

# Cato manor: a legacy of South Africa's past or a model for reconstruction?

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*South African Planning Journal* 42 June 1997, pp. 5-17

## Introduction

Cato Manor is an area of some 2000 hectares located at the confluence of major transport routes in metropolitan Durban, only 7km from the city centre (Figure 1). By 1990 most of Cato Manor was undeveloped - a legacy of South Africa's apartheid era. During the 1950s Cato Manor, which was then just beyond the city boundaries, had a population of 100 000 people of all races. Removals in early 1960s left a wasteland and bitter memories for the thousands of people forced to resettle in more remote parts of Durban. The current redevelopment of Cato Manor is far larger than any previous integrated urban development project undertaken in South Africa. It effectively involves the development of a new city with a population of perhaps a quarter of a million people at the heart of principal metropole in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The Cato Manor project is not simply a housing development project with a few social facilities and job creation projects tacked on. It aims at the establishment of a balanced urban area, entailing the delivery of a full range of urban activities including industrial and offices estates, commercial centres and spines, housing and a full range of educational, social and recreational facilities.

This paper traces Cato Manor's history since the 1950s, focusing on recent measures to reconstruct the area and to integrate it into metropolitan Durban. By describing and analyzing the recent processes and events in this place of tremendous symbolic significance, the paper aims to explore two themes: the interplay of process and product

delivery; and emerging challenges for urban reconstruction in South Africa. To these ends the paper concentrates on the formation of the negotiating forum, and of the development association, and their planning activities chiefly in the period from 1990 to 1996.

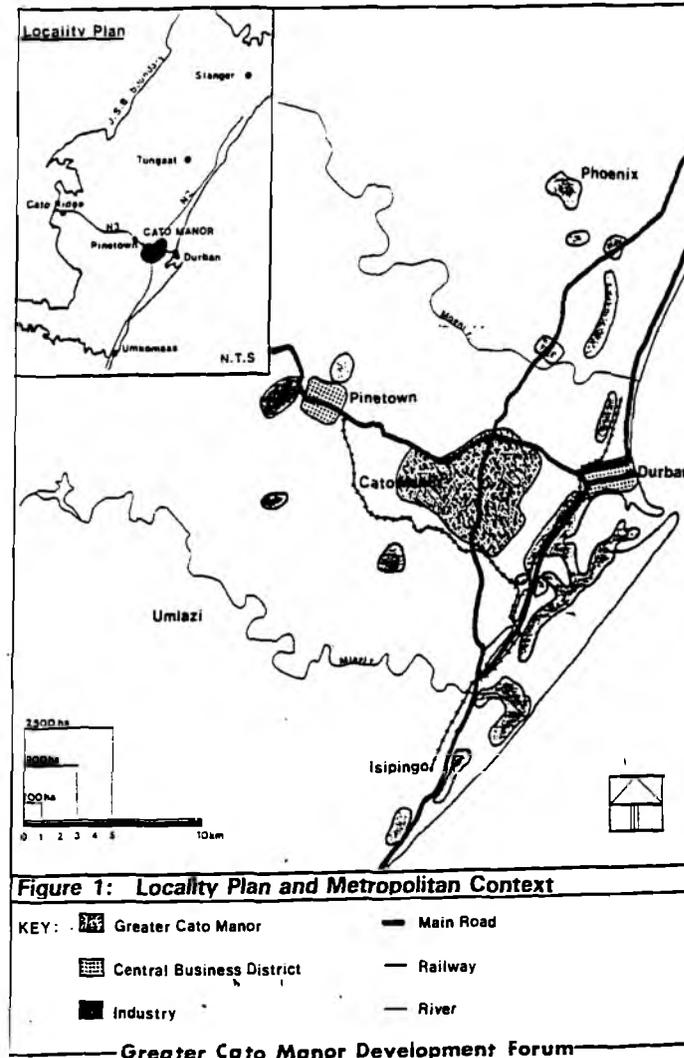
The story of Cato Manor's contemporary history will be recounted concisely, with emphasis on issues that inform these themes. Four main periods have been identified: the early history upto the mid-1960s; the height of the apartheid era from mid-1960s to 1990; the Forum period 1990 to mid-1993; and the first two years of the Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA) from mid-1993 to 1995. It is recognised that the concurrent nature of development in Cato Manor, as well as the limited scope of this paper, preclude a definitive analysis of the themes identified, but it is hoped to make a contribution to a longer-term and wider debate. It should also be noted that this paper is written from the perspective of a participant in the process since 1991 which affects the interpretation of events.<sup>1</sup>

## Early history of Cato Manor

The area known as Cato Manor consists of undulating, broken land to the west of Durban's Berea ridge. Its name derives from George Cato, first mayor of Durban, whose farm it originally

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<sup>1</sup> The author became involved in Cato Manor's recent development in a facilitative capacity during 1991. In January 1992 he was appointed Deputy Chairperson of the Forum and, in April 1993, Chairperson of the CMDA and its Board.



comprised. Cato had been granted the land in 1845 in compensation for a beachfront property which had been expropriated for military purposes. Cato and his descendants farmed there until the turn of the century, after which the estate was subdivided into a number of smaller farms. During the next thirty years or so, the various owners began to hire out or sell plots of land to Indian market gardeners (Ladlau 1975, pp. 7-9).

There is evidence of small numbers of Africans squatting on various farms since the turn of the century and by the late 1920s isolated clusters of African occupied shacks had begun to appear along the banks of the Umkumbaan river which runs through Cato Manor. African migrants pushed by rural evictions and poverty, in many cases accompanied by their families, moved to the city and its fringes in increasing numbers. Many found their way to Cato Manor (at that stage still

beyond Durban's municipal boundary), where the first of Durban's African shack settlements emerged (Maasdorp and Humphreys 1975, p. 14). The reasons for this lay in the (then) Union of South Africa's laws which prohibited Africans from acquiring land or building homes in an urban area, and the policy that regarded urban Africans as 'temporary sojourners' in the towns. Under these circumstances, migrant African families had to fend for themselves and, 'finding that they were able to rent sites cheaply from the increasing numbers of Indian landowners at Cato Manor, many of them proceeded to erect their own ramshackle wood and iron structures there', notwithstanding the lack of water and sanitary services (Maasdorp and Humphreys 1975, pp. 9-10). An added advantage was the proximity to places of work in central Durban and the early industrial areas. By 1932 when the first aerial survey of Durban was made, there were some 300

to 400 squatter shacks in Cato Manor.

In that year Cato Manor was incorporated into municipal Durban. This meant both that the area had become Durban's responsibility and that the shack settlements were illegal. But the municipality found it convenient to turn a blind eye to the Cato Manor squatters (Ladlau 1975, p. 10). As a consequence, Africans continued to move into Cato Manor where the land was almost entirely Indian-owned. As the demand for shack sites increased, 'Indian landowners found shack-farming more profitable than market gardening and the number of squatters increased from 2500 in 1936 to more than 17 000 in 1943'. There were other associated economic opportunities and, in the absence of municipal shops and transport facilities, 'Indian businessmen stepped in to provide such services themselves and Cato Manor's Booth Road was, by the mid-1940s, lined with Indian shops and busy with Indian-owned buses (Ladlau 1975, p. 12). While the shack population continued to grow, already poor living conditions deteriorated further. Overcrowding was rife, there were few taps, an almost complete lack of sanitation, and no system of drainage or refuse removal. In 1948 the Broome commission of enquiry into the needs and grievances of Durban's African population, drew attention to the urgent need to address issues such as inadequate transport, health and recreation facilities, poor wages and, above all, lack of sufficient accommodation. One of the strongest recommendations was the establishment of a temporary transit camp to house the shack dwellers of Cato Manor pending the availability of permanent municipal housing. These recommendations were not taken up by the authorities.

In January 1949 the 'Durban riots' broke out following an incident in the vicinity of Durban's Indian market. Fighting broke out at the crowded Victoria street busrank, in which amongst other things Africans attacked Indians as well as their vehicles, shops and houses. The fighting spread to other parts of the city but was particularly intense in Cato Manor with its dense population of both Indians and Africans. After two days of the most sustained rioting South Africa had experienced, order was restored (Ladlau 1975, p. 17).

These riots changed the *status quo* in Cato Manor. 'Physically, the area was considerably altered by the violence and its aftermath. Most of the Indian shops and homes there had been destroyed, while all Indian residents had been evacuated. Cato Manor Africans thus found themselves in *de facto* possession of the area, and ... they undoubtedly considered that they had won a great victory' (Ladlau 1975, pp. 22-23). After the riots some Indian landlords returned briefly to collect rents from their African tenants, but most re-let their entire plots to individual Africans who would then sub-let the shacks themselves. Ladlau reports that 'these new African landlords thoroughly exploited the situation', in many cases doubling the rents, erecting new shacks and extending existing dwellings into apartment shacks. By 1950 there were some 6 000 shacks in the area, housing between 45 000 and 50 000 people (Maasdorp and Humphreys 1975, p. 15).

It was the riots of 1949 and emergent South African government policy on urban Africans (Wilkinson 1983), rather than the Broome report, that provoked municipal action in Cato Manor. In 1952 government approval was given for a temporary municipal African housing scheme in Cato Manor, coupled with instructions to the municipality to proceed immediately with a massive permanent housing scheme at KwaMashu (20 kms to the north of the city); and instructions for the municipality to zone Cato Manor for future White occupation (Landau 1975, p. 28). Approximately 220ha of Indian owned land astride Booth road to the south of Chesterville was expropriated by the municipality for an 'Emergency Camp' with rudimentary services. Although the camp was intended as a temporary measure, construction in KwaMashu did not begin until 1956. Meanwhile Durban continued to attract Africans; the population in Cato Manor swelled, the camp itself soon approached saturation point and shack areas continued to grow in adjacent areas. By 1957 the shack population of Cato Manor was estimated at about 100 000 and, according to Maasdorp and Humphreys (1975, p. 61) it had become an unhealthy, foul smelling settlement - one of the 'most notorious slums South Africa has ever known'.

In 1958 Durban launched a much publicised scheme for the clearance of several of Cato

Manor's worst clusters of shacks, and the removal of their occupants to the new housing project at KwaMashu to the north of the city. This scheme was met with staunch opposition from residents of Cato Manor for several reasons. Many of Cato Manor residents were reluctant to move to KwaMashu where the cost of living was higher, with rents 116% more than those paid by the shackdwellers and average busfare to work 70% higher. The move would also involve considerable expenditure on furniture and household equipment that had not previously featured in the budgets of Cato Manor residents (Maasdorp and Humphreys 1975, p. 62). A major source of opposition to removals came from the many illegal traders, 'shebeen queens' (women illegally trading in liquor) and shack landlords who, understandably, saw the move as a threat to their livelihoods. Towards the end of 1958 a new government proclamation empowered Durban municipality to proceed with shack-removals from Cato Manor despite the threat of legal action. Large scale removals were accordingly scheduled to commence early in 1959. Again these plans were met with resistance, and tensions rose further (Edwards 1989).

In May 1959 in response to a general deterioration of health conditions and fear of a typhoid epidemic, the municipality undertook a major refuse removal exercise in the emergency camp. In the process cattle were impounded and illegal liquor brewing stills destroyed (Ladlau 1975, p. 56). A few weeks later, approximately 50 Cato Manor women forced their way into the municipal beerhall on Booth road (erected under the municipality's emergency scheme), destroyed equipment, and dispatched the male customers. The situation escalated over the following days to erupt into what became known as the 'beerhall riots' of 1959. Assessments after these riots indicated that whatever contributory factors had sparked off the disturbances, the basic cause was an economic one - poverty coupled with petty harassment and forceable removal to places of high cost such as KwaMashu (Edwards 1989).

In January 1960 shackdwellers made it clear that renewed municipal attempts to remove people would be strongly resisted. Municipal employees were instructed not to proceed with forced removals but only to assist those shackdwellers

who actually wanted to move. But while the municipality kept a low profile in Cato Manor, police continued their unpopular weekly raids of shebeens and illegal brewing. On Sunday 24 June one such raiding party was attacked and stoned after making over 100 arrests in the course of the afternoon. The 19 policemen, stranded without a vehicle, were forced to retreat to transit barracks in the Emergency Camp where they were trapped and attacked by a 'drunken mob'. Nine policemen were killed and the others seriously injured (Ladlau 1975, pp. 92-98). This incident finally tipped the scales in Cato Manor. The clearance of Cato Manor proceeded and was accomplished by the authorities with relative ease. By mid-1963 the Emergency Camp housed 20 000 people with only 6 400 living outside it; and by the end of 1965 these too had been removed. Ladlau (1975, p. 131) reports that by late 1967, 'the hillsides of Cato Manor were covered with tropical bush and grass, the only reminders of the "gloomy satellite" being the still intact beerhall and the disused roads of the Emergency Camp'.

### **The apartheid era (1966-1990)**

For the next quarter century, the Cato Manor area remained undeveloped for the most part, but ownership of the land became increasingly fragmented. Portions in, and adjacent to, old Cato Manor were bought by the Durban City Council, the University of Natal and Westville Municipality; and a private developer also acquired some land for township development (Day and Chetty 1993, Patel 1994). With the introduction of the tricameral parliamentary system in South Africa in 1983, the bulk of old Cato Manor land was reproclaimed for Indian occupation and while remaining in state ownership was transferred from the Community Development Board to the (Indian) House of Delegates Administration. Smaller parcels were transferred to the (white) House of Assembly administration and to the Natal Provincial Administration.

Although mass removals had occurred, a small number of residents managed to remain in Cato Manor, some as land owners and others as tenants of the Community Development Board. These remaining residents had formed the Cato Manor Residents Association (CMRA) in 1979 to resist

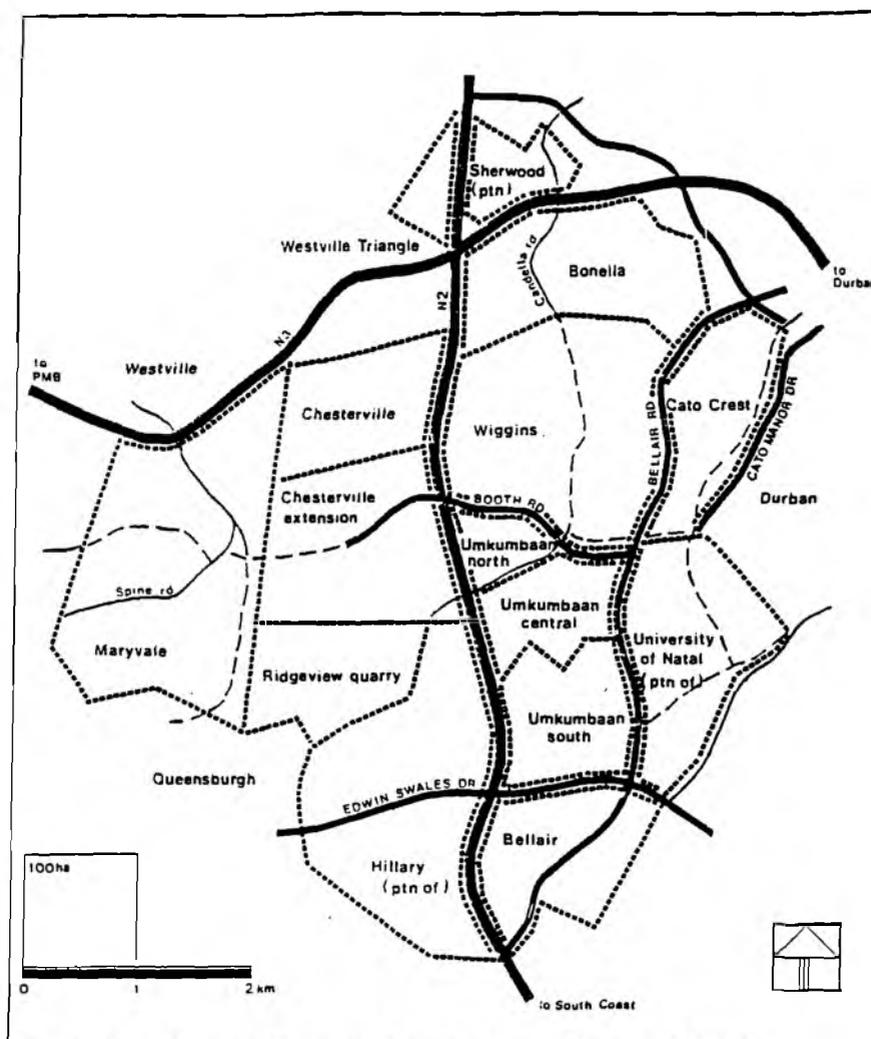
further removals, to resist racially-based developments in Cato Manor and attempt to reclaim the land. With strong support of both existing and former residents, CMRA initiated a process of involving a wider range of roleplayers and interest groups in their campaign (Centre for Community and Labour Studies 1992, p. 2).

**The Forum period (1990 to 1993)**

Wide support for the CMRA laid the foundations for an inclusive development process involving all

interested parties. During 1990 and 1991, partly in response to renewed attempts to develop parts of Cato Manor for exclusive use of specific racial groups, and partly due to the changing political climate in South Africa, intensive discussions on the future of Cato Manor began. By the end of 1991 an agreement was reached to constitute a widely representative body for the holistic development of the greater Cato Manor area (Figure 2).

The greater Cato Manor Development Forum was established in January 1992 to guide and advise on



**Figure 2: Composition of Greater Cato Manor (1990)**

KEY:

	Freeway		Area boundary
	Main Route		
	Proposed Route		
	Others		

development in an area of some 2000 ha including and adjacent to the original settlement. The Forum was made up of 33 members embracing community organisations, major land owners, public authorities (at local, regional and national levels), political parties and private sector organisations. At the outset, these stakeholders agreed to co-operate fully in the process of planning and development of greater Cato Manor; to explore all possibilities of co-ordinated development; and to work towards the creation of a non-racial, democratic implementation vehicle. This process was to be based upon a set of fundamental principles:

- (i) The planning and development process should be holistic
- (ii) It should embrace all the vacant land in the greater Cato Manor area
- (iii) The process should be participatory, involving all interested parties (including past, present and future residents), providing them with ample opportunity to make their concerns and development principles known
- (iv) The development should cater for the broad socio-economic requirements of Durban's metropolitan community, having regard for those removed and existing religious institutions.
- (v) Progress should be made without delay, taking cognisance of projects in progress and the need to maximise available resources.

The Forum had a three-tiered structure:

- Forum (33 members)
- Steering Committee (20 members)
- Implementation Committee (after July 1992) (10 members).

Membership of the latter two was arranged to achieve a balance between 'establishment' and 'non-establishment' interests. This distinction, which needs to be seen in the context of the 1990-94 transition period between the unbanning of political organisations and the first democratic elections, broadly distinguished organisations with direct access to state or other public sector funds and resources, from those that without. Other

criteria used in determining representation on the Steering and Implementation Committees were technical ability, principal land owners, residents, proven support and capacity to influence the situation (CCLS 1992, p. 7).

The process leading to the establishment of the Forum and to reaching agreement on its purpose and points of departure, represented a substantial break from previous ways of tackling large scale urban development projects in South Africa. Traditional approaches were characterised by discrete, mono-sectoral, government or private sector led initiatives, executed in a top-down fashion, with little or no consultation with other interested parties. In the case of Cato Manor, the overall process was based on a series of negotiations, initially around terms of cooperation and later around land, development policies and structuring of an implementation vehicle. Significantly the participants in these negotiations included many roleplayers who were previously excluded from public decision-making and urban development processes.

During its first six months, the Forum became engrossed in two main types of activities: formulation of a vision for greater Cato Manor; and 'fire fighting' to resolve land and autonomy issues among its members. The outcome of these disputes led to a reduction in the amount of land directly available for development by the Forum. In particular, the House of Delegates (HOD) would continue with its planned development in Bonella and parts of Wiggins, and the balance of uncommitted HOD owned land in greater Cato Manor would be made available to the Forum. The suburban Westville municipality withdrew from the Forum, insisting on its right to develop its property in the Maryvale area (though agreeing to cooperation on planning).

The Forum's vision, presented in a document entitled 'A Policy Framework for Cato Manor', was adopted by the Forum in July 1992 (Steering Committee Minutes, 11 July 1992). The vision has three facets: the metropolitan significance of Cato Manor; the spatial and physical form of development envisaged; and the development policies required to implement the vision (Greater Cato Manor Development Forum 1992).

The metropolitan dimension of the vision encompassed the following:

*Opportunity to provide affordable housing and jobs*

Central to the development vision was the provision of affordable housing and jobs for poor people in the inner city. Cato Manor offered an opportunity to provide housing for some 30 000 to 40 000 households (approximately 200 000 people) and thousands of jobs (in the formal and informal sectors) within seven kilometres of the central business district and ten kilometres of the Durban Functional Region's (DFR) main industrial employment centres. It offered the chance to enable poorer people to live closer to the city centre and its many opportunities for work, education, health care, shopping and recreation.

*Symbolic importance to the people of Durban*

The sensitivity surrounding Cato Manor makes it important to the people of Durban at large. The prospect of its redevelopment in the near future was widely regarded as an opportunity to demonstrate a new era of political compromise and a new approach to institutional structures in large scale development projects.

*Contribution to restructuring Durban*

Realisation of Cato Manor's development potential could make a contribution towards restructuring the sprawling, segregated areas developed during the apartheid era. The goal of creating a more compact and efficient city, which offers improved access between home and place of work, social facilities and shopping could only be achieved by the successful development of a number of projects such as Cato Manor.

*Holistic development*

Planning the redevelopment of Cato Manor was to be done in an holistic way, integrated into metropolitan planning and at a more detailed level, to planning for adjoining areas. Holistic development also involved a widely inclusive participatory process organised in ways that would not alienate people from the decision-making process. It also involved a multi-sectoral approach

to development and one that created opportunities for involvement of large and small scale entrepreneurs (Greater Cato Manor Development Forum 1992, pp. 8-12; CCLS 1992, p. 3).

The spatial/physical dimension of the vision attempted to convey a non-technical idea of what Cato Manor would be like if developed according to the Policy Framework based on a number of questions: What will the dominant patterns of land use be in ten years time? What will the buildings look like? Who will live and work there? What kinds of houses will there be? What will the main daily/weekly pattern of activities include? How will people travel about? (Greater Cato Manor Development Forum 1992, pp. 13-42). In qualitative terms, the vision was to develop Cato Manor as a 'place where people like to live and work in a distinctly urban environment, where one can enjoy a full lifestyle and reach most parts of the metropolitan area without needs to own a car'.

Finally the Framework identified the broad spectrum of inter-related policy issues that needed to be addressed in order to start putting the vision into practice (Greater Cato Manor Development Forum 1992, pp. 43-70).

Central to the vision for Cato Manor itself was the creation of a compact and efficient 'city within a city' that provides affordable housing close to the city centre, with access to education, health care, shopping and recreation facilities, as well as opportunities for jobs. The Framework identified the need for holistic planning to integrate Cato Manor into the surrounding neighbourhoods, to involve a widely inclusive participatory process and create opportunities for the involvement of large- and small-scale entrepreneurs.

**Cato Manor Development Association (1993-)**

Acceptance of the vision paved the way for the formation of an implementation vehicle, Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA), in 1993. CMDA's capacity to implement agreed policies and, simultaneously, to respond to issues on the ground changed substantially in its first two years. The first year saw CMDA in a weak and largely reactive mode, while its performance in the second year was far stronger and proactive leading

to a position by September 1995, where it was poised to develop a range of urban development products at scale (Management report to CMDA Board, 14 September 1995).

### *CMDA's first year (1993-94)*

The Forum's early activities had reached a watershed by mid-1992 with the adoption of this Policy Framework and the decision to become more pro-active. It recognised that its original terms of reference, to 'guide and advise' on development, would be insufficient to ensure that Cato Manor was developed holistically and in terms of the vision widely agreed to. As a consequence, the Forum changed its orientation into a more proactive mode and embarked on a three-point programme:

- to acquire as much land as possible in greater Cato Manor so as to secure development rights;
- to establish and staff an appropriate implementation vehicle to manage the project; and
- to obtain adequate funding for the development.

Armed with a Policy Framework, the Forum proceeded to transform itself into a Section 21 (not for gain) Company and the Cato Manor Development Association came into being in March 1993. The initial 21 members of the Association were drawn from those Forum members who had remained actively involved, and had no direct financial interest in the project. CMDA was to be governed by a Board of 12 Directors, ten of whom were members of the Association while two specialists could be co-opted onto the Board with full voting rights. The inaugural meeting of the Association, at which the Board was appointed, took place on 29 March 1993 (CMDA (Association) Minutes 29 March 1993). It was this embryonic structure, as yet unstaffed (and with all members of both Association and Board acting in a voluntary capacity), that was to encounter a severe baptism of fire in its first year of operation. This took the form of a seemingly endless series of challenges,

some to the very existence of the CMDA.

The quest to recruit a top-calibre chief executive and other senior management staff took much longer than expected, and it was only in February 1994 that the CEO and senior executives were in place. The consequent lack of capacity for most of 1993 meant that the CMDA was virtually unable to play the proactive role intended. Instead, it was forced into a reactive mode, with most of its severely stretched capacity absorbed into responding to immediate issues. During this period the City of Durban provided a substantial amount of assistance to the embryonic CMDA in terms of both human and financial resources.

Two serious land invasions occurred in Cato Manor in July and November 1993, the first on vacant land in the area known as Cato Crest and the second an invasion of new houses built by the House of Delegates in part of Wiggins. These invasions placed the CMDA under severe pressure and towards the end of 1993 the CMDA faced a crisis of confidence among its members, the City, potential funders and the community at large. However, after some weeks of deliberations, consensus emerged that the CMDA remained the most widely-based and best placed organisation to manage development in Cato Manor.

Early in 1994, funding was secured for administration and planning, an office was set up close to Cato Manor, and a Business Plan formulated. Restructuring of the Association then commenced. As an interim measure, it was agreed that the Board and Association would meet jointly. Procedures were set in place for other organisations to apply for membership of the Association and to attend meetings as observers while applications were being processed.

The organisational model adopted, confirmed the role of the Association as being representative of the wider community interest in greater Cato Manor, with its Board responsible for taking policy decisions needed to enable the project to proceed. The executive management team, appointed by the Board and responsible to it through the CEO, became responsible for formulating policy options as a basis for the Board to take requisite decisions, and for executing Board decisions.

The CMDA's role in the development process was also clarified. It would be largely a facilitator responsible for setting an overall framework. Responsibility for detailed planning, design and implementation on the ground would be in the hands of a number of consultants, contractors and development agents appointed by the CMDA from the private, public and community sectors.

#### *From reactive to proactive intervention (1994-95)*

In contrast to the reactive mode of its first year, the CMDA became increasingly proactive during 1994, although there were times when most of its management resources had to be diverted to addressing issues on the ground. These included another major land invasion (Dunbar Road) and several subsequent attempts at invasion that were thwarted by CMDA acting in concert with municipal and provincial authorities. Membership of CMDA was further restructured to be more representative of both local and metropolitan interests. The Association still comprises 21 members, but with some changes. A new 15 member Board was elected in July 1994, bringing in additional developmental experience.<sup>2</sup>

An innovative approach to the acquisition of development rights was successfully negotiated, in terms of which the CMDA was appointed as the agent of the National Housing Board which had become the major land owner after the demise of tricameral institutions such as the House of Delegates. CMDA management also played a role in drafting sections of post-apartheid land restitution legislation, in such a way that land claims in major projects like Cato Manor can be dealt with separately (in terms of Section 34 of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994) so as not to impede progress. During this period, the CMDA set up a Consultants Appointment Review Panel and a CMDA Tender Board, to provide a transparent and accountable basis for its decisions about the allocation of consulting work and tenders in Cato Manor.

Planning work was undertaken for the entire Cato

Manor area, enabling CMDA to assess the potential yield and constraints of each parcel of land, and to confirm the concept of mixed-use activity corridors in the area. The CMDA team was confronted with the challenge of turning the Policy Framework into concrete and workable plans while simultaneously implementing projects on the ground. The traditional linear planning approach, which moves from a policy plan through a structure plan to a development plan and local action area plans, conventionally takes more than 18 months before implementation can take place. In the context of the intense settlement pressure, this conventional approach was clearly unsuited to the Cato Manor project. As a consequence a relatively unique planning process was developed and in April 1994 the planning of the Cato Manor project started in earnest. In essence the approach adopted entailed running the various levels of the planning process in parallel and not in sequence (CMDA Annual Report 1995, p. 12).

The process of formulating a Structure Plan, backed by concrete and implementable strategies, started in April 1994. The first phase involved the production of a conceptual spatial framework plan that addressed the following questions: What activities and land uses will be located in Cato Manor? Where will these activities be located? How will development be interfaced with surrounding areas? Where will the major transport routes be? What type and how many different opportunities will become available? Who will access them? What sort of facilities will be provided in Cato Manor and what standards will be applied? Who is going to be involved in the delivery in Cato Manor and how is it to be managed? (CMDA Annual Report 1995, p. 13). The Spatial Framework Concept Plan was completed by July 1994.

The second phase of the Structure Planning process involved, first, testing and elaborating on key elements associated with the spatial framework, for example the overall transportation network, the open space system, housing densities and the public transportation system. Consultation on a draft Structure Plan commenced in August 1995. Next, the process required identification of all projects necessary to make the implementation of the Cato Manor project a reality, together with the requisite programming and budgeting. This

<sup>2</sup> See an earlier version of this paper presented to the Sixth International Planning History Conference, University of Hong Kong, June 1994.

took the form of a draft Business Plan, including 130 projects with specified commencement and completion dates, which was produced in November 1994. An intense process of refinement and modification then followed in order to generate appropriate information for funds from the public and private sectors. The anticipated capital investment in Cato Manor by the year 2005, in current prices, is expected to be R3,455 billion (R1,185 billion public sector and R2,270 billion private sector) (CMDA Annual Report 1996, p. 7).

The third planning phase, involving production of more detailed area specific precinct plans, had commenced in April 1994. The process of developing these into concrete implementational management tools continues, as does the co-ordination of six sectoral programmes (transportation; housing; social infrastructure; engineering services; parks and conservation; economic development). A quantitative sense of what is planned is conveyed in the yield estimates contained in Table 1, while Table 2 highlights some of the characteristic approaches being adopted.

**Table 1. Yield estimates for Cato Manor development**

Development	Yield
Housing (incl. upgrading)	41200 units
Estimated population	200 000 to 250 000
Industrial and office estates	110 hectares
Schools & pre-schools	106
Sports complexes	4
Sports fields	11
Clinics	5
Community halls	10
Libraries	4

Source: CMDA Annual Report 1995, p. 13.

**Table 2. CMDA's approach to development planning**

* <b>Transportation:</b> An integrated multi-nodal public transportation system of a quality hitherto unseen in South African cities is planned. The aim is to make Cato Manor one of the two most accessible parts of the city by public transport, while simultaneously connecting it to all the major employment and social opportunities in Durban.
* <b>Economic opportunities:</b> Capitalisation on Cato Manor's locational and spatial attributes will create an area rich in economic opportunities.
* <b>Housing:</b> New approaches to housing delivery and form at densities higher than the current norm are being formulated.
* <b>Social and cultural facilities:</b> New standards for social facilities and new approaches to space and usage are being investigated. These are targeted towards getting the highest possible yield from the land with hitherto unprecedented cost effectiveness.
* <b>Open space system:</b> An integrated open space system connecting into the Metropolitan Open Space System (D'MOSS) is planned and will be oriented towards conserving prime environmental assets, while simultaneously making available high quality passive environmental and recreational opportunities for the resident population and broader metropolitan community.

Source: CMDA Annual Report 1995 p13

Notwithstanding the rapidly executed planning process, a variety of pressures on the ground and in the decision-making environment have necessitated certain departures from the plans. Chief Executive (1994-95), Dan Smit, summed up the impact as follows:

The development of Cato Manor does not offer the luxury of long-term planning and consultation. Innovative, effective decision-making and some risk-taking are required to give substance to the vision of the CMDA ... Developments of the scale of Cato Manor are generally long-term projects where months, even years, of detailed planning and consultation take place before anything happens of the ground. But in the case of Cato Manor this is a luxury we cannot afford. The settlement pressures are extraordinarily high, and the eyes of the nation are upon us. People want houses, and they have already waited too long (CMDA Annual Report 1995, p. 6).

By mid-1995 construction had begun in three housing projects (involving some 2000 sites and housing units) and CMDA was at the point of implementing two others (CMDA Annual Report 1995, pp. 15-18). Construction had also begun on key elements of bulk infrastructure, including outfall sewers and primary and secondary roads. Substantial progress had been made in the process of land assembly while CMDA's contribution to formulating legislation on Land Restitution in a way which does not cripple major urban development projects, set the context for accelerating the process of land assembly. However, this process has been complicated both by the variety of major landowners, jurisdictional complexities and an ever-present threat of land invasions. At the same time a capacity-building and communications programme was in the early stages of implementation. It was designed to ensure that communities were able to formulate informed positions on development issues.

A particularly innovative aspect was the establishment of *Izwe* (the vision), which is a bi-monthly community newspaper. Its aim is to provide a two-way communication channel between

the CMDA and Cato Manor residents about housing and development issues, as well as to provide a forum for debate. The first two editions (of 10 000 copies each) appeared in May and July 1995 and were well received in the Cato Manor community which numbered some 60 000 people.

One of the most significant achievements was the designation of the Cato Manor project as a Special Presidential Project, as part of the national Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This meant that apart from gaining access to Special Presidential Projects funds, Cato Manor received priority in the budgeting activities of line function departments at all relevant levels of government. The Business Plan required to release RDP funds was submitted in November 1994 but only approved in August 1995 (competition between political parties at regional and metropolitan levels had the effect of delay). This made R80 million available for the Cato Manor project during the 1995-96 financial year with a further R50 million in each of the following 4 years. In addition about R120 million became available from the European Union early in 1997. To sum up, CMDA had completed the preparatory, pre-development phase of its work by about mid-1995 and could then embark on the construction of houses for formal occupation, together with the development of employment opportunities. The rate of delivery of a range of development projects is expected to expand substantially, as indicated by the latest version of the Business Plan. The CMDA emerged from a baptism of fire able to facilitate rapid development, though the extent to which this can be realised depends on a number of factors, some of which relate to effective project management and technical issues, while others hinge on continued political and institutional support.

### Lessons for urban reconstruction

A number of lessons are emerging from the Cato Manor experience that contribute to the current debate about urban development processes and reconstruction in South Africa. The following points may be regarded as interim conclusions (and see also Robinson and Smit 1994, and Smit 1995).

*Process vs product*

The Forum and CMDA devoted more energy to process than to product during the period up to early 1995. This was circumstantial rather than intentional, although the initiative always recognised the importance of getting the process right. During 1994 and early 1995, considerable effort went into the planning that is essential for a project of this scale. The acid test will be whether the emphasis on process has created a strong enough foundation for accelerated product delivery. During the last few years, emphasis on community control over development processes has engendered a new assertiveness within communities, making the process of implementation particularly challenging. However, recent statements by national and provincial cabinet ministers indicate a hardening of attitude on the part of government in situations where the consultation process is being used by particular interest groups to delay progress on implementation.

*Cooperation and creativity*

A high degree of co-operation and technical creativity is required by local authorities, developers and facilitating agencies (CMDA has operated in the latter two roles) in matching speed of delivery with prevailing procedures and regulations.

*Changing operating environment*

Implementation is complicated enormously by the constantly changing operating environment. In Smit's view, 'the task has been made so much more challenging by the fact that we are operating in an environment that is caught in a process of fundamental transformation. The institutional frameworks at national, regional and metropolitan levels are changing, priorities are changing, so too are housing policies and procedures ... The CMDA itself is a product of transition and as the broader environment changes, so pressures will develop for change in the nature and form of the CMDA. The changing environment offered opportunities for innovation on several fronts, but it is generally acknowledged that some stability in the policy environment is highly desirable for those involved in implementation. Yet in Cato Manor there have

been very few 'fixes' to utilise as a basis for project design' (CMDA Annual Report 1995, pp. 6-7).

*Urban reconstruction*

The most severe problem faced by CMDA since its inception has been the succession of crises linked to land invasions or to ethnic tensions (particularly between African and Indian people) inherited from the apartheid era. The effect of these 'shocks' has been to disrupt severely systematic development efforts, absorbing the limited staff capacity into crisis resolution and diverting resources away from other programmes. In addition, of course, invasions caused the loss of developable land and the additional cost and complications associated with subsequent upgrading and allocation processes.

The existing capital subsidy is linked to products that require delivery of tenure. While this system has certain advantages, it simultaneously places constraints on short-term delivery in complex areas like Cato Manor. Associated with this issue is the ambivalence in national housing policy about subsidies for rental housing.

The adequacy and acceptability of fast-track, incremental housing projects raises a host of issues for debate. These include their impact on nearby, well established areas; the evidence that even fast-track incremental delivery is not sufficient to deal with issues on the ground; the need to be opening many small parcels of well-located land throughout Durban (and other centres); and the question of whether another category of housing projects, namely reception areas for homeless or displaced people, needs to be formally recognised in national housing policy.

A major issue is how to balance wider, longer-term interests with short-term, local interests. Evidence from Cato Manor is that the latter tend to be heard more loudly than the former. This issue was exacerbated at a time when no strong metropolitan policies were in place.

The appropriateness of a development vehicle is another challenge that is currently being addressed by the CMDA. The development vehicle for any large urban project is at risk because of

inconsistent support. Whilst a number of actors may have agreed that such a vehicle is useful for undertaking development, their commitment often wavers in the face of crisis: 'inclusive structures have lukewarm defenders' (Robinson and Smit 1994). The CMDA is a Section 21 (non-profit) company, as distinct from public sector organisations commonly involved in other Special Presidential Projects.

### Conclusions

Any assessment of a project still in progress can do no more than reach tentative conclusions. In Cato Manor, the scales of success have been, and remain, finely balanced, with risk of failure ever present. On the one hand, slow progress (or extraneous factors) could result in an invasion of the entire area resulting in a sprawling shackland. On the other hand, an easy route which was considered and rejected by the Forum/CMDA, would have been to hand over development to large-scale developers who could rapidly construct fairly low density housing (most of which would not be affordable by the low income majority of the metropolitan population). Either of these outcomes would, indeed, extend the legacy of the past. Instead, a reconstruction route is being actively pursued. In this sense, and irrespective of its ultimate success or failure, the Cato Manor project is already becoming a model for reconstruction in a variety of ways on account of the lessons it has, and will continue to generate for urban reconstruction in South Africa. ¶

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