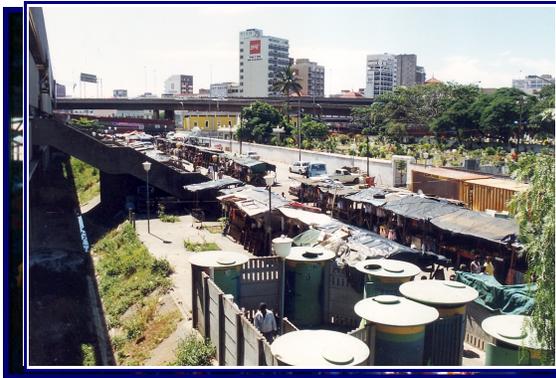


DOCUMENT 2 D

iTRUMP [inner Thekwini Regeneration and Urban Management Programme] AREA BASED CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS MANAGING THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

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BROOK STREET CENTRAL MARKET

1. PROJECT

The Project illustrates the phased development of an urban scale, roofed informal economy trading “mall” that was initiated as a joint venture approach to the Local Authority, through iTRUMP. The approach was by the Badsha Peer Mazaar Society, who proposed the erection of a permanent roof structure over the portion of Brook Street Central adjacent to their Saint’s Mazaar [shrine] for the dual use of their veneration ceremonies and the daily informal trade already existent in the same space. The initial project has subsequently extended to six, almost annual, development phases where the roof has been extended to now shelter the entire length of Brook Street Central [approximately 200 m] to which traders’ specific infrastructure has been added.

The Society has recently conducted its fifth function utilizing the roofed urban space. The Project concept has evolved interactively from phase to phase, so is also demonstrative of the attributes of an area based presence in translating daily observation into responsive design and ultimately, infrastructure. The area based presence has also contributed to the maintenance of a strong vision which is necessary to “carry” phased development.

2. BACKGROUND

The inception of the Project was a joint venture between the Basha Peer Mazaar

Society and ITRUMP. The following summary appeared in the KZ-NIA Journal [issue 3/2001. Volume 26. ISSN 0379-9301].

“Harat Sheik Ahmed Badsha Peer (b. Madras 1830; d. Durban 1886) arrived in SA aboard the S.S. Truro in November 1860. As an indentured labourer, he was hired by Natal Estates at Mount Edgecombe.

While others toiled the fields, he would meditate, yet miraculously his field too was completed. On being released, Peer moved to Durban and lived in a tin shanty at the Grey Street mosque, often being confused as a vagabond. In fact, he was a Majzoob, one who conceals his spiritual character and is in constant communion with his creator, and as such made many predictions.

After his death, devotees began commemorating his life with an Ur, which became an annual event and is now the biggest of such functions held in the southern hemisphere. The Badsha Peer Mazaar Society was formed and its members built the Mazaar (shrine) abounding the Brook Street Muslim section of West Street Cemetery, where Peer is buried.

The veneration of Badsha Peer has occurred in Brook Street Central for the last 65 years and with the relocation of the Berea [rail commuter] Station from West Street, informal trade became concentrated in the same interspace between the cemetery and the Station. A mutual understanding developed between the Mazaar Society and the traders that enabled the creative use of the space by both stakeholders. The Badsha Peer veneration ceremony is determined according to the Muslim calendar, ie. the date advances year on year. At the inception of negotiations between the Mazaar Society and iTRUMP the ceremony was entering the City’s winter season. Routine preparations for the ceremony commence some two weeks before the pinnacle weekend. Prior to the erection of the permanent roof, large marques were erected over Brook Street adjacent to the Mazaar. These marques were erected in this two week preparatory period and required the informal traders to demolish their temporary stalls; clear the street; await the erection of the marques; return into the marques for a few days trading prior to vacating for the penultimate Thursday night ceremony which builds up to the weekend high-point – the gathering of approximately 10,000 devotees, most seated at tables layed out in rows in the public space. After the religious observation, everyone present is served a cooked meal.

The scale of the event has increased each year. This was pressurizing the preparatory phases and practical arrangements. The marques were now the biggest that could be conveniently erected in the space within the time constraints; their capacity was limited; being winter, they provided ideal shelter to for the city’s homeless who naturally lit fires to keep themselves warm – making it virtually impossible for the Mazaar Society to insure the marques; an increasing number of informal traders were required to make way for the ceremony, increasing the resources required to demolish and re-erect their stalls [the Mazaar Society provided timber and nails for the re-

erection process]; the early, co-operative interaction between the two stakeholder groups, though remaining good, was becoming harder to manage. A unique cultural and religious event was outgrowing customary protocols.

The Badsha Peer Mazaar Society approached iTRUMP with the idea that the Society erect a permanent roof over a portion of Brook Street Central, available annually for their ceremony, but for the remainder of the year, cover for the informal traders. This would obviously mitigate the necessity for the marques and traders' stalls, all assisting with the preparatory organization. The initial proposal was to erect an "off-the-shelf" industrial shed.

Being a public space, with an urban scale of a potential in excess of the Mazaar Society's immediate requirements, iTRUMP welcomed the concept but not the detailed submission. The eventual agreement was as follows:

- iTRUMP appointed and remunerated a professional team of Architects, Engineers and Quantity Surveyors. This maintained the Local Authority's authorship of the design in the public urban space and the public safety aspects related thereto.
- The Mazaar Society would be responsible for the erection of an agreed portion of the structure [it was conceived as a larger structure than they initially required]; would utilize the iTRUMP professional team, and in so doing adhere to their detailing and instructions.
- An air-rights servitude would be registered entrenching the user rights and ownership.
- Final public safety certification would only be issued after complete compliance by the Mazaar Society to the professional teams' detailing and instructions.

In essence, a joint venture agreement securing the rights of both parties, but particularly urban design and public safety.

The project proceeded on this basis and the first phase was complete for the Society's ceremony in July 2001 – its 60th anniversary. Subsequent annual implementation phases [now phase six] have seen the roof extended and informal economy infrastructure developed to support the local activities. The informal traders are represented by two street committees, in an approximately equal spatial divide. The Badsha Peer veneration is now in its fifth year since the erection of the roof and the extension of the covering over the entire length of Brook Street Central has accommodated the expansion of their function. Their Society's financial contribution was limited to the first phase of the project but they have subsequently completed major renovations to the Mazaar, increasing the aesthetic appearance of the entire precinct.

3. LOCATION

The Project is located in Brook Street Central, directly between the West Street Cemetery and the eastern edge of the Berea Station. The area is a melting pot of cultural history:

- The cemetery is the oldest in Durban [opened in 1850] and contains Christian, Muslim and Jewish graves. The Muslim section is currently the most actively used.
- The Berea Station was relocated in the apartheid era and was conceived as a segregated facility ie. with racially exclusive platforms and dedicated circulation routes.
- The construction of the new Station deliberately managed the access of Black people into the inner city, as it was the only elevated crossing over the rail corridor connecting the inner city with metro wide public transport routes. This reinforced the circulatory significance of Brook Street as the pedestrian distribution point into the inner city districts. The presence of informal traders was a consequence of this heavy pedestrian traffic.
- Periodically, Muslim funeral processions pass through the area en route from the Grey Street Mosque to the cemetery.
- As previously described, over the years there has been a rich cultural interaction between particularly African and Indian communities surrounding the cemetery activity and the Badsha Peer annual veneration. The latter is a function that has a local and international following.

Although never deproclaimed as a road, the construction of the freeway spurs [described in Document 2A: The Traditional Herb and Medicine Market] designed to connect with Victoria and Queen Streets, now interrupted Brook Street which in effect had become a pedestrian thoroughfare.

4. INTERVENTION

In its infancy the Project represented a unique joint venture between the Local Authority [iTRUMP] and the Badsha Peer Mazaar Society, supporting a long standing cultural and religious practice. The Mazaar Society's approach to iTRUMP gave credence to the possibility of extending the roof along the full extent of Brook Street Central. Although there was no initial financial commitment from either party to fund any subsequent phases [beyond the Society's first phase] the architectural concept and urban scale anticipated this possibility, hence the now appropriate architectural expression and the functioning of the space as an informal economy "shopping mall".

Equally, the urban space and roof has facilitated the unconstrained expansion of the Badsha Peer veneration and provides responsive accommodation for the celebration's programme.

5. PROCESS

Until the Society's formal approach to iTRUMP with the proposal to roof a portion of Brook Street Central, the interaction between the Society and the informal traders' street committee was based on customary understandings and public spirited co-operation. As the veneration function expanded, along with the density of trading, this interaction became harder to manage and progressively the ITSBO [Informal trade and Small Business Opportunity] area manager was approached to assist with the Society / trader preparatory arrangements. A form of social, economic and spatial threshold had been reached.

The evolution of the Project into a joint venture was influenced by four factors:

- Equitable access and use of public space.
- Public safety and liability.
- Urban aesthetics.
- A rational land / legal arrangement.

To ensure that the public objectives of the Local Authority were met, the most practical proposal was that iTRUMP employ the professional team and that the Society work to their design and detailing. The Society wished to construct the shelter on an "owner contractor" basis which created atypical expectations with respect to professional fees for administering the construction work stage of the professional consultancies. It was therefore agreed that the Society also be responsible for this stage of their fees. The joint venture proceeded on this delineation of responsibilities.

iTRUMP facilitated the negotiations that required agreements in principle from Council, the local stakeholders, and in particular the two trader street committees, Intersite [as operating agents for Metro Rail] and Local Authority line departments eg. [then] Traffic and Transportation, Emergency Services, ITSBO, Cemeteries, Urban Design and Real Estate. Provisional agreements enabled the submission to Council and upon their approval the retention of the Professional Team and the finalization of the design. A critical deadline was the completion of a portion of the roof for the forthcoming Badsha Peer ceremony.

At an early stage in the negotiations it was agreed to conceive the design as a roof that eventually sheltered the entire length of Brook Street Central. During the circulation of the proposal to the line departments it was noted that Brook Street was still designated a "road" and as such a "building" could not be erected in this reserve. The time implications with respect to any de-registration were open-ended and would certainly have delayed the roof for the forthcoming ceremony. The iTRUMP team enquired about the statutory unrestricted height applicable to road bridges or structures. In concept, the arched roof was bridge-like, and in response to the clearance requirements of 5,4 metres, the springing [lowest point] of the roof trusses were set and the deproclamation was unnecessary! The irony of this expedient decision is that when the roof was extended for the entire length

of Brook Street Central, the urban scale and height of the shelter was appropriate. An air-rights servitude was registered for the space envelope surrounding the actual roof which described user rights and responsibilities with respect to the Society for the first phase of the project. In practice, the financial obligations of all the parties were met with respect to the first phase and although the professional appointments were atypical in nature, the work was executed in the spirit of the joint venture and the Local Authority was able to obtain professional safety certification for the completed first phase.

6. PRODUCT

The following description schedules and details the various phases of the project:

Phase One: 2000. Architects: Kooblal and Steyn.

Specifically the joint venture construction project consisting of 12 modular bays and a roof only. Notwithstanding the road ordinance dictate for the roof height, the shelters' typical cross-section anticipated the possibility to retrofit two levels of future accommodation along the station edge of Brook Street Central.

Approximate construction cost: R750,000

Phase Two: 2001 Architects. Architects Collaborative

This commission conceptualized the seamless pedestrian connection into Victoria Street through the elevation of Russell Street, commencing at Queen Street such that its elevation adjacent to Victoria Street provided sufficient head height to permit a pedestrian underpass directly from Brook Street into the Grey Street precinct. Currently this at grade pedestrian crossing has a high number of accidents. This plan also increased the area of the Market in that it created better integration between the various disparate portions of land currently under Russell Street and alongside Brook Street North. The plan was submitted to Council but could not attract the required funding. Phase Two therefore, was the Brook Street Central component of this master plan that anticipates the future implementation of the Russell Street elevation, but concentrated on the development of Phase One northwards to the Traditional Herb and Medicine Market. The Queen Street spur's abutment of this Market projected into Brook Street Central, limiting pedestrian circulation to an approximately 3 metre wide underpass along the rail edge and a similar width but more convoluted route on the city side – effectively blocking the extent of the Brook Street Central Market from Victoria Street. The significant architectural contribution of this phase was the demolition of this freeway spur's abutment, replacing the Herb Market pedestrian link with a lightweight metal bridge, designed as a focal architectural element within the newly formed urban space.

In addition, the potential upper level linkages from Berea Station and the Herb Market were collected onto a new upper level walkway running parallel to the rail edge. New izinyanga kiosks and a herb processing plant were constructed along this walkway which now provided a new and alternate route to or from the Station. On the lower level additional space was released for trading and the entire length of

Brook Street Central linked through to Victoria Street. This portion of the work was roofed from Phase One up to the underside of the freeway above.
Approximate cost: R2.0 million.

Phase Three: 2003 Architects. Architects Collaborative

This work was largely opportunistic in that the Project Team was alerted to the potential cost benefit of utilizing the roof truss jigs [temporary manufacturing templates] to complete the entire roof for the Brook Street Central Market. The outstanding section was the extreme southern end and amounted to 4 modular bays. Capital works savings were identified and a “small works” contract was let to complete the roof. This phase comprised the roof structure only.

Approximate cost: R345,000

Phase Four: 2004 Architects. Architects Collaborative

This Phase was conceived as a continuation of the typical two level architectural cross section designed in Phase Two ie. further connections to the upper level circulatory system linking the existing entrances / exists from the Station. Due to the extent and complexity of the lower level work, implementation on the upper levels was sequenced for Phase Five. The sketch design detailed both phases in order to anticipate all the forward planning considerations.

The lower level of this future walkway comprised two levels of traders storage and public toilets. In the past, traders in the area had stored their goods overnight in various shipping containers placed on the sidewalks and operated these as independent storage businesses. This had always been an interim solution and had generated various urban management challenges eg. maintenance of the containers, cleanliness in and around the interspaces between adjoining structures, sidewalk obstructions and [often] overnight sleeping, all requiring resolution. The purpose designed storage facility [in total 12 of various sizes] replaced the existing shipping containers and generally, all the previous shipping container operators signed new tenancy agreements with Business Support [the line department successors to ITSBO] ie. they became established entities. The shipping containers were removed which created more trading space and enhanced the urban management of the area. The provision of the public toilets anticipated the eventual demolition of the existing public toilets at the southern end of Brook Street Central [now Phase Six]. The roof of the upper level storage units formed the eventual pedestrian walkway. The portions of this slab that did not enclose lower level space were omitted for the subsequent phase to prevent access to what would have been attractive vacant space and the commensurate urban management challenges!

Approximate cost: R2.5 million

Phase Five: 2005 Architects. Architects Collaborative

This phase was the completion of the work conceived in Phase Four and entailed the construction of the infill walkway panels to complete the upper pedestrian link [omitted as described earlier]. On this upper level additional kiosks and public toilets were constructed with water and drainage. [Provision was made for later electrical

reticulation.] These kiosks were specifically intended for prepared food vendors and space was provided to accommodate tables for their customers – conceived as a “food court”. Most of these cooks had been preparing food within the immediate area under unsuitable conditions for a number of years. Further, some were cooks “attached” to the occupants of the Traditional Herb and Medicine Market who had not been accommodated in the initial phases of that Market. Both levels of public toilets were designed with the intention that they be operated as “out-sourced” facilities by under-employed informal traders on behalf of the Local Authority.
Approximate cost: R2.2 million.

Phase Six: 2007 Architects. Architects Collaborative

An urban management challenge of the area has always been the intrusion of vehicles into the “heart” of the trading area. Generally, the vehicle owners have claimed a purpose or association with the activities in the Market or the adjacent Station, and although seemingly dangerous, occurs as a local custom without incident. It is however not good practice and is preventing the optimal layout of additional trading sites. Phase Six is to primarily resolve this malady.

Immediately adjacent to the Station is sufficient space for a roadway connecting to the Brook Street taxi rank and a parking node for approximately 12 cars or light delivery vehicles. This number is considered sufficient to service the Market in the manner currently in operation. Above this parking is a continuation of the upper level pedestrian link which eventually terminates in a new stair link to the sidewalk adjacent to the cemetery at the taxi rank. On this upper level are additional kiosks and offices [two of the latter replacing the shipping containers currently being used by the taxi associations as rank offices.]

The architectural concept of this phase is to provide a “gateway” aesthetic to the entire Market when entering from the south and to protect the exposed weather face of the Shelter from the driving rain.

Approximate cost: R3.5 million [this is being provided over two local authority financial years]

Subsequent Phases:

Work that remains outstanding is currently the “fringing” of the cemetery wall with additional trading [both roofed, and open for the location of tenants utilizing demountable “gazebos”] and the appropriate re-paving of the entire Market. It is likely that this work will be spread over two Local Authority financial years.

7. LEARNING

i. Receptivity to Stakeholders’ Ideas.

The evolution of the Brook Street Central Market was undoubtedly as a result of the approach by the Badsha Peer Mazaar Society to erect a permanent roof adjacent to their Mazaar. The idea was unconventional and the innovation required an acceptable joint venture and the redirection of the design to

achieve a more substantial outcome. Being area based, iTRUMP was in communication with all the local stakeholders whose participation was vital in achieving progress on the proposal. Having local “intelligence”, they were also aware of the cultural significance of the Badsha Peer annual veneration and that cultural cohesion was a potential outcome for the Project.

ii. Concept Evolution:

iTRUMP was able to imagine the potential of the initial approach and insist on the implementation of a first phase that accommodated a range of future opinions. The later provision of infrastructure in support of the immediate informal economy activities was evolutionary and responsive to their observed needs and those of the Local Authority eg. the purpose built storage facilities. Key to this achievement was the early production of a flexible master plan and phased implementation.

iii. Phased Implementation:

The adoption of a phased implementation strategy has been a key learning for iTRUMP and their projects developed for the informal economy. A number of practical considerations have supported this approach:

- It has enabled concept evolution in a sector where prior precedent is not generally available.
- Over time, it has enabled an aggregated, enhanced budget commitment that has translated into a more substantial and significant intervention.
- It recognized that many of the informal economy activities are survivalist in nature and are therefore vulnerable to disruption. Ensuring that there is income continuity is an important consideration that can best be achieved by phased implementation.
- It enhances the attributes of area based management in that funds can be placed to maximize leverage, but spread more uniformly to enable the creation of a broader platform that has the possibility of intersecting projects with commensurate benefit, rather than sequentially “starting at one end.”

iv. Strong Vision:

The Project illustrates the need for strong and clear vision as a key requirement for a phased implementation approach. Area based management is one of the only Local Authority approaches that can sustain and evolve this necessity. Line departments can articulate the vision but sustenance depends on area level inputs eg. stakeholder participation, design evolution, on-going maximization of opportunities and **local** institutional memory. All the latter are the preserve of an area based management approach. Strong vision is also applicable to “holding the course” where the local presence understands the significance of the Project and can retain its prominence over [in this instance] 6-7 years.

iv. Urban Uniqueness:

Generally, only an area based presence would have detected the implicit potential of the Society's proposal. It is speculated that a routine approach into a Local Authority line department would have either lost or diluted the potential. The KZ-NIA Journal [Issue 3 / 2001. Volume No. 26] refers to the Brook Street Central Market as being "akin to the Galleria in Milan" [Italy]. Unique in form, concept and use. The interactive use of the space must rate as an international distinguished practice and occurrence. This practice has also developed a local idiosyncrasy where the local informal trader permits will have a qualifying condition that acknowledges the Society's annual use of the space ie. informal trade will be restricted during the veneration ceremony!

The urban uniqueness is also an important contributor to the post-apartheid transformation of South Africa's urban centres. This project site is obviously very significant as the "doorstep" into the previously segregated inner city. Cultural fusion is one means of securing sustainable transformation.