literacy can also be questionable. Their perception and values regarding the use of urban public open spaces are important. This also includes other urban stakeholders involved in urban public open spaces. Different urban stakeholders using urban open spaces view their uses and values differently. Their perceptions can be associated with the social, economic and environmental benefits. However, urban planners have a huge responsibility in promoting sustainable development and encouraging sustainability literacy in communities in order to help protect and manage urban open spaces. Næss (2001:517) elucidated that planners should develop strategies compatible to sustainable development by involving the other stakeholders in planning for urban open spaces. Communities need to be made aware of the consequences of environments that are unsustainable, information about legislative framework must be given and an open communication to the residents is key.

## 5.7 ‘Nature-based Solutions’ application in Mangaung

Urban public open spaces in Freedom Square, Mangaung, have been gradually disappearing due to encroachment for housing purposes. The concept ‘Nature-based Solutions’ brought the

process to guide the assessment and implementation of projects. These include solutions that are generated for innovation purposes. Seven stages are identified in the NbS implementation process and they include:

- Identification of a problem or an opportunity – in Freedom Square, Mangaung, the problem identified is the encroachment of urban public open spaces for residential purposes. The NbS can therefore propose solutions to curb the incidence of urban public open space encroachment.
- Selection and assessment of NbS and the plan of action – encroachment of urban open spaces being identified, the objectives of the best solution and how to assess them are crucial. An action plan by planners needs to be established and this includes how to manage and monitor urban public open spaces.
- Designing the implementation process of the NbS – with the problem being identified and the objectives in place, the implementation process must support openness, transparency in governance and stakeholder involvement.
- Implementation of the NbS – this includes the relevance of the actions taken with the implementation process of the NbS. Perceptions of the different urban stakeholders need to be managed during this process.
- Regular urban stakeholder engagement – communication and collaboration among the different urban stakeholders are important. This is included in the community participation process which was employed in Freedom Square when the township establishment process was planned.
- Transfer and upscaling of NbS – this stage also involves the different stakeholders, and planners can develop innovative ways to the NbS process.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the NbS – once the implementation process is in place, monitoring and evaluation is crucial. This is an indication that even after planning of an urban public open space is done, management or monitoring of these spaces must be done (Raymond et al., 2017:19).

## 5.8 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the environmental and planning context of the research. A brief background about Bloemfontein was highlighted. This included the spatial trend of the municipality (reminding us of what it is) and how it has grown. Freedom Square, in managing, was the case study selected for this research and its origin was also discussed. Under the context of Freedom Square, an overview of urban public open spaces (occupied and unoccupied) was highlighted. This included the incidence of urban open space encroachment which caused extinction of urban open spaces. Some urban open spaces are currently used as dwelling places and others are still vacant. This has made it difficult for planners to plan and manage unbuilt urban open spaces. It is therefore difficult for planners to achieve the key objectives of planning.

The next chapter is based on the argument of the research, findings and analysis sections. The argument is based on the value conflict round unbuilt urban open spaces in Freedom Square. These make it extremely difficult for planners to achieve the objectives of planning. It will draw into the perceptions of urban open spaces, its uses and values in the minds of the urban stakeholders.

## Chapter 6

# INTRA-CASE ANALYSIS BASED ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF URBAN STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

---

---

### 6.1 Chapter introduction

Urban public open spaces play a key role in sustainable neighbourhoods. They display a wide range of benefits, values, opportunities as well as challenges worldwide. Urban public open spaces give an overview of the sense of space, its image and attractiveness, and the competitiveness of urban areas. Also, urban public open spaces display a sense of place and knowing, sense of belonging and being, as well as a sense of possibility and becoming. Overall, they add value to different dimensions in urban areas, namely, social, environmental, economic and planning (Baycan-Levent, Vreeker & Nijkamp, 2004:3; Landman, 2019:184). Furthermore, different urban stakeholders in planning and management of public open spaces have different perceptions regarding the value and use of open spaces. These include recreational, economic, environmental and housing values. The different perceptions of urban stakeholders give way to the incidence of value conflicts, which is a huge contradiction to the sustenance of public open spaces. Therefore, there is a need for all these different perceptions to be considered when planning for public open spaces.

This chapter answers the following research sub-question:

*What are the perceptions of open spaces, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?*

The analyses of this chapter is based on three distinct themes, namely, urban open space planning, community participation, value conflicts of urban stakeholders. Urban open space planning includes planning for urban public open spaces, benefits or values of open spaces, creating sustainable neighbourhoods, challenges or causal factors of encroachment on urban public open spaces and the management or measures to curb the incidence of encroachment on urban public open spaces. Community participation comprises of the optimum levels of community participation and the challenges encountered. Value conflicts of urban stakeholders involves the usefulness or utility of urban public open spaces, value conflicts of different stakeholders and challenges, the management of value conflicts during planning as well as management of urban public open spaces.

In view of the above, this chapter will address the following:

- Research propositions.
- Information of the research participants.
- Research multiple cases (intra-case analysis).
- Summary of the findings.
- Chapter summary.

By the end of the chapter, there will be a clear understanding of the perceptions of open spaces, its functionality and values on the minds of different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of public open spaces. This is in response to the initial research propositions and the generation of new propositions.

## **6.2 Description of the research propositions**

Urban public open spaces undertake salient roles within the democratic, social and cultural space. Culturally, the community interacts with each other for recreational purposes, though differing perceptions about open spaces are displayed. In addition, the community members gain free access to urban public open spaces, especially those that do not have the monetary value. In terms of social space, urban public open spaces intend to achieve urban integration rather than focusing on isolated entities. It is therefore imperative that the users or urban stakeholders should relate to the urban public open spaces. As stated earlier, the different stakeholders are classified into two groups, namely, those that are involved in the delivery of the project (planners, project managers, developers, investors, environmental and human settlement experts) and those that are directly or indirectly affected by the project (users of open spaces, property owners and the community members encroaching on open spaces).

Different urban stakeholders have different views on the utility or usefulness of urban public open space and this has a negative impact on the land use patterns. Therefore, the future of land use planning depends solely on the understanding of the different value conflicts displayed by the urban stakeholders as well as measures that will assist in achieving sustainable neighbourhoods. Moreover, each urban stakeholder plays an integral role in planning and managing urban public open spaces, as well as the creation of sustainable communities. The perceptions of the different stakeholders concerning the value and utility of urban public open space need to be gauged and taken into account during the planning processes. This will lead to the effective design and management of urban public open spaces.

In achieving the above, the researcher generated research propositions. The research propositions answer the questions 'how' and 'why' in the research and are focused on

achieving the objectives of the research study (Yin, 2009:21). This research study aimed at testing the following propositions:

1. Urban stakeholders play salient roles in the planning practice, management of urban public open spaces and creation of sustainable communities.
2. Effective planning for the utility or usefulness of urban public open spaces by different urban stakeholders needs extensive interaction of all the stakeholders involved.
3. Involvement of all urban stakeholders and community participation in the planning of urban public open spaces would lead to the management of encroachment on these spaces.
4. There are different perceptions from the different urban stakeholders about the value and use of urban public open spaces and this leads to value conflicts; hence, planners struggle to achieve the key objectives of planning for these spaces.
5. Different value conflicts influence urban open space encroachment.
6. A reconceptualisation of urban public open spaces is needed to maximise its value for planning and the community.

To conclude, the above-mentioned propositions will be tested in the findings of the intra-case analysis and some will be tested during the cross-case analysis in Chapter 7 of this research study.

### **6.3 Information of the research participants interviewed**

In order to give a clear overview of the relationship between the different urban stakeholders and the case studies, it is imperative to address their views regarding their relation to the selected cases. It is important to focus on how they are affected or benefitting to the case studies. Therefore, the researcher identified urban stakeholders within MMM who were working directly or indirectly with the usefulness and management of urban public open spaces. These stakeholders were interviewed based on their relationship with open spaces, including their roles and responsibilities. The views of all the interviewees who participated in the research study are indicated in the discussion and presentation of the findings. As indicated in Chapter 4, Table 4.4, the sample size included town planners (3), environmental management officials (2) and the GIS unit with their Head of Department; human settlement practitioners (4); the parks and cemeteries division (2); ward councillors (3); and residents from Freedom Square and Kagisanong which formed part of the focus groups.

### 6.3.1 Directorate: Planning

The Directorate: Planning at MMM comprises the following sub-directorates: Town and Regional Planning, Environmental Management and GIS. The Sub-directorate: Town and Regional Planning consists of the town planning and transport planning professionals and has three divisions, namely, Transport Planning, Development Applications and Urban Design. The vision of the Sub-directorate: Town and Regional Planning in MMM is planning for liveable and sustainable urban and regional communities. The mission includes rectifying spatial imbalances caused by the apartheid era, promoting social and economic inclusion and promoting optimal use of land holistically (in terms of political, social, cultural, economic and environmental values). In their planning, this unit make use of the spatial plans such as SPLUMA, SDF, municipal by-laws, the Bloemfontein, Bloemspruit and Bainsvlei Town Planning Schemes and Annexure F (RSA, 1986), regulating land use management.

The Sub-directorate: Environmental Management integrates sustainable development practices within the municipality. This unit is responsible for the establishment of the environmental education system, management of MMM open spaces and negative impacts of developmental activities. In addition, this unit has the responsibility to promote compliance to environmental legislation, policies and by-laws as well as implementation of environmental management systems. It is also responsible for managing conservation and sustainable utility of natural resources within the municipality.

Research participants for this case were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The entire municipality was operating on a limited number of planners and environmental experts responsible for planning and management of urban public open spaces on municipal land. The main focus of the interview protocol was to gain insight of the interviewees regarding their perceptions on the use and values of the urban public open spaces. This included the information on how they plan for these spaces and the challenges they encounter when planning for open spaces, including the management. The selection criteria for the interviewees was based on the urban stakeholders dealing directly with MMM planning projects. Town planning is a scarce skill and the municipality consists of a few planners dealing with the entire MMM. The interviews further focused on how they involved the community in planning projects. The focus was also based on the value conflicts by different urban stakeholders and how they managed these perspectives. The interviews were held over a three-month period from July to September 2019. The findings from these interviews were compared and contrasted with the relevant legislation and literature. Table 6.1 shows the information of the interviewees who participated in the study.

**Table 6.1: Research participants – Planning**

Organisation and division	Position	Alphabetical code
MMM Planning	Head: Planning	HP
Town and Regional Planning Urban Design	Town Planner 1	TP1
	Town Planner 2	TP2
	Town Planner 3	TP3
Environmental Management	Environmentalist 1	E1
	Environmentalist 2	E2

Source: Author's compilation (2019)

### 6.3.2 Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries

The objective of the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries is to provide an attractive, clean, green and healthy environment within the municipality. It aims at enhancing sustainable economic development and the quality of life for the present and future generations. The unit comprises of Parks and Cemeteries and the Crematorium division. For the purpose of the research, the focus was only on the Parks division which is mandated to provide a sustainable clean, green and healthy environment to the residents of Mangaung through effective, efficient and sustainable service delivery. This unit's function involves horticulture maintenance and development of urban public open spaces (parks), traffic islands, buffer zones, sports fields, street trees, city gardens and fire belts. The Planning division involve them in land use applications on municipal properties and they are expected to render comments regarding these projects.

The Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries is the custodian of parks in MMM. It has developed an open space maintenance strategy and development criteria. This serves as a document that informs the maintenance strategy with two categories, namely, open space classification and maintenance system and open space development criteria. Under the open space classification and maintenance, MMM classifies parks into four categories: Criteria A, B, C and D. Developed park criteria A ranges from 2 ha to 10 ha in size and can be developed into a regional park which must be fenced, secure and safe. Developed park criteria B is about 1 ha to 2 ha big and it can be used as a sports field. Developed park criteria C ranges from 0,5 ha to 1 ha and can be used as a neighbourhood park with no lawn but indigenous grass. Developed park criteria D varies from 1 ha to 50 ha, but no development is done and the areas are usually undeveloped.

Two participants responsible for enhancing recreation for the communities in MMM were interviewed using the semi-structured interview protocol. The interview purpose was to gain insight regarding the perception on the value and use of urban public open spaces within the municipality. Emphasis was also placed on how this division manages urban public open spaces and how it protects open spaces from extinction. The findings from the interviews were compared to the literature concerning management of open spaces. For confidentiality, the interviewees are coded Hi and H2.

### 6.3.3 Directorate: Human Settlements

The aim of the Directorate: Human Settlements within the MMM is to ensure the achievement of sustainable and integrated human settlements where people can live, work and play. The Human Settlements directorate buttresses the upgrading of informal settlements, access to basic services and socio-economic amenities, access to well-allocated land for residential purposes, security of tenure, mixed land use developments and sustainable neighbourhood developments. Human Settlements is responsible for acquisition, purchasing and leasing of municipal land. This section also maintains the municipal property as well as purchasing private land for development.

The researcher was able to identify the interviewees from the Human Settlement Directorate who are responsible for the land and property of the municipality, informal settlements and strategic support of human settlements. Semi-structured interviews and document reviews were employed in an attempt to obtain the required data from the research participants. Table 6.2 highlights the profile of the various interviewees selected in the Human Settlement Directorate.

**Table 6.2: Research participants – Human settlements**

Organisation and division	Position	Alphabetical code
Human settlements	General manager	GM1
	General manager	GM2
	Acting general manager	AGM1
	Manager	M1

Source: Author's compilation (2019)

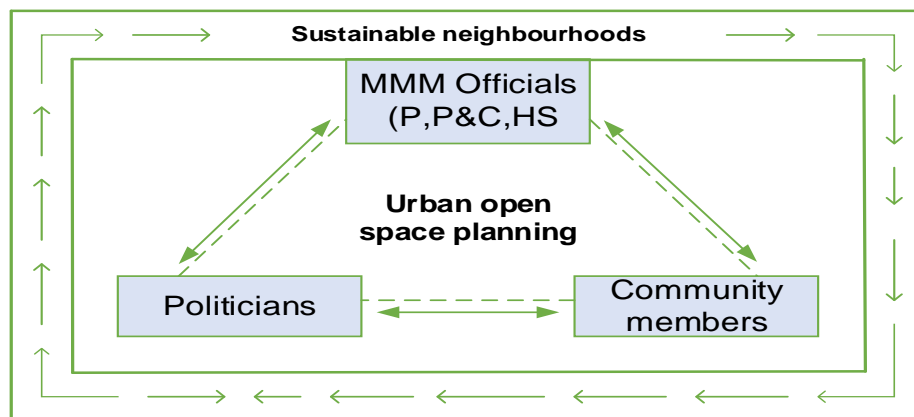
### 6.3.4 Political office

The political office at the municipality is the unit that serves the community with enthusiasm and commitment. Their focus is provision aims to serve the community of Mangaung with zeal and commitment by providing an accountable, caring, people-driven and service delivery

orientated institution with the intent on promoting learning and development. Ward councillors fall under the office of the Speaker. The responsibilities of this office includes creation of an environment that is conducive for effective participation of all the councillors in decision-making processes; effective operation of ward committee members as they form a link between the community and the municipal authority; involvement of the community members in decisions taken by the municipality; and the creation of a sound relationship between the municipality, neighbouring municipalities and the district.

The interviewees selected for this case involves the ward councillors (WCs) involved in the study area. These research participants are selected because they are the gate-keepers to the community members of the selected study area. They form part of the linkage between the municipality and the community. The research participants also included the focus group discussants who are the ward committee members and the community members. Community members include residents that are losing the urban public open spaces (they are coded as CM1) as well as the community members who encroached on such spaces (coded as CM2). The community members owning the properties surrounding the encroached open spaces resumed residence in 1992. Illegal occupation on the urban public open spaces has been ongoing since the allocation of people who are the rightful owners of the properties in the entire Freedom Square. The affected areas in Freedom Square are erven 37321, 36502, 38051 as well as erf 50793 in Kagisanong.

Figure 6.1 illustrates that there is a relationship between the different urban stakeholders involved in the urban open space planning.



P = Planning; P&C = Parks & Cemeteries; HS = Human Settlement

Figure 6.1: Relationship chart of the different urban stakeholders involved in urban open space planning

Source: Author's own (2019)

All these stakeholders formed part of the research study and all their views form part of the presentation of the case study findings. The findings of the intra-case studies, namely, UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4 (different cases for the research) are discussed according to the pre-determined themes resulting from the study's guiding research question: *What practical and theoretical difficulties do planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa?* The thematic focal areas consist of the perceptions of the urban stakeholders concerning the value and use of urban public open spaces. The three distinct themes include urban open space planning, community participation and value conflicts. Urban open space planning take into account the planning for urban open spaces, benefits or values of open spaces, creating sustainable communities, causal factors of encroachment on open spaces and the management or measures to curb the incidence of encroachment on open space. Community participation comprised the optimal levels of participation with the urban stakeholders; and the value conflicts focused on the usefulness or utility of open spaces, differing values of stakeholders and challenges and the management of these conflicts during the planning and management of open spaces.

## **6.4 Research multiple cases (intra-case analysis)**

### **6.4.1 Case 1 (UPOS1)**

#### **6.4.1.1 Specification of the case**

UPOS1 involves the public open space in Freedom Square, erf 37321 (Jacob Zuma Square, Figure 6.2). This property is located in an existing township in Mangaung. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Freedom Square township in Mangaung, Free State, is situated in an area that was earmarked for the extension of Heidedal, a coloured community. Erf 37321, Freedom Square, is situated in Mangaung Extension 24 and it measures 92 051 m<sup>2</sup> in extent. The application site is situated in an area that is characterised predominantly by residential uses interspersed with business uses, community facilities (a police station, clinic and two schools within a 1 km radius), as well as places of worship. In terms of the land use conditions in Annexure F (RSA, 1986), erf 37321 Freedom Square, Mangaung has a land use reservation of 'Public Open Space'. In terms of the open space classification and maintenance system, UPOS1 falls under the Developed park criteria D. This property is located next to Namibia settlement, about 10 km away from the CBD. It is accessible through George Lubbe Road. From 1998, the said property was illegally invaded for residential purposes and since then,

people have been occupying the property without basic services. Most people resumed occupation in the form of shacks with their families and they lacked electricity and water.



Figure 6.2: Amendment of the general plan, rezoning and subdivision on erf 32371, Freedom Square  
Source: MMM GIS division

In 1998, the municipal council took a resolution in one of its meetings that people occupying properties that are not zoned for residential use will not be provided with town planning, infrastructural and land surveying services. An exception was made for this application property in terms of township development. An application was made for: (i) the amendment of the General Plan (SG Number 99/1992) by means of the closure of a park; (ii) rezoning of the said property from 'Public Open Space' to 'Residential', 'Business' and 'Community Facility'; and (iii) subdivision into 125 portions (See Figure 6.3). These subdivided portions included dwelling houses, a business, a church, a park, streets and a site for an existing mast, respectively. A part of the property will still accommodate a public open space as it has not been encroached for residential use. With the high demand of residential sites in Mangaung, dwelling houses are seen as assets to be used as collateral and they provide communities a means to achieve an improved quality of life. This contributes to the creation of more sustainable human settlements. The development property is currently registered at the Surveyor-General with SG No. 235/2018.

Figure 6.4 shows the nature of the area of a portion of erf 32371.

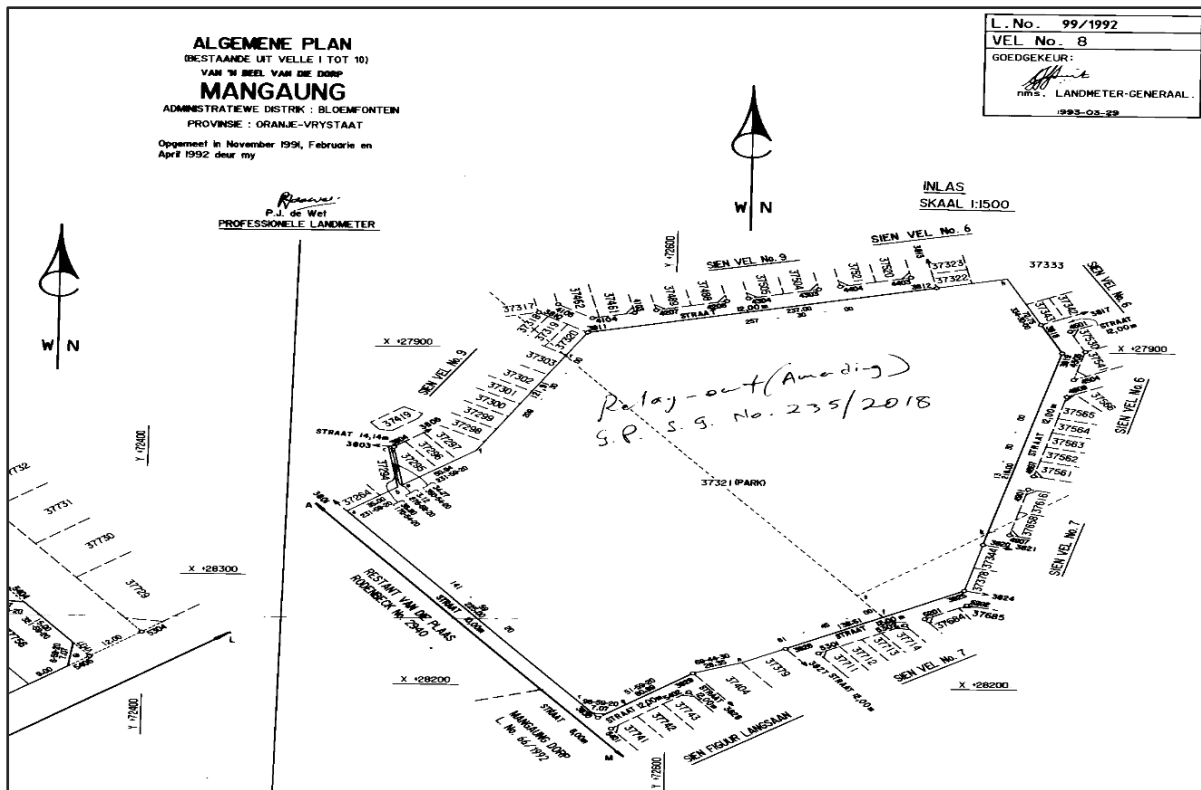


Figure 6.3: Portion of the general plan for UPOS1  
Source: Retrieved in October 2019



Figure 6.4: Photo of a portion of erf 32371, Freedom Square, indicating the nature of the area  
Source: Fieldwork (2019)

UPOS1 comprises of the residents who encroached on the public open space, namely, erf 32371, Freedom Square, as well as the property owners surrounding the said property. This

also includes the municipal officials who are responsible for the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Mangaung.

#### **6.4.1.2 Detailed information of the research participants**

The research participants were selected from the different stakeholders involved in urban public open spaces in Mangaung, as stated in Chapter 4. They were interviewed through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The interviews were predominantly focused on gaining insight regarding the participants' experiences, knowledge, roles and responsibilities in terms on urban open space planning. Cognisance should be taken that their experiences were basically on their involvement in the management of urban open space planning and their involvement in the community participation during the planning process in MMM. Their perceptions of the value and utility of urban public open spaces were also taken into account. Based on the perceptions of the different urban stakeholders who formed part of the research study, value conflicts arose and it should be noted that these conflicts affected the objectives of the planning for sustainable communities. The semi-structured interviews were held at the offices of the MMM, whereas the focus group discussions were held in Freedom Square township in Mangaung from July to October 2019 because all the research participants who are municipal officials work in the same building. The researcher was working at the municipality when she resumed the study and this allowed easy access to the information and selecting the relevant participants for the study. As indicated in Chapter 4 under the selection criteria, the municipality had a shortage of personnel hence the interviews were conducted within a short period of time. With the assistance of the ward councillors and the ward committee members of the case study area, the researcher did not struggle to gain access for focus group discussants.

#### **6.4.1.3 Intra-case analysis of data**

Data was collected from the participants of UPOS1. The analysis of data contributed to the propositions of the study. Also, the data was analysed using the predetermined themes resulting in the sub-research question stated in the introductory part of this chapter. The selected themes are discussed below and the data was analysed manually.

##### ***1.1.1.1.3 Construct 1: Urban open space planning***

Urban open spaces are often viewed to be central to sustainable neighbourhoods. Urban open spaces can refer to any land that is not developed but located within a designated boundary of a neighbourhood. It can either provide a direct or indirect benefit to the community. The

researcher sought to understand the different opinions of various urban stakeholders involved in the management and usefulness of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square, Mangaung. Evidence was gathered during the interviews around the main construct, and the sub-themes presented below emerged which were related to the procedure that planners used in planning for urban public open spaces.

#### **(a) Procedural methods for urban open space planning**

There are different planning models that relate to urban open spaces, namely opportunistic, quantitative, park system, and the garden city model. The opportunistic model refers to open spaces created because of spaces that are left over after the land has been allocated for other land uses. The quantitative model aims at allocating open spaces that will accommodate the population size. The park system includes gardens and parks and is mostly based on the needs of the community rather than the protection of the natural environment. The garden city model addresses the unhealthy lifestyles between the town and country. When the researcher enquired about the planning model for open spaces that was used in planning for UPOS1, TP2 stated that an opportunistic planning model was used and this led to non-functionality of urban public open spaces and encroachment for residential purposes. He admitted that planning does not do enforcement but provides for open spaces, to rezone and register them in favour of the municipality for the community to use. Furthermore, he indicated that:

*As town planners, we have made mistakes in provision, we design and where the land is problematic, we make it a public open space and that is the land that is invaded later on. Then we have to develop at high costs and services are expensive. This is mostly land that is in a koppie ... it is suitable to accommodate residential purposes but the geotechnical study, environmental impact assessment and other related studies become experience. To rectify the mistake, my suggestion is that, one huge functional space be developed immediately after the approval of the township. What will help is the immediate development of the open spaces and put the necessary equipment in the park, only if the community accepts it.*

In line herewith, TP3 suggested that in planning for future urban public open spaces or those spaces that are still left open, especially in the case of UPOS1, a park system will be ideal. He further suggested that it would be ideal if the municipality could adopt the park system and garden city planning models when planning for future urban public open spaces. TP3 continued:

*Most planning projects are given to the consultants who decide where or how to plan for open spaces. Consultants are used mainly because we do not have staff and there is no division in town planning that is for urban design. There is not staff for policy formulation and urban design. If the municipality can have an active division for urban design that will work better.*

In his contribution, H2 stated that:

*We are the custodians of the municipal parks and we need to be part of the planning of the parks. There is no real planning for parks, all the left-over spaces are given to us and we are expected to perform miracles.*

### **(b) Factors influencing urban public open space planning**

Freedom Square had urban open spaces that have been encroached upon for residential purposes and this has led to the gradual disappearance of these spaces. This was one of the major challenges or factors influencing urban open space planning. It also makes it difficult for planners to achieve the key objectives of planning for open spaces (integration and connectivity, inclusivity, convenience, resilience, efficiency, safety and health, as well as aesthetics and character). From the description of UPOS1, the application site was encroached for residential purposes but there is a part of the property that is still vacant and can be used as a park.

In UPOS1, various urban stakeholders who formed part of the interviews shared their different opinions regarding the factors influencing urban open space planning. According to TP1:

*Most of the open spaces are not developed and maintained and people think that it is land for grabs. They are neglected and this leads to encroachment. Also, the state of open spaces attract people to them and some are desperate for residential sites if they see that nothing is done to them.*

Owing to the data collected from the municipal officials, the researcher was able to identify similar functional pathologies related to urban open space encroachment. These include the following:

#### **LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

The lack of understanding of what urban public open spaces are, as well as their values and utility posed a challenge in planning and management of these spaces. This was discovered from the interviews as different interviewees placed different values (recreational, economic, environmental, and housing) on urban public open spaces. The researcher considered this pathology as a communication-related matter as the values are different and can lead to conflicts around the understanding of urban public open spaces (value conflict management forms is another construct which is discussed in this chapter). This dichotomy was drawn across the different research participants in UPOS1. Urban public open spaces have a positive impact on the urban environment because they make the cities more attractive, promote tourist spending and boost the economic development of the city. Due to the description and the state of UPOS1, it is clear that different urban stakeholders do not understand what is meant by

urban public open spaces and what values are placed on open spaces. An example of this assertion was traced to several scenarios relating to how stakeholders view urban public open spaces. During the interviews, TP2 and TP3 shared the same sentiment that there is no understanding of the use of urban public open spaces. This is evident in that any space that is not developed is regarded as an open space. People have encroached on urban land earmarked for parks, schools, churches, clinics and businesses. TP2 reiterated that:

*People do not understand the meaning of public open spaces ... they see it as a vacant land without any purpose. I would suggest that the name 'Public Open Space' be changed so that the meaning can be clear to everyone using these spaces.*

When the researcher enquired further into the meaningful term of these spaces that can create awareness to the public, TP2 maintained that the definition given to the open spaces does not necessarily reflect what is happening on the ground, hence the encroachment. Regarding his observation, he narrated that:

*I say that we must move away from the concept 'Public Open Space' and get another word, a normal zoning. For instance, we can use 'community space for recreation/sports'. When it is surveyed and pegged, it must be indicated to everyone that it is a 'no-go' area. People do not even understand the town planning principles ... the General Plans indicate 'Public Open Space' or 'Park' and people think that they have different functions but they mean and function the same way.*

TP1, E1 and E2 indicated that neighbourhoods need lungs to breathe. TP1 further reiterated that:

*We need those breathing lungs for sustainable neighbourhoods and this is part of orderly planning as provision for parks is for recreational purposes.*

E2 corroborated this viewpoint when he mentioned that:

*The city need green lungs to breathe in terms of the environmental point of view. Not only do they have an economic value, the fundamental reason why we have these spaces is to allow the city to breathe, hence we say they are the lungs of the city. We call them breathing spaces of the city as they affect the air quality ... The problem is how these spaces are utilised. It is easy to view them as a waste of space and the community members see them as bare and this leads to them being used for criminal activities.*

TP2 explained that planners are mostly concerned with the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. Corroborating his statement, he maintained that when planning was done for urban public open spaces, the focus was on attaining the improved life for human beings. TP3 lent support to this assertion by adding that planners focus on meeting the demands for recreational space and environmental quality.

Buttressing the above statement, E1 and E2 maintained that the challenge is lack of understanding of the meaning of urban public open spaces as they are also not well-defined and well-managed. This discovery lent credence to the revelation made by CM1 in UPOS1. Their main concern is safety and security in urban public open spaces. Also, the increased culture and social vitality, better quality of life and improved health, including the sense of place and accessible environments, are key aspects. On the contrary, some respondents from CM2 stated that they understood the meaning and value placed on urban public open spaces but it has a housing value to them, hence an increasing incidence of encroachment.

**Box 6.1: Respondents views regarding the understanding of urban public open space**

*Parks in Freedom Square are not maintained as compared to the parks in town. Their state does not show any attractiveness at all and we end up dumping rubbish and they are also used for criminal activities – CM1.*

*We need more educational awareness on the benefits of parks so that we can be able to manage them. We have seen a park in Kagisanong that is well maintained, fenced and secure ... we also want that in our area – CM1.*

*We understand the meaning and the importance of parks and we need them in our community but we need a place to stay – CM2.*

*The municipality is not managing these parks and we cannot maintain parks if we do not have shelter – CM2.*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

**DYSFUNCTIONAL NATURE OF LAND USE REGIMES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

According to SPLUMA (RSA, 2013), municipalities must have a land use scheme that will assist the urban stakeholder to enforce land use regimes. In most cases, causal factors of poor enforcements include the dysfunctional nature of land use regimes. This also includes the time taken in making decisions on the approval of planning applications. Highlighting some of the issues under this sub-theme, TP1, TP2, TP3 and HP agreed that MMM is challenged with poor enforcement of land use regimes which led to the extinction of urban public open spaces. This is supported by WC, H1, H2, GM1, GM2 and AGM1. TP1 mentioned that UPOS1 is one of the properties that were earmarked as ‘Public Open Space’ for recreational purposes but is was illegally occupied for residential purposes. TP2 further elaborated that UPOS1 forms part of the urban open spaces that were rezoned by the municipality from ‘Public Open Space’ to ‘Residential’.

During the interviews, GM1 and GM2 supported the notion that the municipality adopted the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Strategy by enforcing rezoning by means of the replacement

of informal shacks with formal housing in planned and serviced townships. This is a revelation, namely, that there is a gap between the planners' assumption of creating sustainable communities and facing reality. Narrowing down to his experience regarding municipal land, GM1 enlightened the researcher that the municipality has a land invasion unit which does not allow people to build permanent structures on municipal land, and he summarised that:

*When this space was invaded, the unit did not have land invasion officers, hence the encroachment. Currently, the municipality issues a notice or warning letter for illegal occupation of municipal land ... The challenge is that the municipality must develop a strategy on the plans they have for a particular piece of land. This led to the municipality developing the Human Settlement Strategy and it is assisting in curbing the challenge of encroachment*

Reiterating the issue of poor enforcement of land use regimes, GM1 continued:

*Planners at MMM used to take a firm stand in enforcing land use management but now they have taken a step back ... they accept every instruction even if it is against their planning objectives and legislation. Due to political interference, they do no longer give advice on municipal developments. It feels as if they have lost hope in their profession and they are the backbone of the municipality as they are responsible for how the city should be. Currently, the open spaces are not only rezoned for residential purposes only and this is the case with the case study area. It is rezoned to residential business, municipal and park.*

After UPOS1 was invaded for residential purposes, and due to unavailability of land and the housing backlog, the municipality proposed medium density housing to accommodate the families who occupied that space. The proposal was rejected by the residents because of cultural reasons. Culturally, a variety of strategies that are used for planning, designing and managing urban public open spaces assist promote different ethnic groups to use these spaces. In terms of the cultural context, urban public spaces can be used as a cultural focus and that is why it is important to understand the perceptions of different urban stakeholders on the value and use of these space. With the above scenario, there were complaints from CM2 as they felt embittered by this proposal:

*We are people of different cultures ... if we [are] residing in flats where we cannot claim that this is our property, how are we expected to perform ancestral rituals. How will we be recognised by our ancestors if we do not have proper yards? Where will we perform any cultural ceremony?*

AGM1 highlighted that there is a conflict between the residents who own properties surrounding urban public open spaces and those who encroached these spaces. CM1 added that the municipality is failing them as the community as they allow encroachment by means of infill development. CM2 indicated that they invaded municipal land because the open spaces were vacant and there was nothing indicating that it was earmarked for recreational purposes. They have also realised that there is no proper enforcement of land regimes. Some

indicated that they have been on the 'waiting list' for more than 10 years, and to date, they do not have formal housing. UPOS1 is currently rezoned for residential purposes but there is part of the urban public open space that still holds the purpose for recreation.

### **POOR MANAGEMENT OF URBAN OPEN SPACES**

The issue of poor management of urban open spaces was highlighted by different interviewees. In fact, there is a shift game by different urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of urban open spaces.

#### **Box 6.2: Respondents views regarding the poor management of urban public open space**

*The way planning is structured in MMM, planners do not really have a role in managing open spaces. They plan for urban open spaces but what happens to these spaces afterwards is the responsibility of Human Settlement Directorate and the Sub-directorate of Parks and Cemeteries ... I believe that town planning can do more in maintaining and ensuring that the community use the open spaces for recreational purposes – TP3.*

*MMM planners only do planning and the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries is responsible for management, protection and preservation of parks. When planning, Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries including the Sub-directorate: Environmental Planning, are informed of the areas for urban public open space development and they render comments.*

*We manage only business sites, not public open spaces but in some instances, we dispose of open spaces – GM1.*

*They do not regard us as essential. We have a role to play in providing or enhancing recreation and help the communities – H2.*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Regarding the management of open spaces, H2 indicated that:

*If we cannot develop an open space, it remains undeveloped but we have the municipal by-laws that states what is permitted and what is not permitted. We have a role to enforce these by-laws but that is a challenge that we in this unit ....*

He added that a vacant space is difficult to develop and if they cannot develop that space, the planners are responsible for rezoning of the space that is not developed. Singling out the attempt to curb encroachment of these spaces, H1 confirmed that they have recently advised the Planning Directorate to plan for a 'Recreational Park', instead of the small parcels of urban open spaces designed under the opportunistic planning model. In furtherance, H1 highlighted that the municipality has introduced the concept of 'Adopt-a-Park' in the townships. About 80 parks have been identified for this concept but only 40 parks are functional. Since the UPOS1 has a portion of a park that has not been rezoned, the community can adopt that park. Still on the concept, H1 continued:

*The community can adopt a park and we can assist with the equipment that is needed. They have to write a proposal to the municipality and if it qualified to the criteria used, this unit will support the community. Equipment given to the community include paint, trees, plastic bags and even cut the grass for them. They are given a three-year trial to maintain their park.*

Respondent of CM2 admitted that:

*We have realised that only two parks are left in the whole of Freedom Square and we have also failed ourselves in that we dump rubbish there. We can form a team and manage these spaces but our challenge is that we cannot manage parks (which we see just as a dessert) while we do not have proper housing (which is the main course).*

Respondent of CM1 also added that:

*We also encourage our family members and young adults to encroach as we do not want them to stay far from their homes.*

### **DISCONNECT AMONG THE URBAN STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACES**

Admittedly, all the research participants agreed that there is disconnect among the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. This is as a result of poor communication during the planning process. In their submission, TP2, GM1, M1, E1, H1 and WC maintained that when the township of Freedom Square was established, plans were circulated by planners for comments to different divisions. The approval of this township establishment was only done after all the different units involved rendered their comments. With UPOS1 informal settlement upgrading, comments were only requested for services such as water and sanitation as well as electrical connection. Communication was active between the planners, ward councillor, and ward committee members who always enquired about the progress of the planning application for UPOS1. An initiative was taken to educate the ward councillor and the ward committee members about the processes taken during the time of the application project. This was done to bridge the gap of lack of information and disconnect among the urban stakeholders.

E1 and E2 emphasised that there is disconnect even between the three spheres of government as well as among the municipal officials and the community members regarding the planning and management of open spaces. Respondents of CM1 and CM2 also added that they were not involved in the formalisation of UPOS1. This is a revelation of lack of communication with the municipal officials, ward councillor, ward committee members and the community. H1 also confirmed that there is no communication with the community. He added that proper communication will assist in educational awareness about the value, utility and management of urban public open spaces.

Agreeing with the other participants, H2 mentioned that:

*I did not know of the closure of this park and this is evidence of disconnect or lack of communication between the municipal officials. Township establishment must be an integrated approach but we just hear of these new township establishments or infill planning.*

#### **ABSENCE OF PROFOUND SUPPORT OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

This was also one of the critical barriers that was discovered during the interviews. There was a common agreement among the different urban stakeholders that there is absence of profound support of the municipality and budget constraints. The interviewees cited that there is low prioritisation of urban public open spaces and the financial muscle for these spaces is low as its budget is on the top list of budget cuts.

AGM1 added that:

*Funding for management of public open spaces is lacking; therefore, in order to prioritise such spaces, a special grant must be set aside to manage them. Also, adopting the catalytic programmes will assist in curbing the issue of low prioritisation of public open spaces.*

The respondents of CM1 and CM2 complained that:

*The municipal officials, ward councillor and ward committee members have failed us. Parks are not used for their purpose and as such, they are used for criminal activities and as dumping sites. Sometimes the municipal officials do not collect refuse on the stipulated days.*

This was better narrated by H1 when he added that:

*We have a challenge of lack of resources, poor management and the by-laws are not working ... in support of the communities, we encourage the residents to adopt-a-park and our role is to support them with basic equipment. It is their role to manage the park and we support because the municipality does not have the budget to manage parks.*

Presenting his views regarding budget constraints of projects, H2 stressed that:

*We budget for what is in the IDP so we work according to the operational budget. Councillors need to be active and must be vocal when it comes to the IDP process. When the ward councillor is not strong, it becomes a problem because there won't be a budget for his ward if he is not vocal.*

#### **(c) Operationalisation of urban public open spaces**

In an attempt to test the propositions that emanated from literature, experience and knowledge of the subject matter, the researcher confirmed the procedure applied in the development application relating to UPOS1. Section 7 of SPLUMA (2013) discusses the development principles that apply to spatial planning, land development and land use management. These

include the principles of spatial justice, sustainability, resilience, efficiency, good administration. The Act serves as a guide regarding the preparation and the contents of the municipal SDF and Land Use Management Scheme. The Act indicates that the development application approved for residential purposes must also provide land for open spaces. About 70% of the application site must be residential and 30% must include the provision of the urban open space and other social amenities. Within the SDF, the MOSS is included as the rationalised network of open spaces with the focus of managing open spaces for recreation and general amenities, protecting the biodiversity, plants and animals as well as the heritage or cultural sites. It also provides the establishment and the composition of the Municipal Planning Tribunal who have the responsibility for decision-making regarding land development applications. Even though UPOS1 is located within an old township, its operationalisation is performed under SPLUMA. Drawing from his experience, TP2 shared the brief process followed in planning for UPOS1:

*This application was done in terms of Annexure F of 1986. The property had a land use reservation of a 'Public Open Space' and due to illegal occupation of land, it was rezoned to 'Residential'. The draft layout plan was circulated for comments to Infrastructural Services and Centlec ... The application was lodged to the Municipal Planning Tribunal in 2017 for approval and a land surveyor was appointed to survey the area. After receiving the approval from Surveyor-General, Human Settlements, Centlec, Infrastructural Services, Geographic Information Systems were informed of the final approval of the property and they have to play their responsibilities.*

Annexure F (RSA, 1986) is an outdated document that is still used to regulate land use management in the townships. E2 added that:

*The MOSS is also outdated and needs to be updated. There is also the Urban Open Space Policy and Framework which must be incorporated with the Metropolitan Open Space Framework.*

In addition to operationalisation, H2 added that their unit has a parks development and maintenance strategy which classifies the parks into different categories and their development or maintenance depends on the category of the park. In his clarification, he stated that UPOS1 falls under Park D, that is, undeveloped natural open space where no developments are done and the area is undeveloped. Such spaces ranges for 1 ha to 50 ha is size.

When drawing back to the resolution that was taken by the municipal council in 1998 regarding people occupying land that is not for residential purposes and that they will not be provided with town planning, infrastructure and land surveying services, respondent of CM2 stated that:

*Services are not stopping people from occupying urban open spaces ... it does not matter whether I have electricity or water, I use paraffin and candle and draw water about 200 m away*

*from me. What matters is that I will be having shelter and my children are safe. Remember, it does not happen like that because the municipality is forced by law to provide water ... once you install water, it means you recognise people who are there. One of the main contributing factors is that people have a mentality that they are poor and will be staying there for free but others are taking chances to cut costs because they know they will not pay for any services.*

#### **1.1.1.1.4 Construct 2: Community participation**

Under this construct, the researcher sought to establish the level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders who are involved in urban open space planning, who participated in the planning projects, where their voices were heard and what procedure or guidelines were used during community participation. Chapter 3 discussed the aspects of community participation in-depth and it is imperative that all urban stakeholders collaborate in order to achieve a common goal of understanding the concept. From a planning point of view, if community members form part of the planning processes and decision-making, their lives are enhanced and they will be able to make informed decisions regarding planning of their environments. The researcher sought to determine the opinion of different urban stakeholders within UPOS1 concerning the sub-themes discussed below.

##### **(a) Level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders**

In planning, collaboration, open communication and agreements between different urban stakeholders are essential. Urban stakeholders in this context refer to the group of individuals with different roles, responsibilities, backgrounds and expertise in the urban complexity. In this context, urban stakeholders include the planners, politicians, community members and environmentalists. All of them have an interest in creating of sustainable neighbourhoods. UPOS1 forms part of the community members and needs to work together with the planners, the politicians and environmentalists. Various urban stakeholders within UPOS1 acknowledged that collaboration among the stakeholders is lacking. In her rendition of the situation, TP1 maintained that:

*Consultants are mostly appointed to run with the township establishment applications and they conduct public meetings.*

Buttressed by TP2, TP1 added that:

*As the municipality, we use consultants who hold meetings with the ward committee and they present a plan showing the intention of the development in the area.*

The statement above indicates that people who initiate community projects do not know the project area and this may be the cause of failure for many projects. The planning of UPOS1 was done in-house, in collaboration with the Human Settlements division. Other urban

stakeholders were not included in the planning of this settlement. Stressing the significance of the level of collaboration, GM1 indicated that:

*Intergovernmental relations are important when planning for townships. There is no proper consultation of different stakeholders. For instance, the Departments of Education, Police, Health, and Environmental Affairs are supposed to be part of each planning project. This poses a challenge of illegal occupation of land earmarked for certain land uses.*

Evidence gathered from the focus group discussants (CM1 and CM2) indicates that the community members were not part of the planning of UPOS1. Some did not even know how the layout plan was designed and some only knew that the area was going to be formalised when the land surveyor was pegging the settlement. A proposal for medium density housing that was presented by the municipal officials to the community members was rejected, specifically for cultural reasons. This is an indication of non-involvement of the community members.

From the foregoing, it can be clearly summarised that there is a low level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders involved in urban public open space. According to Arnstein's ladder of participation, this challenge is linked to the non-participatory level where the community does not necessarily have a voice. It is clear that community participation, as discussed in Chapter 3, does not serve its initial purpose because the community is only informed about the already planned development. Professionals involved in planning and managing open spaces are therefore criticised because they own the development and do not take into account the needs and the priorities of the residents.

#### **(b) Level of representativeness of the population**

The Batho Pele Principles state that the community members should be consulted about the planning aspects affecting their livelihoods (RSA, 1997). Municipalities must build partnerships with the communities and be transparent. The voice of the community must be heard. The question remains: Who are the participants of community participation and how are they selected? Are their voices heard?

Pertaining to UPOS1, planning of this settlement did not involve the community. The community was represented by the ward councillor and ward committee members during planning. The community claimed that they were not involved during the planning process. During the interviews, some respondents did not even know that the settlement has been approved by the Municipal Planning Tribunal for residential purposes. They have not even seen the layout plan for the development. TP1 corroborated this concern when she stated that:

*Community participation is mainly done with the ward councillor and the ward committee who represent the entire community. They later have public meetings with the community to inform them of the input of the community participation meeting.*

One of the respondents from CM2 added that:

*We are not trees; we do not like it when the municipality just impose plans to use. The municipal officials are not working with us, they are walking very far from us but they are planning for us.*

Another respondent from CM2 added that:

*Even with just public meetings, sometimes we are side-lined and be told that the meeting is only for people staying in Freedom Square and this is confusing because we are part of this area but we are living in shacks.*

On the question of who gets involved in decision-making on the planning project in UPOS1, GM1 reiterated this point when he mentioned that:

*It was going to be ideal if the whole community was involved in community participation, otherwise, currently it just becomes the issue of compliance. Not everyone is represented at this stage. A few individuals or classes form part of the participation and because it takes place during the day, some people come drunk ... If you look into the outcome of that meeting, nothing is tangible from it.*

Furthermore, from the documentary analysis, it became clear that community participation is mostly done during the IDP review process. In this case, it also happens that the community disengage from the planning process and this is as a result of lack of interest and knowledge about the needs and priorities of different individuals. Moreover, planners need to empower the community members and lead them in the right direction. The community needs proper education and be encouraged to form part of community participation meetings. Planners at the municipality should avoid butting proposals to the community members; rather, all the concerned parties should be engaged in all planning activities.

### **(c) Nature of the community participation process**

The nature of community participation relies on the nature of the organisation and mobilisation at grassroots level. This also includes the purpose of that particular community participation. Community participation is a process that is driven by specific socio-economic goals in order to make the lives of the communities better. The literature review in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3) confirms that community participation in municipalities consists of different perspectives that are based on the origin, need, substance and the outcome of the participation. The MMM has a policy on community participation which serves as guide to provide mechanisms, processes and procedures for effective and reasonable participation of the community. This is meant to

enable community members to access information and participate in consultation and decision-making processes of the municipality.

The South African government documented policies that guide community participation. These include the Constitution of 1996, Municipal Systems Act of 2000, Municipal Structures Act of 1998, Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003 and the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act of 2005. All these policies are included in the policy initiated by the MMM. According to the MMM policy on community participation, the municipality strive to use the different methods of participation which include information sharing sessions, meetings, dialogues, workshops and hearings, as and when it is required. The policy also indicates the processes and mechanisms used during community participation, namely, the preparation, implementation and review of the IDP; the establishment, implementation, monitoring and review of the Performance Management System; the preparation and review of the municipal budget; and strategic decisions pertaining to municipal services. Concerning the integrated approach to community participation, an ad hoc coordinating team should be established when there is a need. One of the representatives included the user directorate which coordinates the community participation depending on their activities.

On the other hand, SPLUMA (RSA 2013) which is an Act related to spatial planning and land use management, relates community participation to one of its development principles, namely, good administration. This development principle states that all policies, legislation and all the planning processes should be perfectly set to inform and empower the community members. On the issue of the nature of the community participation process and the guidelines followed in planning for UPOS1, from his experience, TP3 added that:

*Community participation is not done at all, communities are only informed about the development. This also impacts negatively because no educational awareness is done. If public notices in terms of advertising land use application are used, it does not mean anything to the community because they do not have an understanding. The by-law includes different activities for community participation but it is not ideal especially in the township because not everyone focus on what is in the newspapers or even notices on the application site.*

Recounting his experience with municipal planning projects, TP2 asserted that no proper consultation is done and that there are no proper guidelines or frameworks used in engaging the community in development application processes. The opinions expressed by GM1 and GM2 are in agreement with TP2 as they also stated that no proper consultation with the community is done. Even after the residents in UPOS1 have been relocated, educational awareness was not properly done. Narrowing down to his experience, AGM1 elaborated that

some residents sell their sites or houses and return to shacks because they do not receive proper consumer education from the responsible municipal officials.

From the above-mentioned information, there are no guidelines or programmes followed in engaging the community in planning projects. This can be one of the key challenges for urban public open space encroachment.

#### **1.1.1.1.5 Construct 3: Value conflict management**

Different urban stakeholders who are involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces display different perceptions regarding the value and utility of open spaces. These values include planning, environmental, economic, recreation, housing, cultural and public goods. The different perceptions have created value conflicts in terms of the quest for sustainable communities. In addition, these value conflicts negate the ability of planners to achieve the key objectives of planning for sustainable communities. In sustenance of urban public open spaces, the increasing incidence of value conflict management should be addressed. Interviews conducted by the researcher for UPOS1 revealed various aspects pertaining to this construct and as such, the sub-themes discussed below emerged.

##### **(a) Factors influencing the perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the value of urban public open spaces**

The value of urban public open spaces depends on its functionality. The different perceptions of urban stakeholders lead to the incidence of value conflicts which is a conundrum that negates sustenance of urban public open spaces. Furthermore, the future of land use planning and management depends on understanding these value conflicts and finding solutions that will enable the conflicts to build communities that are sustainable. There is a need for these perceptions to be evaluated and taken into account during planning and development of open spaces. Arising from the interviews, the research sought to understand the factors that influence the perceptions of the different urban stakeholders within UPOS1 regarding the value and utility of these spaces. Highlighting some of the aspects under this sub-theme, TP2 stated that:

*Truth is, there are value conflicts attached to the value of public open spaces. The community members value open spaces for housing as it is their primary need, not open spaces. People staying in this park encroached because they are in desperate need of housing. Another perception includes economic value ... As town planners, we are tired of fighting, if we are instructed to subdivide municipal land, we comply. All the blame goes to us as town planners.*

GM1 added that:

*Municipal officials must agree to everything that they are told to do ... town planners used to take a stand in their profession. Due to political pressure, town planners are no longer advancing their mission of the objectives of their profession.*

Furthermore, WC also identified lack of support from their side as it is also a drawback. He summarised this concern as follows:

*We also take a blame because of the demand from people for housing, we put pressure on the town planners to rezone the land for residential purposes. Lately, demand for land is not only for residential but for business sites and church sites ... My advice to the planners is for them to plan ahead rather than succumbing to pressure of the different values from people.*

GM2, AGM1 and M1 mentioned that their mandate is creating sustainable human settlements. In as much as they understand the benefits of urban open spaces, they are bound to assist in upgrading of informal settlements. UPOS1 is one of the settlements of infill planning. Where they observe illegal occupation of land, they identify the property and advise the planners to do the necessary processes of planning and development. They acknowledged that sometimes they work under fierce political pressure and they also pressurise the Planning Directorate to plan as such. This creates difficulties for planners; hence a challenge in achieving planning objectives.

UPOS1 is one of the settlements which the planners were instructed to subdivide and rezone to accommodate occupants in that area. The same settlement also accommodated a business site to accommodate the informal trade that forms part of the survival strategy for the residents. This is an indication that even the community members also perceive open spaces for economic reasons. Based on the economic value, cities are seen as economic entities because they assist in forming sustainable communities. As most of this settlement is occupied for residential purposes, these open spaces have a housing value to those who have encroached. Surprisingly, other respondents of CM1 admitted that they also encouraged their families, especially the young, to invade municipal land that is in close proximity to home. Also, community members in this settlement are concerned about safety and security. Other responses from both CM1 and CM2 are summarised in Box 6.3.

**Box 6.3: Respondents views regarding their perception regarding the value of urban public open space**

*We have a space that is left and we wanted it to remain a park or accommodate a house but we saw a contractor levelling the ground. He told us that they were given that piece of land by the municipality so start a business. We are not going to allow that. The municipality did not involve us in their plans.*

*We do not see any park around here, so people can be relocated there.*

*We do not want our family members to go and stay far from us, so I can admit that we have also allowed illegal occupation on the parks.*

*We are willing to preserve the space that is left in this settlement but where do we start? What do we do?*

*We cannot prioritise parks while we do not have houses.*

*It is better if these spaces are used for housing because they are not safe spaces. There is a park near Nzame Primary School which is beautiful, secure and clean. Why can't we have such a park?*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The urban public open spaces can also be viewed as a cultural value; therefore, it is important that planners understand the different cultural groups. Simply through observation, the researcher noticed the enhancement of the sense of belonging and identity as a cultural value. Even though some of the residents within UPOS1 do not have permanent housing structures, they own their space. This implies that they have the sense of ownership and sense of place. After the in-depth deliberations during the focus group discussions, some of the respondents had a different view regarding the utility of open spaces. They are open to education about the value and use of urban open space since there is a portion of land in their settlement that is still vacant. Their responses included:

*What must we do to manage and protect the open space that is not occupied? We do not have any funding to maintain the open space, will the municipality meet us halfway?*

*What is the procedure of Adopt-a-Park and what is it that can be allowed in that space because we also want to build something that will be beneficial to us and our children.*

All these different perceptions should be taken into account to enhance effective planning for sustainable environments. This requires the interaction of all the urban stakeholders, as well as effective community participation, thus enabling the management of urban open space encroachment. The photos in Figure 6.5 were taken by the researcher during fieldwork.



Figure 6.5: Photos of different portions of erf 32371, Freedom Square, indicating the nature of the area

Source: Author (2019)

## 6.4.2 Case 2 (UPOS2)

### 6.4.2.1 Specification of the case

UPOS2, known as Saliva Square, is situated within Freedom Square Township, Mangaung. This is an informal settlement located along George Lubbe Street, about 10 km from the CBD. It is municipal land and in terms of Annexure F (RSA, 1986), it had a land use reservation of 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes. It measures about 4,66 ha in extent and was owned by the MMM. The whole development was consolidated with erf 8323 Freedom Square which measures 6 344 m<sup>2</sup> in extent. In terms of the open space classification and maintenance system, UPOS2 falls under the Developed Park Criteria D. The nature of the property is rocky and can be costly for development, especially for infrastructural services. Due to rapid urbanisation, the property was invaded by the community for residential purposes. UPOS2 is located near Kopanong Police Station. There is one primary school located about 1 km from this informal settlement, and the MUCPP Clinic is the nearest health care facility. According to the community members, UPOS2 has been in existence for about 20 years. The community members are using communal standpipes and self-dug pit toilets. Currently, they are issued

with erf numbers and are waiting for the roads to be constructed, and electricity to be installed including water and proper toilets.

UPOS2 followed the same planning procedure as UPOS1 in that it was invaded for residential purposes. The Human Settlements Directorate, who are responsible for municipal land, made a request to the Planning Directorate for the change of land use within UPOS2. An application for the amendment of the General Plan (SG No. 66/1992 and 1645/1998) by means of the closure of a park to create residential erven, a re-layout to create 124 erven and the rezoning from 'Park' to 'Residential', 'Street' and the remainder of the property to be a 'Park', was lodged by the planners on behalf of the MMM. Previously, the municipality was only recommending a development application for approval and the Free State Provincial Government (Planning) would approve or reject the applications. This was a lengthy process which was not understood by the community nor the ward councillors and the ward committee members. The development application of UPOS2 was approved under SPLUMA by the Municipal Planning Tribunal. The property is now registered at the Surveyor-General with General Plan (SG No. 241/2019). Figure 6.6 shows a photo of Saliva Square in Freedom Square taken by the researcher during fieldwork.



*Figure 6.6: Photos of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area*  
Source: Author's own (2019)

#### **6.4.2.2 Detailed information of the research participants**

The researcher adopted the same approach used in UPOS1 to select the interviewees for UPOS2. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews were

used in data collection within UPOS2. All the interviewees at the MMM agreed to accommodate the researcher to conduct interviews at their offices and this made it easier for the researcher to obtain all the necessary information within a short period of time. Another advantage was that the researcher was previously an employee at the municipality so she knew the relevant participants. The focus group discussions took place in Freedom Square township in Mangaung from July to October 2019. The ward councillor and the ward committee members served as gatekeepers to the community members and this assisted the researcher in gaining access for focus group discussants. As indicated in Chapter 4 (Section 4.6.1.3), the municipality had a shortage of personnel and the interviews were conducted within a short period of time.

### **6.4.2.3 Intra-case analysis of data**

Data analysis relating to UPOS2 was emanated from the semi-structured interviews of municipal officials involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. Focus group discussants for data collection included the ward committee members, community members owning properties around the application property, as well as those who occupied the informal settlement. The views of all the research participants assisted in gathering the information for testing of the research propositions.

#### ***1.1.1.1.6 Construct 1: Urban open space planning***

Under this construct, the researcher sought to understand the views of different urban stakeholders who participated in the research. All the interviewees were involved in the management and usefulness of urban public open space in Mangaung. To do this effectively, the researcher gathered the information in the form of sub-constructs related to the processes undertaken by the planners in planning for urban public open spaces.

#### **(a) Procedural methods for urban open space planning**

The interviewees confirmed that the opportunistic planning model was employed in planning and developing UPOS2. One of the planners (T1) indicated that the open spaces designed in terms of this planning model ended up being dysfunctional. In his experience, TP2 added that this is an indication of poor planning and he suggested that “one huge functional space must be developed and the municipality must develop the space immediately after the approval of the township”. It was also agreed that this planning project emerged due to encroachment of this urban open space for housing. Sharing the information from different interviewees, made it clear that it was difficult for the planners to achieve the key objectives of planning for

sustainable neighbourhoods. As indicated on the municipal IDP document, there is a housing backlog in the entire municipality. TP2 stated that:

*It's very difficult to promote a principle of open spaces if there is no adequate housing. They do not understand it because housing is one of the primary needs for the community, not open spaces ... if the community cannot protect the open spaces, the councillor cannot do anything.*

Stressing the importance of the procedure for planning and management of open spaces, the HP emphasised the intervention of Human Settlements and the political office where instructions will be given for informal settlement upgrading. Sometimes consideration is not taken regarding the zoning of urban land. UPOS2 was initially zoned as a park for recreational purposes, and with change of land use, all the different divisions should have been part of the development application but this was not the case. Pegging and relocation of residents were supposed to be done after the approval of the development application by the Municipal Planning Tribunal. In this case, the correct procedure was not followed.

#### **(b) Factors influencing urban public open space planning**

For the researcher to test the propositions from the literature and experiential knowledge, interviews were conducted to understand the factors that influence urban public open space planning within UPOS2. Similar to UPOS1, UPOS2 was initially earmarked for recreational purposes but was invaded by people coming from different parts of the world. The findings emanated from these interviews are presented according to different sub-themes discussed below.

#### **LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

With different definitions attached to open spaces, there is a lack of understanding by different urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of open spaces. The interviews and focus group discussions conducted within UPOS2 indicated a lack of understanding of the utility and values of urban public open spaces. This has led to a challenge for the planners in planning and managing these spaces in order to create sustainable communities. In an attempt to get responses for the question about the benefits and perceptions on the value and utility of urban public open spaces, the researcher discovered that the interviewees placed different values (recreational, economic, environmental, and housing) on urban public open spaces. Similar to UPOS1, the researcher considered this pathology as a communication-related matter. These different values led to conflicts that affect the key objectives of planning for sustainable communities. During the focus group discussions, the researcher discovered that the community members, those who have encroached on municipal land and those

owning the surrounding properties, have a different opinion about these spaces. As discussions were continuing, it was clear that they just see vacant land for grabs. One of the respondents indicated that they do understand the different benefits of open spaces but they are homeless. Others felt that they cannot prioritise parks while they are in dire need of shelters. On the other hand, one of the respondents commented that:

*Our children do not have a place to play football, they play on the streets and this is not safe. We would really love to take part in maintaining the parks but their status do not show if they are parks ... also, we do not have money to maintain parks unless the municipality will help us.*

TP1 added that:

*The state of open spaces attract people to them and people are desperate for residential sites if they see that nothing is done.*

The land use reservation of UPOS2 is 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes. This is a land use given by the planners when planning any township. From her experience, TP1 mentioned that:

*Planners only do planning, so management, protection and preservation is part of Parks and cemeteries. Parks and cemeteries are being informed of the areas for the open spaces and they render comments.*

When the researcher enquired from the focus group regarding the value and utility of urban public open spaces in UPOS2, specifically regarding their opinion on the part that will remain as a park, one respondent indicated that all the vacant spaces must be used for housing purposes. The open spaces are not attractive, comfortable or even safe and are used as dumping sites and for criminal activities. The demand for recreational space and environmental quality are not met.

Judging from the statement above, E2 corroborated this viewpoint when he mentioned that:

*The problem is how these spaces are utilised. It is easy to view them as a waste of space and the community members see them as bare and this leads to them being used for criminal activities.*

In support of this assertion, E1 and E2 maintained that there is lack of understanding in terms of the value and utility of urban public open spaces as they are also not well-defined and well-managed. This has led to the extinction or gradual disappearance of open spaces in Freedom Square, Mangaung.

## DYSFUNCTIONAL NATURE OF LAND USE REGIMES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Observing from the interviews and focus group discussions, UPOS2 formed part of the cases of the dysfunctional nature of land use regimes. This settlement emerged because law was not enforced. The municipality did not comply with the resolution that was taken in 1998 which prohibited residents not to occupy land that was not earmarked for residential purposes. During his interview, HP pointed out that the Directorate: Human Settlement has the responsibility to curb the challenge of urban open space encroachment as they have a land invasion unit which has to enforce land use regimes. Instead, they promote this practice by giving instruction to the planner for the rezoning to accommodate people occupying municipal land since they are the custodians. From the above, he added that:

*The MMM Council took a resolution that people occupying the land that is not zoned for residential purposes will not be provided with town planning, land surveying and infrastructural services. Furthermore, planners are expected to lodge an application for an exception of this resolution so that people occupying the settlement can be accommodated and be granted ownership of the land.*

TP2 added that:

*In this settlement, a land surveyor was appointed to survey the land and this was done in conjunction with Human Settlements.*

The planning legislation emphasise that municipalities must have a land use scheme that will assist the planner to enforce land use regimes. When people invaded UPOS2, there was lack of enforcement of land use regimes and they were permitted to reside in that property even though they stayed there without water and electricity for a very long time. As highlighted in UPOS1, TP1, TP2, TP3 maintained that lack of enforcement of land use regimes led to the extinction of urban public open spaces. Other interviewees like WC, H1, GM1, GM2 and AGM1 buttressed this statement.

WC raised his concern about the attitude of municipal officials. Feeling embittered, he mentioned that:

*We wouldn't be having this challenge if the land was used for its purpose ... the municipality takes time to act, so if people were evicted from this park, we would not be having this challenge. They have been left there for a long time and now they have a concept that the property belongs to them. Most of the people staying in Saliva Square are from outside Bloemfontein, I can count a few of the residents from here.*

During the interviews, GM1, GM2, AGM1 and M1 gave an indication that the Human Settlement division of the municipality adopted the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Strategy and the Human Settlements Plan. These documents assist with sustainable human

settlements. They encourage infill planning or in situ planning as a means of the replacement of informal shacks with formal housing in planned and serviced townships. This revealed a gap between the planners' assumption of creating sustainable communities and facing reality. Figure 6.7 shows a photo taken by the researcher during fieldwork, while Figure 6.8 shows a portion of the general plan for UPOS2.



Figure 6.7: Photo of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area  
Source: Author's own (2019)

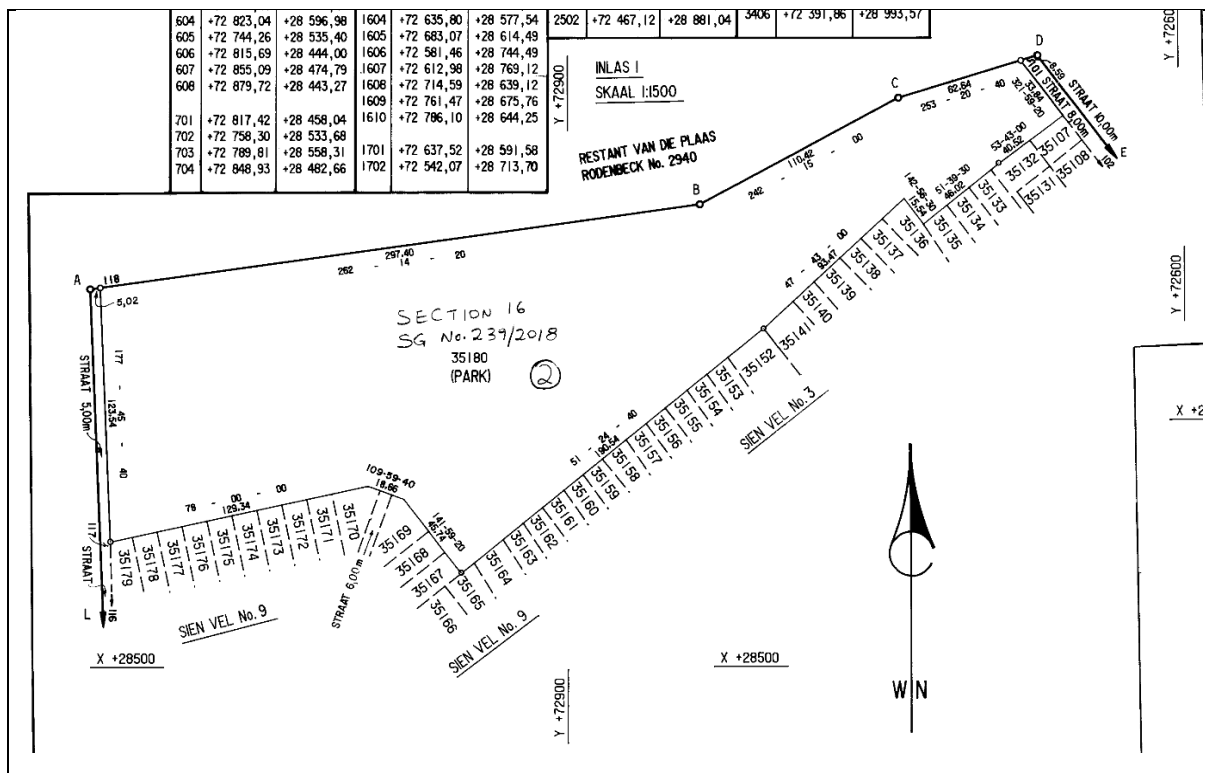


Figure 6.8: Portion of the general plan for UPOS2  
(Retrieved October 2019)

## POOR MANAGEMENT OF URBAN OPEN SPACES

Various interviewees within UPOS2 acknowledged that there is poor management of urban public open spaces. Similar to UPOS1, different urban stakeholders do not want to take responsibility for mismanagement of open spaces. TP1 inoffensively denied any wrong-doing in their section as she mentioned that they only do the planning part, not management. As these open spaces are municipal properties, it is their responsibility to manage them and ensure that they are functional. CM1 respondents emphasised that the municipality is failing them and they allow the encroachment on open spaces because they do not take care of them. It also makes the community not to care what happens there; for them these are just dirty spaces. People see it as vacant spaces for grabs and an opportunity for housing. They also specified that some of the people who have encroached the urban land are their family members, since they cannot relocate far from their family members. The respondents from CM1 indicated that their children are playing on the streets because there are no proper sports fields for them. The inability of the municipality to manage these spaces is disadvantageous to the community and they lamented that they needed proper education regarding the utility of urban open spaces. Other respondents from CM1 indicated that they reported the status (unattractiveness) of open spaces to the municipality but they never received any assistance. Figure 6.9 shows a photo taken by the researcher during fieldwork.



Figure 6.9: *Photo of Saliva Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area*  
Source: Author's own (2019)

#### **Box 6.4: Respondents views regarding the poor management of urban public open space**

*The community has not been taught about the value and use of open spaces. Maybe even if the education system can be changed for future generations so that they can assist in managing open space because we need them – CM1.*

*The challenge that make people to build shacks in open spaces is that people do not have houses and it is better if people occupy them rather than these space being used for criminal activities or as a dumping site – CM1.*

*I stay close to a public open space and I tried to clean it each time people dump rubbish there. I have also reported to the municipality but nothing is done – CM1.*

*I think people should change their attitude regarding the use of open spaces or even any other vacant space because they see open spaces for houses because they are not taken care of – CM1.*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

In an attempt to curb encroachment of these spaces, H1 emphasised that a recreational park should be established rather than creating small pieces of land for urban open spaces which are designed under the opportunistic planning model. The Planning Directorate should look into different planning models for urban open space planning. With the spaces that are left after the change of land use on UPOS2, the community can adopt that park and the municipality will assist with the equipment. It will be the responsibility of the community to maintain the parks.

Narrowing down to his experience, WC indicated that:

*The problem of parks is the municipality, the plan for parks and not do anything. If they can plan properly and let it be used for such a purpose, we wouldn't have a problem. People of Saliva Square do not even know if this was a park and they do not even know if there are parks that are created with the new layout. People do not even see if there is a park, you can also know if you look into the map and this causes people occupying or even dump rubbish on them.*

Respondent of CM2 admitted that:

*We have been told that there are open spaces that are left where we are now and I think we can do better now but we do not know what to do because we are not working. If only the municipality can help us or even educate us more about open spaces but we want something that will benefit us as a community*

Respondent of CM1 also added that:

*The municipality can identify organisations that do not need money. These can help in educating people on how parks can be managed or what to do in the spaces created for parks.*

## **DISCONNECT AMONG THE URBAN STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACES**

The inability of the various urban stakeholders involved in urban public open space planning to communicate properly has created challenges in planning and development. The researcher discovered that there is lack of communication in terms of development application and this serves as one of the causal factors for encroachment on open spaces. Admittedly, all the research participants confirmed that there is gap in communication among them, especially on the procedure for applications on municipal land. During the interviews, TP2, GM1, M1, E1, H1 and WC maintained that when the Freedom Square Township was established, the layout plans were circulated by planners for comments on different municipality divisions. The approval of the township establishment was done when all the different units involved rendered their comments. Even after the approval, TP4 reiterated that they issued out a registration letter to the relevant division at the municipality so that they can have the information and react. Sometimes the disconnect will merge when other urban stakeholders claim that they never received any correspondence. When planning for the UPOS2 informal settlement upgrading, comments were only requested for services such as water and sanitation as well as electrical connections. As in UPOS1, communication between the planners, ward councillor, and ward committee members who always enquired about the progress of the planning application was a success because the ward councillor and the ward committee members were informed about the processes taken during the time of the application of the project. This initiative helped to bridge the gap of lack of information and the disconnect among the urban stakeholders. Also, the SPLUMA (RSA, 2013) include the ward councillors who must have information on planning legislation. The Rural Development department of the Free State province organised several workshops for the training of ward councillors about the planning legislation as stated in SPLUMA.

As earlier indicated by E1 and E2 on UPOS1, they also shared the same sentiment for UPOS2 regarding the disconnect that has even extended between the three spheres of government, as well as among the municipal officials and the community members regarding the planning and management of open spaces. HP added that his division was trying to bridge that gap, they want everyone to be on board and a committee has been created internally, and they will also form an intergovernmental steering committee. This will help to curb the challenge of the disconnection between the different spheres of government. In addition, respondents of CM1 and CM2 stated that they were not involved in the formalisation of UPOS2 and some indicated that they had not even seen the map, even though they were told that the settlement was

approved for residential purposes. This indicates lack of communication with the municipal officials, ward councillor, ward committee members and the community.

H2, in support of the views from other urban stakeholders on this issue, stated that:

*Everyone has a role to play in town planning. Planning is supposed to be a joint effort but planners are not involving all the stakeholders from the initial planning. I am not even aware of the planning of this particular infill planning project.*

### **ABSENCE OF PROFOUND SUPPORT OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

One of the challenges for urban open space encroachment is the absence of profound support of the municipality and budget constraints for open spaces. This was a major barrier that was discovered during the interviews, especially in terms of the maintenance of open space. Different urban stakeholders within UPOS2 confirmed that there is low prioritisation of urban public open spaces and they are not really budgeted for. H1 indicated that there is not enough funding for open spaces, all that can be done is that communities can adopt a nearby park which they will maintain. He added that communities must follow the procedure of the Adopt-a-Park policy before they will be given the equipment, depending on their proposal for the park. Box 6.5 shows the views of the respondents of CM1 for UPOS2:

#### **Box 6.5: Respondents' views regarding absence of profound support of the municipality and budget constraints of urban public open space**

*We really have a serious challenge with the municipality because these open spaces are not attractive and we do not blame people who reside there – CM1.*

*There is so much that can be done on these space, for example, a community garden can be done, which can be useful to us ... Some can be used as a facility for aftercare because our children do not have much to do after school. This can help them to be in a space that is safe to avoid the issue of gangsters – CM1.*

*I stay near a park and people are dumping all sorts of things including dead animals. The municipality is failing us because they do not even collect the rubbish, so where will people dump rubbish? – CM1.*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Admittedly, H1 mentioned that:

*There is indeed a challenge of lack of resources, poor management and the by-laws are not functional. We can just encourage community members to adopt-a-park, they will be supported with basic equipment such as trees, plants, paint and this will depend on what they want to do within that park.*

In addition, H2 reiterated that:

*There is no way that we develop a park without budget ... For the development and maintenance of parks, we need a sustainable budget and we plan according to what is in the municipal IDP. We have the Municipal SDBIP [Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan] which requires us to submit quarterly reports on the projects that are on the IDP and this project was not on our budget.*

### **(c) Operationalisation of urban public open spaces**

In clarifying the process used in planning for urban public open spaces, Section 7 of SPLUMA include the development principles related to spatial planning, land development and land use management. The UPOS2 development is in line with the requirements of SPLUMA as it ensured and promoted the SPLUMA principles, namely, spatial justice, sustainability, resilience, efficiency, good administration. In terms of spatial justice, emphasis is on the access to secure tenure and incremental upgrading of informal areas. The principle of good administration emphasises the participation of different urban stakeholders affected by the development. The SPLUMA also serves as a guide regarding the preparation and the contents of the municipal SDF and Land Use Management Scheme. From the spatial planning perspective, UPOS2 is in line with the municipal SDF as contained in the municipal IDP. In terms of the municipal SDF, the identified development is situated in an area that is suitable for residential development. The development application of UPOS2 was performed under SPLUMA. TP2 summarised the process followed in planning for UPOS2 as follows:

*We had many applications for infill planning and this settlement was one of them. The application was made in terms of Section 16 (2) of the Municipal Land Use Planning By-Law (2015) for amendment of the General Plan by means of the closure of a park, re-layout of the closed portion of a park subject to the registration of the subdivision at Deeds Office within 24 months from the date of approval and rezoning. The whole property will not be used for residential purposes only, there are portions of land that will still be used as a park.*

The land use reservation of UPOS2 is still done under Annexure F (RSA, 1986) which is an outdated document that is still used to regulate land use management in the townships. In addition, E2 also stated that the MOSS document needs to be updated. H1 mentioned that the by-laws for managing urban open spaces are not implemented because there is evidence of urban public open space encroachment.

#### **1.1.1.1.7 Construct 2: Community participation**

In an attempt to test the research propositions, the researcher inquired about different aspects of community participation. In the same vein as UPOS1, the researcher sought to establish the level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders in development applications,

the representative of the sample (who is involved in participation? and what criteria was followed for this process?), were their voices heard and what procedure or guidelines were used during community participation. This provided the researcher an opportunity to understand the nature of the relationship between the different urban stakeholders in urban open space planning, including their involvement in planning projects. From a spatial planning perspective, it is imperative that all urban stakeholders collaborate in order to achieve a common goal of understanding the concept; community participation is key. The findings that accrued from the interviews were presented in three interlinked categories, namely, level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders, level of representatives of the population and nature of community participation process.

#### **(a) Level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders**

Based on the interviews conducted by the researcher, it was noticed that the level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders was low. Since the planners initiate the development applications, they have a responsibility to form partnerships with other stakeholders. This includes being part of community participation which involve the contributions of everyone involved in planning projects, including the community members. Each planning project on the pipeline should be inclusive of everyone who forms part of the projects. It was indicated by TP1 that they had a shortage of capacity and they therefore have to outsource some of their projects, especially municipal land use applications. With this challenge, town planning consultants are appointed to handle the municipal land use management application and they have to be in partnership with everyone involved. In her rendition of the situation, TP1 indicated that:

*Because we are short staffed, we outsource the MMM projects to the town planning consultants who are mostly appointed to run with the township establishment applications as well as infill planning projects. They are therefore expected to conduct public meetings. In this case, the project was done in-house but there was no formal community participation.*

As stated in UPOS1, TP2 buttressed this statement as he indicated that:

*As the municipality, we use consultants who hold meetings with the ward committee and they present a plan showing the intention of the development in the area.*

When asked if the community participation is done properly with the involvement of all urban stakeholders, H1 stated that:

*Yes, the ward councillor meets the community and find out their needs and what they want to do in a park and that park will be designed according to their needs. The community does not get*

*enough education about the value of parks and it is the responsibility of the ward councillor to inform the community about functions of a park.*

An indication from other interviewees is that there is no proper collaboration or even consultation among the municipal officials, the community and even external stakeholders. Focus group discussants based on UPOS2 also decried the lack of collaboration, communication and non-involvement of all the stakeholders involved in planning. Some respondents indicated that they have not seen the layout plan of the settlement, so they were never involved in the project. Some mentioned that they had hopes for improvement when they met with the land surveyor who was appointed for the settlement.

### **(b) Level of representativeness of the population**

The South African government introduced the Batho Pele Principles to strengthen its service delivery plans. This is a tool intended to enhance community participation and service delivery. The community members should be consulted about planning aspects affecting their livelihoods. The community participation process includes activities such as providing the community with information related to planning projects, they should be consulted and be involved in decision-making, there should be equal partnership between the community and the municipality in decision-making processes and the community needs to be empowered with all the decisions taken by the municipal council.

Similar to UPOS1, planning of this settlement within UPOS2 did not involve the community. One of the factors influencing community participation is the representativeness factor where all community members need to be involved in the community participation process and this was not the case with the planning of UPOS2. The ward councillor and ward committee members represented the community during planning. The community claimed that they were not involved during the planning process and sometimes they were even side-lined in public meetings pertaining to the discussion of matters in Freedom Square and Namibia. During the interviews, some respondents indicated that they were not aware that the settlement had been approved by Municipal Planning Tribunal for residential purposes. They mentioned that they sometimes felt that they were not part of that community since they did not have all the necessary knowledge about the area. They did not know how the layout plan of the development look like. According to her experience, TP1 validated that they do not normally meet with the community concerned, they discuss the plans with the ward councillor who will later inform the community in their public meetings about the outcome of the meetings with the planning unit at the municipality.

One of the respondents from CM2 added that:

*We are not even informed if there are meetings in this area. If we happen to hear about them, the councillor will tell us that we are not supposed to be part of the meeting since he only called people from Namibia and Freedom Square. We do not understand this because we are staying within Freedom Square, it's just that we stay in informal settlements.*

An example of this kind of confusion within UPOS2 was mentioned by GM1 in his statement when he pointed out that:

*The whole community must be involved in the community participation process and this in not done in that manner, currently it just becomes the issue of compliance. Level of representation among the community members is low because not everyone is represented at this stage. You may find old-age people or drunk people attending the public meetings and nothing will be productive out of such meetings.*

Furthermore, community participation in MMM is mostly done during IDP review process. Communities also disengage from the planning processes because of little or no knowledge at all regarding the projects. One of the CM2 respondents indicated that they just saw the municipality giving them erf numbers and they were told that roads would be fixed and later they would get toilets as they were currently using pit toilets and communal taps which were added recently. This community still needed to be empowered by the relevant authorities.

### **(c) Nature of the community participation process**

Community participation serves as a guide in promoting the involvement of the community in governance. Post-1994, there were changes in terms of the focus on community participation as consultation and participation of the community was a key priority. All the spheres of government were mandated by the Constitution of the country to create mechanisms that involve participation of the community in all government-led initiatives. The participation process in engaging all the stakeholders need to be clearly defined. Consultation of the community members in all planning actions is one of the key principles in community participation. The Municipal Systems Act enforces the culture of community participation in municipalities because this is a platform for the community to engage in the affairs of the municipality.

The South African government documented policies that guide community participation. The SPLUMA relates community participation to one of its development principles, namely, that of good administration. As mentioned in UPOS1, this development principle promotes the coordination of all spheres of government in ensuring an integrated approach to spatial planning and land use management. Also, it promotes transparency in community

participation processes. This includes the preparation and amendment of spatial plans, policies, land use schemes and procedures for development applications. On the issue of the nature of the community participation process and the guidelines followed in planning for UPOS2, from his experience, TP2 added that:

*Community participation is mainly done with the ward councillor and the ward committee who represent the entire community. They later have public meetings with the community to inform them of the inputs from planning. Community participation for this settlement was not done, except in cases where the planner do site visits and communicate with the concerned community.*

TP3 added that:

*The only time where the ward committee members met with the planners was to clarify the process of development applications and time horizons because the community did not understand why the application approval were taking a long time. Also, the community was met when the land surveyor was on site to start the process of pegging.*

TP1 viewed this from her experience of development applications and asserted that no proper consultation was done in the upgrading or formalisation of this settlement. The planning unit does not have proper guidelines or a framework that is used in engaging the community in development application processes. Currently, the residents have been relocated to the respective properties after the development application for UPOS2 was done but some are still clueless regarding the processes to follow after this. GM1, AGM1 and GM2 added that proper education based on the way forward is needed because some residents sell their properties out of desperation even though they waited a long time to be owners of properties.

#### **1.1.1.1.8 Construct 3: Value conflict management**

Urban public open spaces have different values, benefits and uses but different urban stakeholders display different perceptions about them. Their different perceptions lead to value conflicts in planning and management of urban public open spaces. These values include planning, environmental, economic, recreation, housing, cultural and public goods. These value conflicts make it difficult for planners to achieve the key objectives of planning for sustainable communities. In this section, the researcher sought to establish the existence of the different perceptions displayed by different urban stakeholders regarding the value and use of open spaces. To do this effectively, the researcher adopted different factors on value conflict management and these factors are discussed below.

**(a) Factors influencing the perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the value of urban public open spaces**

From the data collected through the semi-structured interviews and focus groups, it appeared that the various urban stakeholders view open spaces in different ways. In his contribution, TP2, while supporting TP1, observed that:

*Community members value open spaces for houses because it is their primary need, not open spaces. Lots of them encroached this open spaces because they are in desperate need for houses.*

TP3, in support of other urban stakeholders on this issue, indicated that:

*Even the different municipal officials view open spaces differently. People are attracted to open spaces for social and recreational purposes because this is motivation for the relationship they have with the environment.*

From the preceding statement, GM1, GM2 and AGM1 made it explicitly clear that their focus is on creating sustainable human settlements. UPOS2 is one of the infill projects initiated by the Directorate: Human Settlement. UPOS2 is used for residential purposes but after the rezoning of the settlement, three portions of this urban open space are still left for recreational purposes. This also make it easier for planners to involve Parks and Cemeteries to manage such spaces. H1 and H2 indicated that they were the custodians of open spaces but they are not regarded as essential. Their perception on the value of open spaces is not taken into consideration. H2 corroborated this claim when he mentioned that:

*Our challenge is that parks are being amended by means of closure of a park, re-layout and rezoning, especially in the townships. Other land uses are being prioritised ... we are not regarded as essential; we have the role to play in providing or enhancing recreation and help the communities.*

Other respondents of CM1 admitted that they are also doing wrong by not prioritising the open spaces within their surroundings. They have encouraged their elder children to build shacks for themselves close by. Others lamented that they understood the value of open spaces but their main concern was housing. Their responses are highlighted below:

**Box 6.6: Respondents' views on their perception regarding the value of urban public open space**

*We cannot take care of parks while we do not have houses.*

*I believe that we can still save these open spaces that are still left but we need guidance. The municipality and the ward councillor must work with us especially when it comes to collection of*

*rubbish. It is easy for us to dump rubbish on these spaces as rubbish is not collected weekly by the municipality.*

*It is better if these spaces are occupied for housing because they are not safe spaces. If the municipality creates a park, it must be fenced and cleaned ... There is a park in Kagisanong which is well-maintained, why can't that be done in our settlement?*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Gathering from the interviews for UPOS2, it is evident that different urban stakeholders view the value and utility of urban open spaces differently. These perceptions should be considered in promoting effective planning for sustainable environments. However, the researcher discovered that there is a gap between the different urban stakeholders in terms of urban open space planning, community participation and value conflict management.

### **6.4.3 Case 3 (UPOS3)**

#### **6.4.3.1 Specification of the case**

UPOS3, known as Magashule Square, is situated within Freedom Square township, Mangaung. This is an informal settlement accessible through Dewetsdorp Road, about 10 km from the CBD. This settlement has been existing for more than 20 years. It is municipal land and in terms of the land use conditions in Annexure F (RSA, 1986), it had a land use reservation of 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes. In terms of the open space classification and maintenance system, UPOS3 falls under the Developed Park Criteria D. This settlement is situated in a rocky area which can be costly for development, especially for infrastructural services. Due to rapid urbanisation, the property was invaded by the community for residential purposes and there is also a permanent structure of a church. Also, UPOS3 is located near a police station, school and a health care facility. The community members are using communal standpipes and self-dug pit toilets.

In 1994, this property, erf 36502 Freedom Square, was subdivided into two portions (Portion 1 and the Remainder of erf 36502). Portion 1 of erf 36502 was rezoned to "Community Facility" to accommodate a church that was built there, and the Remainder of 36502 remained 'Public Open Space'. Due to an increase in illegal occupation of land, especially public open spaces, the MMM has to provide extra services of town planning processes, land surveying and infrastructural purposes. Because this property was invaded for residential purposes, the planning division lodged an application for the amendment of the General Plan by means of the closure of a park on the Remainder of erf 36502, rezoning, consolidation of both portions of land and subdivision of the property on behalf of the MMM to the Free State Provincial

Government. The 1998 resolution that was made by the MMM Council was exempted so that the residents can be provided with the necessary services. Figure 6.10 shows a photo taken by the researcher during her fieldwork.



*Figure 6.10: Photo of Magashule Square in Freedom Square indicating the nature of the area*  
Source: Author's own (2019)

#### **6.4.3.2 Detailed information of the research participants**

The research participants were selected from the different stakeholders involved in urban public open spaces in Mangaung. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The focus of the interviews was to gain insight regarding the participants' experiences, knowledge, roles and responsibilities in terms on urban open space planning. The experience of the research participants was basically on their involvement in the management of urban open space planning and their involvement in the community participation during the planning process in MMM. The interviews also looked into their perceptions of the values and utility of urban open spaces. The different urban stakeholders have different perceptions regarding the utility of urban open spaces and these led to different value conflicts which affected the objectives of planning for sustainable neighbourhoods. All the semi-structured interviews were held at the MMM offices, whereas the focus group discussions were held in Freedom Square township in Mangaung from July to October 2019

because all the research participants who are the municipal officials were working in the same building. The researcher had an opportunity to work at the municipality and had experience in working with some of the infill planning projects, including UPOS4. As indicated in UPOS1 and UPOS2, the municipality had a limited number of personnel and it took the researcher a short period of time to conduct interviews. With the assistance of the ward councillors and the ward committee members of the case study area, the researcher did not struggle to gain access for focus group discussions.

### **6.4.3.3 Intra-case analysis of data**

The data analysis related to UPOS3 was emanated from the semi-structured interviews of municipal officials involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. Focus group discussions for data collection included the ward committee members, community members owning properties around the application property, as well as those who occupied the informal settlement. The views of all the research participants assisted in gathering the information for testing of the research propositions.

#### **1.1.1.1.9 Construct 1: Urban open space planning**

The researcher sought to understand the different opinions of various urban stakeholders involved in the management and usefulness of urban public open space in Freedom Square, Mangaung. During the interviews around the main theme, sub-themes emerged which were related to the procedure that planners used in planning for urban public open spaces.

#### **(a) Procedural methods for urban open space planning**

In responding to the question about the procedure or planning model that was used when planning for UPOS3, the interviewees indicated that they used the opportunistic planning model. There was an indication that most of the urban open spaces designed by means of the opportunistic planning model became dysfunctional. According to the strategic principles on the criteria and maintenance of urban open space, UPOS3 falls under Category D, which is an undeveloped park. Alluding to poor planning of urban public open spaces in the townships, H2 mentioned that there is no real planning for urban open spaces, all the left-over spaces are thrown back to the Sub-directorate. He further confirmed that he did not know about the closure of this park for residential purposes. In his statement, H2 maintained that this settlement was built in a green area (MOSS) and it is important that they know what they want to achieve with these green spaces. What is more critical is that they plan for what is indicated on the municipal IDP so the communities need a strong, vocal ward councillor.

UPOS3, as an undeveloped park under category D, was encroached for residential and church purposes. Singling out the importance of the procedure for planning and management of open spaces, HP indicated that his Directorate got pressure from the instruction given by Human Settlements and the political office, for informal settlement upgrading or infill planning or in-situ upgrading. Governance or land use regimes of urban land were not taken into consideration and the land that was earmarked for parks was less prioritised. UPOS3 was earmarked as a park for recreational purposes and was later illegally occupied by church members of the existent church that had to be accommodated when the change of land use was done. When the development application was initiated, the 1998 Council Resolution was rescinded so that the application for land use change would be approved. After the recommendation for approval was successful at the municipality, the development application was lodged to the Free State Provincial Government: Spatial Planning for approval. The interviewee indicated that there was a delay in the approval of this application due to the procedure that was taken before the SPLUMA was enacted. The approval was done but the pegging and relocation of the rightful owner was done in an incorrect manner.

#### **(b) Factors influencing urban public open space planning**

The researcher sought to understand the different factors that influenced urban public open spaces within UPOS3. Interviews were conducted in order to attempt testing of the research propositions. Different sub-themes emerged from these interviews.

#### **LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

From the interviews within UPOS3, it is evident that there was a lack of understanding regarding what urban public open spaces are, their values and usefulness among the various urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of open spaces. The annual report of the municipality indicated the core functions of the Parks unit, namely, greening the city entrances, parks and tree planting; maintenance of the existing municipal parks and sports fields; development of new parks and beautification of cemeteries. The municipal policy related to the Adopt-a-Park policy defines a public open space as any land that is used by the public. This can be any open space, park, garden, recreational ground, sports ground, pleasure resort or square. In addition, the municipal by-laws related to urban public open spaces define it as all spaces within a range of open spaces in a city and these spaces range from urban to peri-urban structures of the city. They are all under the control of the MMM.

Stressing the value of urban open spaces, the interviewees placed different values on these spaces, including how they benefit from them. The definitions, as stated on the municipal

documents are also not clear and can be quite confusing to the community. One of the agreements that was repeated by the majority of the interviewees was the issue of explaining the meaning or function of urban open spaces. One of the respondents of CM2 within UPOS3 indicated that when they see an open space, they view it as a space that is non-functioning and they are in desperate need of land for housing. Adding to his experience with planning for open spaces, TP2 indicated that on the General Plan of the property, the land use is a park. This create confusion to the public because they are expecting a park to have furniture such as benches and swings. On the other hand, the term 'public open space' is also used. He added that it would be helpful if the municipality can move away from the term 'public open space' and use a different concept that will be clear to the communities.

Figure 6.11 shows a portion of the General Plan of UPOS3 before the closure of a park and rezoning.

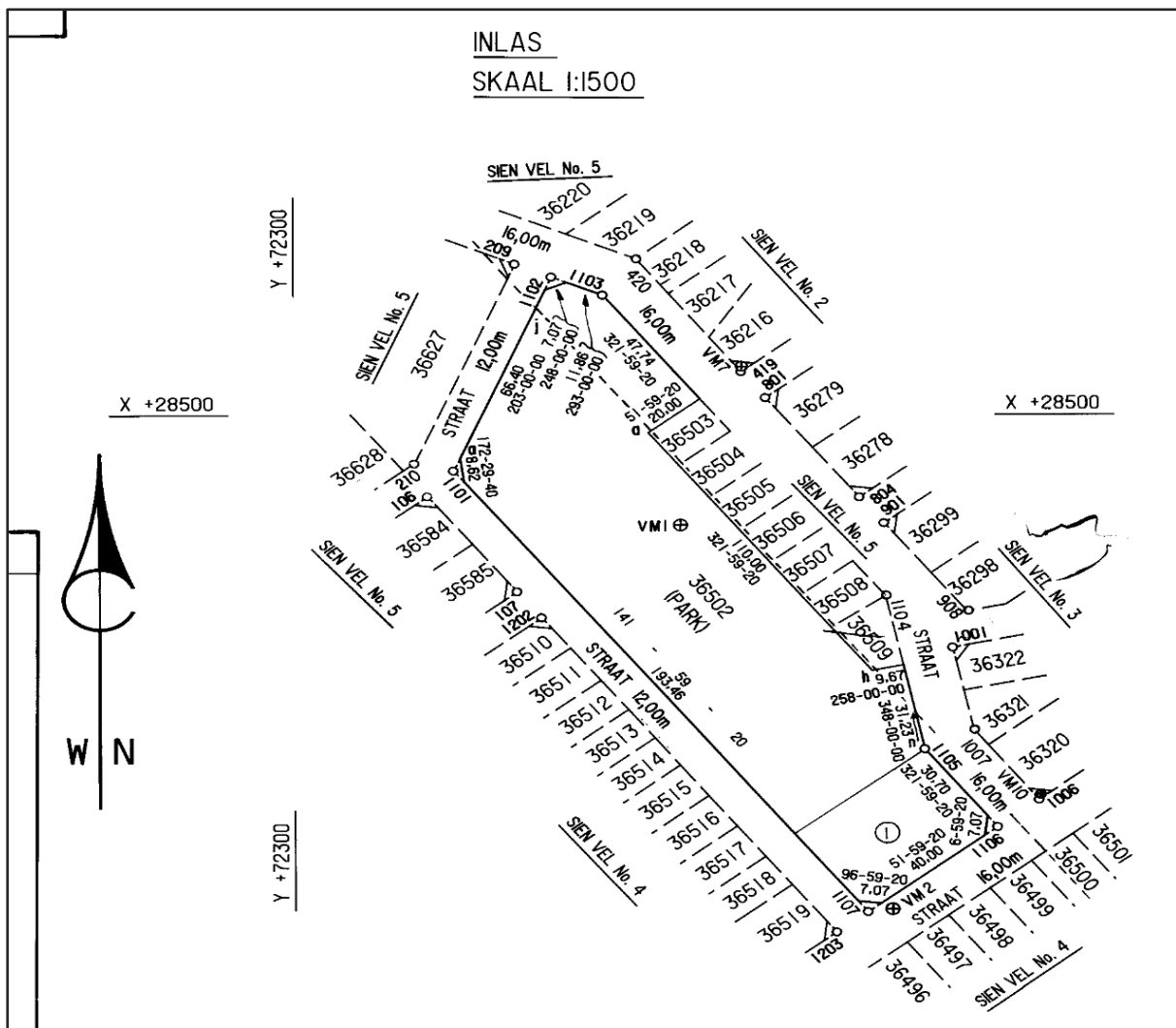


Figure 6.11: Portion of the General Plan of UPOS3 before the closure of a park and rezoning  
Source: Retrieved in October 2019

While agreeing to observing the gradual disappearance of open spaces, a CM1 respondent indicated that they needed open spaces especially for their children who are playing on the street rather than on proper soccer fields. Accordingly, a CM2 respondent explained that they had a clear understanding of what these spaces are used for but their main concern was homelessness. WC, GM2 and AGM1 lent support to this assertion as they added their contribution to the importance of providing sustainable human settlements to the community members in need. Buttressing his opinion on the value of urban open space, H2 highlighted that their role was to enhance recreation but their challenge was that this park was close to prioritise other land uses such as a residential and community facility to accommodate a church. This implies that open spaces are not only perceived for shelter but also for religious purposes.

### **DYSFUNCTIONAL NATURE OF LAND USE REGIMES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

The dysfunctional nature of land use regimes and decision-making processes was viewed to be one of the major causal factors for encroachment of UPOS3. Various urban stakeholders within UPOS3 acknowledged that law was never enforced when people illegally occupied this property. In his rendition to this situation, TP2 mentioned that the land use reservation of this property was that of a 'Park' and has to be used for recreational purposes. He further stated that land use regime was not enforced, hence the change of land use to 'Residential' and 'Community facility' to accommodate a church. The resolution that was taken by MMM Council in 1998 was not enforced as planners were expected to render development planning services. This area have been rezoned for dwelling purposes and the residents have electricity and water. When the researcher enquired about the role of planners or the municipality in enforcing land use regimes, HP pointed out that the Directorate: Human Settlement has a land invasion unit which has to enforce land use regimes. It is not easy for the planners to learn about these encroachments unless they have to formalise the property by means of lodging a development application to the Municipal Planning Tribunal for approval.

The SPLUMA emphasise that municipalities must have a land use scheme that will assist the planner to enforce land use regimes. Within UPOS3, there was lack of enforcement of land use regimes when people resided in that area and they had been staying there without water and electricity for a very long time. GM1, GM2, AGM1 and M1 maintained that UPOS3 was one of their projects for Upgrading of Informal Settlement Strategy and the Human Settlements Plan. These documents assist officials in creating sustainable human settlements. They normally promote infill planning or in-situ planning to accommodate informal dwellers in planned and serviced townships. This creates a huge challenge for planners who are observing the gradual release of urban public open spaces.

## POOR MANAGEMENT OF URBAN OPEN SPACES

Poor management of urban open spaces is viewed as one of the critical aspects encouraging encroachment within UPOS3. Various urban stakeholders are shifting blame towards each other. TP1 mentioned that their role was to plan for open spaces, and management was not part of their responsibilities. UPOS3 has been encroached for both residential and religious purposes due to poor management. The CM1 respondent emphasised that the property remained the responsibility of the municipality and therefore this included its management. They felt that the municipality failed them as this open space was unattended and non-functional; hence, they lost it through encroachment. The CM1 respondent further emphasised that it is best if these open spaces are occupied for housing rather than being used for dumping rubbish or criminal activities. Because of poor management by the municipality, a respondent of CM2 indicated that they saw the space for housing opportunities. The concern from the community was that the gradual disappearance of these spaces affected the social life of their children as they were now playing on the streets rather than having a proper soccer field. Before illegal occupation on UPOS3, the community indicated that it was unattractive, not safe for the community and there were no characteristics of comfort as it is supposed to be since it was earmarked as a park.

In addition to this assertion, respondents for CM1 within UPOS3 indicated that the municipality was consulted regarding the poor status of the open space in their proximity but no assistance was granted. According to WC, the current state of urban open spaces has resulted because of the low prioritisation of these spaces by the municipality. On enquiry regarding the state of the open spaces, he indicated that they were told that there were no resources for maintenance of parks. He also stated that:

*We have now educated the community that they have to manage the open spaces close to them ... We have tried to remove people who encroach on the open spaces but the problem is that planning is done for open spaces but nothing is done. People have been waiting for sites for a long time and they will tell you that they have been on the waiting list for too long and they ran out of patience. It will be better if the municipality can plan for open spaces then immediately do something about them.*

In an attempt to clarify the mandate of the unit who is the custodian of open spaces in the municipality, H2 reiterated that they work on the strategic principles for open spaces. He indicated that they manage open spaces depending on the criteria of open spaces, and UPOS3 falls under the Developed Park Criteria D which is an undeveloped park. They develop and manage parks which have undergone the IDP process. Therefore, he added that communities need outspoken ward councillors who will stand in the gap for the ward. In comparison, UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3, all three open spaces have similar characteristics

except that UPOS3 has been used up without leaving any remaining portion that can still be utilised by the community for recreational purposes.

### **DISCONNECT AMONG THE URBAN STAKEHOLDERS REGARDING PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACES**

Under this sub-theme, the researcher sought to establish if there were disconnections among the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. This was done effectively by collecting data from the municipal officials and the concerned communities as they are urban stakeholders involved in creating sustainable communities. Undeniably, all the research participants confirmed that there was a disconnect among the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces. Poor communication regarding the planning or open spaces has contributed to the urban open space encroachment within UPOS3. In their submission regarding UPOS3, the interviewees TP2, GM1, M1, E1, H1, H2 and WC, attested that the development application for this settlement only included the requests for comments for services such as water and sanitation as well as electrical connection. The ward councillor was inclusive in the planning as he was always kept updated with the progress of the development application. Admittedly, H1 maintained that he was not aware of the amendment of the closure of this park. This is evidence to the level of communication among urban stakeholders. As the custodians of the parks, their input on the development or planning of open spaces carries weight. He further insisted that communities need strong ward councillors who are informed about the objectives of planning for open spaces, including the process of the IDP in order to prioritise the needs of the community.

When the researcher asked about the criteria used in management versus mismanagement of urban open spaces within Freedom Square, UPOS3 inclusive, H2 declared that:

*There is no way that we can manage or develop a park without a budget ... When the ward councillor is not strong, it becomes a problem because we plan for what is in the IDP.*

Commenting further with regard to the poor management of urban open spaces and that UPOS3 falls under Criteria D, H2 maintained that:

*We have the strategic principles for planning and management of parks ... I didn't know of the closure of this park and this shows that the level of communication is low. We work on the operational budget, so everything must be part of the IDP.*

In his experience, WC said that:

*It looks that Planning Directorate does not work with Human Settlements Directorate because they do not have a programme or plan they are working on. It looks like there is no communication*

*between them. We wouldn't be having a problem of encroachment of urban open spaces if they were working together and acting speedily once the township is established.*

### **ABSENCE OF PROFOUND SUPPORT OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

It was observed through the interviews that there was no support from the municipality as urban public open spaces were not prioritised. Instead, other land uses such as residential, community facility and businesses took priority because they were budgeted for. This has been a major drawback in managing UPOS3. In this instance, not only residential erven were accommodated, a permanent structure of a church and ancillary structure were accommodated for religious purposes. In addition to the change of land use in UPOS3, TP2 highlighted that this was not strange because churches are mushrooming in urban open spaces, especially in existing developments. The demand for church sites is also increasing and this is another perception attached to the value and utility of urban open spaces. During their interviews, H1 and H2 shared an example of a successful park that was budgeted for and it is a functional park maintained by a group of individuals who volunteered to adopt a park. They formed a partnership with the municipality and this park is recognised by the whole community of Kagisanong and the surrounding townships. This is an indication that if there is support of the municipality and the correct procedures are followed, parks serve their specific purpose.

Adding to the issue of profound support, TP1 and TP2 highlighted that there was low prioritisation of urban open spaces, and other land uses took preference. This has led to the extinction of urban open spaces. The respondents of CM1 within UPOS3 maintained that urban open spaces were not prioritised and this is evident in their appearance. A comparison was then made regarding how urban public open spaces are handled in the townships as well as in the suburbs. When the researcher enquired more about the difference between urban public open spaces in the suburbs and in the townships in general, including UPOS3, TP2 mentioned that:

*Communities in the suburbs maintain open spaces because it adds value to their properties and they do road reserve. The whole perception differs with income level.*

#### **(a) Operationalisation of urban public open spaces**

The UPOS3 development application was lodged using the old legislation of town planning. Approval was made in terms of the Township Ordinance of 1969 and the Removal of Restrictions Act, 1967, for the amendment of the General Plan by means of the closure of the park and the re-layout into residential erven, a community facility and a street. The land use reservation of UPOS3 was still done under Annexure F (RSA, 1986) which is an outdated

document that is still used to regulate land use management in the townships. According to E2, the MOSS document also needs to be updated. In addition, H1 highlighted that their unit has by-laws for managing urban open spaces but they were not functioning well.

From a spatial planning perspective, UPOS3 is reconcilable with the surrounding land uses and it is also in line with the municipal SDF as contained in the municipal IDP. In terms of the municipal SDF, the identified development is situated in an area that is suitable for residential development. In his experience, H2 alluded that the national standards for provision of parks in a settlement is 10%, and due to different causal factors affecting urban open spaces, this was not the case in the entire Freedom Square area as most of the urban open space, including UPOS3 have been encroached.

#### **1.1.1.1.10 Construct 2: Community participation**

This construct is used to establish the level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders who are involved in urban open space planning, the level of representation of the urban stakeholders in community participation as well as the nature of community participation process. In Chapter 3, different aspects of community participation were discussed in-depth. Below is the discussion of the sub-themes that emanated from the interviews.

##### **(a) Level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders**

The researcher sought to establish the level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban open spaces. Collaboration plays a key role in effective community participation. This includes joint partnership, empowerment of urban stakeholders, and consultation in planning and management of open spaces. In this study, urban stakeholders include the planners, politician, community member, and environmentalist. These stakeholders need to be in joint partnership regarding the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. Within UPOS3, the interviewees admitted that the level of collaboration was very low. Not only focusing on UPOS3, when the researcher needed answers regarding the involvement of the community in planning for open spaces and just the upgrading of informal settlements in Freedom Square, TP1 replied by stating that:

*We normally appoint town planning consultants to run the township establishment applications as well as the infill planning application and they are the ones who conduct meetings with the community.*

No consultation with the community within UPOS3 was done as the development application was done in-house. Due to impatience of the community members encroaching of the property

in question, meetings were held with the ward councillor and the ward committee members to educate them about the processes of town planning applications. Before getting this information, the community members would come to the municipal offices demanding service delivery because they were not aware of the lengthy process of development applications. It even led to name calling as planners were perceived to be anti-planning. While acknowledging that the ward councillor and ward committee members were informed about the process and progress of UPOS3, focus group discussants maintained that they were not involved in any community participation process.

From the above findings, it can be concluded that the level of collaboration among the different urban stakeholders involved in urban public open space was minimal. Arnstein, in her ladder of participation, relates this pathology to the non-participatory level as the residents do not have a voice. Furthermore, poor collaboration between all the urban stakeholders is one of the major factors that work against effective community participation. Professionals involved in planning and managing open spaces are failing to involve the community from the initial stages of the planning projects.

#### **(b) Level of representativeness of the population**

Under this sub-construct, the researcher sought to establish the level of representativeness of the sample for community participation in UPOS3. According to the Batho Pele Principles, consultation with the community members about planning aspects influencing their sustainable livelihood is crucial. The municipalities are expected to be transparent and that the voice of the community is heard. While acknowledging that the issue of representativeness of the sample can be twofold, namely, the municipal officials in different structural levels (positions held) and the community members, the level of representativeness within UPOS3 was very minimal. In this case, this community was represented by the councillor and the ward committee members and this grieved the CM1 and CM2. The focus group discussants echoed that they were taken for granted by the municipality. Planning projects were just imposed on them without discussions with them. Those who were encroaching urban open spaces stated that they were sometimes not represented in meetings. Shockingly, some respondents of CM1 indicated that they just saw shacks closer to them but they did not have much detail about them. Sometimes it becomes an issue of ignorance among the community members as even the public meetings are attended by old people who cannot render any valid reasoning.

Within UPOS3, an indication from both CM1 and CM2 respondents is non-involvement in the planning and management of urban open spaces. Similar to UPOS1 and UPOS2, the ward councillor and the ward committee members are more knowledgeable about the development

of this settlement. Verifying this from other urban stakeholders during interviews, the researcher established that the level of representation for the community was very low. This was buttressed by TP1 as she rendered the same assertion as the other cases. In her rendition, she maintained that:

*Community participation is mainly done with the ward councillor and the ward committee who represent the entire community. They later have public meetings with the community to inform them of the input of the community participation meeting.*

In his experience, GM1 reiterated a general statement that it would be ideal if all the urban stakeholders would participate, including the communities who are staying in and around the urban open spaces. He further indicated that community participation was an issue of compliance and not everyone was represented.

### **(c) Nature of the community participation process**

Considering communicative planning theory, community participation in the decision-making process includes consultations with different stakeholders. It promotes democracy, justice and sustainability, consensus building and information sharing among stakeholders. In addition, community participation plays an important role in achieving sustainable development. Furthermore, it is viewed as a process of a group of procedures aimed at consultation, involvement and rendering information to the community for them to take part in decision-making. As mentioned under UPOS1, the municipality has a policy on community participation which provides the procedure on effective participation of the community. Looking into what GM1 mentioned regarding community participation as an issue of compliance, the nature of community participation within UPOS3 indicated a lack of transfer or sharing of information about urban open space planning and management. This does not only refer to the community members but also to the community of the municipal officials. If focus dwells on the municipal officials regarding consensus building and information sharing, serious challenges arise. Taking consideration of the development principle of good administration/governance under the SPLUMA, justice was not done to UPOS3. Narrating their role in planning and management of urban public open spaces, TP1, TP2 and TP3 agreed that community participation was not done properly within UPOS3.

Gathering from the foregoing information, there is no proper guideline of framework used to conduct community participation, specifically for management of urban open spaces and this is one of the major causal factors of encroachment on urban public open spaces.

### **CONSTRUCT 3: VALUE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

The different perceptions towards urban public open spaces have created value conflicts in terms of the quest for sustainable neighbourhoods among the urban stakeholders in Mangaung. Different values concerning the utility and usefulness of urban public open spaces include planning, environmental, economic, recreation, housing, cultural and public goods. These have also created difficulty on the planners in achieving the key objectives of planning for sustainable communities. In an attempt to establish the different factors influencing the perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the value and usefulness of urban open spaces, the researcher interviewed different urban stakeholders involved in management of these spaces within UPOS3. A sub-construct emerged from the interviews and are discussed below.

#### **(d) Factors influencing the perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the value of urban public open spaces**

Drawing from these interviews, the research sought to understand the different factors that influenced the perceptions of the different urban stakeholders within UPOS3, in terms of how they valued urban open spaces including their uses. In addition, it was not surprising that the different urban stakeholders had different perceptions of what the value of urban open spaces are but all the interviewees were in agreement that these different perceptions led to value conflicts. In response to the question of how they viewed the utility or usefulness of urban open space and the challenges posed by the existence of these different perspectives, H2 stated that:

*We are the custodians of urban open spaces in terms of maintenance and our role is to enhance recreation ... if we are informed about these, at least where 10% is left for us to can cater for the surrounding community and get resources.*

Commenting further, TP2 indicated that UPOS3 revealed not only the housing value on urban public open space. He added that part of this open space accommodated a church site and this was another perception. There had been a great demand for church sites recently and some open spaces were encroached for religious purposes, and this was evident in UPOS3. TP1 further stated that their perceptions on urban open spaces were not considered because they also got pressure from the political office to rezone urban open spaces for residential purposes. In her statement, she added:

*People see urban public open spaces as space for grabs because of poor management. They are in desperate need for housing.*

A respondent of CM2 commented further:

*We are aware of the benefits of parks but we need shelter. These spaces have been left open for many years, there is nothing showing that this was a park unless you go to the municipal offices and enquire.*

Repeating his comment in UPOS1 and UPOS2, GM1 added that:

*Due to political pressure, town planners are no longer advancing their mission of the objectives of their profession.*

When asked by the researcher, GM2, AGM1 and M1 indicated that part of their job was to create sustainable human settlements. In this same tone, they formed part of the informal settlement upgrading. The researcher then probed further questions regarding management of the value conflicts as UPOS3 also accommodated the church that was built in that park. Their response was that they were also put under immense pressure by the politicians and they comply.

Also, when the interviewer conducted focus groups, both CM1 and CM2 responded as follows:

**Box 6.7: Respondents' views on their perception regarding the value of urban public open space**

*We do not have houses, so why would we prioritise management of parks.*

*These spaces are not safe because people are using them for criminal activities, dump is thrown there including dead animals and this is not healthy for us. So, it is better if people occupy them for housing because we do not see any value for them.*

*I do not mind if these spaces are used for housing because they are not safe spaces ... We just do not understand why parks here are treated differently from those in town.*

*The municipality has failed us because they did not manage this park. If they did, we wouldn't have lost our park. Maybe it would have been the same as the park near Nzame Primary School.*

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

#### **6.4.4 Case 4 (UPOS4)**

##### **6.4.4.1 Specification of the case**

UPOS4 is a Regional Park in the Mangaung township, erf 50793 Kagisanong. It is situated at a radius of 2 km from UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. It is accessible from Singonzo Street and is surrounded by a residential area, as well as a business, school and clinic. In terms of the land use conditions in Annexure F (RSA, 1986), it has a land use reservation of 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes. Out of many open spaces in the townships, this is a functional park which is safe and secure. In terms of the open space classification and maintenance system, UPOS4 falls under the Developed Park Criteria A. This is one of the

projects of the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries that was developed five years ago under their capital budget. It was identified as an IDP need in the Ward and the provision was done from the budget for the establishment of the park. Consultants and the contractors worked on this park on behalf of the municipality and it was later handed over to the community. This project was initiated under the concept 'Adopt-a-Park' (see Figure 6.12). An agreement was signed between the community members (group of individuals) and the municipality, but the park stayed the responsibility of the municipality. This is a voluntary programme that was based on what the community can do and they are not paid anything. This group of individuals have to maintain the park and ensure cleanliness.



Figure 6.12: Aerial photo of the recreational park (UPOS4) in Kagisanong  
Source: MMM GIS (2019)

#### 6.4.4.2 Detailed information of the research participants

The research participants were selected from the different stakeholders involved in planning, development, and management or maintenance of urban public open spaces. They were interviewed through semi-structured interviews. The main focus of the interviews was predominantly on gaining insight regarding the participant's experience, knowledge, roles and responsibilities in terms of urban open space planning. Their experiences is based on their involvement in the development of public open spaces and their involvement regarding the importance of community participation. The way they perceive the value and utility of the urban public open spaces is of utmost importance. Due to personnel constraints, it was easy for the

researcher to select and collect data speedily. Most of the information for UPOS4 was gained from the main custodians of the open spaces in the MMM who are responsible for the enhancement of recreation in communities. Their focus is based on promoting sustainable environments.

#### **6.4.4.3 Intra-case analysis of data**

The analysis of the data that relates to UPOS4 was thoroughly reviewed in this part of the study. The interviews from the different urban stakeholders contributed to the testing of the research propositions. Also, data was analysed using the pre-determined constructs and was analysed manually.

#### **CONSTRUCT 1: URBAN OPEN SPACE PLANNING**

The researcher wanted to understand the opinions of the different urban stakeholders that are engaged in open space management and usefulness. Within UPOS4, a recreational park which is functional in the township, evidence was drawn around the main construct and the sub-constructs that emerged from the interviews.

#### **(a) Procedural methods for urban open space planning**

Within the different planning models for open spaces, UPOS4 was planned by using a park system which includes the parks and gardens, and this system is based on the needs of the community rather than the protection of natural environments. Drawing from his experience, H2 stated that:

*This is one of our projects that was established 5 years ago on our capital budget and we executed it in terms of our budget. It was identified by the community of that Ward as an IDP need and the provision was done from the budget of the establishment of parks. That is how it was developed.*

He further stated that:

*Previously, town planning used the guidelines where they ensured that, in each township establishment application, 10% of that space is allocated to open space for parks. With us, it depends on the category or classification of that particular park and fortunately, this park falls under Development Criteria Park A.*

He added that their division suggested that planners should focus on developing or identifying a large park instead of the development of a small parcel of urban land for parks. These small pieces of urban land create challenges as they are encroached for residential purposes or even to accommodate churches.

Arguing with the above statement, TP1 and TP2 agreed that they created small pockets of urban land for parks as they applied the opportunistic planning model for the development of open spaces. They are prepared to take the suggestion of a 'Recreational Park' which must be developed by Parks and Cemeteries Sub-directorate immediately after the approval of the application. This will in turn help them achieve the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. H1 and H2 emphasised the introduction of the concept 'Adopt-a-Park' because they think it is a solution of overcoming their shortcomings or even the extinction of the developed urban open spaces. H2 emphasised that:

*This is an American concept and I see positive things with this programme but it needs to be maintained. Communities have to be educated about this concept so that they can understand how it operates.*

### **(b) Factors influencing urban public open space planning**

Following the trend of the previously analysed cases, the researcher wanted to establish the views of the interviewees in UPOS4 regarding the factors that influence urban open space planning and sub-constructs that emerged from the data collected. The findings that emanated from the interviews within UPOS4 are viewed as critical success factors and they include the following:

#### **UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUE AND UTILITY OF URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

As defined by the researcher in Chapter 2, an urban public open space is an unbuilt portion of land, planned or unplanned, to fulfil human needs (socially, economically and environmentally) and to contribute in the quality of life of human beings in urban areas. In planning for urban public open spaces, the size and function of a park must be related to the traveling distance that is calculated from the residential units and the urban open spaces. When planning for urban open spaces was done within UPOS4, the quantitative planning model was considered. The space standards, the size and the number of people were taken into account when allocating a park within UPOS4. The principle of choice in allocation of this urban public open space was imperative as it is now currently used as a mechanism of relaxation. It creates the sense of uniqueness, balance and comfort to the residents within UPOS4.

Following the interviews conducted, TP1, TP2 and TP3 indicated that urban public open spaces play a critical role in creating sustainable neighbourhoods. Their role in planning was to achieve the key objectives of planning, namely, creating sustainable environments. Admittedly, they indicated that they faced challenges of urban open space encroachment and

were forced to change land use to accommodate homelessness. UPOS4 is one of the urban open spaces that is functional and was used for recreation purposes. The interviews revealed that this park was one of the successful parks in the entire Mangaung township due to the understanding of the value and utility of the urban open spaces. H2 made this revelation when he admitted that:

*This is one of our projects developed 5 years ago with our capital budget and we executed it in terms of the budget. This was identified as an IDP need in the ward and the provision was done from the budget for this establishment ... that is how it was developed.*

The foregoing indicates that there is an understanding of the value of urban open spaces from all the urban stakeholders, the community included. Reference has also been given by the residents in UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 as they were attempting to make comparison of the status of the parks in their proximity.

In response to the question of whether UPOS4 supports the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods, the interviewees were in agreement that this open space support the environmental, economic and social aspects. The literature confirms that the environmental benefits promote sustainability. They also boost the image of the city as they make the cities attractive. Socially, this urban open space contributes to social inclusion because it is associated with participation of the community as it includes aspects such as sense of belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy. Buttressing this assertion, H2 emphasised that the development of this park was a joint partnership with the community as it was identified as a need by the community.

In addition to the status of UPOS4, TP3 maintained that:

*This open space enhances recreational opportunities for the community and promotes the sense of tranquillity and peace. It also represent the element of social inclusion and participation because a group of individuals decided to adopt this park and maintain it. In addition, it serves as a social catalyst because it brings people together because they can also do physical activities.*

Figure 6.13 shows photos of the recreational park in Kagisanong.



Figure 6.13: Photos of the recreational park in Kagisanong

Source: Author (2019)

### MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

The literature indicated that management of urban open spaces should improve the quality of life for humans and it must promote sustainable neighbourhoods, natural environments and effective use of resources. Proper planning and management of these spaces are crucial and it should be inclusive of community participation. Furthermore, the guiding principles for management of urban open spaces include character and identity, distinction between public and private spaces, quality of the public realm, be easily accessible, legibility and adaptability and diversity or choice. With the status of UPOS4, the park has been adopted by a group of individuals who got involved in a signed agreement with the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries. They are in joint partnership and this group of individuals volunteered to manage this park. Applauding this approach, H2 indicated that:

*This is a voluntary programme based on what they can do. They are not paid anything but to maintain the park, collect the papers and remove weeds. We do not expect anything from them. If they want to upgrade this park, they can do is, as long as they have sponsors*

Evidence of management of this park was identified from the interviews and the field work by the researcher (see Figure 6.14).



Figure 6.14: Photo of the recreational park in Kagisanong

Source: Author's own (2019)

## **COLLABORATION OF DIFFERENT URBAN STAKEHOLDERS**

From the data collected, the researcher was able to detect that there was collaboration among the stakeholders involved in the management of urban open spaces within UPOS4. There was mutual understanding among the urban stakeholders, as indicated by H2 as he stated that the development of a park within UPOS4 was a joint venture between the community members and the municipal officials. The success of this adopt-a-park project depended on the collaborative process among the stakeholders. The collaborative process is related to information sharing. The community members were given information regarding the adoption of a park and they followed all the necessary processes that led to the approval of their park. TP1, TP2, TP3 and H2 indicated that a consolidated approach among the stakeholders was crucial. Because this project was an IDP need, it is an indication that the ward councillor was involved. H2 indicated that each ward requires a strong ward councillor who will have a voice concerning the needs of the community.

## **COMPLIANCE TO LAND USE REGIMES**

Comparing UPOS4 with the case studies previously discussed, the researcher established that there was compliance with the land use regimes. The zoning or land use reservation for UPOS4 is a 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes and it is used as such. This urban open space was adopted by a group of individuals who ensured that the park would be functional and they would maintain it so that it would remain attractive, comfortable, secure and safe. Figure 6.15 shows the recreational park in Kagisanong.



*Figure 6.15: Photo of the recreational park in Kagisanong*

Source: Author's own (2019)

What makes this open space unique is that it has not been occupied illegally. Funds for this developed park were taken from the capital budget. In terms of the MOSS, it still remains a green area as TP1 and E2 emphasised that the city needs the 'green lungs' to breathe. H2 emphasised that their responsibility was to enhance recreation and this is evident to UPOS4.

#### **MUNICIPAL SUPPORT AND BUDGETING FOR URBAN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

Budget constraints were emphasised during the interviews for the previously discussed cases. Within UPOS4, H2 indicated that they work according to the operational budget, and every project must be part of the IDP. He further stated that they need a sustainable budget and they only needed maintenance. As the municipal council allocate a budget to all the departments, the budget for this project was approved because it was on the municipal IDP. They have to comply with the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan and submit quarterly reports on the project as per the IDP. As previously indicated, UPOS4 arose as part of the needs for the community for which a budget was allocated for this project. The community works in conjunction with the municipality as their support system. Even so, this is a voluntary project and the individuals forming part of the maintenance of the park are not being paid by the municipality.

#### **(c) Operationalisation of urban public open spaces**

South Africa has a vast range of legislation, policies and strategies that guide integrated planning, including the SPLUMA which serves as a guide for spatial planning and land use management. It promotes consistency and standardisation in the procedures to be followed in development applications, including decision-making by the authorities involved in land use management applications. An old legislation was employed in planning for the entire township where UPOS4 is located, but currently it is affected by the SPLUMA which integrates and aligns plans such as the SDF, IDP, and BEPP. In terms of the municipal SDF, UPOS4 is located within the MOSS area. In terms of the land use and planning schemes, UPOS4 is still managed using Annexure F (RSA, 1986); hence, the land use management of 'Public Open Space'. Based on their experience, H1 and H2 indicated that the property forms part of the Adopt-a-Park policy.

In their explanation, and according to the MMM Adopt-a-Park policy, the municipality places high value on the preservation and maintenance of open spaces. With this in mind, the municipality envisages an attractive, safe, clean, green and healthy environment for the public. The main aim of this policy is to involve the communities to protect and maintain open spaces in Mangaung. The communities need to be educated about the importance of open space,

and how to create and preserve these spaces so that they can be beneficial to all the urban stakeholders. This programme allows a group of individuals from the community to adopt a park which they will maintain, with the support of the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries. This unit may also identify specific parks which can be part of this programme but several parks may be excluded due to safety, economics, logistics as well as undeveloped parks such as UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. The benefits of Adopt-a-Park include a litter-free and attractive environment.

H2 explained that:

*This park was adopted by a group of individuals from the community who volunteered as they are not paid anything. They maintain the park, collect papers and remove weed and we do not expect anything from them. If they want to upgrade this park, they can do it as long as they have sponsors.*

H2 added that this was a joint partnership and just as stated on the MMM policy document, this group of individuals lodged an application to the municipality which was scrutinised and approved. Then a legal, binding agreement was signed by the adopter and the General Manager: Parks and Cemeteries and they an operational plan was attached to the agreement. The agreement is valid for a maximum of three years.



Figure 6.16: Photo of the adopted park in Kagisanong  
Source: Author's own (2019)

#### **1.1.1.1.11 Construct 2: Community participation**

As stated in UPOS1, the proper procedure of community participation processes need to be followed. With the municipal Public Participation Policy in existence, UPOS4 managed to be part of the implementation procedure. During the interviews in relation to UPOS4, various urban stakeholders were identified who made this process a success. The following categories that emanated from the data collected during the interviews:

##### **(a) Level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders**

The collaborative process included the different urban stakeholders working together to achieve the same goal. During the interviews, the researcher observed that in UPOS4, the urban stakeholders worked together to achieve the planning objective. As with the previous cases analysed, H2 gave an example regarding how UPOS4 was developed, including the collaboration with the different urban stakeholders. He added that the Adopt-a-Park project is an example of the interaction of different urban stakeholders and the compliance to the IDP process. There was an agreement by the community regarding the usage of the urban public open space in their proximity. The fact that it was identified during the IPD process consultations, was a symbol of collaboration even among the residents and the ward councillor. A signed agreement between the municipality and the group of individuals who volunteered to be part of the maintenance of the park, was also another way of collaboration among the urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of the urban open spaces. The joint decision-making regarding what will happen in that park symbolises a high level of collaboration among the urban stakeholders. H1 and H2 indicated that the park had been functioning for five years and during the time of the survey, it was still being used as a functional park. This has been a relief on the side of planning as the park is used for the land use it was earmarked for.

##### **(b) Level of representativeness of the population**

All urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban open spaces have a right to be part of meaningful participation. This includes decision-making regarding the planning and management of urban open spaces. In this instance, selecting the participation for community participation is very crucial. The urban stakeholders included in UPOS4 include municipal officials, with the inclusion of the political officials, media and residents. Parks and Cemeteries represented the municipality because they are more knowledgeable and competent as the custodians of urban open spaces within UPOS4. The community shared their practical knowledge and experience regarding the management of urban open spaces.

H2 indicated that the project was a joint partnership and this implies that both the municipality and the community members were involved in planning and management of the urban public open spaces. H2 added that:

*Proper community participation was conducted via the IDP process. The community was engaged and they were taught of the development or the principle of the development of parks.*

The literature focusing on consultation, information, participation and empowerment is imperative when the community is included in a municipal project.

### **(c) Nature of the community participation process**

This sub-theme regarding the nature of the community participation process entails reporting on the guidelines or what the law says about this process. During the interviews, H2 indicated that there was proper community participation on UPOS4 as it followed an IDP process. The MMM IDP document indicates that the community has the right to contribute in the decision-making processes of the municipality and they can submit written or oral recommendations to the municipal council. Within UPOS4, the community was engaged in the planning and management process during the IDP process. Different methods are employed for community participation in the municipality, and they also include information-sharing sessions and workshops. This allows the community to participate in the development of plans and policies of the municipality. During the interviews, H1 and H2, as the custodians of urban open spaces (parks) in Mangaung, added that the community was taught about the principles of the development of parks. The ward councillor who was part of the area at the time, was very active in the activities of community engagement and would always liaise with the municipality and the community members.

From the foregoing, H2 emphasised that the community needs a very strong ward councillor who must not be afraid to let his voice heard when it comes to IDP processes. Because this project within UPOS4 was developed using a capital budget, it implied that legislation should be properly followed as the community participation included the preparation and review of the budget.

#### **1.1.1.12 Construct 3: Value conflict management**

Owing to the data that was collected within UPOS4, the researcher was able to identify the different perceptions regarding the value and utility of urban public open spaces. Different sub-constructs were identified and are discussed below.

### **(a) Factors influencing value conflicts regarding urban public open spaces**

Comparing this case with other cases in this study, the researcher realised that there is a certain trend regarding the perception of the value and utility of urban open spaces followed by urban stakeholders within UPOS4. Drawing from these interviews, the researcher identified that there is a tendency towards a particular category in terms of the perceptions of the different urban stakeholders within UPOS4. Reflecting on the research question, *What are the perceptions of open spaces, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?*, the researcher managed to pinpoint values such as planning, environmental issues, economic, public goods, housing, recreation, education, political affiliation and cultural experience. From the interviews, it was surprising that the urban stakeholders in UPOS4 are in agreement on how they perceived and valued the utility of urban open spaces. In his contribution during the interviews, and in agreement with H1, H2 repeated that:

*We are the custodians of urban open spaces in terms of maintenance and our role is to enhance recreation ... we need to be informed about the open space during the planning process.*

Following from the interviews on the planning perspective, UPOS4 land use reservation is a 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes and it has been used as such. This is a critical success factor for the planners. In addition, the Directorate: Planning and the Sub-directorate: Parks and Cemeteries are moving away from planning scattered open spaces. They have seen that these do not serve the initial purposes and now they are advocating for one big 'Regional Park'. This proposal of the 'Regional Park' is meant to curb the challenge of open space encroachment. This statement was supported by TP2 when he mentioned that:

*We need to move away from the public open spaces and get another word for open spaces. It can be a community space for recreation. When the town is pegged, it must be fenced and communities must be informed that it is a no go area. It must be secure.*

Following the meetings, they had concerning the utilisation of parks, TP1 admitted that:

*Parks and Cemeteries Sub-directorate suggested that the Planning Directorate should stop creating a lot of parks, instead, once central park should be created.*

Buttressing the success of the development of UPOS4, TP1 maintained that:

*This open space enhances recreational opportunities for the community and promotes the sense of tranquillity and peace. It also represents the element of social inclusion and participation because a group of individuals decided to adopt this park and maintain it. In addition, it serves as a social catalyst because it brings people together because they can also do physical activities.*

Commenting further, TP1, agreeing with E2, indicated that UPOS4 has a recreational value which also assists in achieving the key planning objective. In her emphasis, she mentioned that:

*Neighbourhoods need lungs to breathe. We need those breathing lungs for the neighbourhoods and this is part of orderly planning.*

Furthermore, TP3 buttressed his statement when he mentioned that the open space within UPOS4 has an environmental value and it displays benefits for health, recreation and socialising. He added that open spaces that are used for their initial purposes make the cities to be safe for the communities. Focusing on the project as a joint agreement between the municipality and the community, the success of this 'Regional Park' indicates that the community understood the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. The former councillor of UPOS, as supported by H2, had a strong voice for his ward because this initiative was done through the IDP process.

#### **(b) Critical success factors within UPOS4**

From the interviews within UPOS4, the researcher managed to identify the critical success factors. The critical success factors focus into a number of aspects that ensure success of a given project. Following the interviews, the following critical success factors were identified:

- (i) Understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces.
- (ii) Collaboration of the urban stakeholders in managing urban public open spaces.
- (iii) Effective communication between the various urban stakeholders.
- (iv) Commitment of urban stakeholders in planning and management of urban public open spaces.
- (v) Evidence of the relationship between the various value conflicts.

### **6.5 Summary of the findings from the different cases**

From the four intra-case analyses (UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4), the researcher observed different findings that emerged from the different interviews conducted. These findings are summarised in Table 6.3 to get a clear understanding of the similarities and the differences in the selected cases. In addition, the conceptual framework below, which was discussed in Chapter 3, indicates the alignment between the three constructs, namely, urban public open space encroachment, community participation and value conflict management (Figure 6.17). New propositions are included in the summary table and will be discussed in the next chapter as part of the cross-case analysis.

**Table 6.3: Summary of the findings for different cases**

CONSTRUCT	THEME	UPOS1	UPOS2	UPOS3	UPOS4
<b>1. Urban open space planning</b>	<i>Procedural methods for urban open space planning</i>	Opportunistic model used, this is category D (undeveloped park in terms of strategic principle), no compliance for development of parks	Opportunistic model used, this is category D (undeveloped park in terms of strategic principle), no compliance for development of parks	Opportunistic model used, this is category D (undeveloped park in terms of strategic principle), no compliance for development of parks	Quantitative planning model used, this is category A (developed park in terms of strategic principle), adhered to compliance for development of parks
	<i>Factors influencing urban public open space planning</i>	Lack of understanding of the value and the utility of urban open space	Lack of understanding of the value and the utility of urban open space	Lack of understanding of the value and the utility of urban open space	Understanding of the value and usefulness of urban open spaces
		Dysfunctional use of land use regimes and decision-making processes	Dysfunctional use of land use regimes and decision-making processes	Dysfunctional use of land use regimes and decision-making processes	–
		Poor management of these spaces	Poor management of these spaces	Poor management of these spaces	Good management
<i>Operationalisation of urban public open spaces</i>	Disconnect among the different urban stakeholders	Disconnect among the different urban stakeholders	Disconnect among the different urban stakeholders	Effective communication between the various urban stakeholders	
	Absence of profound support by the municipality and budget constraints	Absence of profound support by the municipality and budget constraints	Absence of profound support by the municipality and budget constraints	Collaboration of the urban stakeholders in managing urban open spaces	
	Operated under Annexure F: Land use regulations, of the Regulations relating to Township Establishment and Land Use of 1986, but under SPLUMA	Operated under Annexure F: Land use regulations, of the Regulations relating to Township Establishment and Land Use of 1986, but under SPLUMA	Operated under Annexure F: Land use regulations, of the Regulations relating to Township Establishment and Land Use of 1986, but under Township Ordinance, 1969 and the Removal of Restrictions Act, 1967	Zoning did not change but this operated under the Adopt-a-Park Policy	
<b>New propositions</b>					
<p>Poor awareness of the correct procedure for planning and management of urban open spaces.</p> <p>Poor or no compliance on land use management.</p> <p>No understanding of the value and utilisation of urban open space.</p> <p>Lack of effective communication among the different urban stakeholders during the planning process.</p> <p>No integrated approach in planning and management of urban open spaces.</p>					

CONSTRUCT	THEME	UPOS1	UPOS2	UPOS3	UPOS4
<b>2. Community participation</b>	<i>Level of collaboration among different urban stakeholders</i>	Collaboration among the stakeholders is lacking	Collaboration among the stakeholders is lacking	Collaboration among the stakeholders is lacking	Effective collaboration among stakeholders
	<i>Level of representativeness of the sample</i>	Low representativeness of the sample. The ward councillors and the ward committee are well-informed	Low representativeness of the sample. The ward councillors and the ward committee are well-informed	Low representativeness of the sample. The ward councillors and the ward committee are well-informed	Community members well-presented
	<i>Nature of the community participation process</i>	No proper procedure is used and there are no guidelines for community participation for urban open space planning	No proper procedure is used and there are no guidelines for community participation for urban open space planning	No proper procedure is used and there are no guidelines for community participation for urban open space planning	IDP process used for community participation. The development of the park was an initiative via the IDP process
	<b>New propositions</b>				
Lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment as well as communication to engender community participation. Absence of robust frameworks for mainstreaming these factors towards ensuring improved levels of community participation. No proper procedure followed for community participation regarding planning of urban open spaces.					
<b>3. Value conflict management</b>	<i>Factors influencing value conflicts regarding urban public open spaces</i>	Planning Recreational/environmental Housing Economic Cultural Political	Planning Recreational/environmental Housing Political Cultural	Planning Recreational/environmental Housing Cultural Religious Political	Planning Recreational/environmental Social Educational
	<b>New propositions</b>				
	Evidence of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders. Relationship between the varying value conflicts witnessed and the poor management of urban open spaces. Absence of the management of the variety of perspectives during the planning and management of urban open spaces.				

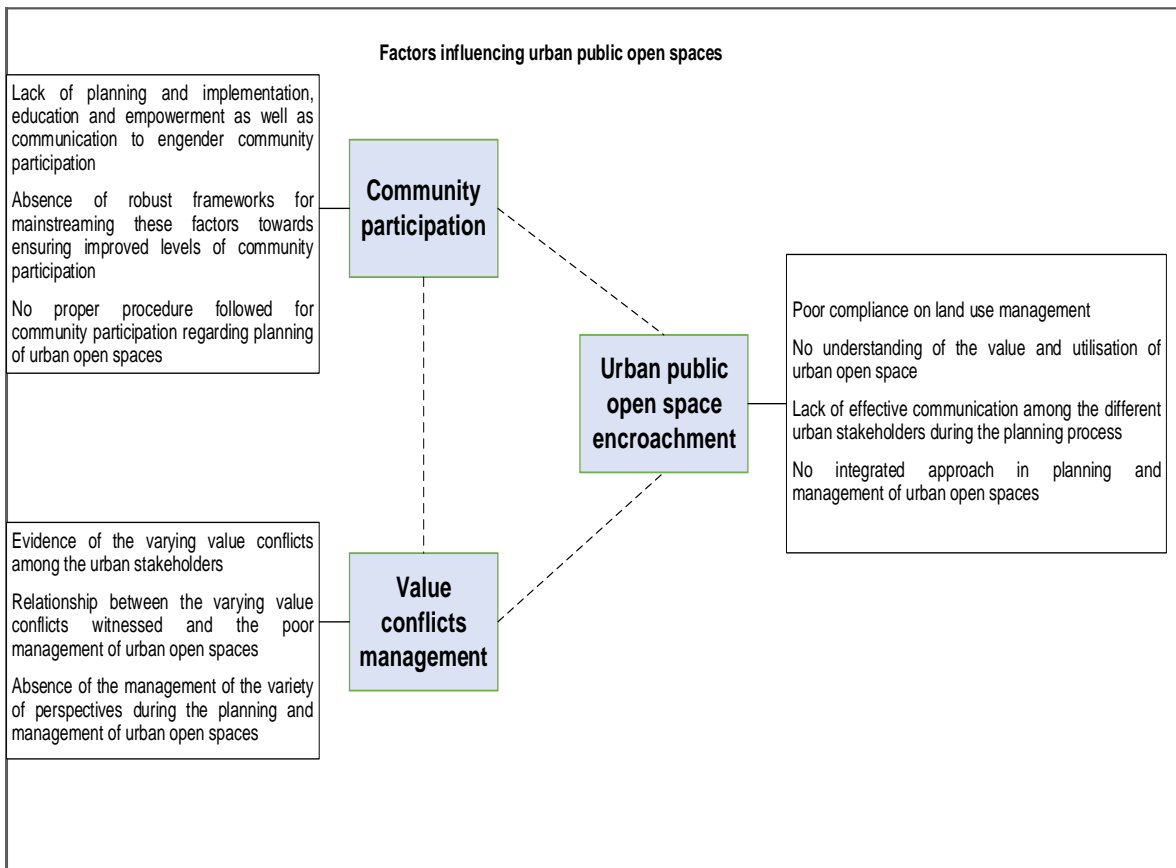


Figure 6.17: Conceptual framework  
Author's own (2019)

## 6.6 Chapter summary

The intra-case analyses of four case studies were presented in an attempt to answer the research sub-questions and testing of the research propositions. Each individual case (UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4) was presented following a sequence that included the specification of each case, the information of the research participations, the different constructs, namely urban open space planning, community participation and value conflict management. Different sub-constructs emerged from the interviews with the research participants as data was analysed. The succeeding chapter, cross-case analysis, involves the findings that emanated from the intra-case analysis. These findings gathered from the multiple cases served as new propositions to be tested in the cross-case analysis.

## Chapter 7

# CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS BASED ON THE VALUE CONFLICTS BY DIFFERENT URBAN STAKEHOLDERS

---

---

### 7.1 Chapter Introduction

Chapter 6 was based on the intra-case analysis of four cases where the research propositions were tested and the research sub-question number 4 (*What are the perceptions of open space, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?*) was answered. Perceptions of the different urban stakeholders regarding the usefulness and value of urban public open spaces in Mangaung were assessed. The main constructs that formed part of the intra-case analysis were urban public open space planning, community participation and value conflicts. New propositions emerged from the findings of the different cases, namely, UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4. This chapter, namely, the cross-case analysis, builds on the findings from the intra-case analysis. Within this chapter, the researcher has an opportunity to achieve analytical generalisation through literal and theoretical replication. The newly formulated propositions are compared to the theory and they will be tested. They include:

- Lack of understanding of the value and utilisation of urban open space.
- Lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment as well as communication to engender community participation.
- Absence of robust frameworks for mainstreaming these factors towards ensuring improved levels of community participation.
- Evidence of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders regarding urban public open spaces.
- Absence of the management of the variety of perspectives during the planning and management of urban public open spaces.

For the continuation of the study, the highlight of the relationship between the new propositions and the sub-research questions is addressed in Table 7.1. In addition, this chapter also answers the research sub-questions 5 and 6, namely:

- What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the objectives of planning?

- How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key objectives of planning and to create sustainable communities?

Comparisons and contrast will be made to allow analytical generalisation. To conclude, the findings will be used for framework development and validation.

## **7.2 Discussion and analysis of the findings (cross-case analysis)**

This section discusses the different propositions that emerged from the intra-case analysis, since there is a relationship among the different propositions. The researcher grouped some of the propositions as constructs:

- Research proposition 1  
The lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces and the dysfunctional use of these spaces that resulted in the urban public open space encroachment.
- Research proposition 2  
The lack of planning, implementation, education and empowerment as well as ineffective communication that influence the optimum levels of community participation.
- Research proposition 3  
The lack of management of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders influence urban public open space encroachment.

From the foregoing, the research propositions will be discussed as different constructs resulting from the multiple cases. Furthermore, analytical generalisations will be drawn from the different cases and this will in turn result in the validation of the findings. Prior the discussion of the research propositions, their relationship with the sub-research questions are highlighted in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Relationship between the new propositions and sub-research questions**

Research propositions	Research sub-questions
Lack of understanding of the value and utilisation of urban open space.	<i>How is open space understood in the literature?</i>
Lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment as well as communication to engender community participation.  Absence of robust frameworks for mainstreaming these factors towards ensuring improved levels of community participation.	<i>What theories relate to planning of open spaces?</i> <i>What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung?</i>
Evidence of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders.  Absence of the management of the variety of perspectives during the planning and management of urban public open spaces.	<i>What are the perceptions of open space, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?</i> <i>What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?</i> <i>How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key objectives of planning and to create sustainable communities?</i>

For easy reference from the intra-case analysis, included in this section is the summary of the research participants for the different cases, namely UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4 in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.2: Research participants**

Organisation and division	Position	Alphabetical code
MMM Planning	Head: Planning	HP
Town and Regional Planning Urban Design	Town Planner 1	TP1
	Town Planner 2	TP2
	Town Planner 3	TP3
Environmental Management	Environmentalist 1	E1
	Environmentalist 2	E2
Parks and Cemeteries	Horticulturalist 1	H1
	Manager	H2
Human Settlements	General Manager	GM1
	General Manager	GM2
	Acting General Manager	AGM1
	Manager	M1

## 7.2.1 Research proposition 1

*The lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces and the dysfunctional use of these spaces that resulted in the public urban open space encroachment.*

### 7.2.1.1 Case 1 (UPOS1)

The urban public open space within UPOS1 was invaded for residential purposes, and different urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of open spaces display different perceptions regarding the value and utility of urban open spaces. These include recreational, environmental, economic and housing values. Drawing from the interviews, a lack of understanding regarding what urban public open spaces are, their values and usefulness has been observed as a challenge within UPOS1. All these different values are associated with a communication-related pathology because they lead to the value conflicts among the urban stakeholders. The state of urban public open spaces within UPOS1 displayed evidence of this dichotomy. Furthermore, the urban public open spaces make the urban environment attractive and boost the economic nature of the city but this is different in UPOS1. The urban public open space forming UPOS1 is encroached for residential purposes because it was not managed properly and defined well, or used according to its land use, namely for recreational purposes. TP2 reiterated that there was a lack of understanding regarding the meaning of public open spaces and he suggested that a new terminology should be used which can be understood by the urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of such spaces. Buttressing this, TP2 maintained that:

*I say that we must move away from the concept 'Public Open Space' and get another word, a normal zoning. For instance, we can use 'community space for recreation/sports'. When it is surveyed and pegged, it must be indicated to everyone that it is a 'no-go' area. People do not even understand the town planning principles ... the General Plans indicate 'Public Open Space' or 'Park' and people think that they have different functions but they mean and function the same way.*

There is a notion that the city needs green lungs to breathe and this is important for sustainable neighbourhoods as part of orderly planning. From the perspective of CM1, safety and security, culture and social vitality, better quality of life and improved health, as well as a sense of place, are key aspects to the property owners around the urban public open spaces. To the contrary, some respondents of CM2 maintained that they understood the value and utility of urban public open spaces but they place a housing value to it, hence they encroached within UPOS1. Dysfunctional use of open spaces promote encroachment, in that UPOS1 was earmarked as a public open space for recreational purposes and was later rezoned to residential purposes

to accommodate people who illegally occupied the open space. This is also evidence of low prioritisation of urban public open space.

### 7.2.1.2 Case 2 (UPOS2)

Findings from UPOS2 were similar to that of UPOS1 in that encroachment of the urban public open space was observed. The respondents within UPOS2 indicated that the different urban stakeholders placed different values on urban land. With lack of awareness and understanding of the different existing perceptions, namely recreational, environmental and housing value, with regard to the value and usefulness of urban public open space, conflict arose and influenced encroachment. Buttressing this assertion, the drivers for placing a housing value on urban public open spaces arose from lack of shelter or homelessness. With this stated, respondents from CM2 maintained that they will not prioritise urban public open spaces because they did not have shelter. Similar to UPOS2, there was evidence of low prioritisation of urban public open spaces and the dysfunctional use of this open space contributed to the encroachment. This settlement emerged because law was not enforced and this was indicated in the dysfunctional use of land use regimes by the municipality. Due to low prioritisation of open spaces by different stakeholders, a portion of UPOS2 was rezoned from 'Public Open Space' to 'Residential' to accommodate people who occupied the space illegally. Contradicting from what was initially planned by the municipality, one of the respondents indicated that:

*The MMM Council took a resolution that people occupying the land that is not zoned for residential purposes will not be provided with town planning, land surveying and infrastructural services. Furthermore, planners are expected to lodge an application for an exception of this resolution so that people occupying the settlement can be accommodated and be granted ownership of the land.*

This resolution applies to all the municipal land, and the planning legislation (SPLUMA, RSA, 2013) emphasises that municipalities must have land use management schemes to assist the planner in enforcing land use regimes. Politicians, as part of the urban stakeholders within UPOS2 felt embittered by how the urban land is perceived and utilised. One of the interviewees mentioned:

*We wouldn't be having this challenge if the land was used for its purpose ... the municipality takes time to act, so if people were evicted from this park, we would not be having this challenge. They have been left there for a long time and now they have a concept that the property belongs to them. Most of the people staying in Saliva Square are from outside Bloemfontein, I can count a few of the resident from here.*

The above statement adds to the notion of lack of understanding of the value and utility of urban public open spaces by different urban stakeholders. In addition, this space has not been prioritised, managed and protected by the relevant stakeholders. There is also an indication of the influence of rapid urbanisation as most of the people residing within UPOS2 are not originating from Bloemfontein.

### **7.2.1.3 Case 3 (UPOS3)**

Similar to UPOS1 and UPOS2, different urban stakeholders within UPOS3 display different perceptions on the value of urban public open spaces. Their perceptions range from social, environmental, housing and all these influence planning objectives. This is an indication of lack of understanding on the usefulness of urban public open spaces. During the interviews within UPOS3, the researcher observed that the urban stakeholders had challenges with the unclear definitions and functions of urban public open spaces on the municipal documents. Respondents indicated that they saw an open land with no value, being non-functional and they viewed it as land for grabs since they were homeless or lacked shelter. In addition, the general plan of the property within UPOS3 indicated it as a park. This created much confusion to the community because the property was unhygienic, unsafe, insecure and not properly managed by the authorities. One of the respondents emphasised that the municipality should use a different concept to describe the value and function of the urban public open space, in that way, a common ground would be reached by all the urban stakeholders. Deducting from the findings within UPOS3, a contrast to the previously discussed cases, UPOS1 and UPOS2, was observed. UPOS3 was not only invaded for housing purposes but a permanent structure of a church has been built. In rezoning the property, the church was also accommodated and this was viewed as another value which could be associated with cultural, religious or social values. This is different from UPOS1 and UPOS2 where only the housing value was attached.

### **7.2.1.4 Case 4 (UPOS4)**

Unlike the previous cases, UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3, where there was evidence of a lack of understanding on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces, UPOS4 operated differently. Evident from the personal observations and interviews conducted, urban stakeholders involved in planning and management for urban public open spaces, quantitative planning model was employed. From the foregoing statement, the space standard, size and number of people in the neighbourhood were taken into account. The zoning of UPOS4 was 'Public Open Space' for recreational purposes and has been used as such. It was different

from the other cases because the community was engaged in the 'Adopt-a-Park' project; hence, it is managed and used as a recreational park. All urban stakeholders within UPOS4 placed an environmental value on this space. It currently functions as a mechanism for relaxation and is used by people of different races and age. Following the value of planners and environmentalists, which is planning for sustainable communities, UPOS4 created a sense of uniqueness, balance and comfort within the UPOS4 community, as stated by H2:

*This is one of our projects that was established 5 years ago on our capital budget and we executed it in terms of our budget. It was identified by the community of that Ward as an IDP need and the provision was done from the budget of the establishment of parks. That is how it was developed.*

This is in line with the key objectives of planning and the UPOS4 promotes sustainability and it boosts the image of Mangaung townships. Different stakeholders were involved in this project and the community members who identified the recreational park as a need for the ward. The entire process of identifying the need for the recreational park in the neighbourhood took place during the IDP review process. This project within UPOS4 promotes stakeholder engagement in planning and management of urban public open spaces. This was lacking in the cases discussed previously.

### **7.2.1.5 Analysis of the findings**

Urban public open spaces form an integral part of sustainable neighbourhoods and, as such, they play a critical role in the sustainable development of communities. From a sustainability point of view, urban public open spaces add value to the urban environment and displays a major benefit to the quality of life (Nasution & Zahrah, 2014:587). The different urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of these space displayed different values on urban land. This depends on how they perceived the contributions of the urban environment to their sustenance. In addition, their perceptions were influenced by the manner in which they were involved or engaged within the urban planning projects (Mathur, Price, Austin & Moobela, 2007:5). The perceptions of the urban stakeholders involved in the planning and management of urban public open spaces ranged from economic, social and environmental values. The values stated above influenced the planning choices and they made it difficult for planners to achieve the key planning objective. For instance, the main concerns of planners, as part of the urban stakeholders, were the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and improved quality of life for human beings. In so doing, planners attempted to meet the demands for the recreational space and environmental quality. Furthermore, the concerns of the environmentalists were the conservation and protection of urban public open spaces (Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007:4; Toba, 2020:442). Yet, the community members

concerned themselves with safety and security, increased cultural and social vitality, better quality of life, which include better and improved health, more inclusive open spaces, sense of place and accessible environments (Carmona et al., 2002:167). The community members who did not have shelter put a housing value on urban public open spaces, hence an increase in the incidence of urban public open spaces. Based on economic value, investors and developers are concerned with the security of investment (Carmona et al., 2002:155). In terms of the social value, urban public open spaces impact on community cohesion, visual amenities and social integration which is inclusive of interaction among the different urban stakeholders who are involved in planning and managing these spaces.

UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 are the public open spaces situated in Freedom Square, Mangaung, whereas UPOS4 is located within Kagisanong, Mangaung. From the findings, all the urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of these urban public open spaces were in agreement that there was lack of understanding regarding the value and utility of urban public open spaces. Their differing perceptions led to the incidence of value conflicts. This was a conundrum that negates sustenance of urban public open spaces. From the researcher's perspective, including the viewpoints of different scholars in literature, this was a disadvantage in achieving key planning objectives. Moreover, with UPOS4, interaction or engagement of all the stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open space served as an advantage in achieving the creation of sustainable communities.

## **7.2.2 Research proposition 2**

*The lack of planning, implementation, education and empowerment, as well ineffective communication, influence the optimum levels of community participation.*

### **7.2.2.1 Cases 1, 2 and 3 (UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3)**

In planning, collaboration and effective communication among the urban stakeholders is significant. The findings within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 indicated that there were minimal collaboration and communication among the municipal officials and the community members. One of the respondents mentioned that the intergovernmental relations for planning of townships is crucial and this was one of the causal factors for the incidence of urban public open space encroachment. The main challenge was officials who are not working together or as a team in planning projects. For instance, town planning applications must be circulated for comments to different directorates and this was rarely implemented. H2 indicated that he was not aware of the rezoning application for these projects and they were the custodians of public open spaces. Furthermore, some of the focus group discussants were not aware of the

township development or even the approval of the rezoning application for the settlement they were residing in. The ladder of participation by Arnstein (1969) aligned this challenge to a non-participation level of participation where the community members are not included in decision-making about the developments or planning projects in the neighbourhood. In response to the questions *Who are the participants of community participation? How are they selected? Are their voices heard?* in all three cases proper consultation was not done except only with the ward councillor and the ward committee members who had to be educated so that they could have the information on the township development process. Property owners around the urban public open spaces that are encroached were also not aware of the planning process for the projects. Corroborating his concern, TP1 reiterated that:

*Community participation is mainly done with the ward councillor and the ward committee who represent the entire community. They later have public meetings with the community to inform them of the input of the community participation meeting.*

The level of representativeness was very low within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 as engagements were only done with the ward councillor and some ward committee members. There was no proper communication or engagement with the community members in decision-making and this is an indication that there were no robust frameworks in conducting community participation when planning for urban public open spaces. The community is normally engaged during the IDP process. Ineffective ways of conducting community participation in planning projects promote urban public open space encroachment. Community members need proper education and engagement in planning and management of urban public open spaces.

Despite the MMM having a policy for community participation, this process was not done for these cases. SPLUMA (RSA, 2013) emphasises the importance of the “principle of good governance” in terms of land use management. This development principle was not considered as it indicates that development applications should be regularly communicated to the community to ensure transparency and they get support from the community. From his experience, TP2 pointed out that there were no proper guidelines or framework used in engaging the community in development application processes. No educational awareness was done after approval of the township and some residents sold their properties after receiving the occupation certificates.

#### **7.2.2.2 Case 4 (UPOS4)**

Findings within UPOS4 are contrary to that of UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. Collaboration was evident through the success of the ‘Adopt-a-Park’ concept within UPOS4. This project

was identified as a need by the community during the IDP process consultations. The MMM community participation policy encourages community participation during the IDP process. In this case, the success of this project was a joint decision-making process among the different urban stakeholders. As its land use reservation is a 'Public Open Space', UPOS4 was used as a recreational park that was adopted by a few community members who volunteered to manage the park. H2 indicated that these volunteers were educated about the principles of development and management of parks and they were not expecting anything from the municipality. This was regarded as a critical success factor for the municipality in terms of the planning and management of parks.

### **7.2.2.3 Analysis of the findings**

The concept of 'community participation' has been used differently by planners, scholars and politicians in planning projects. As such, it is viewed as a process that includes all the urban stakeholders affected by the development initiatives and it can involve the urban stakeholders directly or indirectly. According to Mafukidze and Hoosen (2009:385), community participation is the direct involvement of the community members in planning, governance and development issues at grassroots level and that community participation is "the involvement of local actors in the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects, in practise it sometimes tends to be confined to specific activities". Planners need to engage community members in the planning projects and implementation. For effective community participation to be achieved, there should be increased cooperation among the urban stakeholders, including the community members. This can be achieved if the community members are empowered and mutual trust is being promoted during the participation process. The needs, concerns and the values of the community need to be taken into account (Ismail & Said, 2015:358).

At the core of the communicative planning theory is community participation which involves the decision-making process wherein urban stakeholders form part. Wilson, Hannington and Stephen (2015:64) alluded that community members have the right to partake in decision-making. Lalicic and Önder (2018:5) viewed community members as stakeholders who form part of decision-making and they are bound to bring forth better decisions and solutions. This is a result of their own knowledge and experience from their environment. Furthermore, if the voice of the community is heard during the initial stages of the planning projects, this can curb the incidence of challenges faced by both the planner and the community. Community participation is central to planning and policy reforms as it promotes democracy, justice and sustainability. It is regarded as a significant element in achieving sustainable development

and, in this case, the key objective of planning is achieving or creating sustainable neighbourhoods (Mahjabeen, Shrestha & Dee, 2009:46). Based on the pioneer work of Arnstein (1969:218), community participation ranges from non-participation (therapy and manipulation which is associated with blueprint planning), degree of tokenism (placation, consultation and informing which is associated to synoptic planning) and the degree of citizen power (citizen control, delegated power and partnership) which is associated with pluralistic planning. All these levels of participation involve the planner and the community members. In this instance, informing, consultation and co-production of knowledge between the urban stakeholders are the broad approach to be used for effective community participation. Innes and Booher (2004:420) alluded that planners do not conduct the process of community participation in an effective way. As such, the communicative planning theory substituted the rational planning theory as a corrective measure to this shortcoming. In addition, the assertions from the different researchers indicate the importance of this research regarding effective planning, implementation, education and empowerment as well communication among the urban stakeholders in influencing the optimum levels of community participation.

Furthermore, fostering community participation by planners in the MMM poses a challenge during planning processes. As such, different levels of public apathy have been observed within the different multiple cases (UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3). The public apathy continues to undermine the quest of municipalities to provide sustainable neighbourhoods. In addition, the value conflicts that were previously identified from different urban stakeholders during the intra-case analysis can be ameliorated through improved participation of the communities in the planning processes. Due to ineffective community participation, urban public open spaces continue to be encroached and this is affecting spatial patterns of urban land use. Moreover, there are no robust frameworks for mainstreaming planning, implementation, education, empowerment and effective communication in order to ensure the improved levels of community participation in Mangaung. In different municipalities, community participation is an issue of compliance and procedures with legislation in the IDP process (Human, Marais & Botes, 2009:24). In this case, MMM has a policy of community participation but one of the interviewees confirmed that community participation is an issue of compliance and is mostly used during the IDP process.

From the findings of the intra-case analysis which described each case in-depth, there is evidence that there is lack of planning, implementation, education, empowerment and ineffective communication influencing the optimum levels of community participation within the multiple cases. All the interviewees within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 agreed that

community participation was not done in a proper way. Despite municipal town planning projects being outsourced to planning consultants due to capacity, these cases were handled in-house. The challenge related to lack of capacity and experience with regard to community participation among the planners, including other municipal officials. This is a deficiency that led to community participation to be viewed as an event instead of a process that can lead to a good relationship between the community and the municipal officials. In addition, lack of understanding of the importance of community participation in planning projects results in ineffectiveness of such a process. In all three settlements, community participation was not properly done; instead, the ward councillor and the ward committee members were educated regarding the processes of town planning applications. This implied that the level of representativeness of the community members was minimal and only a few voices were heard. For UPOS4, community participation was done. According to H2, this project was identified as an IDP need by the community and the provision was done from the budget for the establishment of this park. Evidence of community participation during the IDP process within UPOS4 was in conformity with the South African legislation (Constitution, RSA, 1996; White Paper on Local Government, RSA, 1998; Municipal Systems Act, RSA, 2000; the Department of Provincial and Local Government [IDP guide packs], RSA, 2002) and literature. Even though these policy documents provide procedural guidelines for community participation, the literature suggested that guidelines should include mechanisms to be used for community participation, creative ways for effective community participation which will suit the nature of the municipalities, and ways on how the community inputs should be structured in order to strengthen the planning process (Human et al., 2009:14). In addition, to improve the level of community participation, different innovative techniques (crowdsourcing as one example), as suggested and implemented by different scholars are used globally.

From the accruing evidence of the cross-case analysis and literature, it appeared that planning, education, implementation and effective communication among different urban stakeholders in achieving successful implementation of community participation is necessary. Drawing from UPOS4, new innovative ways and a framework for mainstreaming these factors towards ensuring improved levels of community participation are necessary.

### **7.2.3 Research proposition 3**

*The lack of management of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders influence urban public open space encroachment.*

### **7.2.3.1 Cases 1, 2, 3 and 4 (UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4)**

As indicated previously, effective planning and management of urban public open spaces considering the different perceptions of the different urban stakeholders need proper collaboration and communication. The findings from UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS 3 and UPOS 4 displayed that the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces displayed different perceptions. This caused planners to struggle in achieving the key planning objectives. For instance, planners have initially planned erven 37321, 36052, 38051 in Freedom Square and erf 50793 in Kagisanong for recreational purposes. Within UPOS1 and UPOS2, the community members displayed a housing value which resulted from a lack of shelter or homelessness. Residents indicated that they could not prioritise urban public open spaces while they did not have shelter. Therefore, the municipality rezoned these properties from 'Public Open Space' to 'Residential'. On the other hand, H2, being the custodians of parks at MMM and in support of environmental value, stated that they were not aware of the rezoning of these properties. This symbolised failure to collaborate and communicate as well as less prioritisation of urban public open spaces by other stakeholders. In as much as there was an understanding of the value and benefits of urban public open spaces, GM1, GM2, AGM1 and M1 were responsible for the municipal land and human settlements and they placed a housing value on urban land due to the housing backlog faced by the municipality. With these projects, planners were instructed to rezone municipal land, with pressure coming from the community and the ward councillors. Also, with UPOS3, the community members occupying the urban public open spaces did not only focus on housing but also on their religious beliefs as a church had been accommodated on that open space. Again, planners had to accommodate the permanent church building and rezone the portion of land from 'Public Open Space' to 'Community facility'. UPOS4 took a different direction as all the urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces displayed an environmental and recreational value in this open space. UPOS4 is currently still operating as recreational park that is actively used by the residents. From the focus group discussions, it has motivated the community members to start taking care of the remaining open spaces, especially within UPOS1 and UPOS2.

### **7.2.3.2 Analysis of the findings**

Urban public open spaces, as an integral part of sustainable neighbourhoods, provides a wide range of values from different urban stakeholders. Urban public open spaces add value to social, economic, ecological, environmental and planning dimensions. Baycan-Levent et al. (2004:2) stated that the value of urban public open spaces depends on the functionality and

impact it has on the quality of life. As previously mentioned in section 7.2.1.5, different urban stakeholders display different perceptions regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open space and these lead to value conflicts. These conflicts arise when values are contrasted with each other and are juggled with how important they are in planning for urban public open spaces (Luomala et al., 2004:564). These include planning, recreational, public goods, environmental, economic, cultural and housing. Therefore, it is imperative to understand these value conflicts, including its solutions. In addition, there is a need to gauge and consider these perceptions when planning and developing urban areas as it will lead to effective design and management of urban public open spaces (Toba, 2020:441).

Focusing on the perceptions of the urban stakeholders on the value of urban public open spaces, the nature of the engagement with the existing land use patterns is important. For instance, planners are concerned with planning for sustainable communities. According to investors and developers, urban public open spaces make the cities attractive and boost the economic development of a city; hence, they are perceived to carry an economic value (Carmona et al., 2002:147). Environmentalists, as the custodians of urban public open spaces or parks, as well as the planners, perceive these spaces for recreational and environmental value by protecting the existing natural values. In addition, the concern for community members is safety and security, increased cultural and social vitality, better quality of life that include better and improved health, more inclusive open spaces, sense of place and accessible environments (Carmona et al., 2002:167). On the other hand, community members without proper shelter place a housing value on urban land and this leads to the incidence of urban public open space encroachment (Toba, 2020:442). The housing value has led to the gradual disappearance of urban public open spaces within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 and this has threatened the sustainable planning of the community, urban public open spaces inclusive. Table 7.3 displays the different perceptions leading to value conflicts among the different stakeholders as evident from the intra-case analysis.

**Table 7.3: Value conflicts of different urban stakeholders**

Case	Value conflicts					
	Planning	Environmental	Economical	Recreational	Housing	Social/ Religious
UPOS1	√				√	
UPOS2	√				√	
UPOS3	√				√	√
UPOS4	√	√	√	√		

From Table 7.3 and from the findings of the intra-case analysis, all the cases were planned for by the planners. This indicates that planning overlaps other perceptions, in that, though planners planned for all the open spaces within the cases, community members placed the value of housing on UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. UPOS3 also accommodated a church that has been permanently built on that urban public open space.

As indicated in Section 7.2.3.1, UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4 initially had a land use reservation of a ‘Public Open Space’ for recreational purposes. Only UPOS4 is currently used as a recreational park due to the Adopt-a-park concept that was accepted by the community members who volunteered to protect and manage this space. They are not expecting anything from the municipality but the space promoted the interaction of the urban stakeholders who, in turn, promoted the sense of community and sense of belonging. UPOS4 satisfies the recreational need of humans. It serves as a source of relaxation and as stress reliever. It also has a positive impact on the physical and psychological well-being of community members. This implies that functional urban public open spaces such as the one within UPOS4 improve the mental state or health of humans, as are therapeutic in nature. The literature states that urban public open spaces enhance participation in activities such as physical exercise occurring in these spaces and promote mood and attention (Hag, 2011:602; Lee, Jordan & Horsley; 2015:132). Moreover, UPOS4 enhances community cohesion, social interaction and betterment of the neighbourhood. According to Cilliers (2015:2), such spaces display a social role as they are “related to leisure and recreation, the facilitation of social contact and communication, access to and experience of nature, issues influencing human physical and psychological health and well-being and overall sustainability”.

From the interviews within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3, urban public open spaces have a housing value which led to the loss of these spaces. Respondents indicated that they cannot prioritise urban open spaces while they do not have shelter or are homeless. Others indicated that they understand that there are benefits for urban public open spaces but their main

concern is housing. Safety and security from within the four UPOS cases were also highlighted, because the urban public open spaces are also used as dumping sites as they are not properly managed by the municipality. Several factors that also led to encroachment of urban open spaces are ineffective use of open spaces, poor management and lack of enforcement of land use regimes by the authorities.

Despite the Council Resolution of 1998 that was taken by the municipality regarding people illegally occupying municipal land, where it is stated that those people will not be accommodated, planners stated that an exception has been done within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 and these settlements are rezoned for residential purposes. With the law not being enforced as stated in SPLUMA (RSA, 2013), the housing value has been encouraged within informal settlements. As such, planners find it difficult to achieve the predetermined levels or key planning objectives for urban public open spaces. In this instance, the different value conflicts among the urban stakeholders influenced encroachment on urban public open spaces. For instance, the causal factors or drivers for community members to encroach open spaces and placing a housing value on them were homelessness or lack of shelter (Toba, 2020:447). Other causal factors influencing urban public open space encroachment include poor management and enforcement of land use regimes by planners, low prioritisation, and non-participation of community members during the planning for sustainable communities (Mensha, 2014a:6, 2014b:7; Cilliers et al., 2015:349; Bengston et al., 2004:279). The available evidence from the intra-case analysis within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 indicated that the value of urban public open spaces had been neglected by the relevant authorities. Their focal point was on other land uses and this has affected the spatial patterns in the urban context.

The afore-mentioned factors influenced urban public open spaces and can be viewed as failure factors instigated by the varying value conflicts of the different urban stakeholders. Table 7.4 summarises the different factors and their impact on the multiple cases.

**Table 7.4: Factors influencing urban public open space encroachment**

<b>Drivers of urban public open spaces encroachment</b>	<b>Evidence on cases</b>	<b>Summary of findings from intra-case</b>
Poor management and enforcement of land use regimes by planners	UPOS1 UPOS2 UPOS3	SPLUMA (RSA, 2013) emphasises that municipalities should have a land use scheme that will assist with enforcement of land use regimes/law. Mensha (2014:6) highlighted some African countries such as Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Ghana and other South African cities that have experienced poor enforcement of land use regimes which led to encroachment of open spaces. In addition, Watson (2011:182) added that there has been a resistance to change in the land use regimes.

Drivers of urban public open spaces encroachment	Evidence on cases	Summary of findings from intra-case
		<p>Mangaung is not an exception as it used the old legislation for approval of the settlements within the study cases. Urban public open spaces within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 are not properly managed and the community members are concerned about their safety and security. Land use regimes are not enforced and this contribute to the gradual disappearance of open spaces.</p> <p>All the cases were initially zoned 'Public Open Spaces' but due to poor management and lack of enforcement, rezoning to 'residential' applied so that people who encroached on these spaces could be accommodated. These spaces fall under category Park D, in terms of the MMM parks development and maintenance strategy. This implies that these are undeveloped natural open spaces where no developments are done. Due to the disconnect of the municipal officials, others do not know of this strategy and land use change applications for residential purposes have been approved for UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3.</p>
Low prioritisation of urban public open spaces	UPOS1 UPOS2 UPOS3	<p>Cilliers et al. (2015:349) confirmed that urban open spaces are not prioritised because they lack monetary value. They further mentioned non-priority that leads to value conflict in terms of different land uses, conservation and development. Also, land uses such as residential, commercial and community facilities are highly prioritised because they have monetary value. Furthermore, decision-makers focus on other land uses as the environment is considered mostly for leisure purposes.</p> <p>As a result, it is a challenge to balance the importance of building a sustainable future and address the need to prioritise and manage urban open spaces (Cilliers &amp; Cilliers, 2016:22).</p> <p>The level of urban open space prioritisation is very low in many countries, including South African municipalities, and this has led to urban open space encroachment. Again, Mangaung is not an exception as it has displayed low prioritisation of open spaces in the townships. There is under-provision of urban public open spaces and amendment of the general plans by means of the closure of a park, subdivision and rezoning to accommodate dwelling houses in MMM.</p> <p>Interviewees within the cases indicated that the three settlements were rezoned for housing purposes but H2 indicated that their section was not even aware of such application. Open spaces within these areas gradually disappeared and other land uses such as residential, churches and businesses have been prioritised. Community members indicated that they could not prioritise open spaces while they do not have shelter. In addition, they understood that such spaces have benefits but instead of them being used as dumping areas or for criminal activities due to poor management, people can be accommodated to reside on them.</p>
Non-participation of community members during the planning for sustainable communities	UPOS1 UPOS2 UPOS3	<p>Participation is regarded as the distribution of power to society in order to influence decision-making. Arnstein (1969) stated that non-involvement of community members in decision-making regarding policies affects communities negatively. It was emphasised that community members will not be empowered if they are not involved in decision-making during the planning process.</p> <p>Within the cases, residents occupying properties around the urban public open spaces were willing to be educated on the sustainability of these spaces to create change in the quality of their lives. In addition, Richards, Carter and Sherlock (2004) mentioned that stakeholders should be capacitated instead of only focusing on including them in decision-making. The UN-Habitat (2015)</p>

Drivers of urban public open spaces encroachment	Evidence on cases	Summary of findings from intra-case
		<p>defined capacity building as an effort taken in building relations and competency of the society in the participation process.</p> <p>Findings from the interviews within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 indicated that the community members are not involved in planning and management of open spaces. The level of community participation was very low and this included the level of representativeness in this regard. The ward councillor and the ward committee members had knowledge of the planning projects. There was no proper consultation with the community members in planning for urban public open spaces. The municipal officials reiterated that they did not use community participation and in most of their planning projects, they outsourced them to planning consultants who organised public meetings with the concerned community. Also, confirmation was clearly made that planners do not have robust frameworks to conduct community participation when planning urban land.</p>

### 7.3 Analytical generalisation

Case study research involves the use of analytical generalisation in generalising the findings from the cases. Analytical generalisation is used for building of a theory or modification and it is based on the theoretical proposition and not the population (Eisenhardt, 1989:548; Meyer, 2001:347). In the Encyclopaedia of Case Study Research, Yin (2010:20) explained analytical generalisation in a two-way process, namely, the researcher shows how the findings of the case study bear upon a theory, and the application of the same theory to implicate similar situations. The findings of a case must indicate the outcomes of the results and how the findings can be generalised to similar settings. This study depended on generalising the findings that emerged from the multiple case studies (UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4) which formed the investigation. The following analytical generalisation will assist with the validity of the research.

#### 7.3.1 Lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces lead to urban public open space encroachment

Urban public open spaces form an integral part of sustainable neighbourhoods. As such, they are used by different urban stakeholders who display different perceptions on their values and usefulness. However, taking into account the findings from the cases (UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4), it was observed that the different perceptions of the urban stakeholders led to value conflicts (economic, recreational, environmental, housing). This has made it difficult for planners, including other professionals, to achieve the planning objectives for urban public open spaces. Urban public open spaces in Mangaung are gradually disappearing and this is evident from the encroachments on UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 for housing purposes.

In as much as there was a housing backlog in Mangaung, urban public open spaces have been less prioritised by all the stakeholders, especially in UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 in the sense that the urban stakeholders placed a housing value on them. This has been different in UPOS4 which has a recreational and environmental value. All the urban stakeholders need to collaborate with each other in facilitating the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and this can be initiated by municipal planners as the key actors in achieving the key planning objectives.

It was also discovered that poor management and sustenance of urban public open spaces contributed to the encroachment of such spaces. Value conflicts identified from the different urban stakeholders also have an influence on urban open space encroachment. The focus has been mostly on the housing value and urban open spaces were neglected by the municipal officials. UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4 initially had a land use reservation of 'Public Open Space' and were earmarked for recreational purposes, but only UPOS4 held a recreational and environmental value. With the successful implementation on the value and utility within UPOS4, community members were willing to be educated and capacitated regarding the planning and management of urban public open spaces. UPOS1 and UPOS2 still have the portions of urban land that are still earmarked as a 'Park' and if proper consultation with them is done, those remaining spaces can still regain the recreational and environmental value. However, the municipal officials indicated that they did not have guidelines or a framework that they can use in planning and management for urban public open spaces. In spite of the absence of guidelines for planning and management of urban public open spaces, planners rezoned the open spaces in the three cases for residential purposes and this also promoted poor enforcement of land use regimes by the planners. The municipal planners are the custodians for planning and they have to promote a sustainable neighbourhood but formulating policies that will curb the incidence of urban public open space encroachment. This can be done by collaborating with 'Parks and Cemeteries' who are the custodians of open spaces and they indicated that they had the strategy for the development of public open spaces. Lack of understanding of the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces, which led to value conflicts, hampered the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods.

### **7.3.2 Fostering community participation during planning processes poses significant challenges for municipalities**

Different scholars have emphasised the significance of community participation in planning projects. Its success relies on the involvement of different stakeholders in planning and development of urban land. The importance of urban stakeholder participation in planning and development of urban land needs adequate consultation and participation of all the relevant

stakeholders in planning projects. However, the findings for the cases that were reviewed indicated that the level of community participation in planning projects was very low. This included the level of representativeness and the nature of the community participation process. The needs and concerns of the community members are not taken into account. The flow of information from the municipal officials to the community members was very poor and rezoning of the urban land was done without the engagement of other stakeholders. This discovery was based on the evidence from the interviewees who indicated that no community participation was done within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. Also, other municipal officials indicated that they were not aware of the change of land use for those urban public open spaces. The findings also pointed out that most of the municipal planning projects were given to the planning consultants who held meetings with the public, ward councillors and ward committee members. The case was different with UPOS4 which adopted the concept of 'Adopt-a-Park' and was done through the IDP process. This showed that there were transparency and empowerment of all the urban stakeholders involved in this project. The volunteers of this project, who are the community members, were educated about the concept and currently serve as useful resources for policymakers. Because it was a project initiated through the IDP process, the project was budgeted for by the custodians of parks.

It was further discovered that collaboration among the different urban stakeholders was lacking. The decisions made on planning for urban public open spaces were not based on consensus but rather made independently. This was indicated by the disconnect among the municipal officials in planning for the development of urban open spaces which were rezoned without the comments or consent of the custodians of open spaces. The municipality had a development strategy for parks but was not known by other officials and this showed that municipal officials were working in silos. Community members were willing to participate in the planning and management of urban public open spaces but they were not consulted by planners. Problems emanating from the incidence of the encroachment of urban public open spaces included lack of effective communication where information sharing was poor and there was no mutual understanding among the urban stakeholders. Also, the absence of robust guidelines or frameworks for implementing proper community participation in planning projects hampered effective community participation.

### **7.3.3 Varying value conflicts among the different urban stakeholders relate to poor management of urban public open spaces**

Reviewing the earlier discussions about the factors influencing urban public open space encroachment and its connection to value conflicts, evidence pointed out that in Mangaung, urban public open spaces were poorly managed and less prioritised. Concentration was on

land uses such as residential, business, educational and health, and community facilities. This resulted in mismanagement or negligence of urban public open spaces. It has been discovered that the housing value placed on urban public open spaces was as result of poor management by municipal officials. If the urban public open spaces within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 were properly managed, in the same way as within UPOS4, the planners would not be facing the challenge of the extinction of open spaces. Discussants from the focus groups repeatedly mentioned that such spaces were used for criminal activities as well as for dumping rubbish. This is an indication of poor management of open spaces. Continuing from the interviews, one respondent raised his concern regarding the nature of open spaces within the cases and, feeling embittered, he mentioned that these open spaces would not be in such a state if the municipality used the parks for their purpose. He further stated that there was no management of these spaces and people without shelter saw them as land for grabs. Also, instead of managing the open spaces, people are allowed to encroach and then the infill planning is done. Further responses from the municipal officials within UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3 indicated that there were no guidelines or framework used by planners in planning and management for urban public open space. It was further stated that the planners only planned for open spaces but did not manage them.

Despite the value conflicts displayed, there is willingness from the community members to be educated on the sustainability of these spaces. Within UPOS1 and UPOS2, there is still a portion of urban open spaces that are not rezoned and they can be managed if all the urban stakeholders are involved. Proper planning and management would still be possible, especially in the case where the community members are the willing partners in rectifying the challenge. Involvement of all the urban stakeholders in management of the urban public open spaces is believed to assist in creating sustainable communities. Urban stakeholders responsible for urban public open space management should consider an open space audit which includes the location, size, characteristics, quality and the purposes of open spaces. Such open space audit will assist the relevant stakeholders with a sense of ownership and proper management of open space within their context. From the accruing evidence of analysis and from the literature, it was noticed that there is a relationship between the value conflicts and poor management of urban public open spaces. Also, there is a need for a guideline or framework that can be used in the planning and management of urban public open spaces. This should include community participation, where all the stakeholders are involved in planning projects, especially with sustenance of urban public open spaces.

## 7.4 Framework development and validation

This section addresses the research sub-question 6 – *How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key planning objectives to create sustainable communities?* This presents the development of the framework for planning and management of urban public open spaces in municipalities. This section first presents the proposed conceptual framework and its key components. Furthermore, it provides the description of the framework and its validation. Last, the final framework is illustrated and the recommendations to the planners and other practitioners involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces are presented.

### 7.4.1 Proposed conceptual framework

The final research sub-question of this research addressed how planners plan and manage urban public open spaces in the MMM. It has been discovered that there were no guidelines or frameworks used by planners for urban public open space planning, community participation or value conflict management within the municipality. This therefore motivated this research to develop a framework that could be used by planners and other professionals or practitioners involved in planning projects to solve this problem. It was envisaged that the development of the framework and its application by planners and relevant practitioners would assist in curbing the challenges faced in achieving the key objectives of planning. The proposed conceptual framework was discussed as part of the literature review in Chapter 3, Section 3.5 and in Chapter 6, with the research participants. Jabareen (2009:51) stated that a conceptual framework provides understanding and an interpretative approach to social reality. It can be “developed and constructed through a process of qualitative analysis” (Jabareen, 2009:51) and each concept used play in critical role in theory. This is also described as a process of theorisation and is based on data collected through multiple techniques. Therefore, in developing the proposed conceptual framework, the researcher made use of literature and qualitative data through interviews with urban stakeholders selected for the research. The main concepts used in developing the proposed conceptual framework are shown in Figure 7.1.

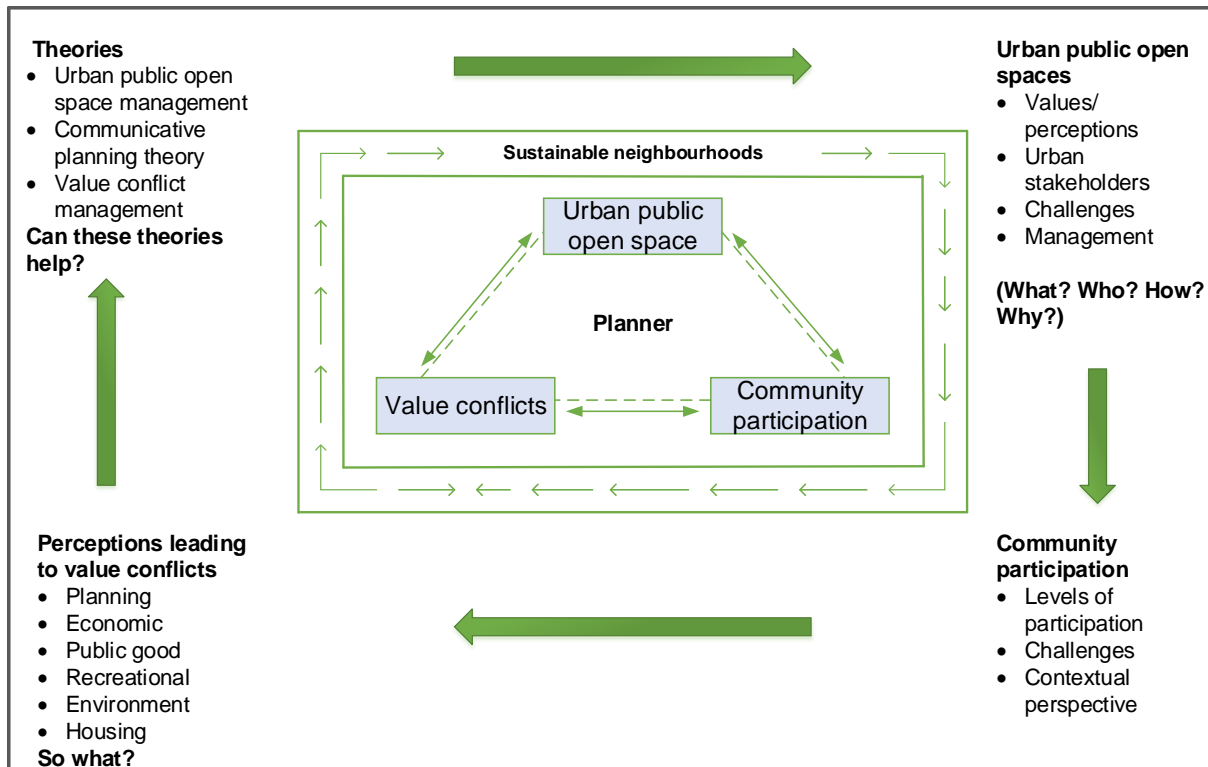


Figure 7.1: First draft of the proposed conceptual framework  
 Source: Author's own (2019)

#### 7.4.1.1 First draft of the proposed conceptual framework

The first draft of the proposed conceptual framework evolved from the literature review. The main concepts that formed this framework include urban public open space, community participation and value conflicts. At the centre, there is a planner who has a responsibility to plan for achievement of sustainable neighbourhoods. In planning, different land uses are considered in creating sustainable communities and the urban public open spaces are part of the key objectives of planning. Planners are struggling to create sustainable neighbourhoods because urban public open spaces are gradually disappearing as they are encroached for housing purposes. Different urban stakeholders are involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces but there are challenges with facilitating community participation in planning projects, especially where urban public open spaces are involved. The different urban stakeholders have different perceptions on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces and these include planning, recreational, environmental, economic and housing values. With different theories attached to these concepts, is there anyone that can help to solve this problem?

#### **7.4.1.2 Second draft of the proposed conceptual framework**

From the interviews conducted with the research participants and the focus groups, their responses to the questions asked motivated the second draft of the proposed conceptual framework. The initial concepts were used in this draft and focus was on the factors influencing urban public open spaces. Figure 7.2 illustrates the second draft of the proposed conceptual framework. From the first draft illustrated in Figure 7.1, the interview protocol was made of the three constructs (urban public open space planning, community participation and value conflicts) and new propositions emerged from the interviews. Under urban public open space planning, the propositions included poor awareness of the correct procedure for planning and management of urban open spaces; poor or no compliance on land use management; no understanding of the value and utilisation of urban open space; lack of effective communication among the different urban stakeholders during the planning process; and no integrated approach in planning and management of urban public open spaces. New propositions from the community participation construct involved lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment as well as communication to engender community participation; absence of robust frameworks for mainstreaming these factors towards ensuring improved levels of community participation; and no proper procedure followed for community participation regarding planning of urban open spaces. With the value conflict construct, the following new propositions emerged: evidence of the varying value conflicts among the urban stakeholders and absence of the management of the variety of perspectives during the planning and management of urban open spaces. These propositions, as illustrated in the second draft, indicate the challenges facing the planners in planning and managing urban open spaces and therefore motivate the formulation of the final draft which is the framework to be used by the planner to reconceptualise urban public open spaces.

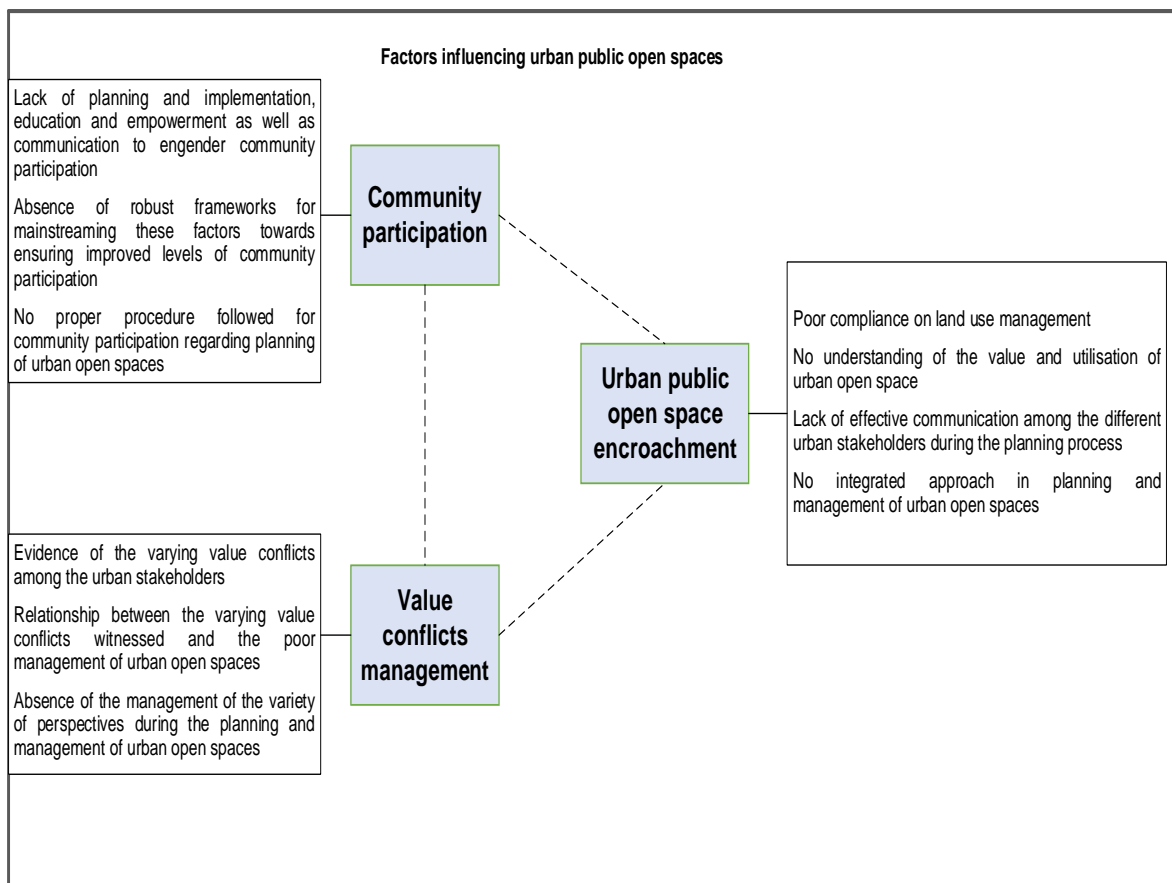


Figure 7.2: Second draft of the proposed conceptual framework  
Source: Author's own (2019)

### 7.4.1.3 Final draft of the proposed conceptual framework

Figure 7.3 illustrates an improved version of the second draft of the proposed conceptual framework. The newly emerged propositions were addressed by the researcher and this gave the researcher an opportunity to draw conclusions from the analysis and discussions of the results from the intra-case analysis. The final version of the conceptual framework combines all three concepts and indicate a link between them. The conceptual framework is named the Urban Public Open Space Management Framework. It involves the initial concepts as indicated in Chapter 3. These include community participation, value conflicts and urban public open spaces. Effective community participation and effective value conflict management can lead to effective urban public open space management which will help to curb the incidence of urban public open space encroachment. Aspects under these concepts are recommended for use by planning professionals and other practitioners that are involved in planning projects. Chapter 8 gives more detail on the recommendations for practice and policy as well as future studies.

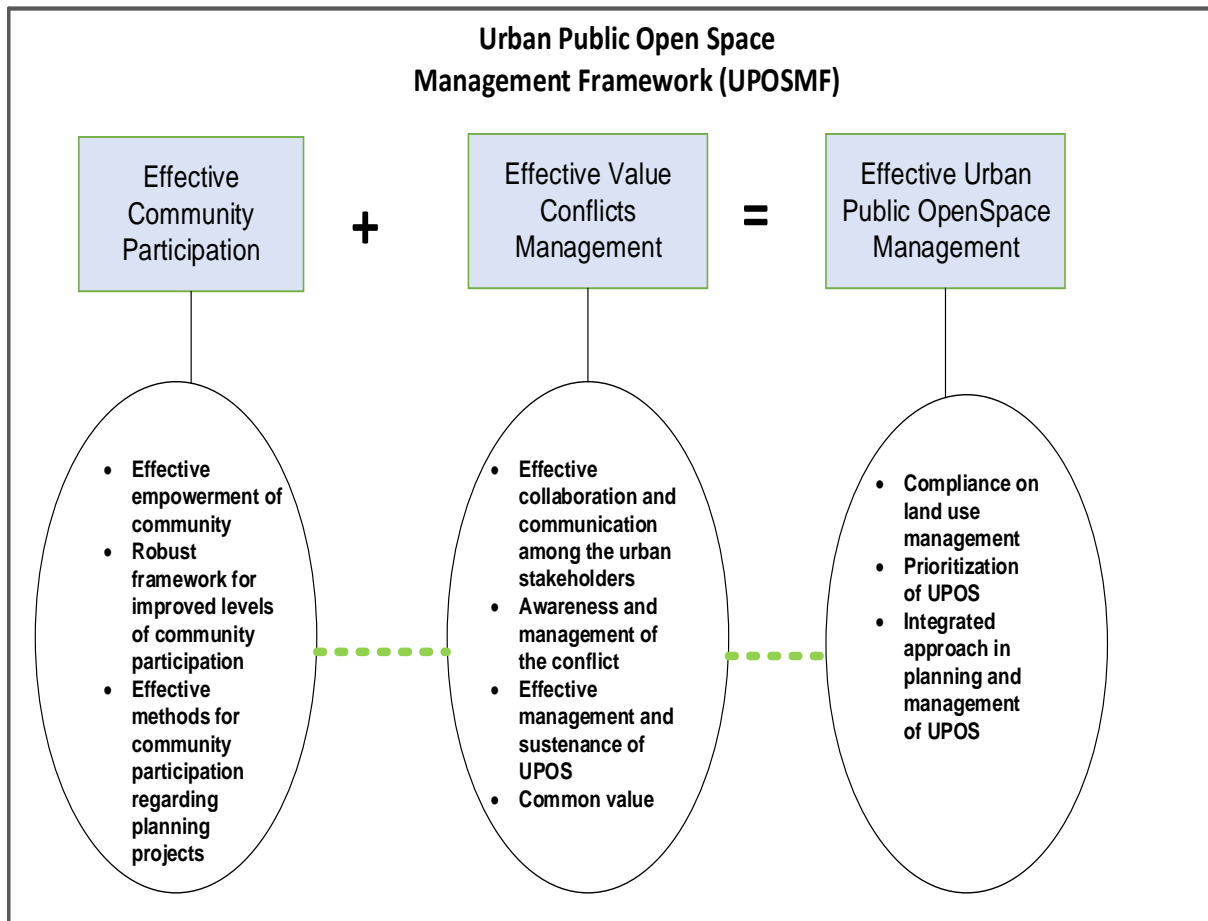


Figure 7.3: Final draft of the proposed conceptual framework  
Source: Author's own (2019)

#### 7.4.2 Application of the proposed conceptual framework

The researcher developed the proposed conceptual framework for the planning practitioners based on the challenges faced by the planners in achieving the key planning objectives. Understandably so, focusing on the application of the framework, there are implications and limitations to the framework as the framework might not be implemented immediately, but rather to integrate the framework with the Capability Maturity Model that has been used in carrying out projects in different disciplines such as engineering and construction, amongst a few.

It is further important to outline how the framework will be applied and implemented by the users in practice. This framework can be applied by planners at municipal level, including other sectors at the municipality that are involved in planning and management of the urban public open spaces. Because planners are responsible for the municipal applications, they can share or use the framework with other MMM practitioners involved in planning projects. Community members also need to be recognised as urban stakeholders as this will help in their

involvement in planning projects because there was already willingness from the focus group discussants. Limitations to the implementation of the proposed framework may arise due political pressure. The use of this framework may even change within the same community, that of Mangaung. It can also change when the circumstances around the political economy changes. The next section addresses the validation process of the proposed conceptual framework.

### **7.4.3 Validation of the proposed conceptual framework**

An interview protocol was designed by the researcher for validation of the proposed conceptual framework. The interview protocol was sent by email to the ten research participants. The target was the practitioners involved in planning and management of the urban public open spaces. Selection of the participants was based of the experience of the stakeholders, their expertise on the subject matter, their roles and responsibilities because not all the planners at the municipality are handling applications for properties allocated at the townships. Also, the selection was based on the knowledge and expertise of the procedures used in development applications (The interview protocol is attached as Appendix F).

During the process of validation, not all the research participants responded to the interview protocol and this was seen as a limitation of the study. Of the ten participants, only four returned their responses, three others responded via telephone and three others did not respond to the request. Based on the responses from the planning practitioners, it was said that the framework indicates the relationship between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts. The respondents also indicated that the framework was easy to understand. In addition, the participants agreed with the factors indicating urban open space encroachment and that the compliance and enforcement of the land use regimes could be a solution to the incidences of encroachment. Also, collaboration and effective community participation among the urban stakeholders would all assist in managing urban public open spaces. Furthermore, one of the respondents indicated that he did not believe that compliance and the enforcement of land use regimes would assist in the management of urban public open spaces. The framework would assist in planning of projects but the indication was more of a system problem that is caused by other factors beyond. Participants were willing to implement the framework. With telephonic interviews, some practitioners suggested that the framework needs to improve and can be extended beyond municipal boundaries.

## 7.5 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the cross-case analysis in an attempt to answer the research sub-question and some of the new propositions that emerged from the intra-case analysis. Findings from the multiple cases rendered an opportunity for the researcher to evaluate the different views of the research participants. From the analysis, certain aspects pertaining to planning and management of urban public open spaces were used to draw up the patterns from the intra-case analysis and they were exercised for the replication strategy. These involved the role of the urban stakeholders, the influence of value conflicts on the urban public open space encroachment, relationship between the value conflicts, the poor management of urban public open spaces and the impact of community participation in curbing the incidence of encroachment. For analysis and discussion of the results, the researcher developed analytical generalisations which were related to the context of the study and to the research propositions. To conclude, this chapter presented the framework development and validation which is intended to assist the planner and other practitioners involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces.

## Chapter 8

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

---

---

### 8.1 Chapter introduction

The previous chapter focused on the discussion of the results (cross-case analysis) to answer the research question namely, *What practical and theoretical difficulties do planners face in the planning and management of urban public open spaces in Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa?* and to answer the six sub-questions posed (8.3.1–8.3.6). Then the new propositions emanated from the intra-case analysis will also be reviewed. Analytical generalisations were developed, and to conclude, a framework development and validation was discussed. Chapter 8 aims at providing the review of the research process and its discussion as anchored in the research aim and the objectives of the study. Recommendations for the planners, policymakers and for future studies are provided. This chapter also presents the contribution of the research to theory and practice and finally, the limitations to the research study are provided.

This chapter is therefore structured as follows:

- Review of the research process.
- Reflection of the major findings of the study.
- Recommendations.
- Contribution to the body of knowledge.
- Final conclusions.

### 8.2 Review of the research process

The research study commenced with focusing on the literature review based on the understanding of different terminologies and definitions of open spaces. Furthermore, different theories related to planning and urban public open spaces, including community participation, were discussed. The research aims sought *to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community, and to develop a framework which can be used by planners to manage value conflicts and achieve the objectives of planning.* This was achieved by the development of a framework that can be used by planners in planning and management of urban public open spaces, and even further, for other planning projects in order to achieve the creation of sustainable communities. The research was based

on a multiple case studies conducted in the Mangaung townships, Freedom Square and Kagisanong, with the inclusion of different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces.

To achieve the set research aims, the following research objectives guided the study:

- Determining the different terminology and definitions of open spaces.
- Exploring the different theories related to planning of urban public open spaces.
- Identifying challenges affecting the planning of sustainable neighbourhoods in Mangaung.
- Identifying the perceptions of urban stakeholders on urban public open spaces, its uses and values.
- Exploring what value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the planning objectives.
- Developing a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives.

A set of research questions in achieving the research aims and objectives were formulated for the study, in conjunction with literature. These questions were related to the objectives and were answered in different chapters of this study. They include the following:

- How is open space understood in the literature?
- What theories relate to planning of open spaces?
- What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung?
- What are the perceptions of open space, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?
- What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?
- How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key planning objectives to create sustainable communities?

In addition, the research propositions were also set up by the researcher and were tested in Chapter 6 (intra-case analysis).

The research propositions for the study included:

- Urban stakeholders play salient roles in the planning practice, management of urban public open spaces and creation of sustainable communities.
- Effective planning for the utility or usefulness of urban public open spaces by different urban stakeholders needs extensive interaction of all the stakeholders involved.
- Involvement of all urban stakeholders and community participation in the planning of urban public open spaces would lead to the management of encroachment on these spaces.
- There are different perceptions from the different urban stakeholders about the value and use of urban public open spaces and this leads to value conflicts; hence, planners struggle to achieve the key objectives of planning for these spaces.
- Different value conflicts influence urban open space encroachment.
- A reconceptualisation of urban public open spaces is needed to maximise its value for planning and the community.

The above-mentioned research questions were answered using the literature review in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, as well as through the semi-structured interviews, focus groups and personal observations in Chapters 6 and 7. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with planning, human settlements, environmental practitioners and the municipal councillors. Focus group discussants included community members who encroached on the urban public open spaces in UPOS1, UPOS2 and UPOS3. Some included the property owners surrounding the urban public open spaces in UPOS1, UPOS2, UPOS3 and UPOS4 in the Mangaung townships Freedom Square and Kagisanong. The information from the literature review and the results from the data collected during the interviews assisted in the development of the draft frameworks. These were validated by the planning practitioners to develop the final framework for the study. Also, there was a set of research propositions that were initially set by the researcher and were tested in the intra-case analysis (Chapter 6). New propositions emerged from the intra-case analysis and some of them were tested in the cross-case analysis (Chapter 7). Based on the testing of the research propositions and the findings that emanated from Chapters 6 and 7, some recommendations for the planners were drawn by the researcher and will be discussed in this chapter. A summary of the review of the research process is illustrated in Table 8.1. It is in relation with the chapters where the research questions were answered and the method used.

**Table 8.1: Summary of the review of the research process**

Chapters	Research question	Method used
2	How is open space understood in the literature?	Literature study
3	What theories relate to planning of open spaces?	Literature study
5	What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung?	Literature study
6	What are the perceptions of open space, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?	Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews Focus groups Personal observations
7	What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?	Literature study Semi-structured interviews Focus groups Personal observations
7	How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key planning objectives to create sustainable communities?	Literature study Semi-structured interviews

### 8.3 Reflection of the major findings of the study

This section summarises the major findings of the study. For clarity and easy understanding, these findings are presented along with the different research questions that guided the study. The section below outlines the achievement of the research objectives listed in Table 8.1.

#### 8.3.1 Research question 1

*How is open space understood in the literature?*

The concern of this research question was on literature review examining the understanding of different terminologies and definitions for open spaces. This was explored in Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 was based on the background of important aspects of the research which included the problem statement in relation to urban public open spaces of Mangaung townships in the Free State, South Africa. Chapter 2 explored the understanding of open spaces which was based on defining open spaces and exploring the different terminologies of open spaces. With the exploration of deferent terminologies, the researcher opted for the 'Urban Public Open Space' which is a terminology utilised within the municipality. Included in this section were planning and design of open spaces, its classification, and the benefits and value conflicts of different urban stakeholders, as well as the connection between urban public open spaces and sustainable communities. On the basis of the literature review, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document reviews and personal observations

were conducted to obtain an in-depth understanding of urban public open spaces from the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of open spaces. Data collection included information on the procedure used by planners in planning and management of open spaces; the perceptions of different urban stakeholders on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces in the Freedom Square and Kagisanong townships in Mangaung, Free State, and causal factors of urban public open space encroachment. The findings indicated that there was a lack of understanding on the value and utility of urban public open spaces; non-compliance of land use management which is a result of low prioritisation of urban public open spaces; poor awareness of the correct procedure for planning and management of open spaces; lack of effective communication among the different urban stakeholders; and there is no integrated approach in planning and management of urban public open spaces in Mangaung. New propositions emerged from the findings and were later tested in Chapter 7 (cross-case analysis). Based on the analysis of the results and the review of the literature, useful information for the development of the framework was provided.

### **8.3.2 Research question 2**

*What theories relate to planning of open spaces?*

The second research question was mainly concerned with different theories related to planning for urban public open spaces. These included planning theories, community participation, value conflicts and stakeholder participation. The planning theories discussed were interconnected to the Arnstein 'ladder of participation', namely blueprint planning versus the non-participation level, synoptic planning versus the degree of tokenism, and pluralistic planning versus the degree of citizen power. The planning modes associated with planning for urban public open spaces were discussed. Furthermore, stakeholder participation, its classification as well as the perception of the urban stakeholders regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces were reviewed in Chapter 3. The initial conceptual framework for the study was developed under this research objective. To answer this research question, Chapter 3 reviewed literature that revolved around three major concepts such as urban public open spaces, community participation and the value conflict of different urban stakeholders. These concepts, as part of the literature review, were also used for data collection through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The findings in Chapter 6 (intra-case analysis) were established from the above-mentioned concepts (urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts). The findings indicated that there was no proper procedure or methods followed for planning and management of urban public open spaces as well as for conducting community participation. In continuance, new

propositions emerged from this, and they include lack of planning and implementation, education and empowerment which is inclusive of communication among the urban stakeholders to engender community participation. It was further observed that the municipality does not have any robust framework for mainstreaming these factors in order to improve the levels of community participation. These propositions were discussed in the cross-case analysis in Chapter 7 where literal and theoretical replication applied.

### **8.3.3 Research question 3**

*What are the key planning challenges in Mangaung?*

The main concern for this research question was based on the key challenges that affect the planning of sustainable neighbourhoods in Mangaung. In responding to this research question, Chapter 2 was based on the literature review that highlighted encroachment of urban public open spaces as a societal malaise. The challenges hindering implementation of the management of urban public open spaces were also reviewed. Chapter 5 was based on the research context of Mangaung townships and it included the challenges on the quality and nature of urban public open spaces in the Freedom Square and Kagisanong townships in Mangaung. This was further supported by semi-structured interviews with the municipal officials involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces, including the community members who encroached on open spaces and those who own the properties surrounding these illegally occupied open spaces through focus group discussions (Chapter 6). From the major findings related to this research objective, it was noted that urban public open spaces in Mangaung townships are encroached for different reasons and this has affected the spatial patterns of land use in Mangaung. The gradual disappearance of urban open spaces were evident through the mushrooming of informal settlements in Mangaung and this makes it difficult for the planners to plan for sustainable neighbourhoods. The causal factors identified during the intra-case analysis (Chapter 6) included the following:

- Dysfunctional use of land use regimes and decision-making processes by planners contributed to the encroachment of urban open spaces because they rezoned these spaces from 'Public Open Spaces' to 'Residential' as they were illegally occupied for residential purposes.
- Urban public open spaces are poorly managed by both the municipal officials and community members. Even though their land use reservation is for a 'Park', they are not used for recreational purposes, instead, they attract other uses. This is also an indication of low prioritisation of urban public open spaces.

- The municipality is still operating on outdated documents to regulate land use management. For instance, in the townships, the municipality is still using the land use conditions in Annexure F (RSA, 1986).

#### **8.3.4 Research question 4**

*What are the perceptions of open space, its uses and values in the minds of urban stakeholders?*

Research question 4 specifically focused on the perceptions displayed by different urban stakeholders in Mangaung regarding the values and usefulness of urban public open spaces. These perceptions ranged from economic, social and environmental values and influenced planning choices. The literature review in Chapter 2, supported by semi-structured interviews with planning, human settlements and environmental practitioners, ward councillors and focus group discussants revealed that different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces have different perceptions on the value and usefulness of these spaces (Chapter 6, intra-case analysis). The key findings from this research question revealed the following:

- The planner's role is to create sustainable communities and to provide quality of life to human beings. They can achieve this goal by fulfilling the human demand of urban public open spaces for recreational purposes and environmental quality. Planners are facing difficulties in achieving the key objectives of planning.
- Community members owning the properties surrounding urban public open spaces are concerned about the safety and security, increased cultural and social vitality, better quality of life that include better and improved health, more inclusive open spaces, sense of place and accessible environments. Urban public open spaces in their vicinity have been poorly managed and their quality was not good and they felt that it is better if these spaces are occupied for residential purposes rather than attracting criminal activities and unhealthy conditions.
- Community members encroaching urban public open spaces place a housing value on urban public open spaces as they are an unbuilt space or land without any function, hence the mushrooming of informal settlements. They see it as land for grabs since they are not properly managed. Others displayed not only a housing value on urban public open spaces but a cultural value which attached religious beliefs.
- Environmental practitioners place an environmental value on urban public open spaces. Challenges in the case of Mangaung is that urban public open spaces have

not been properly managed and one of the major causes is disconnect among the municipal officials who are working in silos. There is no integrated approach in planning and management for urban public open spaces. It has been different with the urban public open space located in Kagisanong where community participation was followed and the concept of 'Adopt-a-Park' was introduced to the community who eventually volunteered to manage the park. This is viewed as a success factor as the park is used for recreational purposes.

### **8.3.5 Research question 5**

*What value conflicts do these differing perceptions establish for the planner?*

Following from Research question 4, the different perceptions on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces lead to different value conflicts which make it difficult for the planner to achieve the key planning objectives. The literature review in Chapter 2 provided the basis for data to be collected through semi-structured interviews and focus groups as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. The findings indicated that there was evidence of the varying value conflicts displayed by the different urban stakeholders. These included planning, recreational or environmental, housing, cultural and political values. Furthermore, there was an indication of the relationship between the varying value conflicts witnessed and the poor management of urban public open spaces. Urban public open spaces are created to provide the community a space for recreational purposes. In the Mangaung townships, urban public open spaces are less prioritised as the focus is on land uses such as residential, business and social amenities. This has led to negligence or poor management of urban public open spaces. During the semi-structured interviews, the municipal officials indicated that the municipality has lost urban public open spaces because they were rezoned for residential purposes. This is termed 'informal settlement upgrading' which is supported by human settlement practitioners. The case study areas were rezoned for residential purposes and the focus group discussants confirmed that they occupied the urban land because they did not have shelter. They clearly understood that there are benefits for urban open spaces but their challenge was homelessness because of lack of shelter. This causes challenges in balancing the importance of building sustainable communities and addressing the need to prioritise urban open spaces.

### **8.3.6 Research question 6**

*How do planners in Mangaung plan and manage urban public open spaces to achieve the key objectives of planning and to create sustainable communities?*

This research question sought to review the concern on how urban public open spaces are planned for and managed by planners in Mangaung since they are becoming extinct. In response to the research question, the researcher strived to develop a conceptual framework that will serve as a guide for urban public open space planning and management in Mangaung. Different scholars have mentioned urban public open spaces; however, no scholar known to the researcher attempted to explore the combination of urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflict management in planning projects. The conceptual framework was developed in Chapter 3 based on the concepts such as urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts. It was further developed through data from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions that was analysed and discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

The validation of the framework was carried out in Chapter 7 and was performed with planning practitioners of the MMM. This framework was given out in the form of an interview protocol for validation and the planning practitioners were required to give inputs and render contributions. The framework is meant to be a guide when planning for urban public open spaces. The planners agreed that the proposed framework is easily understood, user-friendly and logical. It would add value to their professional work and they can apply it when planning for urban public open spaces.

To conclude from the responses of the research questions reflection and the testing of the initial and emerging propositions, the findings from the intra-case analysis in Chapter 6 and cross-case analysis in Chapter 7, the study considers the suggested recommendations provided in the following section. These suggested recommendations are necessary for the planners, policymakers and for future studies, if the necessity arise.

## **8.4 Recommendations of the study**

### **8.4.1 Recommendations for practice and policy**

After the consideration of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested for planning practice and policy to ensure improvement on planning and management of urban public open spaces:

- For planners to plan and manage and manage urban public open spaces, proper procedures or methods for urban public open spaces are necessary. There is a need for collaboration with other urban stakeholders, particularly with the Parks and Cemeteries sub-directorates. This unit is already operational in terms on the planning and management of open spaces since they developed the “strategic principles for

planning and management of open space”. Also, the planner should endeavour to acquire more knowledge and skills in planning for urban public open spaces. These can be achieved through the attendance of planning forums, workshops and conferences and other training programmes based on planning and management of urban public open spaces. Planners should also gain in-depth understanding on the value of urban public open spaces, especially in terms of its sustainability. This will assist them in improving their sustainability literacy levels in planning projects as they are concerned with planning for sustainable neighbourhoods.

- To curb the incidence of urban public open spaces on future development, including the current unoccupied urban land, involvement of all the relevant urban stakeholders in planning projects must be encouraged. Improved collaboration and effective communication among planning, environmental and human settlement practitioners, other policymakers, political officers and community members should be encouraged. There is a need to review the roles and responsibilities of different urban stakeholders so that relevant professionals can deal with planning and management of urban open spaces. This exercise can assist in effective management of urban public open spaces. Therefore, an integrated approach by all urban stakeholders should be promoted.
- The 2013 legislation for planners (SPLUMA) encourages enforcement of land use regimes. Planners need to enforce compliance as stipulated in the land use management legislation and this can hinder challenges of urban public open space encroachment. Community members, including other urban stakeholders who are not experts in planning projects, should be educated. Regular attendance of the Free State SPLUMA forums which are scheduled once per term and organised by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform should be encouraged for all urban stakeholders involved in planning projects.
- Financial support should be made available by the municipality for the planning and management of urban open spaces. With the new ‘Adopt-a-Park’ concept, funding is necessary and the community should be educated regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. Furthermore, planners have a responsibility to educate the community members about township development and the importance of creating sustainable communities. This will also minimise urban public open space encroachment. Also, this will help all the urban stakeholders involved in planning to focus on one common value and goal for open spaces and prioritise them.

- To engender community participation, planners should properly plan for this exercise to educate, empower and communicate effectively with the community members. Robust frameworks are needed to improve the levels of community participation.
- In managing value conflicts that are caused by the different perceptions of urban stakeholders on the value and utility of urban public open spaces, planners should recognise the community members as key stakeholders to be involved in planning projects. In this case, stakeholder engagement should be encouraged. Planners should allow community members to participate in decision-making in planning projects because participation is the distribution of power. Capacity building should be promoted in planning for urban public open spaces.

#### **8.4.2 Recommendations for future studies**

The following recommendations are suggested for future studies:

- The scope of the study was very wide because it focused on three concepts: urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts. More studies involving the planner and other urban stakeholders in planning projects can be explored. Due to the extinction of urban public open spaces in Mangaung, monitoring of urban public open spaces using unmanned aerial vehicles, abbreviated as UAVs but also commonly known as drones, can be explored. The municipality already consists of the Sub-directorate: Geographic Information Systems which is responsible for the Mangaung database, and land invasion under Human Settlements, can collaborate with planners to monitor encroachment. A conceptual framework has already been developed by the researcher, outside of this research.
- For future studies, community engagement can be facilitated using technology driven solutions, instead of the traditional ways to engender community participation. Crowdsourcing community participation can be encouraged, including different urban planning applications that can promote community engagement.
- Further studies can also consider a framework development for value conflict management for different perceptions displayed by different urban stakeholders regarding the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. This framework can be used by planners in managing conflict of different values by urban stakeholders.

## 8.5 Research contribution to the body of knowledge

The key objectives of planning include the creation of sustainable communities. This includes planning and management of urban public open spaces for recreational purposes. This is evident in literature; however, most of the information on open spaces is fragmented and challenging for the planner to comprehend and implement in planning projects. In addition, several scholars addressed urban open spaces in different contexts and several frameworks on the subject matter were developed and validated but none of them, known to the researcher, addressed or attempted to reconceptualise urban public open spaces by inter-connecting them with value conflict management and community participation. Also, the researcher consulted several studies conducted by different researchers on urban public open spaces and none of them mentioned how valuable the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces can be to help planners manage the value conflicts of the different urban stakeholders. These value conflicts arise from the different perceptions placed by different urban stakeholders on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. The argument was based on what *value conflicts* these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the objectives of planning.

There are different value conflicts among the different stakeholders; however, all these value conflicts, be it planning, economic, recreational, environmental or housing values, make it impossible for the planner to achieve planning objectives for urban open spaces and for other issues such as housing and land use management. Urban stakeholders include non-experts, that is, community members who hardly participate in planning projects. The researcher also observed that challenges associated with urban public open spaces make it difficult for the planner to achieve the key planning objectives, namely, creation of sustainable community. The researcher therefore intended to fill this gap in the body of knowledge that will benefit the planner and other urban stakeholders involved in planning projects. To achieve this, research Objective 6 was explored, namely, *developing a framework for the evaluation of the value of the current theoretical understanding of the urban public open spaces in helping planners to manage value conflict and achieve the planning objectives*. This research therefore sought to provide the following outcomes:

- To broaden the mind of the planner to understand the different perceptions of urban stakeholders regarding the value and usefulness of urban open spaces and how to manage these value conflicts.
- To develop a framework that will serve as a guide for the planners in planning and management of urban public open spaces. The focus of the framework suggests that

effective community participation and effective value conflict management lead to the urban public open space management framework.

- In addition, the framework can also be used for future research as it can be applied in real-life settings.

## 8.6 Final conclusions

The study explored the review of the research process which highlighted the aims and research objectives, the research questions and propositions. Responses to the research questions formulated by the researcher were linked to literature and the major findings of the research. From the research questions, the researcher suggested recommendations to be used by planners in planning for urban public open spaces. Furthermore, the research study developed and validated a framework based on three concepts linked together, namely urban public open space, community participation and value conflict. The framework will contribute to the body of knowledge. From a practical perspective, planners can use this framework as guideline on how to plan and manage urban public open spaces. This will help in achieving the key planning objectives and the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. However, as a limitation to the study, the robustness of the framework is not guaranteed as the planner might use it if needs arise. Also, the framework was developed and validated by planners in MMM, the study is limited only to the Mangaung townships, Freedom Square and Kagisanong and cannot be statistically generalised; instead, was analytically generalised.

The aim of this study was to reconceptualise urban public open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community, and to develop a framework which can be used by planners to manage value conflicts and achieve the objectives of planning. The title of the thesis, *Reconceptualising urban public open spaces: A Case of Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa*, intended to help to planners evaluate the value of the current theoretical understanding of urban public open spaces and how to manage value conflicts among different urban stakeholders in order to achieve the planning objectives.

## REFERENCES

---

---

- Abbasi, A., Alalouch, C. & Bramley, G. 2016. Open space quality in deprived urban areas: User perspective and use pattern. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 216:194-205. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.12.028
- Agee, J. 2009. Developing qualitative research questions: A reflective process. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22:4:431-447.
- Aitken, M. 2010. A three-dimensional view of public participation in Scottish land use planning: Empowerment or social control? *Planning Theory*, 9(3):248-264. doi:10.1177/1473095210366193
- Alexander, E.R. 1981. If planning isn't everything, maybe it's something. *The Town Planning Review*, 52(2):131-142.
- Alexander, E.R. 1992. *Approaches to planning: Introducing current planning theories, concepts and issues*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Switzerland: Gordon and Breach Science.
- Alexander, E. 2008. Public participation in planning – A multidimensional model: The case of Israel. *Planning Theory and Practice*, 9(1):57-80.
- Al-Hagla, K. 2008. Towards a sustainable neighborhood: The role of open spaces. *International Journal of Architectural Research*, 2(2):162-177. doi:10.26687/archnet-ijar.v2i2.239
- Allmendinger, P. 2001. *Planning in postmodern times*. London: Routledge.
- Allmendinger, P. 2009. *Planning theory*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Allmendinger, P. & Tewdwr-Jones, M. 2002. The communicative turn in urban planning: Unraveling paradigmatic, imperialistic and moralistic dimensions. *Space and Polity*, 6(1):5-24.
- Anguluri, A. & Narayanan, P. 2017. Role of green space in urban planning: Outlook towards smart cities. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, 25:58-65.
- Arnstein, S.R. 1969. A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4):216-224.
- Auret, H. 2016. Bloemfontein (1848-2015). *New Contree*, 76 (Supplement edition):193-212.

- Awuzie, B.O. 2013. *A viable infrastructure delivery systems model for achieving socio-economic benefits in the Nigerian oil and gas industry*. Master's dissertation, University of Salford, United Kingdom.
- Baxter, P.E. & Jack, S.M. 2008. Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4):544-559.
- Baycan-Levent, T., Vreeker, R. & Nijkamp, P. 2004. *Multidimensional evaluation of urban green spaces: A comparative study on European cities*. Research Memorandum, Vrije Universiteit, Faculty of Economic Business and Administration. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1-18.
- Behrens, R. & Watson, V. 1996. *Making urban places: Principles and guidelines for layout planning*. Urban Problem Research Unit, University of Cape Town.
- Bengston, D.N, Fletcher, J.O. & Nelson, K.C. 2004. Public policies for managing urban growth and protecting open space: policy instruments and lessons learned in the United States. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 69(2004):271-286.
- Berke, P.R. & Conroy, M.M. 2000. Are we planning for sustainable development? An evaluation of the 30 comprehensive plans. *APA Journal*, 66(1):21-33.
- Blaikie, N. 2000. *Designing social research: The logic of anticipation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Cambridge: Polity.
- Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. 2007. *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Pearson.
- Botes, L.J.S. 1999. *Community participation in the upgrading of informal settlement: Theoretical and practical guidelines*. Doctoral thesis, University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.
- Botes, L. & Van Rensburg, D. 2000. Community participation in development: Nine plagues and twelve commandments. *Community Development Journal*, 35(1):41-58.
- Botes, L.J.S., Stewart, T. & Wessels, J. 1996. Conflict in development: Lessons from the housing initiatives in Freedom Square and Namibia Square. *Development Southern Africa*, 13:453-467.
- Bromell, D.J. & Hyland, M. 2007. *Social inclusion and participation: A guide for policy and planning*. Social Inclusion and Participation Group Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand.

- Brundtland, G.H. 1987. *The Brundtland report. Our common future*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A. 2012. *Social research methods*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- CABE Space. 2005. *Does money grow on trees?* Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110118110609/http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/does-money-grow-on-trees.pdf> [Accessed 05 March 2019].
- Campbell, L. 2016. *Stepping back: Understanding cities and their systems*. ALNAP Working Paper. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- Carmona, M., De Magalhães, C. & Edwards, M. 2002. Stakeholder Views on value and urban design. *Journal of Urban Design*, 7(2):145-169.
- Cilliers, E.J. 2015. The importance of planning for green spaces. *Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries*, 4(4-1):1-5. doi:10.11648/j.aff.s.2015040401.11
- Cilliers, J & Cilliers, S. 2016. *Planning for green infrastructure: Option for South African cities*. South African Cities Network. Johannesburg.
- Cilliers, E.J., Diemont, E., Stobbelaar, D. & Timmerman, W. 2011. Sustainable green urban planning: The workbench spatial quality method. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(2):214-224.
- Cilliers, E.J. & Timmermans, W. 2013. Approaching value added planning in the green environment. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(2):144-154.
- Cilliers, E.J., Timmermans, W., Van den Goorbergh, F. & Slijkhuis, J.S.A. 2015. Green place-making in practice: From temporary spaces to permanent places. *Journal of Urban Design*, 20(3):349-366.
- City of London. 2014. *Open spaces strategy: Supplementary planning document consultation draft*. Department of Built Environment, City of London. Available at <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/heritage-and-design/Documents/open-spaces-strategy.pdf>
- City of London. 2017. *City gardens draft management plan 2017-2022*. London. Available at <http://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s78177/Appendix%20%20-%20Draft%20City%20Gardens%20Management%20Plan%202017-2022.pdf>
- Cohen, B. 2006. Urbanization in developing countries: Current trends, future projections, and key challenges for sustainability. *Technology in Society*, 28:63-80.

- Cohen, M., Wiek, A., Kay, B. & Harlow, J. 2015. Aligning public participation to stakeholders sustainability literacy: A case study on sustainable urban development in Phoenix, Arizona. *Sustainability*, 7:8709-8728.
- Cooper, D.R. & Schindler, P.S. 2014. *Business research methods*. 12<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Creswell J.W. 2007. *Qualitative inquiry and research design. Choosing among five approaches*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. 2013. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. 2014. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. 2015. *Educational research. Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J.W. & Poth, C.N. 2018. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among the five approaches*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- CSIR. 2005 (reprint). *Guidelines for human settlement planning and design*, Vol. 1. Pretoria: CSIR Building and Construction Technology. Available at [https://www.csir.co.za/sites/default/files/Documents/000\\_Vol\\_I\\_TOC.pdf](https://www.csir.co.za/sites/default/files/Documents/000_Vol_I_TOC.pdf)
- Davidoff, P. 1965. Advocacy and pluralism in planning. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 31(4):331-338. doi:10.1080/01944366508978187
- Davies, J.R. 1981. The spatial formation of the South African city. *GeoJournal*, 2:59-72.
- Dehghanmongabadi, A., Hoşkara, S.O. & Shir Khanloo, N. 2014. Introduction to achieve sustainable neighbourhoods. *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*. 3(9):16-26.
- De Groot, R. 2006. Function-analysis and valuation as a tool to assess land use conflicts in planning for sustainable, multi-functional landscapes. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 75(3-4):175-186. doi:10.1016/j.landurbplan.2005.02.016
- Dudley, F. 1993. *The critical villager: Beyond community participation*. London: Routledge.

- Du Plessis, C., Irurah, D.K. & Scholes, R.J. 2003. The built environment and climate change in South Africa. *Building Research & Information*, 31:240-256.
- Egan, J. 2004. *The Egan review: Skills for sustainable communities*. London: RIBA.
- Eisenhardt, K.M. 1989. Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4):532-550.
- Etzioni, A. 1968. Social analysis and social action. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 12(1):31-33. doi:10.1177/000276426801200107
- European Commission. 2015. Towards an EU Research and Innovation Policy Agenda for Nature-based Solutions & Re-naturing Cities. *Final Report of the Horizon 2020 Expert Group on Nature-Based Solutions and Re-Naturing Cities*. Brussels.
- Faludi, A.1973. *A reader in planning theory*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Fausold, C.J. & Lilieholm, R.J. 1999. The economic value of open space: A review and synthesis. *Environmental Management*, 23(3):307-320.
- Filho, W.L., Skanavis, C., Kounani, A., Brandli, L.L., Shiel, C., Do Paco, A., Pace P., Mifsud, M., Beynaghi, A., Price, E., Salvia, A.L., Will, M. & Shula, K. 2019. The role of planning in implementing sustainable development in a higher education context *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 235:678-687. doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.06.322
- Flick, U. 2014. *An introduction to qualitative research*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. London: Sage.
- Flyvbjerg, B. 1998. Habermas and Foucault: Thinkers for civil society? *British Journal of Sociology*, 49(2):210-223.
- Flyvbjerg, B. & Richardson, T. 2002. Planning and Foucault. In Allmendinger, P. & Tewdwr-Jones, M. (Eds.), *Planning futures, new directions for planning futures*. London: Routledge, 44-62.
- Foucault, M. 1982. The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4):777-795.
- Foucault, M. 1984. *Power. Essential works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, Vol. 3. Edited by J.D. Faubion. New York: The New Press.
- Francis, M.1987. Urban open spaces. *Advances in Environment, Behaviour, and Design*, 1:70-106.
- Freeman, R.E. 1984. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman.

- Freeman, R.E. 2004. The stakeholder approach revisited. *Zeitschrift für Wirtschafts-und Unternehmensethik*, 5(3):228-254.
- Friedmann, J. 1973. *Retracking America: A theory of transactive planning*. New York: Anchor Press.
- Fuwape, J.A. & Onyekwelu, J.C. 2011. Urban forest development in West Africa: Benefits and challenges. *Journal of Biodiversity and Ecological Sciences*, 1(1):77-94
- Gay, L.R. Mills, G.E. & Airasian, P.W. 2011. *Educational research. Competencies for analysis and applications*. 10<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Pearson.
- Gehl, J. 2010. *Cities for people*. Washington: Island People.
- Gelderblom, D. & Kok, P. 1994. Urbanisation: South Africa's challenge. *Volume 1: Dynamics*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Gilbert, A. 1987. Forms and effectiveness of community participation in squatter settlements. *Regional Development Dialogue*, 8(4):56-80.
- Gilbert, A. & Ward, P. 1984. Community action by the urban poor: Democratic involvement, community self-help or a means of social control? *World Development*, 12(8):769-782.
- Gondo, T. 2012. Spatial planning and open space integration in urban Ethiopia: A sustainable accessibility exegesis. In Schrenk, M. et al., *Re-mixing the city: Towards sustainability and resilience*. Real Corp Proceedings Tagungsband, 1383-1389.
- Gray, D.E. 2014. *Doing research in the real world*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. London. Sage.
- Haaland, C. & Van den Bosch, C.K. 2015. Challenges and strategies for urban green-space planning in cities undergoing densification: A review. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 14(4):760-711.
- Habermas, J. 1984. *The theory of communicative action. Reason and the rationalization of society*. Volume 1. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. 1985. *The theory of communicative action. Lifeworld and system: A critique of functionalist reason*. Volume 2. Beacon Press. Boston.
- Hag S. 2011. Urban green spaces and an integrative approach to sustainable environment. *Journal of Environmental Protection*, 2:601-608.
- Hall, P. 2002. *Cities of tomorrow*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Hassan, G.F., Hefnawi, A.E. & Refaie, M.E. 2011. Efficiency of participation in planning. *World Pumps*, 50(2):203-212.
- Healey P. 1992. Planning through debate. The communicative turn in planning theory. *The Town Planning Review*, 63(2):143-162.
- Healey, P. 1996. The communicative turn in planning theory and its implications for spatial strategy formation. *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science*, 23(2):217-234. doi:10.1068/b230217
- Herzele, A. & Wiedemann, T. 2003. A monitoring tool for the provision of accessible and attractive urban green spaces. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 63:109-126.
- Howard, E. 2011. Garden cities of to-morrow: (being the second edition of "To-morrow: A peaceful path to real reform"). London: Nabu Press.
- Hudson, B.M. 1979. Comparison of current planning theories: Counterparts and contradictions. *Journal of American Planning Association*, 45:387-398.
- Human, F., Marais, L. & Botes, L. 2009. Missing the boat? Community participation in the integrated development planning process in the Free State, South Africa. *Journal for Development Support*, 1:1-32.
- Innes, J.E & Booher, D. 2004. Reframing public participation: strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 5(4):419-436.
- International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). 2013. *Federation core values awards*. USA.
- International Union for Conservation of Nature. 2016. *Nature-based solutions to address global societal challenges*. Switzerland.
- Ismail, W.A.W. & Said, I. 2015. Integrating the community in urban design and planning of public spaces: A review in Malaysian cities. *Procedia – Social and Behavioural Sciences* 168:357-364.
- Jiboye, A.D. 2011. Urbanization challenges and housing delivery in Nigeria: The need for an effective policy framework for sustainable development. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(1):176-185.
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. 2012. Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Jürgens, U., Donaldson, R. Rule, S. & Bähr, J. 2013. Townships in South African cities – Literature review and research perspectives. *Habitat International*, 39:256-260.
- Kagioglou, M., Cooper, R. Aouad, G. & Sexton, M.G. 2000. Rethinking construction: The generic design and construction process *protocol*. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, 7(2):141-153.
- Khan, S. & Swapan, M.S.H. 2013. From blueprint master plans to democratic planning in South Asian cities: Pursuing good governance agenda against prevalent patron-client networks. *Habitat International*, 38:183-191.
- Khosla, R. 2015. Community participation for inclusive urbanization: Moving from tokenism to genuine participation. In Shrestha, K.K., Ojha, H.R., McManus, P., Rubbo, A. & Dhote, K.K. (Eds.), *Inclusive urbanization: Rethinking policy, practice and research in the age of climate change*. New York:Taylor & Francis.
- Kit Campbell Associates. 2001. Rethinking open space – Open space provision and management: A way forward. Edinburgh, Scotland: The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. Available at [https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180520180720mp\\_/http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/156814/0042172.pdf](https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180520180720mp_/http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/156814/0042172.pdf)
- Krige, D.S. 1991. Bloemfontein. In Lemon, A. (Ed.), *Homes apart: South Africa's segregated cities*. London: Paul Chapman, 104-119.
- Lalicic, L. & Önder, I. 2018. Residents' involvement in urban tourism planning: Opportunities from the smart city perspective. *Sustainability*, 10(1852):1-16. doi:10.3390/su10061852
- Landman, K. 2019. *Evolving public space in South Africa: Towards regenerative space in the post-apartheid city*. New York: Routledge Research in Planning and Urban Design.
- Lane, M. 2005. Public participation in Planning: an intellectual history. *Australian Geographer*, 36:283-299.
- Lawrence, D.P. 2000. Planning theories and environmental impact assessment. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 20:607-625.
- Lee, K.A.C., Jordan, H. & Horsley, J. 2015. Value of urban green spaces in promoting healthy living and wellbeing: Prospects for planning. *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy*, 8:31-137.
- Lee, A.C.K. & Maheswaran, R. 2010. The health benefits of urban green spaces: a review of the evidence. *Journal of Public Health*. 33(2):212-222.

- Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2001. *Practical research: Planning and design*. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Li, F., Sun X., Li, X., Hao, X., Li, W., Qian, Y., Liu, H. & Sun, H. 2016. Research on the sustainable development of green-space in Beijing using the dynamic systems model. *Sustainability*, 8(965):1-17.
- Lindsey, G. 2003. Sustainability and urban greenways: Indicators in Indianapolis. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 69(2):165-180. doi:10.1080/01944360308976304
- Luomala, H.T, Laaksonen, P. & Leipamaa, H. 2004. How do consumers solve value conflicts in food choices? An empirical description and points for theory-building. In Kahn, B.E. & Luce, M.F. (Eds.), *NA – Advances in consumer research*, Vol. 31. Valdosta, GA: Association for Consumer Research, 564-570.
- Lynch, K. 1981. *A theory of good city form*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Mafukidze, J.K. & Hoosen, F. 2009. Housing shortages in South Africa: A discussion of the after-effects of community participation in housing provision in Diepkloof. *Urban Forum*, 20:379-396.
- Mahjabeen, Z., Shrestha, K.K. & Dee, J.A. 2009. Rethinking community participation in urban planning: The role of disadvantaged groups in Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, 15(1):45-63.
- Marais, L. & Krige, S. 1991. The upgrading of Freedom Square informal settlement in Bloemfontein: Lessons for future low-income housing. *Urban Forum*, 8(2):176-193.
- Marais, L. & Ntema, J. 2013. The upgrading of an informal settlement in South Africa: Two decades onwards. *Habitat International*, 39:85-95.
- Marais, L. & Visser, G. 2008. *Spatialities of urban change: Selected themes from Bloemfontein at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Stellenbosch: African Sun Media.
- Marais, L., Ntema, J., Cloete, J. & Venter, A. 2014. From informality to formality: Extralegal land transfers in an upgraded informal settlement of South Africa. *Urban Izziv*. 25 (Special Issue):148-161.
- Maruani, T. & Amit-Cohen, I. 2007. Open space planning models: A review of approaches and methods. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 81(1-2):1-13.  
doi:10.1016/j.landurbplan.2007.01.003

- Mashalaba, Y.B. 2013. *Public open space planning and development in previously neglected townships*. Master's dissertation, University of the Free State.
- Matthews, P. 2013. The longue durée of community engagement: New applications of critical theory in planning research. *Planning Theory*, 12(2):139-157.
- Mathur, V., Price, A.D.F., Austin, S.A. & Moobela, C. 2007. Defining, identifying and mapping stakeholders in the assessment of urban sustainability. In Horner, M., Hardcastle, C., Price, A. & Bebbington, J. (Eds.), *International Conference on Whole Life Urban Sustainability and its Assessment*. Glasgow.
- Mensah C.A. 2014a. Urban green spaces in Africa: Nature and challenges. *International Journal of Ecosystems*, 4(1):1-11. doi: 10.5923/j.ije.20140401.01
- Mensah C.A. 2014b. Destruction of urban green spaces: A problem beyond urbanization in Kumasi city (Ghana). *American Journal of Environmental Protection*, 3(1):1-9. doi: 10.11648/j.ajep.20140301.11
- Merriam, S.B. 2009. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco. CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. 2016. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. 4th Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Meyer, C.B. 2001. A case in case study methodology. *Field Methods*, 13:329-352.
- Miles M.B., Huberman A.M. & Saldaña J. 2014. *Qualitative data analysis. A methods sourcebook*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- MLM (Mangaung Local Municipality). 2004. *Draft Urban Open Space Policy 2004*. Second Draft. Bloemfontein.
- MLM (Mangaung Local Municipality). 2007. *Mangaung by-laws regarding urban open spaces as promulgated by Local Government Notice of 2007*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Urban-Open-Spaces-By-Laws.pdf>
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2015. *Land Invasion Strategy (Draft)*. Bloemfontein.
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2012. *Integrated Development Plan 2011-2012*. Bloemfontein.

- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2015. *Reviewed Integrated Development Plan 2015/2016*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/26-June-2015-Reviewed-IDP-2015-2016-Final.pdf>
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2017. *Five Year Integrated Human Settlements Plan (2016/17–2020/21)*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/4-Council-59.1-IDP-2019-2020-ANNEXURE-B-Integrated-Human-Settlement-Plan.pdf>
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2017. *Draft Integrated Development Plan 2017-2022*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/IDP-2017-2022.pdf>
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2017. *Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP) 2017/18–2019/20*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Council-Annexure-31-May-2017-Item-63-1-No-9-BEPP.pdf>
- MMM (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality). 2018. *Integrated Development Plan 2018-19*. Bloemfontein. Available at <http://www.mangaung.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/IDP-2018-19-FINAL-7-June-2018-1.pdf>
- Mohammadi, H. 2010. *Citizen participation in urban planning and management: The case of Iran, Shiraz City, Saadi community*. Kassel University Press.
- Næss, P. 2001. Urban planning and sustainable development. *European Planning Studies*, 9:505-524.
- Nega, T., Fu, W. & Vrtis, G. 2010. Open space index: A GIS-based tool for assessing human penetration of a landscape. *Local Environment*, 15(8):743-759. doi:10.1080/13549839.2010.509387
- Nel, V. 2015. Spluma, zoning and effective land use management in South Africa. *Urban Forum*, 27:79-92.
- Nesshöver, C., Assmuthe, T., Irvine, K.N., Rusch, G.M., Waylen, K.A., Delbaere, B., Haase, D., Jones-Walters, L., Keune, H., Kovacs, E., Krauze, K., Külvik, M., Rey, F., Van Dijk, J., Vistad, I.O., Wilkinson, M.E. & Wittmer, H. 2017. The science, policy and practice of nature-based solutions: An interdisciplinary perspective. *Science of the Total Environment*, 579: 1215-1227.

- Ntema, J., Massey, R., Marais, L., Cloete, J. & Lenka, M. 2018. Informal settlement upgrading in South Africa: Beneficiaries' perceptions over nearly twenty-five years. *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 11(4):460-479.
- Nasution, A.D. & Zahrah, W. 2014. Community perception on public open space and quality of life in Medan, Indonesia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 153:585-594.
- Officha, M.C., Onwuemesi, F.E. & Akanwa, A.O. 2012. Problems and prospect of open spaces management in Nigeria: The way forward. *World Journal of Environmental Biosciences*, 2(1):7-12.
- Özgüner, H. 2011. Cultural differences in attitudes towards urban parks and green spaces. *Landscape Research*, 36(5):599-620.
- Pathirage, C.P., Amaratunga, R.D.G. & Haigh, R. 2005. *Knowledge management research within the built environment: Research methodological perspectives*. University of Huddersfield Repository.
- Patton, M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Plano Clark, V.L. & Creswell, J.W. 2015. *Understanding research: A consumer's guide*. Boston: Pearson.
- Rakhshandehroo, M., Mohdyusof, M.J., Tahirholder O.M. & Yunos M.Y.M. 2015. The social benefits of urban open green spaces: A literature review. *Management Research and Practice*, 7(4):60-71.
- Raymond, C.M., Frantzeskakib, N., Kabischc, N., Berryd, P., Breile, M., Nitaf, M.R., Genelettig, D. & Calfapietra, C. 2017. A framework for assessing and implementing the co-benefits of nature-based solutions in urban areas. *Environmental Science and Policy*, 77:15-24.
- Richards, C., Carter, C. & Sherlock, K. 2004. *Practical approach to participation*. Aberdeen: Macaulay Institute.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1986. *Regulations relating to township establishment and land use*. GN R1897 of 12 September 1986 Available at [https://www.kzndhs.gov.za/Uploads/documents/Resource\\_Centre/Legislation/REGULATIONS%20RELATING%20TO%20TOWNSHIP%20ESTABLISHMENT%20AND%20LAND%20USE.pdf](https://www.kzndhs.gov.za/Uploads/documents/Resource_Centre/Legislation/REGULATIONS%20RELATING%20TO%20TOWNSHIP%20ESTABLISHMENT%20AND%20LAND%20USE.pdf)

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1996. *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. Cape Town: Government Gazette.

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1997. *White Paper on South African Land Policy*. Pretoria: Department of Land Affairs. Available at <http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/phocadownload/White-Papers/whitepaperlandreform.pdf>

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1997. *White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele White Paper)*. Pretoria: Department of Public Service and Administration.

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2000. Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000.

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2007. *National policy framework for public participation*. Department of Provincial and Local Government. Pretoria. Available at <https://pmg.org.za/policy-document/35/>

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2013. Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, Act 16 of 2013. Department of Rural Development & Land Reform, Pretoria.

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2014. *Guide on public participation in the public service*. Department of Public Service and Administration. Pretoria. Available at <http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/cdw/2014/citizenengagement.pdf>

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2019. *Planning and design guide*. Department of Human Settlements, Pretoria.

RSA PSC (Republic of South Africa. Public Service Commission). 2008. *Report on the assessment of public participation practices in the public service*. Pretoria. Available at [http://www.psc.gov.za/documents/2009/Report\\_Assess.pdf](http://www.psc.gov.za/documents/2009/Report_Assess.pdf)

Ritchie, R. Lewis, J. Nicholls, C.M. & Ormston, R. 2014. *Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Robson, C. & McCartan, K. 2016. *Real world research: A research for users of social research methods in applied settings*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Wiley.

Rowe, G. & Frewer, L.J. 2000. Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 25(1):3-29. doi:10.1177/016224390002500101

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2009. *Research methods for business students*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. England: Pearson.

- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2019. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 8th edition. England: Pearson.
- Sharifi, A. 2015. From garden city to eco-urbanism: The quest for sustainable neighbourhood development. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 20(2016):1-16. doi:10.1016/j.scs.2015.09.002
- Schoeman, K. 1980. *Bloemfontein: Die ontstaan van 'n stad 1846-1946*. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau.
- Schoeman, K. 2015. *Imperiale somer: Suid-Afrika tussen oorlog en unie, 1902-1910*. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis.
- Shuib, K.B., Hashim, H. & Nasir, N.A.M. 2015. Community Participation strategies in planning for urban parks. *Procedia – Social and Behavioural Sciences*. 168: 311-320
- Silva, C.N. 2010. *Handbook of research on e-planning: ICTs for urban development and monitoring*. Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, Portugal.
- Sisk, T.D. 2001. Democracy at the local level: The International IDEA Handbook on Participation, Representation, Conflict Management and Governance. *International IDEA Handbook Series 4*. Sweden.
- Smith, D.M. 2001. *The apartheid city and beyond: Urbanisation and social change in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Sowman, M. & Gawith, M. 1994. Participation of disadvantaged communities in project planning and decision-making: A case of Hout Bay. *Development Southern Africa*, 11(4):557-571.
- Stessens, P., Khan, A.Z., Huysmans, M. & Canters, F. 2017. Analysing urban green space accessibility and quality: A GIS-based model as spatial decision support for urban ecosystem services in Brussels. *Ecosystem Services*, 28:328-340.
- Steÿn, J.J. 2015. *Reforming normative planning: Essays on a Christian approach to planning/ Opstelle oor 'n Christelike benadering tot beplanning*. Orania, South Africa: Prisca.
- Sugiyama, T. & Thompson, C.W. 2008. Associations between characteristics of neighbourhood open space and older people's walking. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 7:41-51.
- Swain, J. 2017. *Designing research in education. Concepts and methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Swanwick, C., Dunnett, N. & Woolley, H. 2003. Nature, role and value of green space in towns and cities: An overview. *Built Environment, Perspectives on Urban Greenspace in Europe*, 29(2):94-106. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23288809>

The Bible – New King James Version. 1982. Hosea 4:6.

Thompson, C.W. 2002. Urban open space in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 60:59-72.

Toba, L. 2020. Perceptions of urban stakeholders concerning the value of urban open spaces in Bloemfontein. In: Aigbavboa, C. & Thwala, W. (Eds.), *The Construction Industry in the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, pp. 440-449. CIDB 2019. Springer, Cham.

Toba, L. & Campbell, M. 2018. Factors influencing urban open space encroachment: The case of Bloemfontein, South Africa. In *Smart & Sustainable Built Environments*. 6<sup>th</sup> CIB International Conference, Sydney.

Toba, L., Campbell, M., Schoeman, D. & Lesia, P. 2012. *A critical examination of public transport: A case study of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa*. 48<sup>th</sup> ISOCARP Congress. Russia.

Todes, A. 2011. Reinventing planning: Critical reflections. *Urban Forum*, 22:115-133. Doi:10.1007/s12132-011-9109-X

Turner T. 1992. Open space planning in London (from standards per 1 000 to green strategy). *The Town Planning Review*, 63(4):365-386.

UN-Habitat. 2009. *Global report on human settlements. Planning sustainable cities*. Nairobi, Kenya: United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

UN-Habitat. 2008. *State of the world's cities 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide*. Nairobi, Kenya: United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Available at <https://africacheck.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/State-of-the-world-cities-2010.pdf>

UN-Habitat. 2014. *A new strategy of sustainable neighbourhood planning: Five principles*. Urban Planning Discussion Note 3. Nairobi, Kenya. United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Available at [https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/5-Principles\\_web.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/5-Principles_web.pdf)

UN-Habitat. 2015. *Capacity-building-in-new-urban-agenda-HABITAT-III Nairobi*.

UN-Habitat. 2016. *World cities report. Urbanization and development: Emerging features*. Nairobi, Kenya: United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

United Kingdom. 1906. Open Spaces Act, 1906. Chapter 25. Available at [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1906/25/pdfs/ukpga\\_19060025\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1906/25/pdfs/ukpga_19060025_en.pdf)

United Kingdom. 1972. Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act, 1972. Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/52/contents>

United Nations. 2016. Agenda 2030. Sustainable development goals. *Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities*. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

Van Herzele, A. & Wiedemann, T. 2003. A monitoring tool for the provision of accessible and attractive urban green spaces. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 63:109-126.

Van Wyk, J. 2012. *Planning Law*. Cape Town: Juta.

Vernet, N. & Coste, A. 2017. Garden cities of the 21st century: A sustainable path to suburban reform. *Urban Planning*, 2(4):45-60.

Vikneswaran, M., Mohd, S.M.I. & Zakaria, R. 2010. *Implementation of sustainable neighbourhood elements (SNEs) model in Malaysian neighbourhood planning system*. In CRIOCM 2010, International Symposium on Advancement of Construction Management and Real Estate, "Towards Sustainable Development of International Metropolis" (pp. 96-105). Chinese Research Institute of Construction Management. Available at <https://www.scopus.com/record/display.uri?eid=2-s2.0-84929153211&origin=inward&txGid=f20dce834063684f3e6efde138f25be3>

Wagner, C., Kawulich, B. & Garner, M. 2012. *Doing social research. A global context*. McGraw-Hill.

Wakaba, D. 2016. *An assessment of the quality of open spaces in Komarock Estate, Nairobi, Kenya*. Unpublished dissertation. University of Nairobi.

Walker, D.H.T., Bourne, L. & Rowlinson, S. 2008. Stakeholders and the supply chain. In: Walker, D.H.T. & Rowlinson, S (Eds.), *Procurement systems: A cross-industry project management perspective*, pp. 70-100. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Wang, D., Mateo-Babiano, I. & Brown, G. 2013. Rethinking accessibility in planning of urban open space using an integrative theoretical framework. 6th State of Australian Cities Conference, Sydney, NSW, Australia, 26-29 November 2013. In Hobart, T.A.S. (Ed.), *state of Australian Cities Conference 2013: Refereed proceedings*. Australia: State of Australian Cities Research Network.

- Watson, V. 2002. The usefulness of normative planning theories in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa. *Planning Theory*, 1(1):27-52.
- Watson V. 2006. Deep difference: Diversity, planning and ethics. *Planning Theory*, 5(1):31-50.
- Watson V. 2009a. Seeing from the south: Refocusing urban planning on the globe's central urban issues. *Urban Studies*, 46(11):2259-2275.
- Watson, V. 2009b. The planned city sweeps the poor away ...: Urban planning and the 21<sup>st</sup> century urbanisation. *Planning in Progress*, 72:151-193.
- Wilson, K., Hannington, S. & Stephen, M. 2015. The Role of community participation in planning processes of emerging urban centres. A study of Paidha town in Northern Uganda. *International Refereed Journal of Engineering and Science (IRJES)*, 4(6):61-71.
- Woolley, H. 2003. *Urban open spaces*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Our common future*. World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yin, R.K. 2003. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R.K. 2009. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Sage.
- Yin, R. 2010. Analytic generalization. In Mills, A.J., Durepos, G. & Wiebe, E. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of case study research*, 21-23. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R.K. 2011. *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York: Guilford.
- Yin, R.K. 2014. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R.K. 2016. *Qualitative research from start to finish*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Guilford Press.
- Zhou, X. & Rana, M.P. 2011. Social benefits of urban open space. A conceptual framework of valuation and accessibility measures. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, 23(2):173-189.

# Appendix A

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

---



### GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

28-Jun-2019

Dear Mrs Sinxadi, Mildred ML

#### Application Approved

Research Project Title:

**Reconceptualizing unbuilt urban open space: A case of Bloemfontein, South Africa**

Ethical Clearance number:

**UFS-HSD2019/0533/2806**

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

**Prof Derek Litthauer**

**Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee**

Digitally signed  
by Derek  
Litthauer  
Date: 2019.06.30  
21:45:41 +02'00'

205 Nelson Mandela Drive/Ryalaan  
Park West/Parkwes  
Bloemfontein 9301  
South Africa/Suid-Afrika

P.O. Box / Huisadres 339  
Bloemfontein 9300  
South Africa / Suid-Afrika  
T: +27(0)51 401 2118  
F: +27(0)51 401 3752  
[WethuRC@ufs.ac.za](mailto:WethuRC@ufs.ac.za)  
[www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)



# Appendix B

## CONSENT LETTER FROM THE MUNICIPALITY

---

---



DIRECTORATE  
OFFICE OF THE  
CITY MANAGER

PO Box 3704, Bloemfontein, 9300  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Bram Fischer Building, De Villiers Street, Bloemfontein  
Tel: +27(0)51 405 8621, Fax: +27(0)51 405 8108

Your Ref:  
Room 201, Bram Fischer Building

Our Ref:  
Date: 04 April 2019

**Mrs. Lindelwa Sinxadi**

**University of the Free State**

**Invitation to participate in interviews: Reconceptualising Unbuilt Urban Open Spaces: A Case of Mangaung, South Africa**

Dear Mrs. Sinxadi,

Reference is made to the above mentioned subject.

The Mangaung Metro Municipality hereby grants you the permission to conduct your PhD research using one of our geographic space and area (i.e. Freedom Square) as a case study. We are of the strong conviction that your research area will assist in generating more knowledge on urban management and in particular it will assist the municipality on bettering our city planning responsibilities and function.

In order to assist you with your stated requirement, you are requested to liaise with Mr. Bheki Mthembu, HOD: Planning at (051) 405 8869 or email [Bheki.mthembu@mangaung.co.za](mailto:Bheki.mthembu@mangaung.co.za). It will be appreciated if you would furnish the municipality with the final outcomes of your research work.

Regards,

  
-----  
**Mr. Bennet Comakae**

**Deputy Executive Director: Operations**

**Office of the City Manager**

# Appendix C

## RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

---

---



### Research Information sheet

You are hereby invited to participate in this research study. You are requested to read the research information sheet which will assist you in deciding whether to participate or not. The information sheet provides a summary of what the research entails. If you have any questions about this research, kindly contact the researcher via the email address below.

#### Research information

##### Purpose of the research

This research study focuses on perceptions of different urban stakeholders regarding urban open spaces, its uses and values. Emphasis is on the value conflicts these differing perceptions establish for the planner in relation to the objectives of planning. The study aims to reconceptualise unbuilt urban open spaces in order to maximise its value to planning and the community and to establish how planners can manage value conflicts and achieve the objectives of planning. The research is based in Freedom Square in Mangaung, Free State Province.

##### Selection of participant

You are selected to participate in this research because of your expertise in the study area and that you have been involved in planning and management of urban open spaces in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.

##### Decision to participate in the research

You have the right to decide whether to participate or not in this research. Should you agree to participate, you will be given this information sheet to retain. You will also be requested to sign the research consent form. In addition, if you decide to take part in this research and later decide to withdraw, you can do so without providing reasons. Any information you have given to the researcher will be immediately destroyed. Refusal to participate in the study will not have any consequences. However, your expertise on the subject is crucial as it will have a positive impact to the study and the body of knowledge in planning and management of urban open spaces, especially in Mangaung.

If you participate in this study, an invitation will be sent to you by the researcher for conducting the interview or focus groups. The interview will be conducted at your office and will be recorded. The interview session will last for less than an hour. In the case of focus groups, sessions will be organised with the relevant personnel. The content of the interview protocol will focus on your experience as one of the urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban open spaces. Also, the contents of the interview may be used in this research as well as other publishable articles/journal papers/conference presentations and proceedings.

---

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa  
P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)51 401 9111, [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)



**Research Participant Consent Form**

**Title of Research:** *Reconceptualising Unbuilt Urban Open Spaces: A Case of Mangaung, South Africa*

**Researcher's name:** Lindelwa Sinxadi

**Supervisor's name:** Prof. Maléne Campbell

Consent information	Tick (✓) where appropriate		
	Agree	Disagree	Not applicable
I have read and understood the contents of the research information sheet and understand the importance of my contribution to this research			
I understand that selection criteria is based on the expertise I have on planning and management of urban open spaces			
I do understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any point of the research process without providing any reasons to the researcher			
I agree to the recording of the interview or focus group discussions by the researcher			
I understand that the contents of the interview or focus groups may be used in this research as well as in academic articles, conference presentations and proceedings			
I confirm that an opportunity to ask questions about the research was granted			
I agree to participate in this research study.			

**Name of Participant:** .....**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

If you have questions, contact me via email on [TobaM@cut.ac.za](mailto:TobaM@cut.ac.za) or my supervisor Prof Maléne Campbell at [CampbeMM@ufs.ac.za](mailto:CampbeMM@ufs.ac.za).

Yours sincerely,  
Lindelwa Sinxadi, PhD Candidate  
Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

Prof Maléne Campbell, Supervisor  
Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

# Appendix D

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

---

---



### Participant Invitation letter

Dear Participant,

**Invitation to participate in interviews: Reconceptualising Urban Public Open Spaces: A Case of Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa**

I am a PhD student at the University of the Free State, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bloemfontein. As part of the programme requirements, I am undertaking a research that is based in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, specifically in Freedom Square. The research study involves unbuilt urban open spaces in Mangaung. Due to rapid urbanization, people settle on undeveloped land that is zoned as urban open spaces for recreational purposes. There are different urban stakeholders involved in the planning practices and they have different perceptions on the use and value of urban open spaces. These different value conflicts makes it difficult for planners to achieve the objectives of planning. Planners are therefore faced with practical and theoretical difficulties in the planning and management of unbuilt urban open spaces in Mangaung. In addition, the current theories around urban open spaces and communicative planning do little to help the planner to manage the conflicting demands of urban stakeholders around urban open spaces. A reconceptualization of unbuilt urban open spaces is therefore needed to maximize its value to planning and the community.

Due to your expertise in the study area and the subject matter, I would be very grateful if you can grant me an opportunity to discuss the proposed study with you. I am seeking an appointment to interview you at your offices and the interview will last less than an hour. The discussion will include sharing your experiences as it concerns the planning and management of urban open spaces.

I wish to assure you that the findings from the interview will be confidential. Information will remain anonymous unless otherwise stated. The information received from you will remain on the research report and on any other publications that may be written in future. It is also within your rights to withdraw from the interview because this is a voluntary activity.

If you have questions, contact me via email on [TobaM@cut.ac.za](mailto:TobaM@cut.ac.za) or my supervisor Prof Maléne Campbell at [CampbeMM@ufs.ac.za](mailto:CampbeMM@ufs.ac.za).

Yours sincerely,  
PhD Candidate Lindelwa Sinxadi  
Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

Prof Maléne Campbell  
Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

---

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa  
P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)51 401 9111, [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)



## Semi-structured interview protocol

Title: *Reconceptualising Urban Public Open Spaces:  
A Case of Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa*

Name of Organisation:

Number of the interviewee:

Date of Interview:

Start time:

End time:

Total interview time:

Questions:

### Urban open space planning

1. How many urban open spaces do you have in Freedom Square, Mangaung?
2. There are different planning models relating to urban open spaces and they include opportunistic, park system, quantitative and garden city model. The opportunistic model refers to open spaces created because of spaces that are left over after the land has been allocated for other land uses. Park system includes gardens and parks and is mostly based on the needs of the community rather than the protection of the natural environment. Quantitative model aims at allocating open spaces that will accommodate the population size. The garden city model addresses the unhealthy lifestyles between the town and country. Of the different planning models for open spaces, which one was used for planning of urban open spaces in Freedom Square?
3. What general benefits of urban open spaces do you know of?
4. Are there any specific benefits/values/uses of the urban open spaces in Freedom Square?
5. What is your perception on the value and use of the urban open spaces in Freedom Square?
6. Do these urban open spaces support the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods in Mangaung? Response should be based on the economic, social, and environmental development of Freedom Square, Mangaung
7. Freedom Square has urban open spaces that are encroached upon for residential purpose and this lead to gradual disappearance of these spaces. What is your role in managing urban open spaces?
8. Does MMMhave regulations for planning and management of urban open spaces? If yes how are these regulations applied?
9. In your opinion, are the urban open spaces gradually disappearing in Freedom Square? If yes, why? Can you suggest solutions to these challenges?

### **Community participation**

10. When upgrading informal settlements in Freedom Square, was the community of this area involved?
11. Do you think people who encroach on urban open spaces know the importance of urban open spaces?
12. If community participation is done properly with the involvement of all the urban stakeholders, are decision taken in such processes based on mutual agreement of all those involved in participation?
13. What are the challenges facing community participation in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality?

### **Value conflicts**

14. Different urban stakeholders are involved in planning and management of urban open spaces and they have different perceptions on the value and use of urban open spaces. These different values lead to conflicts that affect the objectives of planning for sustainable communities. These values include planning, economic, environmental, public goods, recreation and housing. Of these different values, under which value can you rate yourself and why?
15. In your opinion, what is the relationship between these value conflicts and the management of urban open spaces by municipal officials involved in planning and the community members?
16. What do you think can be done by planners or how can planners be assisted in order to manage the different demands regarding urban open spaces?
17. What measure/s do you recommend, which can be used by all urban stakeholders in the planning and management of urban open spaces?

**Thank you**

# Appendix E

## FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOL

---

---

### Focus group discussion protocol for Freedom Square residents

Title: *Reconceptualising Urban Public Open Spaces:  
A Case of Freedom Square in Mangaung, South Africa*

Name of the interviewer:

Name of Neighbourhood:

Date:

### Introduction

I am a PhD students at the University of the Free State, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bloemfontein. As part of the programme requirements, I am undertaking a research that is based in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, specifically in Freedom Square. The research study involves unbuilt urban open spaces in Mangaung. Due to rapid urbanization, people settle on undeveloped land that is zoned as urban open spaces for recreational purposes. This creates gradual disappearance of urban open spaces in Mangaung townships. There are different urban stakeholders involved in the planning practices and they have different perceptions on the use and value of urban open spaces. These different value conflicts makes it extremely difficult for planners to achieve the objectives of planning.

The focus group discussion protocol is designed to get information on the perceptions of the residents regarding the value and uses of the urban open spaces in Freedom Square, Mangaung, Bloemfontein. The information you give in the discussions will remain confidential. Therefore, all participants must be free to give the correct information to ensure success of the research. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Lindelwa Sinxadi

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

Prof Maléne Campbell

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein

### Questions:

1. How many urban open spaces do you have in your neighbourhood?
2. What general benefits of urban open spaces do you know of?
3. Are there any specific benefits that the urban open spaces in Freedom Square have?
4. Are these urban open spaces well managed and maintained? If yes, how? If no, what maybe the causes for poor management?
5. In terms of the condition of the urban open spaces in Freedom Square, can you describe their state and how they are handled by the community?

6. Where you part of the planning of this neighbourhood including its urban open spaces? How did you become part of this neighbourhood? Were part of the community participation during the planning process of this area?
7. How do you value urban open spaces? In your opinion, what is your perception about urban open spaces?
8. With the gradual disappearance of urban open spaces in your area, what do you think are the causal factors and are the solutions to these challenges?
9. Given an opportunity to be part of planning and management for urban open spaces in your area, what do you think can be done and how can planners be assisted in order to manage the different demands regarding urban open spaces?
10. What measure/s do you recommend, which can be used by all urban stakeholders in the planning and management of urban open spaces?

**Thank you**

# Appendix F

## FRAMEWORK VALIDATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

---

---



### FRAMEWORK VALIDATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

#### INTRODUCTION

The Urban Public Open Space Management Framework (UPOSMF) is a representation of the relationship between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts. Planner's role is to achieve key objective of planning which includes the creation of sustainable communities. Urban public open spaces form an integral part of sustainable communities. Urban open spaces are gradually disappearing and this has affected the spatial patterns of urban land uses. The gradual disappearance of these spaces is evident in the mushrooming of informal settlements in the townships. Causal factors of the incidence of urban public open space encroachment include rapid urbanisation, poor management of urban public open spaces, low prioritization of urban public open spaces, low levels of community participation, lack of collaboration and disconnect among the urban stakeholders. In addition, there are different urban stakeholders who are involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces and these include those that are directly affected by the planning projects and those that indirectly affected by the project . These stakeholders display different perceptions on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces, namely, planning, economic, environmental, recreational, and housing. All these different perceptions have led to different value conflicts among the urban stakeholders. It has been observed that Mangaung townships has lost some urban public open spaces due to value conflicts by different urban stakeholders. This makes it difficult for the planners and other professionals to achieve the planning objectives for urban open space and for other issues, such as housing and land use management.

In continuance, the UPOSMF forms a contribution to the study and it draws insight from the literature and the data collected. Upon identifying causal factors of urban public open spaces through the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion, a framework was developed for the planner and other professionals involved in urban planning and socio-economic development praxes. The researcher commenced with the initial conceptual framework where the planner is at the centre of planning for sustainable neighbourhoods. The framework displayed a connection between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflict management. From the data collection and analysis of the results, amendments were made in the second draft of the framework and this showed challenges in the municipality. Lastly, factors identified for effective community participation and effective value conflict management lead to effective urban public open space management. If all the urban stakeholders can adhere to this, it will lead to reconceptualization of urban public open spaces both within the province and beyond.

## FRAMEWORK VALIDATION

The framework validation includes the initial, second and third draft formulated by the researcher. As the participant in the validation of this conceptual framework, study each framework and answer the questions attached under each draft.

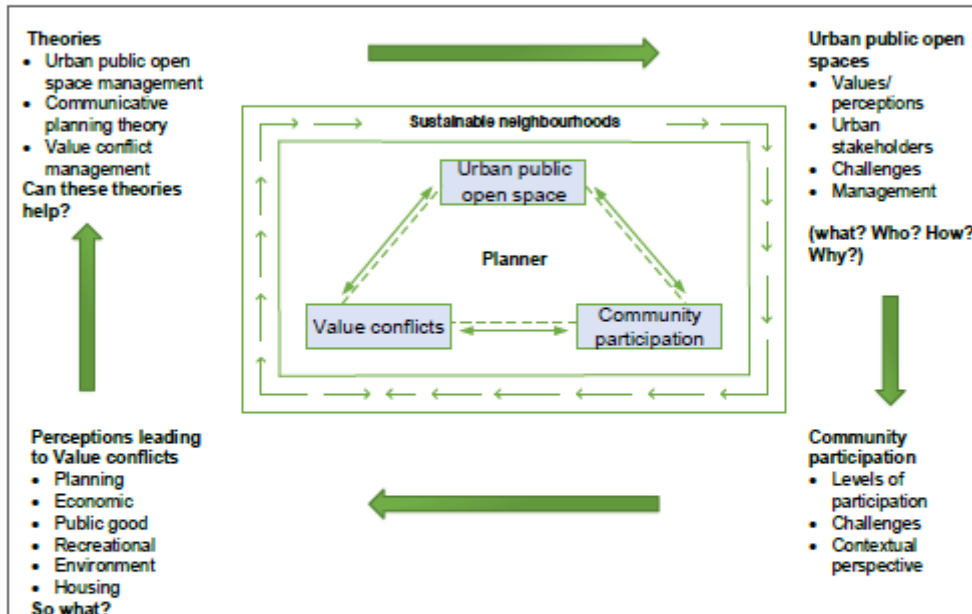
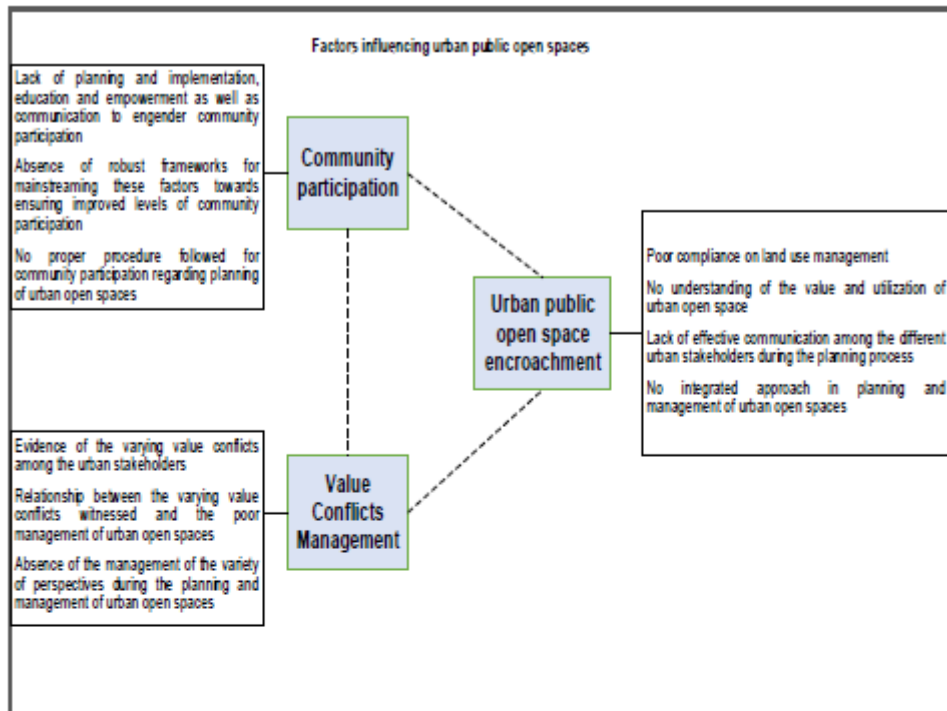


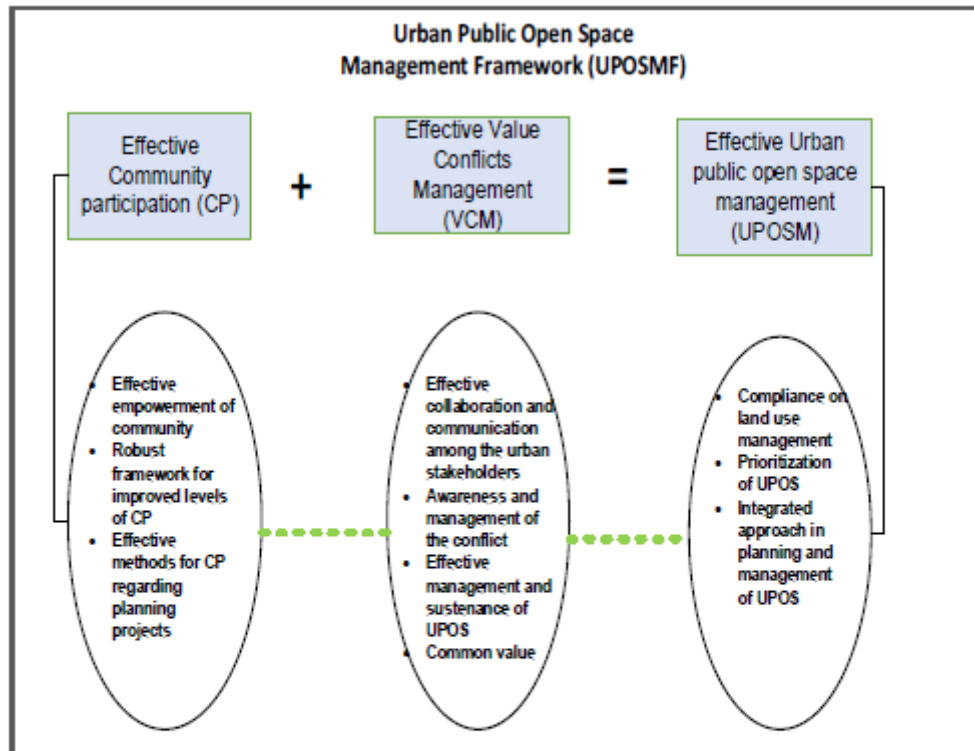
Figure 7.1 Initial Conceptual framework (Author's construct, 2019)

1. Does the framework indicate the relationship or link between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflicts depicted from the perception of the different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces?
2. As an urban stakeholder involved in the creation of sustainable communities, do you think this framework is easy to understand?



## 7.2 Second draft of the Conceptual framework (Author's construct, 2019)

1. Does the framework clearly indicate the causal factors influencing urban public open space encroachment?
2. Is there an indication that all the three concepts link?
3. Would you describe this interconnection easy to be used and be assessed by different urban stakeholders involved in planning and management of urban public open spaces?
4. Can compliance and enforcement of land use regimes curb the incidence of urban public open spaces?
5. Can effective communication and collaboration between different urban stakeholders lead to effective planning and management of urban public open spaces?
6. Focusing on your experience in planning, do you think a robust framework for planning, implementation, education, empowerment of the community and communication can assist in engendering for community participation in planning projects?
7. Different urban stakeholders have different perceptions on the value and usefulness of urban public open spaces. These different perceptions lead to value conflicts that causes difficulties in achieving the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. What are your thoughts on this statement? How have these affected you as a planner?
8. What challenges have you experienced regarding urban public open space encroachment, community participation and value conflict? How can these challenges be resolved for successful planning and management of urban public open spaces?



7.3 Third draft of the Urban Public Open Space Management Framework (UPOSMF): Author's construct, 2019.

1. The Urban Public Open Space Management Framework (UPOSMF) above serves as a representation of the relationship between urban public open spaces, community participation and value conflict management. Do you think these factors, under each concept, are imperative for effective planning and management of urban public open spaces?

2. If yes, what contribution can you make to ensure successful implementation of this framework?