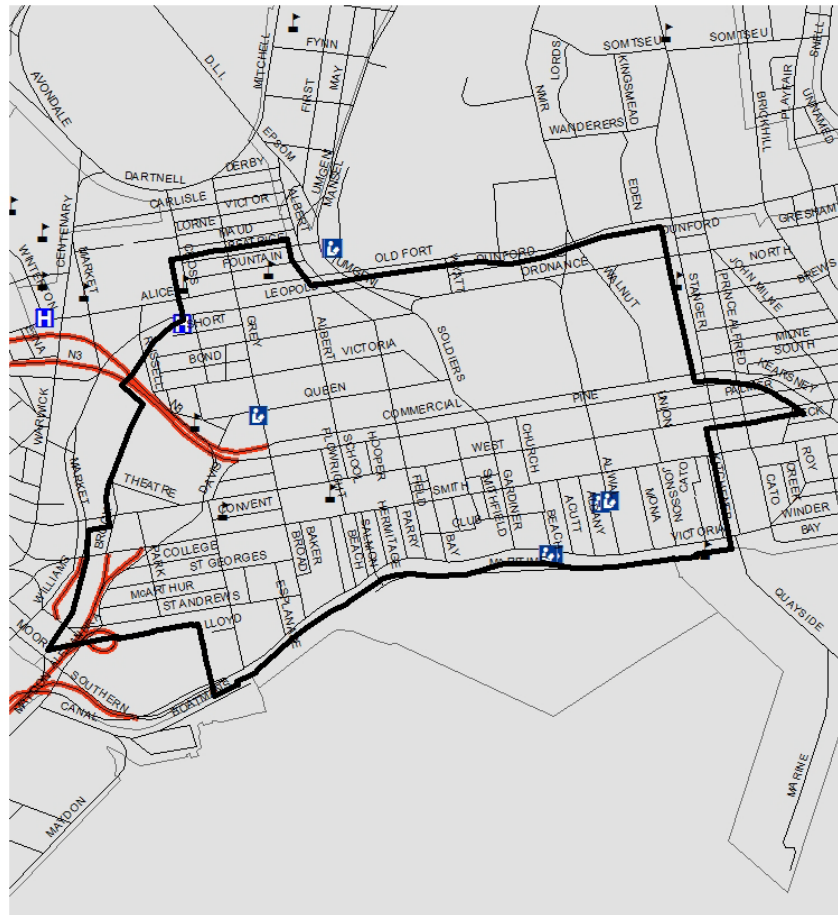
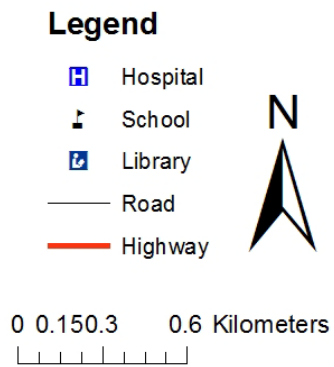
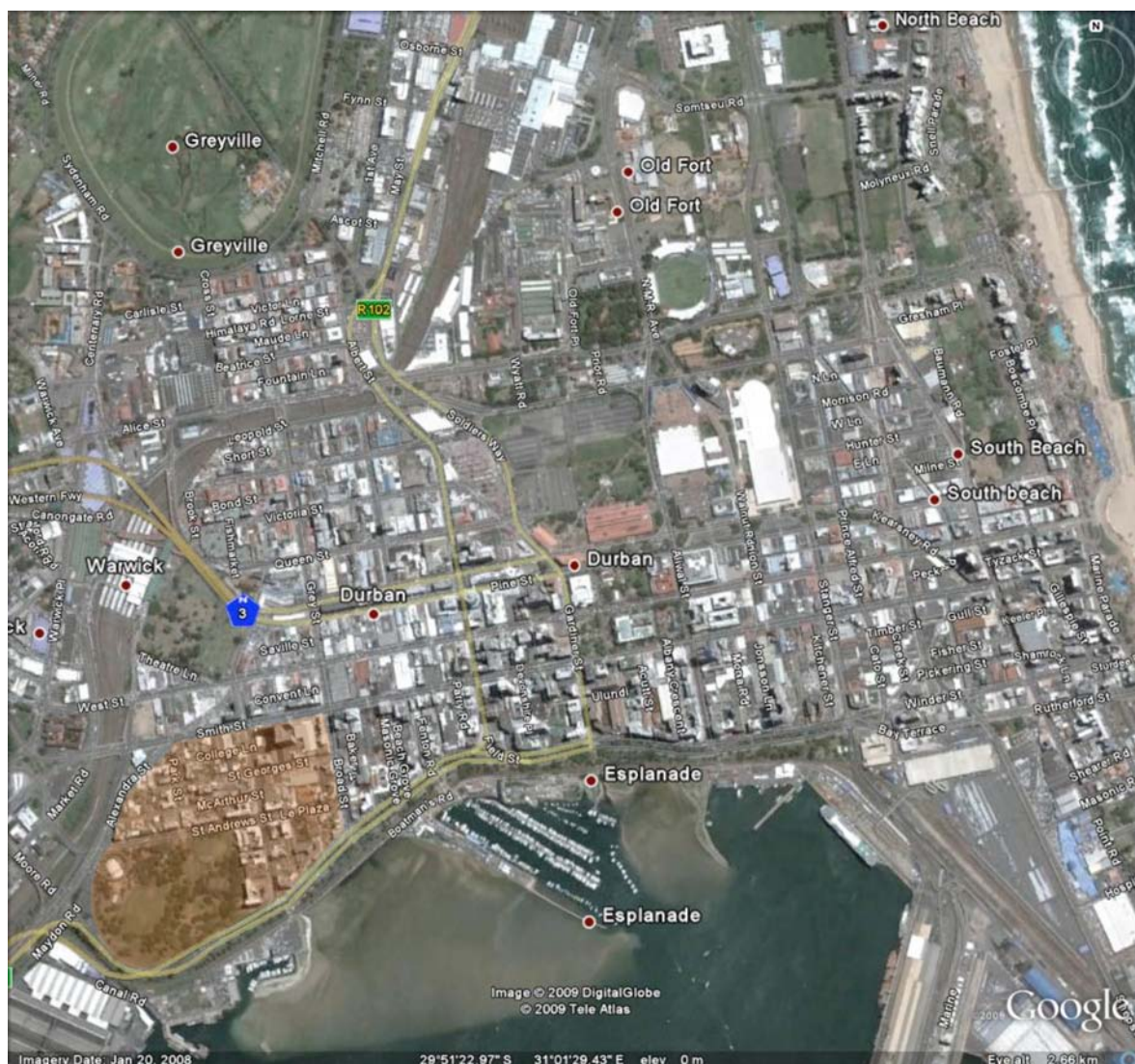


## Durban CBD





Key:  Albert Park Area

*Note on street names:* Many of Durban's CBD street names were changed in 2009 to reflect a more inclusive and accurate historical representation of Durban and South Africa. The street name changes were highly controversial in Durban and came up against diverse and vocal opposition. In all but one of the Interviews the respondents used the old street names to talk about their city. The maps shown above have also not yet been amended to reflect these changes. Therefore this report on the whole uses the old street names to offer an explanation for some of the findings during this study. However, below is a list of street name changes found in the CBD for the interest of the reader:

| Old Name       | New Name              | Old Name             | New Name                |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| ALBERT ST      | INGUCE ROAD           | PINE ST              | MONTY NAICKER ROAD      |
| ALI WAL STREET | SAMORA MACHEL STREET  | PRINCE ALFRED STREET | FLORENCE NZAMA STREET   |
| BAKER ST       | J N SINGH STREET      | PRINCE EDWARD        | DR GOONAM STREET        |
| FIELD ST       | JOE SLOVO STREET      | QUEEN ST             | DENIS HURLEY STREET     |
| GARDINER ST    | DOROTHY NYEMBE STREET | RUSSEL ST            | JOSEPH NDULI STREET     |
| MASONIC GROVE  | DULLAR OMAR GROVE     | SMITH ST             | ANTON LEMBEDE STREET    |
| OLD FORT PLACE | ARCHIE GUMEDE PLACE   | ST GEORGES STREET    | MAUD MFUSI STREET       |
| OLD FORT RD    | K E MASINGA ROAD      | VICTORIA STREET      | BERTA MKHIZE STREET     |
| ORDINANCE RD   | BRAAM FISCHER ROAD    | WEST ST              | DR PIXLEY KASEME STREET |

Source: <http://www.durban.gov.za/durban/government/renaming>

In many ways the Apartheid city planning of the Durban CBD still presents structural obstacles that dictate who lives and works in the CBD. The Apartheid system of separate land use meant the business hub was not designed to accommodate residential services and facilities. Indeed at night the space effectively shut down. Specifically designed residential areas within the CBD, such as Albert Park (see map above) offered high-rise accommodation aimed mainly at 'white' civil servants working at the harbour, railways and the post office. Few blocks were built with off-road or designated parking areas. This meant that even at the fall of Apartheid in 1994 the residential demographics within the CBD (with some exceptions on the Esplanade and in Grey Street) was one of young 'white' students and professionals for whom bachelor type apartments were sufficient, and elderly pensioners who had downsized from the suburbs. However, after the end of the Group Areas Act, and particularly after 1994, the demand for housing stock grew dramatically as the CBD offered an attractive pricing range and close proximity to work, the business district and services for 'black' professionals and office workers. This influx of people in post-apartheid South Africa reshaped the CBD; at times dramatically changing the face of the city such as moving the CBD into a hub for small entrepreneurial business rather than the old stalwarts of financial and legal houses found before 1994, and at others maintaining similar patterns of residency groups as this new influx of people came up against the same design constraints as the previous 'white' population. For example the CBD still has a substantial student population, which can make statistics on income levels in the city hard to interpret. Whilst students may be financially burdened they are different to the urban poor who are not accumulating skills to build capital in the future.

Perhaps one of the most striking characteristics of the Durban CBD today is how quickly things change from one street to the next, even from building to building. For example in Albert Park, St. Andrews Street, now Diakonia Avenue, on a good day looks like a postcard from Miami with its high rise flats and wide avenue lined with palm trees. Yet within a minute's walk away to St. Georges Street, garbage bags rather than palm trees line the street. Here the street is both residential as well as filled with small formal and informal businesses. On the Esplanade a well maintained harbour-facing residential block with off street parking housing expensive cars is adjacent to a rundown pay per day lodge, that has washing hanging outside most windows. Their verandas are separated with barbed wire.

In the business district you can find the large retail stores that you find in out of town shopping malls like Gateway or the Pavilion, such as Woolworths, Edgars, Clicks, Foschini's

and Mr. Price. Alongside these outlets are small hair salons, pie shops and various street traders. Whilst the macro changes discussed in this report offer an overview of how this urban space has transformed after 1994, it is important to note that the city also in some ways refuses to be one thing to all people, but rather since 1994 has been reshaped to meet a diverse set of social and economic needs.

### **Racial and economic change**

The city encapsulates a number of areas of interest each of which, whilst sharing many changes within the CBD, appear to have their own transition trajectories. Areas such as Albert Park, Grey Street, the Esplanade and then West Street or the business district are mentioned consistently throughout the interviews and appear to be distinguishable as having their own unique characteristics and tensions. The beachfront (again split into North Beach – upper middle class and South Beach – middle class), Warwick triangle and the Point area feature often in people's explanation of change in the CBD, although these areas are not encompassed in the CBD map used for this study.

The CBD has undergone a transformation in terms of who lives and works in this city space. Under Apartheid it was almost exclusively a 'white' residential area; a pattern that was underpinned by the Group Areas Act. Today the CBD is predominantly 'black', although it is important to note not exclusively so. Some areas within the CBD, such as Grey Street, are viewed as still being mostly 'Indian', and the Esplanade, regarded as being more upper middle class is seen as mixed with 'white', 'coloured', 'Indian' and some 'black' residents. Whilst the end of Apartheid opened up opportunities for all people within the country to move into the city these changes had started from as early as the 1980s particularly in Warwick triangle, parts of Grey Street and Albert Park. The income brackets of residents on the surface appear to have declined, with more working class residents than middle class residents living in the CBD after 1994. One pattern emerges, both within 'white' and 'black' exodus into the suburbs, where upwardly mobile middle class families tend to leave the city centre as they accumulate capital. However, looking a little deeper, the CBD offers a more complex class mix. Whilst some areas are thought of as lower income areas, such as St. Georges Street, Park Street, Russell and Broad Street, there are also areas where the income of residents changes from block to block. For example in St. Andrews Street some buildings, mostly those with access to off-road parking, charge high rents and are occupied

with middle class tenants and owners who drive fairly expensive cars. Two blocks down a building may be in a state of disrepair with no running water and lights.

Grey Street and the Esplanade are areas within the CBD that have not necessarily seen the large scale transformations that have taken place in Albert Park and the business district. In the social imagination and to a large extent in the lived experiences of residents in Grey Street it is still an 'Indian' owned and populated area. More recently one corner of the rather fuzzy geographic area thought of as Grey Street has attracted immigrants from Pakistan. There has been some racial tension around maintaining the housing stock exclusively for 'Indian' tenants. Likewise the Esplanade, whilst experiencing deterioration of some buildings and the opening of bars and taverns, has remained a largely middle-class area that attracts higher property values and is seen as a 'good' place to live. Some letting agents don't refer to the Esplanade as part of the CBD as the tenants in general belong to a wealthier income bracket. However, urban spaces such as Albert Park and the business district of West Street have undergone rapid demographic, social and economic change. An analysis of the changes in population within Albert Park offers some insight into the general residential shifts within the city.

### **Albert Park**

The inner city area known as Albert Park is situated south-east of the Durban CBD. The area takes its name from the adjoining large public park. It is primarily a residential area characterised by medium and high-rise flats, with small formal and informal businesses operating at pavement levels. It is a space that continues to capture the imagination of the people of Durban, who frequently write into the newspapers to bemoan its dowdy appearance and reputation, often with reference to how it *used to be* prestigious and clean. Whilst urban decay forms part of the public commentary on Albert Park, it is how this rapidly transforming city space has experienced issues around 'legitimacy' of residency that make it a fascinating and complex space. In many ways it provides, albeit a very specific, cosmopolitan example of how issues of 'race', nationality and identity are played out in post-apartheid South Africa, offering a hopeful glance at the success of integrated and heterogeneous spaces and a stern warning as to how problematic these identities can become when used to mobilize particular agendas.

Up until the late 1970s Albert Park, the largest residential area in the CBD, was considered a prestigious 'white' city location, and the park was seen as a leisure and entertainment destination. By the 1980s a number of economic and social factors drove a fairly rapid

transformation of Albert Park into one of the first integrated city spaces<sup>1</sup>. Most of these new residents belonged to an emerging professional class of 'black', 'Indian' and 'coloured' families for whom the reasonable rentals in Albert Park and close proximity to the CBD brought numerous conveniences. However, this transformation was primarily driven by a lack of housing in designated non-white areas and an abundance of empty flats for rent in Albert Park<sup>2</sup>. Flat owners faced a rapidly dwindling 'white' rental demand for their properties in the area and began securing rental through tenants categorized under the Group Areas Act as 'disqualified' from living in white areas, often fronted by a 'white' person signing the lease agreement. This transformation in the large part appeared to happen without much initial conflict around racial integration from the residents.

However, in the late 1980s that began to change. The Department of Development and Planning put pressure on the flat owners that if any 'disqualified' peoples where found leasing their flats they faced prosecution under the Group Areas Act and risked losing their properties. Many 'Indian', 'coloured' and 'black' tenants received eviction notices (Mohamed and Naidoo, 2001). These discriminatory evictions made Albert Park the centre of debate around the injustices of the Group Areas Act in the city of Durban. Responses ranged from racist statements urging segregation in order to preserve cleanliness and prestige of the area (*The Daily News*, 25/03/1989), more muted suggestions for creating 'free' or 'open' areas (*The Natal Mercury*, 05/06/1989) to calls for dismantling the Group Areas Act in Durban as a whole (*The Daily News*, 29/06/1987). Many Albert Park residents of all 'races' took action against these evictions. Residents formed support networks for families threatened with eviction, joined civil action groups<sup>3</sup> and protested against these unjust removals in community meetings (*The Post*, 20/06/1987). Although these evictions continued sporadically up until 1990, Albert Park had by then unofficially become one of the first integrated city spaces, a city equivalent of the "rainbow nation" (Bouillon, 2002:23). However, few people refer to Albert Park in this manner today.

As mentioned at the beginning of this report the urban design of residential areas in the CBD plays an important role in who is attracted to this city space. This type of design meant that by 1994 areas like Albert Park were predominantly occupied by 'white' students and young professionals (for whom bachelor flats provided suitable and affordable accommodation) and

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<sup>1</sup> Warwick Triangle was also rapidly transforming on the border of the Durban CBD (Maharaj, 1999)

<sup>2</sup> See Maharaj and Mpungose's (1994) paper *The Erosion of Residential Segregation in South Africa: The 'Greying' of Albert Park in Durban* for a more detailed analysis of this process.

<sup>3</sup> The Durban Central Residents Association (now called the Organisation of Civil Rights) was instrumental in providing legal assistance to fight against these discriminatory and many times illegal evictions.

pensioners (who on retirement had downsized from their family homes in the suburbs). Once tenants started families and earned more income they tended to move out of the CBD to more spacious homes in the suburbs. After 1994 the demographics changed from mostly 'white' to mostly 'black' residents. Many 'white' people left the CBD for the suburbs largely in fear of transformation, some for capitalist gains as there was a high demand for residential space in the CBD and renting for profit became increasingly attractive. A large portion of 'white' pensioners who had used their savings to purchase property in the area remained, and continue to live in the CBD. Some commentators see these pensioners as financially stuck in the city, but there is also - depending to whom you talk to - a sense that these elderly people belong there, they fit, and are an integral part of what makes the CBD a diverse and interesting places to live. Of course the elderly can be vulnerable to attacks and there are cases of pensioners who at the Russell Street post office, which is surrounded by two infamous taverns, have been stabbed and mugged for their state pensions.

By 2001 the Albert Park area was largely occupied by 'black' students and young professionals. This heterogeneous urban space has also seen a new influx of people, both 'legal' and 'illegal', from diverse African countries. Coupled with the increase in crime in the area and urban decay of many of the high rise flats, as well as a large number of bars and drinking holes in the area – none of which are necessarily a result of this new movement of people – it has earned a certain notoriety as a dangerous neighbourhood. Its crime ridden reputation and large number of immigrants, has had the unfortunate effect of creating new discriminations and protectionism about what kinds of people levy paying tenants and owners will tolerate in the area. A telling sign of this tension is Ward councillor Vusumuzi Khoza's statement in the city's *eZasegagasini Metro* (2006) newsletter that his priority challenge for the year of 2006 was to "curb crime in Albert Park and deal with the influx of foreigners". These tensions, coupled with the urban design constraints meant that 'black' families as they earned more income migrated into the suburbs in search of more spacious and safer environments in which to raise their families; following a similar pattern to that seen in 1994 when many 'white' families moved out. One estate agent stated that her Zulu tenants no longer wanted to live in Albert Park as it was seen as a 'place for foreigners'.

This bundling together of crime and immigration has materialized into violent xenophobic reactions against immigrants such as the murder of a group of Tanzanian men sleeping in the park in 2005 (*Daily News*, 2005) and more recently the murder of a Zimbabwean and Tanzanian by a vigilante group in 2009 (*Daily News*, 6/01/09). This last attack was allegedly



carried out by members of the Community Police Forum and the Ward Councillor himself has been implicated<sup>4</sup> as being part of this group, suggesting that this xenophobic policing of who is allowed to live in the area receives worrying authoritative support. Indeed linking crime, issues of cleanliness and urban decay to the immigrants repeats the same discriminatory discourse used by the conservative elements of Albert Park in the 1980s when they protested against non-white tenants in the area. The ease in which older discourses of exclusion and otherness have been reworked to justify violent and everyday discriminatory practices against people perceived as 'foreign' at first glance appears bizarre considering the history of this community and the country as a whole. Bouillon (2002:18), I believe, offers an acute explanation for this when he comments on xenophobia in Durban that "[t]he extent and emotional strength of this performance seems to have something to do with the deeply entrenched 'multi-racial' and 'multi-national' ideology" of most South Africans. In many ways then 'race' thinking and difference still serve to mediate which tenants are seen as being legitimately accepted in the area<sup>5</sup>. It is important to note that not all interactions between people in Albert Park are based on this axis of difference, a recent study of small businesses in Albert Park suggest that many business owners recognize the value to themselves and their businesses that people from other countries hold in terms of business and technological knowledge (Kariuki, 2009).

## **Foreign Nationals**

The CBD has become the first port of call for many foreign nationals, themselves a very diverse group of people in terms of economic and social circumstances. Durban attracts wealthy investors, immigrants hoping to find work as well as many refugees who have left horrific situations in their home countries. The city offers easy access to the large transport hub in Warwick Triangle and through this hub routes via taxis to various suburbs and townships<sup>6</sup>, access to business facilities and a large consumer base for various economic interactions. Some faith based organisations such as the refugee centre at Emmanuel Cathedral offer support to refugees. In the Diakonia centre<sup>7</sup> in Albert Park (an NGO hub), two NGOs offer various social and legal support to immigrants. As already stated a large population of foreign nationals from various geographic locations reside in Albert Park. The

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<sup>4</sup> Their trial has been postponed until August this year.

<sup>5</sup> The policing of the area by various members of the Albert Park community, using similar arguments that it would compound the problems of crime and urban decay, was also apparent in the uproar against moving the homeless shelter *The Ark* to Albert Park (see Bouillon, 2002).

<sup>6</sup> For example many Ethiopian traders sell blankets on credit in the townships.

<sup>7</sup> The Diakonia centre was previously known as the Ecumenical Centre and has strong links to the Anti-Apartheid movement as well as providing a space for community meetings and trade unions.



Emmanuel Cathedral<sup>8</sup> also rented space in the area to assist refugees. However increasingly different nationalities have started to congregate in specific areas in the CBD. For example opposite the West Street cemetery is Abyssinian Lodge that predominantly provides accommodation to Ethiopians and within this area in West Street there are Ethiopian restaurants and take-aways – some of which have relocated there from Albert Park. Pakistani immigrants find accommodation in the Grey Street area, whilst the Point Road area is reputed to ‘belong’ to the Nigerians. Nigerians, particularly in relation to the Point area (just outside the borders of the map used in this study) are seen as excellent entrepreneurs, although more often than not stereotyped as drug dealers and organising sex work in the area. The Point area is infamous for its availability of most illegal substances but more especially the sale of crack cocaine. Another area known for drug dealing is Albert Park, although the Tanzanians are often blamed as selling drugs and for petty crime the two rival gangs that operate in this area are allegedly run by South Africans and Nigerians respectively.

### **Urban Decay and Housing a bed of capitalist opportunities**

A reoccurring theme within the media since 1994 and within the interviews conducted for this study is that of urban decay, where the city centre is framed as constantly fighting against a tide of building decay, business flight, general squalor, crime and grime. Although no longer rationalised as a result of racial mixing or ‘white flight’ as it was in earlier media articles the quest for urban regeneration in the CBD continues. An explanation as to why the CBD has seen a number of buildings dilapidated and certain areas becoming stigmatised as ‘no-go zones’ for potential flat owners and tenants is a complex one. Yet throughout the interviews, respondents, albeit from slightly different perspectives, alluded to the workings of capitalist exploitation, rather than racial tension, as the main drive behind urban decay.

Changes in ownership and tenants have to a large extent been driven by the property market. In some instances tenants who had been in the CBD for 30-40 years were displaced to make room for university students. Agreements with educational institutes to house students were seen as favourable since rent was paid up front. After 1994, many estate agents recognised the potential of selling to first time ‘black’ buyers in the CBD. The prices of small flats were affordable and the area attractive due to its location to the business district. Many estate agents, both individuals and companies, made extensive profits during this time; however there was an unscrupulous practice of purposefully neglecting to inform

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<sup>8</sup> The Emmanuel Cathedral has a long struggle history in Durban especially through the work of Father Dennis Hurley. It continues to run various community programmes.

first time buyers about additional costs to ownerships such as rates and levies. Many first time owners had not factored in these costs and found themselves in difficult financial situations, often taking in additional tenants to make ends meet. In brief, unpaid rates and levies breed tension between owners within blocks, some of which manifested in racial tensions. Rentals also started to increase rapidly in the area following the high demand for accommodation. Tenants started to sub-let flats in order to cover the rent often resulting in overcrowding, which in turn placed stress on existing infrastructures. There are examples of buildings in Albert Park where the basements were often flooded with sewerage as the embattled plumbing system succumbed to overuse. Flats with outstanding levies could no longer afford to maintain the building and deteriorate slowly set in, many previous owners, predominantly 'white', began to sell at this time.

With many of the previous owners selling their properties new investors bought up stock in an area that had a high rental demand, as rents started to increase so too did the practice of sub-letting. Some of these new investors bought into sectional titles buildings in the area with ruthless capitalist agendas. 'Absentee landlords', so called as neither their tenants nor other owners know their identities or contact details, purposefully allowed overcrowding as a means of extracting additional rent from tenants (often 'agents' acting as middlemen for the landlords hassle tenants for rent), whilst simultaneously neglecting to pay rates and levies. Neglecting to pay rates meant rent paying tenants often had their electricity and water cut off by the municipality. Some flat owners, who had continued to pay levies and rates in these buildings, abandoned their property as the state of the buildings and redlining by banks made selling near impossible. Until recently in Albert Park, redlining took place on a building by building basis, usually depending on whether the block had a functioning body corporate and up to date levies or not.

In a bid to press owners into better maintenance of buildings, the ANC proposed a country-wide initiative that tried to give agency to rent paying tenants through tenant committees. However this agency existed only on paper as sectional titles in law is an ownership scheme; therefore tenants had little legal recourse. This was compounded by the fact that the Provincial Rental/Housing tribunal has no jurisdiction on sectional titles. Seeking profit from rentals these landlords, especially since 1998, have manipulated the high demand for accommodation in the city and legal loopholes to exploit tenants; indicating that urban decay is an issue of irresponsible ownership rather than an issue created by tenants. This issue is not devoid of racial tensions; a common perception is that in the CBD these landlords are

'Indian' landlords<sup>9</sup> exploiting 'black' tenants. Although it is important to note that in the one interview it was mentioned that just outside the map used in this study, along Umgeni Road these types of buildings are also owned by 'white' and 'African' landlords.

Some of these landlords are now termed 'Slumlords', here buildings or old warehouses in the CBD – but particularly in Albert Park, some areas off Grey Street and in the Point – have been converted into small units for rent to individuals or families. These units are often divided by flimsy chip board or curtains with no additional ablution facilities to cater for the large number of people housed in the building. The conditions in these buildings are inhuman, with little or no running water, illegal electricity connections and insufficient or no toilet facilities. People who pay rent to live in and run their businesses from these buildings are often immigrants who are deemed to be in the country illegally and therefore cannot take legal action against or call attention to the unjust landlord.

The city has had various initiatives over the years to work towards urban renewal and regeneration, such as the Area Based Management initiative and iTrump, with the aim of uplifting areas like Albert Park but also to attract big business back into the CBD. Municipality initiatives like the *Better Buildings* project, started in 2001, which targets and then offers various types of interventions to derelict and "economically dysfunctional" buildings, as well as buildings identified as crime havens, have had some successes. National government initiatives like the *Urban Development Zones* (UDZ) also offer tax breaks in demarcated areas in the city to investors that refurbish buildings (or build new buildings) that have been declared derelict. However, there is speculation that some of these absentee landlords in Durban, especially where a large number of units belong to one owner, are simply investors in waiting for UDZ benefits. Actively enabling a building to deteriorate through absentee ownership and not paying rates speeds up the process of getting it declared derelict and offers the potential investor profit through rent in the meantime.

### **Changes in business**

Many newspaper articles during the period of 1996 – 2001 focus on the perception of big business leaving the CBD. This is not strictly true, some businesses such as big insurances and financial houses, large legal firms and some bank branches moved out of the CBD into

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<sup>9</sup> Two interviewees perceived 'Indians' as holding the most property in general in the CBD.

the Umhlanga ridge area or the suburbs. The rationale for this move is best explained as a mixture of fear of transformation, following their clientele who were mostly 'white' and middle class into the suburbs, a perception that their clientele would no longer frequent the city and more practical concerns around negotiation of rates and a lack of sufficient parking in the CBD<sup>10</sup>. However, many sets of consumer services remained, whilst others such as those offering legal advice shifted away from big firms towards smaller more specialized businesses that focus on for example labour disputes. As mentioned previously large retail outlets, which can also be found in the upper middle class shopping centers, have kept their anchor stores in the city, and do very well there. More recently some banks have started moving branches back into the city. This suggests that middle class consumers still form a substantial group within the CBD. The gap left by the businesses that have moved out have been filled by countless small businesses who target lower end income consumers, a large portion of which open temporarily and then in turn make space for new entrepreneurs hoping to earn profits from the extensive foot traffic in the city. Food outlets make up a large portion of these small businesses, perhaps driven by the lunch time trade offered by the student population and city workers. Other striking changes are the many training colleges and education institutes, mostly private, that have taken over whole office blocks offering short courses and diplomas. The business district loosely clustered around West and Smith Street<sup>11</sup> has slowly started to show signs of mixed use. The old ABSA bank building is one example, where the ground floors are occupied by Mr.Price, a clothing outlet, and the offices above have been converted into residential flats. Some empty offices have also been rented as doctors' and dentists' rooms, offering a mixture of Western and traditional medical practices.

Perhaps the most striking change after 1994 is the growth of informal traders in the CBD. There have been various tensions between formal business and street traders, especially around the use of pavement space and shop frontage. There are also perceptions that the street traders enable criminal activity. However, more recently it has emerged that street traders often form neighborhood watch networks to guard against theft during working hours. There has also been a change in who works at these street stalls, in one interview it was stated that in 1998/9 almost 100% of street traders were South African women but that now it is about 40-50% immigrants. Street traders also have an uneasy relationship with the city and the police. In 1996 the city, lobbied by business owners, implemented a license system

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<sup>10</sup> For example this year Vodacom is moving out of the CBD towards the Northern suburbs due to issues around rates and parking space.

<sup>11</sup> Durban has in some ways always had a split business district, Grey Street and West Street.

that meant that under new bylaws unlicensed traders would have their goods confiscated. Today you can still see traders paying fines (sometimes off the record to individual police officers) and collecting their goods from the pilot metro police station in Albert Park. Street traders have had some of their demands met, as when the municipality erected pavement structures that provided permanent 'stores' from which to sell goods. The business sector has taken action against crime in the CBD, many collaborating to form security networks for their shops such as those found in the Grey Street area. Business has also funded private/public security initiatives such as the voluntary police systems that patrol West and Smith Streets and the Beachfront area. Mostly these initiatives are very focused on protecting business property and their consumer base rather than working towards a broader strategy for security within the CBD.

### **Services/Infrastructure, Relations to Government**

Services and infrastructure in the CBD appear to run fairly well, barring incidents of overcrowding in residential areas. However, as the CBD had seen an influx of people into the area certain social facilities have become insufficient; this is certainly the case with schools and possibly police coverage. Both primary schools and high schools that service young people living in the CBD are found outside the map used in this study. However, as mentioned by one respondent the city has no more space for development, even if you could raise funds for a new school you would have no where to put it.

In general the residents and business population of the city is fairly engaged in dialogue with local government, through ward meetings, CPFs and the Area Based Management initiative. There are also other community initiative forums that aim to bring together key players in the city. Most of these meetings appear to centre around crime and cleanliness of the city, or in Albert Park the number of taverns in the area. Some of the interviewees felt that whilst the meetings are fairly well attended, they tend to be dominated by strong personalities and achieve little. In other instances the community can be very vocal about their needs but municipal response can take time.

For example since the early 2000s, in Albert Park the CPF and community at large had been pushing for the dilapidated bowling club on the outskirts of the park to become either a community hall or new police station. Up until 2008 it still lay empty. Earlier this year a pilot police station has been set up (*Independent on Saturday*, 16/05/2009). The slow rate of change and inadequate police services for the area may well be behind the active participation of Albert Park residents to deal with issues in their community. Private business

(*Business Report on Sunday*, 6/08/2000) and NGO's (*Leader*, 18/10/2002 and *Daily News*, 29/07/2005) in the area have taken initiatives in the past – with varying success – to regenerate both the aesthetics and the security of the area. In 2007 residents and businesses collaborated, even the rather notorious tavern owners got involved, to clean up the rubbish in the streets (*The Mercury* 14/12/2007). This suggests a fairly active and positive community but slow progress on behalf of the city can also lead to the type of hatred and vigilantism seen in Albert last year, particularly in light of growing unemployment in the area and discrimination against people perceived as 'foreigners'.

### **Social Integration**

A surface analysis suggests that whilst the city is home to a diverse population it is not necessarily an integrated one. Most interviewees thought of Albert Park and the Point area as mostly a 'black' area, Grey Street as 'Indian', the Esplanade as 'wealthy' and various specific areas as being populated by 'foreigners'. It would appear that social divisions along class, 'race' and nationality still mediate people's interactions in this complex city space. In one sense a picture of living *next to* but not *with* each other is painted. The lack of schools, sports and social facilities that could offer a space for social integration certainly compounds this. The fact that it is a space of temporary residence for many people living in the area may also offer an explanation for a lack of social integration, which requires a long-term investment in one's neighbours and neighbourhoods. However, within the interviews there are suggestions that this macro picture may not tell us the whole story. Anecdotal stories within the interviews offered examples where both residents and business owners collaborated towards common goals, and where everyday interactions spoke of intimacy and care between people from different 'races', income groups and nationalities.

Photos of Durban CBD







## Photos of Albert Park



## St Andrews Street

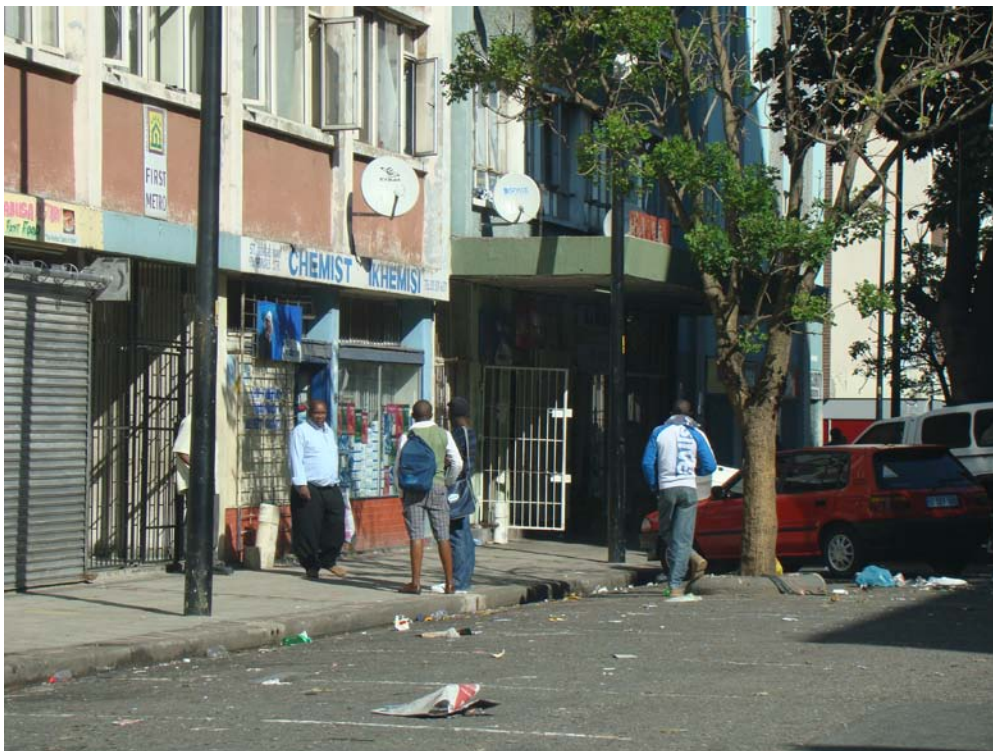


## Entrance to Albert Park





**Albert Park residential area**



**Albert Park residential area**

## Additional Resources

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