



***An Evaluation of the Use of Strategic Planning Tools for the Built  
Environment:-  
the Case Study of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's Application for  
Metropolitan Status***



**Mr Prince Fakude**

**March 2015**

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*A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Town  
and Regional Planning, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College)*

## DECLARATION

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I certify that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University's rules, requirements, procedures and policy relating to my higher degree research award and to my thesis. I certify that I have complied with the rules, requirements, procedures and policy of the University. This work has been submitted in compliance with the course requirements for the Degree of Masters in Town and Regional Planning in the School of Built Environment and Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College Campus), Durban.

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***Student Signature***

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## ACRONYMS

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AFS:	Annual Financial Statements
ANC:	African National Congress
CIF:	Capital Investment Framework
CoGTA:	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DA:	Democratic Alliance
DEDT:	Department of Economic Development and Tourism
DGDP:	District Growth and Development Plan
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GRAP:	Generally Recognised Accounting Practice
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
IFP:	Inkhatha Freedom Party
LGMSA:	Local Government: Municipal Structures Act
M.E.C.:	Member of the Executive Committee (Provincial Cabinet member)
MDB:	Municipal Demarcation Board
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MMs:	Municipal Managers
MSA:	Municipal Systems Act
MTAS:	Municipal Turn-Around Strategy
MTEF:	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NDP:	National Development Plan
NEMA:	National Environmental Management Act
NFP:	National Freedom Party
PGDP:	Provincial Growth and Development Plan
PGDP:	Provincial Growth and Development Plan
PGDS:	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
PwC:	PricewaterhouseCoopers
S.A.:	South Africa
SALGA:	South African Local Government Association
SDF:	Spatial Development Framework
SEA:	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEAR:	Strategic Environmental Assessment Report
SoE's:	State-Owned Enterprises

SP:	Scenario Planning
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
U.S.A.:	United States of America
UKZN:	University of KwaZulu-Natal
uMDM :	uMgungundlovu District Municipality or “the district”
UN:	United Nations

## ABSTRACT

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The dissertation evaluates the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment. In its evaluation, it considers the case study of uMgungundlovu District Municipality's (uMDM) and its application for metropolitan status. In 2013, the uMDM submitted its application to the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) to consider its request for re-categorization from a category C to A municipality. This research noted that one of the category B or local municipalities within the district's jurisdiction, namely the Msunduzi Municipality had already been granted metropolitan status in 2009, which was later withdrawn. The reasons for the withdrawal of the Msunduzi's re-categorization mainly included that all the seven other local municipalities and the district objected as they wanted the entire district municipality to be re-categorized as a metropolitan area. This objection was also supported by the M.E.C. for CoGTA in the province. It is against this backdrop that the uMDM lodged its application in 2013. The problem that this dissertation investigates is that the district's future is unknown. Its hypothesis is that current strategic planning tools are adequate in preparing the district's transition from municipal category C to A.

The key findings from both the empirical investigation and evaluation of the existing strategic planning tools have confirmed that the current set of tools used by the district planners are adequate in preparing the district for transforming into a potential metropolitan area. However, such confirmation has a condition of how best and effectively has the district been using the tools at its disposal. The study has also found that metropolitan planning is a complex phenomenon and suggests best possible ways on how the district could utilize its current strategic planning tools towards the realization of its vision of becoming a metropolitan municipality in the future. The study suggests that the district will have to use the review of its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and its associated plans such as the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) to enable these plans to begin to paint plausible future scenarios on achieving metropolitan status. In this way, the IDP becomes the main or overarching strategic tools with many other tools sub the IDP like SWOT analysis, benchmarking and others. Evidence from other countries (in both the developed and developing worlds) has proven that strategic planning tools have been used in planning metropolitan areas. The study ends by painting plausible future scenarios on how the future metropolitan area may look.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

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### **1.0. THE BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

In the democratic period after 1994, South Africa embarked on a process of realigning the institutional, spatial, economic and administrative roles undertaken by local government. The aim of this restructuring process was to align the delivery and implementation vehicles of local government with the imperatives set out in the National Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) and the White Paper on Local Government (1998) for the creation of developmental local government and wall-to-wall municipalities across the country. Linked to this process, there was the introduction of new tools for strategic planning in the built environment and the creation of three categories of local government structures, namely:-

Category A: Large Municipalities or Metropolitan Areas;

Category B: Local Municipalities that included all the areas not deemed to be metropolitan areas or districts; and,

Category C: District Municipalities under which the various local municipalities were clustered.

A new legislative framework has been created for the implementation of the vision for local government. It included three key statutes namely the Demarcation Act (No 27 of 1998), which addressed spatial and administrative restructuring; the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (No. 117 of 1998), which determined structural administrative reform; and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), which outlined the systems and procedures of the new municipalities. A paramount principle was that of implementing the model of developmental local government. Of the three laws, the Municipal Systems Act is the one that legally mandated the municipalities to prepare an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and to link it to Spatial Development Frameworks and Land Use Guidelines. This suite of legislative planning tools has formed the framework for the development of strategic plans for the municipalities, which are guided by a vision statement and supported by local participatory processes.

### **1.1. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

In the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the Demarcation Board delineated one metropolitan municipality namely eThekweni and created ten district municipalities and fifty Category B-local municipalities. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is one of the ten Category C district municipal areas delineated under the 2000 process. The uMhlathuze Municipality located on the north coast of KwaZulu-Natal (which had applied for metropolitan status in 2000) remained as a Category B Local Municipality despite making a case as having the role of an incipient metropolitan area. Like the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, uMhlathuze encompasses key urban areas e.g. Richards Bay with an airport, Empangeni town, the three former KwaZulu townships of eNseleni, Ngwelezana and Esikhawini, and the University township of Vulindlela. It has a large commercial agriculture area and extensive land administered by Traditional Councils and categorised as Ingonyama Trust Land.

Post 2000, a number of other municipalities have requested a review of their category status by the Demarcation Board. These include the Msunduzi Local Municipality, which falls within the wider area of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and had been approved as the second metropolitan area of KwaZulu-Natal in 2011. Its application was rescinded shortly after its approval in 2009 after being placed under financial administration by the provincial department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). Msunduzi Municipality now forms part of the new application of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. It is against this background that the current application for the declaration of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality as a metropolitan area has to be evaluated.



## **1.2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is important to conduct this evaluation since an application by a district municipality to be re-categorized, as a metropolitan municipality in South Africa is a rare phenomenon. Usually it is the Category B or Local Municipalities that have in the past tended to seek re-categorization of their status to become a metropolitan area. In this way, they would join with another neighbouring B municipality to form a conurbation. The concept of conurbation is explained in the Literature Review chapter. In this way, the study will contribute as one of the few precedents on evaluating an application by a district municipality to be a Category A municipality.

Secondly, it will also contribute to contemporary debates on the use of strategic planning tools in the built environment, in this case in the discipline of town and regional planning studies. Particularly in South Africa, the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment is a “young debate” since it is only as recently as 2009 when scholars like Robinson (2009) (who wrote the book *Future, Change and Choices: strategic planning methods for built environment professionals*) and in 2014 there is now its second edition. Robinson’s (2009) book seeks to illuminate the processes behind the development of the built environment at its all scales by highlighting the role of strategic planning as change unfolds.

Lastly, the study will also be practically useful for the District Municipality itself irrespective of whether it eventually becomes a metropolitan municipality or not. It will be usable to guide its strategic planning course at present and in the future.

## **1.3. THE uMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality (uMDM) is located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and includes the local municipalities of uMshwathi Municipality-KZ221, uMngeni Municipality-KZ222, Mpofana Municipality-KZ223, Impendle Municipality-KZ224, Msunduzi Municipality-KZ225, Mkhambathini Municipality-KZ226 and Richmond Municipality-KZ227 (<http://www.umdm.gov.za>). It is a Category C District Municipality and wanted to upgrade its status to that of a metropolitan region similar to that held by eThekweni. The current organizational vision statement, reads as follows:

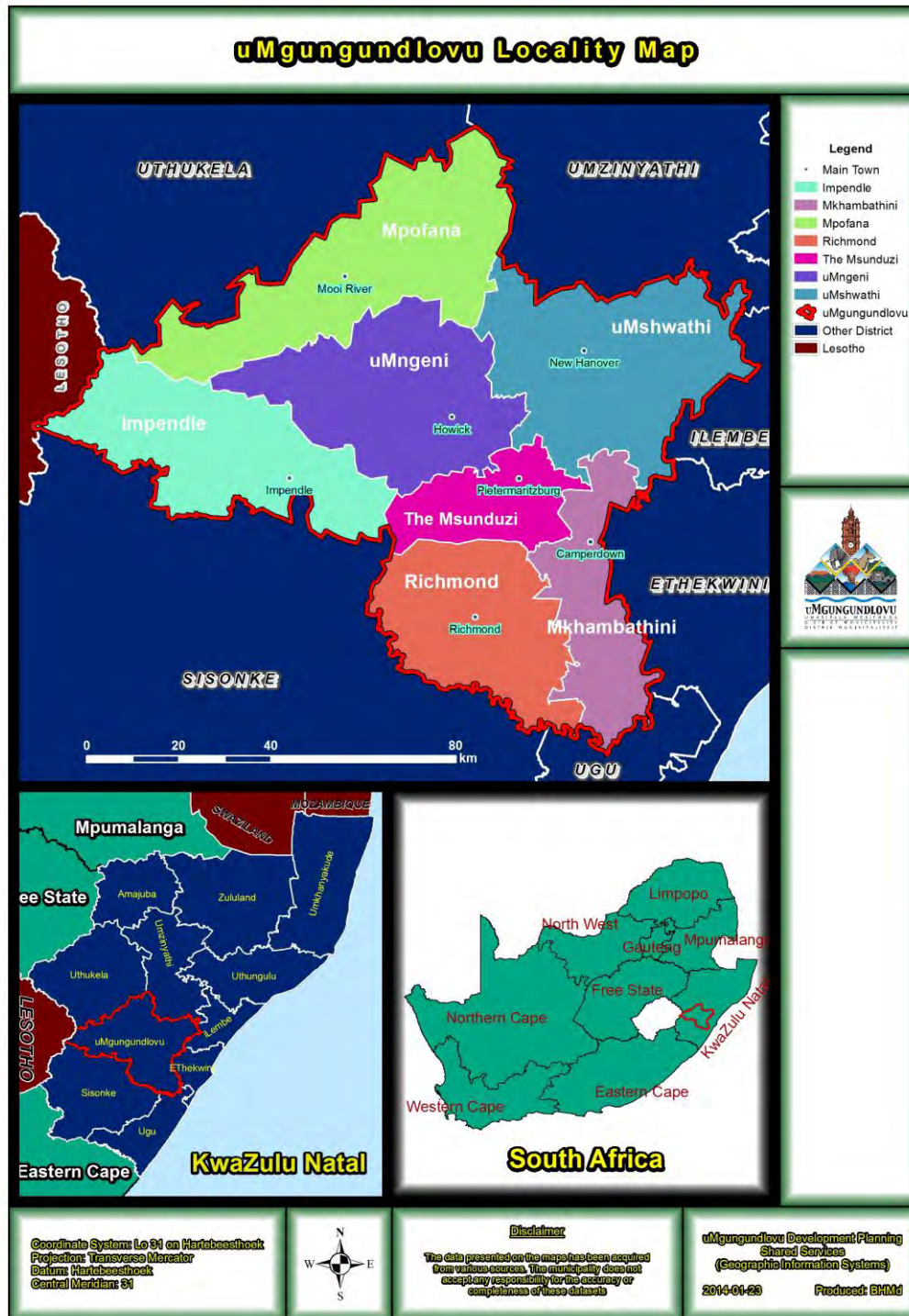
*“uMgungundlovu District Municipality will evolve into a dynamic metropolitan area, spreading its vibrant economic benefits to all its citizens and places and will, through concerted integrated development and service delivery, realize improvements in the overall quality of life.” (<http://www.umdmd.gov.za/> uMgungundlovu IDP”2011-2016)*

It is from the interpretation of the above-stated vision statement that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, supported by its seven Local Municipalities, applied to the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) to be re-categorised as a Category A or metropolitan municipality, in terms of the Municipal Structures Act (No. 118 of 1999) read with the Demarcation Act, (No 27 of 1998). The district’s application has been given the name “DEM 4155” by the MDB. The application has also been supported by the Provincial Department-CoGTA. The focus of this study is to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment in the context of a district municipality aspiring to become a metropolitan area, irrespective of the outcome of the uMDM’s application.

The total district population has grown by 0.88% between 2001 and 2011, recording 1 017 763 persons (one million, seventeen thousand seven hundred and sixty three) as the total population (Stats SA, Census 2011). The study area consists of the eight municipalities referred to in the introduction, which make up the District Municipality-DC22. Map 1 shows the location of the District, with its Local Municipalities, their administrative boundaries and extents.

The map also shows that in KwaZulu-Natal Province, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality is abutted by ILembe District Municipality on the east, the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality on the southeast, the Umzinyathi District Municipality on the northeast, the UThukela District Municipality on the north-west and the Harry Gwala District Municipality (previously known as Sisonke) on the south-west. There is also an insert of the map of South Africa, which shows the location of the district within the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The proximity of the district to the Free State and Eastern Cape Provinces enhances its competitive advantages and its cross-boundary economies of scale. In economic sense when applying David Harvey’s ‘city entrepreneurialism’ concept, its ‘competitor’ is the uThungulu District Municipality, which is some 250 kilometres away. The population looking for ‘greener pastures’ can see the distance of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality from Richards Bay as creating a barrier and this cushions it from ‘mass emigration’.

Map 1: Locality Map



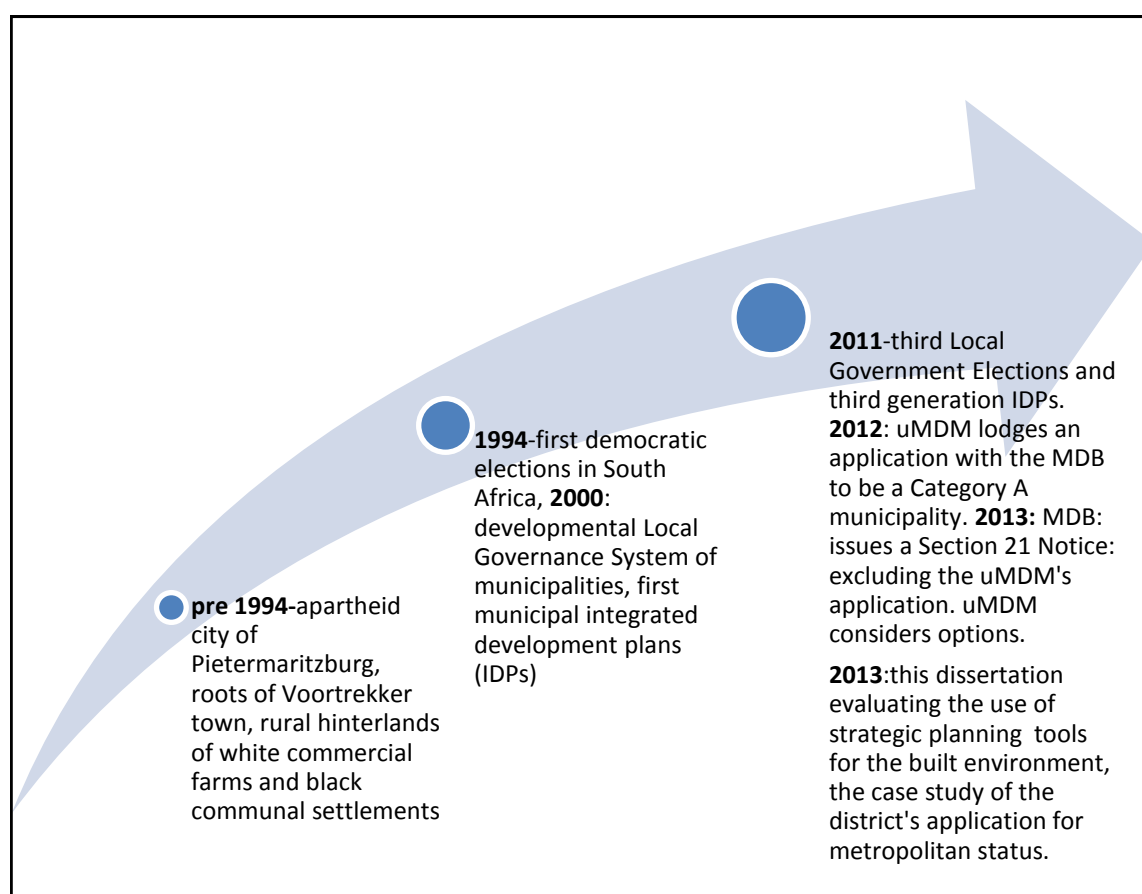
Source: uMDM Integrated Development Plan (IDP): 2014

The District's socio-economic and political context is diverse. Demographically it is noted that according to Census 2011 results, there are 272 666 households in the District, which encompass all race groupings in South Africa. From an economic perspective, the District is second largest potential in the province, but also facing socio-economic challenges with an unemployment rate of 30.4%. The dominant political party after the 2011 local government elections is the African National Congress (ANC), followed by the Democratic Alliance (DA), the Inkhatha Freedom Party (IFP) and lastly the National Freedom Party (NFP), the last two have an almost equal representation in the District Council. The political proportion is similar across the Local Municipalities in the "*District Family*".

#### **1.4. THE TIME-PERIOD AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The time-period for this research is from June 2013 to October 2014. The study is limited to the evaluation of use of strategic planning tools for the built environment in the case study of uMgungundlovu District Municipality's application for metropolitan status. It also looks into the use of these planning tools in building a series of potential scenarios that may inform the spatial, socio-economic, institutional and environmental realignment of the imagined metropolitan municipality. In other words, the study aims to assess the current and future application of strategic planning tools in the context of a district municipality wanting to become a metropolitan area one day. The built environment in this context refers to the envisaged transition from a district municipality to becoming a metropolitan municipality in South Africa. Figure 1 below is a summary of a basic time-line of the events in history that led up to this study, has been inspired by the District's vision, and which led to the lodgement of an application to the MDB.

**Figure 1: An Abridged Time-Line of the uMDM and the Study**



**Source: P. Fakude August 2013**

The sequence of events outlined in Figure 1 contextualizes the study both pre and post the application process for metropolitan status. The core area, which is the city of greater Pietermaritzburg, has a rich history as summarized in the basic timeline. Furthermore, the other reason that led to the withdrawal of Msunduzi's metropolitan status (granted in 2009 by the Municipal Demarcation Board) is that the seven other municipalities (including the District) lodged an objection to the granting of metropolitan status to Msunduzi and requested that the Board reconsider its decision. The basis of the objection was that Msunduzi should not '*go it alone*' as a metropolitan entity. Any application needed to be inclusive of the entire district's geographical area. This objection was also supported by the Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), which later supported the district's application in 2012. Table 1 below details the sequence of events on the application's legislated process.

**Table 1: Chronology of the uMgungundlovu District Municipal /DEM 4155 Application to the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB), 15 December 2011 to 08 August 2013**

No.	ACTIVITY	WHEN	BY WHOM
1	Submission of the application to MDB for the redetermination of its municipal boundaries into a Category A Municipality	15 December 2011.	uMgungundlovu District Municipality
2	The Section 26 Notice in terms of the Demarcation Act, No 27 of 1998 was issued and published in newspapers, showing the areas to be affected by the redetermination of boundaries. The uMDM's application to be a metropolitan municipality (referred to as DEM 4155) was also part of the published Section 26 Notice.	November 2012	Municipal Demarcation Board
2.1.	CoGTA compiles a "State of Readiness Report" on the uMDM 's application	November 2012	CoGTA
3	The Municipal Managers Forum (MMFs') of as mandated by all Mayors resolved that the uMDM should procure the services of an external service provider to undertake a high-level feasibility study on the District's application. This was additional motivation on the application.	14 February 2013	District Family of Municipalities (all eight including uMDM)
4	PwC firm as the successful service provider undertook the High-level Feasibility study.	01 June 2013 to 01 August 2013	PwC, all Mayors and all Municipal Managers

No.	ACTIVITY	WHEN	BY WHOM
5	PwC concluded and presented the final document to the project Steering Committee being the MMs' Forum. The document was signed-off by all MMs by way of consensus and is recorded on the minutes. (minutes are in Appendices)	01 August 2013	PwC and all MMs
6	The signed High-level Feasibility study is submitted via XPS Courier service, overnight to the MDB headquarters in Pretoria.	01 August 2013	uMgungundlovu District Municipality
7	The signed electronic copy of the High-level Feasibility study is submitted via E-MAIL to the MDB.	02 August 2013	uMgungundlovu District Municipality
8	The email is opened and read.	02 August 2013	Municipal Demarcation Board
9	The document's receipt is acknowledged formally by a letter.	06 August 2013	Municipal Demarcation Board
10.	The Section 21 Notice is published and gazetted, reflecting decisions on the applications. The Section 21 Notice has two Annexures: A) those that will go through the legal process; and B) those that have been rejected. The uMDM's or DEM 4155 is under Annexure B.	08 August 2013	Municipal Demarcation Board

**Source: P Fakude; 2013**

The chronology of the uMDM's application as depicted in Table 1 already demonstrates the use of strategic planning tools, namely the feasibility study and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis after the Municipal Managers (MMs) Forum had commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to undertake the feasibility study. Furthermore, CoGTA's 'Readiness Study and Report' involved a series of assessments including the strategic planning tools currently in place such as the IDPs, Performance Management Frameworks, Human Resources Strategies and

Financial Strategic Plans, including budgets. From the onset, it becomes evident that the district used the strategic planning tools for the built environment (municipalities) to strengthen its application. The used strategic planning tools included the IDP with its subsidiary methods such as SWOT analysis, Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF's), Capital Investment Frameworks (CIF's), projections and trend analysis. Scenario planning was utilised as an inherent tool throughout the application's process since the question of what happens after the MDB's decision on the application is part of an unknown future. The uMgungundlovu District would have to consider a number of different development paths, irrespective of the outcome of the application.

## **1.5. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this dissertation are as follows:-

1. To evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment in the context of a district municipality's application for metropolitan status;
2. To evaluate the impact of the current strategic planning tools against the criteria of, or requirements for, a future metropolitan municipality;
3. To test the application of the current strategic planning tools on the dimensions of citizens' or social perspectives, economically, ecologically and institutionally;
4. To interrogate the envisaged viable scenarios, options and models of metropolitan municipality-after the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment;
5. To use the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's application as a case study on evaluating the use of strategic planning tools for a future metropolitan municipality in order to inform contemporary-strategic planning initiatives.

## **1.6. Research Questions**

These research questions addressed by this dissertation are outlined in more detail below.

### **1.6.1. Main Question**

The central question being posed in the research process is whether strategic planning tools for the built environment are relevant and capable in assisting the District Municipality in its quest of becoming a metropolitan municipality. In order to answer this key question, the dissertation uses the dimensions of live, grow, work and play as taken from the UN-Habitat (2012) where the following question was used to structure interviews that: *"What would it be like to live, work, grow and play in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu District 'Family of Municipalities, should they become a single*



*metropolitan municipality?”* From this central question flow a series of related sub-questions, which are outlined below.

Another component of the research is to evaluate whether the use of strategic planning tools could be the means to an end towards achieving the stated goal of the municipality to create a liveable and sustainable future should the “uMgungundlovu Municipality” it become a metropolitan area one day?

### **1.6.2 Sub-Questions**

The subsidiary questions that support the central question are as follows:

1. What strategic planning tools are available for use by built environment professionals to aid municipal planning?
2. What are the requirements needed for a municipality to be considered a metropolitan council?
3. Are the current strategic planning tools being used by the uMgungundlovu District Municipality the most effective given the set of criteria needing to be addressed for metropolitan municipality status?
4. Will the future municipality be sustainable in a total environmental sense: socially, economically, ecologically and institutionally?
5. Which would be the future viable scenarios, options and models following the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment?
6. Can strategic planning tools used in the built environment assist the district municipality to apply successfully for metropolitan status in South Africa?
7. Can strategic planning tools for the built environment be used in planning a future metropolitan municipality?

### **1.7. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This research critically evaluates the strategic planning process used by the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in preparing an application to change their status from a District Municipality to that of a Metro. The success or failure of the application has an unknown future since the Demarcation Board had still to assess it whilst this work was ongoing. Specifically, there is uncertainty of readiness on the side of the district on embracing its envisioned metropolitan municipality status. This dissertation seeks to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools as one of the means to end towards the illumination of the path that the district needs to take towards its destination. No one knows

what morphology the future metropolitan municipality will take. It is seldom that a district municipality applies to the MDB to change its category from C or district municipality to that of a category A or metropolitan municipality. This application is the first of its kind in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and thus there is no precedent against which to judge the outcome of the application.

Within the district's administrative area, eight municipalities are currently governed as separate entities. They all have a level of individual autonomy. The challenge would be how the region would achieve '*territorial cohesion*', which is defined by Faludi (2005) as cooperation between entities that share regional boundaries. Furthermore, there are disparities in terms of the administrative, financial and service delivery capacities within the district area. Their spatial patterns are also different as the result of the historical, economic and social trajectories over time. Despite all the uncertainties, there are specific outcomes to be gained from the strategic planning process, which will be beneficial to the municipality in its quest to build an amalgamated entity. Whether the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) does eventually or does not grant metropolitan status to the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, the focus of this study is to evaluate the ability of the current strategic planning tools for the built environment to position the district to be a potential metropolitan municipality. In addition, this evaluation is relevant to the municipality's practical review of its strategic vision as contained in the IDP.

As it has been stated previously, seven municipalities form the "District Family" with the uMgungundlovu Municipality. All are diverse in terms of their administrative structure, capabilities, functionally, ability to generate own revenues. They face varying challenges and they differ in population dynamics. The 2011 Census results that are presented in the analysis section will show these differences. The data will highlight the positive and negative impacts on the imagined metropolitan municipality. To be precise, the district population has shown a positive-growth rate of 0.88% between 2001 and 2011. Statistics SA estimated the total population at 1,017,763 people in 2011, with densities that were very unequal across the spread of local municipal areas in the district. Furthermore, the same Census 2011 results indicate sharp disparities on various development indicators such as education levels, access to services such as piped water, sanitation, electricity and others. The uMgungundlovu District thus faces this complexity in amalgamating those administrative entities included in its jurisdiction. The challenge would be how the future metropolitan entity will deal with all these challenges successfully. Information will also be drawn from other precedent

studies that compare the uMgungundlovu District with existing and recently promulgated metropolitan municipalities in South Africa.

There is a very strong political will among the political leadership within in the study area, which supports the move of amalgamating all the municipalities into a single entity. The administrative wing on the other hand is applying a technocratic view of trying to “*test the waters*” first. This research has relevance because it is addressing contemporary planning challenge whilst it is being implemented. The author is also an employee of the same District Municipality and has been mandated by the Accounting Officer to undertake this study. Both the political and administrative segments of the municipality argue that they are motivated by the drive to become a metropolitan municipality from a shared municipal vision as recorded in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP, 2011-2016), which states that:-

*“uMgungundlovu District Municipality will evolve into a dynamic metropolitan area, spreading its vibrant economic benefits to all its citizens and places and will, through concerted integrated development and service delivery, realize improvements in the overall quality of life.”* (<http://www.umdm.gov.za/> uMgungundlovu IDP”2011-2016)

In other words, it is a Government initiative derived from the first line of the above vision statement that reads, “*uMgungundlovu District Municipality will evolve into a dynamic metropolitan area...*” Whether this interpretation is correct or not will be determined by a thorough investigation of the remaining dimensions as contained in the above vision statement, that:

*“...spreading its vibrant economic benefits to all its citizens and places and will, through concerted integrated development and service delivery, realize improvements in the overall quality of life.”*

### 1.7.1 The Nature of the Problem is Futuristic and Complex

The challenge facing the family of local municipalities located in the uMgungundlovu District is futuristic since they are not a metropolitan municipality yet. They do share a common vision that one day the entire District will evolve into a metropolitan municipality. In fact, the Municipal Demarcation Board, through its issuing of a Section 21 Notice <sup>1</sup>, published on a Provincial Gazette and MDB's Circular 2/2013, indicates that it will not pursue the uMDM's application in 2013 for implementation in 2016. The implications are that should the MDB's decision remain unchanged, the uMDM's dream of becoming a metropolitan municipality will have to wait until 2021 when the MDB will be doing another process on the redetermination of municipal boundaries. In contrast, things may turn around should the Board after considering the uMgungundlovu District Municipality appeal or objection, then end up granting a metropolitan status after the 2013 legal process. Therefore, the focus of the study, which addresses the use of strategic planning tools such as scenario planning, intends to paint the different options that a future metropolitan area may choose from for becoming a successful and sustainable entity. Most scholars and practitioners in scenario planning agree that it is the most appropriate tool for dealing with an uncertain future. The envisaged result is to equip decision makers with a rationale for managing the future, no matter how it appears.

Robinson (2009) speaks of the challenging environment of town and regional planning and development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as being characterised by: -

- *“Rapid and often unpredictable changes experienced worldwide;*
- *Very complex issues, even at local level;*
- *Constant pressure on decision-making; and,*
- *High and persistent degrees of uncertainty. ”p. V)*

The above challenges as mentioned by Robinson (2009) are relevant to the uMgungundlovu's application for metropolitan status. The global context cannot be overlooked. All these changes are taking place whilst there is a global economic downturn, which has seen global economies struggling. Most urban planning theorists and practitioners seem to agree that planning at metropolitan scale is complex. It involves thinking and conversing about infrastructure development, stimulating

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<sup>1</sup> The Section 21 Notice is issued by the MDB, listing the applications that it will; consider and those that it has rejected. The uMDM's application is one of the applications that have been listed under Annexure B of a Section 21 Notice under Circular 2/2013.

economic growth and employment opportunities, the improvement of transportation networks (especially public transport) dealing with socio-political dimensions, and many other inherent issues. This complex environment eventually exerts pressure on senior managers and councillors to make the most appropriate decisions.

Furthermore, the problem has a political dimension. Municipal representatives such as mayors and councillors are democratically elected representatives who come to power through a process of a multi-party democracy. Diverse political parties are represented in municipal councils. As would be expected, there are diverse views about the application put forward by the uMgungundlovu District. The majority party, which is (the ANC) and other smaller parties such as the NFP and IFP are all in support of the application. However, although the majority supports the application process, there seem to be some varying opinions on who exactly should be leading this initiative between the district leadership and the provincial leadership. These two centres of power on the other hand see the Member of the Executive Committee (M.E.C.) for CoGTA as a harmonizer. The Democratic Alliance (DA) has voiced its opinion that they are not in support of the district's application for metropolitan status. The argument of the DA (although they are a minority in the Councils) is based on the spread of the per capita ability to pay for municipal services across the District's area, as they claim that they are representing the rate-payers who are mainly residing in the urban centres such as Howick, Pietermaritzburg and Camperdown.

Dewar, et.al (1990) discuss problems that are associated with metropolitan scale by using the Cape Town Metropolitan area as an example. The following passage summarizes their views:

*“Historical methods of ‘place-making’ have been forgotten and the form of urban development increasingly fails to reflect the cultural history of its peoples. More and more, Cape Town looks like Johannesburg or any other South Africa city, and they in turn like it. A common low quality sameness is emerging instead of a qualitatively high individuality and distinctiveness. Simultaneously, the sprawling form of development is progressively removing people of the city from meaningful contact with nature and with the rural hinterland of the city.” (p.145)*

The above argument emphasizes “place making”, which, can also be interpreted as “sense of place” where the urban environment is not dull, but it is full of life. Like Cape Town, the envisaged ‘uMgungundlovu Metropolitan’ will face the challenge of achieving a vibrant sense of place at a greater level of scale. Hence, the following section introduces the different dimensions of the study.

#### **1.8. RELEVANT DIMENSIONS OF THE STUDY**

Within the parameters of strategic planning tools for the built environment, the study will look at the following dimensions:-

- Rules of the game;
- The sustainability principles or segments, being: social, economic, institutional or governmental and ecological; and,
- Future scenarios based on the above dimensions.

In other words, the nexus between the elements that underpin the theory of sustainability will be evaluated in order to assess if the uMgungundlovu District fits the criteria for a successful (future) metropolitan area. According to the Ministry of Nairobi Metropolitan Development (2008), the following elements or criteria describe these elements:-

*“in doing so a city or city region must deal with three elements of sustainability, namely being regionally and globally competitive, becoming conscious of the environmental implications, and focusing on the liveability of places” (p. V)*

The approach of this study, which is following a qualitative approach, will also explore the following areas:-

- Who are the role-players;
- What historical factors have a present day impact; and,

- How does the use of strategic planning tools in the built environment add to the process of building a sustainable metropolitan area and how important is civic and citizen participation in strategic planning?

These further sub-themes relate to the mandate of South African municipalities, as contained in section 152 of the Constitution to:-

- Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- Promote social and economic development;
- Promote a safe and healthy environment; and,
- Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

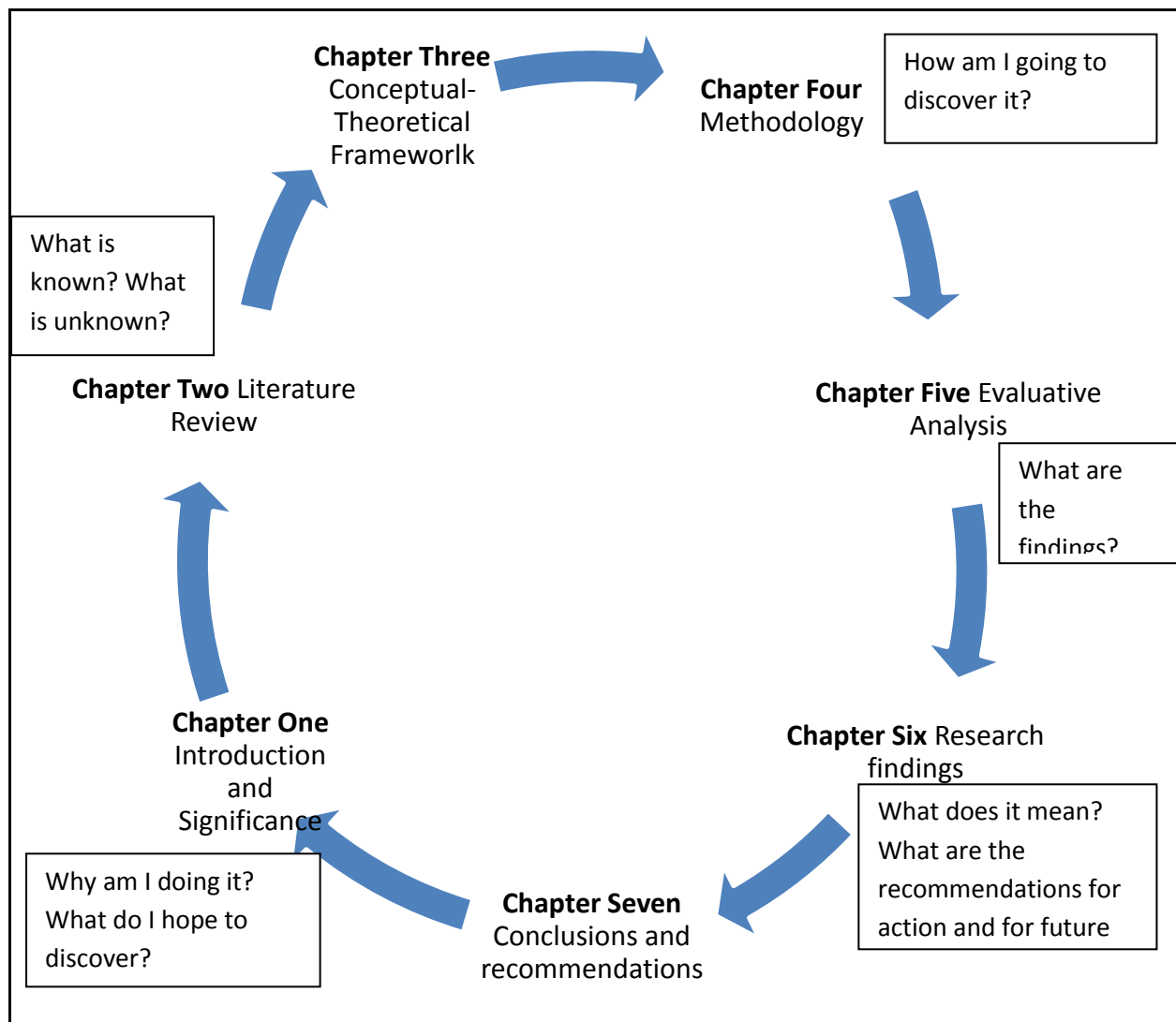
### **1.9. HYPOTHESIS**

The hypothesis of this study is that *“the current strategic planning tools for the built environment used at uMgungundlovu District Municipality are adequate in preparing the District in its quest for metropolitan status”*. In other words, the evaluation of the current strategic planning tools, as applied on the context of the uMDM’ s application, will be undertaken specifically in testing their effectiveness on making the district ready to embrace its envisaged future. This enquiry will explore the strategic planning tools used in the built environment and specifically their application in the context of metropolitan municipal planning. In addition, by drawing from precedent studies and applying the concepts and methodologies to the context of the uMgungundlovu District (uMDM), the usefulness of these tools will be evaluated.

### **1.10. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

Roberts (2004) states that there are many dissertation styles that varies depending on the academic discipline and topic. The style used in this dissertation is outlined in Figure 2. It provides an overview of the dissertation’s basic structure:-

**Figure 2: Dissertation's Basic Structure**



Source: Roberts (2004), redrawn and elaborated by the author

This dissertation, will adopt the above style in a more elaborative approach. The final dissertation report will consist of seven chapters and the detail contained in each is explained below.



## **Chapter One: Introduction**

The first chapter introduces the study area, the topic, the research problem, objectives and the research questions. This section gives an introduction and provides a background to the topic. It also addresses the limitations of the study, hypothesis and research methodology. It also provides an explanation as to why the topic has been chosen. This chapter is responsible for the outline of the themes. It therefore contextualizes the research by giving sound background to it, unpacks the title, and outlines the scope and shape of the study.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

The second chapter then bridges the interface between theory and practice by way of reviewing relevant pieces of literature and precedent studies. This chapter provides a theoretical perspective that will guide this research. It also lays a foundation for the research by reviewing past similar cases that contribute to a rich understanding of the topic. It will outline the following themes: the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment and in general; the context and approaches for planning future metropolitan municipalities in South Africa by comparatively reviewing international and local examples. It links with the conceptual and theoretical framework, which focuses on the selected concepts that theoretically shapes the study.

## **Chapter Three: Conceptual-Theoretical Framework**

The third chapter draws from the preceding second chapter by selectively expounding on the concepts that have been introduced in the Literature Review chapter. These selected concepts are now guiding the research and form the theoretical grounding that supports the assertions of the dissertation. In other words, the theoretical works of other scholars is being used to support the arguments being made from empirical evidence.

#### **Chapter Four: Research Methodology**

The fourth chapter indicates the apparatus that are used for data collection and analysis. For the purposes of this study, qualitative research methods are used in both data collection and analysis. It will explain how the main research questions are answered and what approach-framework is to be adopted in terms of which the study will be conducted. A description of the design of the study, sampling and sampling methods with rationale, the data collection methods and data analysis methods is outlined. Copies of instruments used in data collection such as the interview questionnaire are included in the Appendices. The results of the survey will be included in the text. It also includes the sourcing of primary and secondary sources of data and their analysis.

#### **Chapter Five: Evaluative Analysis**

The fifth chapter is the crux of the dissertation as it here that the current strategic planning tools used by the uMgungundlovu District planners have been evaluated. It starts by outlining the strategic tools that are at the disposal of planners. Secondly, it links them to their parent Legislation. Thirdly, the actual strategic planning tools are dissected and evaluated. The gist of this evaluation is to unearth their ability or adequacy to transform the district municipality and to enable it to 'evolve' into becoming a metropolitan municipality in future. It is the information from this chapter that allows the author to either confirm or discard the research hypothesis. This chapter is centrally linked to the main argument of the dissertation. Finally, it ushers the following chapter as both chapters are related, as they have to do with synthesis of the results.

#### **Chapter Six: Research Findings or Results**

The sixth chapter is related to the fifth one; however, it focuses more on empirical evidence obtained from interviews and observation of focus groups. It is the climax of the research as it is where the findings are presented and analysed. It is where data results are critically evaluated. It is in this chapter that all the findings of the research are provided and then analysed to inform the main argument of the research. This chapter shows the key findings of the research and conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis. This is the chapter where the objectives of the research are proven or met. There will be analysis of additional information uncovered during the research process.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations**

Lastly, chapter seven recaps the study by restating what transpired. It restates the key findings and emphasis points. It then draws conclusions to make sense of the entire research and offer recommendations for future research. It provides a comprehensive summary of the research.

### **1.11. CONCLUSION**

On its own, metropolitan planning is a complex process. It is linked to a greater scale of planning and strategic interventions, which need to be examined individually and collectively to ascertain their effectiveness. The study's primary aim is to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment both in the status quo and in the future. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality's application for metropolitan status is used as a contemporary example within which to evaluate the use and effectiveness of these tools. A complex problem due to the nature and scale of the topic is being researched. However, this matter of complexity reflects the importance of the study and its contribution to a greater understanding of strategic planning tools within the metropolitan context of planning. The following chapter presents the reviewed literature, which informs this study.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, a brief outline of the application made by the uMDM for metropolitan status is presented. It points to a rare institutional phenomenon and stirs up inquisitive thinking or a need for a scientific enquiry into the matter. Generally, the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment is a specialised area of study. It becomes even more interesting when applied to the case study of this dissertation. In order to arrive at acceptable definitions and meanings, this chapter will report on an exploratory survey of the concepts that come directly from the topic. These terms will be looked at “*wearing the lenses of theory*” in order to extract meaning from them.

This synthesis of meaning is pivotal in order to arrive at knowledge that is universally acknowledgeable about what is really taking place in the case study of this dissertation. The problem at hand is not only going to be taken at face value but the underlying sub-processes at play will also be looked at. This will be achieved through redefining the problem from a theoretical perspective. Furthermore, the strengths and weaknesses of these terms will be evaluated and how they apply to the topic of this dissertation. The chapter starts by defining the concepts in order to unbundle the problem. The information from this section of the dissertation will later be used to inform its written evaluative discussion.

### 2.1. DEFINITIONS AND DISCUSSION OF KEY TERMS AND PHRASES

The key terms that come directly from the topic are strategic planning tools, built environment, metropolitan planning, application for metropolitan status, district municipality and the case study of uMgungundlovu District Municipality’s application.

#### 2.1.1 Strategic Planning Tools

Firstly, the phrase “*strategic planning tools*” can be unpacked as firstly involving a phenomenon being “*strategic planning*”, and secondly “*tools*” refers to the methods that are used in the practice of strategic planning. However, in this dissertation the strategic planning tools are not looked at in general but within the context of the “*built environment*”.

In general, strategic planning has been associated with the corporate world where private sector firms strategize about maximizing profits, reducing business risks and on painting future scenarios. In addition, strategic planning has been associated with the military, where it is also called *“tactical planning”*.

However, to theorise about strategic planning is not a focus of this dissertation but the focus is on theorizing about the *“use of strategic planning tools for the built environment”*. According to McCarthy in Robinson (2009), *“efficient metropolitan areas will make for an increasingly successful country”*. This viewpoint means that when best strategies are applied at a smaller scale, the cumulative result would also be positive. At this stage, there is a need to answer the following question: *“What is the built environment?”*

Therefore, in the context of municipal planning, the strategic planning tools emanates mainly from Legislation that is mentioned in the Introduction Chapter. The dominant tool is the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP has appeared to be an over-arching plan that has ‘subsidiary’ planning tools under it. The position of these other plans as ‘subsidiary’ to the IDP is mainly because the IDP is directly mentioned in Chapter 5 of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 as a ‘non-negotiable’ and mandatory plan that each and every municipality must have it. However, in order for the municipalities to be sustainable and plan for liveable human settlements, the IDPs must have other important strategic planning tools that are sector specific. These include the Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF), Disaster Management Plan, Financial Strategy, Local Economic Development Strategy, Integrated Waste Management Plan, just to mention a few. It is against this background that this dissertation would focus to the main on the IDP as inclusive of the other strategic planning tools in municipalities (as part of built environment) but it will also be specific on discussion some of these other tools over and above the IDP itself. For example, scenario planning is discussed as a standalone option for the IDP but is also the SDF.

### 2.1.2. A Definition of the Built Environment

This dissertation adopts a definition of built environment that contains common denominator phrases such as that taken from the *Oxford Dictionary* that “it entails human-made physical environment whether buildings, cities, land-use and other physical elements that surrounds us”. In other words, the built environment or built form or ‘built-up areas (as it is sometimes referred to) is different from the natural environment since the former is made or built by human beings, whereas the natural environment is created by God (based on the author’s belief in God as the Creator).

Another definition by Saelens and Handy (2008) states that:

*“The built environment has been defined in different ways by different researchers. Most generally, it is defined as the part of the physical environment that is constructed by human activity. By one definition, the built environment consists of the following elements: land use patterns, the distribution across space of activities and the buildings that house them; the transportation system, the physical infrastructure of roads, sidewalk, bike paths, etc., as well as the service this system provides; and urban design, the arrangement and appearance of the physical elements in a community [32].”*

The above definition is relevant as it covers aspects that are relevant to metropolitan planning such as land-use planning, physical infrastructure, systems and other human-made forms and patterns. Clearly the built environment is “constructed by human activity”, which is similar to Stiffler and Watson (2005) who argue that urban space is shaped by various factors that are a result of social and economic activity. In the case of this dissertation, the desire of a district municipality to become a metropolitan area is a form of human activity that has a potential of creating a new “built environment”, in this case a metropolitan municipal area.

Sub-topics and themes such as “user-centred built environment” and ‘participatory design’ become significant. In this way, Vischer (2008) argues, “since the built environment became a legitimate subject of research, theories of the built environment have tended to be oriented to process – how it is created and supplied – and/or product – how it functions once it has come into existence....” The author then introduces a change of paradigm as she proposes a shift of focus from process and product oriented view of the built environment to a “user-centred” approach or focus on the built environment. This focus on the users’ experiences of the built environment as proposed by Vischer

(2008) is relevant to the enquiry of this dissertation in that it raises the question of *“what would it be like to live, play and work in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu Metropolitan Municipality once it has been promulgated as a Metropolitan Municipality”*. This question focuses on the user or the citizens, which then introduces another sub-theme of public participation or public engagement. Public participation is important to address what she calls a *“theoretical polarity”* between focus on buildings and focus on users.

### **2.1.3. The Use of Strategic Planning Tools in the Built Environment**

Broadly speaking, the term *“strategic planning”* has been used mainly in the corporate world where managers of large companies embark on strategic planning in order to improve their businesses’ modus operandi, sharpen their competitive advantages or plan the future. Most writers seem to agree that the approach involves some sort of long term planning. Whilst the concept has been used for a number of years in the commercial business arena, it is only in recent times that scholars such as Robinson (2009) began to write about *“strategic planning tools for the built environment”*. One of the main reasons for this transition or adoption of managerial methods into planning and development is outlined by Robison (2009) in *Future, Change and Choices: strategic planning methods for built environment professionals*. Notably he highlights the importance of the urban context of planning by stating, *“increasingly efficient metropolitan areas will make for an increasingly successful country”* (Ibid, in the Foreword).

Robinson (2009) defines the built environment as:

*“...the term “built environment” is used broadly, to include man-made changes to the natural environment, development of settlements, towns, cities and regions as well as establishment of the socio-economic and institutional environments that enable people to live harmoniously and sustainably in towns, cities and regions....”* (i)

From the above definition, the built environment for this study means the socially constructed and planned space where people can live, work and play at a scale of a metropolitan area. Similarly, one of the focus areas of this dissertation is on governance as it relates to planning, since it is about the ‘district’s application’ for metropolitan status. There are many dimensions to the study namely

social, economic, environmental or ecological and institutional. It also looks at the historical perspective and political dynamics in the district area.

#### **2.1.4. On Scenario Planning's definition**

The *Oxford Dictionary* (Eighth Edition) defines the word scenario as *"a description of how things might happen in the future"*. Scenario planning has been defined as planning about the future. The future is unknown and uncertain. According to Ralston and Wilson (2009), the dilemma is that *"our knowledge is about the past, and all our decisions are about the future"* (p.1). However, they argue, *"the scenarios force the managers to get their arms around the issues, to engage in rehearsals about the future,"* and so be better prepared for *"whatever the future may bring"* (p.1). Strategic planning faces the same challenges and thus the use of scenarios is critical to the process of developing ideas and strategies for potential development issues.

It is against this backdrop that scenario planning has been identified as one of the strategic planning tools for developing a futuristic plan for the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. It is a method for developing an imaginary plan, which encapsulates what the different futures or possible outcomes might look like. However, this approach will not involve *"modelling"* since scenario planning is not about modelling, which tends to use mathematical methods. Rather scenario planning deals with different options for a future or futures. Amongst others, the following definition will be used in this study, namely that:

*"Scenario planning is a process in which transportation professionals and citizens work together to analyse and shape the long-term future of their communities. Using a variety of tools and techniques, participants in scenario planning assess trends in key factors such as transportation, land use, demographics, health, economic development, environment and more. The participants bring the factors together in alternative future scenarios, each of these reflecting different trend assumptions and trade-off preferences. In the end, all members of the community-the public, business leaders, and elected officials will need to reach an agreement on a preferred scenario. This scenario becomes the long-term policy framework for the community's evolution and is used to guide decision-making".*



(Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration 2004, as cited by Avin, 2007).

The above definition provides the starting point from which to explore the concepts, assumptions, methodologies and the independent and dependent variables such as transportation, land use, demographics, health, economic development and the environment that are required for a strategic planning exercise. Furthermore, the work of Illbury and Sunter (2001) in *Mind of a Fox* will be used in the following argument on how scenario planning has been used in preparing organisations for unknown future or futures. These authors introduce various ways to build scenarios. In forecasting the future, most writers contradict each other as some explicitly state that scenario planning is not about forecasting and others say it is. Most relevantly, Professor Peter Robinson (2009) in his book entitled *“Future, Change and Choices: Strategic Planning Methods for Built Environment Professionals”* also presents the use of scenario planning in strategic planning for the built environment. In other words, his work applies the use of scenario planning as a technique to the discipline of Town and Regional Planning.

Overall, in the built environment and in the strategic planning domain, scenario planning can be seen as belonging to the contemporary ways of planning. It is a paradigm-shift from conventional ways of planning such as Geddes’ *“survey-analyse and plan”* linear method. Notwithstanding, it is still important to gather the facts, analyse them and suggest alternatives.

#### **2.1.5. Sustainable Development**

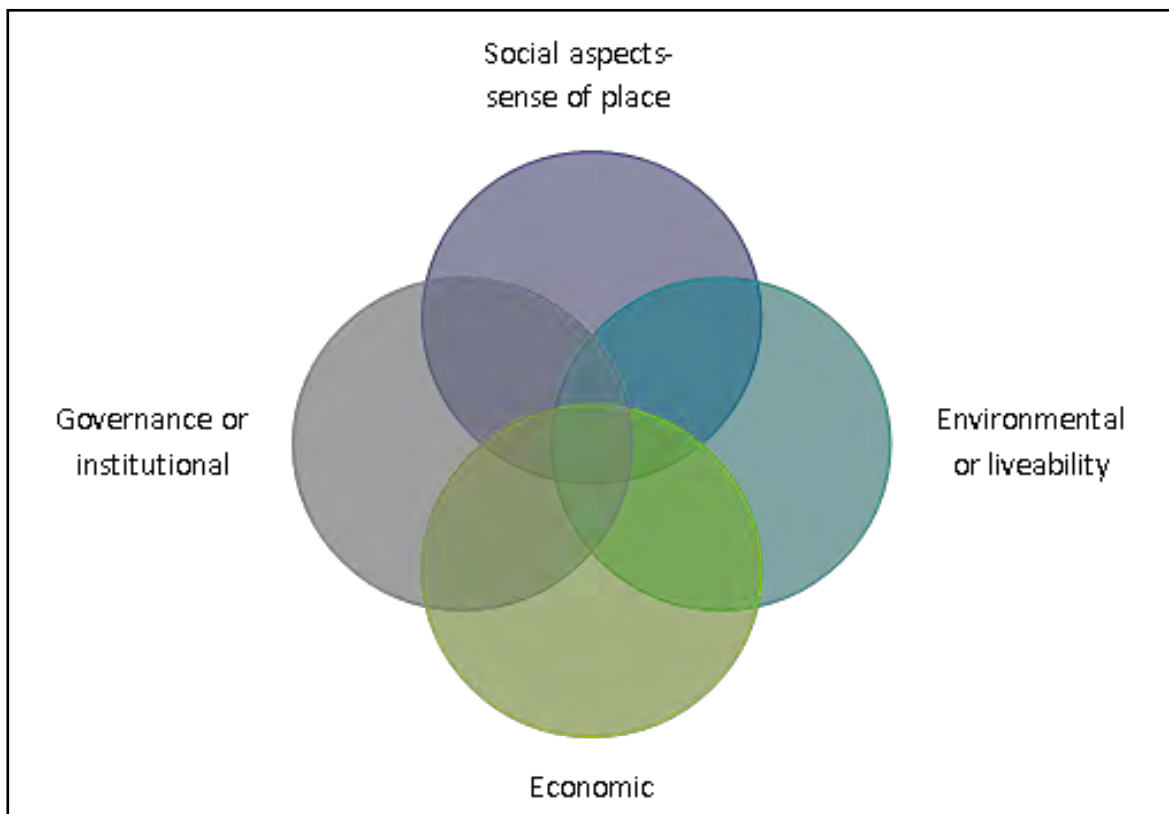
Figure 3 below introduces the multi-dimensional approach to answering the question that is linked to the main research question i.e. “what would it be like to live, work, grow and play in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu District ‘Family of Municipalities’, should they become a single metropolitan municipality”? The variables are social, economic, governance or institutional and ecological. The United Nations (UN)’s Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 issued a report known as the *Brundtland Report, Our Common Future* that included the universal definition of sustainable development as follows:-

*“development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.*

(Source: <http://www.un.org>, accessed on 30 July 2013).

Contemporary definitions of sustainable development also incorporate the aspect of governance into the mix to emphasise that policy imperatives require political will for implementation.

**Figure 3: A Multi-Dimensional Approach to the Research Problem**



Source: P. Fakude (2013)

#### **2.1.6. Smart Growth**

Duany, et.al. (2010), the authors of *The Smart Growth Manual*, have introduced desirable principles for guiding contemporary planning projects. This dissertation suggests that the following smart growth principles would better shape a sustainable metropolitan area. The principles include the proactive encouragement of mixed-use zoning, narrow streets, connected-intermodal transit, pedestrian friendly built environments, and the maintenance of large public open spaces and the preservation of natural resources.

Furthermore, authors of the “Smart Growth Manual”, make an important observation that growth is inevitable in global urban environments. The authors argue that most studies have tended to criticize growth as a cause of urban problems such as sprawl, they then offer an alternative by presenting what has become to be known as “smart growth”. Although there is no absolute definition of the term smart growth, Duany, et.al (2010) uses explanations such as “*we know that it is the opposite of automobile-based suburban development*” (page xvi) to explain the concept. In other words, smart growth promises a new way of planning the urban built-environment by applying principles such as:-

- The compacting of cities;
- The introduction of mixed-use zoning;
- The use of narrow streets ; and,
- Pedestrian-orientated urbanism.

Similarly, in <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/what-is-smart-growth> it is defined as:

*“Smart growth is a better way to build and maintain our towns and cities. Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools. This approach supports local economies and protects the environment” (accessed on 26 July 2014).*

The term is also associated with postmodern thinking such as “New Urbanism’. New Urbanism was also launched as a response to problems associated with conventional urban planning and building such as sprawl, single-use zoning and creation of urban areas that are dependent on motorized transportation. Both smart-growth and new urbanism promotes walkable urban precincts, designing with nature, the precise principles listed in the *Smart Growth Manual* include the following: (universally there seem to be consensus on what principles are associated with smart growth, below from

<http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/AboutUs/SmartGrowthPrinciples/tabid/133/Default.aspx> (accessed on 26 July 2014) :

As taken from the above source, the 10 smart growth principles are:-

1. A mix of land uses where each neighbourhood has a mixture of homes, retail, business, and recreational opportunities;

2. Build well-designed compact neighbourhoods where residents can choose to live, work, shop and play in close proximity. People can easily access daily activities, transit is viable, and local businesses are supported;
3. Provide a variety of transportation choices so that neighbourhoods are attractive and have safe infrastructure for walking, cycling and transit, in addition to driving;
4. Create diverse housing opportunities so that people with different family types, life stages and income levels can afford a home in the neighbourhood of their choice;
5. Encourage growth in existing communities through investments in infrastructure (such as roads and schools) are used efficiently, and developments do not take up new land;
6. Preserve open spaces, natural beauty, and environmentally sensitive areas through the use of the principle that development respects natural landscape features and has higher aesthetic, environmental, and financial value;
7. Protect and enhance agricultural lands through a secure and productive land base, such as BC's Agricultural Land Reserve, provides food security, employment, and habitat, and is maintained as an urban containment boundary;
8. Utilize smarter and cheaper infrastructure and green building designs coupled with other sustainable systems that can save both money and the environment in the long run;
9. Foster a unique neighbourhood identity so that each community is unique, vibrant, diverse, and inclusive; and,
10. Nurture engaged citizens by providing places that belong to those who live, work, and play there. Engaged citizens participate in community life and decision-making. (Original source: *Smart Growth Manual 2010*)

#### **2.1.7. Integrated Development Planning**

According to Robinson (2009) the concept and methodology of integrated development planning (a process) has been used overseas in countries such as Australia as well as in South Africa. Its product is the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

In South Africa, the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), also termed the 'MSA', mandates municipalities to compile Integrated Development Plans (IDP's). The IDP is the outcome of a five-year planning process, which needs to be reviewed every subsequent year of the Council's term of office. This study evaluates the uMDM's IDP in terms of how it facilitates the process towards the realization of the District's vision to become a metropolitan municipality in 2016. From Section 26 of the MSA, the components of the IDP are outlined as follows:-

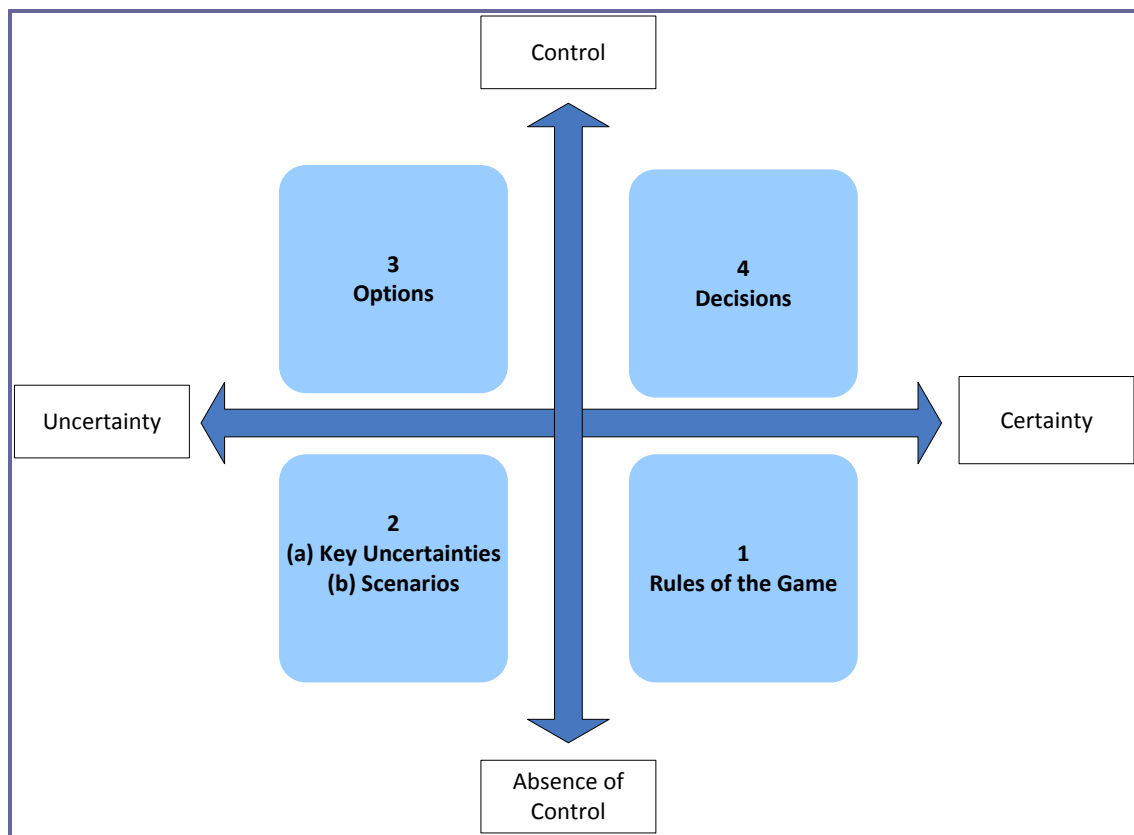
***“26. An integrated development plan must reflect—***

- (a) the municipal council’s vision for the long-term development of the municipality with special emphasis on the municipality’s most critical development and internal transformation needs;*
- (b) an assessment of the existing level of development in the municipality, which must include an identification of communities that do not have access to basic municipal services;*
- (c) the council’s development priorities and objectives for its elected term, including its local economic development aims and its internal transformation needs;*
- (d) the council’s development strategies which must be aligned with any national or provincial sectoral plans and planning requirements binding on the municipality in terms of legislation;*
- (e) a spatial development framework, which must include the provision of basic guidelines for a land, use management system for the municipality;*
- (f) the council’s operational strategies;*
- (g) applicable disaster management plans;*
- (h) a financial plan, which must include a budget projection for at least the next three years; and,*
- (i) the key performance indicators and performance targets determined in terms of section 41.”*

**2.1.8. The use of Scenario Planning**

Authoritatively the work of Robinson (2009) qualifies the use of scenario planning in the macro discipline of the built environment and here specifically in Town and Regional Planning. McCarthy’s foreword in Robinson (2009) argues that successful metropolitan areas may lead to successful countries. He continues to argue that Robinson’s (2009) work provides the skills and methods of scenario planning for the built environment especially on how to plan the unknown future of cities in South Africa. Robinson (2009) draws substantially from well-known authors on the topic of scenario planning Illbury and Sunter (2001). They are the authors of the book *“The Mind of a Fox Scenario Planning in Action”* and other publications on this topic. This research also refers to the matrix introduced by Illbury and Sunter (2001), also used in Robinson (2009) in the discussion. The matrix in its advanced stage is diagrammatically introduced below.

**Figure 4: Scenario Planning Matrix in its Advanced Stage**



**Source:** Illbury and Sunter (2001:38) diagram redrawn by the author on 25 June 2013

The above matrix in Figure 4 is explained (as taken from its original authors and interpreted by the author) and applied to this study as outlined in the 'Conceptual Framework Chapter'.

Furthermore, Gandy (2005) discusses the example of the city of Lagos, in Nigeria as an example of a metropolitan area that is faced with structural challenges. These structural challenges include inadequate public transport and chaos in the city. The challenges mentioned are similar to those being experienced by uMgungundlovu District and calls for the application of relevant strategic planning tools that are introduced in this Chapter and continued in the next Chapter. He also refers to a need to embrace "African urbanism" in order for African planners to be able to address the unique problems that face post-colonial African cities.

### 2.1.9. Metropolitan Planning

A metropolitan area can be defined as-

*“A term first used in the United States to describe a very large urban settlement. Definitions vary between countries, but a population of at least 100,000 and containing one or more centres with 50,000 inhabitants is typical. Areas bordering the city that are socially and economically integrated with it are included.”*

Pressat, R. (1985) in *The Dictionary of Demography*, Basil Blackwell, England (p.144).

The above definition may seem to suggest that uMgungundlovu District Municipality is an incipient metropolitan area since it recorded 1,017,673 population according to the Census 2011 results, which is above the “100 000” inhabitants mentioned in the above definition. Nevertheless, the question of numbers differs as one moves from country to country. In South Africa, the MDB applies a stringent suite of criteria when assessing merits for metropolitan areas. The logical concept that follows in explaining further the scale of metropolitan areas is that of a ‘conurbation’, which is defined below as:-

*“A continuous built-up area which has arisen from the coalescing of formerly separate settlements which, while retaining some administrative or economic independence, form one agglomeration. The term is often used synonymously with metropolitan area.”(p.42)*

The above synonymous definitions of ‘metropolitan area’ and ‘conurbation’ depict a commonality that a metropolitan area is complex and large in scale. Such complexity calls for carefully orchestrated planning, which is referred to in this dissertation as ‘strategic planning’ and its tools. In South Africa, the Municipal Structures Act, (No. 117 of 1998) as amended stipulates that:-

*“2. An area must have a single category A municipality if that area can reasonably be regarded as—*

*(a) a conurbation featuring—*

*(i) areas of high population density:*

- (ii) *an intense movement of people, goods and services:*
- (iii) *extensive development: and*
- (iv] *multiple business districts and industrial areas;*
- (b) *a centre of economic activity with a complex and diverse economy:*
- (c) *a single area for which integrated development planning is desirable: and*
- (d) *having strong interdependent social and economic linkages between its constituent units."*

Therefore, metropolitan planning involves engaging with all the above-mentioned requirements. A complex process requires strategic planning tools in order to bring all variables and requirements into a state of equilibrium.

## **2.2. AN APPLICATION FOR METROPOLITAN STATUS**

The process of application for metropolitan status will be examined within the context of South Africa by reviewing the legislative process. The uMgungundlovu applied to the Demarcation Board for the District to be declared a metropolitan municipality as provided for in the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (No. 117 of 1998). The Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Local Government also submitted a similar application for consideration. The Board's response to the two applications was to issue the required Section 26 notice in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998, stating its intention to consider the application and inviting representations from the public on the application. DEM4155 (the proposed uMDM Metropolitan) is a type C redetermination which includes the categorisation of any new metropolitan municipality with or without boundary changes. This type must satisfy Section 2 of the Municipal Systems Act and Sections 24 and 25 of the Municipal Demarcation Act, 27 of 1998 and requires consultation with the National Minister responsible for Local Government, the M.E.C. for Local Government in the Province and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

This type of application, due its complexity further requires extensive motivation and a significant amount of the following supporting evidence being:-

- Extensive research;



- High level framework to guide the transformation; and,
- High level engagement process to ensure inclusivity of all parties.

The expectation was that the Demarcation Board would make its final determination on the matter in August 2013. Indeed, the decision was made in that month and the outcome of its decision to decline a change in municipal status is discussed in the 'Research Findings' chapter of this dissertation.

### **2.3. A DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

In South Africa, the Constitution provides for the separation of the spheres of Government with their distinct powers and functions. A district municipality falls under the Local Government sphere. Section 155 of the Constitution states that national legislation must:

- Define the different types of municipality that may be established within each category.
- Establish criteria for determining when an area should have a single Category (A) municipality or when it should have municipalities of both Category (B) and (C).
- Make provision for an appropriate division of powers and functions between municipalities when an area has municipalities of both Category (B) and (C).

In terms of the Constitution, a district municipality or Category C can be defined as a municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality. In order to uphold these Sections of the South African Constitution, the Government have promulgated legislations such as Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998, Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 and the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 27 of 1998.

### **2.4. THE CASE STUDY OF UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY'S APPLICATION FOR METROPOLITAN STATUS**

In order to provide a theoretical explanation of the unfolding process, this dissertation uses Blumenfeld's (1979) variables under the "Criteria for judging the quality of the urban environment"

sub-topic. Blumenfeld (1979) argues that there are yardsticks for measuring the successes of an urban area. However, in a scale of a metropolitan municipality there is no clear-cut distinction of urban and rural-countryside but a rural-urban continuum. Indicators such as the concentration of labour and work opportunities can describe the relationship between the urban and rural components of a conglomerate. This leads to the question of commuter workers and migrant workers. Furthermore, he argues on aspects such the importance density. Similarly Frenkel (2007) on the study of the metropolitan city of Tel Aviv in Israel, argues that there is now a shift from an assumption that work opportunities are only concentrated in the 'central business district' or CBD. He uses empirical evidence after researching the trends that depicts the city's CBD shift further from its original centre and the phenomenon of suburbanization. On the other hand of the spectrum, suburbanization has been sharply criticised by advocates of contemporary planning practices such as 'new urbanism' and 'smart growth', these concepts have already been introduced in this dissertation.

In his discussion of the *"criteria for judging the quality of the urban environment"*, Blumenfeld (1979) reminds readers of Aristotle's argument that *"men come together in cities for security; they stay together for a good life"*. He then extrapolates from this statement to support the argument that cities are not only meant for making a living but for the living itself. In other words, the city dwellers' experiences count. Blumenfeld's (1979) criteria areas for judging the quality of an urban area include:-

- *"Urban growth"*-where it has been criticised as one of the major causes of world crisis like environmental degradation, climate change, disasters, breakdown in international and intra-national securities.
- The *"good life"*-where cities are supposedly areas for living and enhancing the good life experience. It is about 'liveable neighbourhoods'.
- *"Social and physical environment"*-where both "environments" are cognisant and must be equally nurtured or embraced. This argument is linkable to the advocates for sustainable human development.
- *"The city as an economic machine"*: Blumenfeld rather argues that it has been a wrong fallacy to view the city as a place of just making a living as this has contributed to a plethora of socio-economic and ecological problems. He again emphasises his main argument that the

city should be treated as a place for living and not just for making a living as the latter makes cities to be temporal and even artificial when compared with the countryside. This aspect is linkable to post-industrial city debates like the preservation of a greenbelt as reforms in cities like London and in most American cities. Furthermore, this is linkable to the contemporary obsession of most urban planners, the problem of urban sprawl. Most contemporary spatial planning tools like the Spatial Development Frameworks also discussed in the Discussion chapter of this dissertation have what is called “*an urban fringe*” or “*development boundary line*” whose main aim is to constraint urban development from “sprawling” further into the countryside. The advocates of an urban fringe-line argue for the preservation of character of the countryside. These arguments become intense especially when there are proposals for new developments on rural and semi-rural land.

- “*Accessibility and transportation*”: he opens the argument under this sub-topic by saying, “without accessibility, however, the mere existence of a wide range of choice within an urban area is only an empty promise” (p.37). He expounds from this sentiment by citing how workers who reside from the city’s periphery become disadvantage as result of the city administrators’ failure to reduce the friction caused by distance from where the potential workers reside and where the work opportunities are. The suggested solution to the problem of inaccessibility is transportation, especially reliable, affordable and efficient public transportation system. In most large urban areas, especially metropolitan areas there is a presence of multi-modal public transportation system for example that inter-changes commuters between buses, rail, taxis and other modes including maritime where the topography enables.
- “*Criteria for urban transportation: mobility*”- flowing from the preceding discussion on accessibility it is the notion of “mobility”. Mobility means movement in order to leave a point to reach a destination. Blumenfeld (1979) argues that there are three intrinsically linked problems of mobility and these have to do with time, space and inconvenience. On time, effective mobility has to reduce the time spent on travelling from one point to another. The problem experienced in most large urban areas like metropolitan areas include traffic congestion and delays. Plate 2 shows traffic congestion problems in Pietermaritzburg. Linked to this is a problem of location, as most daily commuters between home and place of work would prefer to spend less than half an hour of travelling between the two points.
- The other transportation related dimensions discussed are “*safety*” and “*the protection of the pedestrian realm*”- a need for the reduction of road accidents. Quantifiable cost of loss

to the local economy due to road accidents is immense. There is also a critical need for city planners to ensure the convenience and safety of those who use the most sustainable mode of transportation i.e. walking. He suggests a few ideas like the creation of walkways as pavements higher than the space for motorized vehicles.

- *“Waste and pollution”*- he ascribes the problem of trashing the city from the misconception that the city’s purpose is just for making a living and not for living itself. He says that it is the emphasis of the former that makes the city’s users to dump garbage anyhow and cause pollution of air and water resources. This is a major problem in fast growing cities as it is associated with growing consumerism by both domestic and business contributors.
- *“Microclimate”*- choice of location between the well-off and the low-income earners determines the advantage or disadvantages from tapping into the benefits of nature in controlling the microclimate. He explains it in a way that the rich would select sites for building in higher altitude areas that are cooler in hot summer days, with less pollution whereas on the other hand the poorer residents of the same urban area would be located in lower lying areas that trap heat and pollution like smog.
- *“Recreational facilities:-“live-play-work”* emphasised –he argues that there is a dearth of recreational facilities for different ages. Hence there is a need for public open spaces like those included in the land-use plans of progressive metropolitan municipalities what, for example the city of eThekweni has a policy called Durban Metropolitan Open Space System also known as D’MOSS.
- The structure of the urban area: quoting Ebenezer Howard- *“the father of ‘Garden City’* idea, he uses the argument *that “people are attracted by two magnets: city and country”*. There is a need for a balance, like the introduction of greenbelts in urban areas.
- Privacy and neighbourliness: Again, there is a need to balance these two values of privacy and neighbourliness when planning the built environment. This can be achieved irrespective of respecting different income groups’ needs as both rich and poor in actual sense value both.
- Density-where and how to increase it without scattering and achieve compaction;
- Lively centres: for both day and night-design of land-uses-a place for meeting;

- Separation and integration: using zoning effectively and most appropriately for compatibility –but also allow a mixture of compatible uses. Also know where to separate in order to protect property values;
- Continuity and change: for maintenance of character and predictability of the urban form, better exploitation for transportation corridors;
- Perception of the environment: this can also be explained as designing for achieving a sense of place.

## 2.5 DEFINITION OF A ‘PROSPEROUS CITY’ BY THE UNITED NATIONS HABITAT (2012) IN THE STATE OF THE CITIES REPORT 2012/2013-PROSPEROUS CITIES:

On defining a “prosperous city”, the UNHabitat (2012) uses the following points:

*“A prosperous city is one that provides:-*

*Productivity: Contributes to economic growth and development, generates income, and provides decent jobs and equal opportunities for all by implementing effective economic policies and reforms,*

*Infrastructure development: Provides adequate infrastructure – water, sanitation, roads, information and communication technology in order to improve urban living and enhance productivity, mobility and connectivity;*

*Quality of life: Enhances the use of public spaces in order to increase community cohesion, civic identity, and guarantees the safety and security of lives and property;*

*Equity and social inclusion: Ensures the equitable distribution and redistribution of the benefits of a prosperous city, reduces poverty and the incidence of slums, protects the rights of minority and vulnerable groups, enhances gender equality, and ensures civic participation in the social, political and cultural spheres;*

*Environmental sustainability: Values the protection of the urban environment and natural assets while ensuring growth, and seeking ways to use energy more efficiently, minimize pressure on surrounding land and natural resources, minimize environmental losses by generating creative solutions to enhance the quality of the environment”.(p.14)*

The sentiments that are identified in the *State of the Cities Report 2012/2013: Prosperous Cities* are useful in evaluating one of the uMDM's current strategic planning tools, namely its IDP. The IDP for 2011 to 2016 states that the district has strategically positioned itself as a “*citizen-centric, results-driven and performance orientated*” municipality. This strategic stance is in line with its vision statement that includes a quest of evolving into a metropolitan municipality in the near future. Furthermore, a mission statement that underpins the vision statement reads, “*the uMgungundlovu District Municipality will through sound governance and community participation ensure the provision of the equitable and sustainable services and economic growth*”. In addition, a statement of core values supports the mission statement that:-

*“Driven by the aspirations of the people we strive to achieve our Vision and Mission through:-*

- *Providing services according to the principles of Batho Pele (People First)*
- *Practicing Ubuntu*
- *Accepted codes of practice and standards of professionalism*
- *Teamwork and commitment*
- *A high standard of work ethic*
- *Constant engagement with stakeholders” (uMDM IDP 2013/2014)*

The above evidence from the uMDM's strategic planning tool, which is the IDP, demonstrates that strategic planning tools can be used to steer a municipality or city towards its envisioned future. In this instance, the goal is to change its administrative status and become a metropolitan municipality. However, the decisive test would be on whether it becomes a ‘prosperous metropolitan area’ for all and as defined by already the presented UN Habitat (2012)'s all-round definition of a ‘prosperous city’. Another criticism that is mentioned in the *State of the Cities Report: 2012/2013* is that there has been a lopsided focus on economic prosperity of cities and not a holistic or sustainable development approach. This skewedness is evident by a continuously widening gap between the rich and the poor in cities worldwide.

## **2.6. CONCLUSION**

The preceding literature review has presented what is already known about the concepts identified in the dissertation topic. These concepts have been introduced, defined and applied to the context

of the study area. The literature review assists in understanding the research problem further and in responding to the research questions. It has also revealed that metropolitan planning is a complex process that also calls for appropriate strategic planning. Hence, this dissertation evaluates the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment on the uMDM's application for metropolitan status. The following chapter on the conceptual-theoretical framework will take the literature review to another level by selecting the theories that are most relevant and develop themes that will shape the argument(s) of this dissertation.

### 3.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on ‘conceptual-theoretical framework’ and draws from the preceding literature review, which laid the foundation about what is generally known about the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment. The chapter will use those selected concepts and theories that are most relevant to shape the discussion of this dissertation. Furthermore, the selected theories will enable the dissertation to have a theoretical soundness and be rooted on what is universally known about the ideas that are related to this topic. The discussion provides a theoretical basis of the study by developing a conceptual and theoretical framework that is informed by the review of precedent studies, including primary and secondary data sources. The ultimate goal is to link the study at hand with previous similar case studies, thoughts and ideas. The main themes to be evaluated as part of the ‘*strategic planning tools for the built environment*’ include the social construction of urban space; metropolitan planning: internationally, regionally and locally; painting of future scenarios in metropolitan planning; area-based management; rural-urban continuum; and sustainable development. All will be reviewed in the context of a district municipality that has a desire of becoming a metropolitan municipality.

The conceptual framework will also critically evaluate ideas related to the change of a metropolis to polyopolis<sup>2</sup>. It will include a consideration of how a municipality can use comparative advantage and develop competitive advantage within a specific regional economic area. The approach of developing regions, scale, conurbation, agglomeration and the amalgamation of municipalities will be critically analysed during the research process. The concept of sustainable development is also applied as a measure against which to assess the potential of the district municipality to reach its goal.

### 3.1. USING THE CONCEPT OF SCENARIO PLANNING IN EMBRACING THE FUTURE

The concept of ‘scenario planning’ has already been introduced in the Literature Review chapter. It will be taken further in analysis as it applies to the uMgungundlovu’s case study. The variables of ‘rules of the game, key uncertainties (scenarios), options and decisions’ as taken from Illbury and

---

<sup>2</sup> Multiple centered urban conglomerate area



Sunter (2001, see Figure 4 ) will be used in the early stages of this dissertation's conceptual framework. Scenario planning as one of the subsidiary strategic planning tools under IDPs is relevant to this dissertation as the problem under investigation is futuristic. In other words, the application by the uMgungundlovu District Municipality for metropolitan status has future implications since the District is not has yet achieved this desired future outcome. Therefore, to start the process it has to use strategic planning tools that allow the district to perceive the future and be prepared to embrace that future when it comes. Scenario planning is therefore relevant as a futuristic strategic planning tool; in this case, it is used in conjunction with the IDP. The following discussion will explain each variable from Illbury and Sunter (2001) in terms of how it applies to the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's case study.

### **3.1.1. Rules of the Game**

This is associated with certain or known rules of the game, where the role-players do not have any control. In this study, it refers to the applicable policy, laws and procedures. The legal frameworks are briefly explained below.

#### **▪ The Constitution, Act (No. 108 of 1996)**

Section 155 of the national Constitution outlines the framework for the establishment of developmental local government and proposes the following categories of municipality:-

- i.) Category (A): A municipality that has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area.
- ii.) Category (B): A municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a Category (C) municipality within whose area it falls.
- iii.) Category (C): A municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality.

In Chapter 7, the objectives of Local Government are outlined and that is the source of developmental mandate of local government. In broad terms, these include municipal planning, local economic development, and safety.

#### **▪ The White Paper on Local Government**

Metropolitan areas are large urban settlements with high population densities, complex and diversified economies, and a high degree of *"functional integration across a larger geographic area"* than the normal jurisdiction of a municipality. Economic and social activities transcend municipal boundaries, and metropolitan residents may live in one locality, work in another, and utilise recreational facilities across the city region area.

▪ **The Local Government Demarcation Act, (No. 27 of 1998)**

This Act sets out the criteria and procedures for the determination of municipal boundaries by the Municipal Demarcation Board. It empowers the Minister for Co-operative Governance to determine whether an area should have a category A municipality status or not using specific criteria, and after consultation with the MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs in the province concerned. Other state and public institutions such as the Municipal Demarcation Board, SALGA and organised local government also have to be consulted.

▪ **The Local Government Municipal Structures Act, (No. 117 of 1998 as amended):**

This law regulates functions, powers, and levels of municipalities:

A metropolitan municipality has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area. An area must have a single category A municipality if that area can reasonably be regarded as-

- (a) a conurbation featuring—
  - (i) areas of high population density;
  - (ii) an intense movement of people, goods, and services;
  - (iii) extensive development; and
  - (iv) multiple business districts and industrial areas;
- (b) a centre of economic activity with a complex and diverse economy;
- (c) a single area for which integrated development planning is desirable; and,
- (d) Having strong interdependent social and economic linkages between its constituent units.

▪ **The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000)**

In Chapter 5 calls for co-ordinated and integrated development planning and the compilation of IDPs by all municipalities. Chapter 4 calls for public participation at local government level.

▪ **The Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act (No. 56 of 2003)**

This statute regulates the administration of municipal finances. It also calls for intergovernmental co-operation in fiscal management amongst the three spheres of government.

What can be observed from the 'rules of the game' is that a metropolitan municipality in South Africa is a complex-conglomerated entity that is expected to function beyond any reasonable doubt.

### **3.1.2. (a) Key Uncertainties**

Stage 2 is a migration from the world of "*certainty to that of uncertainty*"...

This is a reference to the unknown or "*driving forces*" which raise the curiosity of a strategic-scenario planner and encourages him/her to reflect on possible risks and limitations that might be associated with the future. Ralston and Wilson (2009) argue that "*the future is, for the most part, not only unknown: It is unknowable*" (p.1). This then leads to the next step in the matrix, which deals with scenarios.

### **3.1.3. (b) Scenarios**

The authors argue that when these risks and limitations are known, then possible scenarios could be constructed. Whether desirable or undesirable, the facts will be considered and possible futures painted with options of which is most likely to be feasible. In other words, it is possible having constructed all the scenarios to identify one or two that most closely mirror what will happen given the current unknowns. Scenarios do not have to paint only a rosy future but can also paint a gloomy one. This flexibility will allow the management or municipality to develop strategies for multiple outcomes and thereby be able to deal with the future.

### **3.1.4. Options**

This stage is when the strategic-scenario planner begins to even "*think the unthinkable*" -when they explore a number of options given the rules of the game, key uncertainties and scenarios about a future. In this case study, the possible scenarios would be to consider which structural model that the new metropolitan might take forward. The options would be among others, the linear corridor model and the compacting of cities; institutionally, through a decentralized model such as Area Based Management and the notion of Rural Services Centres as discussed by Robinson (2005).

### **3.1.5. Decisions**

The corporate world uses the phrase *“informed decision-making”*, which refers to the making of decisions after considering information about the problem at hand. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality and its other seven local municipalities would decide after considering the rules of the game, key uncertainties, scenarios and a number of options, which structuring elements would result into a sustainable metropolitan municipality. This process may call for what has been referred to as *“going back to the drawing board”* by applying a systematic method of analysis.

### **3.2. ECONOMIC INFLUENCES**

Firstly, an understanding of the international economic context and the prevailing economic conditions in the *‘global village’* is critical, for example if there is a sluggish growth, recessionary signs and high household debt. According to the former South African Reserve Bank Governor Gill Marcus, South Africa has been experiencing a stagflation where there is low growth and high inflation. The other distortion is that countries’ economic performances are measured through Growth Domestic Products (GDP) and not necessarily by per capita income. For example, in the United States of America (USA), which has a dual economy such as in South Africa, although the country’s GDP may be good, the distribution of wealth is not even. This results in huge gaps between the *“haves”* and the *“have-nots”* or inequalities in society.

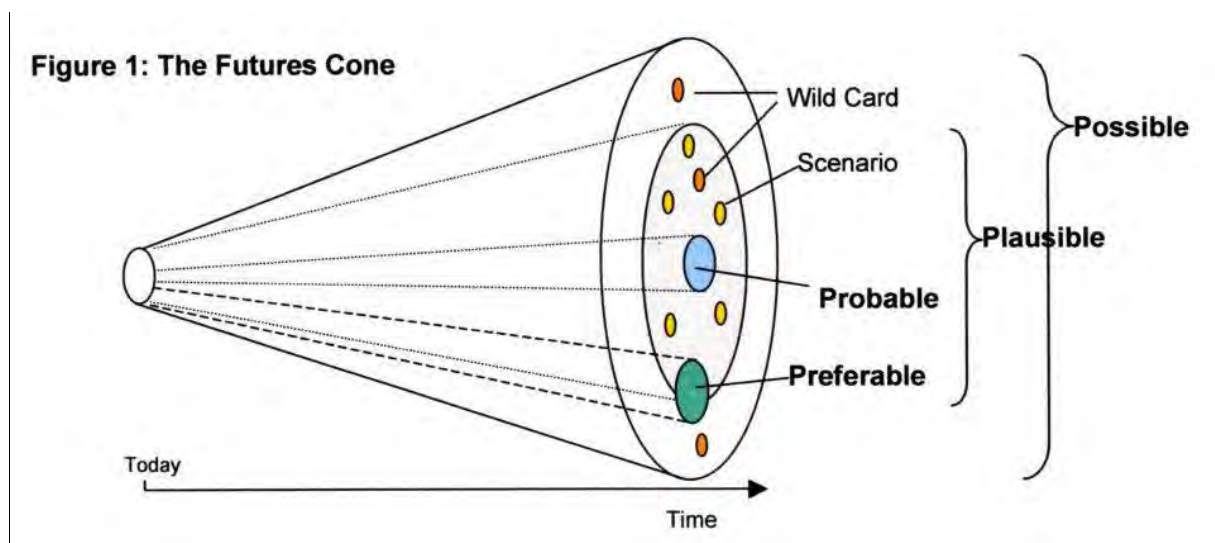
It is against this backdrop that the District’s economy is to be considered within the already outlined macro and global economic context. Regionally or in the African economy, the South African economy has been said to be the largest. uMgungundlovu is said to be the second largest in GDP after eThekweni in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. It is however consumptive rather than productive when compared to its close ‘competitor’ the UThungulu District, which is productive due to active industries in the area.

### **3.3. THE CREATION OF FUTURE SCENARIOS**

Scenario planning as a form of strategic planning focuses on dealing with the future. In regard to this tool, Robinson(2009) citing Gibson, 1996:6; Handy, 1998:17; Dixon, 2002:1; Illbury and Sunter

(2007:32) all argue that it is proactive in nature - *“being future-wise involves taking charge of the future , rather than responding to it”* . Furthermore, these writers argue that the uncertain future is characterised by interconnected complexities (Robinson, 2009:1). The ‘cone’ is **Figure 5** illustrates this dynamism of engaging the future.

**Figure 5: The Futures Cone**



Source: Thinking Futures – Foresight Primer [www.thinkingfutures.net](http://www.thinkingfutures.net), accessed on 16 August 2013

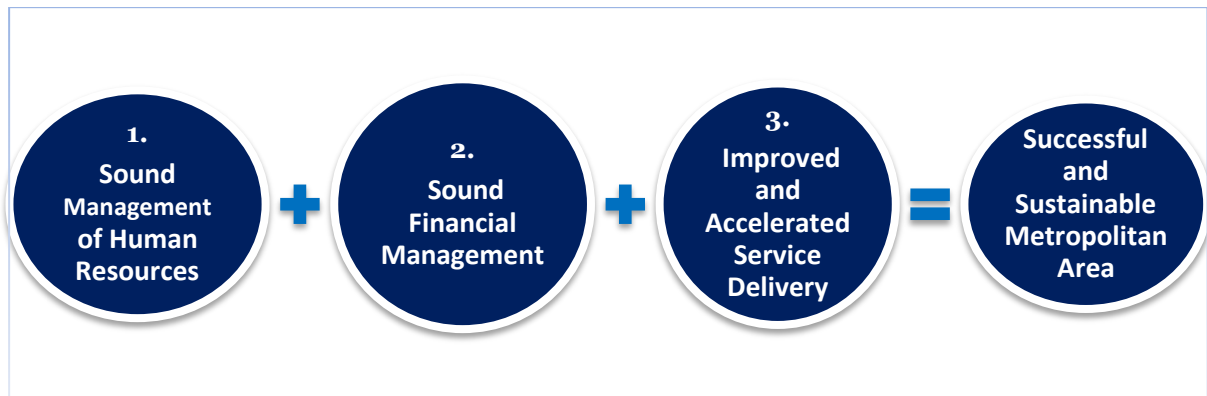
The above cone is similar to the one presented in Illbury and Sunter (2001) and illustrates the point that the more we move towards the future, the greater the degree of uncertainty. This concept will be applied to the study and used to envisage what type of metropolitan municipality may emerge from the current process. However, the study will not use Scenario Planning in depth for example in identifying probable, preferable-plausible and possible scenarios.

### **3.4. SWOT ANALYSIS FROM THE PRECEDENT STUDY METROPOLITAN HIGH LEVEL FEASIBILITY**

A SWOT analysis is a sub-technique that is used during IDP processes. It enables managers to be able to deal with and isolate the internal and external forces at play, both negative and positive. The summarized results from a precedent study conducted by the district will be used during the

discussions of the results. The following illustration summarizes the whole ethos of this precedent study that:

**Figure 6: A Summary of the Metropolitan High-level Feasibility Study Approach-2013**



Source: UMDM: Metropolitan High-level Feasibility Study (2013)

### **3.5. A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF URBAN SPACE**

Stiftel and Watson (2005) introduced the concept of the “social construction of urban space” and argue that urban space is shaped by various factors that are a result of socio-economic activity. In the case of uMDM, this shaping is primarily caused by in migration between the core and the periphery. Due to uneven economic development, the economically active population (i.e. aged between twenty and sixty four years and in the categories of employed or unemployed) have been ‘*voting with their feet*’ leaving rural areas and seeking ‘*greener pastures*’ in the urban core of Pietermaritzburg. This in migration has recently been evident in Howick, which is growing as an industrial hub. Similarly, Rubin (2003), when comparing the works of Geddes in Palestine, and his predecessors such as Le Corbusier in Chandigarh, almost 30 years later, makes the following claim that “*both planners foresaw the block as a means of developing social life*” (p.133). Therefore, the study will also consider but at a higher level the elements that underpin the dependent variable of liveability and its intrinsic-independent variable of ‘*planning for sense of place*’.

### 3.6. METROPOLITAN PLANNING – INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

According to Boyce, et.al (1970), metropolitan planning is a young “art” that began to be a meaningful activity in the late 1950’s (p.19). They argue that it contains three products namely:

1. An inventory and analysis of a region’s physical, economic, social and cultural characteristics, and forecasts of future economic development, population, and physical growth based on trend projections;
2. The preparation of a comprehensive plan for the development of the region; and,
3. The implementation and revision of the adopted plan.

The above and other arguments that are reviewed make it impossible for this study not to consider the concepts and phenomenon of sustainable development as has already been discussed. This also links back to the main research question on the adequacy of current strategic planning tools for preparing the district in its quest to becoming a metropolitan municipality. Furthermore, the argument assists towards answering the question “*what it would be like to live, grow and work in the amalgamated metropolitan municipality?*” It also points out the complexity of planning at a metropolitan scale, where there are multiple dimensions that all require a planner’s attention.

Smit, D. and Todes, A. (1987) in “*Managing Metropolitan Growth*” present models that are relevant in future strategic planning and could provide options for a future metropolitan municipality. These models will be applied as one of the lenses to take a closer look at the problems confronting the potential metropolitan and suggest possible solutions. For example, they present spatial concepts for restructuring and compacting cities at metropolitan scale and these include ‘a linear activity corridor’ and the ‘cities within cities’. The challenges facing uMgungundlovu District Municipality would be how to amalgamate the established urban core areas and link these with the peripheral rural economies. Such models, which inform spatial integration and compaction, would be useful for analysing spatial imperatives and hierarchies in the new metropolitan area.

The Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration 2004, as cited by Avin’s (2007) definition of scenario planning discussed earlier, indicates that strategic planning tools can be used as a mechanism for developing solutions for complex planning problems such as planning a metropolitan municipality.

A striking example which shows where strategic planning tools for the built environment have been used both in the Developed and in the Developing World is discussed in *Nairobi Metro 2030 A World Class African Metropolis*, where some parts of a model) used in the City of Melbourne, Australia have been applied in the Kenyan City-Region of Nairobi. In a sense, the planning for a future Nairobi City-Region or Metropolis/metropolitan area involves long term strategic planning as it is about forecasting what the future of that city-region would be like. Field and McGregor (1987) in *Forecasting Techniques for Urban and Regional Planning* have discussed how the Greater Manchester Council (GMC) area was reconstructed by using integrated forecasting as opposed to limited linear deductive methods of forecasting in urban and regional planning (p.194). The techniques and lessons from this work and others can be applied in the context of the study area, especially as to how the district municipality can meaningfully make use of its current strategic planning tools towards realization of its vision of becoming a metropolitan municipality, the main tool being it's IDP.

### **3.7. “FROM METROPOLIS TO POLYOPOLIS”**

Pain and Hall (2006) discusses the emergence of a new phenomenon: the *polycentric mega-city region*. It is a concept of *polyopolis* where poly means many and polis refers to the city. This means a city with many or multiple centres as opposed to a single centre. They also refer to other studies for example Guttman's (1961) Megalopolis. The examples mentioned include United States of America, London, Pearl River Delta and Yangtze River Delta regions of China, the Hokkaido (Tokyo-Osaka) corridor in Japan and the Greater Jakarta. This discovery challenges Christaller's Central Place Theory, because the concept of the polyopolis allows the coexistence of centres. This theory is applicable to the uMgungundlovu case study in supporting the idea of a decentralized model or an Area-Based Management (ABM) system of governance. This can also address the legacy of the fractured “*apartheid city*” that is still evident in the spatial characteristics of Pietermaritzburg - the primary node of the district.

One of the suggested scenarios would be the polycentric model versus the compact city one as discussed by Smit and Todes (1987). The merits of each of the options would need to be assessed in the context of this research. Other approaches to be assessed would be the nodes, the corridor model, and the option of linking multi nuclei and institutional structure through an Area-Based Management model. However, this will have to be done without promoting urban sprawl by



maintaining the character of rural areas, among others through the application of “*smart growth principles*”.

### 3.8. APPROACHES TO AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT (ABM)

The study looks at the case of eThekweni Metropolitan as an example. As part of applying the “*Unicity*” principle, eThekweni has been sub-divided into sub-administrative areas or “*municipalities within a municipality*”. There are also decentralized ‘Sizakala Centres’ or service centres for ease of accessibility by citizens. Tools such as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Spatial Development Framework (SDF), a proactive densification strategy, public transportation strategy and other infrastructure development initiatives have led to the sustainability of eThekweni’s Area-Based Management model. Furthermore, capitalizing on a competitive advantage such as topography by way of going beyond “*environmental determinism*”<sup>3</sup> has also contributed to eThekweni’s success. The examples are the successful tourism industry capitalizing on the Indian Ocean and trade through the Durban Port and Harbour.

Similarly, the uMDM can also capitalize on the fact that most of its smaller municipalities are located in the KwaZulu-Natal mist-belt, which has favourable soils and a climate conducive for agriculture. This is backed by a recent study by the Provincial Department of Economic Development (DEDT) on comparative advantages, which identifies the uMDM’s economic sectors and hubs as being:-

*“Key sectors include agriculture - vegetables; poultry, forestry and logging, leather and footwear production, public administration, collection and purification of water. uMgungundlovu’s Industrial Economic Hubs are primary - leather and footwear. Secondary sectors are in agro-processing hub with a focus on vegetables; crops and dairy processing.”*  
(DEDT, 2012)

Some Government officials have referred to the District as a potential ‘food basket’ of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. However, there is a need to develop this potential into a tangible and viable

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<sup>3</sup> **Environmental determinism**, also known as *climatic determinism* or *geographical determinism*, is the view that the physical environment sets limits on human environment ([https://www.princeton.edu/Environmental\\_determinism.html](https://www.princeton.edu/Environmental_determinism.html) , accessed on 30 July 2013)

agricultural economy, mixed with industrialisation and other economic generating land-uses and activities.

### **3.9. A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Rubin (2013) in *“The celebration, condemnation and reinterpretation of the Geddes plan, 1925: the dynamic planning history of Tel Aviv”* In *Urban History*, 40 1 (2013) argues that *“future planning often starts in the past”* (p.114). However, in the abstract he writes that the main aim of the article is that *“when present planners are confronted with a past which does not suit current needs, history is contested, or reinvented entirely”* (p.114). The history that the article evaluates is the work conducted by Patrick Geddes in 1925 when he planned the metropolitan city of Tel Aviv in Israel. Geddes is well known for his “Garden City” theory or concept. The article assesses how lessons from the past can shape how we plan the future. This approach brings in a sub-discipline of ‘planning history’.

A similar argument can be applied to the sub-questions of this dissertation of ‘what will it be like to live, work and play in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu metropolitan municipality?’ In this way, Rubin (2003) when comparing the works of Geddes in Palestine, and his predecessors such as Le Corbusier in Chandigarh, almost 30 years later, makes the following claim that “both planners foresaw the block as a means of developing social life” (p.133). This observation is profound as a paradigm shift that has led to contemporary thinking such as the notion of human settlements. This can be used in developing a scenario that will lead to influencing policy makers to begin thinking on how best to utilize public open spaces.

Similarly to Tel Aviv, uMgungundlovu District Municipality can also be described as the ‘city of opposites’ or contrasts. The former in the form of being located between the overpopulated European Cities and rural Palestine, the latter has both outer and intra contrasts spatially, economically and socially. This presence makes the problem even more complex since the ‘opposites’ or contrasts also vary as we move from one municipality to another that form the “District Family”. Furthermore, this presence resembles that of the entire country of South Africa, which is characterised by a presence of a dual economy. This part of the argument then introduces the following concepts, being that of rural services centres and the rural-urban continuum.

The presence of Traditional Authority areas also highlights the observation that the District has a rich and diverse history, as shown in Figure 8 below.

**Figure 7: A Historical Diagram showing shifting Political and Economic Environment in Pietermaritzburg**



Source: <http://www.pmbhistory.co.za>, accessed in 10 August 2013

As an example, the cartoonist impression in Figure 7 summarizes Pietermaritzburg's diverse history and its *"progress in a shifting political and economic environment"*. The city of Pietermaritzburg has a history of contrasts, a mosaic of immense cultural, historical, political, institutional and economic influences and changes. Its capital city status remains a common denominator throughout its history and has given the city a unique character. The significance of Pietermaritzburg has always been constant in this variable. However, this might be detrimental when the sustainability measure is applied. In addition, this identity is a dependent variable when the *'independent and dependent variables'* measure is applied. It is a dependent variable because it becomes an outcome of who constitutes the dominant political group at the time of decision-making.

Furthermore, the following historical perspective taken from Bulpin (1970) in *“Discovering Southern Africa”* can expound this point. The city of Pietermaritzburg evolved from simple Dutch ‘farm style’ houses built on large plots and wide streets to modern day skyscrapers and a city that has a population density of 975 people per square kilometres in 2013. However, the Voortrekkers’ rule ended after the collapse of the Natal Republic in 1843, and the town became the administrative capital of the British Colony of Natal. It is interesting to observe that the Victorian architecture is still evident after the British regime ended many decades ago.

### **3.10. RURAL SERVICE CENTRES OR SYSTEMS**

Looking at the current Spatial Development Framework of the uMDM, the importance and relevance of the rural services centres or systems cannot be overlooked. As within other spatial settings in South Africa, the area is characterised by sharp contrasts between the well-serviced urban centres and poorly serviced rural areas. Due to this reality, rural residents cannot access all the needed services such as healthcare, legal, education, and civic support within short distances. They have to spend money on transport costs and time in order to access services at the nearest urban centre.

The concept of the rural services centres, which is discussed by Robinson (2009), is one of the attempts to improve the rural citizens’ quality of life by introducing all the needed services within short distances. Robinson’s model proposes ‘one-stop’ centres which would provide a comprehensive set of services to rural communities. These centres are not envisaged as replacements for urban services but should as a minimum be able to at least provide ‘low-order’ services within a walking distance radius of 5 kilometre). There might still be a need for the rural dwellers to travel to the nearest urban centre in order to access high order services such as hospitals, universities, professional services and others. As the concept evolved, Robinson (2009) and others felt that the word ‘centres’ was limiting and they came up with the word ‘systems’ in order to enhance the effectiveness of the concept as they now refer to it as the *‘Rural Services Systems’*. Sometimes both rural services centres and rural services systems are used interchangeably.

### **3.11. THE RURAL-URBAN CONTINUUM**

Similar to the rural services systems concept, the *‘rural-urban continuum’* concept attempts to bridge the multifaceted gap between rural and urban areas. The often-wide gap between rural and urban

areas is evident in functionality, disposable resources, skills, services, goods, facilities and opportunities. The consequence of this disparity is that it gives rise to “*pull and push factors*” between the two spatial settings. Rural areas suffer many push factors leading to emigration of the population into urban areas. On the other hand, the urban areas have more “*pull factors*” such as job opportunities, high order services and many others and they experience immigration mainly from rural areas. The side-effects of this trend is that urban areas end up receiving more population than they can optimally provide services to in terms of basic needs such as clean water, sanitation, food, jobs, shelter and education. This results in the mushrooming of informal settlements and other dilapidated areas where associated social ills such as crime, drug and substance abuse manifest themselves.

The rural-urban continuum concept has been developed as a way to describe the widened gap between rural and urban areas. It is a means of presenting the way that people have always viewed the two spatial settings as completely separate from each other. In planning theory however the opposite is proposed. The concept states that urban and rural areas are actually to complement each other instead of working against each other. This approach is applicable to the context of uMgungundlovu District Municipality since there are both urban and rural areas. Urban areas are the core and rural areas are the periphery. One of the areas where they are able to complement each other is in the ensuring of long-term sustenance of food security, which has a rippling effect on other spinoffs and benefits.

The rural areas located in all the seven local municipalities have relatively good fluvial systems to ensure water supply for agricultural produce. There is high potential agricultural land and a history of agricultural production. The development of increased agriculture in rural areas can lead to entrepreneurial and job opportunities that can reduce the unemployment rate. In addition, the rural areas will experience new development such as improved roads, water, sewerage, electricity and other infrastructure, which will in turn attract more investors into the rural areas. The urban areas will buy the harvest from rural areas for the urban retail markets.

### **3.12. A HIGHER-LEVEL FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE METRO- COMMISSIONED IN JUNE 2013 BY THE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

The purpose of this study whose time-period was from June 2013 to August 2013 was to determine the feasibility of the application known as DEM 4155. The scope and limitations of the study was to look at the three variables of human resources, financial viability and accelerated service delivery-the latter being underpinned by the demands of a “developmental local government” as recorded in the Constitution. The key findings of this study are discussed in the Results Chapter.

### **3.13 CONCLUSIONS**

The preceding discussion of relevant concepts and the building of a theoretical framework that underpins this study have shown that the dissertation can be linked to what is already known about the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment. It has been shown that in both developed and developing countries, planners have used strategic planning tools in planning and development of the built environment. The knowledge gathered from the reviewed materials has been used in the light of the District’s application for metropolitan status. In this way, it has been used to give scholarly meaning to the dimensions or variables of the study. The literature review and development of a theoretical framework have contributed to a wider understanding of the topic. They have informed the research methodology which is addressed in the next chapter. The following chapter explains the apparatus that have been used in collecting empirical evidence.

### 4.0. INTRODUCTION

From the preceding chapter, which gives this dissertation a solid grounding on theory, this chapter presents the methods that have been used for collecting empirical data. This chapter explains the approach that the study has taken towards answering the research questions. It describes the design of the study, sampling and sampling method with rationale, primary and secondary data collection methods or “apparatus” and data analysis methods. According to Sapford (2006:175), research methodology can be defined as *“a philosophical stance of worldview that underlies and informs a style of research.”*<sup>4</sup> From this definition, it is apparent that the “style of research” is one of the fundamental determinants for the choice of research tools chosen by the researcher.

In this case, the style of the research is qualitative and uses qualitative research methods, which are will be explained later in this chapter. Other scholars such as Kitchin and Tate (2000) in *Conducting Research in Human Geography Theory, Methodology and Practice* argue that the research design or style, with its discriminatorily selected research methods needs to tie back to the research question and objectives. As the research is about an evaluation of an existing phenomenon and makes use of a contemporary case study, the chosen methodology and style is qualitative. In other words, the researcher ought to justify why he/she has chosen a particular research style with its tools and techniques over other styles and techniques. The following subsections will do exactly that. They will explain the chosen research style, the techniques or methods to be applied, and towards the end, will provide a justification for why they have been chosen. Copies of all ‘instruments’ used to gather the information such as details of meetings observed and questionnaires are included in the appendices of this dissertation.

### 4.1 THE MAIN RESEARCH METHOD

The research design and style is interpretive and investigative in nature. They are interventionist where the qualitative research methods are applied in practice. The research methodology is echoed in the title of this dissertation, namely that it is an evaluative case study. In order to draw the necessary conclusions, the study follows the universal pattern of applied qualitative methods.

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<sup>4</sup> (Cited from <http://englishforuniversity.com> website accessed on 07 April 2013)

However, and not as a standalone method, there will be basic statistical analysis and interpretation of Census data to be combined with qualitative analysis of results.

## **4.2 AN EVALUATIVE ANALYSIS**

The approach to data gathering and analysis is that of evaluating an existing planning intervention. In this way, information will be gathered and interpreted in answering the research questions. The main research question has been stated as *being “are current strategic planning tools adequate in equipping the district municipality in its quest of becoming a metropolitan municipality?”* The linked question that has been used in collecting data through interviews is that *“what would it be like to live, work, grow and play in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu District ‘Family of Municipalities’, should they become a single metropolitan municipality?”*. As it can be seen that the main research question is broad, the sub-questions then narrow it down. Broad as it is, the main question indicates that the research problem is futuristic and deals with or about an uncertain future. Furthermore, it indicates that the conundrum at hand is a complex one. Therefore, the research evaluates the current strategic planning tools used in the built environment to test their effectiveness against the criteria for metropolitan municipalities. The research also takes a retrospective view of the journey that the District has taken in its application. There are many role-players and diverse *“rules of the game”*. The *“strategic planning tools for the built environment”* can also be regarded as part of the main methodology themselves. However, the approach is that of evaluating these rather than reinventing the wheel.

## **4.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

Qualitative research methods have been used in the gathering, analysis and presentation of data. Sources of data include primary data, namely books and journal articles. A process of desktop data extraction, critical review, interpretation and integration into the argument has been used as a way of solving the research problem.

### **4.3.1 Primary Sources /Empirical Information**

Firstly, the researcher will utilise face-to-face or structured interviews. Secondly, the observation of focus groups as a qualitative research method in conjunction with interviews. During the focus groups, the researcher will be a ‘participant-observer’ rather than a normal participant or facilitator. Ralston and Wilson (2006) have stated that there is benefit in this approach where the researcher



can be a member of the group and conceals his or her observer status to ensure that there is maximum benefit from observing and recording the interactions of others. The information will then be deductively utilised in informing the argument and building a case that will either prove or disprove the hypothesis.

#### **4.3.2 Secondary Sources**

A review of precedent studies, published articles, authors who have written about other authors on the subject, newspaper articles, information from the Internet and Census data. All the information consulted will be fully acknowledged and referenced accordingly.

#### **4.4 JUSTIFICATION**

The already outlined research design with its methods, tools and techniques has been chosen since the research style is interpretive, investigative and thus the methods of observation, interviewing and some form of statistical analysis fit well. In addition, case studies fit well with qualitative research methods. Furthermore, the qualitative research methodology is relevant since the research is a case study, observatory and interactive. The researcher currently works in the context and interacts with the data and other role-players.

Since the research is applied work, its recommendations have the potential of being used by the district municipality. As a result, officials in the district municipality have supported the research process and agreed to be interviewed for it. The uMgungundlovu District supports the research hence the interview samples includes the five senior managers and the municipal manager. Furthermore, the Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) in KwaZulu-Natal has also indicated that it backs the research. It therefore has relevance for the development of contemporary planning approaches in advising emerging and existing metropolitan areas. The research findings add to the current debate about the efficiency and use of strategic planning tools for the built environment.

#### 4.5 DATA COLLECTION

Empirical evidence has been collected through face-to-face interviews and focus group observations, in the manner detailed as follows. A series of interviews were conducted for a duration of 20 minutes on Friday 13/12/2013:08h00-14h30 and on Tuesday 17/12/2013:08h00-16h30 with all of the five uMgungundlovu District Municipality's senior managers as the sample. In addition, the same questionnaire was circulated to the senior managers to complete prior to the interviews. This study applied the discriminatorily selected sample or purposive sampling method used in qualitative research. More detail of the sample method is provided below.

#### 4.6 SAMPLE

The sample constituted of five senior managers (with their assigned code numbers for presentation of the results) who were interviewed namely:-

1. the Municipal Manager (code number 1) ;
2. the Senior Manager: Financial Services (code number 3);
3. the Senior Manager : Community Services (code number 4);
4. the Senior Manager: Corporate Services (code number 2); and,
5. the Senior Manager: Technical Services (code number 5).

**Table 2: Sample Characteristics**

NO.	RESPONDENT'S CODE NUMBER	RESPONDENT'S NAME	DURATION	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS AS A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE
1.	1	Municipal Manager	20 minutes	The Accounting Officer, who heads the entire administration of the District Municipality.
2.	3	Senior Manager: Financial Services	20 minutes	A senior manager responsible for budget, revenue collection, debtors' management, supply chain and other financial management.
3.	2.	Senior Manager: Corporate Services	20 minutes	A senior manager responsible for human resources management and general administration.

4.	4.	Senior Manager: Community Services	20 minutes	A senior manager responsible for disaster management, local economic development, spatial and environmental and all other social programmes.
5.	5	Senior Manager: Technical Services	20 minutes	A senior manager responsible for infrastructure development and capital works.

Source: P Fakude, 2014

#### 4.7 FOCUS GROUP OBSERVATIONS

According to Bloor, et.al. (2001) the researcher can apply the observation methodology of collecting empirical data either as a standalone or adjunct to other methods. In the case of this dissertation, data were collected through observation and face to face interviews as already stated in the methodology chapter. Furthermore, Bloor, et.al. (2001) argue that the observer can either reveal her or his observer status within a focus group or conceal it. In case of the former, the observer would participate in the focus group activities or be the facilitator, and in the case of the latter, the observer can also participate, be the facilitator or where there is an external facilitator. Observation of focus groups has been cited as one of the most effective methods for data collection as participants are in a relaxed environment, and it is also recommended that focus groups are of a sizeable size so that they can be managed easily. In addition, focus groups can meet at any given stage of the project i.e. at its inception where they agree on research objectives and they can also meet at the end to evaluate the research findings. Bloor et.al.(2001) mention that when focus groups are used for public participation, members of the public could even demand to set the project priorities and make value judgements about the project, which can create conflict between them and the experts.

The observation of focus groups was also used to collect empirical evidence on the following:-

- **uMgungundlovu District Municipality's Management Committee (MANCO)** - comprising of five Heads of Departments (HODs) or Section 56 managers and five other additional section 56 managers who report to the municipal manager. The researcher had been authorized by the

municipal manager to attend the MANCO meetings, and has been allowed to observe the proceeding without his observatory role being known to the participants. This has enhanced the authenticity of the observations.

- **The Municipal Managers Forum**-comprising all the eight municipal managers of the “District Family” of municipalities. Fortunately, the researcher was appointed by the municipal manager and other seven municipal managers to be the secretariat of this forum when it deliberated on the metropolitan application. Furthermore, there is written permission signed by the district municipal manager, which ethically allowed the researcher to conduct this research. The meeting’s proceedings, the workshops and the minutes were observed in order to inform this research. The gathered information has been used in the SWOT analysis and generally in recording and analysing the perceptions of the various stakeholders.
- **The Metropolitan-Application Steering Committee including the Mayors’ Forum:** comprising of all the eight mayors of the “District Family” of municipalities. The observation was done at a workshop held on 16 July 2013 where the participants deliberated on the SWOT analysis of the application.

#### **4.8 THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE CODING OF THE RESULTS**

The interview questions stem from the guiding question: *“what would it be like to live, grow and play in an amalgamated municipality?”* There were thirteen (13) questions for the five interviewees. The interview questions addressed the multi-dimensions of the study, which were summed-up in the paraphrased question: *“Will the future municipality be sustainable in a total environmental sense: socially, economically, ecologically and administratively?”* and the other sub-questions in the light of the main question are addressed in the analysis and discussion of the results chapter. A copy of the full research questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

The results or synthesized answers are presented on a coding sheet that is based on the questions’ corresponding numbers. Since most of the questions were open-ended, the coding sheet will be simple and will have two columns divided between a themed-response and the respondent’s number.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

The methodology or tactical route that this research has taken has been presented in this chapter. The research style and main method is that of qualitative research. It is qualitative since the enquiry is that of a case study format. Universally it has become a norm that case studies adopt a qualitative research methodology. The researcher is part of the institution that he is researching thus the observation and contact interviews have been selected as the best apparatus for empirical data collection. However, the researcher will avoid bias in interpreting the results. Furthermore, other methods such as review of published materials, both from primary and secondary sources, have also been applied. The research process has received ethical endorsement from the municipal manager of the District. All the supporting evidence is contained in the Appendices of this dissertation report. Finally, the next chapter provides a closer look at the actual strategic planning tools that are used in the district and evaluates them against the requirements for metropolitan planning.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: AN EVALUATIVE ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOLS USED BY THE UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT**

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### **5.0. INTRODUCTION**

As stated in Chapter One, this research intends to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment by using the contemporary case study of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's application for metropolitan status. In this way, the chapter provides the results of an evaluation of the strategic planning tools that are currently being used by the district planners. It highlights those tools that can still be used for future planning by the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The results from focus group observations are also presented. These include the results after the use of a SWOT analysis for projecting the idea of what the future metropolitan municipality would look like. It is in this chapter that all the findings of the research are provided and then analysed to give meaning to them. It shows the interrelationship between the key findings of the research and conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis. It is in this chapter that the gathered fieldwork is presented and synthesized. The chapter demonstrates how well the objectives of the research are proven or met.

### **5.1. AN EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOLS USED BY THE DISTRICT PLANNERS AND WHETHER THEY CAN ASSIST THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS FROM DISTRICT TO METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

The following discussion presents an evaluation of the existing strategic planning tools used in the study area, which have contributed to its unique characteristics. As outlined in the introductory chapter, the study area consists of eight distinctive municipalities including the District itself. Map 1 has shown the locality of the study area.

#### **5.1.1 Spatial Development Framework (SDF) Higher-Level Analysis**

The effective use of a Spatial Development Framework (SDF) as one of the strategic planning tools for the built environment is considered here. The SDF can be an effective strategic planning tool for a metropolitan or any other category of municipality if its purpose is unambiguously comprehended, appropriately structured and implemented accordingly. According to Dewar (2013, presenting a lecture in Pietermaritzburg), the primary purpose of an SDF is that of directing future investment in a municipality. He argued that it is not for controlling land-uses. This control should be left to other

tools such as land use or planning schemes<sup>5</sup>, which are lower layer plans in a hierarchy or package of plans. As the package of plans is developed, the degree of detail and control is increased and is refined. Thus, Dewar's point is that the role of strategic plans is not one of detail but direction. The map in Map 2 is the current uMDM's SDF and the future would be an amalgamated map of all the municipalities that form the uMDM's area of jurisdiction.

The following discussion of the uMgungundlovu District's Spatial Development Framework (SDF) draws largely from the existing information, and draws upon the current Integrated Development Plan (IDP), its supporting sector plans and other statutory and non-statutory sector plans. An analysis of the settlements hierarchy as defined by the order of services and presented in the SDF can be summarised as follows:

- There is a high concentration of higher order services in the urban core areas of the city of Pietermaritzburg, its suburbs and townships within Msunduzi Municipality;
- Secondary service centres are located in Howick town, its suburbs and townships within uMngeni Municipality;
- Richmond town and its surrounding residential areas within Richmond Municipality provide tertiary services;
- Then Camperdown village town, with its surrounding residential areas at Mkhambathini Municipality provides lesser order services;
- Mooi River village town with its built environment within Mpofana Municipality is the lowest settlement in the hierarchy with minimal services; and,
- The rural centres remain where with basic services are provided.

There are a number of rural areas and the Rural Services Systems located within the District including:-

- Wartburg, followed by New-Hanover, which is the administrative centre, Dalton and other rural settlements mainly characterized by agricultural land-use (commercial and subsistence) and homesteads- within uMshwathi Municipality; and,

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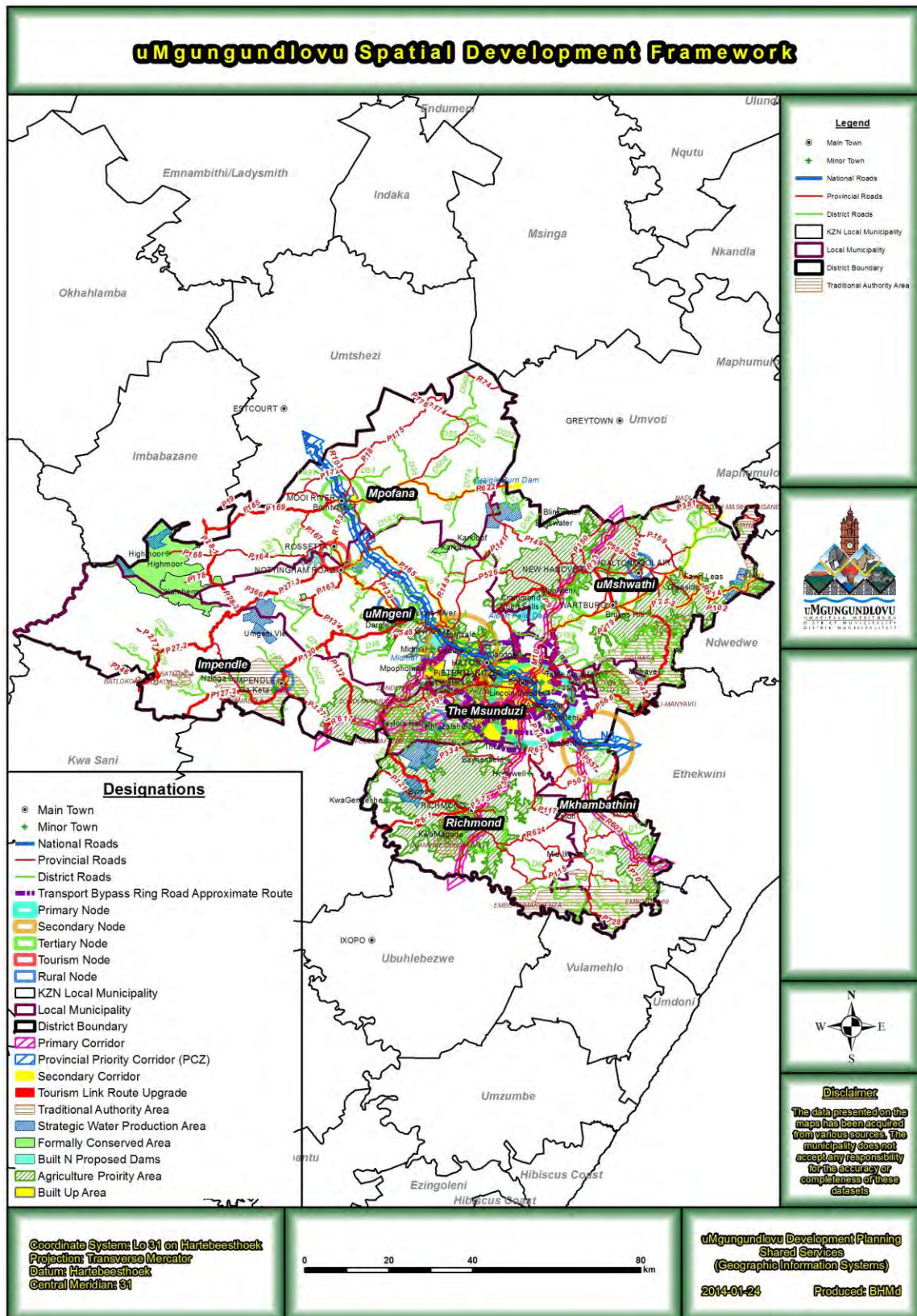
<sup>5</sup> Land Use or Planning Schemes have also been referenced in the literature as Town Planning Schemes and Zoning Schemes. In KwaZulu-Natal the introduction of the Planning and Development Act introduced a change in terminology from Town Planning Scheme (Natal Ordinance) to Scheme.

- Impendle Village-Town within Impendle Municipality with low order commercial, administrative and other services. In 2011, the municipality concluded an Urban Development Framework, which proposes significant future developments which, when implemented, have the potential of changing this village town.

Both the nodal hierarchy of settlements and the rural centres are presented on the SDF which is presented on the following page.



Map 2: Current uMgungundlovu District Spatial Development Framework (SDF) 2013



Source: uMDM IDP-SDF 2013/2014

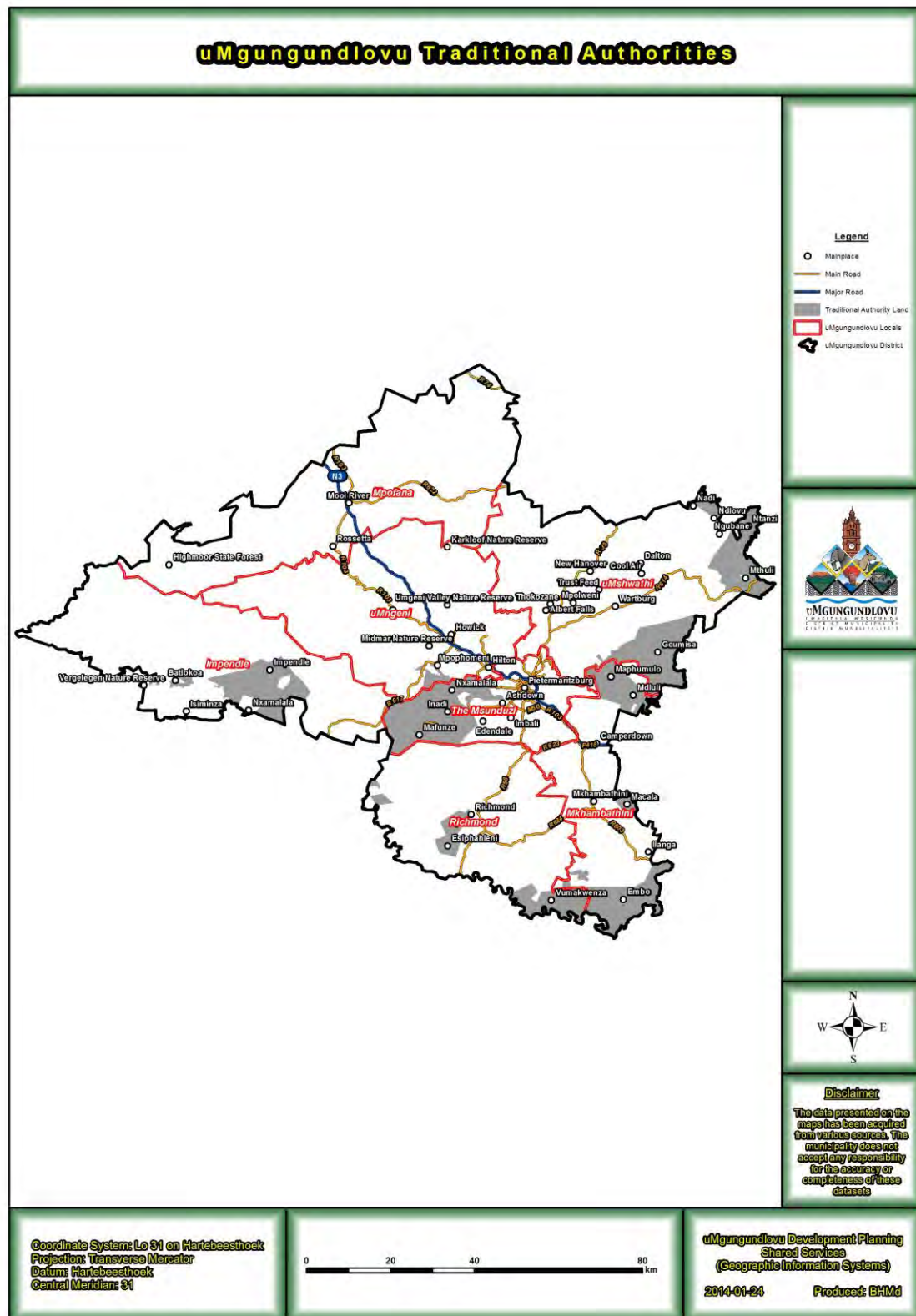
### 5.1.2 Development Nodes

The uMDM Spatial Development Framework has identified primary, secondary, tertiary, rural and tourism nodes within the plan based on a hierarchical order of services. These are listed below-

- The Primary Node, which consists of the urban complex of Pietermaritzburg / Ashburton / Edendale. This is a centre with high levels of economic development and the potential for growth and expansion, serving the regional economy and beyond and is generally recognised as an emerging metropolitan area.
- Secondary Nodes are urban centres with a second tier of services rendered after primary nodes. The two secondary nodes are the Howick / Hilton / Mpophomeni complex and the Camperdown / Cato Ridge area.
- Tertiary Nodes are centres with lower order services and are characterised by predominant agricultural activity. The tertiary nodes are Mooi River / Bruntville, New Hanover / Wartburg and Richmond.
- Rural Nodes are centres that fulfil the function of a rural service centre or system to the local area. The rural nodes are Dalton / Cool Air, Impendle and Vulindlela. Services that can be found in these nodes include Police Services, Administration Services, Clinics, and low level of retail services, Mobile Services, Pension Pay-out Points and a range of social facilities including a Community Hall.
- Tourism Node: the current SDF only limits this crucial node to the villages of Rosetta and Nottingham Road within Mpofana Municipality. The current SDF review will have to expand its scope to be inclusive in terms of the 'Midlands Meander' and other areas with tourism potential in the entire district.

The following Maps are part of the district's SDF, which is reviewed annually, using in-house GIS specialists.

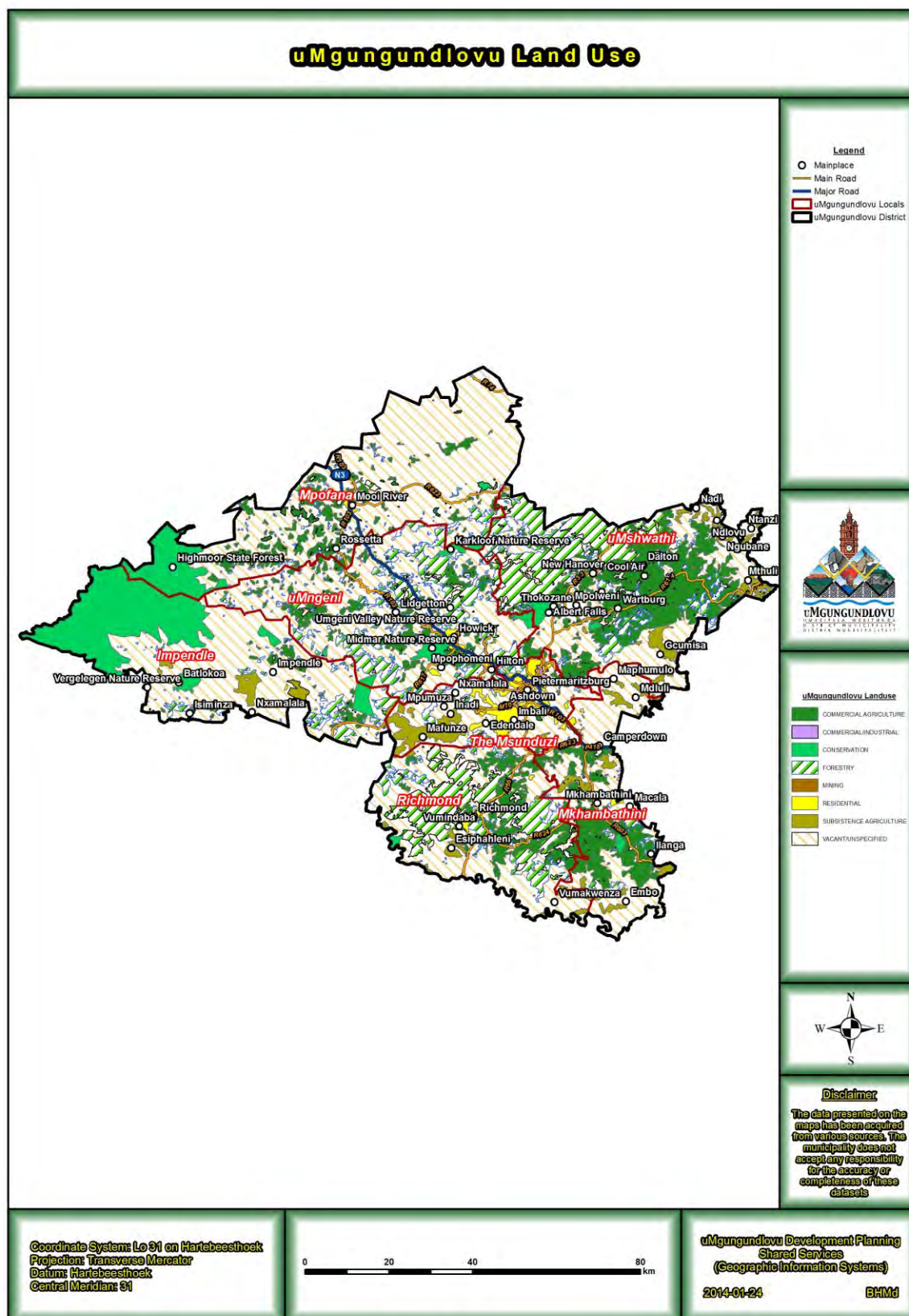
Map 3: uMgungundlovu District- Traditional Authority Areas



Source: UMDM IDP-SDF 2013/2014

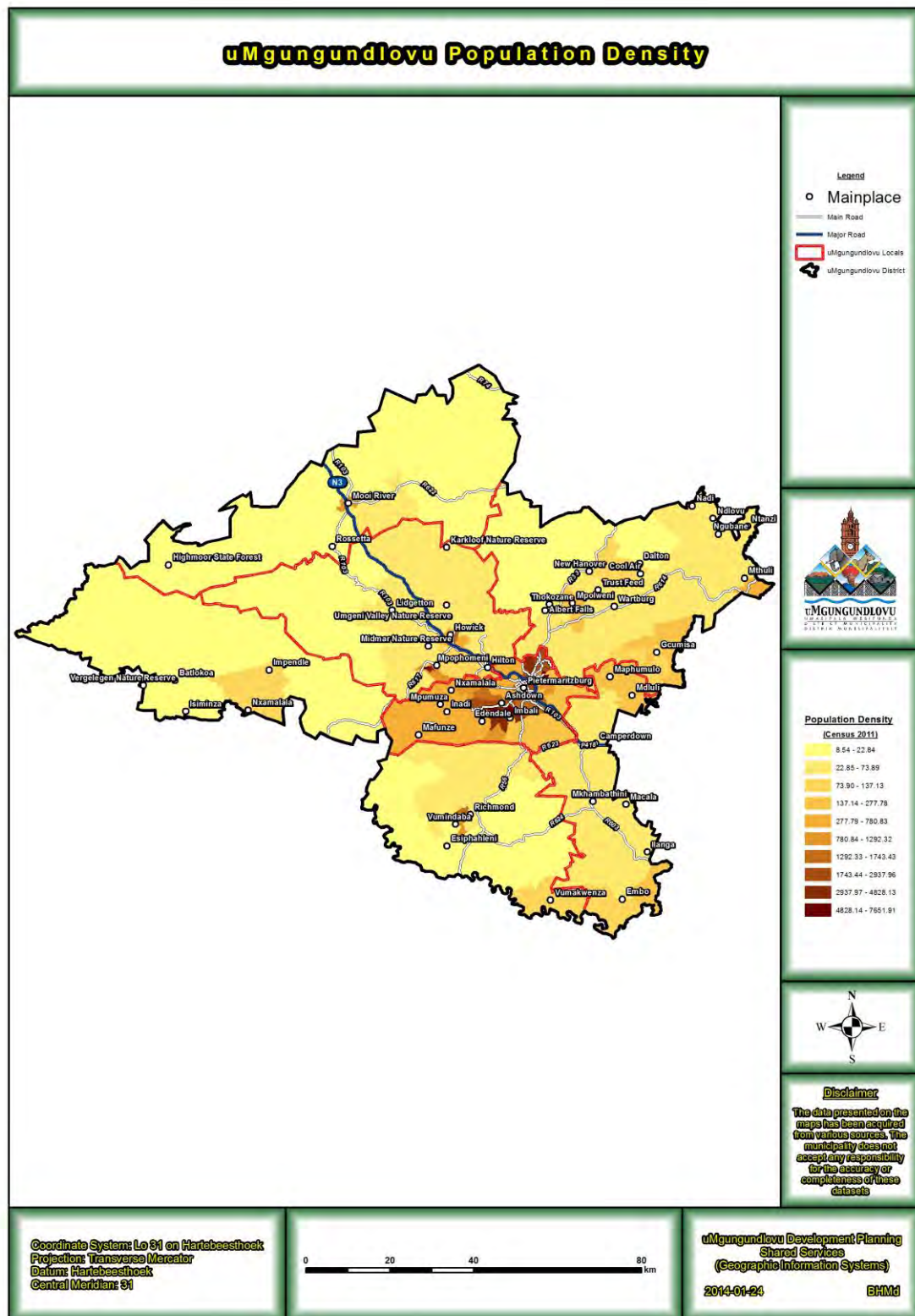


Map 4: Land-Use in the District



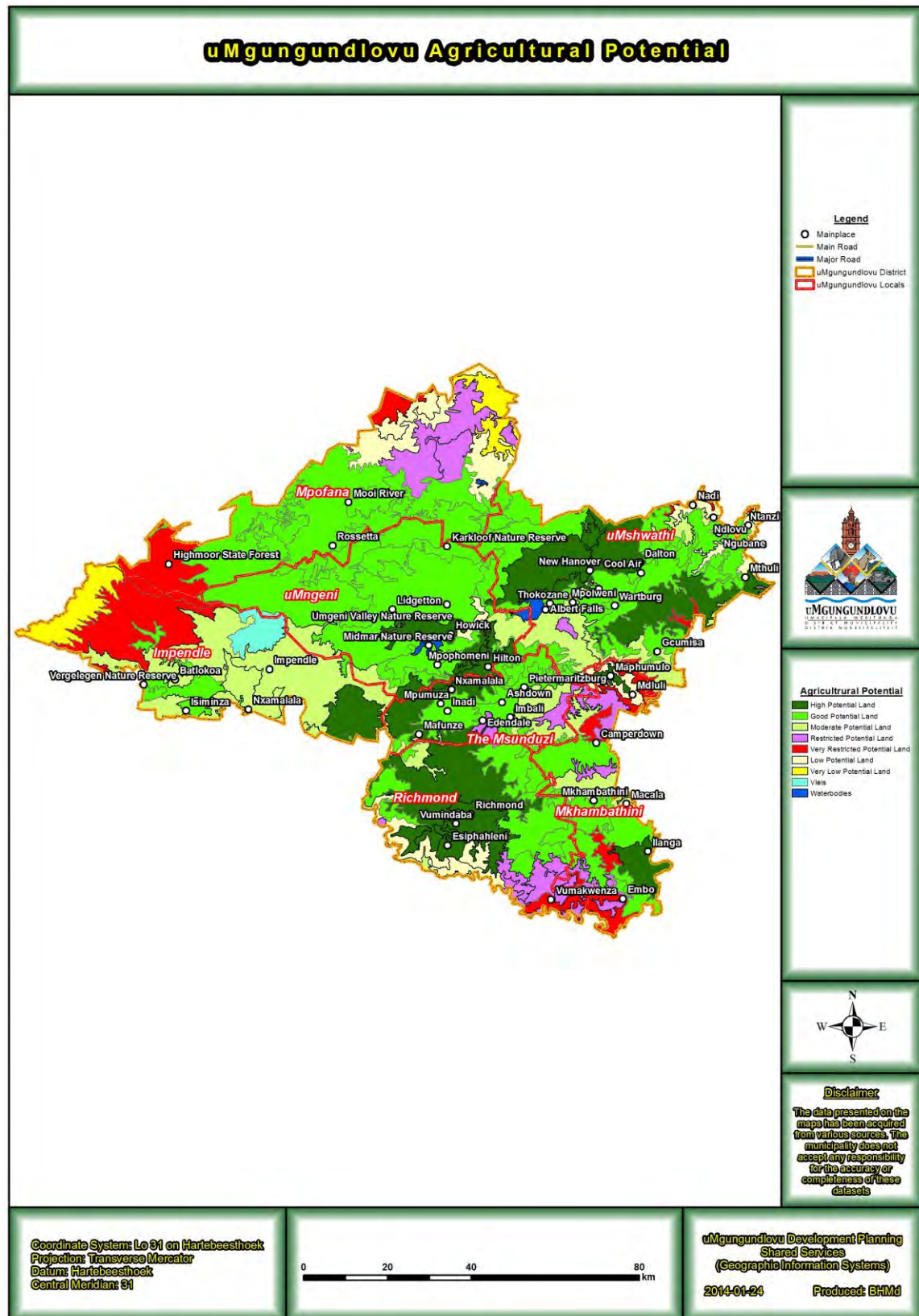
Source: UMDM IDP-SDF 2013/2014

Map 5: Population Density



Source: uMDM IDP 2013/2014

Map 6: Agricultural Potential



Source: uMDM IDP 2013/2014

- The preceding maps indicate the nodes, roads, natural resources and other built infrastructure. The second map shows the land uses namely commercial agriculture, industry, conservation, forestry, mining, residential, subsistence agriculture and vacant or unspecified. Agriculture is a dominant activity and the 'unspecified' include open spaces. The third map indicates the spatial location of the Traditional Authority areas. The land under traditional leadership has different tenure than that under formalized areas. In the former, land is owned communally and under customary law where the traditional leadership is custodian of the land under the Zulu King. The applicable legislation is the Ingonyama Trust Act. This set-up makes development uneven between the rural and urban areas as investors become weary of the security of tenure in rural areas. However, the Ingonyama Trust Board has recently upgraded the land tenure system in areas under its jurisdiction to be in the form of long-term (up to 99 years) lease agreements. The fourth map is of the population density, reinforcing the argument that the urban core has higher density when compared to the peripheral areas. Lastly, the fifth map indicates that there is high agricultural potential as the District is in the famous KwaZulu-Natal mist belt region, which is well known for a favourable climate for agricultural production.

There are also sector-specific plans on strategic infrastructure such as the water services development plan, integrated transportation plan, human settlements sector plan, electricity master plan and others that informs the SDF. The role of these sector-specific plans is especially to indicate the availability of bulk services such as water and others in support of the planned development, both at present and in the future.

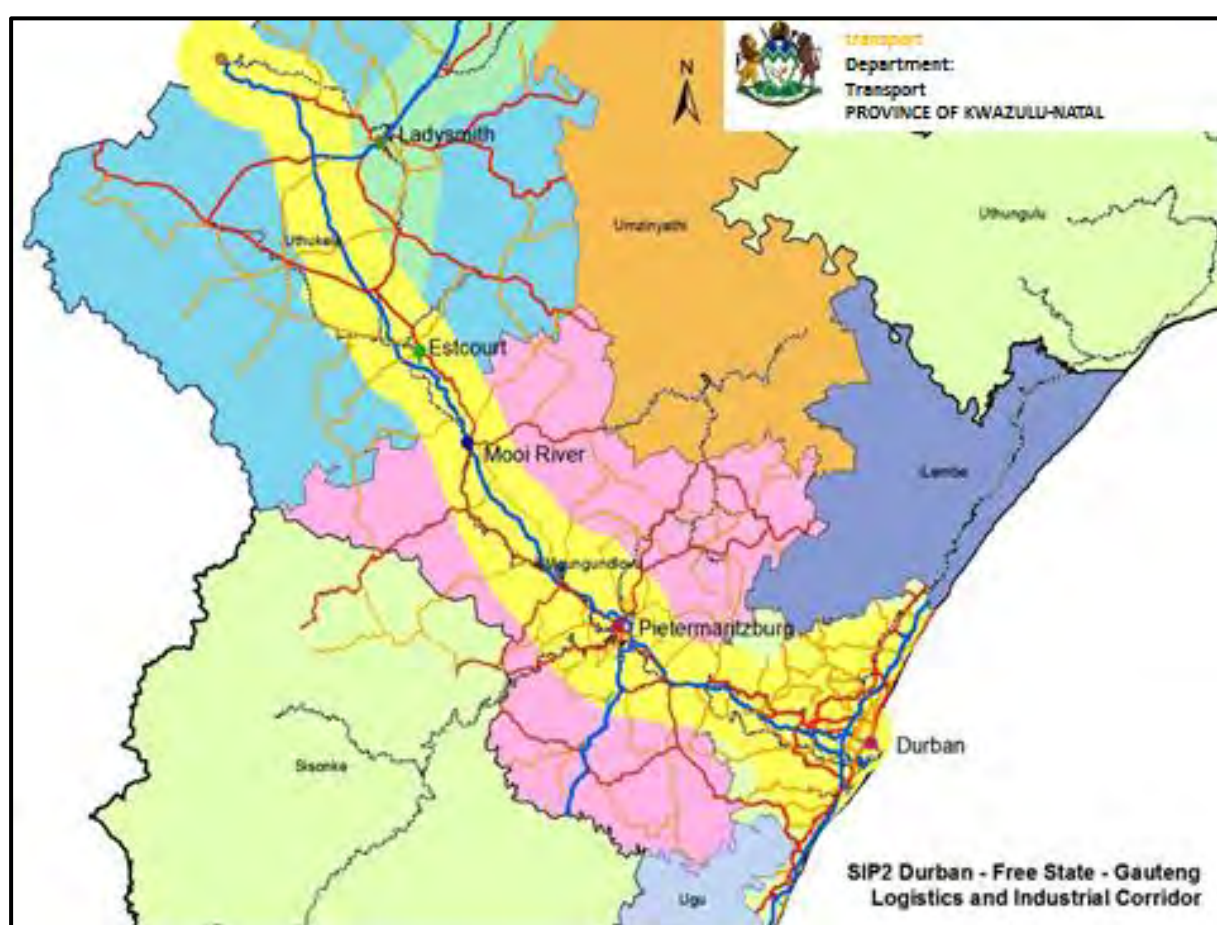
#### **5.1.1. MOVEMENT CORRIDORS**

The Provincial Priority Corridor located from eThekweni to Newcastle includes centres that fall within the district municipality. Camperdown – Msunduzi – Mooi River on the National Road - N3 have also been identified in terms of the Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs) as SIP 2. This category indicates that the road constitutes an important route for facilitating the movement of goods and services between KwaZulu-Natal-Free State and Gauteng Provinces (see Map 7). The main function of this corridor is mobility. It has limited access because its design facilitates long distance movement of automobiles. However, the municipalities along it see it as a development opportunity to expand their economic footprint, which may conflict with its primary function. The district municipality and other role-players like Department of Transport (DoT), South African National Roads



Agency Limited (SANRAL) and others will have to manage this process with high circumspection in order to balance the expectation of communities and the function of the corridor. Other primary corridors include Eastern Cape – Richmond – Msunduzi – Greytown on R56 and R33, Camperdown– Umbumbulu–South Coast on R603, Msunduzi–Boston–Underberg on P7-2 and Howick–Boston– Underberg on R617.

**Map 7: Durban-Free State-Gauteng N3 Movement Corridor / “SIP2”**



Source: KZN Department of Transport, 2013



### 5.1.2. Secondary Corridors

There are a number of secondary corridors linking into the national freeway. Their function is to link nodes inside the district, and provide connection with external nodes. An example of such a corridor is the R103, which serves as both an established tourist route and an alternative route to the N3. These roads also serve as alternative routes from the national roads. Other proposed secondary corridors are Howick – Mooi River on the R103, Mooi River–Greytown on the R622, Albert Falls – Wartburg–North Coast on the R614. Lower-order roads such as local and access roads will not be discussed in this research since they form part of more refined planning tools like Local Area Plans, Precinct Plans and Land-Use Scheme Maps and the focus of this research is on strategic planning tools, which are at a higher-level.

## 5.2. THE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Flowing from the discussion of the SDF with its road-network, the district has collaborated with the Department of Transport (DoT) to upgrade its road infrastructure and network. Table 3 shows the current District (D) road lengths and their condition. It indicates the grade of the road e.g. whether it has a gravel top or surfaced top. The available data includes information up to 2012. The Department of Transport still has to implement new projects in a three year cycle i.e. 2013/2014 to 2016/2017 financial years and this data were not available within the research framework.

**Table 3: uMDM District Road Lengths (in kilometres) as at January 2012**

LOCAL COUNCIL	KZ NUMBER	GRAVEL (KMS)	SURFACED (KMS)	TOTAL (KMS)
uMshwathi	KZ 221	509.31	320.58	<b>829.89</b>
uMngeni	KZ 222	295.68	188.31	<b>483.99</b>
Mpofana	KZ 223	297.15	147.37	<b>444.52</b>
Impendle	KZ 224	342.2	47.25	<b>389.45</b>
Msunduzi	KZ 225	327.15	190.55	<b>517.7</b>
Mkhambathini	KZ 226	367.23	162.24	<b>529.47</b>
Richmond	KZ 227	315.6	117.55	<b>433.15</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>2454.32</b>	<b>1173.85</b>	<b>3628.17</b>

Source: KZN Department of Transport, 2012

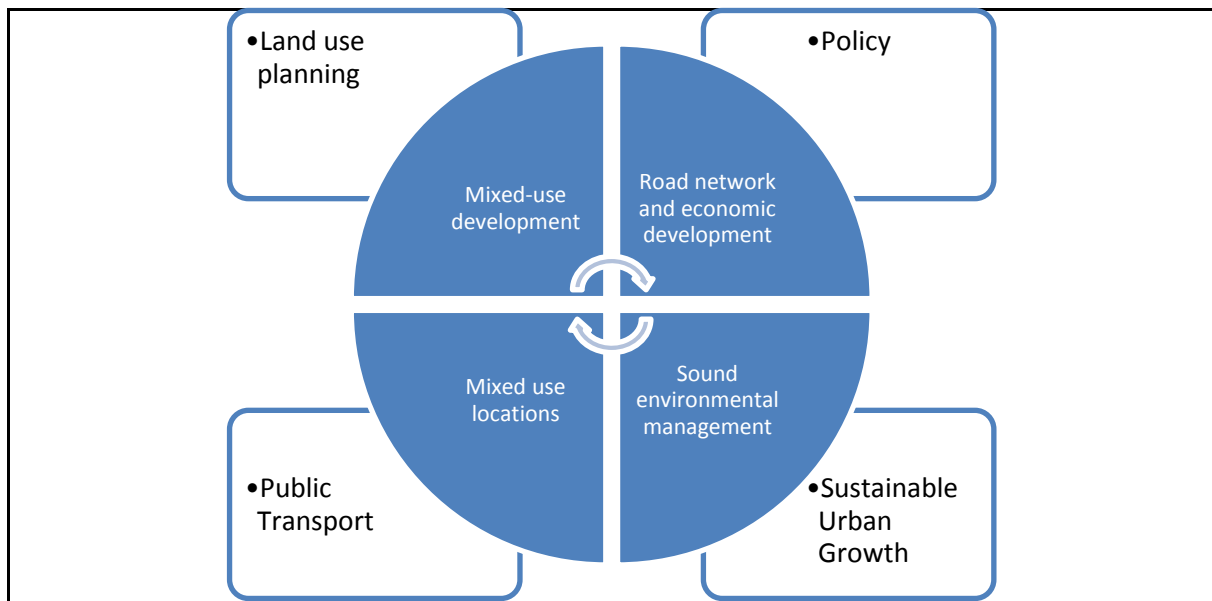
Table 4 below details the DoT's targets for only the 2014/2015 financial year:

**Table 4: The Department of Transport 2014/2015 Targets for uMDM**

DESCRIPTION	TARGET 2013/14
Local Roads Construction	32 km
Causeways	5
Re-Gravelling of P and D Roads	220 km
Road Marking and Road Studs	330 km
Guard Rail Repairs & Maintenance	6 200 m
Blading of Gravel Roads	6 500 km
Black Top Patching	35 000 m <sup>2</sup>

The targets presented in Table 4 above, indicate that there will be improvements in mobility, which is one of the necessary variables for success in metropolitan planning. As an example, the well-known city of Curitiba's success story is embedded in its integrated transportation system or network. According to Rabinovitch (1996), the following are the critical structuring-planning elements that contributed to Curitiba's success:

**Figure 8: Structuring Planning Elements for a Successful Metropolitan Area**



**Source: P Fakude (2013), based on Rabinovitch (1996)**

The structuring elements shown in Figure 8 are relevant to the uMDM's case since the area is vast and needs a viable transportation network. Furthermore, Rabinovitch (1996) uses Lerner's (the urban planner and later Mayor of Curitiba in Brazil) argument that there are three critical elements that shape the urban environment and these are sustainability, mobility and identity. This study agrees with this sentiment, as sustainability is essential for a viable metropolitan area. Secondly, mobility is about moving from one location to another for various purposes. Thirdly, identity is about character and it is an essential element. The built environment must be planned for the people or its citizens who must have a sense of belonging to it.

Despite planned transportation upgrades to the uMgungundlovu District's urban core area, there are still major problems such as traffic congestion. The photograph in Plate 1 below was taken by the author at Retief Street, which is a downtown area of Pietermaritzburg at about twelve o'clock 12h00 mid-day, and depicts heavy traffic congestion.

**Plate 1: Traffic Congestion and Limited Public Transportation Options**



**Source: P. Fakude, 23 December 2013**

The picture illustrates the poor planning of road infrastructure as roads are planned inwardly to the city and there is insufficient provision for letting traffic away from the city centre. In other words, commuters who need to travel from home to work or back from work to home, have to pass through the city centre, which causes traffic congestion. Mini-bus taxis are a dominant mode of public transport, which adds to the problem of congestion as they can take only fifteen (15) to twenty three (23) passengers, unlike buses, which can take up to eighty (80) passengers and trains that can take more per single trip. However, one of the city regeneration projects is the planned '*integrated rapid public transport network*', which is aimed at easing traffic congestion and improving mobility. Pietermaritzburg can learn lessons from other larger cities such as Curitiba where link roads take traffic away from the city centre and are complemented by an intermodal transportation network.

### **5.3. ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

The District has the following strategic planning tools for environmental planning and management:-

- Climate Change Response Strategy-study;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Report (SEAR) and,
- Biodiversity Sector Plan;
- Strategic Environmental Management Plan (SEMP).

All the above strategic maps and plans are synthesised into the Integrated Development Plan and inform the Spatial Development Framework.

The uMgungundlovu District has uMngeni River, a significant catchment that runs across it to neighbouring districts and eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. Therefore, it is critical that as part of its strategic planning, the district protects this crucial fluvial system for long-term sustainability. The above-mentioned plans elaborate on the protection of biodiversity, public open spaces, wetlands, rivers and soils. These instruments also assist in mitigating development pressures without hindering development. This direction will lead the municipality to the attainment of sustainable development.

### **5.4 THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

According to research undertaken by the uMDM in 2012, the district has been identified as one of three climate change hotspots in South Africa. Research into climate change has revealed clear warming trends, which have already occurred between 1950 and 1999. According to this study, it is projected that between 2045 and 2060 the average annual mean daily temperature will increase by more than two (2) degrees Celsius across the entire uMDM area with some parts of uMngeni and Impendle municipalities increasing by up to two point five (2.5) degrees Celsius. Such an increase in the average annual mean temperature will result in impact on food security, vector borne diseases, heat stress, distribution of plants and animals and irrigation. The study includes data on the 'mean annual temperatures for January; mean annual rainfall, patterns in the months of highest rainfall and extreme short-term rainfall events'. The overall conclusions of this study are that the District will

face a warmer and wetter future. When linked with the Disaster Management Plan, this study would also assist towards developing a safer and resilient municipality.

## **5.5 AN EVALUATION OF OTHER STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOLS USED IN THE uMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

There are a number of other tools used by planners and officials within the municipality to enable strategic planning. These are outlined below.

### **5.5.1 Vision Statement**

A vision statement is a mandatory element of the Integrated Development Plan and has been translated through the hierarchy of plans from the strategic to the local level. This is achieved by providing more detail to the vision statement in each level of planning undertaken. At the most detailed level of the package of plans – the Scheme, the vision statement informs the Statement of Intent (Sol) for each zone. In the case of the district municipality of uMgungundlovu, the Vision statement is enabling, however the current strategies have been focused on the elimination of backlogs and the provision of access to basic services as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2014. In terms of the actual strategies, which will enable the municipality to evolve into a metropolitan municipality, the vision statement encapsulates the ‘wish list’ of the municipality – which is an objective to work towards as an outcome. There are however additional tools or mechanisms available to the municipality in support of its vision statement.

### **5.5.2 Catalytic Projects outlined in the Service Delivery Plan**

In recent months, CoGTA and the Office of the Premier have charged all ‘district families of municipalities’ to compile lists of ‘catalytic’ projects that will have a meaningful impact. The author’s understanding of a catalytic project is one that has a high impact or potential in terms of reaching more people or scale. Catalytic projects have higher budget allocations because of their impact and size. These projects have been identified from the respective IDPs to form what has been known as a ‘*Service Delivery Plan*’, which is a list of high-impact projects.

The categories of these catalytic projects are presented below and are recorded in the District’s IDP:-

#### *“Project Types*

*A -Focused on the provision and maintenance of infrastructure about electricity, water, sanitation, roads and human settlements;*

*B -Leading and sustaining urban and rural development;*

*C -Promoting sustainable change in social and economic relations;*

*D -Leveraging corridor development and rehabilitation of small towns;*

*E -Geared towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;*

*F -Geared towards massive job creation and local economic development;*

*G -Promoting Integration of Planning and Development / IDP's;*

*H -Aligned to (or Localising) Provincial and National priorities;*

*I -Promoting sustainability of the environment; and*

*J- Promoting Good Governance, Institutional Development and Financial Viability”.*

Specific projects with their allocated budgets are identified and listed under the above categories for implementation by various State departments, State-Owned Enterprises (SoEs) and the Private Sector. The current SDF is used as the spatial plan to guide the location and integration of these high-impact projects. It is the District's and its stakeholders' hopes that these catalytic projects will be one of the means to achieving its envisaged metropolitan status.

#### **5.5.3 Converting the Resolutions of the District Growth and Development Summit into Tangible Projects (in a 20-year plan)**

The name of a long-term plan that must be an outcome of the District Growth and Development Summit, which was held on 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> March 2013 is the 'District Growth and Development Plan' or DGDP. This long term Plan has been under construction from 2013 to October 2014. It is intended to align the municipality's local objectives with those outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and Plan (PGDS and PGDP). It's extended period and link to national and provincial planning tools indicates that it is strategic in nature and an

adjunct to the Integrated Development Plan. Below are the points taken from the draft DGDP under the Provincial Goal 7: Spatial Equity:-

- *“Establish a hierarchy of district nodes with clearly defined functions and interventions per node (SDF).*
- *Establish a hierarchy of district nodes with clearly defined functions and interventions per node (SDF).*
- *Building the capital city status of Msunduzi within the district.*
- *Creating functional, sustainable and attractive small towns.*
- *Development of specific corridor plans to co-ordinate interventions around district -corridors and the N3 corridor plan, which is a Provincial priority.*
- *Other Primary corridors,” etc.*

#### **5.5.4 Municipal Turn-Around Strategy (MTAS):**

This strategy is short-term and immediate as its aim is to react to problems at hand, which have been identified after an external diagnostic study. The mere fact that the diagnostic study was carried out by external officials from the CoGTA indicates that it is not wholly owned by the municipality’s top management. However, the Council needs to adopt the strategy for its implementation. The ‘turn-around’ projects that have been identified are included in the IDP. The municipality then reports regularly to CoGTA on progress regarding the projects that are in the MTAS. Once all projects have been implemented successfully, the MTAS is closed, as the municipality would have turned the corner with regards to matters that have been identified as needing to be turned-around for better. The examples of such projects include development of operational systems as information technology in billing systems, operations and maintenance, improvements of filing systems and records management.

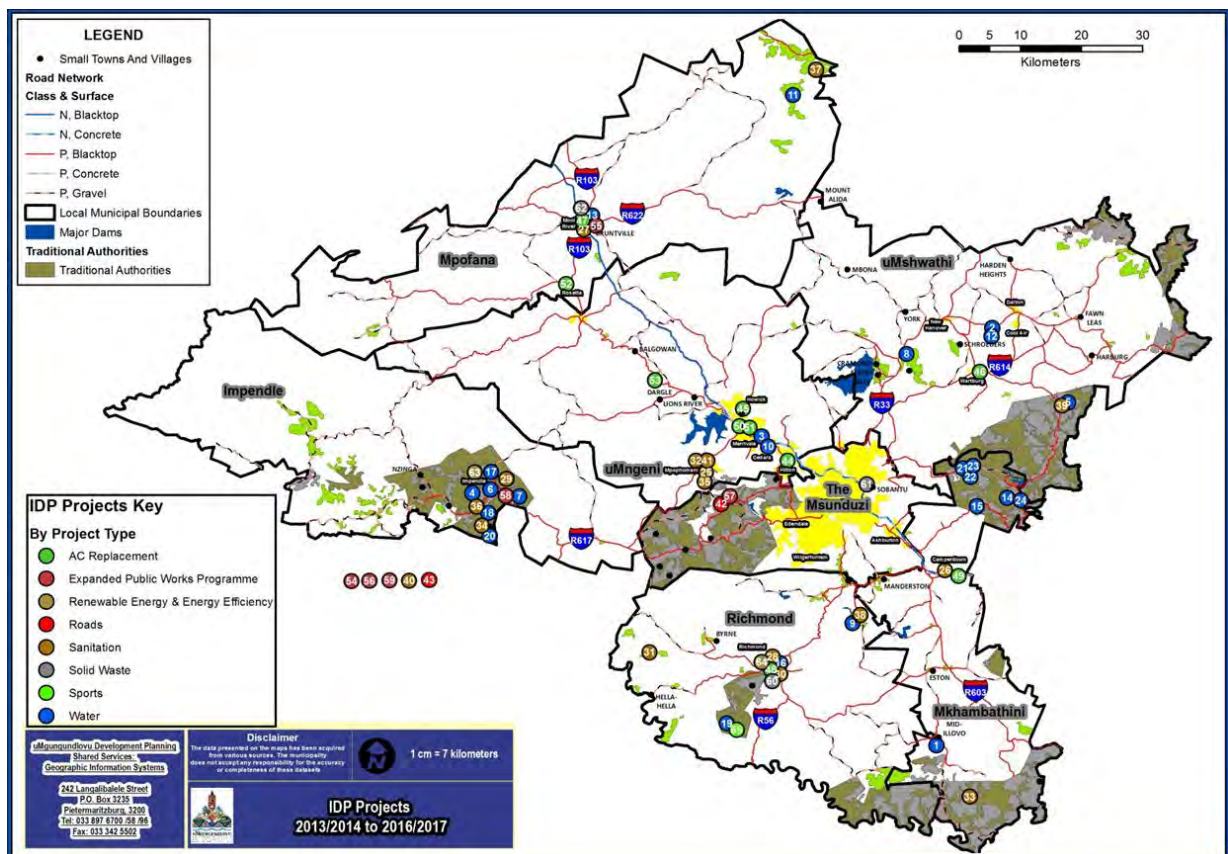
#### **5.5.5 The Five-Year Capital Investment Framework:**

The Five-Year Capital Investment Framework (CIF)-(which is sometimes linked to the three-year MTEF) is a financial plan. This strategic planning tool is part of the Spatial Development Framework and presents the allocation of the municipality’s capital budget to projects, which have been identified as critical in achieving the development outcomes of the plan. It provides the spatial location of capital works or where the municipality intends to spend its allocated capital budget. The current plan has a table that lists the projects with a map reference number, an example of the CIF



map for 2014/2015 Financial Year is shown in Map 8 below. This tool is critical as it also assists the municipality in aligning its budget to that of National and Provincial Government departments and their expenditures. It assists in showing areas for concerted investment, which guides investors and developers. If used effectively, this tool can assist the District's application for metropolitan status.

**Map 8: CIF Map of Projects' Location for 2014/2015 Financial Year,**



Source: uMDM IDP (2014/2015)

## 5.6 THE MUNICIPAL DEMARCATION BOARD'S CRITERIA AND RESPONSE TO THE uMGUNGUNDLOVU'S APPLICATION

The role of the Municipal Demarcation Board process outlined in terms of the Local Government: Demarcation Act (No. 27 of 1998) has already been explained in the Literature Review Chapter, specifically as forming part of the 'rules of the game' component of scenario planning. Here the

focus will be on how the Section 21 Notice was issued, which gave the results or the outcome of the uMDM's application. The Notice was issued on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013, and it was in media headlines (see Plate 2).

**Plate 2: The Witness Newspaper Headlines on the Municipal Demarcation Board's Decision on the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's Application 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013, Pietermaritzburg**



Source: Photograph taken by P. Fakude on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013

The Witness newspaper article broke the news that the District's application to be re-categorised as a metropolitan municipality had been turned down by the Municipal Demarcation Board. The news

was later confirmed by an official correspondence from the MDB in the form of a published Section 21 Notice issued in terms of the Municipal Demarcation Act, 27 of 1998. According to the Demarcation Board, the economic imbalance (geographically) and uneven densification of the municipality were the main reasons for the rejection of the district's application for the 2016 process in 2013. In this way, the MDB looked at various indicators, especially the spatial distribution of the population and the economy of the municipality against the qualifying criteria for an area to be considered as metropolitan area. These concerns are briefly considered. According to Coetzee (2013), Msunduzi is the largest municipality within the District contributing seventy two per cent (72%) the districts' GDP. This is followed by uMngeni with a contribution of 9 per cent (9%) and thereafter uMshwathi with seven per cent (7%). These figures indicate a considerable disparity between the municipalities located in the district area. Table 5 suggests that the economic contributions of the various local municipalities towards the district economy have stayed constant from 1996 to 2012, confirming this unbalanced relationship.

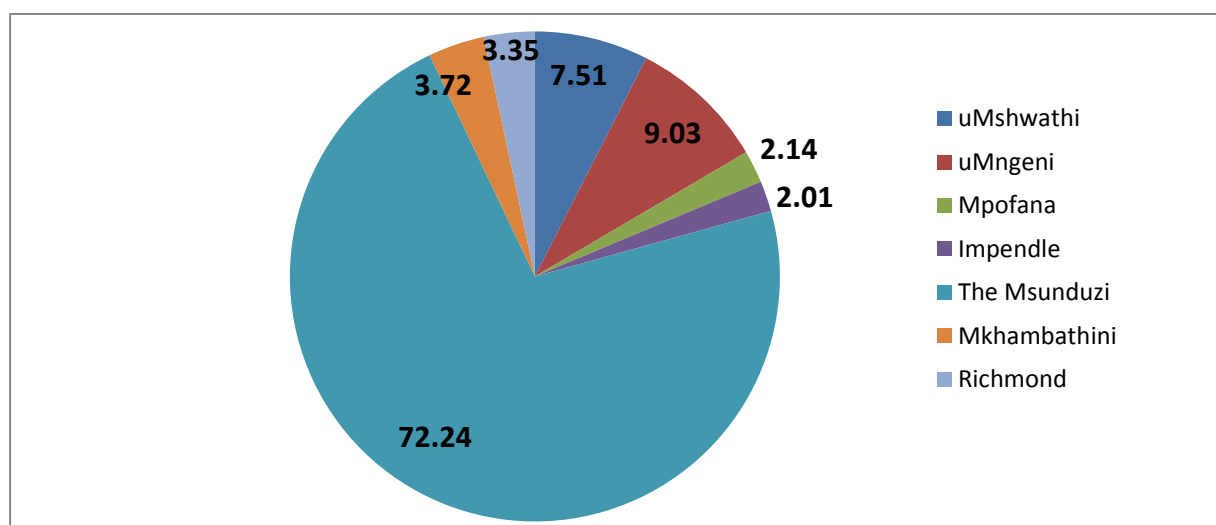
**Table 5: Municipal Contributions to the District Economy (% point, Constant 2005 Prices)**

Year	uMshwathi	uMngeni	Mpofana	Impendle	Msunduzi	Mkhambathini	Richmond
1996	7.44	8.21	2.30	2.17	72.07	4.11	3.70
2003	7.31	8.22	2.22	2.08	72.97	3.83	3.36
2011	7.41	8.86	2.12	2.01	72.51	3.74	3.33
2012	7.51	9.03	2.14	2.01	72.24	3.72	3.35

Source: Global Insight, 2013, Coetzee 2013, own calculations

Figure 9 below presents the economic sizes of the individual municipalities in the "district family".

**Figure 9: uMgungundlovu District Municipality's Gross Domestic Product Contribution Rates (% point, 2012)**



**Source: Global Insight, 2013, Coetzee 2013, own calculations**

Figure 9 displays the per capital Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the District and its seven local municipalities for the year 2012. It is clear from the figures that the uMngeni and Msunduzi Local Municipalities have out-performed the uMgungundlovu District and the remaining other five local municipalities over the period. Impendle is shown to have performed particularly badly in this period. This can be attributed to the fact, among others, that it is faced with 45% unemployment rate according to 2011 Census. Furthermore, it does not have an established industrial local economy but rather pockets of commercial farms and a predominance of subsistence farming in its rural hinterlands.

Part of the Municipal Demarcation Board's rationale for turning down the district's application for metropolitan status relied on the above information in **Table 5**, especially the economically "weak" municipalities, namely Impendle and Mpofana. These are the rural-based municipalities. This sparked controversy and an adverse response from the uMgungundlovu District as it viewed the MDB's decision as self-contradictory. The district based its counter-argument on Section 25 of the Demarcation Act where the need to rationalise the total number of municipalities within different categories and of different types to achieve the objectives of effective and sustainable service

delivery, financial viability and macro-economic stability were outlined. This was the stated objective of the new metropolitan institution.

In 2009, the Demarcation Board issued a Section 21 Notice that re-included the Msunduzi Local Municipality into the district boundaries. This was a surprising move given that it excised the municipality from the boundaries of uMgungundlovu because it was to become a metropolitan municipality in its own right. The reasons for this reversal decision have been addressed elsewhere and will not be repeated here. This re-inclusion of Msunduzi into the district area created a perception that uMgungundlovu could be considered a conurbation if it included its seven local entities, namely Msunduzi, uMngeni, Mkhambathini, Richmond, uMshwathi, Impendle and Mpofana municipalities, as depicted in the map in Map 1. Furthermore, the uMDM stated that the omission of DEM4155 was contradictory on the part of the MDB, particularly with Section 25 of the Demarcation Act, which embodies the principles of *“interdependence of people, communities and economies”*. In addition, the District was of the opinion that the Board had been applying the conurbation criteria inconsistently in considering national applications. This observation was based on the fact that other urban areas with similar geographical features had recently been amalgamated to become metropolitan municipalities, e.g. Mangaung and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipalities. However, the District expressed its respects for the ‘independence’ of the MDB in applying its mind on submitted applications.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

The preceding discussion on the evaluation of the current strategic planning tools that are used in the “District Family” of uMgungundlovu has indicated that these planning tools can contribute to the procedural and analytical process needed for the district to become a metropolitan municipality. However, they are limited in their impact by the composition of certain spatial and socio-economic variables, which are fundamental for a municipality to comply with the prescribed criteria for the approval of metropolitan status. In other words, the strategic planning tools are an enabling tools; however, they can be limited by ‘environmental determinism’ territorial competition and political dynamics. Furthermore, the success or failure of an institution to achieve its goals is dependent of effective utilisation or application of these strategic planning tools. The preceding discussion in this chapter has shown that the district has a variety of strategic planning tools at its disposal, which means that it is compliant with the law. However, according to the MDB, as shown on its response to the District’s application, the latter has not utilized the current strategic planning tools enough in addressing the current socio-economic disparities and spatial landscape. The application did not indicate how the whole municipality could be considered as an emerging conurbation. Although the

MDB appeared to be convinced that Msunduzi qualified as seen in its decision of 2009 in favour of this local municipality becoming a metro it was however not convinced that the district as a whole (all eight municipalities) was ready for metropolitan status. In response to the Board's decision in 2013, the uMgungundlovu District returned to the drawing board and is using the same and new strategic planning tools to meet the shortcomings that have been identified in their application by the MDB. However, the strategic nature of the problem at hand and the use of strategic plans is not an 'overnight' process, but it will require time. Fittingly, the district has more than five years still to plan itself towards another application for metropolitan status in 2021.

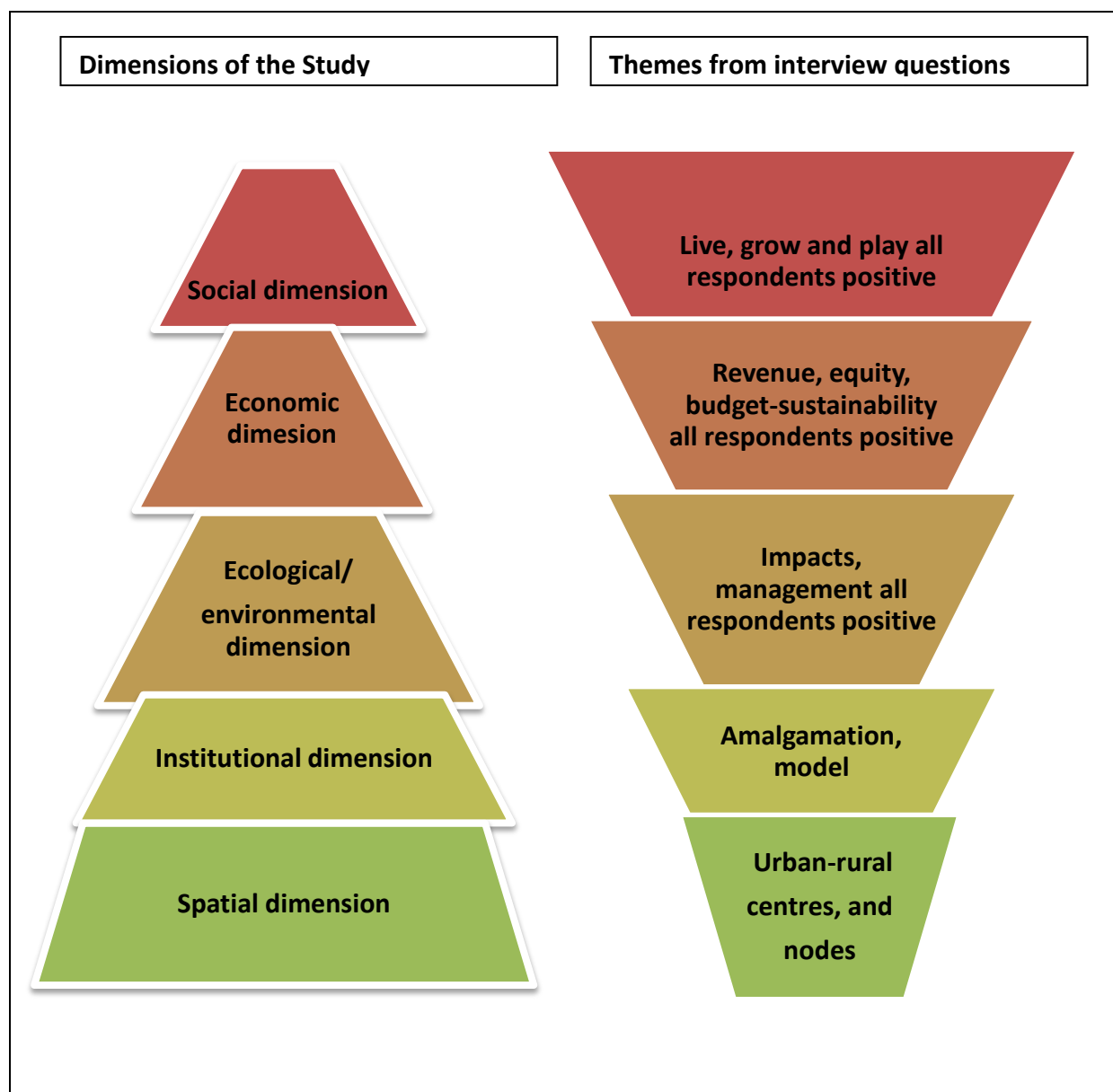
### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research findings and has been organised in terms of answers to the main research question, the sub-questions and the dimensions of the study that stimulate discussion. This chapter is about *“hammering the data until they confess”* (Owen McGee, retired Geography Professor at UKZN). It provides empirical evidence on the evaluation of the use of strategic tools for planning a future metropolitan area. As already shown in the methodology chapter, the researcher has applied the qualitative methods including formulating and asking relevant interview questions. These questions were then used to interview key officials within the municipality. Within the structure of the interview questionnaire, the District’s application for metropolitan status was the *‘unit of analysis’* or focus of interaction. Furthermore, the observation of focus groups of relevant stakeholders to the district’s application was also used as a method adjunct to interviews.

### 6.1 A PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY

For the purposes of interviewing, the framework question used was *“what would it be like to live, grow and play in an amalgamated uMgungundlovu municipality?”* Flowing from this guiding question, the specific interview questions were multi-dimensional and open-ended. The researcher has analysed the results and grouped the responses to the interview questions into common themes in a coding table. The themes have then been analysed further. Reference is made to a general discussion that has drawn from the interviews and focus group work, which is included under each question. For the interviews, where the questionnaire was used, the unit of analysis was the *‘application for metropolitan status’* which is the focus of the research topic. The following diagrammatic illustration summarizes the dimensions of the study and the keywords or themes from the interview questions.

**Figure 10: Grouping of Thematic Findings from Interviews and Focus Group Observation**



Source: P. Fakude (2013)



## 6.2 THE SOCIAL DIMENSION QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS

In response to the primary question “what it would be like to live, work, grow and play in an *amalgamated metropolitan municipality or what would be the quality of life?*” all respondents 1-5 responded as follows:-

The quality of life will improve drastically as there will be economic growth. From this response a number of conclusions can be drawn.

Common themes and points from responses included:-

- Improved quality of life; and,
- A balanced or standardization of service delivery between rural and urban could be achieved.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes all respondents’ responses to this question 1 (under possible responses of good quality of life, bad/unpleasant and neutral):

RESPONSES	RESPONDENT’S CODE
Good quality of life	1,2,3,4,5
Bad /unpleasant quality of life	None
Neutral	None

The respondents that said good quality of life based it on the principle of synergy rather than fragmentation. None of the respondents answered “*bad or unpleasant*” and none were neutral in their answers. On “*what it would be like to live, work, grow and play...*” respondents 1-5 all responded positively as they envisioned the potential future. However, a critical analysis of the above uniformity in responses indicates that all respondents seem to have not thoroughly engaged with the question critically. The interviewer tried probing techniques in order to gather more information; however, the respondents’ answers indicate that they are influenced by their philosophical stance on the matter. In other words, the respondents could not separate the independence or objective nature of the interviews but gave answers as influenced by the fact that as senior managers in the District Municipality, they are in support of the vision to become a metropolitan municipality. Nevertheless, the answers were recorded as uttered by the interviewees

and they inform the argument of this dissertation. In particular, the strategic ethos or philosophical stance of the respondents, as they are all members of the 'management committee', is that they are well versed with the strategic planning tools being used by that the municipality. Hence, their responses indicate that they have confidence on the current strategic planning tools used in preparing and moving the municipality to its desired destination.

### 6.3 A CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

The District posted a poll on its Website: [www.umdm.gov.za](http://www.umdm.gov.za) where citizens could vote under the question "should we become a metropolitan in 2016?" The author extracted the following page from the same site on 04 January 2014, and it reflected the following results:-

#### "Should we become a metropolitan municipality in 2016 "

❖ Select Poll	Should we become a metro
❖ Number of Voters	
❖ 718	
❖ First Vote	
❖ Wednesday, 04 April 2012 07:12	
❖ Last Vote	
❖ Saturday, 04 January 2014 18:16	

Should we become a metro? Should uMDM be a Metro in 2016?

The poll answers choice: Strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree

Hits	Percent	Graph
<b>Yes</b>		
530	73.8%	
<b>No</b>		
187	26%	

Source: [www.umdm.gov.za](http://www.umdm.gov.za) accessed on 04 January 2014

The above web-based poll results shows “718 voters of which “530” or 73.8% voted in favour of the metropolitan application and 187 or 26% voted against it. This result shows that although the majority of those citizens who accessed the website poll are in favour, there is still is 26% who do not support an amalgamated municipality. Public participation is supposed to be a backbone of decision-making in developmental local government as outlined in the Municipal Systems Act. Hence, it will be critical to undertake a thorough public participation programme before arriving at a decision for a change in local government status. However, a review of this aspect was hampered by the fact that the researcher could not access other records of community participation other than the poll. It is recognised that only a limited number of citizens could access the internet to make their opinions known and this calls into question the effectiveness of this method in obtaining an entirely true reflection of people’s feelings about the application. Public participation is required in terms of Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, (Act No.32 of 2000) and the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, (Act No. 27 of 1998). It is doubtful that a single internet poll would satisfy the criteria of these two Acts concerning meaningful participation in local government matters.

Question 1.2. addressed the matter of what would it be like to grow and implications on the children?

The common themes and points from direct answers included:

- There will be qualified teachers; and,
- There will be additional facilities for all levels of learning.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondents' responses to this question:

RESPONSES	RESPONDENT'S CODE
Good quality of life	1,2,3,4.5
Bad /unpleasant quality of life	None
Neutral	None

Despite the positive responses by senior managers, the Witness Newspaper of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013 reported that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality is amongst the worst areas with regard to the indicator of children faced with hunger, malnutrition and disease. A question for further research would be how this statistic could be addressed and what strategies need to be introduced to address this problem. How would the change in local government status help to address this social crisis?

**Plate 3: Witness newspaper article on evaluating poverty in the District**

# KZN's children among worst hit by hunger, disease

**THAMSANQA MAGUBANE**

CHILDREN in KwaZulu-Natal are among the worst affected in the country by malnutrition, pneumonia and diarrhoea.

This information is contained in the District Health Barometer report released by the Health Systems Trust yesterday.

It investigated primary healthcare in 52 district municipalities across the nine provinces.

Most KwaZulu-Natal districts, including well-resourced ones such as the eThekweni Metropolitan and uMgungundlovu District, fared badly in the various childcare incident reports.

A key contributor in the child mortality rate is malnutrition. The report found that five of the 10 districts across South Africa with the worst rate of malnutrition were in KwaZulu-Natal.

uMgungundlovu and the Umkhanyakude districts are worst affected with the highest numbers of children suffering from malnutrition, the report said.

uMgungundlovu shows up as the second worst district in the country, recording the most cases of malnutrition in KZN, an average of 13 cases per 1 000 children.

However, the district managed to save most of the children diagnosed. Of the actual number of children who died from malnutrition, uMgungundlovu was below the national average. uMzinyathi was the worst in the country as it recorded the most fatalities.

Mervyn Abrahams of the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (Pacsa) said the research was spot on.

He said many families are struggling to support themselves, leading to cases of malnutrition among children.

"Our research shows that food prices have increased... and that has forced families to do one of two things, either to eat less or buy cheap food. If they buy cheap food, this leads to a lack of nutritional value — the child might look full, but the food has no nutritional value."

Julie Todd, the director of Pietermaritzburg Child Welfare, said they get about a 100 queries about nutrition per month, but due to a shortage of funds, they were struggling to assist.

The report also found that eight out of the 10 districts with the most pneumonia incidents were also in KZN. This is the second highest cause of death for children under the age of five. However, the illness showed signs of decline.

Ugu, uMgungundlovu, eThekweni, Sisonke and iLembe are the worst affected districts in the country. However, they managed to curb the death rate, with eThekweni and Ugu recording below the national average in deaths.

The report says KZN and the Western Cape have some of the districts with the highest numbers of cases of diarrhoea with dehydration in the country.

Diarrhoea is among the top causes of child mortality.

Six of the worst affected districts noted in the national report are in KZN. These include iLembe, eThekweni, Ugu, uThungulu, uMgungundlovu and Umkhanyakude. iLembe is the worst affected.

Health MEC Sibongiseni Dhlomo directed all queries about the report to the department. However, by the time of going to print, the department had not responded to *The Witness*' questions.

## Child pneumonia in KZN

Children under five with pneumonia per 1 000 children

District	Rate per 1 000 children
Ugu District	156.4
uMgungundlovu	128.7
eThekweni	127.6
Sisonke	125.7
iLembe	120.2
Uthungulu	118.0
Amajuba	114.8
uMzinyathi	71.4
Zululand	68.2
Uthukela	66.9

**MERVYN ABRAHAMS** Pacsa

*"The child might look full, but the food has no nutritional value"*

**Source: The Witness, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

The article shows that the uMgungundlovu District is rated the second worst in terms of hunger and disease after the Ugu District in KwaZulu-Natal. The logical question is that whether the current strategic planning tools are addressing this aspect of the a developmental challenge. The most relevant strategic planning tool would be the IDP and its linked sector-specific plans.

The third question asked the respondents "what would it be like to play?" (What would be a sense of place?)

The common themes that emerged and the points from direct answers included:

- New recreational facilities would be developed;
- Rural areas will have cleaner and safer facilities as well;
- There will be social cohesion, to reverse the history of tensions; and,
- There will be a variety of sporting codes across the area.

The following coding Table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:

RESPONSES	RESPONDENT'S CODE
Good quality of life	1,2,3,4.5
Bad /unpleasant quality of life	None
Neutral	None

There will also be a need to improve the management of public open spaces. Currently, there is unevenness of managing public open spaces. The current budget on sports and youth will have to be increased.

#### **6.1. THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION- QUESTIONS, RESPONSE, THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **2 Economic Dimension Questions and Responses**

#### **Question 2.1.: What would be the implications on the income or revenue of the future amalgamated municipality?**

The themes and points from direct answers included:

- increased revenue base;
- standardization of revenue collection;
- rationalization because of amalgamation.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondents' responses to this question:

Responses	Respondent's code
It will increase	1,2,3,4.5
There will be problems	None
Neutral	None

The responses to this question indicate that the senior managers had a positive outlook into the future, as they believed that the revenue base would increase. It is one of the MBD's criteria that for

an area to be considered for metropolitan status it must show signs of ability to raise its own revenues and be less dependent on external aid. From the analysis of annual financial statements of all municipalities forming the district, it appears that they are all highly dependent on external grant funding from National and Provincial Government, with the exception of the Msunduzi Municipality, where the latter demonstrates an above average ability to generate its own revenue as a ratio to external grant funding. However, the shared view by senior managers is based on a 'projection' that once all municipalities become a single entity they will be able to optimize their ability to raise own revenue.

**Question 2.2.: How will the amalgamation affect the ordinary person on the street?**

The themes and points from direct answers included:

- There will be more job opportunities;
- Improved identity, sense of place and belonging;
- Ease of doing business, including upgrade of informal traders.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:

Responses	Respondent's Code
For better	1,2,3,4.5
For worse	None
Neutral	None

The respondents believed that 'there will be more job opportunities' for the ordinary person on the street. Currently the district is faced with 30.4% unemployment according to Census 2011 results. According to Coetzee (2013), the district economy is currently consumptive-driven instead of being productive-driven. Job creation naturally follows a booming local economy. In this way, the District will have to work hard on growing its economy, which will in turn create sufficient jobs for the currently unemployed population.

**Question 2.3.: What would be the implications on expenditure budget, including personnel budget?**

**And**

**Question 2.4.: Will this be sustainable in the short/long term?**

The themes and points from direct answers included:

- Expenditure will be high in the short-term but will stabilize in the long-term;
- The increased rates base will offset high expenditure budget.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondents' responses to this question:

Responses	Respondent's Code
It will be sustainable	1,2,3,4.5
Not sustainable	None
Neutral	None

The municipality will have to balance between capital and operational expenditure and avoid the situation where operational expenditure exceeds capital or expenditure on development. The current analysis of Annual Financial Statements (AFS) of all the municipalities forming the district family indicates that a large chunk of their budgets is skewed towards operational costs, especially personnel or employees and councillors' remuneration costs instead of capital expenditure. The correlating strategic planning tools that would be able to meet this challenge would be 'activity-based budgeting', which is linked to strategic objectives as contained in the IDP and measured by means of both the organizational and individualized performance management systems.



### **6.3 THE ECOLOGICAL/ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION: QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS**

In terms of the way the questionnaire was structured, the environmental dimension and its related issues were dealt with under section 3. There were two questions in the section namely:-

- what would be a cumulative impact of the new development's footprint on the ecology a result of new infrastructural projects that the future metropolitan municipality will implement due to its increased size and added responsibility ;and
- Will there be sufficient environmental management capacity within the amalgamated municipality to carry out this mandate?
- 

Direct answers: themes and points to the questions:-

- There will be cumulative impact from the new development's footprint, but balanced with increased environmental management capacity;
- Carbon foot-print will reduce as there will be less travelling due to development spreading across the municipal area; and,
- Improvement in water purification and waste management.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:-

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Respondent's Code</b>
Increased foot-print but increased management capacity	2,4,5
Less foot-print due to even development and mixed-use and closely connected development and public transportation	1
Neutral	3

The answers to this question were diverse as shown in the above coding table. The majority acknowledged that due to an increase in governance capacity, budget and status, there would also be a corresponding increase in development, which will have an increased ecological footprint. This indicates the importance of achieving a balance between protecting environmental assets and increased development. The municipality will have to use the existing environmental-strategic planning tools in mitigating the negative environmental impacts and in striking a balance between development and conservation. From the National Environmental Management Act OF 1998 (NEMA) to municipal bi-laws, all development needs to have some form of environmental authorization, which is aimed at achieving the above-mentioned balance or sustainable development.

## **6.2. INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION: QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS**

In addressing the institutional dimension, two key questions were posed during the interviews as outlined below-

- How will all the different municipalities be managed as a single entity ; and
- Which one would be a suitable administrative or institutional model, if any?

The themes and points from direct answers included:

- Migrate from Unicity to Area Based Management model;
- There will be one central point and all other local municipality offices will become area management offices;
- Consolidation of all local municipalities , where they become units of the whole; and
- Satellite offices.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:

RESPONSES	RESPONDENT'S CODE
Area Based Management /decentralization	1,2,3,4,5
From one centre	None
Combination of both	None

As discussed in the literature review, Area Based Management seems to be a preferred model, as understood to mean a decentralized service. In other words, the senior managers view current municipal entities as future 'satellite offices' of a future metropolitan municipal area should the application be successful in future. Whatever institutional model is adopted, it will have to be based on scientifically backed evidence and precedents from other similar cases study areas, which face the same challenges as the uMgungundlovu District. It is seldom that a district municipality applies to the MDB to be re-categorized as a metropolitan municipality. This reality results in limited applied lessons and learnings. . In this absence, lessons from other African cities and international examples can be drawn upon for information and ideas. At the same time, the scope will have to be widened in looking at possible models that can be adapted for local application.

#### **6.4 THE SPATIAL DIMENSION: QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS**

In this section of the questionnaire, the spatial implications related to an amalgamated metropolis were addressed by posing the following questions.

- How would be the interrelationships be like between the urban and rural centres?

The themes and points from direct answers included:

- There will be equity in the distribution of available resources using population numbers;
- There will still be rural areas but with improved infrastructure and other services.

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:

Responses	Respondent's Code
Balanced relationship, with pro rural development	1,2,3,4.5
Status quo will remain	None
Neutral	None

As discussed in the literature review, the concepts of the Rural Services Systems and Rural-Urban Continuum explain the senior management response to this question. As they see the future of urban and rural settlements co-existing in an equitable manner but with a pro-rural approach. This is understandable as rural areas are lagging behind primarily regarding development and when compared to urban centres.

A related question was then provided as a follow up to probe the translation of the concept of the hierarchy of nodes into a wider metropolitan spatial context. The respondents were asked to list the order or hierarchy of nodes as they see them in the future.

The themes and points from direct answers included:-

- Same as in the current SDF; and,
- There will be a change in the hierarchy of nodes since there has been recent infrastructure upgrades; water and sanitation

The following coding table or sheet summarizes the all respondent's responses to this question:-

RESPONSES	RESPONDENT'S CODE
Same as in the current SDF	1,2,3,4
Slightly different from the current SDF (Pietermaritzburg, Howick, Camperdown Wartburg, Richmond, Mooiriver, Impendle)	5
Neutral	None

The current Spatial Development Framework from the district and the local municipalities will have to be reviewed in light of a single entity and common outer geographical boundary. Generally, all the five senior managers, including the municipal manager, seem to be of the opinion that the envisaged metropolitan area would be feasible. They indicated that they saw value at the use of the strategic planning tools for the built environment as appropriate for the realization of the application to be a metropolitan municipality. Albeit that the interviews took place after the MDB had issued a decision not in favour of the application for implementation in 2016, the senior managers have consensus on their hope that by 2021 the dream of becoming a metropolitan municipality and the application would have been realised.

## 6.5 THE RESULTS FROM OBSERVATIONS OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

Mckenzie, et.al. (1997) uses Gold's (1958) definitions of various forms conducting observations in research. These ways are the 'participant observer', the observer as participant' and the 'complete participant'. It defines the 'participant as observer' as the one that is aware of the contaminants of the environment but does not conceal their observer role. He defines the 'observer as participant' role as *"here the researcher formalizes their role, sets limits to the amount and type of contact they have with participants"* (p.166). In this way, the researcher would sit, listen and takes notes. He defines the 'complete participant' role as where *"interaction between researcher and researched is limited to gaining and sustaining access"* (p.166). This method is used where it is not possible for the observer to be a participant, for example in a classroom situation. However when comparing observation to interviewing, he seem to prefer the latter since the researcher need not be present as when observing. Nevertheless, observation is still regarded by McKenzie as one of the best data collection methodologies as he compares and contrasts it to epistemology, which he criticises for its

claims of '*rationality, absolutism*' and that it does not fit well to postmodern methodologies such as observation.

In the case of this dissertation, the researcher was part of the focus group being observed, namely the Municipal Managers Forum (Metro Application Project Steering Committee) and also one joint session which involved all eight Mayors that form the "*District Family of Municipalities*". The researcher is employed by the uMDM and was appointed by the steering committee to be a point of contact between the consulting firm facilitating the focus group and the steering committee. Among other duties, the author was responsible for the collation of all relevant data and submission of this to the consultants for inclusion in the final report, which was a motivation for the application for metropolitan status to the MDB. Whilst the author was observing the focus group's deliberations during and outside meetings, he did not reveal his observer status or that he was observing. Instead he observed silently as one of the participants. Plate 4 shows one of the sessions.

The output of the focus groups was a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the uMDM's application, which formed part of the motivation for the application. The other purpose of the focus group (although it was not pronounced explicitly) was to ensure that there is consensus and territorial cohesion amongst the eight municipalities forming the district family. The author is ethically bound to be objective and commits to an undertaking that the observation's findings are free from any bias whatsoever, but yet he is sensitive to the socio-political dynamics in the study area. Furthermore, he acknowledges that there have been diverse views, loyalties and feelings about the uMDM's application

**Plate 4: Joint Focus Group of Mayors and Municipal Managers on 16 July 2013**



**Source:** Photo was taken by the facilitator, the author is also in the photo.

Below is a summary of the findings after objective observation by the author:-

- It was evident that the city of Msunduzi, the administrative capital city of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the only member of the South African Cities Network within the district family, did not send the most senior officials and politicians to the focus group meetings. However, the Msunduzi Municipality did co-operate by sending written documentation that was required to strengthen the application. It was also observed that some participants viewed Msunduzi's lower-level participation as a manifestation of the prevailing socio-political dynamics

in the study area. However, the author did not dwell much on those dynamics as they were based on speculation and not on facts. There is also a counter argument that rejects the already mentioned speculation and rumours about Msunduzi's participation, which cites a presence of consensus amongst all the eight municipalities forming the "*District Family*". This latter school of thought maintains the excuses that non participation by Msunduzi's senior officials was due to prior commitments to other official duties.

- This meeting s took place against the backdrop that Msunduzi's application for metropolitan status was initially approved and then rescinded by the MDB in 2009 after the seven municipalities had objected. The basis of the objection was that other municipalities wanted to be included in the metropolitan boundary together with Msunduzi in order to share in and contribute to a merged local economy. According to KwaZulu-Natal Treasury (2012), the MDM has the second largest economy in the province after eThekweni, followed by UThungulu District Municipality. However, economists such as Coetzee (2012) argue that the uMDM economy is consumer led whereas the UThungulu's economy is production led. In this way the uMDM still has a long way to go in order to diversify its local economy and have a meaningful competitive advantage.
- It was also observed that the smaller municipalities with a predominantly rural landscape opted to take the middle ground, but vocally supported the idea of the application and showed allegiance to the District.
- Furthermore, CoGTA showed an unwavering support of the uMDM throughout the application process. However some officials within CoGTA expressed their own, unofficial and personal views on the uMDM's application. These personal views were either for or against the application.

## **6.6 OBSERVATIONS ON WHETHER THE USE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOLS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT WERE EFFECTIVE IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

This aspect of observation is takes the already reported observation back to the core focus of this dissertation, which is on the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment during the observed focus groups. Patton (1990) argues that the investigator has to draw from the original research questions in order to analyse the collected data effectively. It is clear that the strategic



planning tools were utilised in facilitating the focus groups, in data collection and its presentation. The facilitators divided the larger group of about 15 participants as depicted in Plate 3 into smaller focus groups as follows:-

- Group A: Financial Managers to look at finances;
- Group B: Municipal Managers to look at governance issues that would later inform an ideal governance model or future scenarios; and
- Group C: Town and Regional Planners specialising in Integrated Development Planning (IDP's).

Mayors were spread evenly across the above three focus groups in that a mayor participated in each group. The author was in the Town and Regional Planners group by default since he is employed as the IDP Manager by the uMDM. This allowed direct contact with this particular group in order to observe its deliberations. In addition the researcher took turns in other groups as he assisted the facilitators who were independent consultants. Furthermore, all groups reported back to a plenary session, which made it possible for the author to observe the outcome of the other groups' discussions in detail. The plausible strategic planning tool that was used during all these focus groups was the SWOT analysis. The second one was the 'comparative advantages analysis' or 'benchmarking' where the uMDM's performance as the applicant was measured against the already existing metropolitan areas, namely: Mangaung, Nelson Mandela Bay and Buffalo City. The results of the benchmarking exercise are detailed in the report by PwC (2013) entitled *"uMgungundlovu Feasibility Study Metropolitan Municipality Application"*.

The commissioning of a feasibility study by the uMDM on its own is a strategic planning exercise. Its purpose was to strengthen the uMDM's application. However, the idea of using a SWOT analysis as one of the strategic planning tools on supporting the application yielded a dual result. From the uMDM's perspective, it provided introspection, but from the MDB's perspective it gave ammunition that supported its decision not to grant the application. The only aspect of the strategic planning tool that yielded the desired stance of the district was the benchmarking exercise as it demonstrated that the municipality compared favourably and in some cases exceeded the achievements of the already existing metropolitan municipalities.

## 6.7 CONCLUSION

Therefore, the results and their analysis indicate that the senior managers are optimistic about the future, despite the fact that the Municipal Demarcation Board has already declined the current (2013) application. In other words, the paintable scenario is that of a “delayed vision” meaning that there is a potential scenario where a metropolitan status could be achieved but that this goal will not be an immediate one. In addition, it is a plausible scenario that by 2021, the district and its local municipalities would have worked hard, using strategic planning tools for the built environment to realize its current vision statement that:

*“uMgungundlovu District Municipality will evolve into a dynamic metropolitan area, spreading its vibrant economic benefits to all its citizens and places and will, through concerted integrated development and service delivery, realize improvements in the overall quality of life.”*

Source: <http://www.umdmd.gov.za/> uMgungundlovu IDP2011-2016

A foreseeable future is an attained vision using strategic planning tools applicable in the built environment in this case, the scale of planning a metropolitan municipality or a metropolis. The results from interviews and observation of focus groups show that uMgungundlovu has the potential of successfully working towards the attainment of its current vision. However, “potential” and “current reality” are two different worlds, where the former is a futuristic goal and the latter is contemporary state. In order to bridge the gap between achieving the potential or desired outcome and current reality, there is a need to take vital steps that will lead to the desired future.

It is the argument of this dissertation that the current strategic planning tools are adequate in preparing the district to eventually reach its goal of evolving to metropolitan council. In this way, the hypothesis of this dissertation that *“the current strategic planning tools used by the district are adequate in preparing it for metropolitan status”* is confirmed by the results that have been presented. The findings outlined in the chapter on evaluation of the current strategic planning tools and this one on the results from interviews and observation of focus groups confirm this assertion. However, this acceptance or confirmation of the hypothesis does not correlate to practical success of the uMDM. That outcome is dependent on how best it utilises the current strategic planning tools

towards its desired future. On its own, the evidence has shown that strategic planning tools are adequate for developing strategies, goals and outcomes for achieving a change in municipal status that is reflective of socio-economic change and spatial integration. Other metropolitan areas around the world and in South Africa have used similar strategic planning tools to become successful conurbations.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **7.0 INTRODUCTION**

After the discussion of the research findings, this chapter provides a synopsis of the research process. As the final chapter, it provides a comprehensive summary of the research. It highlights the key findings and gives suggestions for further research. From inception, the study has stated that its main aim is to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for the built environment, and their efficacy in the case study of uMgungundlovu's application for metropolitan status. The objective of the study has been to evaluate the adequacy of the current strategic planning tools used in this process.

### **7.1 CONCLUDING STATEMENTS**

The main objective of this study has been to evaluate the use of strategic planning tools for planning a future metropolitan municipality. This has been achieved through the research process. It has been completed by identifying the strategic planning tools applicable to the built environment generally and highlighted specific tools used in the uMgungundlovu's application. Tools that evaluate the present and that can be used to propose an imagined future have been highlighted. The effective use of these tools by the district municipality allowed it to reach a point where it was able to submit an application and then review the outcome of that process.

With regard to the present context, it has emerged that the main current planning tools being used by municipalities including the district are the Integrated Development Plan, the associated Spatial Development Framework and the use of SWOT analysis. The use of these tools is to address current problems, but they have dual benefit in that they are capable of guiding the municipality to the realisation of its vision of becoming a metropolitan area in future. The very same vision statement to become a metropolitan municipality has developed from a strategic planning tool for the built environment as recorded in the Integrated Development Plan. On forecasting the future, scenario planning has proven to be an appropriate strategic planning tool that is also useful in developing options for the built environment.

In this way, the hypothesis of this study has been proven. Firstly, the proposition that strategic planning has been and can be used as a tool for planning a future metropolitan municipality has been demonstrated. This has been illustrated through reference to other examples around the world both in Developing Countries and the Developed World. These examples have been discussed in support of this argument. Hence, this affirms the motivation that strategic planning tools are adequate in preparing the uMgungundlovu District to become a metropolitan municipality one day, if they are used effectively. In other words, success is dependent on how the municipality utilises the available strategic planning tools towards the attainment of its vision. The tools are adequate on their own.

Secondly, there has been a deductive application of concepts and theories that have proven that strategic planning tools for the built environment have been adequate worldwide in planning large and complex metropolitan areas. The examples that have been discussed included cities in Europe, United States, in the developed world and cities in Africa such as Nairobi, Cape Town, eThekweni and others. In all these examples, it came out clearly that the scale and extent of metropolitan planning is complex and requires a number of strategic planning tools in order to attain liveable, sustainable, resilient and globally competitive metropolitan areas.

Within the context of KwaZulu-Natal Province, the uMgungundlovu Municipality envisaged transition from being a district municipality to become a metropolitan municipality is unique and calls for some form of scenario planning. Since the envisaged transition is futuristic, the application of scenario planning techniques observed in focus groups proves the importance of strategic planning as a prerequisite for a successful metropolitan area. It can be applied in the context of dismantling the problem of uncertainty and setting up potential responses within a flexible planning and development framework. Although the study did not go into much depth on the practical use of scenario planning, it has demonstrated the relevance of using this strategic planning tool in the built environment and particularly in this case study.

Thirdly, the journey undertaken by the municipality towards realisation of its current vision statement as contained in its current Integrated Development Plan, has both possibilities and constraints. Hence, there is a need to explore various options, which strategic planning tools can best present.

The following scenarios have emerged from the research findings. They substantiate the main argument regarding the adequacy of strategic planning tools as a vehicle for planning a future metropolitan area. These include

- **Metropolitan Status Revisited** where the municipality could reapply for metropolitan status to the Demarcation Board during 2015. In order to achieve the outcome the shortcomings of the current application, the geo-political and territorial incoherencies would need to be addressed.
- **Incremental Moves toward Metropolitan Status** where uMgungundlovu would identify a phased amalgamation of settlements and the addressing of strategic project development to improve the socio-economic position of the individual municipalities. The most likely first stage would be in increasing the administrative area of Pietermaritzburg /Msunduzi. In this scenario there would need to be a shared vision and strategic plan with common goals and time lines. There is an inherent risk in this scenario since an increased geographical/administrative area for a local municipality that has already bid for metropolitan status in its own right may encourage it to do so again. However, this aspect can be mitigated by increasing shared powers and interdependence between the district and local levels of government supported by the Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs.
- **Metropolitan Status Deferred** where the uMgungundlovu District remains as it is and postpones the application for change in local government until there is a more favourable set of circumstances that would allow the district to reapply to the Demarcation Board again. Of all the scenarios this is the most unsatisfactory since it is not a proactive choice.

The future uMgungundlovu Metropolitan Municipality would be characterised by the use of multiple planning tools and models such as Area-Based Management (ABM), and Rural Service Centres and the consideration of the polycentric or polyopolis concept. There will be no 'one-size fit' all approach, but implementation of a decentralized system of governance. In other words, there will be synergy of all the eight municipalities to form a whole. This is necessary in the whole essence of strategic planning whose purpose, among others, is to provide the executives or decision-makers with options for long-term solutions.

The above painted scenarios have been empirically proven by the synthesised results from interviews with senior managers of the District Municipality. The questionnaire was intended to provoke the strategic thinking of the senior executive managers as they are the strategic ‘think tank’ of the municipality. The interview questions relate back to the main or central research question.. It also presented different options for future development paths, which they could consider and respond to in the interview process. They were encouraged to wear their strategic goggles and envision an unknown future. The interview results indicated that managers are generally optimistic about the envisaged future of evolving from a district municipality and becoming a metropolitan municipality. The questions probed for answers from a sustainability perspective. As such, they focused on the different dimensions of this theoretical approach and considered the institutional, social, economic and ecological dimensions of the problem. When the aforementioned variables are combined and are in a state equilibrium, they result in a phenomenon called “*sustainable development*” which is one of the desired goals of the municipalities’ Integrated Development Plan.

However, the glaring over-optimism from the interview responses is seen as a lack of critical self-assessment of the uMgungundlovu’s application on the part of the senior managers. In other words, they did not look into the pros and cons of the envisaged future, but they answered the questions from a point of a desired outcome. . In this way, the useful strategic planning tool that provides a balanced and critical evaluation is that of looking into the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, abbreviated as SWOT analysis. The results from a SWOT analyses that was conducted through one of the precedent studies evaluated, provides a wider scope in deducing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which confronts the envisaged future. It became clear that the district came close to the existing metropolitan areas used as a benchmark for certain variables. An example being that the municipality needed to reduce the backlogs in the provision of basic services and had succeeded in addressing this problem. However, it was also lagging behind on other indicators or variables. In terms of budgeting for operations and maintenance costs, it was below average. This disparity of diverse performance in municipal responsibilities and actions would have to be addressed should the district want its application to be successful on becoming a metropolitan municipality.

Furthermore, on applying the MDB’s criteria to the district’s application for metropolitan status, it was found wanting. The application did not have the necessary densification standards for viable, equitable and sustainable metropolitan areas in South Africa. In other words, the uMgungundlovu

District's application, according to the Board, failed to demonstrate adequately and practically that all the municipalities envisaged for amalgamation have the required densities and per capita income that are not too distant from the MDB's criteria. In addition, what emerged clearly was a wide gap between the core and periphery or wide dualism. The main urban core area of Pietermaritzburg is characterised by advanced urbanization and industrialization, which results in higher population and settlement densities, which makes it viable. In contrast, the peripheral areas are characterised with sparsely populated human settlements, with very low per capita income, and these seem to dominate the entire land area of the district as show in Map 2. As a response to these shortcomings, the relevant strategic planning tool used in the built environment would be the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) as part of the IDP, which will have to be used in guiding the municipality on the location of future development and on the identification of future-investments areas.

## **7.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of recommendations emerged as a result of the research process and are outlined in more detail in the following explanation. Firstly, in order to respond to the MDB's response to the application, the district needs to review its Spatial Development Framework by focusing on a new densification strategy and capital investment that indicates spatially where strategic-catalytic projects can be located. This will curb the in-migration from rural-peripheral areas to the urban core. In other words the pull and push factors will be in a state of equilibrium. In addition, the implementation of a densification strategy would result in the increase of densities (population and settlements) in rural areas for a viable metropolitan area. Secondly, the new economic investments and developments will yield new jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities that could result into a balanced per capita income across the district area. Thirdly, the other recommended strategic planning tools are:-

- The practical application of Scenario Planning as a technique for engaging the future options;
- The augmentation of the current Integrated Development Plan and planning process to be focused on municipal functions that generate income for the municipality. The Integrated Development Plan is geared towards being 'business-like';
- The improve of the use and application of the current SWOT analysis to another level of strategically converting the identified strengths and opportunities into viable and practical strategic propositions and projects; and,



- The devising strategies and responsive turn-around projects to mitigate the weaknesses and threats identified through the SWOT analysis.

Therefore, future practical research could focus, among other aspects on the aforementioned areas and others that the municipality and its stakeholders may see as befitting.

### **7.3. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study has largely evaluated the use of current and future strategic planning tools for the built environment in the case study of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's application for metropolitan status. The hypothesis that the current strategic planning tools are adequate in assisting the district towards its envisaged metropolitan status has been accepted and confirmed by the research results. The study has also contributed to the contemporary debate on the value, relevance and adequacy of strategic planning tools in the domain of the built environment, precisely in the field of Town and Regional Planning. The research has demonstrated that contemporary strategic planning tools are necessary for planning a built environment that holistically addresses multiple dimensions i.e. from a citizen's perspective, environmental, land-uses, economic development and institutional change. . Therefore, the study has contributed to contemporary debates in the field of Town and Regional Planning or the Built Environment in general.

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## **APPENDICES**

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### **APPENDIX A- Interviews schedules and Questionnaire**

A single Interviews Questionnaire was used for all five interviews on a sample of five senior managers of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality:

#### **INTERVIEW 1**

The interviewee was Mr Bheki Mbambo, Senior Manager for Technical Services at uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The date and time of the interview was the 13 December 2013 at 14h00 and concluded on 17 December 2013, at 12h00.

#### **INTERVIEW 2**

The interviewee was Mr Joe Baloyi, Senior Manager for Community Services at uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The date and time of the interview was the 17 December 2013, at 08h30.

#### **INTERVIEW 3**

The interviewee was Mr Mbongeni Mathe, Senior Manager for Corporate Services at uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The date and time of the interview was the 17 December 2013, at 09h30.

#### **INTERVIEW 4**

The interviewee was Mr Sibusiso Khuzwayo, Municipal Manager at uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The date and time of the interview was the 17 December 2013, at 14h00.

#### **INTERVIEW 5**

The interviewee was Mr Njabulo Mchunu, Acting Chief Financial Officer at uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The date of the interview was the 17 December 2013, at 17h00.

The questions stem from the main research's fundamental question which is "what would it be like to live, grow and play in an amalgamated municipality?" There were 13 questions for the five interviewees. Four questions were selected from the five dimensional areas listed below to test the

acceptance of the questions. The initial responses indicate whether to proceed with the rest of the questions or to reformulate them.

## **THE QUESTIONNAIRE:**

### **1. Social Dimension Questions**

1.1. What would it be like to live in an amalgamated metropolitan municipality or what would be the quality of life?

1.2. Answer: The quality of life will improve drastically as there will be economic growth. What would it be like to grow-implications on the children?

Answer: Children will receive more recreational facilities as well as better education.

1.3. What would it be like to play? (What would be a sense of place?) They will be assisted by new recreational facilities.

### **2. Economic Dimension Questions**

2.1. What would be the implications on the income or revenue of the future amalgamated municipality? There will be more income generated due to more stream of revenue

2.2. How will the amalgamation affect the ordinary person on the street? There will be more job opportunities.

2.3. What would be the implications on expenditure budget, including personnel budget? The budget will increase because of more stream revenue.

2.4. Will this be sustainable in the short/long term? It will be sustainable and it will improve the quality of life.

### **3. Ecological/Environmental Dimension Questions**

3.1. What would be a cumulative impact of the new developments footprint on the ecology a result of new infrastructural projects that the future metropolitan municipality will implement due to its increased size and added responsibility? There will be cumulative impact on the new development's footprint.

3.2. Will there be sufficient environmental management capacity within the amalgamated municipality to carry out this mandate? Yes there will as there will be more resources to deal with the matter.

#### **4. Institutional Dimension Questions**

- 4.1. How will all the different municipalities be managed as a single entity? There will be one central point and all other local municipality offices will become area management offices.
- 4.2. Which one would be a suitable administrative or institutional model, if any? One central point with one administrative head and political head with various key head departments.

#### **5.0 Spatial Dimension Questions**

- 5.1 What would be the interrelationships be like between the urban and rural centres? The distribution process and allocation process of budget will be undertaken in the same manner related to services required that time.
- 5.2 Can you list the order or hierarchy of nodes as you see them in the future?

**APPENDIX B: MINUTES FROM THE OBSERVED MUNICIPAL MANAGERS' FORUM/  
METROPOLITAN FEASIBILITY STEERING COMMITTEE**

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**uMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT FAMILY: METROPOLITAN HIGH-LEVEL FEASIBILITY STUDY**

**STEERING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE first STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 01 AUGUST 2013, 10:00, uMDM Office, 242 Langalibalele Street**

No.	Description	Action
	<p><b>PRESENT</b></p> <p>S Khuzwayo (SK) uMgungundlovu District Municipality (UMDM) – Chairperson</p> <p>P Fakude (PF) uMgungundlovu District Municipality</p> <p>K Sivenandan (KS) uMgungundlovu District Municipality</p> <p>A Els (AE) KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (KZN Cogta)</p> <p>D Nxumalo (DN) KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs</p> <p>M Jackson (MJ) Msunduzi Municipality</p> <p>M Ngubane (MN) uMngeni Municipality</p> <p>M Cebekhulu (MC) uMshwathi Municipality</p> <p>D Pillay (DP) Mkhambathini Municipality</p> <p>M Links (ML) Mpofana Municipality</p> <p>PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)</p> <p>PricewaterhouseCoopers</p>	



	K Kooverjee (KK)  R van Vuren (RvV)		
	<b>APOLOGIES</b>  A Reddy  M Nkosi	KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  Msunduzi Municipality	
<b>1.</b>	<b>OPENING &amp; WELCOME</b>  The Chairperson, Mr Khuzwayo of UMDM, welcomed those present and noted that six out of the eight municipalities in the District are present at the meeting.		None
<b>2.</b>	<b>OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>  The Chairperson provide the background in terms of the application to the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) for the District to be declared a Category A Metropolitan Municipality and that PwC has been appointed to conduct a high-level Metropolitan feasibility study in support of the application made to the MDB.		None
<b>3.</b>	<b>PRESENTATION OF FINAL DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL FEASIBILITY REPORT</b>  RvV of PwC indicated that at the Status Quo workshop held on 16 July 2103 the major draft feasibility study findings were presented and discussed in three Commissions. At the workshop, it was agreed that any information still outstanding will be provided by Monday 22 July 2013 and signed-off by the respective Municipal Managers so that PwC can finalise the draft feasibility study in time for presentation to Steercom today.  It was noted that a number of municipalities provided electronic copies		

	<p>of their financial statements but that only two municipalities provided and signed-off on outstanding human resources information. Any additional information received was considered and included in the draft report.</p> <p>RvV then took the meeting through the executive summary as contained in the draft report seeing that the detail was already presented at the 16 July workshop. The report concludes as an overall finding that the proposed Metropolitan should be able to contribute more effectively towards the fulfilment of the imperatives for municipalities as set out in the section 152 of the Constitution than the current arrangement of the uMgungundlovu area being served by seven local and one district municipality.</p> <p>The Steercom members were given an opportunity to comment on the draft report. The comments questions raised and responses provided were the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MM of uMngeni Municipality: MN raised a concern that there might still be some gaps in the report because of outstanding information. He would welcome more time to study and beef-up the report. He stressed that the feasibility study must be credible and further remarked that aspects such as the seat and type of proposed Metropolitan is not covered in the draft report.</li> </ol> <p>The Chairperson replied that the report is urgently required by the MDB to assist them in their decision, which is required by the end of August 2013. It must also be remembered that the brief was to compile a high-level pre-feasibility study within a very short timeframe and that aspects such as the seat and type of Metropolitan will only be addressed by KZN Cogta in the transition plan and Section 12 notice after the MDB has arrived</p>	
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	<p>at a decision.</p> <p>KK of PwC also stressed that the report was updated with additional information received and that the report is a high-level feasibility study.</p> <p>2. MJ of Msunduzi Municipality: MJ enquired whether the human resources and organisational capacity part of the draft report is credible seeing that only a few municipalities provided the required information. PwC replied that where information was not received from individual municipalities such information was sourced from secondary sources and documented.</p> <p>3. MM's and municipal representatives present highlighted the importance of union involvement from the onset as well as the need to consult the Amakhosi in the area and the sensitivity of dealing with the qualifications of individual managers. The general sentiment was the draft report be accepted and submitted to the MDB in support of the Districts application to be declared a Metropolitan.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>It was resolved that the high-level Metropolitan feasibility study be accepted and that the Chairperson be authorised to submit it, on behalf of all the municipalities in the District, to the Municipal Demarcation Board as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>PF and KS – submit report to MDB</p> <p>2 August 2013</p>
4.	<p><b>SIGN-OFF BY MUNICIPAL MANAGERS</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the report does not have to be signed-off by the MM's present, as the minutes will reflect the resolution reached at the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><b>WAY FORWARD</b></p> <p>No discussion under the item.</p>	

6.	<p><b>CLOSURE</b></p> <p>KK of PwC thanked the District for the opportunity to work on this key assignment and to all the Municipalities for their cooperation in providing the required information.</p> <p>The Chairperson thanked all the Municipalities for their support and assistance and declared the meeting closed.</p>	
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