

SECTION D
HIGH LEVEL SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
&
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

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1. Environmental Sector Plans

SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE Umtshezi LM (ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT)

The Environmental SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) for the various local municipalities has been presented in Table below.

SWOT analysis for the Umtshezi local municipality.

MUNICIPALITY	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Umtshezi Local Municipality	<p>Large biodiversity that inhabits an ecosystem landscape that has retained ecological functionality;</p> <p>There are wetlands, important water yield areas and streamlined rivers</p> <p>The presence of Priority Floral Species that prevents ecological degradation and further loss of vegetation</p> <p>The municipality also contains the basis of the Tugela-Vaal water scheme and good water resources.</p> <p>Indigenous</p>	<p>Limited benefits derived from international assets situated in the municipality</p> <p>Lack of environmental compliance and enforcement; this weakens management of the natural environment</p> <p>Lack of environmental management strategies and key interventions to monitor & manage biodiversity as well as ecological footprint</p> <p>Lack of common planning between development planning and environmental planning</p> <p>Lack of environmental</p>	<p>Improvement of biodiversity and hydrological integrity of aquatic systems</p> <p>There is an opportunity for contributions to rural livelihood through employment opportunities in alien eradication operations as well as beneficiation of some species as they provide materials for the production of various household and saleable items such as building materials, crafts and furniture and fuel wood</p> <p>Stakeholder alliance on environmental protection</p> <p>Revenue generation through conservation of biodiversity</p> <p>Mapping environmental sensitive areas</p>	<p>On-going environmental degradation impacting the ecotourism, leading to a reduction of resources available for conservation aspects.</p> <p>Low economic growth and increasing rate of unemployment in major economic sectors</p> <p>Alien infestation may lead in marked declines in stream flow, transformation of vegetation composition & structure; alteration of patterns nutrient cycle & fire regime; also impact on Tourism & Agricultural production</p> <p>Poor environmental management due to lack of</p>

	planted at Wembezi Area as a response to reduction of Carbon Footprint Municipal Participation in Greenest Municipality Competition (GMC) Partnerships with other sector departments	education & awareness in municipal communities		environmental awareness Industrialisation and overpopulation Illegal Dumping which pollutes wetlands High potential agricultural land, potential forestry areas and areas likely to experience settlement expansion this poses greatest threats to identified Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) Limited benefits derived from international and national assets situated in the district.
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Umtshezi LM is committed to adhere to sustainable development principles in its municipality for the benefit of present and future generation. This is achieved through proper environmental planning which includes environmental sector plans which suppose to be considered in integrated development planning of Umtshezi LM to avoid environmental degradation.

Environmental Planning concerns itself with the decision making processes where they are required for managing relationships that exist within and between natural systems and human systems. Environmental Planning endeavours to manage these processes in an effective, orderly, transparent and equitable manner for the benefit of all constituents within such systems for the present and for the future. Present day Environmental Planning practices are the result of continuous refinement and expansion of the scope of such decision making processes. Environmental sector plans can be used to manage environment in the area of municipal jurisdiction. The following are the existing Environmental sector plans for Umtshezi LM:

1.1 Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP)

This plan covers the following key aspects Status quo analysis of Waste Management Goals and objectives of Waste Management, Gaps and needs and needs assessment of Waste Management, Evaluation of alternatives for Waste Management, Framework for an Implementation Strategy. UMTshezi LM is reporting its waste information to the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) through South African Waste Information System (SAWIS). Umtshezi LM has a Waste Designated Officer to handle all matters related to waste management as per the requirements of National Environmental Management: Waste Management Act (No. 59 of 2008)

UThukela Biodiversity Sector Plan (BSP)

KZN Ezemvelo Wildlife has developed Biodiversity Sector Plan which covers all local municipalities within UThukela District. Umtshezi LM uses this plan to manage its Biodiversity which plays a critical role in local socio-economic, also used for sustainable development through managing natural resources. The Biodiversity Act introduced several legislated planning tools to assist with the Management and conservation of South Africa's biological diversity. These include the declaration of "Bioregions" and the publications of "Bioregional Plans" "Bioregional plans which usually an output of a systematic spatial conservation assessment of a region. They identify areas of conservation priority, and constraints and opportunities for implementation of the plan. The precursor to a Bioregional Plan is a Biodiversity Sector Plan (BSP), which is the official reference for biodiversity priorities to be taken into account in land-use planning and decision-making by all sectors within the UThukela District.

1.3 UThukela District Environmental Management Framework (EMF)

UThukela District Municipality has received R 1, 5 Million from Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Rural Development (DAERD) to develop UThukela District Environmental Management Framework (EMF). The service provider has been appointed to develop the plan. This plan will cover the entire district of UThukela as a result Umtshezi LM will rely on district Environmental Management Framework (EMF).

Environmental Management Framework (EMF) will have an important role in land-use management of Umtshezi & the entire district of UThukela because it is a tool that defines the status quo of existing environment, specifies the attributes of the environment in the area including sensitivities, and states conservation status of the area & the environmental management priorities, indicate the kind of activities that would have a significant impact on those attributes & those that would not, also indicates the kind of activities that would be undesirable in the area or in specific parts of the area.

1.4 Geographical Information System (GIS)

Umtshezi LM has Geographical Information System through shared services. The tool is used to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present all types of geographically referenced data for Umtshezi LM.

NB: Umtshezi LM sees & understand the strong need for other environmental management tools which needs to be developed e.g. Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) is necessary for Umtshezi LM as it is characterized by many industries that contributes to atmospheric pollution. There is also an existing Air Quality Monitoring Station in the area that ought to be constantly monitored as well; moreover Umtshezi LM understands the legal requirements of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (No.39 of 2004)

2. Public Participation & Engagement on environmental matters

Umtshezi LM does not have capacity to handle environmental matters but it ensures that it gives a maximum participation to all district & local structures or forums for engagements & updates on environmental management issues. The following is the list of environmental management forums where Umtshezi LM participates in:

2.1 Environmental management forums

District Waste Officers Forum- Umtshezi LM has a responsibility of rendering waste services to their communities; as a result there is a strong need for them to participate in relevant structures to discuss waste related matters. Umtshezi LM actively participates in UThukela District Waste Forum which is comprised of Environmental Affairs (DEA) & Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Rural Development (DAERD) & all municipal officials responsible for waste services as it is their core function.

District Climate Change Forum-all municipalities are expected to have a critical role to play in responding to threats posed by climate change & global warming. Umtshezi LM participates in District Climate Change Forum which is intended to come up ways & strategies to mitigate climate change challenges. The forum is comprised of government sector departments, NGOs, District & Local Municipalities. The forum has numerous environmental awareness campaigns meant for educating communities on global warming & climate change issues e.g. Umtshezi LM hosted a major Pre-Cop 17 event in Winen & also hosted water conservation campaign.

KZN Waste Officers Forum-waste management services is the core function of Umtshezi LM; it is therefore critically important for Umtshezi LM to be capacitated on environmental legislations. Umtshezi LM participates in this forum which is aimed at capacitating all KZN Waste Management Officers on waste management services, updates on upcoming waste road shows, training, including capacitating on various environmental management legislations e.g. National Environmental Management Act (No.

107 of 1998), Waste Management Act (No. 59 of 2008). The forum is comprised of KZN of sector departments, municipal officials responsible for waste services i.e. designated waste officers, landfill operators, and waste management officers.

3. Environmental capacity building initiatives/projects

Umtshezi LM admits that there is no budget attached to environmental capacity building initiatives therefore it plays a supporting role in celebration of calendar days namely: Arbor Day, Wetlands Day, World environmental day, Clean-Up Week & Water Week. Umtshezi LM also participates in Greenest Town Competition on yearly basis.

The following projects are currently ongoing in the municipality:

- ***Fencing of the Estcourt Landfill Site***
- ***Rehabilitation of the borehole at the Landfill Site***
- ***Keep Umtshezi Clean Project (street cleaning etc.***

CHAPTER FOUR :

SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

UMTSHEZI SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:

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26. Land Use Management Framework (Draft SDF)
27. Consolidated SDF

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Asgi-SA:	Accelerated Shared Growth initiative for South Africa
CBD:	Central Business District
CBO:	Community Based Organisations
CLaRA:	Communal Land Right Act
DASC:	Direct Access Service Centre
DFA:	Development Facilitation Act
DLGTA:	Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs
DOT:	Department of Transport
EIA:	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP:	Environmental Management Plan
EMRS:	Emergency Rescue Services
GEAR:	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
ISRDS:	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
LED:	Local Economic Development
LFTEA:	Less Formal Township Establishment Act
LRAD:	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
LUMF:	Land Use Management Framework
LUMS:	Land Use Management System
LUS:	Land Use Scheme
MPRA	Municipal Property Rates Act
MSA:	Municipal Systems Act
NDoH:	National Department of Housing
NDPG:	National Development Partnership Grant
NEMA:	National Environmental Management Act
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDP:	National Spatial Development Plan
PGDS:	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
PLRO:	Provincial Land Reform Office
PLUS:	Pro-active land acquisition Strategy

POS:	Public Open Space
PPDC:	Provincial Planning and Development Commission
PSEDS:	Provincial Spatial Economic Development Strategy
RDP:	Reconstruction and Development Program
RSC :	Regional Service Centre
SALA:	Sub-division of Agricultural Land Act
SANRAL:	South African National Roads Agency
SEA:	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SDF:	Spatial Development Framework
SLAG:	Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant
SMME:	Small Micro Medium Enterprise
TPS:	Town Planning Scheme
UDF:	Urban Development Framework
WSDP:	Water Services Development Plan
WURP:	Wembezi Urban Renewal Program

INTRODUCTION

Umtshezi Municipality has developed, adopted and is continuously reviewing its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as required in terms of the Municipal Systems Act (MSA), Act No. 32 of 2000. The IDP is developed within a framework of the national and provincial development imperatives. It commits the municipality to addressing the key development issues facing the area, and improving the standard of living for the all those who live and work within the Umtshezi Municipality area of jurisdiction. It is an organisational and institutional transformation tool, and an instrument for change management. It achieves this by painting a clear vision for the

future and articulating a strategy for its attainment. This includes both short and long term interventions.

The IDP comprises of many components or sector plans dealing with a range of development issues. One of these is a Spatial Development Framework (SDF). This is essentially a spatial representation of the development vision and strategy, and a guide for the spatial distribution of development interventions. As an integral part of the IDP, it deals with spatial transformation and identifies priority intervention areas. It assumes a five year horizon and is reviewed annually in response to changes in priorities, trends and pattern as well as new information. The spatial development framework presented in this document is thus a further refinement of the

municipality's IDP, and a partial fulfilment of the requirements of the MSA.

As indicated on Map 1 below, Umtshezi Municipality is one of five local Municipalities that makes-up uThukela District. Other municipalities being:

- Imbabazane
- Indaka,
- Okhahlamba, and
- Emnambithi/ladysmith

It is located in the midlands area of KwaZulu-Natal approximately 200km west of Durban along the N3. Umtshezi Municipality is bordered on its south-eastern portion by the

- It is developed within the national, provincial and district policy framework and seeks to advance the objectives of these spatial development policies.
- It is aligned with the spatial development plans of the neighbouring local municipalities such as Mpofana, Imbabazane and Ladysmith/Emnambithi.

The municipal boundaries were delineated in terms of the Municipal Demarcation Act and the criteria set therein. This includes population movement trends, regional economic patterns and land use pattern. As such,

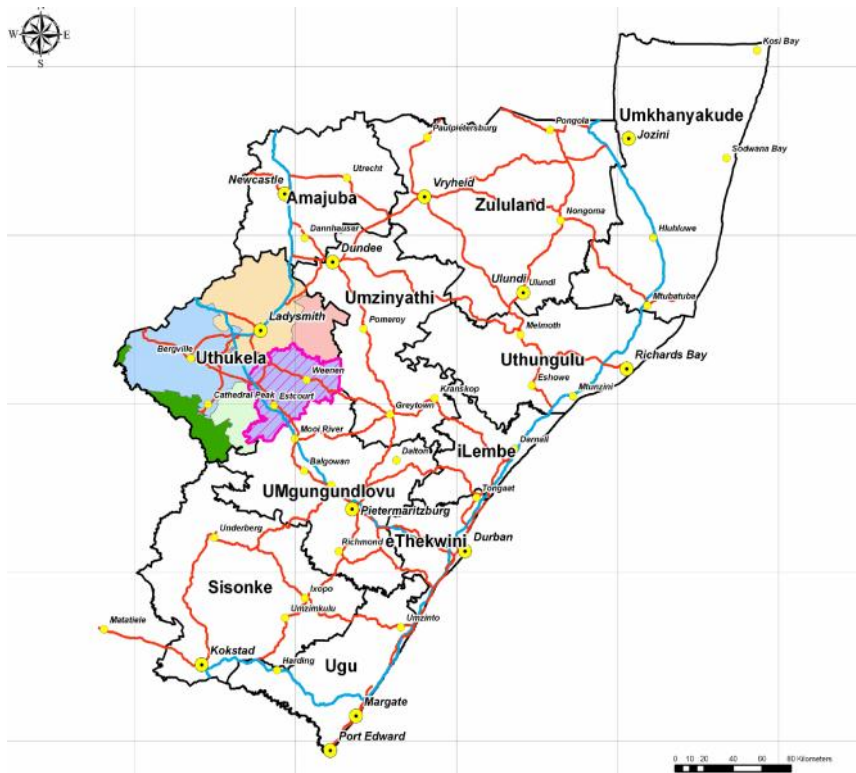
Mooi Mpofana Municipality, Msinga Municipality on its eastern portion, Indaka Municipality on its north-eastern portion, both by Emnambithi and Okhahlamba Municipalities on its north-western portion and Imbabazane Municipality on its south-western portion.

The SDF covers the whole municipal area (refer to Map 2), and provides detailed information on selected areas such as urban centres and settlements. Its key features are as follows:

- It includes a spatial representation of all priority projects and a framework for Land Use Management System (LUMS).
- It is prepared in accordance with the guidelines for SDFs as suggested by the Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs (DLGTA).

the boundaries are not just administrative, but are also intended to promote social and economic development. Other key characteristics of the area include the following:

- At a provincial scale, Mtshezi Municipality is located along the foothills of the Drakensburg Mountain. The N3 runs through the municipal area and almost divides it into two.
- The area also has a rich heritage and sites of historical significance. As such it falls within two tourism regions. Estcourt is the only major town in the area and provides service to areas beyond the municipal boundaries, particularly Ntabamhlophe and Loskop which forms part of Imbabazane Municipality.
- The other small town is Weenen which also has a catchment beyond the municipal boundaries including portions of Msinga Municipality.
- It forms part of Uthukela River catchment through Bushman's River and Umtshezi River and is dominated by commercial farmlands.



The municipality boasts well-established industrial, commercial and residential areas as well as rich agricultural farmlands. uMtshezi occupies the ideal spot for any manufacturing industry. It is adjacent to the N3 national highway, and lies on the Johannesburg-Durban electrified main railway line, facilitating the transportation of goods to and from the town. uMtshezi has a highly efficient, reliable and cost effective electrical infrastructure, which supplies its large industries with all the power they need to run their plants. An abundance of water, from the Bushman's River, which flows into the nearby Wagendrift Dam, ensures that the industrialists are suitably served in terms of their water requirements.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Project Definition

The primary aim of the project is to develop a detailed Spatial Development Framework for Mtshezi Municipality within the context of national and provincial spatial development imperatives. This is done with due cognisance of the spatial policies of Uthukela District and the neighbouring municipalities. Its specific objectives are as follows:

- To indicate the current spatial reality of the municipality and identify opportunities, constraints and threats.
- To determine growth directions and device strategies to direct development accordingly.
- To give local interpretation to the national and provincial spatial policies and position the municipality to plan a significant role in the realisation of the national spatial transformation agenda.
- To give spatial interpretation to the development strategies outlined in the IDP and indicate the spatial location of catalytic and strategic projects.
- To indicate intervention areas in terms of sustainable development, building sustainable human settlements and promoting economic development and growth.
- To provide a framework for the development of detailed Land Use Management System (LUMS).

Approach

The nature of the SDF, its significance as a tool for spatial transformation and local governance, and the spatial challenges facing Mtshezi Municipality requires that the preparation of the SDF for the municipality be undertaken from a strategic perspective with a particular focus on the identification of intervention areas that will have a catalytic effect.

Planning Principles

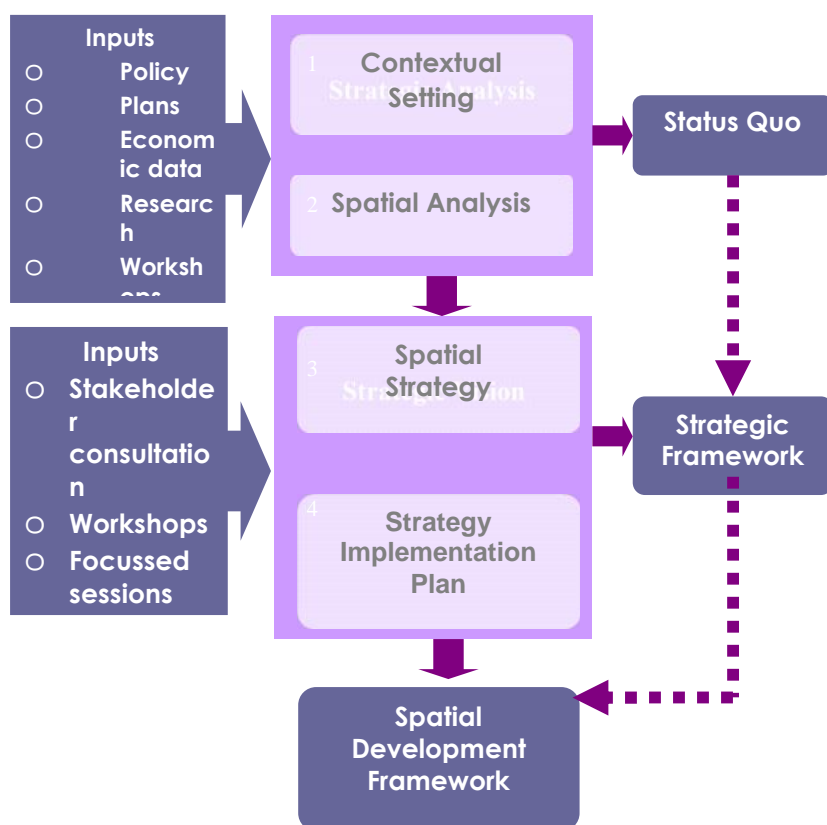
In line with the strategic approach, the following principles were adopted as overarching concerns that should be satisfied or met in order to produce a credible SDF:

- Stakeholder consultation: The final SDF should be developed on the basis of views, concerns and issues raised by a range of stakeholders in a structured public participation process.
- Integrated Development: The SDF should facilitate integrated development (horizontally and vertically).
- Sustainable development: The SDF should promote spatially, socially, economically, environmentally and institutionally sustainable development.
- Equity: The SDF should serve as the basis for an equitable access to land and other resources. It must address gender issues and provide for empowerment.
- Efficiency: The SDF should facilitate efficient allocation of resources and implementation of land development projects.

A Phased Approach

The preparation of the SDF involves the completion of a number of tasks leading to the achievement of sequential milestones. As such, these activities have been grouped according to milestones as reflected on Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Methodology



At least three stakeholder workshops were held:

- The first workshop unfolded in a form of a presentation to the stakeholder forum and focused on the introduction of the project to the stakeholders and provided an opportunity for them to identify spatial development issues that require detailed investigation. Essentially, this was an environmental scanning exercise.
- A current situation analysis report was presented at the second workshop. Stakeholders were given an opportunity to input on the formulation of responses to the issues. This includes development broad parameters for a short to long-term spatial development vision, objectives and preliminary spatial strategies.
- The last workshop focused on the presentation of consolidated spatial strategies and obtaining further debate in this regard.

Focussed sessions and stakeholder interviews were undertaken with a range of organised interests including the following:

- Workshops with ward committees held in three different areas (Estcourt, Weenen and Wembezi) but covering the whole municipal area.
- Relevant government departments and development agencies.
- Farmers associations, organised business, CBO's and NGO's.
- Alignment meetings with the District Municipality and the neighbouring municipalities, particularly Imbabazane and Mooi Mpofana.

POLICY CONTEXT

Since the introduction of the democratic dispensation in South Africa, the notion of spatial planning, given effect in the form of spatial development plans and spatial targeting, has gained momentum. This is the case in all spheres of government. At a national level, this focus first emerged within the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and was given statutory emphasis through the Development Facilitation Act (DFA). Spatial targeting was first built into the Integrated Sustainable Development Strategy (ISRDP) which identified 13 nodal areas. Today, it is one of the fundamental principles on which the National Spatial Development Plan (NSDP) is based.

At a provincial, the now outdated Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS) had a spatial component to it. More detailed spatial planning guidelines were incorporated into the Rural Development White Paper for kwaZulu-Natal which introduced the Rural Service Centre system (RSC), which is now widely used in the province as an approach to regional spatial planning. The same theme has been carried over to the emerging provincial development policy in the form of Provincial Spatial Economic Development Strategy (PSEDS).

Defining an SDF

Umtshezi SDF is formulated within the spatial planning policy context set by these national and provincial spatial development imperatives. In part, it deals with the spatial issues facing the municipal area, but also seeks to contribute to the attainment of the spatial development targets and objectives outlined in these policies.

Defining an SDF

The Spatial Development Framework is a principal spatial planning instrument which guides and informs all planning, land management, development and spatial decision-making in a municipality. It aims to create a spatial interpretation of the strategies and projects already contained within the IDP. The main purpose of the SDF is to **guide the form** and location of **future spatial development** within a Municipal area in order to address the imbalances of the past. Its attributes are as follows:

- As the SDF is a legislative requirement it has legal status and it supersedes all other spatial plans that guide development at local government level.
- The SDF will enable the municipality to manage its land resources effectively in a sustainable manner.
- Through the SDF, the municipality is able to develop and implement appropriate strategies and projects to address spatial problems.

In addition, the SDF will promote effective use of scarce land resources, speed up delivery of spatial bound projects and services, help attract additional external funds where it is needed, strengthen democracy and institutional transformation, promote intergovernmental coordination on spatial issues, and provide guidance to more detailed Land Use Management Systems.

Purpose of the SDF

Umtshezi SDF is neither a development nor a master plan, but a strategic guide for the spatial transformation of the area.

It provides a framework for the formulation of more detailed and area/site specific plans.

National Spatial Development Imperatives

National spatial development vision was first articulated, in principle, in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, which identified a need to create integrated and sustainable urban and rural spatial systems. This was essentially, about spatial transformation and resonated well with the transformation and reconstruction agenda of the new government. It was articulated in more detail in the Development facilitation Act, (Act No. 67 of 1995). This Act introduced a generic set of normative and procedural principles that should guide land planning and development in South Africa. These principles were amplified in the White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management introduced in 2001. The principles are as follows:

The White Paper states that the principles and norms collectively form a vision for land use and planning in the country. They constitute a single point of reference and an overarching coherent set of policy guides to direct and steer land development, planning and decision making in all spheres of government including other public agencies involved in land use so that the outcomes thereof are consistent with the national objectives.

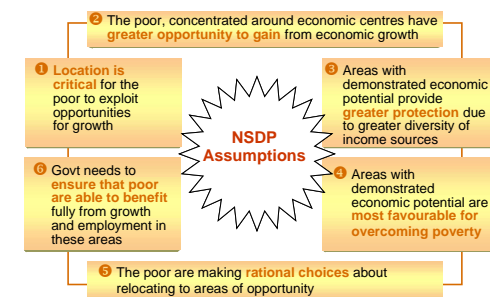
Although not necessarily a spatial planning policy, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) added spatial targeting as a new dimension to the government vision for spatial planning. It identified 13 district municipalities as focus areas for rural development programmes. Although Umtshezi Municipality is not located within an ISRDS node, it should nevertheless observe and incorporate its principles in its spatial and development planning initiatives.

More recently, the national government has introduced the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) as spatial expression of the general national development vision as outlined in Asgi-SA. The NSDP assists government in addressing three fundamental issues, namely:

- Strategic areas where government should direct its investment initiatives so as to achieve maximum and sustainable impact.
- Creating forms of spatial arrangements that are conducive to the achievement of the national objectives of democratic nation building and socio-economic inclusion; and
- Taking the government beyond the rhetoric of integration and coordination and start putting into place clear procedures and systems for achieving these ideals.

The NSDP read together with the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) and the Urban Development Framework (UDF), clearly suggests that spatial planning should be based on a rigorous analysis of the space economy, focus on achieving sustainable developmental outcomes and be fully integrated into the local development programs.

Figure 2: NSDP Principles



Source: The Presidency

As indicated on Figure 2 above, it introduces a set of additional normative principles and maintains, inter alia, that:

- Sustained economic growth is a pre-requisite for poverty alleviation;
- Government spending should focus on localities of economic growth or with potential for economic growth; and
- Future settlement economic development opportunities should be channelled into activity corridors and nodes that are adjacent to or link the main growth centres.

Although Umtshezi Municipality is located along the N3 which is a national trade route, it is not identified as one of the national priority development nodes. However, the NSDP principles are as relevant in Umtshezi as they are in the target areas.

The implementation of the national spatial development vision is supported by a number of sector policies and programmes such as the land reform program, urban renewal, housing policy, environmental management policies, etc.

Provincial Spatial Development Vision

The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy was developed in the late 1990s and has since been overtaken by a number of initiatives and events. This includes the introduction of the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative for South South (Asgi-SA) as a national development macro-economic policy

and the NSDP. A process towards the introduction of a Provincial Spatial Economic Development Strategy as a Provincial translation of the NSDP suggests that there is emerging consensus that the new PGDS should rest on the following pillars:

- Increasing investment in the Province
- Skills and capacity building
- Broadening participation in the economy.
- Increasing competitiveness

The Provincial Spatial and Economic Development Strategy (PSEDS) developed as a component of the emerging PGDS identifies development corridors and nodes, and characterises these according to the dominant economic sectors. It identifies agriculture, industry, tourism and service sectors as the main drivers of the Provincial economy. It recognizes the strategic location and potential of Umtshezi Municipality, and acknowledges that the area has potential for tourism and agricultural development. It identifies Estcourt as a tertiary node (a centre which should provide service to the sub-regional economy), and two corridors linking Estcourt with other centres within the province:

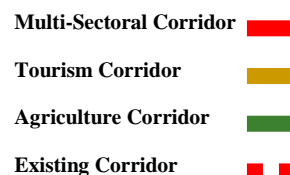
- Existing corridor which is essentially the N3.
- Tourism corridor linking Estcourt with Uthungulu.

It concludes that it is imperative to ensure that these corridors and nodes are supported by an adequate and appropriate network



of services including transport, electricity, water, housing, health, education and community safety, amongst others (PSEDS, 2008:22). Given the agricultural focus of Umtshezi Municipality area, PSEDS calls for a developmental approach to the land reform program so as to prevent the loss of agricultural land and manage impact on the agricultural and tourism sectors. It also requires the municipality to consider the economic realities of the emerging farmers when developing systems and procedures for the implementation of the Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA). It is therefore, important to clarify the role of Umtshezi Municipality generally and Estcourt in particular in the provincial space economy.

Figure 3: Provincial Nodes and Corridors



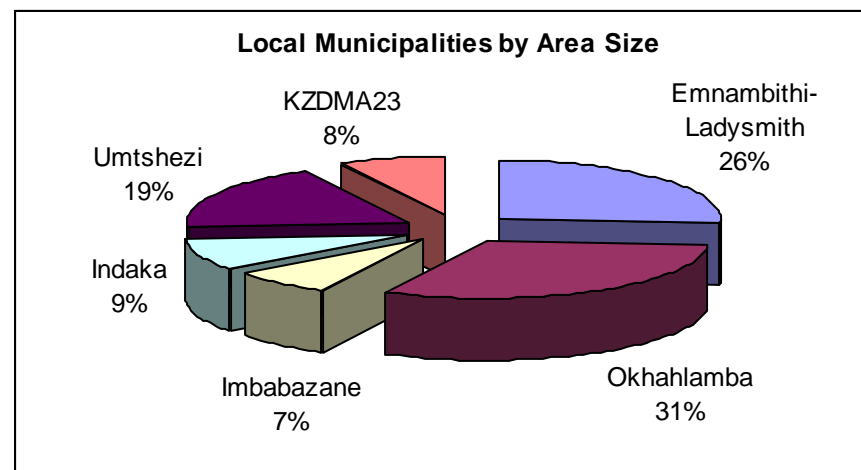
Uthukela District Spatial Development Vision

Uthukela District Municipality has developed a high level Spatial Development Framework as part of its IDP. The District SDF provides a spatial vision for the whole district and serves as a tool for coordinating spatial planning and development initiatives within the district. It has serious implications for Umtshezi Municipality.

Spatial Structure

The uThukela district is located on the western boundary of the KwaZulu-Natal province, and abuts onto the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Free State province. Neighbouring districts within KwaZulu-Natal are: DC25 (Amajuba) to the north, DC24 (Umgungundlovu) to the east and DC22 (Umtshezi Municipality) to the south.

Figure 4: Uthukela Local Municipalities by Area



Source: DLGTA

As indicated on figure 4 below, Umtshezi Municipality accounts for at least 19% of the total district area (also refer to Map 3), and accommodates about 10% of the district population.

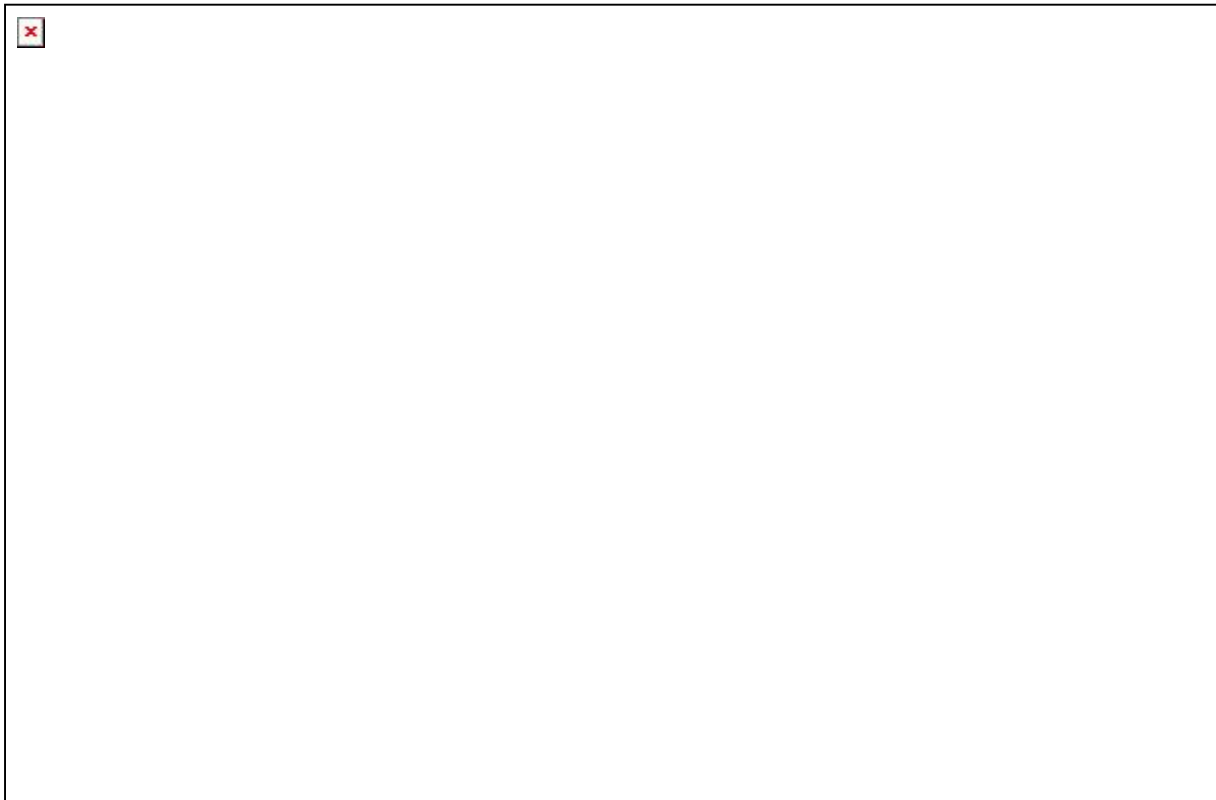
Spatial economy

In line with spatial targeting, the District SDF adopts a service centre approach and establishes a clear hierarchy of centres with Ladysmith being the primary centre or the hub. Ladysmith is the largest urban centre in the district and it has been growing in importance as the primary economic core. It is characterised by a well-developed and diversified urban economy, comprising most of the industrial activity in the district. As the administrative centre, it provides a range of higher-order services for the whole district.

Figure 5: UMDM District SDF

Ladysmith is an important transport hub, as it lies at the intersection of many secondary roads leading to the N3, the Drakensberg as well as destinations beyond the district itself. Most of the secondary and rural settlements in the district have strong functional links with Ladysmith and can, to some extent, be considered dormitory suburbs of the district's economic core. It leads the district with respect to the provision of services, having good roads, a water reticulation network, sewerage system, electricity, recreational facilities and other services.

Estcourt/Wembezi is the second largest urban area in the district. Its threshold extends beyond Umtshezi Municipal boundaries to include almost the whole of Imbabazane Municipality and portions of Okhahlamba Municipality. This document refers to this as the Greater Estcourt Functional Region.



Most notably, the economies of smaller towns have been weakening with the impact of macro-economic trends and transportation changes. The construction of the N3 that bypasses these towns has significantly reduced the amount of through-traffic. The development of direct access service centres (DASC) along the N3 has also reduced a need for motorists to get off the N3 to the urban centres such as Ladysmith and Estcourt.

In response to their declining economic base, some of the secondary urban settlements have begun to expand their roles in tourism. Local-scale, lower-order

- R33 which runs parallel to the N3 from north of Estcourt to Mooi River and beyond.

- P29 from Estcourt through Wembezi to Ntabamhlophe in Imbabazane and Giants Castle.

goods and services are supplied at smaller towns throughout the district. Towns along the tourism routes provide for some of the commercial needs of tourists.

An increasing number of rural households have begun to move towards urban centres in search of basic infrastructure, social services and economic opportunities, and as a result towns are experiencing urbanisation on their peripheries (eg, Mimosadale in Estcourt). Thus, smaller towns primarily function as rural service centres. However, the reduced economic base and increasing population pressure has begun to place severe strains on the financial resources of the towns.

These centres are linked together by a network of regional and district roads with the N3 and N11 (alternative route from the N3 to Gauteng and Mpumalanga) being the main development corridors. Secondary corridors or major internal link routes with serious implications for Umtshezi Municipality include the following:

- P11 linking Bergville to the west through Winterton and Ladysmith to the north through Colenso.
- P13 from Estcourt to Weenen and eventually the north coast.

The majority of these also serve as tourist routes in addition to being regional link and access roads.

Other key district spatial features which influence spatial planning and development in Umtshezi Municipality include the following:

- The Drakensberg forms the south-western boundary of the district and is one of the most prominent and influential natural features. In fact, it one of the prime tourist destinations provincially and nationally. Umtshezi Municipality is located at the foothills of the Drakensburg.
- The numerous protected areas in the district are important natural features. KZN Wildlife is responsible for administering several nature reserves (including uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park, Spioenkop Nature Reserve and Weenen Nature Reserve).
- Extensive commercial farming in the northern, central and south and south-western areas of the district. Crop farming, however, is restricted by low rainfall patterns primarily in the central areas of the district, but pockets of more intensive land use are found where irrigation can occur. Nearly 90% of Umtshezi Municipality is commercial agricultural land.
- While development patterns are often influenced by transportation routes, it is important to note that many of the rural settlements are somewhat removed from the major roads,

and improving accessibility and facilitating functional integration are thus important spatial challenges.

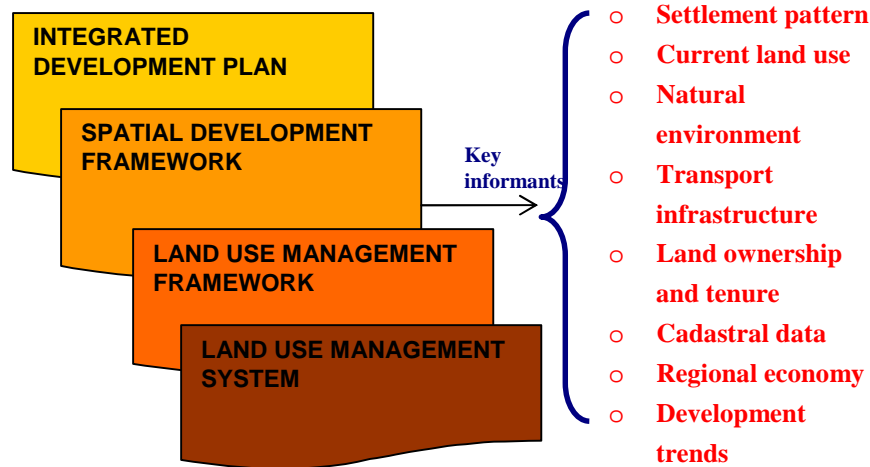
The settlement pattern and spatial planning in the district has been determined to a large extent by apartheid policies, which prohibited African households from undergoing natural processes of urbanisation. It resulted in the development of settlements in rural areas with few infrastructural services or community facilities and a very limited economic base, often at some distance from larger urban centres and employment opportunities.

IDP, SDF and LUMS

The current and emerging legislation governing the implementation of LUMS imply that it is possible to develop land use schemes directly from the Spatial Development Frameworks prepared as part of the IDP. However, this cannot be achieved unless the SDF is sufficiently detailed and provides an indication of the manner in which land uses are currently organised in space, and provides guidance in terms of the future location of different land uses.

Umtshezi Municipality SDF is structured so as to provide for a strategic link between the IDP and site specific land use management system. The following are major components of the SDF:

Figure 6: Linkage between the IDP, SDF and LUMS



- A refined Spatial Development Framework, which essentially is a spatial imprint of the development vision and strategies.
- Land Use Management Framework, which refers to a guide for the future location of different land uses and identification of areas that are experiencing development pressure and requires, detailed level of controls.
- Management overlays, which provides for the recognition of other factors in land use decision-making.
- Nodal frameworks

Implications for Umtshezi SDF

The strategic focus of these policies and development intents is motivated by a number of concerns, the precise mix of which is determined by particular social, economic and

political contexts of different times. In the context of Umtshezi Municipality, these concerns include the following:

- Environmental concerns: uncontrolled development of land can have adverse effects on natural habitats, cultural landscapes and air and water quality.
- Health and safety concerns: uncontrolled development can lead to overcrowding and unsafe building construction. Certain land uses can also be detrimental to the health and safety of neighbours.
- Efficiency of infrastructure provision and traffic management: Where infrastructure is provided, generally at high financial cost, without taking into account likely and relevant land-use and settlement patterns the opportunity costs to society are very high.
- Aesthetic concerns: the control of land development enables government to prescribe certain design parameters for buildings and areas/space.
- Investment promotion: strategic planning is often seen as a prerequisite for attracting certain types of investment to targeted areas. These strategies are likely to be linked to local economic development initiatives.

These policies introduce a set of principles that are intended to influence the substantive outcomes of planning decisions, whether they relate to spatial development frameworks or decisions on land use change or development applications. The overall aim of these principles is to achieve planning outcomes that:

-
- restructure spatially inefficient settlements;
 - promote sustainable development and use of natural resources;
 - channel resources to areas of greatest need and development potential, thereby redressing the inequitable historical treatment of marginalized areas;
 - take into account the fiscal, institutional and administrative capacities of role players, the needs of communities and the environment; and
 - stimulate economic development opportunities in rural and urban areas; and support an equitable protection of rights to and in land.

Although municipalities are responsible for spatial planning at a local level, the desired or ideal spatial and economic system can only be achieved if local government works in tandem with the relevant organs of state and civil society. This emphasises the importance of public participation and cooperative governance.

To this end, spatial planning in Umtshezi should address the local interests and be managed in accordance with the universal development principles. It should also:

- generate a wide range of economic development opportunities and necessary support systems;
- enable the members of the public to conduct their daily activities quickly, easily and cost effectively;

- provide a choice of living environments along a continuum from conditions of intense public environments to conditions of great privacy; and
- promote equitable access to opportunities.

The need to address environmental issues as part of spatial planning has become critical. At a strategic level, this involves a detailed assessment of such issues and preparation of appropriate strategies for achieving environmentally friendly and sustainable development. As such, spatial planning in Umtshezi Municipality should be in line with the requirements of legislation such as the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) is critical in this regard.

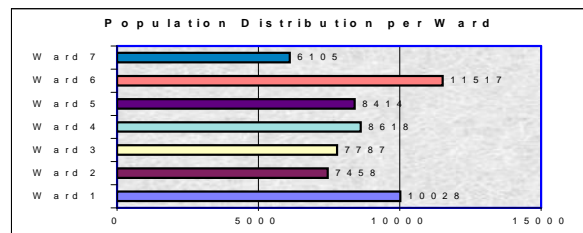
SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Umtshezi Spatial Development Framework is a forward looking document that seeks to achieve spatial transformation while also unlocking development potential. It moves from the premise that a desired future spatial situation requires a detailed understanding of the internal and external spatial development influences.

Demographic Profile

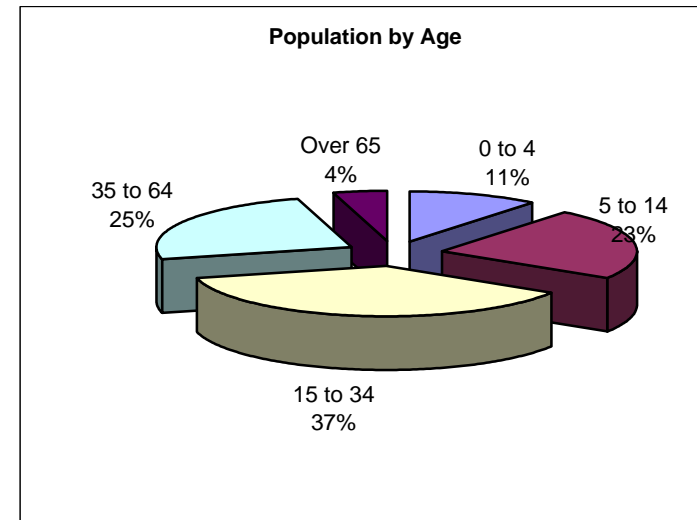
Although the SDF has a clear spatial focus, it is critically important to locate it within the broader development profile of the municipality. Essentially, this refers to a broad overview of the demographic, social and economic trends, opportunities and challenges.

Figure 7: Population Distribution by Wards



Umtshezi Municipality population is estimated at 59 822 individuals or 13 965 households. This marks an increase of about 4.7% from the situation in 1996. The majority of the population is African constituting 83.7% of the total population. The minority racial groups constitute 16.28% of the total. Map 4 indicates population distribution per small area layer.

Figure 8: Population by Age



Population growth is expected to continue to grow albeit at a much slower rate compared to the last census decade. Areas such as Wembezi and Estcourt are likely to attract most of the population growth due to their strategic location.

The IDP notes the potential impact of HIV and AIDS on the population and development within the municipal area generally. It thus introduces strategies and programs to mainstream HIV and AIDS in all municipal development initiatives. The SDF deals with population dynamics by means of introducing a tool for monitoring development focus areas, relatively high population concentration areas and development pressure areas. It notes the impact of urbanisation processes and its implications for the allocation of space for development.

Development Profile

Socio-Economic Profile

A review of the socio-economic profile as presented in the IDP and the draft Housing Sector Plan indicates the following as key characteristics of Umtshezi population:

- The majority of the population can be considered functionally illiterate as 70.5% of the population has a primary education and 18.8% % have not been to school.
- Of the 13 961 households 3 777, representing 27 % of households have no income. This correlates with the high levels of unemployment that stands at 33%.
- Very few individuals have an income above R3 500 to enable them to provide their own shelter. Clearly the majority of the municipal population will depend on state support for shelter and other basic services. Statistics reveal that 27% of the households are surviving on less than R12 a day.
- Approximately 10% of the total working force in the municipality is skilled. Only 18.3% of the workforce is professional. Trade and craft constitute 10% of the workforce. Wholesale and retail trade employs 1 857 (4.9%) while electricity, gas and water supply employ 4.2% of the population. While agriculture is considered a key economic sector, statistics reveal that the sector employs 2.4% of the economically active population.

Using household income, employment profile and employment by sector, it is strikingly clear that Umtshezi Municipality has a relatively

high rate of unemployment, is dominated by low income households and the majority of those who are employed are involved in elementary sectors. Agriculture, which is essentially a dominant land use accounts for a small number of existing jobs. It follows that the majority of the unemployed are in areas with high population concentration

Access to Basic Services

Access to basic services is a reliable measure of the standard of living and level of poverty. Review of the IDP, WASDP and Housing Sector Plan reveals the following situation:

- Umtshezi Municipality enjoys a relatively good road network with the majority of roads being in a good condition. The situation is however, different in the settlement areas, portions of Wembezi and almost the whole of Weenen
- 8233 households use electricity for lighting. Only 4557 use candles for the same purpose.
- Weekly municipal refuse removal is provided in urban centres only. There is a need to develop a strategy for dealing with waste removal in rural areas.
- 2995 households do not have access to sanitation facilities whereas 86 are using bucket system. It is believed that the bucket system has been successfully eradicated.
- While almost all urban based households have access to water within RDP standards, provision of water to the rural communities remain a major challenge.

Generally, Umtshezi is well provided with basic services. However, the growth of peri-urban settlements outside Estcourt has led to an increase in the number of poorly serviced households. These settlements, particularly Emabhanoyini and Rensburg Drift are increasing at a fast rate.

Settlement Pattern

Population Density

As indicated on Map 5, population density is generally low with most of the urban centres and major rural settlements having between 80 and 285 households per km². However, pockets of relatively higher density settlements with households ranging between 285 and 614 households per km² have developed in the outskirts of Wembezi and Estcourt. Unless growth and spread of these settlements is controlled, they are likely to degenerate into slums.

Population Distribution

Although Umtshezi municipality is predominantly rural in character, the majority of the population resides in urban areas and peri-urban settlements. Development intensity in terms of the number of households is acute in the urban areas of Estcourt and Wembezi. While each of these areas has experienced limited development over the last few years, expansive peri-urban settlements have developed in the outskirts of each of these areas. Some of these have been formalised as part of the housing delivery program of the municipality.

The majority of the housing projects have focused around Estcourt and Wembezi. Weenen has also attracted a fair

amount of population increase. As indicated on map...a large number of households is scattered throughout commercial farmlands. This includes labour tenants and farm dwellers.

Spatial Structure

Spatial structure of Umtshezi Municipality has been highly influenced by apartheid spatial planning policies, demarcation of municipal boundaries and reflects a highly fragmented pattern with the following features:

- The municipal boundaries were established using the criteria outlined in the Municipal Demarcation Act which includes economic functionality, settlement pattern, population movement pattern, etc. As such, Estcourt is the main economic hub and a primary service centre within the municipal area.
- Wembezi Township located about 25km outside of Estcourt has historical links with Estcourt having been developed as part of the economic system of Estcourt. Wembezi remains nothing more than another dormitory suburb of Estcourt.
- Weenen which developed as an agricultural town serving the surrounding farming community. Although this area enjoys good access and connectivity by road, it faces a number of challenges including urban decay, changes in the commercial agricultural sector and poor maintenance of infrastructure. The role of this town should be redefined in the context of the changes taking place around it.
- With the demise of the apartheid regime and repulsion of influx control legislation, a number of dense peri-urban settlements have developed outside Estcourt and Wembezi. These include

Mimosadale, Kwa C and Rensburg Drift. Population in these areas continue to swell establishing a need to contain and direct their development.

- Relatively dense rural settlements which previously served black spots supplying labour to the commercial farmlands. These settlements have grown as a result of forced removals, land redistribution program and
- A large number of households are spread unevenly in space through the commercial farmlands. These include farm dwellers and labour tenants.
- These areas are connected together by a relatively road network.

Typical of apartheid regional planning, movement from these settlements is towards Estcourt and Weenen which are both located within former white areas. This creates a sense of dependence, and subjects the poor to high transport costs and long trips. This has serious effects on the productivity of those who commute on daily basis between the urban centres and their rural residential areas. A hierarchy of centres has developed with Estcourt being the economic hub. Estcourt accounts for a major part of the municipal economy and has retained its sub-regional importance in the face of economic recession. The same cannot be said about Weenen which has declined in significance, and primarily function as a secondary centre.

Current Land Use

Current land use pattern has evolved in response to the settlement pattern, the natural environment and regional

access routes. The following broad land use categories are found in Umtshezi Municipality:

- Urban nodes are Estcourt, Wembezi and Weenen. Each of these plays a different role in the space economy. While Estcourt is the major commercial node, Wembezi is essentially a dormitory suburb. Weenen is a declining rural town.
- A sizeable portion of the municipal area comprises commercial agricultural areas. There are extensive and intensive farming activities throughout this area. They include crop production (primarily in irrigated areas), game farming, limited forestry and livestock farming.
- While there are no proclaimed Traditional Authority Areas within Umtshezi, there are several areas of dense rural settlement. They include settlements such as Frere, Chiveley, Cornfields and Thembalihle. The latter is settled by members of Mabaso traditional council.
- Conservation areas include nature reserves (namely the Weenen, Wagendrift and Moor Park Nature Reserves), game farms and heritage sites.
- A number of farms which were previously used for livestock farming have now been converted into game farms and are developed with tourism infrastructure.

Land Ownership and Use Control

Land Ownership Pattern

Land ownership in the municipal area can be categorized as follows:

- There are numerous parcels of state land located throughout the municipal area. They include the land parcels upon which various facilities have been constructed, for example, government and municipal offices, police stations, schools, clinics and utilities (such as water works and sewerage treatment works). Small portions of agricultural stateland are found near Ennersdale.
- The predominant form of land ownership in the municipal area is privately-owned land. However, this is likely to change as more land is increasing registered in the name of groups as a result of the land reform program. Huge tracks of land will fall under communal land as defined in the Communal land Rights Act (CLaRA).
- Major servitudes relating, *inter alia*, to uThukela Water's bulk water supply pipelines and Eskom powerlines.

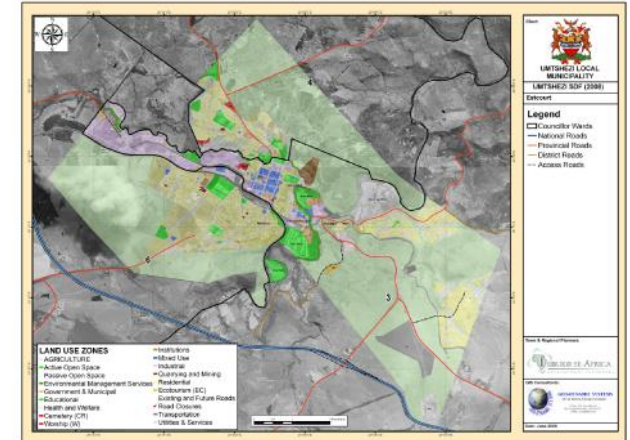
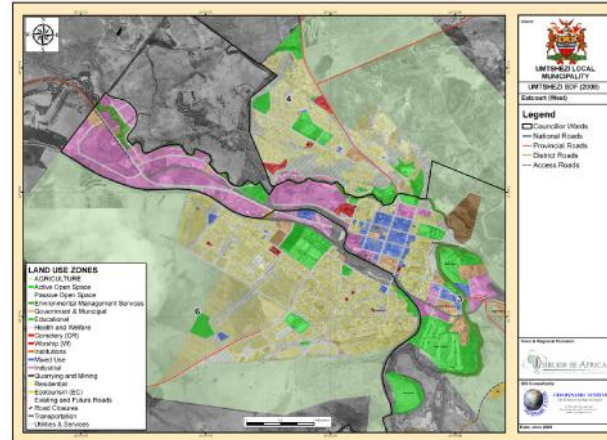
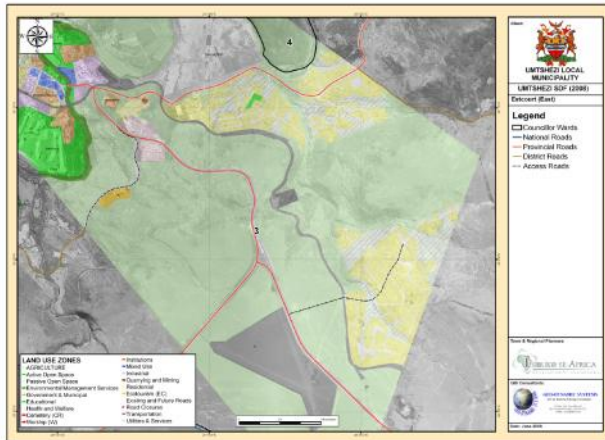
It is noted that the municipality is to commence a "land audit" project in due course. The project will entail the establishment of a comprehensive GIS database (listing, *inter alia*, all registered erfs, their extent, ownership, current use and zoning), which will form the basis for a Valuation Roll covering the entire municipal area.

Land Use Control

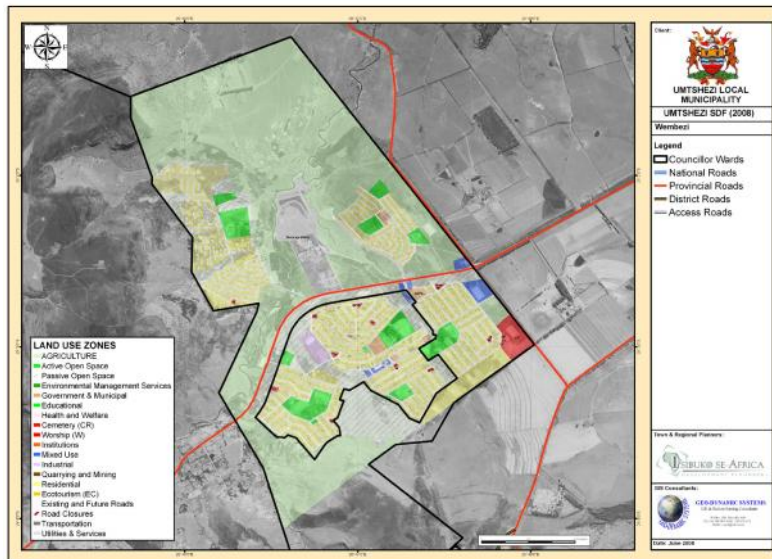
Umtshezi Municipality has developed a wall-to-wall Land Use Management Systems (LUMS). However, only the Estcourt and Weenen Town Planning Schemes (TPS) are currently being implemented.

These TPSs were introduced in terms of the Natal Town Planning Ordinance, No. 27 of 1949. Last reviewed in 1996, the TPS comprises a TPS Map and a set of TPS Clauses. The existing TPS provides for a substantial number of zones and reservations and is accordingly a Complex Scheme.

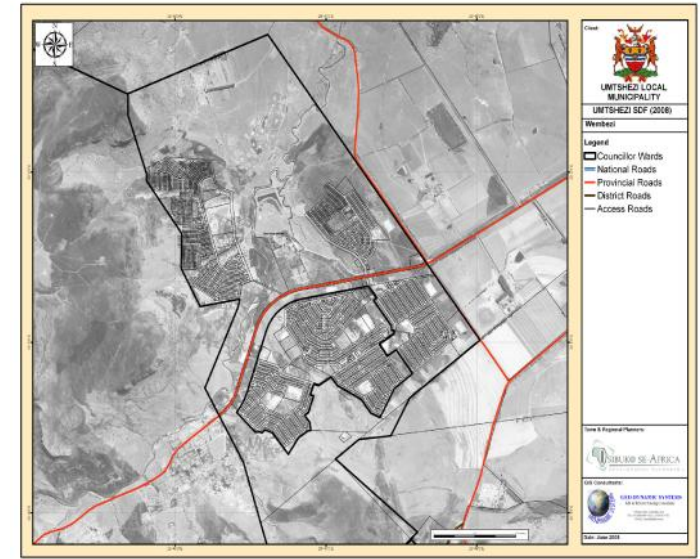
Development in Wembezi is administered in terms of KwaZulu-Land Affairs Act with the layout plan doubling as both a land use plan and a land use scheme.



entrated mainly to the west of the CBD and is used to separate the former Coloured e CBD. This introduces a challenge to transform the area into a mixed land use



The areas of
The key challenge in Wembezi is to transform the area from being a dormitory suburb into a sustainable human settlement that provides for the social and economic development needs of the local people. It can also provide service to surrounding communities and tourist.
rural



Umtshezi are currently managed in terms of various pieces of legislation, including the following:

- the Town Planning Ordinance No. 27 of 1949 (applicable to former Natal areas);
- the Development Facilitation Act, No. 67 of 1995; and
- the Less Formal Township Establishment Act, No. 113 of 1991.

These laws are administered by the Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Administration. Housing projects are formalised in terms of the DFA and LFTEA. The LUMS document introduces land use schemes for each of the areas albeit different levels of detail.

According to PPDC records, a total of 136 Scheme amendments have been initiated since the Scheme was originally adopted. As it is the only current, legally adopted Scheme it has been a key informant in the LUMS establishment process, particularly in respect of the Urban Scheme.

The municipality has recently completed the first phase of the Land Use Management System (LUMS) as an attempt to develop and introduce a uniform land use management system. However, it will need to be updated to take into account the recommendations of the SDF and availability of updated cadastral information. The latter is being generated as part of the development of systems and procedures for the implementation of the MPRA.

Economic

Tourism

It is difficult to obtain local statistics for tourism in the Umtshezi municipality. However, tourism is one of the sectors that have contributed to the economy of Umtshezi both directly and indirectly. There are surrounding tourism activities that have major influence on the tourism sector of Umtshezi. The main tourist destinations in the area include:

- The Midlands meander, which is an arts and crafts route around the Pietermaritzburg, Hilton and Howick and Mooi River.
- Drakensberg Resorts which is a National Heritage Site. The Drakensberg Mountain Range is a well-established holiday destination for local tourists.
- Thukela Biosphere Reserve and Weenen Nature Reserve. These areas focus on eco-tourism.
- Battlefields Route – This route encompasses a number of towns in the region in which historic battles took place. Along the route, events are planned which include re-enactments of battles.
- Bushmans Experience– This route starts in Estcourt/ Wembezi and is designed to capture tourists visiting the above destinations, as well as to create a local Umtshezi tourist destination.

There is an existing Tourism Association in Umtshezi, which has a membership of 85% of the Bed and Breakfast establishment in the area (KZN Tourism Brochure).

Commerce and Industry

Estcourt is the only major commercial and industrial centre within Umtshezi Municipality. It is a hub of commercial activity developed with many chain retail stores as well as local businesses. It serves as a sub-regional commercial centre with a threshold that transcends the municipal boundaries to include areas such as Ntabamhlophe and Loskop located in Imbabazane Municipality. Although Estcourt has not experienced substantial investment in the commercial sector over the last few years, it offers huge opportunities for further commercial development and linkages of this sector to the tourism industry.

Existing industrial activities are highly involved in the processing of agricultural products, particularly dairy, meat production, maize milling and wood products. Again, Estcourt has potential to develop as a regional agr-processing zone with a district wide influence. It is strategically located in relation to provincial and national transportation routes.

Limited commercial activities occur in Weenen and in Wembezi. The bulk of the economic activities are in a form of general dealer stores, taverns and tuck shops, which cater for the needs of local residents. The significance of Weenen as a commercial centre has declined as a result of changes in the agricultural sector and growth of Tugela Ferry in Msinga.

Agricultural Potential

The agricultural potential of Umtshezi varies with the different rainfall, soil, climate and topographical condition in the area. The five distinct Bioresource identified by the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs have a major impact on agricultural practices and potential. The area of Umtshezi is of

marginal value for crops, unless irrigated. The good water resources in the area create a high potential for irrigation.

Agricultural potential within Umtshezi Municipality falls into six of the eight potential ratings namely: good, relatively good, moderate, restricted, low, poor, and very poor agricultural potential areas (refer to Map 6). These are described as follows:

- Good agricultural potential areas: Areas of agricultural potential within Umtshezi Municipality which are classified as good are limited of the six agricultural potential zones. These areas occur at the southern part of municipality. Good agricultural land occupies an estimated 2% of the municipality.
 - Relatively good agricultural potential areas: Land of relatively good agricultural potential is quite extensive in municipality. Areas of relatively good agricultural potential occur along the western boundary of the municipality and also at the northern tip of the municipality. Relatively good agricultural land occupies an estimated 16% of the municipality.
 - Moderately good agricultural potential: Land that is of moderate agricultural potential is located in the central parts of the municipality between the areas encompassed by southwest of Estcourt, east of Frere, northeast of Colenso and west of Weenen. A very small area of this land type also occurs along the western boundary of the municipality. Moderately good agricultural land occupies an estimated 25% of the municipality.
- Jane

- Low and poor agricultural potential: The rest of the area which covers an estimated 56% of the municipality is covered by land considered to be low to poor agricultural potential land. These areas occur mainly at the western half of the municipality.
- Agricultural Potential for Planning Purposes: The quantity and distribution of water resources in Umtshezi Municipality is very good although rainfall is erratic and soils are poor. It is estimated that close to 60% of land in the municipality has limited agricultural productivity. Thus in terms of economic land use, agriculture is not a suitable development option for economic development in the Municipality. Since majority of the people in this municipality depend on crop cultivation an area of focus for the municipality is to strengthen subsistence farming at the household level.

The best areas for irrigation are in the valleys of the Bushmans and Little Bushmans Rivers and the area of the Wagendrift Dam. Agricultural potential is greatest in the eastern sections along the Little Tugela River, declining to the west. Commercial farming is taking place in the eastern sections and non-commercial farming occurs in the vicinity of Weenen. The irrigated small holdings located almost around Weenen town accounts for the relatively good potential land in this area. High potential agricultural land is located to the south west of the area along Bushmans River.

Social Infrastructure

Equitable access to social facilities such as to schools, clinics and police stations is an important indicator of the quality of life. Although, the majority part of Umtshezi Municipality fell

within the former Natal, the area has suffered from decades of neglect in terms of the delivery of social facilities. As such, the need to address this issue is identified in the IDP as one of the key challenges facing the municipality. Understanding the spatial distribution of these facilities and the identification of gaps is a critical aspect of the SDF (refer to Map 7).

Education

Spatial distribution of education facilities in relation to the population density reveals that some areas are not well provided with education facilities. This is based on the application of a standard of 1200 households per secondary school and 600 households per primary school. Areas that require urgent attention include Frere, Rensburg Drift, Cornfields and Thembalihle. In some instances, the settlement does not have sufficient threshold to warrant a school. This situation accounts for a high rate of school drop out and the associated functional illiteracy. This affects mainly the farm dweller households that are located in deep commercial farmlands.

Health

An analysis of the spatial distribution of health facilities reveals the same pattern as that of education facilities. Areas such as Wembezi, and Weenen each have one clinic yet they provide service to large areas with households in excess of the norm of 6000 households per clinic or a clinic within a 5km radius from each household. Thembalihle, Rensburg Drift and Frere do not have stationery clinics. The rate of population growth in these areas emphasises a need for these facilities in these areas.

Health facilities in Umtshezi are as follows:

- Estcourt Hospital which is a district hospital servicing areas beyond the municipal boundaries.
- 5 clinics located in Wembezi, Estcourt (2), Weenen and Cornfields.
- Emergency rescue services (EMRS) found in Estcourt.

As with education facilities, an increase in density in some settlements increases service backlogs and forces people to walk travel long distances so as to access health facilities.

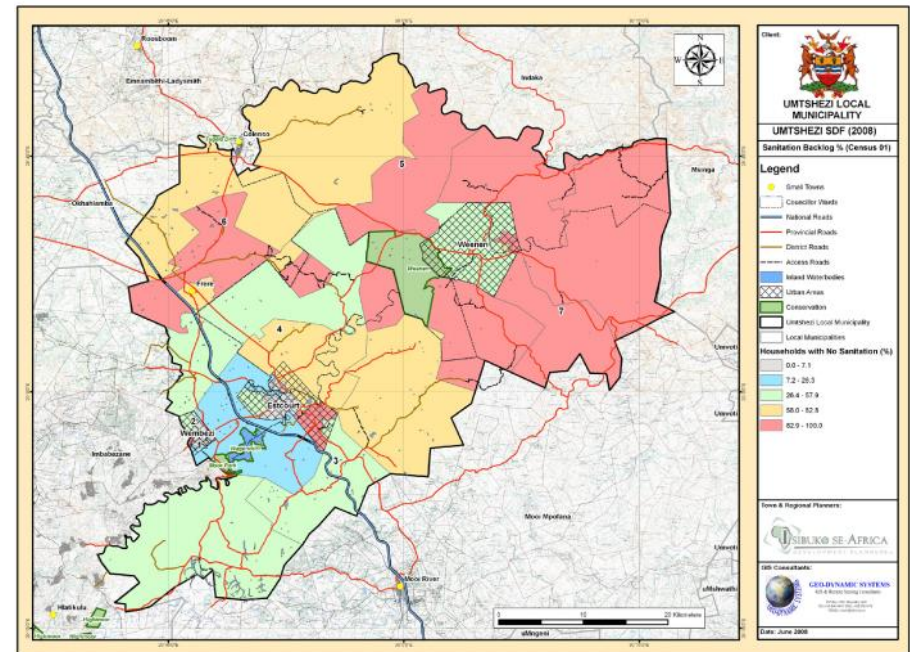
Police Stations

Umtshezi Municipality is generally well provided with police stations as each of the three major population concentration areas is developed with a police station. Information pertaining to the location of crime scenes could not be obtained. Therefore it is difficult to establish the spatial pattern of crime in the area. Although the IDP indicates that crime levels have generally declined, it emphasises the need to improve security and safety at a community level, and general access to such facilities.

Physical Infrastructure

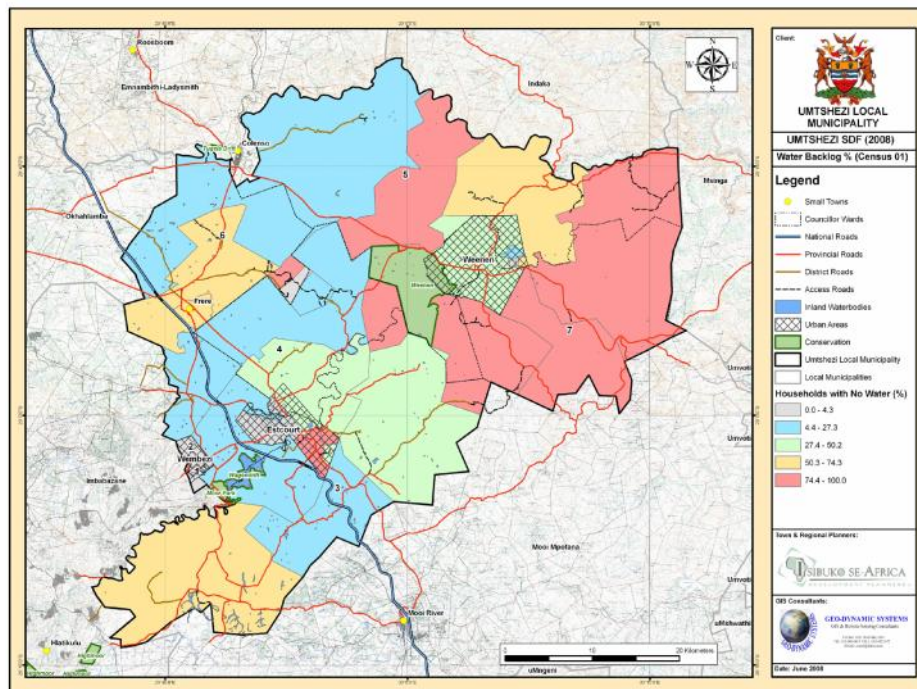
Water

Households without water are largely concentrated around Weenen, particularly ward 5 and 7. A large peri-urban settlement (Mimosadale) located to the south of Estcourt is also experiencing serious water backlog.



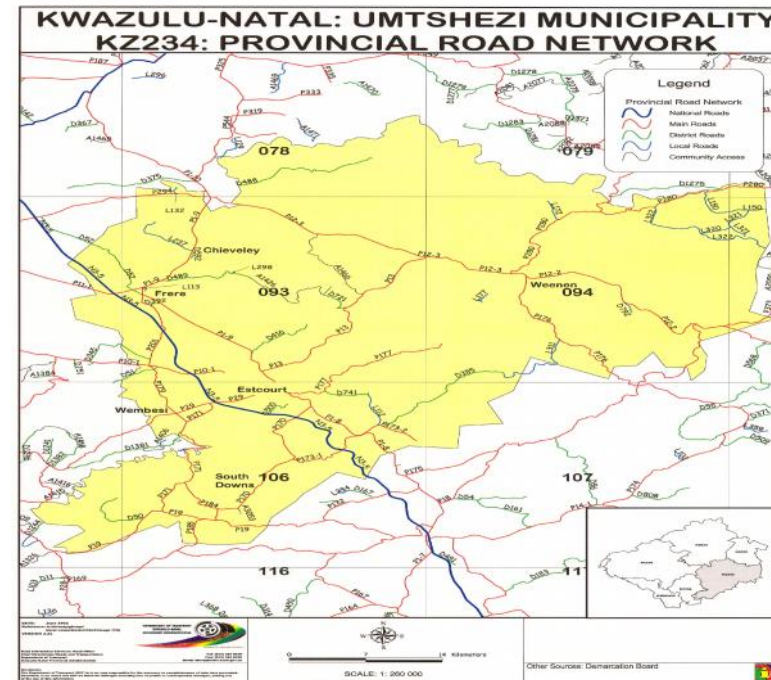
Sanitation

The geography of sanitation backlogs largely co-incides with the water backlogs suffice except that there seems to be more areas without sanitation compared to water. Again the majority of people without access to proper sanitation are found in wards 5 and 7. Cornfields and Mimosadale are also poorly developed with sanitation facilities.



Electricity

Access to electricity, particularly outside of the urban centres remains one of the major development challenges facing Umtshezi Municipality. The majority of the per-urban settlements are also poor supplied with electricity. Information indicating electricity infrastructure could not be obtained as it is deemed strategic information by ESKOM.



Roads

The Municipality is strategically located in relation to national, provincial and regional routes. Major connector roads within the municipal area include the following:

- N3 which is a national corridor.
- P1-8 which runs parallel to the N3
- P12 to Weenen and beyond.
- P29 to Giant Castle.

There is a need to maximize on development opportunities along key routes within the municipality linking markets, places and people.

Environment

The natural environmental resources and endowments are the pivots around which development revolves. Human intervention plays a critical role in the sustainability or depletion of these resources. Thus the ability of the natural environment to supply raw materials for production on a sustainable basis depends on the management principles and the instruments available for the management of these resources. In the case of Umtshezi Municipality where natural resources play a significant role in the socio-economic lives of the inhabitants, knowledge of the available natural resources, and development of appropriate management measures for these resources, are key components to planning a Spatial Development Framework for the Municipality.

This portion of the SDF report addresses issues relating to the natural environment within the Umtshezi Municipality. It identifies available natural resources, sensitive environments that require particular management attention, and defines the limitations and potentials of the Municipality in terms of its environmental resources.

Catchments

Umtshezi Municipality is a major contributor to the provinces water supply and play a major role in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy in KZN. Three of the rivers

in the province flow through the municipality area, namely (refer to Map 8):

- Boesman River,
- Bloukrans River,
- Sikhehlenga River, and
- Uthukela River

The quality and quantity of water emerging from the municipality largely depends on land use and land management practices in the municipality. Since impacts on natural river systems at any given point is propagated over long distances beyond the point of impact, care needs to be taken to protect the rivers and wetlands in the municipality from undue pollution.

Thus in order to protect rivers, there is the need to investigate and establish the 1:100 year floodline for all major rivers in the municipality. It is also necessary to investigate and delineate suitable buffers for the wetlands in the municipality.

Areas of Important Biodiversity

The Umtshezi Municipality is rich in biodiversity. As can be seen from Map 9, the western and southern portions of the municipality are particularly high in species diversity and habitats. The eastern parts in particular and portions of the central areas of the municipality have intermediate sensitivity to species diversity. In the central parts and areas centrally placed towards the north, species diversity and communities tend to be irregular with some areas having intermediate sensitivity and others having low sensitivity.

South Africa has ratified the International Convention on Biological Diversity, which commits the country, including KwaZulu-Natal, to

develop and implement a strategy for the conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of the benefits of biodiversity. In the Province of KwaZulu Natal, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is the authority responsible for planning and management of biodiversity conservation. As a means of complying with the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity, KZN Wildlife has developed management tools to manage the biodiversity resources in the province.

One of the tools of the conservation planning analysis (C-Plan) is an irreplaceability map of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This map is divided into 2 by 2 km grid cells called 'planning units'. Each cell has associated with it an 'Irreplaceability Value' which is one reflection of the cells importance with respect to the conservation of biodiversity. Irreplaceability reflects the planning units ability to meet set 'targets' for selected biodiversity 'features'. The irreplaceability value is scaled between 0 and 1.

- ***Irreplaceability value – 0.*** Where a planning unit has an irreplaceability value of 0, all biodiversity features recorded here are conserved to the target amount, and there is unlikely to be a biodiversity concern with the development of the site.
- ***Irreplaceability value – 1.*** These planning units are referred to as totally irreplaceable and the conservation of the features within them are critical to meet conservation targets. (Developments in these areas definitely require EIA for which, and depending on the nature of the proposal, an authorisation is unlikely to be granted).
- ***Irreplaceability value > 0 but < 1.*** Some of these planning units are required to meet biodiversity conservation targets. If

the value is high (e.g. 0.9) then most units are required (few options available for alternative choices). If the value is low, then many options are available for meeting the biodiversity targets. (EIA required and depending on the nature of the proposed development, permission could be granted).

The C-Plan is used to develop a minimum sets of biodiversity required (Minset) to meet biodiversity conservation targets. Minset output map shows areas that are already protected, 'Mandatory Reserves' and 'Negotiable Reserves'. Mandatory reserves are those areas that appear as totally irreplaceable on the irreplaceability map, since there are no other alternatives for achieving the conservation targets. Areas identified as negotiated reserves are the areas that the Minset function returns as the most efficient for achieving targets and constraints. However there are alternatives to achieving the targets and constraints but with less efficiency, and hence the designation of this area is still negotiable.

Majority of the municipality is accorded very low irriplaceability values. Areas considered as initially excluded (not required in Map 9) correspond with those areas of low irriplaceability values. This implies that development planning in these areas is not likely to infringe significantly on biodiversity conservation issues. However, care needs to be taken in planning infrastructure in particular and developments that are likely to take up large extends of land in areas that are labelled as negotiated reserves especially in areas around Weenen and north east of Colenso (Map 9). Development in such areas should involve low key developments and planning processes should involve KZN Wildlife at the conception stage of the planning process.

Areas labelled as Mandatory Reserve located at the southern tip of the municipality is considered as important for biodiversity conservation. These areas would definitely be expected to be conserved by KZN Wildlife. It is recommended that areas labelled as Mandatory Reserved by included as part of passive open spaces in the municipality. There is a centrally located protected area west of Weenen town. This area is a legally protected area which is not available for development or any land use changes except by consent from the relevant authorities.

It is recommended that protected areas and mandatory reserves should be included in passive open systems. Negotiated reserves should be zoned as limited development areas where all developments involving new open spaces should be undertaken under the guidance of an EIA. A broad environmental assessment report is attached herewith as Annexure A.

Slope/Topography

Umtshezi Municipality is characterised by generally three topographical regions (refer to Map 10). Areas above the escarpment located mainly to the west of Estcourt town, are generally flat and suitable for crop production and extensive grazing. Areas with undulating terrain are located mainly along the southern and northern boundaries. They are dominated by thorn bush and characterised by erodible soils. Areas such as Weenen valley are located within low lying regions.

Land Cover

Vegetation in the Umtshezi Municipality is generally characterized by three main vegetation types (refer to Map 11). These main vegetation types are the Thukela Thornveld, the Thukela Valley Bushveld, and Dry Highland Sourveld.

According to the vegetation analysis data of KZN Wildlife, the Thukela Thornveld and Thukela Valley Bushveld are both endemic to KZN. This implies that these vegetation types are found only in the KwaZulu Natal Province. Furthermore, the vegetation types are either threatened or vulnerable.

The implication of this vegetation character of the Umtshezi Municipality implies that, developments in the entire municipality need to be carefully planned so that vegetation removal or destruction is kept to a bare minimum.

Conservation

Weenen Nature Reserve

The nature reserve offers a number of attractions including the following:

- Game viewing
- Hide and waterhole
- Vulture feedings site
- Self guided trails
- Picnic sites

The main attraction of the Weenen Nature Reserve is its game. There is 30 km of roads in the reserve which is open to tourism and enables visitors to view a wide variety of games and veld types. The nature reserve is home to a variety of animals, including black and white rhino, which had to be reintroduced to the reserve. Over 250 species of birds have recovered in the reserve. Various types of accommodation facilities are available in the reserve. These include campsites, cottages (chalets) and caravan parks.

New Formosa Nature Reserve

This small nature reserve is located to the west of the R102 as it leaves Estcourt to the South. Facilities at this reserve are limited, although the reserve has a number of nature trails.

Wagendrift Nature Reserve

This nature reserve is located between Wembezi and Estcourt. It includes the Wagendrift Dam and covers an area of approximately 728ha. Although it is developed with arrange of tourist facilities such as boating, fishing and limited overnight accommodation, it presents huge opportunities for leisure and eco-tourism related developments.

The Thukela Biosphere

The Thukela Biosphere was initiated as a community organization that had the aim of improving the quality of life for the people of the Weenen area, is the oldest biosphere reserve in South Africa. It sought to achieve its objectives by means of a joint management of the land in a sustainable manner. The biosphere has slowly been developing a model for the sustainable use of resources that bring benefits to the private sector and local communities alike. The affected area is divided into three zones as follows:

- The Conservation Zone which limits land use to conservation uses only. This zone includes the 5000 hectare Weenen Nature reserve which forms the core area of the biosphere along with other privately owned land.
- The buffer zone consists of about 58000 hectares of privately owned valley bushveld, and as the name suggest forms a buffer between the core areas and the transition zone. Land in the

buffer zone is used for activities such as game farming, the use of indigenous animals and plants and eco-tourism.

- The transition zones include all areas of settlement and agricultural activity. This zone is characterized by social and engineering infrastructure, human settlement and activities

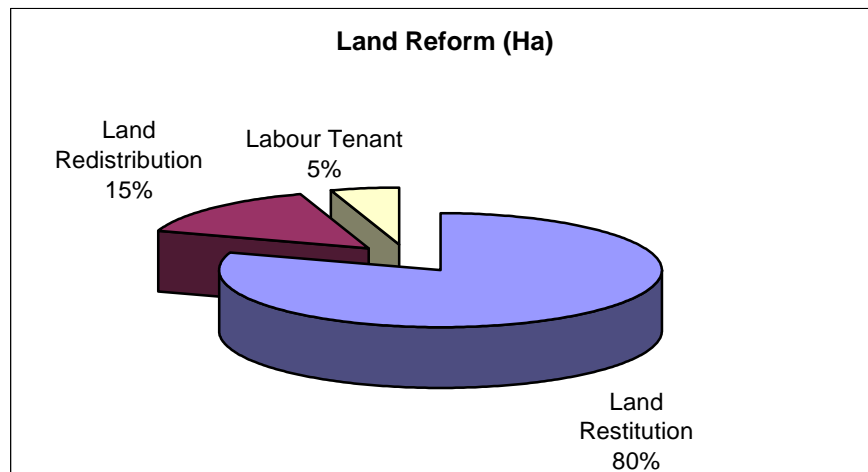
However, the idea of a biosphere seems to have been overtaken be events including the implementation of the land reform program and the proposed Ngongola Game Reserve. Nevertheless, it remains a plausible option for sustainable natural resource management and development.

Land Reform

The implementation of the land reform program in Mtshezi Municipality has progressed very slowly. The area is characterised by a relatively large number of complex and overlapping labour tenant claims and land restitution claims. As indicated on figure 9 below, the land redistribution program has delivered just more than 21000ha while the land restitution is hovering at about 114934ha. Labour tenant program has delivered about 7000ha. Map 12 depicts the spatial implications of the land reform program in Umtshezi Municipality.

Despite a slow progress, the program has generated a large number of projects. This could be ascribed to the historical land dispossession that took place in the area during the apartheid period; the labour tenancy practise and land need as experienced by various previously disadvantaged communities in the area. It is important for the municipality to monitor this program given its potentially serious implications for the implementation of the Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA).

Figure 9: Land Reform



The majority of the land reform projects are located to the north of Estcourt and involves land ranging from low moderate to very low agricultural potential.

Land Redistribution

Land redistribution was first introduced in uMtshezi Municipality in the early 1990s as part of the Land Reform Pilot Program. The early approach to this program was based on Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) and gave rise to projects involving a large number of households and relatively small areas (eg Cornfields with 442 households on 4339ha). Most of these are located on land with marginal production potential and are currently dysfunctional as production units. In fact, they are mainly settlement projects. The introduction of Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) in the early 2000 and recent restructuring of the funding criteria creates opportunities for

sustainable settlement of emerging farmers and acquisition of land with high production potential. Land redistribution program in uMtshezi Municipality has generated a negligible number of LRAD projects. Instead, the grant has been used to settle labour tenant claims although they are not agricultural development projects. This is a common practice throughout the province.

At least one project of about 1215ha is being implemented in terms of the Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS).

Labour Tenants

The settlement of labour tenant applications is one of the priority programs of the Provincial Land Reform Office (PLRO). A number of labour tenant applications spread unevenly in space were lodged with the Department of Land Affairs and are currently being assessed and finalised. About 261 households have benefitted from this program and have acquired ownership of approximately 7103ha. This translates to an average of 27.2ha per household. The majority of these are located on land with a relatively low production and grazing potential and have not led to any meaningful improvement to the lives of the beneficiaries.

The outcome of this process has serious spatial implications including emergence of small isolated settlements in the middle of commercial agricultural land. In fact, all labour tenant projects within uMtshezi are categorised as settlements with subsistence farming (PLRO Database) despite being funded through LRAD grant. Off-farm settlement and a cluster approach are recommended for the applications where the applicants do not intend to engage in productive agriculture. This will create an opportunity for the management of the undesirable spatial impact of this program.

Land Restitution

According to the information contained in the Umtshezi Housing Sector Plan and data provided by the KwaZulu-Natal Regional Land Claims Commission, it indicates that the largest percentage of both commercial and conservation land is under restitution claim. This affects both Weneen Game Reserve and private game reserves that serves as a source of employment for local people. The number of outstanding land restitution claims within the Umtshezi as at May 2008 is 38, which comprises of eighteen claims from Estcourt and twenty from Weenen. The total number of claims that are settled and lodged for land and development within the Umtshezi area is fifteen, with estimated land cover of 6 0404 ha involving 3 037 households. There are twenty six redistribution projects within Umtshezi municipality. All of these projects have been transferred. The net effect of this is that there is potentially about 10000 households that are likely to settle on previously commercial land. This excludes the farm dwellers and labour tenants as well as outstanding land restitution claims.

Implications for the SDF

The spatial development framework guides and informs all decisions of the municipality relating to the use, development and planning of land. It must guide and inform the following:

- directions of growth;
- major movement routes;
- special development areas for targeted management to redress past imbalances;

- conservation of both the built and natural environment;
- areas in which particular types of land use should be encouraged and others discouraged; and
- areas in which the intensity of land development could be either increased or reduced.

The spatial development framework should not attempt to be comprehensive. It must have sufficient clarity to guide decision-makers in respect of development applications. It should describe the existing and desired future spatial patterns that provide for integrated, efficient and sustainable settlements. In this regard, the spatial development framework should only be a strategic, indicative and flexible forward planning tool to guide planning and decisions on land development. In a rural context it will be necessary also to deal specifically with natural resource management issues, land rights and tenure arrangements, land capability, subdivision and consolidation of farms and the protection of prime agricultural land.

NODES AND SETTLEMENTS

A number of nodes and settlements have emerged in uMtshezi in response to the successive economic and political regimes. The nodes include Estcourt which is the main economic hub, Wembezi which was established as a township for the resettlement of black African people and Weenen which is essentially an agricultural town. Relatively large settlements have developed either as a result of the land reform program or land invasion.

Estcourt

Location and Access

Estcourt is located along the N3 national route linking Durban and Johannesburg. It is approximately 80km from Pietermaritzburg and about 40km from Ladysmith. It is highly accessible both local and regional level, and is strategically located to serve as a launch-pad into the battlefields route, the Drakensburg and the Midlands meander.

Role and Function

The role of Estcourt has changed over a period of time reflecting changes in the regional development trends. The town developed as one of the major settlements along a transport wagon route between Durban and Inland areas and soon grew into a complex urban system with a relatively large catchment and providing a range of functions to its rural hinterland. These include the following:

- Transport interchange
- Main sub-regional economic hub.

- Industrial area for the processing of raw materials produced in the region.
- Tourism town.
- Service centre.
- Settlement or residential area.

Structure

The town has developed in line with a typology common in most towns and cities in South Africa wherein the structure relates to a central core in the central business district (CBD) with several major access and/or exit routes radiating outwards. In Estcourt, these occur in the form of the east-west and north south axis linking different parts of the town through the city centre. Linkage back to the N3 is significant for regional and provincial integration as the N3 is identified in the NSDP and the PSEDs as a development corridor of national and provincial significance.

Estcourt is a typical apartheid town characterised by the following spatial patterns (refer to Map 13):

- Low density sprawl which is fuelled, among other, values of suburbia which promotes large plots as an image of good urban living. It occurs in the form of low density residential suburbs designed in terms of garden city concepts, and entrenched into the Town Planning Scheme through inflexible density controls and scheme clauses such as coverage, minimum site sizes and permissible uses. Most residential areas within the town are characterised by low density zoning. The LUMS document noted

that there is no intermediate residential area (medium density housing) category in the present TPS and this should be addressed as part of the spatial restructuring of the town.

- Historical separation of land uses, urban elements, races and income groups. A large number of the poor are living on the urban periphery further away from the opportunities and places of work. The current zoning system entrenches this trend.
- Spatial fragmentation with land use pattern resembling a series of relatively homogenous blobs of different uses tied together by high speed transport routes. The separation of places of work and residence is deeply entrenched in the philosophy of urban management.
- Dual character of the CBD with one part being well developed and well maintained while down town is characterised by urban decay, grime and deteriorating quality of infrastructure.
- Fragmented open space system.

The combined consequences of these spatial patterns have been phenomenal leaving the town with entrenched inequality and functional inefficiency. It created a distorted, fragmented, incoherent and inefficient functional structure. It also gave rise to spatial, social and economic exclusion of certain race groups to the benefit of others, and created a poorly functioning land and housing market.

The existing town planning scheme was developed sometime back and is now outdated. The LUMS process recommended a complete overhaul of the scheme and an introduction of Land Use Scheme that could be applied across the municipal area.

Land Use Pattern

Estcourt is a mixed land use development comprising of a range of land uses which could be classified as follows:

- Residential use which includes housing products ranging from low cost housing through to medium density and up-market housing.
- Industrial land located mainly along P10-1 just outside the central area.
- Central area which comprises of a range of economic and business uses.
- A range of social facilities including a cemetery, schools, etc.
- Utilities such as sewerage and water works, dumpsite, etc.
- Public open space (POS) located mainly along the river.

Spatial Development Challenges

Spatial development challenges facing Estcourt town could be summarised as follows:

- Spatial integration intended to address spatial fragmentation which separated the town into up-town and down-town.
- Land use integration as a means to address the coarse grain-land use pattern.
- Urban renewal programme which may include infrastructure upgrade, redevelopment and refurbishment of buildings.
- CBD expansion including gateway developments at strategic points.

- Strengthening spatial linkages with the neighbouring settlements such as Wembezi.

Wembezi

Location

Wembezi Township is located approximately 25km south western of Estcourt along the boundary of Umtshezi Municipality with Imbabazane Municipality. It is accessed off P29 linking Estcourt Town and Giants Castle in Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park.

Role and Function

Wembezi Township was developed on Ingonyama Trust land (former KwaZulu Government area) to accommodate black people working in Estcourt and forcefully removed from Kwezi Township which was located just outside Estcourt. It is generally well provided with social infrastructure (although most of it requires maintenance and upgrading), and has the basics to become a sustainable human settlement. With the exception of local convenient shops, the area is poorly developed with commercial facilities, thus forcing local residents to undertake most of their shopping activities in Estcourt. Nevertheless, there are huge opportunities for commercial development given the location of Wembezi in relation to expansive rural settlements that form part of Imbabazane Municipality.

Structure

Wembezi can broadly be divided into four development areas or

precincts, namely (refer to Map 14):

- The original township area characterised by the four roomed dwelling units developed under apartheid past. Until recently, units were held under a Deed of Grant, but these have since been upgraded to full ownership. This area was badly affected by political violence that engulfed the province in the late 1980s. Most of the community facilities are located in this development area. The latter includes an area that was reserved for a town centre.
- Middle income housing area located across the road from the original township. The uptake of the recently sold 35 units being developed as an extension to this area suggests a need for similar housing products in the area. There is scope for further expansion.
- Section C which has recently been upgraded in terms of the low housing program of the Department of Housing. It is dominated by gravel roads which require maintenance and upgrading.
- Rural settlement located to the west of Section C. A large portion of this area is situated in a wetland.

The sewerage works is situated between two of the settlement areas.

Land Use

An analysis of the land use pattern in Wembezi reveals that Wembezi is a simple residential area and a typical township. Land uses in the area include the following:

- Residential use dominated by typical township houses and a small component of middle income housing.
- Social facilities such as sports fields, schools, churches, community hall and a clinic all located in Section A (original township).
- Sewerage and water works.
- Cemetery which has reached its capacity and requires upgrading into a decent burial site.
- Informal settlement occurring as an extension to the township.
- Rural settlement located to the west of the township.

Land use pattern is generally coarse grained and is characterised by land use separation, cellular development and mono-functional use typical of apartheid spatial planning.

Spatial Challenges

The key spatial development challenge in Wembezi is to provide land for additional housing, and economic development initiatives. The second issue relates to a need to facilitate spatial integration between Wembezi and Estcourt, and introduction of a land use scheme. Finally, the management of rural/urban interface, particularly uncontrolled expansion of settlements and loss of agricultural land.

Weenen

Locality

Weenen is located along R74 approximately 45km north-east of Estcourt and 35km to Greytown. The town straddles the Bushman's River and is surrounded by commercial farmlands, the majority of which is subject to land restitution. Its threshold includes portions of rural settlements in Msinga.

Role and Function

Weenen performs a range of functions. It is a residential area to those who live in and around the town, a service centre for those who access a variety of services in the area, and business area to those whose business operations are based in town. Its administrative functions are now limited to a few government departments that still have offices in the area.

Structure

The area of Weenen could be divided into four main development areas as follows (refer to Map 15):

- The village which is the main urban area. It is developed with a range of limited commercial facilities and has a relatively large threshold which includes the communities located around the town. There are approximately 765 residential properties in Weenen of which about 75 are vacant. The average site size is 900m².
- KwaNobamba which was established in the 1960s as a temporary emergency camp for people evicted from the neighbouring farms. Initially, it has about 591 residential sites, but has since been increased to about 1000 as a result of the

recently competed low cost housing project. Kwanobamba is located about 10km from Weenen and is poorly integrated into the Weenen space and land use system. The majority of sites in this area are about 200m² in size.

- Weenen town is surrounded by about 200 agricultural properties which is indicative of the importance of agriculture in the local economy. Although some of these sub-divisions are vacant, underutilised and poorly developed, they consist of land with a relatively high agricultural potential. The remainder of residential land consists of large sites located around the commercial area.
- A small mixed land use node is located to the south of the town centre. Notable land uses in the area include service station, town hall and a market area.
- Expansive agricultural land with limited potential and located almost around the town. The area forms part of the townlands and establishes Weenen as a town with the most townlands in KwaZulu-Natal. The area is used mainly for extensive farming and grazing purposes.

Land Use Pattern

Existing land uses include the following:

- Residential uses located in Weenen and KwaNobamba.
- About 195 sites zoned for agricultural land. Although some of the sites are vacant and underutilised, the area has huge potential for extensive and irrigated crop production. The majority of these are small holdings of about 5ha to 20ha.

- About 12 sites which are zoned for industry. Take up of industrial land in Weenen is very slow. The town has potential to develop capacity for packaging and processing of agricultural produce.
- Commercial land concentrated mainly along Retief Street in the town centre. Over the last few years, commercial use in the town has declined tremendously. The role of the town as a commercial centre has declined over the last few decades in response to changes in the agricultural sector and growth of Tugela Ferry as a commercial and rural service centre.
- Community facilities such as cemeteries, clinic, education, government offices, etc.

Key Spatial Challenges

The key spatial development challenges facing Weenen include the following:

- Need to contain commercial development to a single area. Existing commercial development not compatible with adjoining uses could be accepted as existing non-compatible uses that may not be expanded.
- The role of Weenen town in the sub-regional space economy should be redefined to cater for changes that emerge as a result of the land reform program and changes in agricultural land uses.
- Infrastructure within the town requires substantial upgrading and renewal.

- Need to provide support to the small holdings around the town and redevelop these as intensive agricultural production units. This may require upgrading of the irrigation infrastructure.

Settlements

Cornfields and Thembalihle

The communities of Cornfields Thembalihle are one of the very first communities to acquire land in KwaZulu Natal in terms of the land redistribution program. They acquired 11 farms totalling to about 8531ha. Although both areas were planned as part of the designation process, settlement and general land use seem to have deviated from the approved plans. The latter made provision for the following:

- Settlement or residential development.
- Grazing land.
- Crop production areas.
- Sites for social facilities.

Although these areas were each developed for a specified number of households, they have grown beyond the original numbers and threaten to develop into expansive isolated rural settlement. Both areas have a history of being black spots hence location in the middle of agricultural land. Both areas should be considered for development into sustainable human settlements as provided for in the housing policy and the Sustainable Communities Program implemented by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

Frere and Chieverly

Frere and Chieverly are both small isolated settlements located on privately owned land. Over the last few years, the number of households in both areas has increased enormously, and this trend is poised to continue. These settlements are situated along the main regional access routes, which establish them as ideal centre points for the development of clusters for the benefit of the land reform beneficiaries. Land adjacent to Chieverly is registered in the name of Sibuyile Matiwane Community Land Trust and was acquired in terms of the land reform program. Spatial development challenges in these areas include the following:

- Consolidation of the area into a sustainable human rural settlement.
- Integration into the surrounding commercial farmlands through the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices.
- Integration with the surrounding land reform projects to form a cluster for sustainable land reform implementation.

Mimosa and Emabhalonini

Mimosa and Emabhalonini are both located to the east of Estcourt Town and could be described as peri-urban settlements. They are located on municipal land. Mimosa has benefitted from the housing program. As such, it has been planned, laid out properly and provided with rudimentary services. Its development has led the growth of Emabhalonini as an expansive informal peri-urban settlement. Spatial development challenges in these areas could be summarised as follows:

- Upgrading of Emabhaloni in terms of the sustainable human settlements of the Department of Housing.
- Managing further growth of the settlements outwards as this gives rise to the undesirable low density urban sprawl.
- Introduction of development and land use management system in the area.

Location of a dumpsite fairly close to Emabhalonini poses serious environmental and social problems. The municipality must consider relocation of the dumpsite away from the area.

Rensburg Drift

Rensburg Drift is located on privately owned land along the road to Weenen, approximately 7km outside of Estcourt. Like Emabhalonini, the settlement is expanding at a fast rate. Recently, there was an attempt to invade land which was acquired by some households in terms of the land reform program. The area is poses similar spatial planning challenges as Emabhalonini, and its further outward growth should also be managed.

Land Reform Settlements

A number of small isolated settlements have been and continues to be established as the land reform program unfolds in the area. While these were intended to for the few beneficiary households, most of them are fast developing into large settlements without the benefit of proper development planning. As such, they are poorly located and can hardly be provided with all the necessary services and facilities.

Implications for the SDF

Broad assessment of the existing nodes and settlements reveals a number of spatial planning challenges that needs to be addressed as part of the SDF, that is:

- Low density urban sprawl which occurs mainly in the form of low cost “informal” settlements.
- Increase in the number of small isolated settlements located in the middle of commercial farms lands.
- Need to undertake land reform in a manner that protects agricultural land and improves access to such land by the previously marginalised and small emerging farmers. Land reform program provides for the acquisition of alternative land or off-farm settlement where land need is not in tune with the capacity of the land in question.
- Spatial fragmentation leading to the separation of places of work and residence.
- Consolidation of large rural settlements into sustainable human settlements.

KEY ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

Future spatial transformation of Umtshezi Municipality will be shaped by a number of factors and influences. Although these are a function of different sectors including social, economic, physical and environmental, they can broadly be categorised as follows:

- Spatial development opportunities.
- Spatial Development Constraints
- Spatial patterns and trends

Development opportunities

Umtshezi Municipality presents huge development opportunities:

- The N3 which is a national and provincial development corridor runs through the area almost dividing it into two sections. The challenge is to re-enforce the functional link between Estcourt Town and the N3.
- Vast tracks of land that is suitable for game farming and general livestock farming. The majority of this is located north of the N3 particularly in areas towards Weenen, and is subject of land restitution and labour tenant claims.
- High potential agricultural land suitable and developed with infrastructure for intensive irrigated crop production.
- Environmentally sensitive area with endemic species and presenting an opportunity for the development of leisure and ecotourism activities.

- Location along the foothills of Ukhahlamba Drakensburg Park which is a world heritage site and prime tourist destinations.
- Availability of strategically located commercial and industrial land both in Estcourt and Weenen.

Development Constraints

Development opportunities that characterises Umtshezi Municipality should not be over-estimated. The area is also subject to severe limitations:

- The majority of the area located north of the N3 is characterised by poor soil conditions and low mean precipitation rate.
- A large number of properties acquired by the previously marginalised through the land reform program are lying idle or grossly underutilised. This has potential to undermine the viability of the agricultural sector and the economy of the area as whole.
- Fragmented spatial structure with settlements located far apart from each other and away from economic/employment opportunity areas.
- Environmentally sensitive areas with endemic species, which limits the nature and extent of development.
- Inadequate capacity of the bulk services such as electricity, water and sewer systems.
- Rugged terrain in the bush thicket areas.

- Distance from Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park and location fairly close to the well marketed Midland meander and the Battlefields Route.

Development Trends

- Land reform
- Low income settlements in peripheral parts of the nodal areas.
- Change from livestock farming to game farming.
- Economic stagnation
- Increasing importance of the second economy/informal sector
- Urban decay.

CONCEPT PLAN

Umtshezi Municipality SDF is a strategic document that gives a spatial translation to the development vision and program as outlined in the IDP. It will guide and inform land development and management, and as such it:

- gives effect to principles contained in the Development Facilitation Act, Act No. 67 of 1995, NEMA and other relevant policies;
- sets out spatial objectives and provides spatial strategies that indicate desired patterns of land use, address spatial transformation, and provide decision making processes relating to the nature and location of development;
- provide basic guidelines for a Land Use Management System and development of a spatial Capital Investment Framework,
- align with neighbouring SDFs and the UMDM SDF; and
- provide visual representation of desired spatial form.

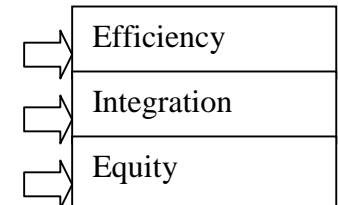
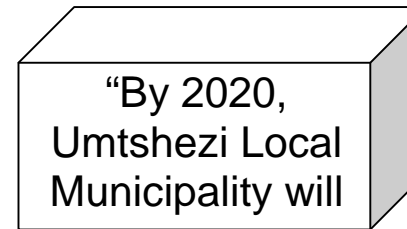
Municipal Development vision

Umtshezi Municipality development vision was developed as part of the Integrated Development Planning process in line with the requirements of the Municipal Systems Act. The vision commits the municipality to sustainable development and the creation of a safe environment. This is interpreted to include social, economic, physical, financial and institutional sustainability, and is in line with the Agenda 21 understanding of sustainability – commitment to future generations.

"TRANSFORMING FOR BETTER SERVICE
DELIVERY"



Sustainability



The attainment of this vision requires the municipality to facilitate the development of a spatial system that:

- is sustainable from a social, economic, financial, physical and institutional perspective;
- provides for an efficient movement system, use of scarce resources and decision making processes;
- promotes integrated development; and
- equitable access to development opportunities.

Such a spatial system will create an environment conducive to economic development and growth. It will promote social and economic development and contribute to the achievement of the development objectives as outlined in the IDP.

Aim and Objectives

The primary aim of the SDF is to guide the spatial form and location of future developments within the municipality area of jurisdiction. Its objectives are as follows:

- giving a spatial expression of the development vision and strategy as outlined in the IDP;
- Identifying areas where development should or should not go

- guiding the municipality in the coordination of development within its area of jurisdiction;
- giving spatial effect to multi-sectoral projects identified in the IDP
- promoting sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

Spatial Planning Principles

Umtshezi Municipality SDF is underpinned by normative principles reflected in various policy documents and pieces of legislation. The following principles have been extracted from these sources and are considered appropriate to guide the preparation, review and implementation of the SDF.

The objective of the principles and norms is to influence directly the substantive outcomes of planning decisions, whether they relate to spatial development frameworks or decisions on land use change or development applications. The overall aim of the principles and norms is to achieve planning outcomes that (White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management):

- restructure spatially inefficient settlements;
- promote the sustainable use of the land;
- channel resources to areas of greatest need and development potential, thereby redressing the inequitable historical treatment of marginalized areas;
- take into account the fiscal, institutional and administrative capacities of role players, the needs of communities and the environment;

- stimulate economic development opportunities in rural and urban areas; and
- support an equitable protection of rights to and in land.

In addition they promote:

- accountable spatial planning, land use management and land development decision-making by organs of state;
- cooperative governance and wider information sharing in plan-making and implementation; and
- maximum openness and transparency in decision-making.

The normative principles are focused on and correlated to the field of spatial planning, land use management and land development, but, as is the case with all principles and norms, need further actualization in specific, concrete contexts. Thus, in the practical implementation of the principles spatial planning, land use management and land development in Umtshezi will be guided by the following overarching concerns:

- Integrated development, which is a key concern in legislation and policies dealing with Integrated Development Plans (Municipal Systems Act) and Land Development (Development Facilitation Act).
- Sustainability, which emanates from Local Agenda 21 and in South African is, enforced through the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) amongst others.
- Equity, which implies equitable distribution of development, resources and opportunities. This principle featured prominently

in the Redistribution and Development Program (RDP) and is also a central concern in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR).

- Participation. Chapter of the Municipal Systems Act is dedicated to the subject matter of public participation in municipal affairs. This principle promotes accountability and transparency in decision-making.
- Order and amenity, which focuses mainly on the creation of safe and healthy environments suitable for human habitation. Current land use legislation (Natal Town Planning Ordinance) puts a greater emphasis on this concern.
- Redress, which is mainly addressed in the Land Reform Program and various, associated pieces of legislation. The main focus in this regard is to correct the wrongs of the past.
- Efficiency, which deals mainly with, the creation of efficiently functioning environments scaled to the needs of the local people and role-players.
- Good governance

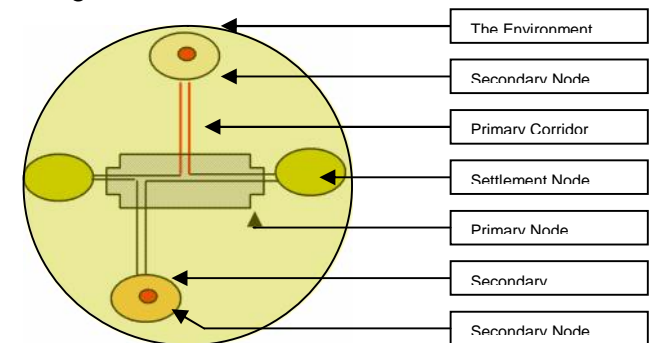
The principles and norms collectively form a vision for land use and planning in Umtshezi. They constitute a single point of reference, and an overarching coherent set of policy guides to direct and steer land development, planning and decision-making in land use so that outcomes thereof are consistent with the development objectives as outlined in the IDP.

Approach

Although the boundary of Umtshezi Municipality is mainly for local governance and service delivery purposes, its delineation was based on a number of factors including population movement patterns, lines of investment and sphere of influence of the existing regional or sub-regional centres. As such, the area could be regarded as a system of interests with a number of sub-systems operating within it.

The emphasis of the SDF is not so much on defining and interpreting the manner of operation of the entire system, but to re-enforce linkages and interdependence between the constituent parts, clearly articulating the role of each part and providing for feedback loops. An efficiently functioning spatial system would perform in line with the spatial development norms and standards, and would generate predictable.

Figure 10: Spatial Planning Model



As indicated in Figure 10 above, Umtshezi spatial system comprises of the following main components:

- Development nodes with varying levels of impact and spheres of influence.

- Development corridors whose role is mainly defined in terms of the associated economic development sectors, land use pattern and role in the sub-regional economy.
- Settlements located in different environments including urban, peri-urban and rural areas.
- Agricultural land
- Environmentally sensitive areas.

Each of these plays an important role in the functioning of the spatial system. The table below gives an indication of the range and type of service available at each level of the hierarchy.

Type of Planning Areas	Functions	Type of Service
Primary (Sub-	• Distribution	Police Station, Hospital,

Spatial Planning Strategies

The application of the service centre (nodes and corridor) approach in the context of Umtshezi follows logic of spatial planning strategies as indicators of a desired future spatial situation, and broad policy positions to guide decision making.

Enhancing the Quality of the Environment

The principle of sustainable development challenges the present generation to engage with the natural resource base and meet its development needs in a manner that enables the future generations to meet their own development needs. This is often referred to as environmentally sustainable

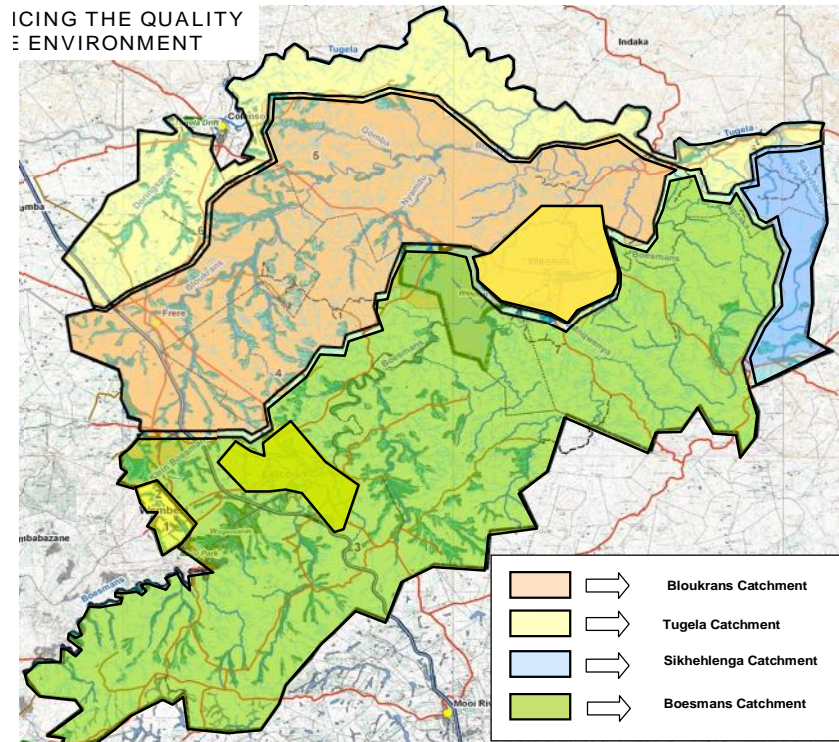
regional Centre)	and coordination point • Higher order level of goods and services	Welfare Office, Schools, Community Hall, Post Office, Bank, Court, Comprehensive sport facility, Developed Economic Centre, Information Service Centre, Emergency Service Centre, Police Satellite Station, 24hr clinic, Weekly Welfare Mobile Services, Schools, MPCC, Weekly Information Mobile Services, Post Net, Mobile Bank Services, Tribal Court, Basic Sport Facility
Secondary (Community Centre)	Lower order level of goods and services as compared to primary node	Mobile Clinic, Schools determined by population density, Community Halls determined by population density, Postal Services determined by population density, Basic Sport Facility
Tertiary (Neighbourhood Centre)	Serve to provide a convenient service to the village community	

development. It acknowledges the need the importance of the following as key interventions for spatial transformation:

- protection and enhancement of the environmentally sensitive areas;
- protection and optimal utilization of high potential agricultural land;
- creation of an integrated open space system; and
- enhancement of the aesthetic quality of the environment.

Ideally, a buffer line of environmentally sensitive areas along a river would follow the 1:50 year floor line, but in view of the lack of such information an indicative line has been used.

Rivers provide opportunities for tourism, irrigation and sports development. Similarly, ecological zones such as wetlands, areas where there are endemic species, scenic areas, etc, provides opportunities for environmental conservation and tourism development, and should not be subjected to development pressure.



Protection of High Value Agricultural Land

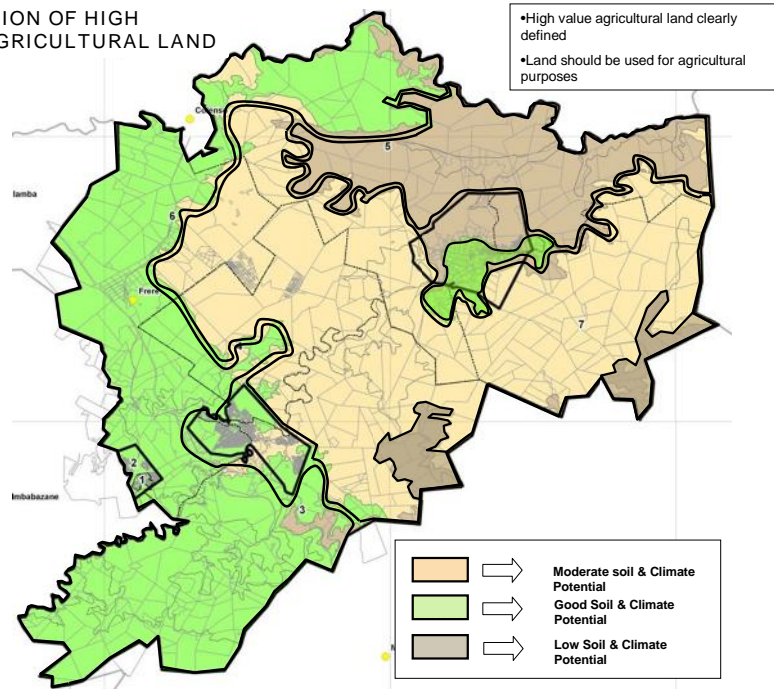
A substantial amount of land in Umtshezi, particularly, the land located to the south of the N3 and Estcourt Town, is generally classified as having high and good potential for

agriculture. It is important to note high potential agricultural land has become a scarce and an ever dwindling resource. Its protection is high on the agenda for the Department of Agriculture. Encroachment of development onto agricultural land poses a number of challenges, namely:

- reduction of land available for food production and against the increasing problem of food shortages and increase in food prices;
- declining performance and contribution of agriculture into the district and provincial economy;
- need to target high production potential land for the settlement of small and emerging farmers in terms of the land redistribution program; and
- low density urban sprawl which encourages development of inefficient urban spatial systems.

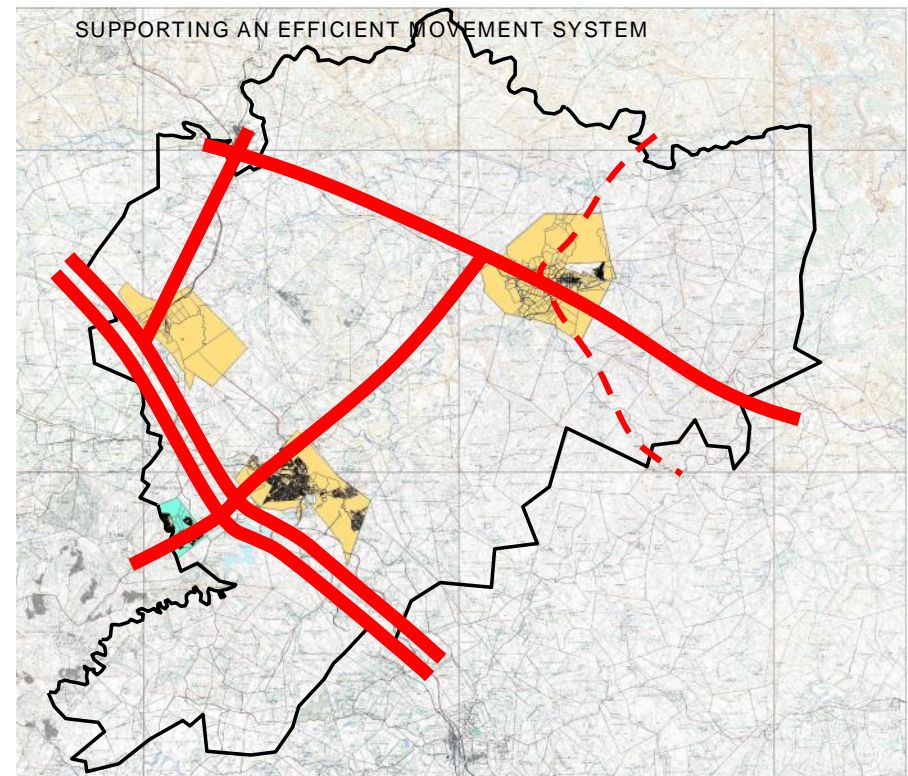
Sub-division and change of land use on agricultural land is governed in terms of the Sub-division of agricultural Land Act (SALA), Act No. 70 of 1970, and is administered nationally. Although, the provincial Department of Agriculture undertaken the assessment of the applications and makes recommendations to the national Department of Agriculture, there is no coherent provincial policy that guides this process. As such, it is critically important for Umtshezi Municipality to develop its own guidelines (as part of the SDF) for managing development on agricultural land.

PROTECTION OF HIGH VALUE AGRICULTURAL LAND



Supporting an Efficient Movement System

The Movement Strategy for Umtshezi Municipality is based on the recognition of the role of different movement routes, and a need for the provision and maintenance of a highly accessible movement system and network. The latter should support a range of modes (road and rail, public and private) and activities at various levels, intensity and scale. It specifically endorses the promotion of the improved accessibility to areas of opportunity as a key to economic development and growth.



The efficiency of the sub-region relates directly to the efficiency of its movement system i.e. the ability to move goods and people within and beyond the municipal boundary. This strategy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Promoting accessibility of communities to economic (employment), recreation and social opportunities.
- Protecting and enhancing the mobility function of major arterials and roads.

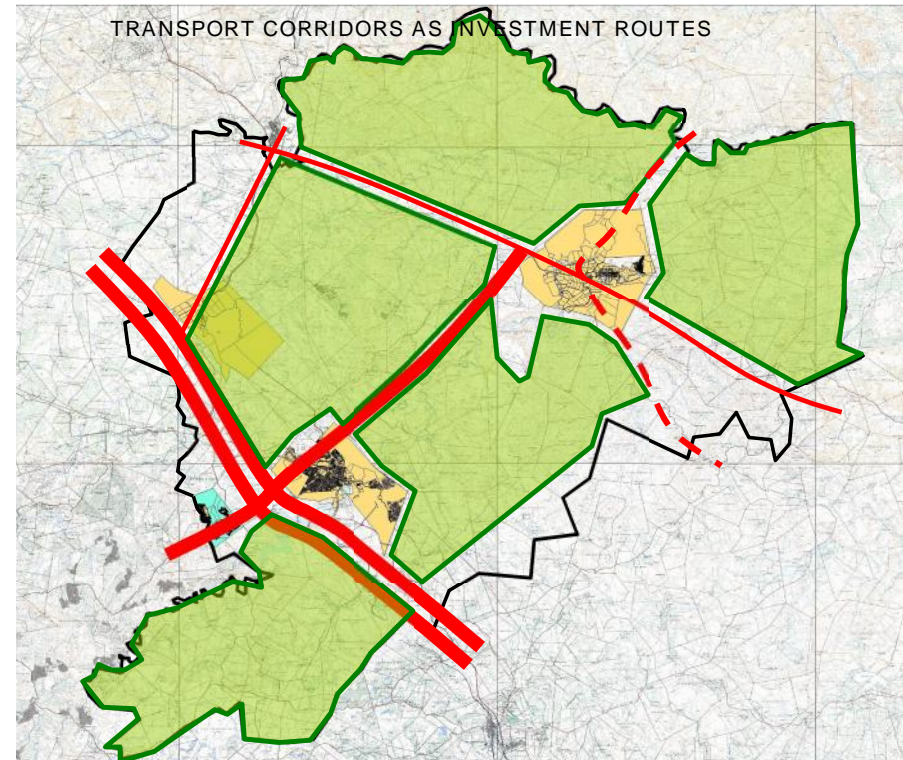
- Supporting and aligning existing and planned public transport infrastructure.
- Ensuring that the movement system directly links with and is supported by, strong high intensity nodes and higher density residential development.

While this involves reinforcing the role of the existing road networks, it also seeks to open new movement routes and refine the role of some of the existing roads.

Development Corridors as Investment Routes

A public investment approach which views urban centres as inward oriented spatial systems linked to the rural hinterland by the high speed regional movement routes is inappropriate and undesirable. In conditions of scattered settlement pattern, such as Umtshezi, regional transport routes which link a number of areas should, instead, be viewed as the logical focus areas of an ordered strategy for rural development. These routes should be seen as activity and investment lines. The structure they give to the area is articulated in the form of movement patterns and systematic distribution of land uses in space.

However, not all regional routes are the same in terms of the intensity of use and ability to attract investment, services, economic activities and settlement. Generally, larger routes linking generators of movement and investment have a greater generative capacity than smaller routes.



It thus follows that regional facilities and services should gravitate towards these areas. Smaller facilities requiring smaller thresholds should be located along smaller routes. Viewed in this way, the issue of regional and rural spatial organization becomes one of creating a systemic framework of interlocking activity routes over time. This has an impact of:

- reducing spatial marginalization;
- increasing equitable access to all level of services; and
- promoting investment.

Location of facilities along major routes recognizes the importance of choice to the rural communities with respect to services such as education, health and welfare facilities.

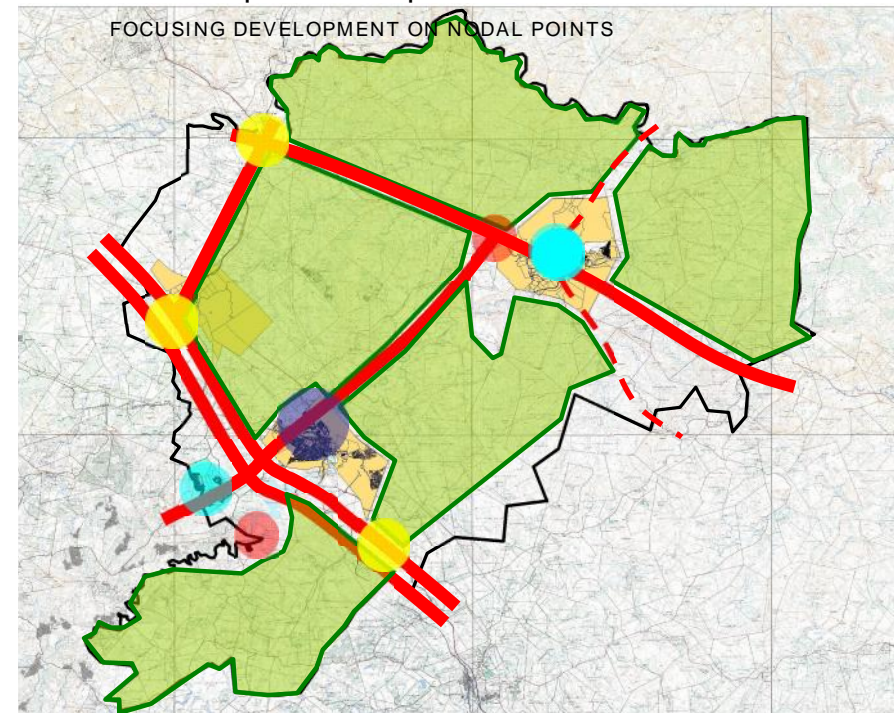
Focusing Development in Strategic Nodal Points

The equitable distribution of services and facilities is one of many issues which Integrated Development Plans seek to address. This has a spatial impact in a municipal area in that the ordering and location of services and facilities, in a manner that promotes accessibility and efficiency in service delivery, is required. This is critical for the performance of the municipal area as a whole and land use integration. The following planning areas have been identified:

- Sub-regional centre (primary nodes) provides higher order services and facilities. This is a centre of municipal wide significance and attracts movement from all over Umtshezi and beyond.
- Community centre (secondary nodes) serves the hinterland population in terms of social and community facilities and basic retail facilities.
- Neighbourhood centre (tertiary nodes) provides access to services and facilities at a much localized scale.
- Settlement webs and complexes located in both rural and urban areas

Nodes are locations of concentrated activity often associated with the presence of employment opportunities and high density residential development located on or adjacent to

regional mobility roads and spines, and as such act as destinations for public transport.



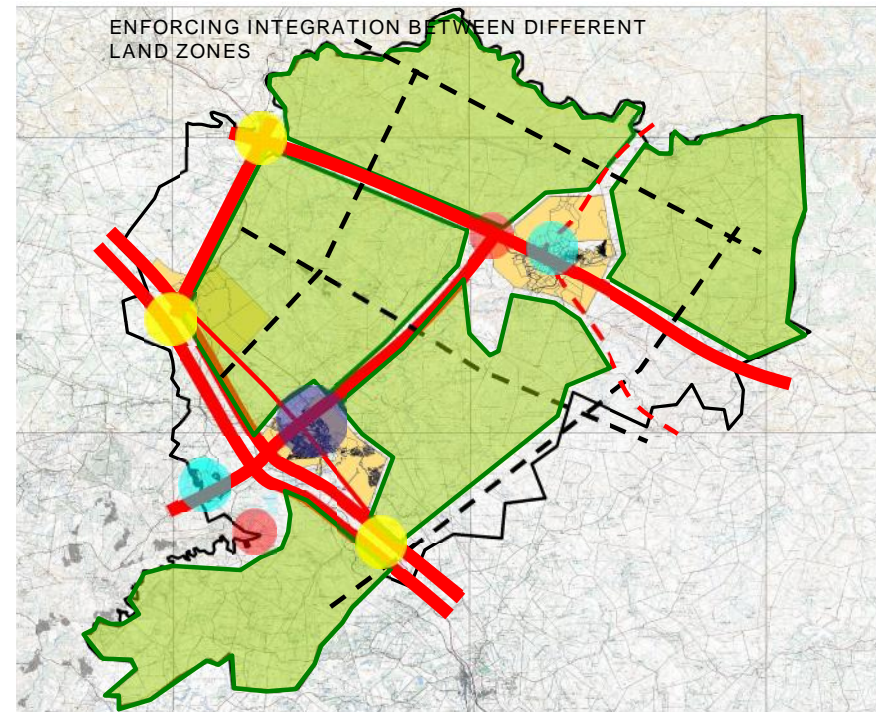
These nodes will form the focal points for the clustering of development and service provision, and will ensure access to social and economic opportunities for the entire municipal region. The concentration of activities in and around these areas will stimulate further development of higher order activities.

Integration between Different Landscapes/Land Use Zones

The intention with the built environment should be the creation of large continuous precincts of built form, rather than it occurring in spatially discreet pockets or cells, as is commonly the case in Umtshezi. This is necessary to obtain economies of agglomeration. At places, the continuity of the fabric should be systematically broken so as to ensure equitable access to green space and other opportunities.

The benefits of mixed development

- More convenient access to facilities
- Travel-to-work congestion is minimised
- Greater opportunities for social interaction
- Socially diverse communities
- Visual stimulation and delight of different buildings within close proximity
- A greater feeling of safety, with 'eyes on streets'
- Greater energy efficiency and more efficient use of space and buildings
- More consumer choice of lifestyle, location and building type
- Urban vitality and street life
- Increased viability of urban facilities and support for small business (such as corner shops).



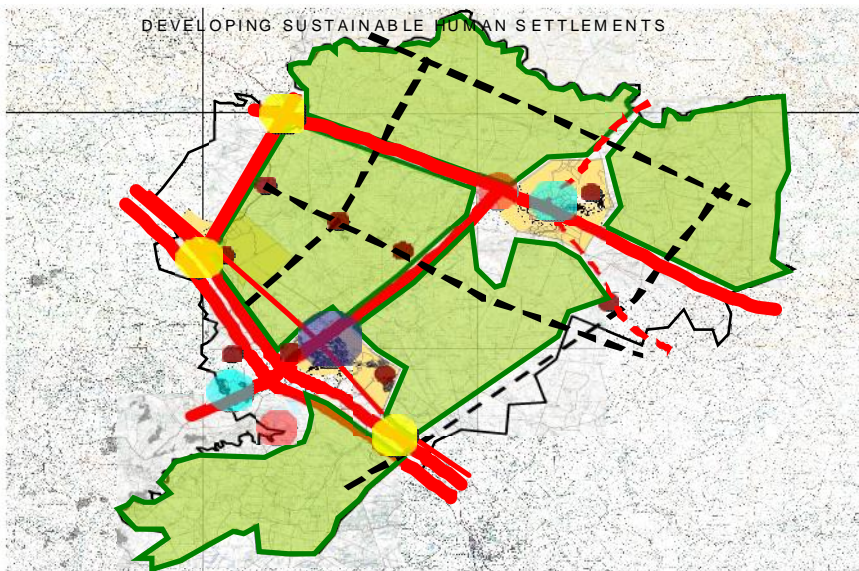
A more vibrant and sustainable spatial structure and form results from blurring the distinction between uses and designing places that make walking to the local centre, and bus stop or taxi rank, as convenient and comfortable as possible.

Developing Sustainable Human Settlements

Settlement pattern in Umtshezi Municipality occurs in the form of low density urban sprawl reflecting the texture of the existing urban centres as rural villages. This pattern is not sustainable and renders service delivery and development ineffective. While this is critical in defining the structure and

behaviour of settlements, it has given rise to a continuum of rural settlement ranging from low density remotely located agrarian communities to centrally located relatively high density settlements.

A detailed consideration of the settlement pattern reveals a high level of disintegration and fragmentation. Higher density settlements should be located along the main transportation routes and held together by a web of local access roads and public facilities. At a regional level, they should be knit together by a system of regional access routes. However, settlements are also not static. They respond to change and are continuously in the process of transformation. The key challenge is to turn them from being creations and remnants of the apartheid regime into sustainable human settlements. This has serious implications for detailed planning and development of these settlements:



- They should generate a wide range of opportunities. Sparsely populated settlements should be considered as opportunity areas for agricultural development such as crop production and livestock farming. Centrally located settlement should provide improved access to higher order public facilities, intensive agriculture and other urban services.
- A convenient settlement improves the level of choice, encourages creativity and investment while a less convenient settlement imposes a lifestyle on people and results in unnecessary expenses.
- Settlements should be equitable in the sense that they should provide a reasonable access to opportunities and facilities to all. It is neither possible nor desirable for settlements to be homogenous hence an emphasis on choice.

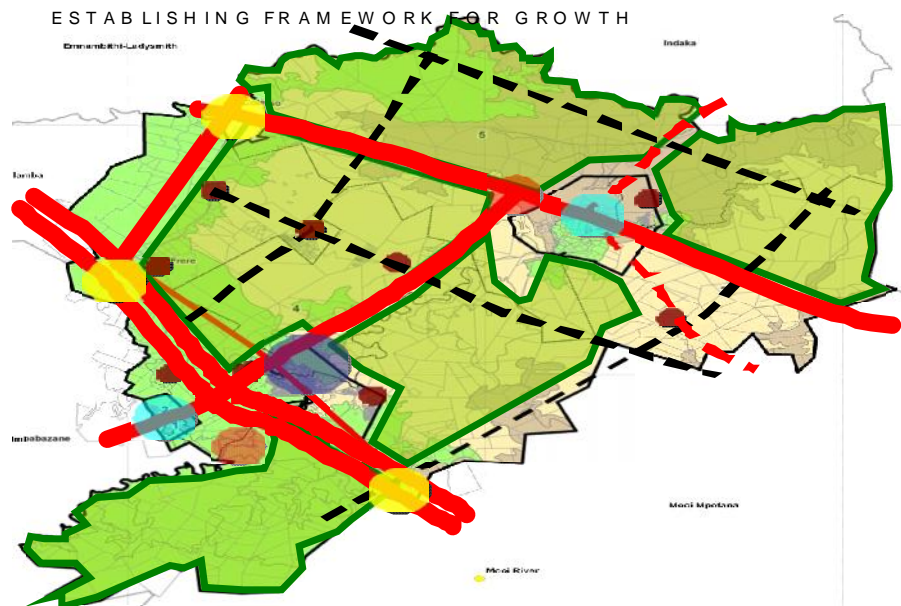
Establishing Framework for Growth and Development

Development within Umtshezi Municipality raises an issue of the traditional dichotomy between urban and rural - between town and countryside. While areas such as Estcourt and Weenen Towns are considered urban, they are located in a generally rural region and form part of a rural economy. The structure of the local economy blurs the distinction between urban and rural.

These realities underscore the necessity of putting together a spatial strategy within the broader development context. It should thus focus on managing the form and texture of

- Creating a more efficient and productive sub-region through the development adoption of policies that seeks to built of the competitive advantages while also unlocking new opportunities.
- Improving the overall quality of the urban environment by better integrating environmental concerns within development planning and urban management practices.
- Developing an inclusive spatial system that promotes integration of the previously disparate areas and eliminates the mismatch

- Promoting integrated and coordinated development with all stakeholders working towards a common development vision and agenda.



between where people live and where they work.

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Umtshezi Spatial Development Framework provides guidelines and directions for development in respect of the following key concerns:

- Environmental management
- Protection of high value agricultural land
- Development corridors.
- Development nodes
- Land reform implementation
- Housing delivery and development of sustainable human settlements.
- Economic development.
- Urban development and management framework.
- Land use management.

Environmental Management Framework

Areas Suitable for Planning & Development

The areas considered suitable for development fall outside the environmentally sensitive areas, the areas with agricultural potential and the archaeologically sensitive areas. However, there may be other issues that may hamper planning and development in these areas, hence these are given as guides only and more detailed investigation will be needed at the planning/development stage to confirm the findings of this desktop study.

Other factors such as geological/geotechnical, economical, social etc, may prevent planning and development. This broad environmental scan covers the intrinsic green environment. Some of the issues that may impact on the planning and development of the Umtshezi Municipality are given below.

Issues Impacting on Planning and Development

Low Cost Housing

Low cost housing problems, such as: subsidence, sewage problems, collapsing of houses, (all issues especially evident within low cost housing developments), may occur because of:

- Inappropriately located sites;
- Impatient and environmentally insensitive developers;
- Lack of understanding from developers regarding the role of environmental impact assessments in the site selection and application process (EIAs are often the last thought once all other studies have already been undertaken, developers are often not open to alternatives in terms of site selection or housing / development design or type);
- Disregard for wetlands and endangered species;
- Poor quality housing;
- Health conditions (in wet areas – compromises sewage systems and cemeteries) and costs.
- Because low cost housing sometimes merely Tran-locates the poor from a rural area to urban areas – where the housing is provided on smaller lots (preventing homeowners from growing

food or keeping livestock), and where employment is not available to compensate, the poverty cycle, impact on the environment and crime may in fact increase as a result. More suitable housing sites (not in wet areas) with larger plots per home should instead be considered.

Increased development of informal housing hinders the development potential and aesthetic appeal of the region. Rural areas should be formalised and provided with sanitation and water. Residents should be encouraged to remain in these areas where there is sufficient space to establish large gardens and keep livestock.

Mining

Illegal mining, without permits – all sand winning requires development on a site specific EMP and the subsequent issuing of a permit from the Department of Minerals and Energy.

Problems arise with the non-compliance of 'sand winners/miners' with the specified regulations and the EMP requirements for legitimate sites (sites that apply for permits go no further in ensuring the implementation of the conditions of the permit and EMP document).

Management of Water Resources

Incorrect citing of high-impact developments (such as low cost housing with poor sewage, wastewater and storm water management) in close proximity to wetlands, drainage lines, rivers and dams is resulting in water pollution. There is a need to protect water resources as a means to prevent waterborne diseases and ensure adequate supply of quality water for household consumption (refer to Map 16).

The sustainable use of ground water must be guaranteed, in order to ensure the quality and quantity of water for consumption and other uses in future. Siting of unsuitable

developments in close proximity to known water sources and in sites of high ground water must be prevented.

Veld Fires

Veld burning is recognised as an important veld management tool but should be applied according to strict scientific methods, considering factors such as veld type, carrying capacity (number of animals of a given type which the veld type can support), seasonal, climatic, soil and veld conditions. Veld areas should only be burnt after full ecological consideration and evaluation, to provide informed decision making regarding hot or cold burns to control excess woody material. Fire-breaks should be burnt in early to mid winter, depending on environmental conditions as broad strips allowing for effective fire management.

Requirement for a Municipal Open Space System

A clearly defined municipal open space system (for the entire municipal area, but especially in the 'urban' areas of Estcourt, Weenen, and later in the more rural areas but still built up) is required for the:

- Protection of wetlands, associated rivers, streams and catchments and areas of natural beauty.
- These Open Space Plans should take into consideration the local EMPs and SEAs and the LUMS for the local and district municipalities.

Rehabilitation of Damaged and Degraded Areas

Rehabilitation of damaged and degraded areas is now legislated and the municipality could begin to enforce this legislation by developing a whole new environmental branch: Very few new developments institute or apply rehabilitation plans, often where blatantly necessary.

Protection and Conservation of Agricultural Land

As a general aim, the municipality together with the Department of Agriculture has a responsibility to protect agricultural land from development that leads to its alienation from its primary purpose or to diminished productivity. Any proposal for non-agricultural development on agricultural land is subject to an application made to, and assessed by, the Department of Agriculture in terms of the Sub-division of Agricultural Land Act, (Act No. 70 of 1970). On the other hand, the municipality has a responsibility to implement wall-to-wall land use management system within its area of jurisdiction. This includes setting land aside for agricultural development purposes.

The traditional and widespread view that land is an almost limitless resource is a myth. Both availability and condition are under threat. Poor resource (veld) management such as overstocking, the development of land for settlement and other non-agricultural uses has led to the loss of significant areas of good agricultural land, and land degradation is now widely regarded as one of the greatest challenges facing rural Umtshezi.

As indicated on Map 17, agricultural land in Umtshezi Municipality could broadly be divided into three main categories as follows:

- Good agricultural land is located along the southern and western boundaries of the municipal area. Patches of similar land are found along Umtshezi River and around Weenen.
- Moderate potential agricultural land is located generally in the area stretching from Estcourt in the south to Weenen in the north.

- Land with low agricultural potential is located in the low lying areas towards Indaka and Msinga Municipalities and falls largely within the Bloukrans River catchment area.

Protection of good agricultural land should be based on the following policy principles:

- Good quality agricultural land has a special importance and should not be built on unless there is an overriding need for the development in terms of public benefit and no other site is suitable for the particular purpose.
- When preparing, reviewing or amending planning schemes, the municipality will be expected to include provisions for protecting good quality agricultural land, regardless of the effect of market fluctuations on its viability.
- The preparation of planning schemes should include an evaluation of alternative forms of development, and significant weight should be given to those strategies which minimise the impacts on good quality agricultural land.
- The land Use Scheme should aim to minimise cases where incompatible uses are located adjacent to agricultural operations in a manner that inhibits normal farming practice. Where such instances do arise, measures to ameliorate potential conflicts should be devised.
- The land use scheme should provide for a hierarchy of agricultural zones based on the agricultural development potential and impact of non-agricultural activities on agricultural land. Non-agricultural activities such as agri-tourism, game

farms with themed estates or lodges, resort developments, etc should be located on land with moderate agricultural potential.

Agricultural potential should be used to establish agricultural zones in terms of the land use scheme, and provide for a continuum of agricultural zones from predominantly agriculture only zones to zones that allows for a mixture of agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

The following criteria may be used in this regard:

- High potential agricultural land should be used for mainly agricultural activities. However, limited non-agricultural uses may be permitted especially along the corridors and within the designated development nodes. Conservation should form part of a drive to protect and enhance the quality of agricultural land. Irrigated land along the river corridors should be protected equally.
- Land with moderate agricultural potential provides an opportunity for the development of mixed agricultural, tourism and conservation uses. These include game farms, game reserves and feedlots. As such, the proposed game reserve stretching from just outside Estcourt towards Weenen should be supported subject to the resolution of the land and social issues.
- Low potential agricultural land should be subjected to conservation and low intensity agricultural uses. Most of it is degraded and prone to soil erosion.

A detailed indication of agricultural activities undertaken in the area is indicated in the District Agricultural Development

Strategy. It recommended that an agricultural development plan be prepared.

Development Corridors

Development corridors are a potential instrument to restructure the municipal area into robust, efficient and well-connected spatial system as well as contributing to region-wide (Uthukela District) economic growth and job creation. This is achieved by unlocking inherent and under-utilised economic and social development potential with existing nodal development and road infrastructure (refer to Map 18). The movement and nodal components are most prominent and intense within the identified corridors. Strengthening these corridors will also strengthen key economic centres to balance and share growth not only for Umtshezi but also across the province with neighbouring local municipalities.

The movement system indicates various road types and identifies the interrelationship between movement and activity. It seeks to promote mobility along major roads and arterials while encouraging higher density residential and nodal development along such routes so that a maximum number of persons can gain easy access to economic development opportunities. Lower order roads seek to improve access to agricultural land, tourism development zones, and settlement areas.

The N3 National Corridor

The N3 is identified in the NSDP as a national corridor, and is recognised as such (existing corridor) in the PSEDs. It runs in an east-west direction almost dividing Umtshezi Municipality in two halves. The southern portion is dominated by high potential agricultural land and portions of conservation worthy

areas, while areas to the north could be described as moderate to low in production potential and generally suitable for livestock and game farming. It is a high speed limited access road providing access and inter-nodal connections at a national and provincial level. It carries traffic between Johannesburg and Durban.

At a local regional and local level, it presents an opportunity for the integration of Estcourt Town to the national and provincial trade routes. It is a tourist route to the major tourist destinations in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), particularly the Drakensburg and the Battle-fields Route.

Development along this route should occur as follows:

- Facilitate the establishment of mixed land use activity nodes at the intersection of the N3 and the regional or provincial routes. Activities that may locate in these areas include logistics, warehousing, light industry and commercial facilities.
- In the short to medium term, high value agricultural land located along the corridor should be protected, but in the long term, strategically located areas abutting onto the mixed land use nodes should be opened for development as mixed land use precincts.
- Compliance with the policies and regulations introduced by the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL).
- Development of Wembezi Interchange as a mean facilitate access to the “Berg”.

Primary Development Corridors

Two main access and mobility routes have been identified as primary development (regional) corridors, namely:

- Giant Castle to Weenen Nature Reserve Corridor (north–south axis);
- Regional road from Colenso in the west through Weenen to Greytown and beyond (east-west axis); and
- R103 which runs parallel to and north of the N3. For the purposes of the SDF, R103 is seen as part of the broader N3 corridor.

The former has potential to develop into a tourism route linking the Drakensberg with the proposed Big Five Game Reserve centred on Weenen Nature Reserve. There are also opportunities for intensive agricultural activities or leisure type of developments linked to the game reserve along the river hence the river is identified as a green corridor. It is also a major link between Estcourt and Weenen. As such, it carries local traffic between the two centres and creates a link between a largely agricultural centre in Weenen and an agri-processing centre in Estcourt.

The eastern axis on the other hand serves as a major link to the areas beyond Umtshezi Municipality, and is an alternative tourist route to the north-coast from areas such as Gauteng and the Free State. It runs through the proposed Big Five Game Reserve and has potential for the development of a range of tourism facilities including private game farms (mainly for hunting and/or conservation purposes). In the medium to long term, a need may arise for some land to be released for settlement purposes to accommodate land

restitution claimants, labour tenant and farm dwellers using a cluster approach.

Development along these corridors should conform to the following guidelines:

- Both corridors are located on provincial roads and thus should adhere to the regulations as implemented by the Department of Transport.
- Development of viewing and picnic sites in appropriate areas.
- Development of a tourism node at the intersection of the two corridors.
- Limit the number and location of settlements located along this route to carefully selected areas.

Secondary Corridors

A number of existing roads have potential to develop as secondary or sub-regional development corridors, but there are opportunities to unlock new development areas through the use of a network of secondary corridors. The key existing secondary corridors include the following:

- Road from Winterton to Colenso running along the western boundary of Umtshezi Municipality. This corridor links Winterton with Colenso and beyond. It runs mainly along agricultural land. As such, development along this corridor should focus on intensive and extensive agriculture including livestock farming. Settlement should be limited to the consolidation of the existing Chieverlery, its expansion to accommodate land reform beneficiaries and provision of the necessary public facilities so as to establish the area as a sustainable human settlement.

- P170-D385 corridor from Wagendrift dam through Estcourt town to Weenen running along the eastern boundary of the municipal area.

The road from Winterton to Colenso serves as a major link at a district level knitting together small towns from Bergville through Winterton to Ladysmith, Weenen and beyond. It runs mainly along agricultural land. As such, development along this corridor should focus on intensive and extensive agriculture including livestock farming. Settlement should be limited to the consolidation of the existing Chieverlery, its expansion to accommodate land reform beneficiaries using a cluster approach and provision of the necessary public facilities so as to establish the area as a sustainable human settlement.

P170-D385 corridor is a proposed corridor linking the eco-tourism and leisure node of Wagendrift Dam through Estcourt town with the proposed Big Five Game Reserve but running along the eastern boundary of the municipal area. It is essentially a tourism corridor, but its future development should provide for a strategic mix of agricultural and eco-tourism activities. From Weenen, this corridor runs northwards into Indaka Municipality where it links with the proposed Cannibal Route.

Tertiary Corridors

Tertiary corridors are also known as local corridors because they serve mainly a local function including the following:

- D489 – D721 (Cornfields-Thembalihle Corridor).
- P179 from Loskop road through Wembezi to Wagendrift Dam and the surrounding proposed conservation areas.

Cornfields-Thembalihle Corridor serves as a major link between the two parallel secondary corridors and has potential to improve access to Thembalihle and Cornfields which area both isolated expansive rural settlements located on commercial farmlands. It has potential to link with Chieverley as well. To all intents and purposes, this corridor has limited economic opportunities.

P179 from Loskop road through Wembezi to Wagendrift Dam and the surrounding proposed conservation areas is also an emerging corridor intended to reinforce linkages and integrate Wembezi and the surrounding settlements to the agricultural and the proposed eco-tourism areas in the vicinity of the Wagendrift Dam. It has potential to serve as an alternative access to the Wagendrift eco-tourism node from the Loskop road. It has potential to serve as an alternative access to the Wagendrift eco-tourism node from the Loskop road. It also provides access to settlements such as Wembezi and C-section.

Wembezi-Estcourt Mixed Land Use Corridor

Spatial integration between Wembezi and Estcourt is one of the main spatial development challenges facing Umtshezi Municipality. It is thus recommended that the portion of the main road between the two areas be developed as a low impact mixed land use corridor in the short to medium term. This will ensure protection of the existing agricultural land while also opening opportunities for tourism, leisure, housing and commercial development. The proposed N3 off-ramp gives further impetus to the development of a mixed land use node which accords well with the proposed corridor.

System of Activity Nodes

An activity node is a place of high accessibility onto which both public and private investments tend to concentrate. An activity node offers the opportunity to locate a range of activities, from small to large enterprises, often associated with mixed-use development. They are generally located along or at the cross-section of development corridors.

Activity nodes have the potential to be an important sub-regional structuring device. They serve as points in the spatial structure where potentially access to a range of opportunities is greatest, where networks of association create diversity and where people are able to satisfy the broadest range of their day to day needs. Being points of maximum economic, social and infrastructure investment, as well as representing established patterns of settlement and accessibility, these nodes must be regarded as primary devices on which to anchor the structure of the sub-regional spatial system. Application of a system of development nodes in Umtshezi is indicated on Map 19.

Sub-regional Activity Node - Estcourt

Estcourt is the main commercial, industrial and administrative centre within Umtshezi Municipality. It forms of part of the district spatial systems and is identified in the district SDF as a secondary node. This is despite Estcourt being recognised as a third order centre at a provincial level alongside Ladysmith. As a sub-regional node, the following activities should be strengthened in Estcourt:

- Development of commercial activities serving the whole municipal area and the surrounding areas (sub-region).

- Location of district and sub-district offices of various government departments and serve delivery agencies.
- Location of facilities and services for an effective administration and local governance of Umtshezi Municipality.
- Industrial development, focusing mainly on the processing of raw materials produced within the sub-region and the neighbouring areas – agri-processing centre.
- Location of public facilities serving the whole sub-region and beyond. These may include sports and transportation facilities.

Secondary Activity Nodes/Urban Community Centres

Two secondary activity nodes have been identified in Umtshezi Municipality, namely:

- Weenen, and
- Wembezi Town Centre.

Weenen which was previously a thriving rural town has experienced decline in both character and function. It is characterised by derelict and poorly maintained buildings, deteriorating quality of infrastructure and the associated services, and lack of investment. With the majority of the land around this town being subject to land restitution and labour tenant claims, it is critically important to repackage Weenen as a centre of activity and an anchor point for the integration and coordination of support services to the various land reform projects. It has potential for the activities:

- Administrative offices for the decentralisation of services to the communities located around Weenen.

- Limited commercial activities targeting the surrounding communities.
- Processing of raw materials produced in the area given its potential for intensive crop and citrus production.

A case for the regeneration of this town is presented in Section 9.4.2 below.

Wembezi on the other hand was developed as a residential township or a dormitory suburb for black people working in Estcourt. A small area was set aside for the development of a town centre. Today, this area is poorly developed with a community hall and two small local convenient shops. However, a small agglomeration of commercial facilities has occurred at the northern entrance to the township. Plans to develop a neighbourhood shopping centre in the area have reached an advanced stage with implementation due to start at the beginning of 2009. The area is also being considered for a range of projects that would be funded through the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG).

In addition, middle income housing is being developed to the west of the Wembezi Township. In fact, there is potential to expand this to cover the vacant land located to the west of B-section and may yield about 500 units. Other issues that require attention in the area include:

- Upgrading of informal settlements.
- Upgrading of the existing cemetery.
- Upgrading and maintenance of roads.

Tertiary Nodes/Rural Community Centre

The vision for the future spatial development of Umtshezi Municipality makes provision for the development of community centres within a cluster of settlements, as follows:

- Thembalihle and Cornfields
- Frere
- Chively
- Rensbergdrift
- Nhlawe

None of these is currently developed. The primary aim of these centres is to accommodate land uses that provide services to the local communities. These include the following:

- Educational facilities such as schools.
- Community centres including a community hall
- Health facilities such as a clinic or mobile clinic
- Sports facilities
- Limited commercial facilities
- Pension pay point.

Community centres should be planned as an integral part of a cluster of settlements and resonates with the ideal of sustainable human settlements as envisaged in the new national housing policy (Breaking New Ground).

Land Reform Framework

The role of local government in supporting the land reform program remains one of the poorly defined and uncoordinated activities in the integrated development planning process. The land reform impacts on the local communities, yet it is implemented by a national government department with limited, if any, consideration of the IDPs and the SDFs. Similarly, these documents do not provide an adequate strategic framework for dealing with the land question. Land issues are complex and intricate with some of them (labour tenants and land restitution) being rights driven. Nevertheless, the land reform is one of the significant programs that promise to make a major contribution to economic growth, poverty alleviation and nation building. As such, its implementation should be embedded in the notion of sustainable and integrated development.

Umtshezi Municipality recognizes the importance of the land reform; particularly the role it can play in addressing historical land related conflicts in the area, overcrowding and congestion, as well as promoting agricultural development. As such, the following should guide future implementation of the land reform program within Umtshezi Municipality (refer to Map 20):

- Clustering of projects in a geographic area (across products) so as to optimise development potential, rationalise support services and promote efficient use of scarce resources. Identification of clusters should be based on access, social identity, development opportunities, land use pattern and social relationships. This will provide a framework for a comprehensive

approach to the resolution of labour tenant and land restitution claims.

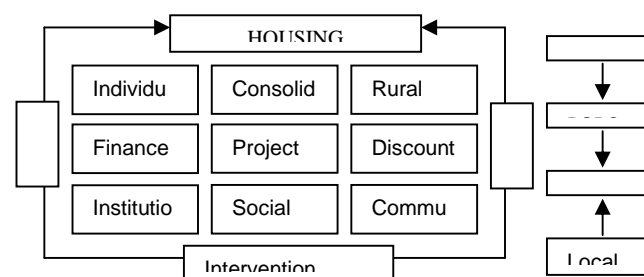
- Settlement of the emerging farmers in terms of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) or Pro-active land Acquisition Strategy should be located close to transport axes on good agricultural land in situations where they have access to ongoing support and mentorship – this by definition would exclude isolated areas of the municipal area.
- There is a need to promote off-farm settlement as a land delivery approach where the main need for land is settlement. Such land should be located in accessible areas which can be provided with social facilities and basic services in an efficient and effective manner. It may also form part of a cluster of projects. This will also facilitate housing delivery and development of such settlements as sustainable human settlements.
- Identification of high impact projects and integration into the local value chain or development proposals. These projects should also be integrated into the LED program of the Municipality. Opportunities in Umtshezi include game farming, livestock farming, citrus, irrigated pastures, and dryland and irrigated crop production.

It must however, be noted that the land reform is a need and a rights based program. Its primary focus is to transform the land ownership pattern in line with the national government targets.

Housing Delivery Framework

Since the introduction of the Housing Act, (Act No. 107 of 1997), the National government has introduced a comprehensive programme to address a range of housing needs in South Africa. The programme is outlined in the recently introduced Comprehensive Plan for the Creation of Sustainable Human Settlements.

FIGURE 11: HOUSING POLICY AND PROGRAMME



As indicated on Figure 11 below, the national housing delivery programme seeks to achieve its goals by means of a range of instruments including individual subsidy, social housing and community residential units. The application of these instruments occurs within the legislative and policy framework set by the National Department of Housing, and is implemented in a cooperative manner among the three spheres of government with local government serving as the agent of the Department of Housing in KZN.

Umtshezi Municipality has developed a Housing Sector Plan as a guide to the execution of its housing mandate. As such, housing is not construed as an end in itself, but a strategic intervention for addressing an assortment of development objectives. These include (NDoH, 2007: 5):

- Development of sustainable human settlements in support of spatial restructuring. This includes the promotion of efficient urban environments and integration of previously excluded groups into the city and its associated benefits.
- Combating crime, promoting social cohesion and improving quality of life for the poor.
- Leveraging growth in the economy. Essentially, this requires a stronger alignment of the housing programme with the local economic development strategies.
- Job creation.

Although Estcourt, Wembezi and Weenen account for about 50% of the municipal population, the housing sector plan concludes that the highest housing need is found in the rural settlements. The majority of housing in these settlements occurs in the form of traditional huts. Moreover, they have not benefitted from any housing scheme, yet they account for about 35% of the municipal population.

The poorest households in the municipality amounts to 3777 households who do not have any reliable source of income, and a further 1337 households with access to less than R4800/month. It is noted that there are about 6050 units that are to be delivered (already in the pipeline) within the short to medium term.

In addition, a number of land reform projects are fast degenerating into swelling rural settlements. This trend is set to continue as the more complex rural based land restitution claims unfolds. Secondly, there is an equally significant number of people who reside on commercial farmlands as

either farm dwellers or labour tenants. They are experience an acute housing need.

Table 1: Planned Projects

PROJECT NAME	SETTLEMENT TYPE	UNITS REQUIRED	PROJECT PACKAGING	PREP FUNDING APPLICATION
Rensburg Drift	Urban	1000		1000
Thembalihle	Rural	400		400
Chively	Rural	350		350
Owl and Elephant	Rural	400	400	400
Frère	Rural	400	400	400
Rama	Rural	500	500	
Papkulisfontein	Urban	400		
Bambanani	Rural	2000		2000
Machunu				
Msobotsheni, Engodini & Nhlawe	Rural	1000		1000
Mshayazaffe				
TOTAL		6050		5550

Source: Umtshezi Housing Sector Plan

A framework for the delivery of housing based on the Housing Sector Plan is presented on Map 21. While 2423 units are nearing completion (project close out), four other projects are currently under implementation, namely:

- Wembezi A with 515 units.
- Wembezi C phase 2 with 738 units.
- Kwanobamba phase 2 with 72 units.
- Kwezi Hostel Upgrade with 900 units.

The housing sector plan adopts a phased approach with the following being the first phase projects:

- Chively (350 units).

- Papkuilsfontein (1000 units).
- Bambanani Machunu (1000 units).
- Msobotsheni, Engodini and Nhlawe (2000 units).

The first 2 projects are urban and have a total yield of 750 units, while the rural projects will deliver about 3000 housing opportunities. The second phase is planned as follows:

- Rensburg Drift (1000 units).
- Thembalihle (1000 units).
- Own and Elephant (500 units).
- Frere (500 units).
- Rama (500 units).

The SDF identifies areas for middle income and up-market housing as well as upgrading of informal settlements in nodal areas.

Economic Development Framework

Umtshezi LED plan adopts a sector based approach and identifies tourism, agriculture and manufacturing as the main economic drivers locally. The sector support approach is based on the assumption that economic growth can be driven by interventions in specific markets and sectors. The analysis typically makes use of an analysis of sector stakeholders, product development and selection, supply and value chains, markets areas and national and international trends.

An ongoing intervention would include clear identification of spatial development opportunities, regular communication with specific sector groups and in working with those groups

to monitor changes in the sectors. The feedback mechanism will provide a mechanism to measure changes in the different sectors and to measure the impacts of various policies and interventions. All of the above are key in the uMtshezi area, in particular agriculture, industry and tourism (refer to Map 22).

Commerce and Industry

Estcourt

The Provincial Spatial Economic Development Strategy primarily identifies Estcourt as being:

- on the exiting N3 corridor;
- being a service node; and
- being part of a tourism corridor.

The area should be developed with infrastructure for the following sectors:

- Tourism: tourism spatial strategy indicates that the uMtshezi area is considered to contain cultural and eco-tourism opportunities. It is important that these opportunities are exploited as a substantial amount of national resources are channeled into the tourism sector.
- Industry: The area has potential to develop into a processing centre for the raw materials produced within the municipal area and beyond.
- Commerce: Estcourt serves as the main economic hub for the sub-region which includes almost the whole of Imbabazane

Municipality and portions of municipalities such as Mooi-Mpofana and Msinga.

Weenen

Weenen is located along a primary corridor and currently serves as a commercial node for the surrounding farming and rural communities. The area has potential to consolidate its role as a commercial centre as follows:

- The town is surrounded by intensive agricultural operations which provide an opportunity for the development of packaging and limited processing industries.
- There is a need to promote intensification of agricultural production in the area. This includes provision of state of irrigation infrastructure.
- Regeneration of the urban centre so as to provide for the commercial development in and around the town.

Tourism and Leisure Development Areas

Developments that promote eco-tourism and leisure products should be promoted in the following areas:

- Area around the Wagendrift Dam, particularly along the proposed Wembezi-Estcourt Development.
- Conservation area to the south of the municipal area. This area has endemic species and is already being considered for the development of a game farm.

- Area being considered for the development of a big-five game reserve between Weenen and Estcourt. The development area may need to be re-configured so as to cater for the social development needs of the labour tenants and land restitution claimants.
- Heritage sites spread throughout the municipal area, particularly within Estcourt Town.

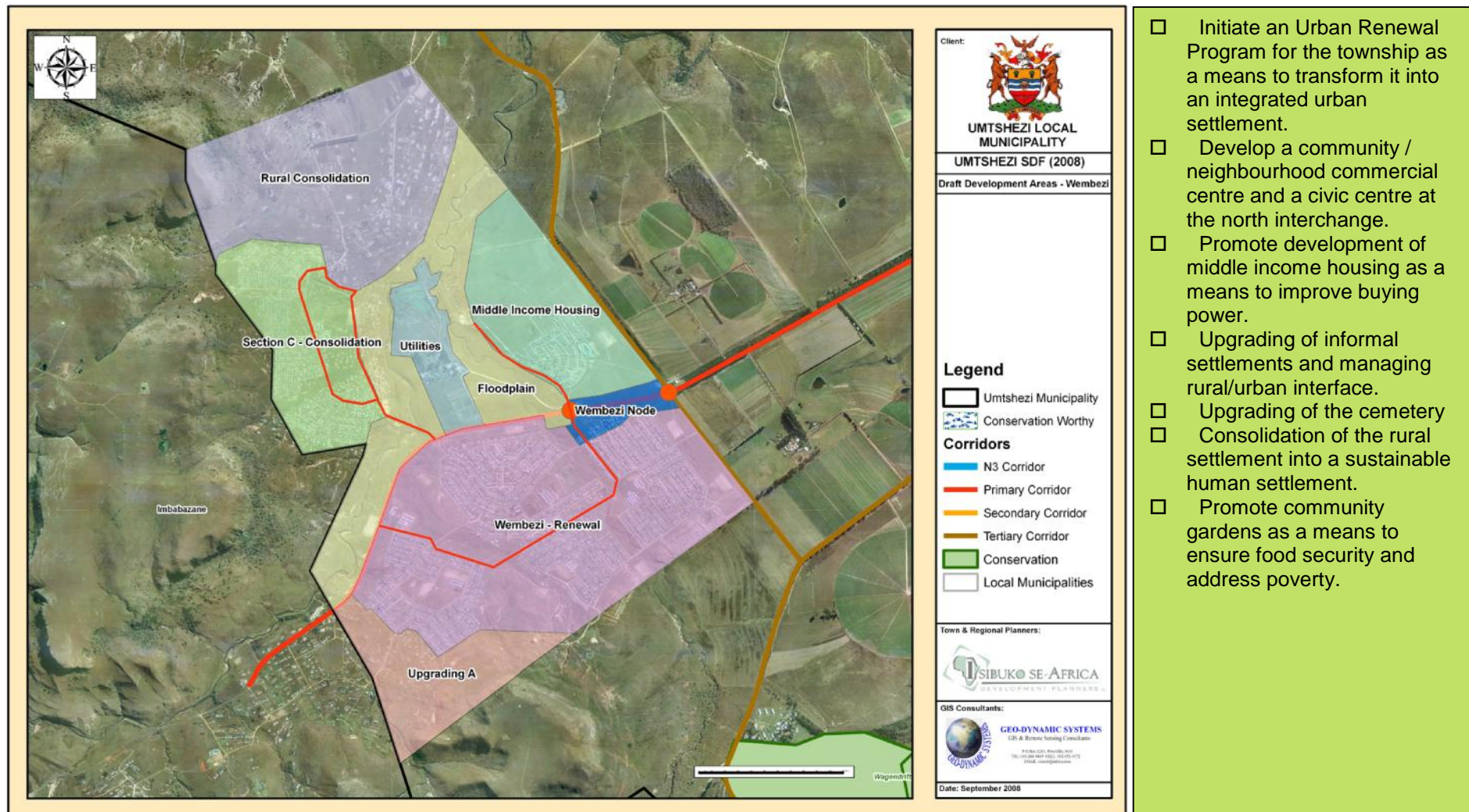
Urban Development Framework

Urban development program focuses mainly in the three urban nodes within Umtshezi Municipality, namely:

- Wembezi where the main focus on the initiation and implementation of an urban renewal program.
- Weenen where the main focus also on urban renewal and intensive urban agriculture.
- Estcourt where the main focus is on land use integration and developing the town into an efficient sub-regional centre.

Wembezi Urban Renewal

Wembezi Urban Renewal Program (WURP) is a project aimed at “renewing” or regenerating Wembezi Township as a means to improve the quality of life of the local community. The urban renewal programme’s objectives are:



- ☐ Initiate an Urban Renewal Program for the township as a means to transform it into an integrated urban settlement.
- ☐ Develop a community / neighbourhood commercial centre and a civic centre at the north interchange.
- ☐ Promote development of middle income housing as a means to improve buying power.
- ☐ Upgrading of informal settlements and managing rural/urban interface.
- ☐ Upgrading of the cemetery
- ☐ Consolidation of the rural settlement into a sustainable human settlement.
- ☐ Promote community gardens as a means to ensure food security and address poverty.

The overall objectives of the URP are to enable systematic and sustained interventions to alleviate poverty and significantly address underdevelopment and socio-economic exclusion. Its specific objectives include to promote local economic development; to relieve poverty and unemployment; to provide a safe and secure environment by fighting crime; to support education, training and skills development; to create a quality urban environment where people can live with dignity and pride; to develop efficient, integrated and user-friendly transport systems; and to create job opportunities through the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP).

- To encourage socially cohesive communities, who are viable, safe, mutually supportive, productive and involved.
- To improve living standards, quality of life and create prospects for a better life for the township residents.

Based on abroad overview of the development challenges in the area, it is suggested that WURP should focus on the following:

- the development of new and improvement of the existing infrastructure such as the resurfacing of roads and building of pavements;
- implementation of an environmental program intended to create a balanced environment where development does not compromise the quality of the environment;
- social upliftment through the upgrading of dilapidated houses, upgrading of informal settlements and development of the area into a sustainable human settlement;
- development of Wembezi into an integrated community through the creation of opportunities for middle income housing development;
- consolidation of the community through the development of social infrastructure such as sports complex, community centre (Thusong Centre), and taxi rank;
- the development of the local economy through job creation and Small, Micro and Medium Enterprise (SMME) projects, like

grass-cutting and the setting up of vegetable gardens and agriculture projects; and

- creating an environment conducive for private sector investment through unlocking strategically located land for commercial development in support of Wembezi and portions of Imbabazane Municipality.

Weenen

Weenen is identified in the in the SDF as a secondary node or an urban community centre. Weenen, a previously economically thriving little town has over the last few decades experienced a sharp decline and decay. As already indicated, this is suggested by an apparent dominance of poorly maintained buildings, deteriorating infrastructure and lack of new investment. The key challenge is to reverse this trend and reposition the town as a rural service centre, community commercial centre and an agricultural town serving the surrounding land reform projects and the existing Weenen community. As such, future spatial development in Weenen should focus on the following:

- Spatial integration of Weenen and Nobamba. The latter was established as an emergency camp in the 1960s, but has since developed into a relatively large urban settlement. It is located approximately 10km from Weenen. Spatial integration may include the upgrading of community facilities located between the two areas, development of community gardens along the road to Kwanobamba, etc.
- Amendment of zoning and land use controls applicable to the large residential properties so as to accommodate future need

for residential properties. Effectively, this means that in the short to medium term, residential development should occur in the form of densification and infill using these properties.

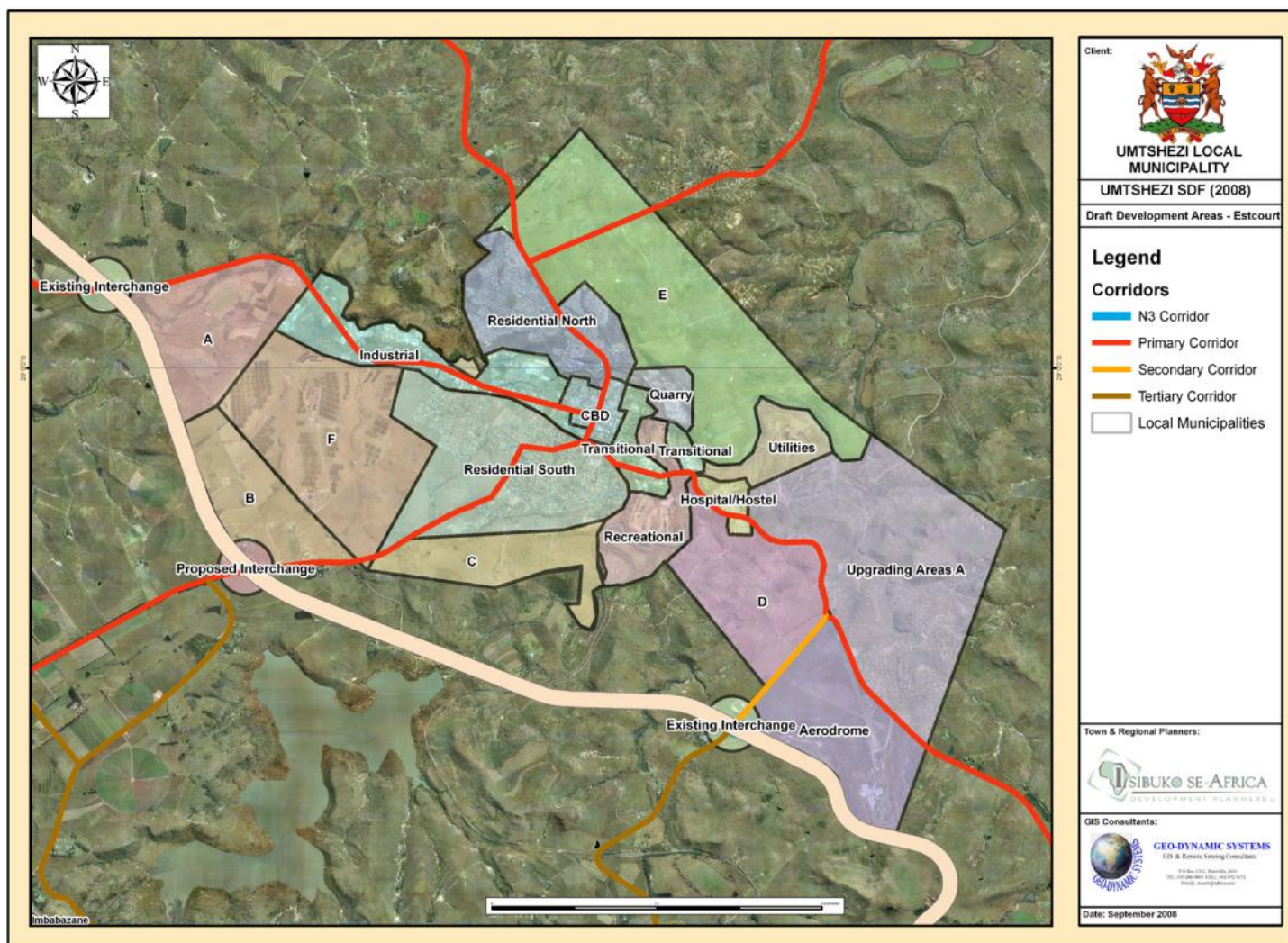
- Urban renewal focusing mainly on infrastructure upgrading and maintenance, refurbishment of existing buildings, delineation of flood lines, upgrading the image of the town, and promoting new investments.
- Mixed land use corridor development linking the two commercial nodes. The corridor is located along the main road and should thus be undertaken with due cognisance of the requirements of the Department of Transport (DOT). The corridor has potential to integrate the two areas and provide for the processing or packaging of local agricultural products.
- Developing the small sub-divisions into viable intensive crop production and general agricultural entities. This includes the development of an irrigation system linked to the Bushman's River. It is understood that most of this land is subject to land restitution claims. Therefore, the target beneficiaries should be the land restitution claimants. The maintenance of the existing canal system is the responsibility of Umtshezi Municipality.

- Integrated environmental management system which includes the Bushman's River system, open space system and environmentally sustainable development.
- While Weenen town centre should serve as the main commercial area, the node along the main road should be consolidated as a civic centre for the delivery of social services. The area should be considered for the location of various government services and a tourism information office.
- The urban boundary should be redefined to include the urban built-up area and the immediate small agricultural lots which are proposed for future residential development.

Estcourt

Estcourt is identified in the SDF as a sub-regional centre (primary node), and a constituent part of Uthukela economic system. Its threshold extends beyond the municipal area and includes portions of Imbazazane and Mooi Mpofana Municipalities. Future spatial planning and development in the area should focus on the following:

- Defining a clear urban edge (fence) as a means to contain urban sprawl and promote urban densification, while also integrating the town functionally to the N3 national corridor.



- ☐ Strengthen functional link between Estcourt Town and the N3 through mixed land use development in all interchange areas and open land along the N3.
- ☐ Promote upmarket housing developments on Area C with fantastic views of the dam and the N3.
- ☐ Promote redevelopment of the industrial area into a mixed land use activity corridor.
- ☐ Initiate CBD regeneration program as a means to improve character and image of the town. I
- ☐ Promote densification through redevelopment, cluster housing, etc.
- ☐ Define urban fence as a means to manage rural urban interface and curb low density urban sprawl
- ☐

- ☐ Land along Umtshezi River should be developed as a green corridor comprising of active open space or recreational areas and urban agriculture.
- ☐ The waste disposal site located to the south of the landing strip should be relocated to pave way for the upgrading of the landing strip and development of the area as a mixed land use precinct.

- Settlement such as Rensbergdrift located just outside the current scheme boundary poses a serious threat to this ideal, and should be controlled.
- Land located between the railway line and the river from the CBD to Estcourt North off-ramp should be planned and developed as a mixed land use activity corridor. The area has potential for a system mix of industrial, commercial, residential and other types of land uses. The main road services as a spine and is not subject to limited access controls (at least within the TPS area).
- In regenerating the CBD the Municipality needs to focus its energy on a series of principles which should be regarded as the major components of urban regeneration in CBDs. These principles are include establishing effective CBD management systems, building public confidence in the CBD, creating an attractive public environment; promoting new markets and the 24-hour CBD; and focusing development energy into specific areas so as to obtain the maximum benefit.
- Future residential development in Estcourt should provide for the delivery of a range of housing products with a particular focus on opening housing opportunities for the poor in close proximity to employment and social opportunity areas. Te plan identifies at least three areas for future residential development.
- Upgrading of the existing informal settlements (using the housing delivery program) so as to curb uncontrolled future

expansion. The municipality should develop and implement a policy to address land invasions.

- Direction of growth should move towards the N3 so as to seize the development opportunities the N3 presents to Estcourt and create a strong functional linkage between the N3 and the town. As such, all the N3 off-ramps have been identified as potential missed land use nodes with Estcourt South having potential to develop into a light industrial node.
- Development of an integrated open space system focusing mainly on the integration of open space and its use to promote integrated and sustainable development. This includes a clear identification of green corridors and a formulation of rules to govern development along these areas.
- Urban agriculture in selected areas, particularly along the Umtshezi River. Areas not suitable for development or that may not be required for development in the short to medium term should be left as agricultural (grazing) areas.

Land Use Management Framework

The primary aim of the Land Use Management Framework (LUMF) is to bridge the gap between the Integrated Development Plan and the detailed requirements of land use management applied at municipal level. Although it is not a legal requirement, it is an important aspect of spatial planning. It provides for the refinement of the SDF, identification of areas that require different levels of detail in terms of land use schemes and the formulation of broad principles to guide the development of land use schemes. It enables development

control, at differing levels of complexity, to extend over rural areas, and giving property owners, developers and the authorities a clear point of reference from which to manage the conservation and development of land.

Umtshezi Land Use Management Scheme would be based on both policy and zoning system. Land use policies would be developed mainly for agricultural, conservation and settlement areas while zoning system would be used primarily in the urban areas. This will occur as follows (refer to Map 25):

- A comprehensive Land Use Scheme (LUS) for Estcourt Town.
- A primary Land Use Scheme for Wembezi and Weenen.
- Elementary schemes for the settlements areas.
- Environmental Management Overlay as a means to integrate environment management into the administration of the scheme. This overlay will identify and introduces controls that apply specifically to the environmentally sensitive areas.

A parent zone refers to an area that is set aside for a particular bundle of land use rights. They identify land set aside for different land uses, and form the basis for the identification of sub-zones (districts) based on potential impact and intensity of development. Ideally, there should be a continuum of land use districts ranging from intrusive and high impact uses to low impact uses.

Land Use Scheme may also identify special zones as a means to enable the municipality to manage land developments with unique or specific characteristics and where a proposed land use does not comply with the standard zones. As a key aim of a Scheme is clarity, the use of Special Zones should be kept to a minimum. Besides Special Site Planning Areas that would

have controls for the duration of the development, all other Special Zones should be temporary mechanisms with the specific intention that they will be incorporated into a scheme during the regular scheme review process. Land reform projects are specifically identified as special zone areas for the following number of reasons:

- They planned settlements and/or land use areas with an approved plan.
- They are established outside of the LUMS framework through a piece legislation that is not administered by the municipality.
- In most instances, actual development on the ground does not follow the provisions and stipulations of the plan.

Within a zone a municipality may wish to provide for different intensities of development, over fairly large areas or relatively small areas. The intensity of development can be described in a number of ways, including density (in terms of number of dwelling units per hectare), minimum lot sizes, bulk (in absolute terms, or as a composite of coverage) and height. The scheme shall make provision for at least four types of development rights, namely:

- Freely permitted: This category includes land uses that are considered to be compatible with the surrounding land uses and which may be permitted by the municipality.
- Development Permit: This category includes compatible and/or ancillary uses considered to be low impact uses that require limited procedural mechanisms for consideration. The procedure usually involves obtaining written consent from the neighbours or community consent.

- Special Consent Use Permit: This category includes ancillary uses that might have a more intrusive impact and may require special conditions to protect the amenity of the area or mitigate the impact of the proposed use.
- Prohibited Uses: This category includes land uses which are considered to be incompatible with the surrounding land uses, and which a municipality is precluded from considering.

The municipality will make use of an overlay to depict an area of environmental importance or an Environmental Service Area where it is appropriate to zone an area for a particular use but where additional controls are required to sustain the provision of specific environmental services in an area. The use of the overlay implies that there will be an element of management applied to the affected area. The area depicted on an Environmental Service overlay may not be based on cadastral base, but factors such as extent of flood line. Areas to be depicted on an Environmental Service Overlay include:

- Open space systems including fully functional, partially functional, and isolated areas, water courses, wetlands
- Areas of indigenous vegetation, breeding sites, etc.
- Other elements as determined by the municipality concerned e.g. sites of cultural or archaeological significance
- Catchment management areas and areas of bio-diversity.

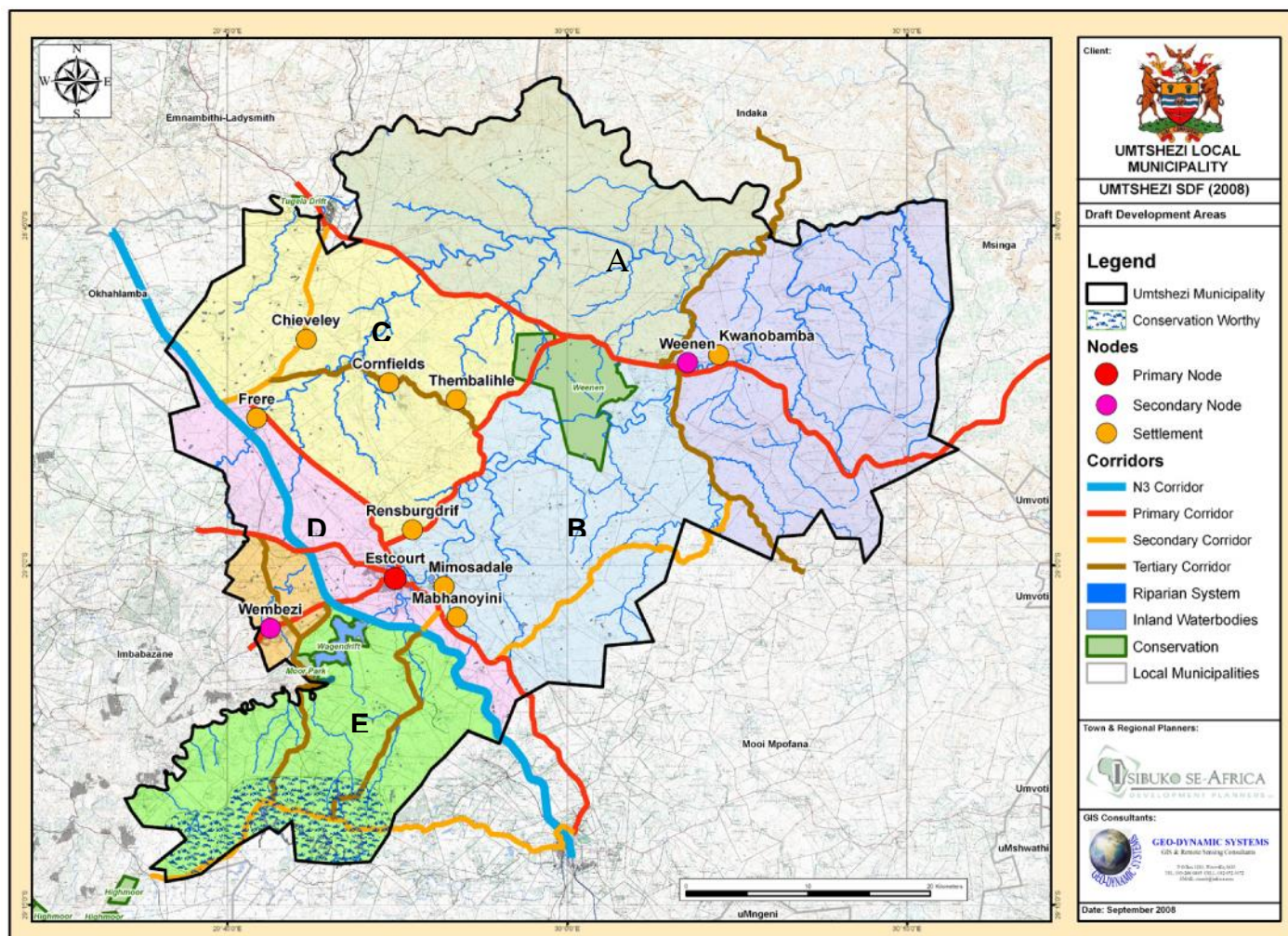
The LUS should define and introduce measures to conserve high potential agricultural land. An agriculture parent zone has, as its primary aim, the identification, protection and reservation of land which has agricultural value and that should be

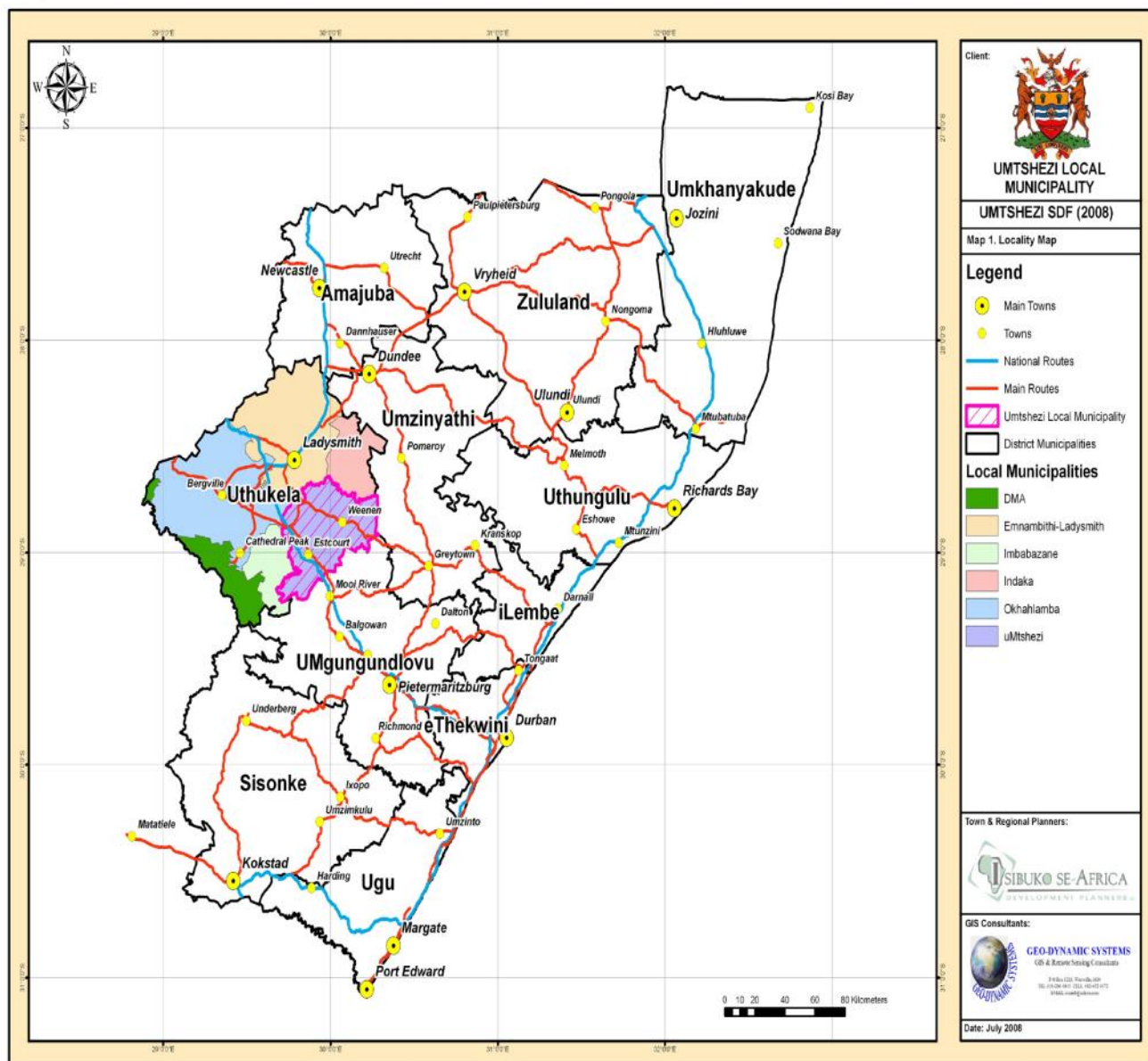
optimally utilised in accordance with national and provincial legislation, policy and guidelines related to sustainable development, agricultural production and use and or protection of natural resources. It may include the following sub-zones:

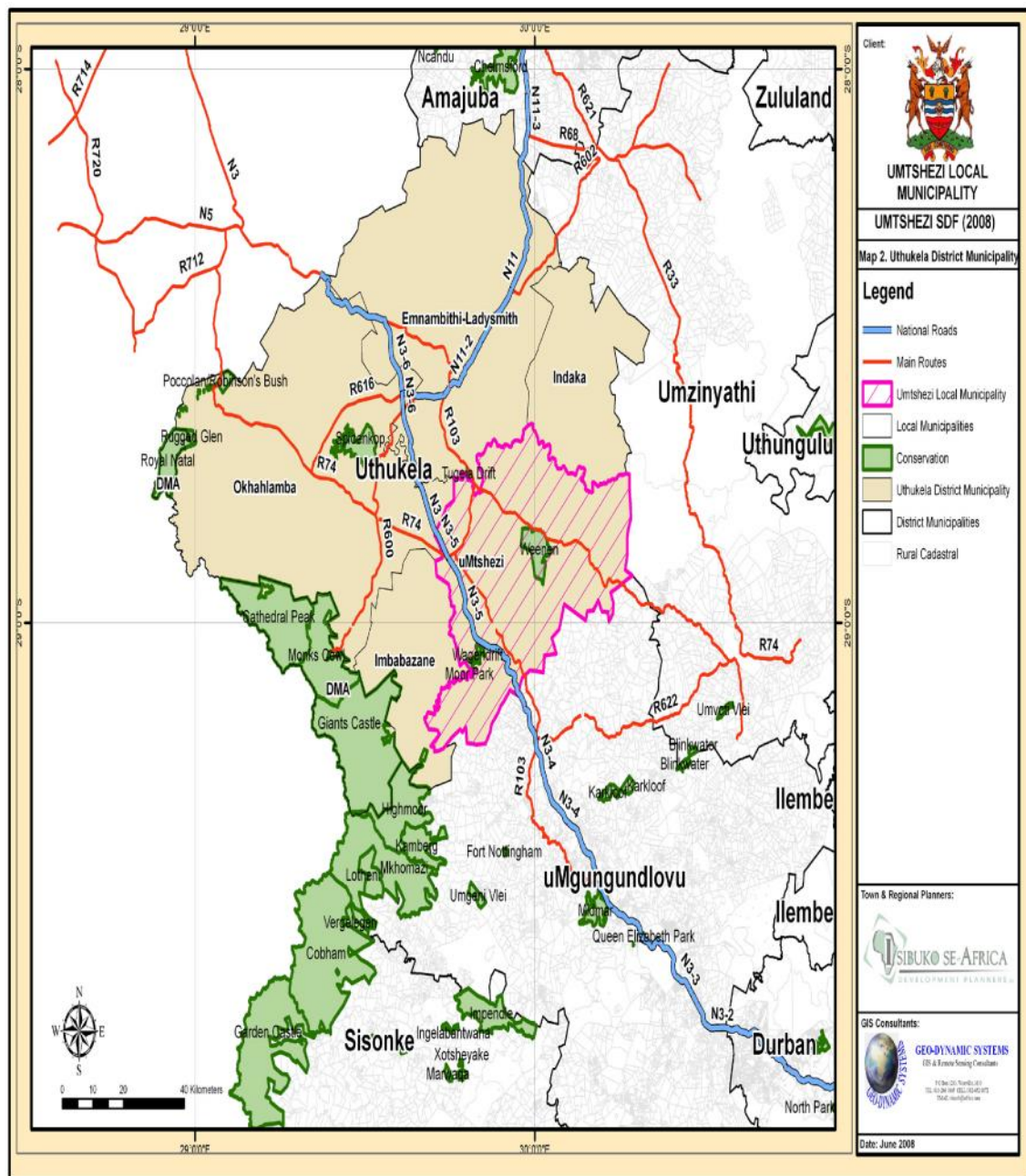
- Agriculture only zone where the primary use is agriculture and buildings ancillary thereto.
- An agricultural zone where low impact non-agricultural uses and activities (agri-tourism, limited processing, etc) may be allowed, but the primary use remain agriculture
- Agriculture zone where a range of non-agricultural uses (e.g agricultural industry such as milling, game farming, themes estates or resorts, etc) with potential to impact on agricultural practices may be permitted.

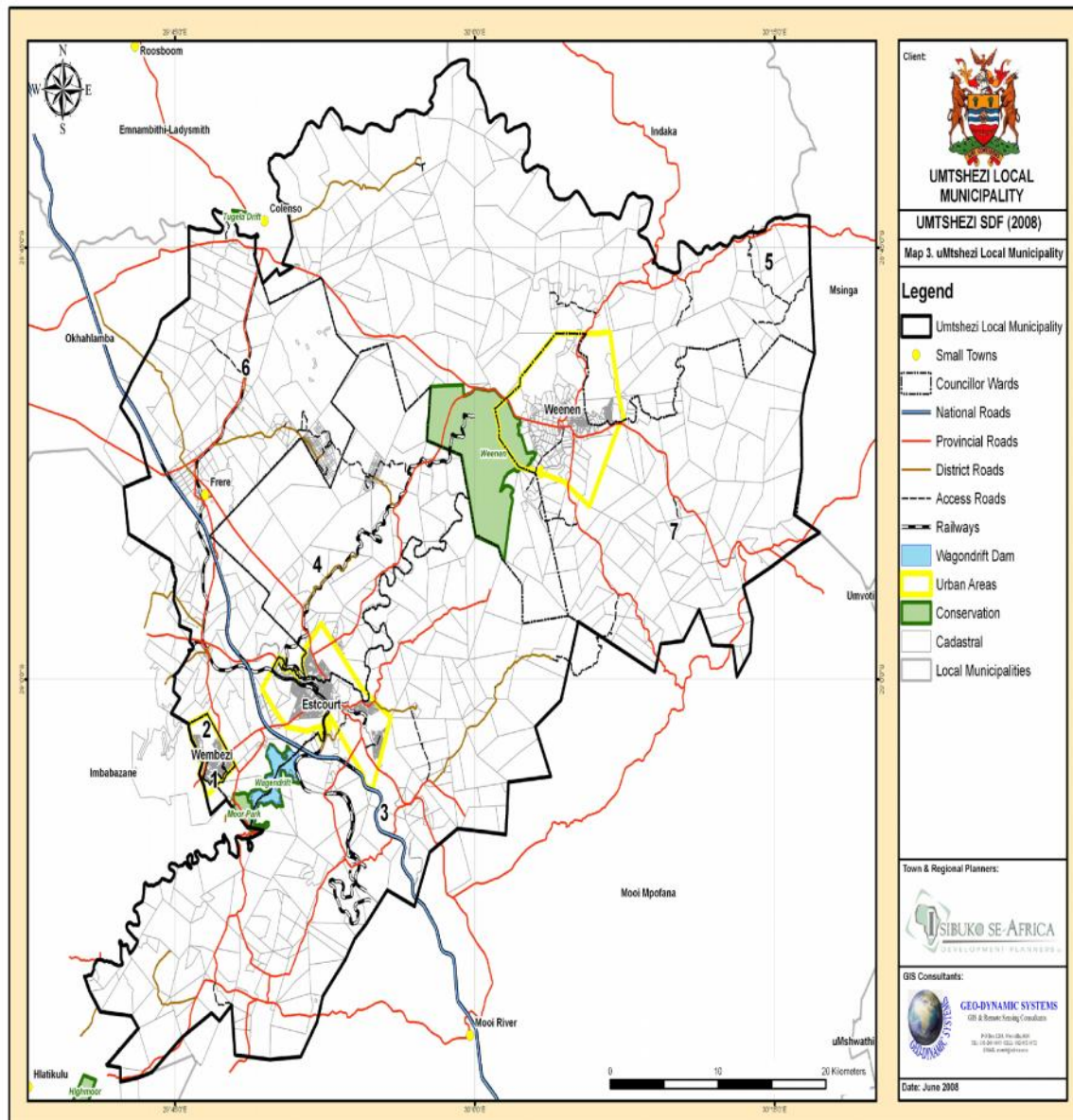
A consolidated spatial development framework for Umtshezi Municipality is presented on Map 26.

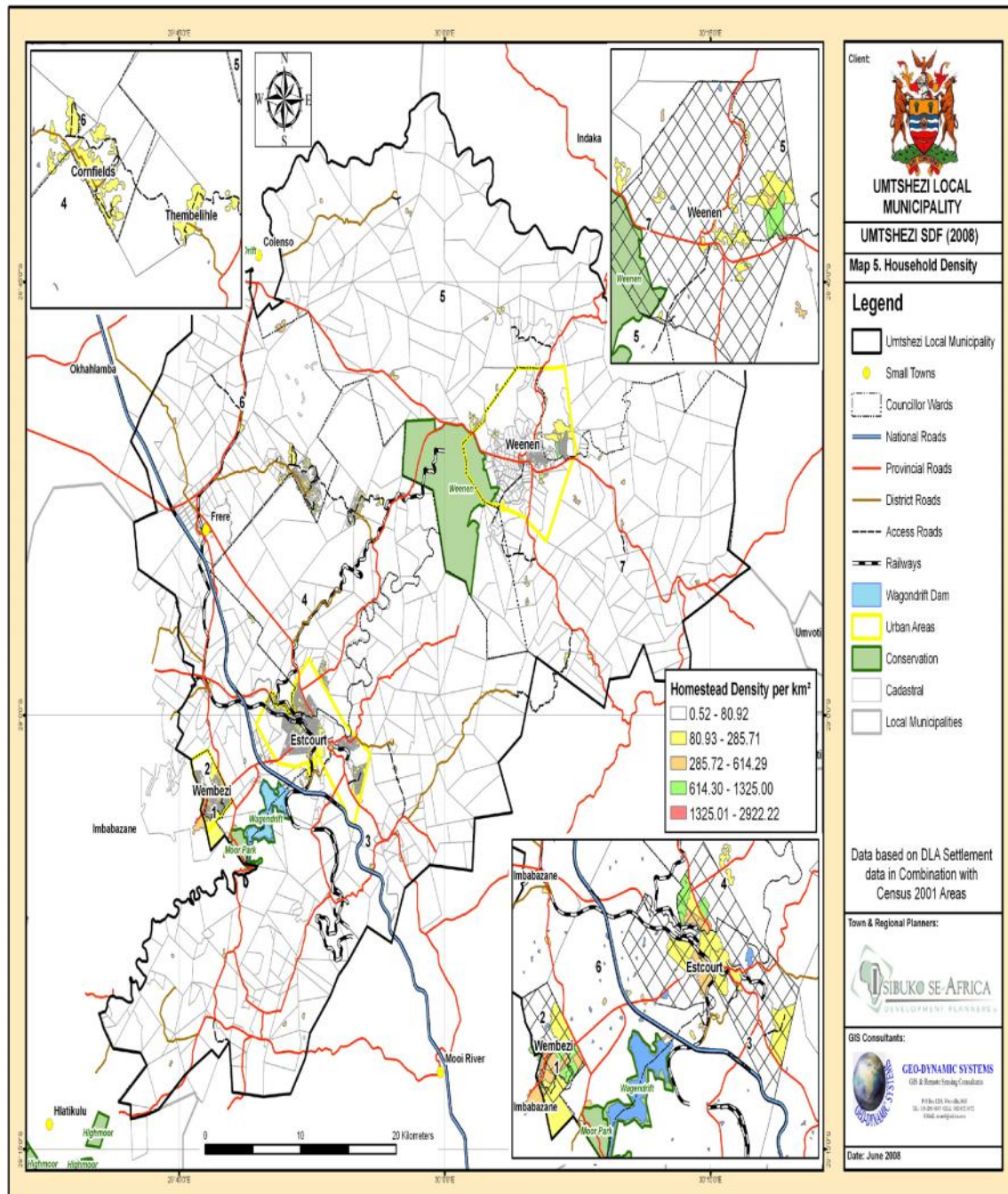
Development Areas

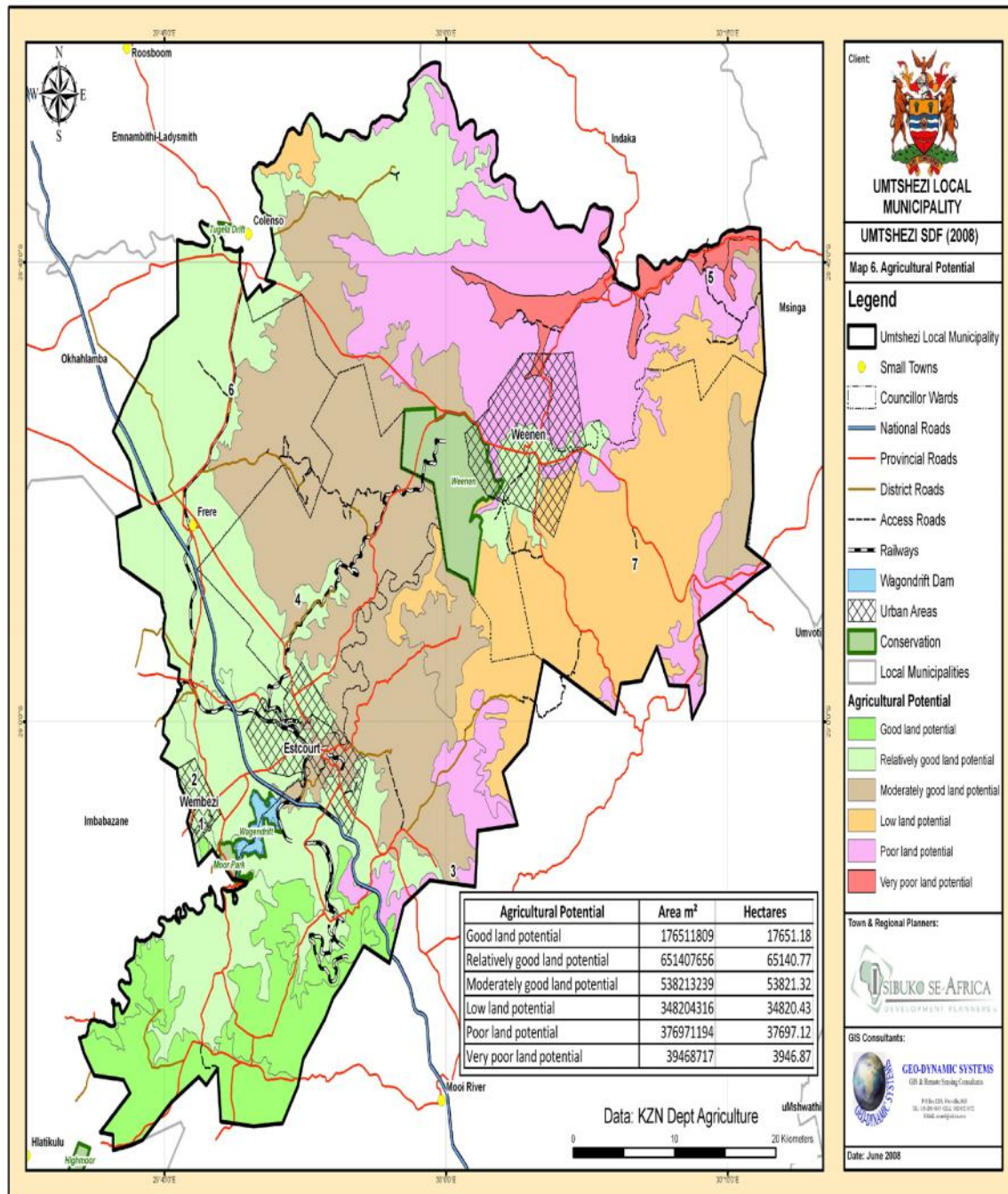


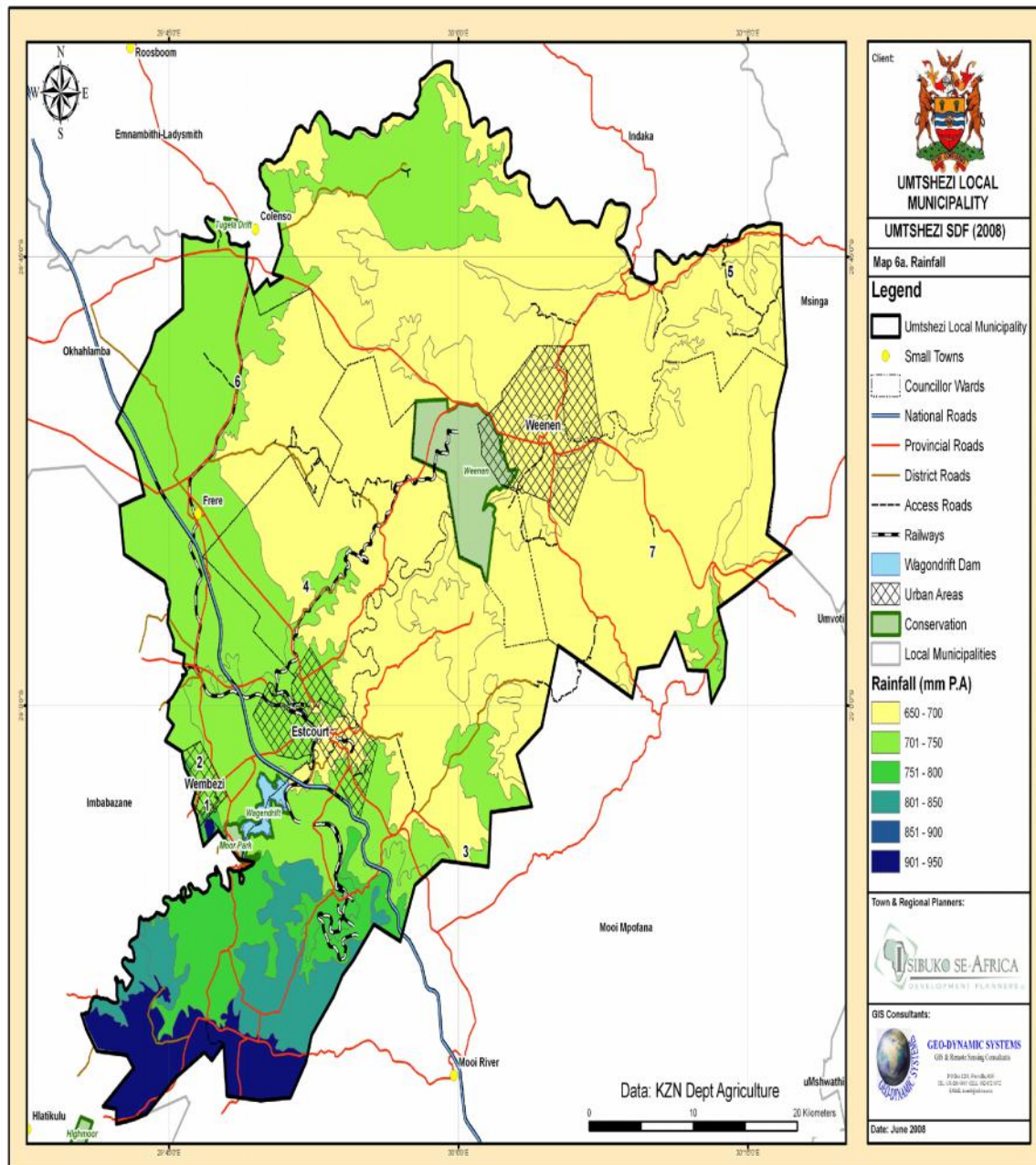


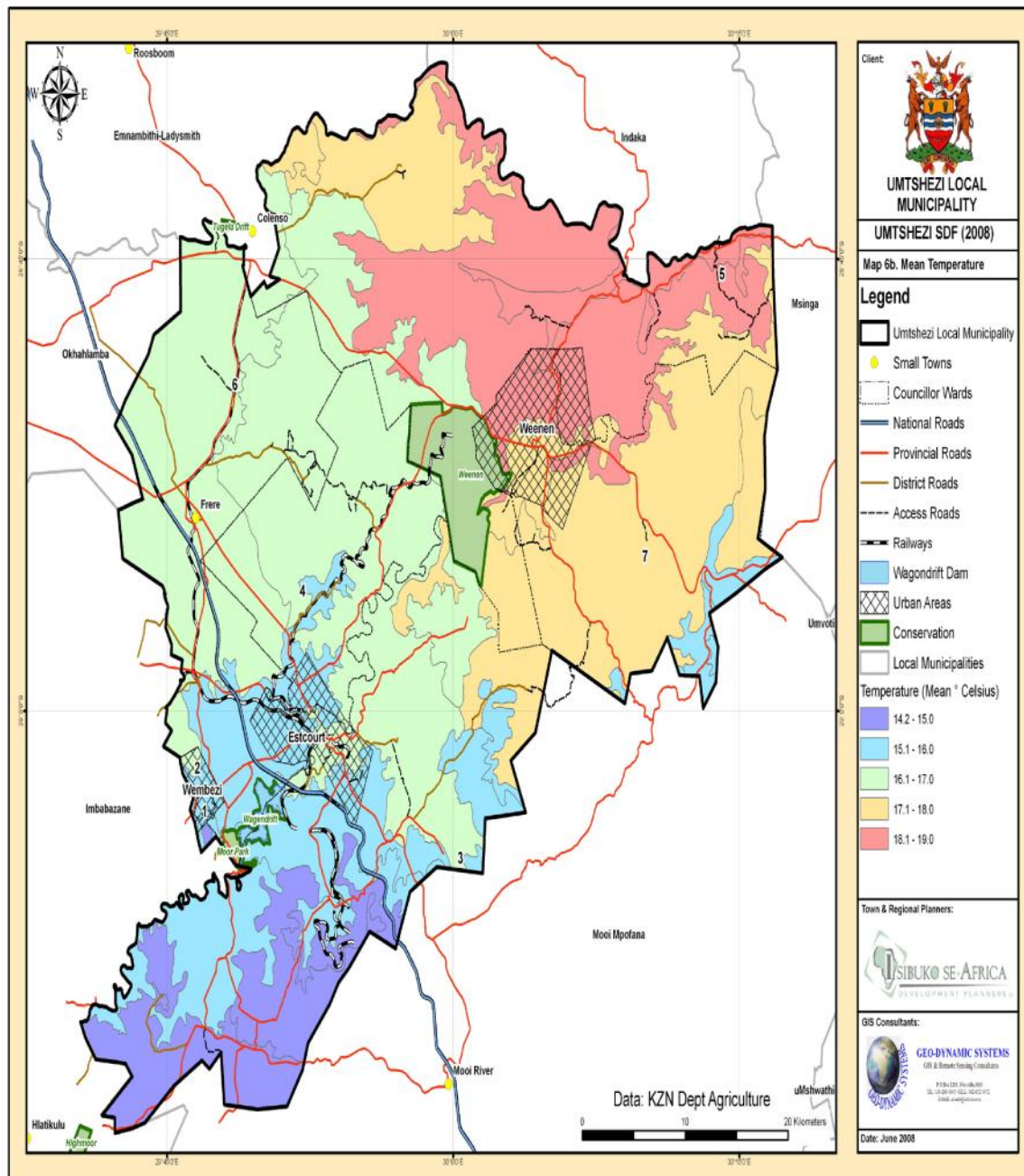


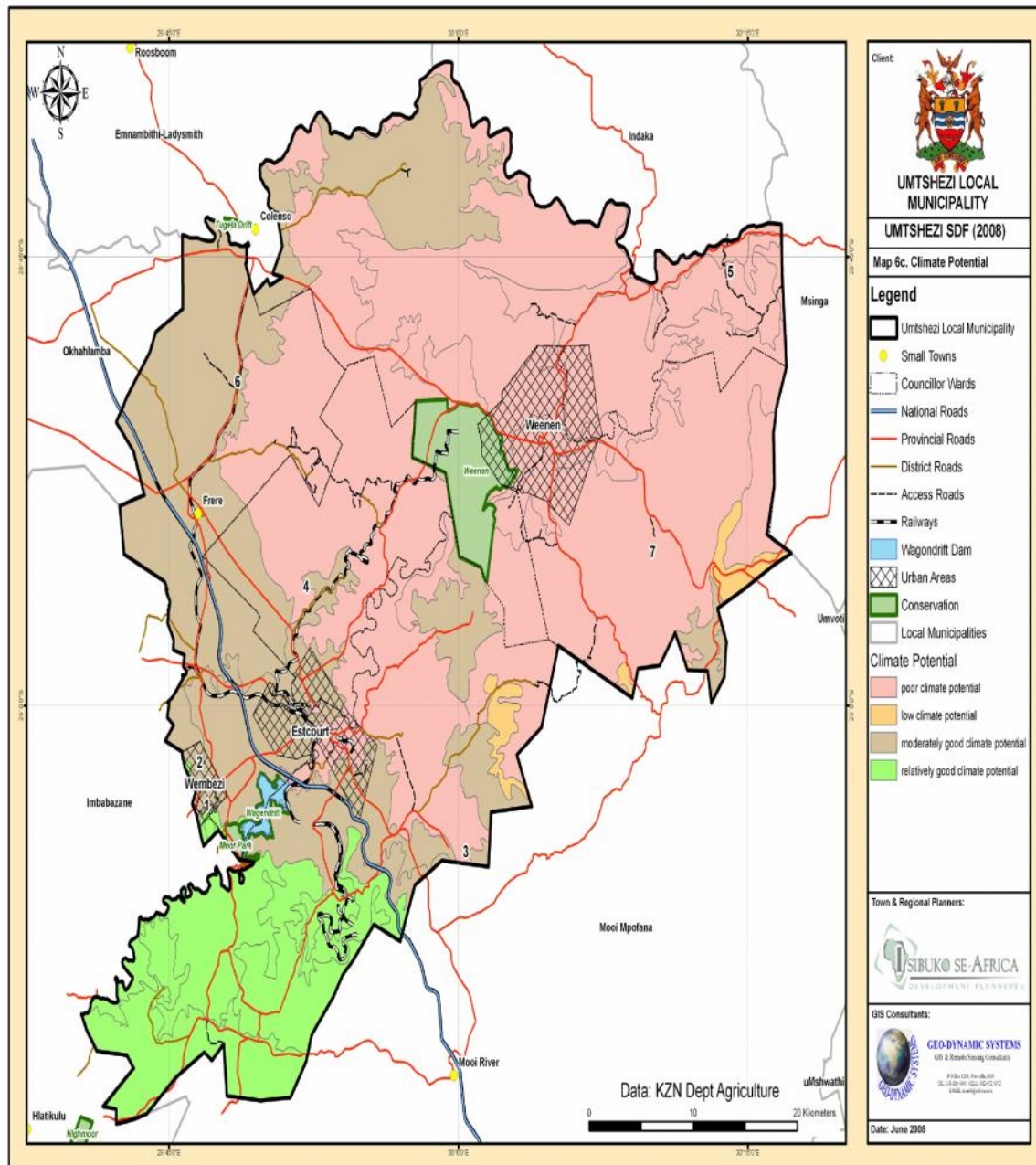


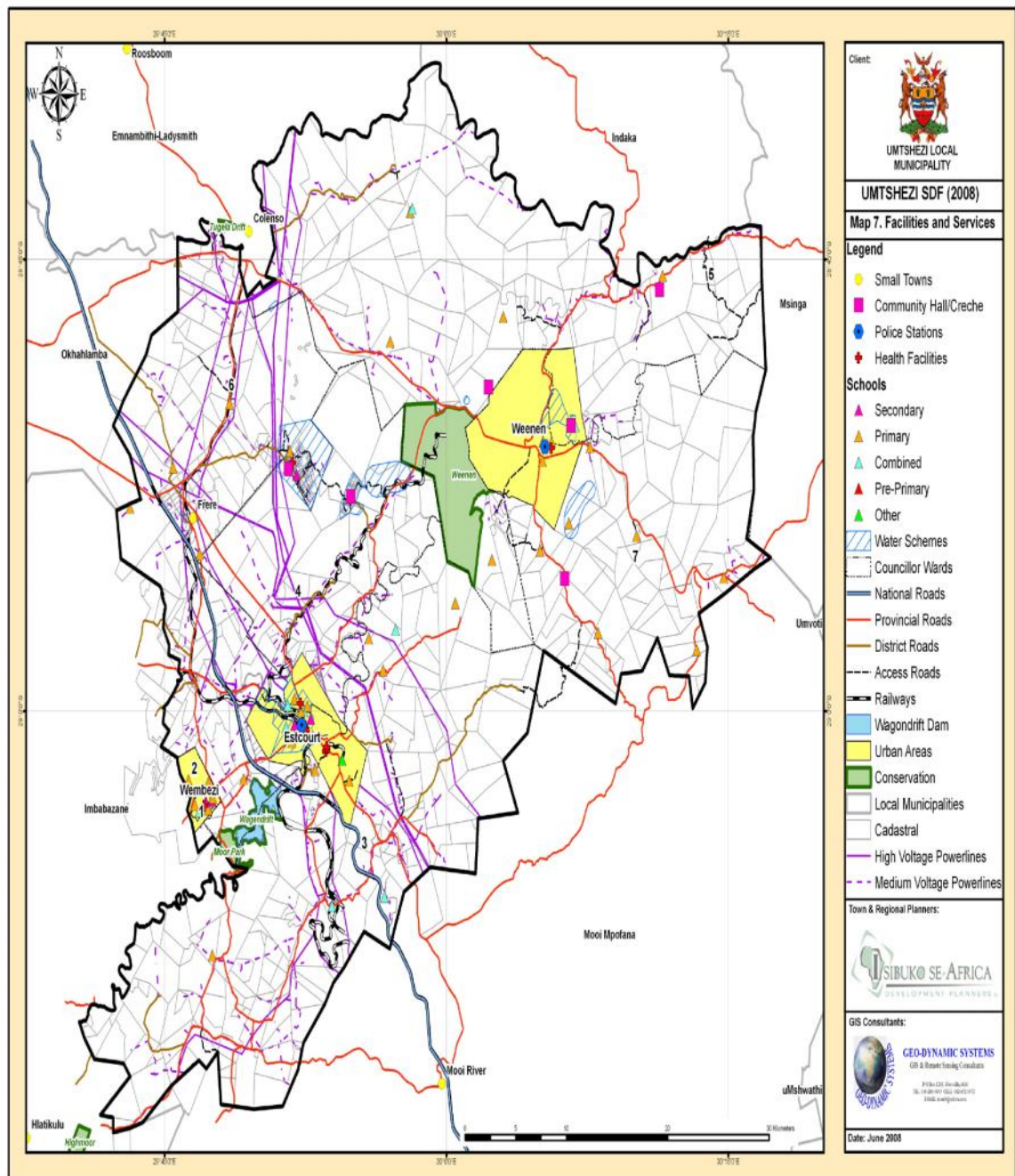


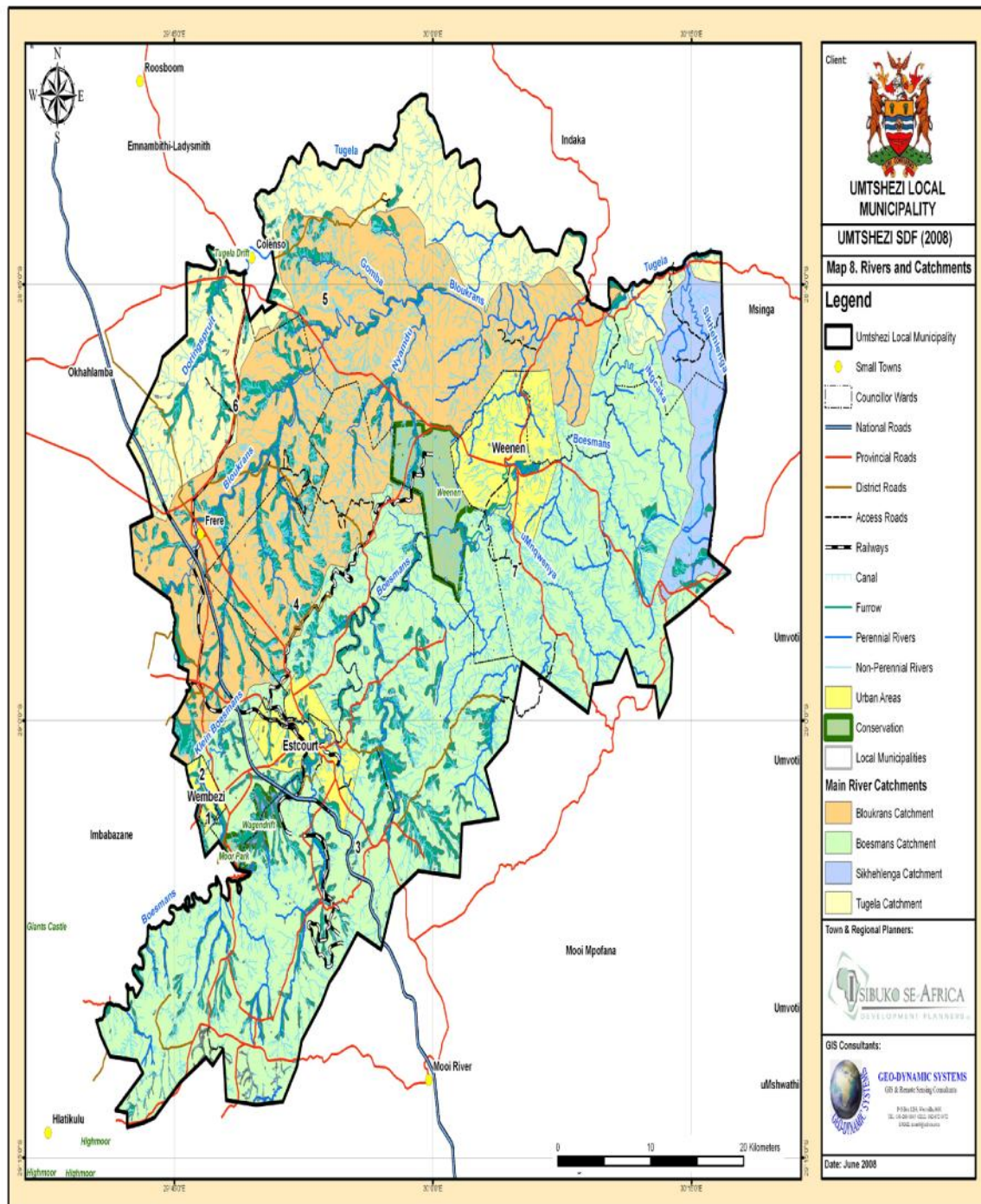


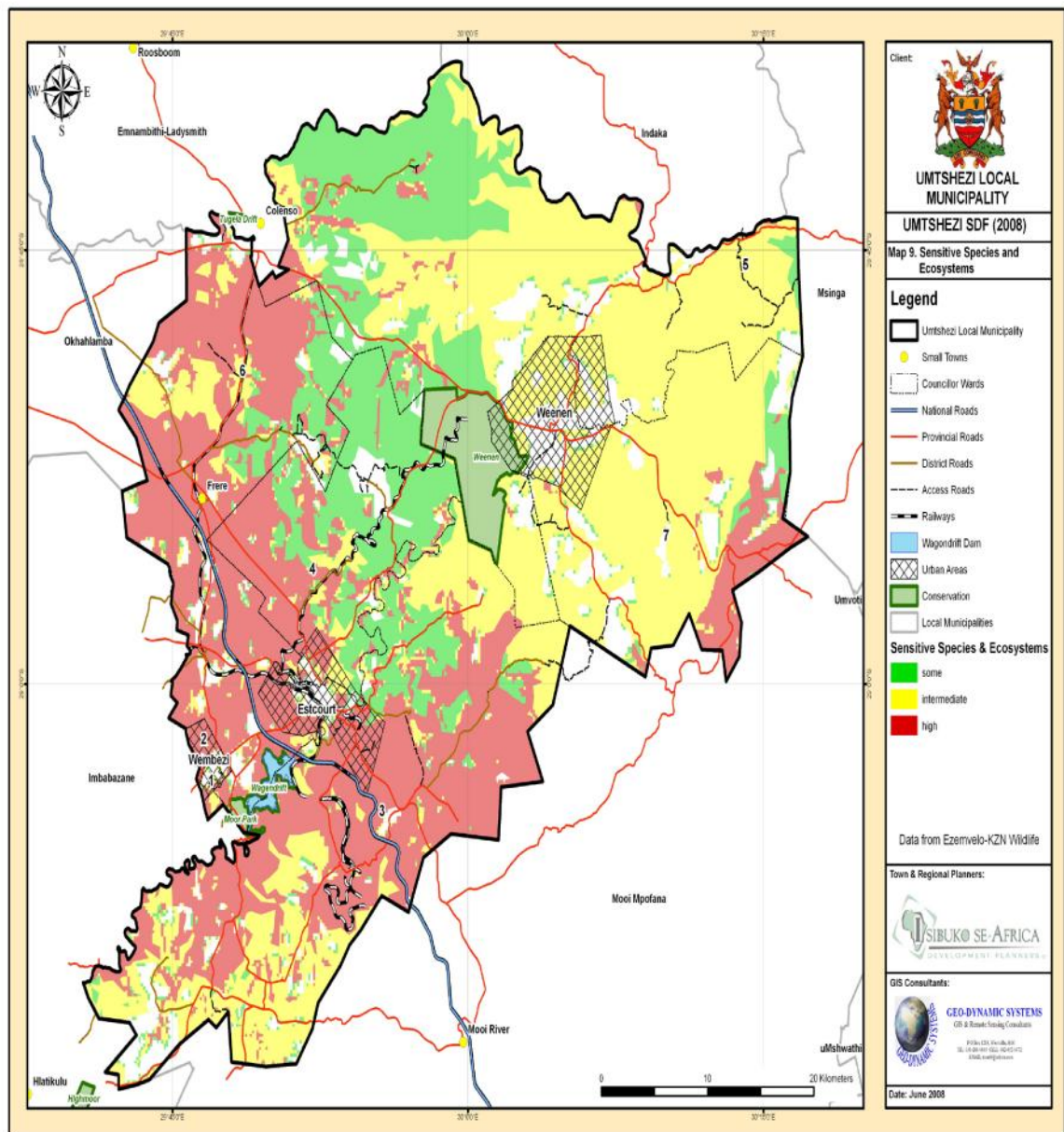


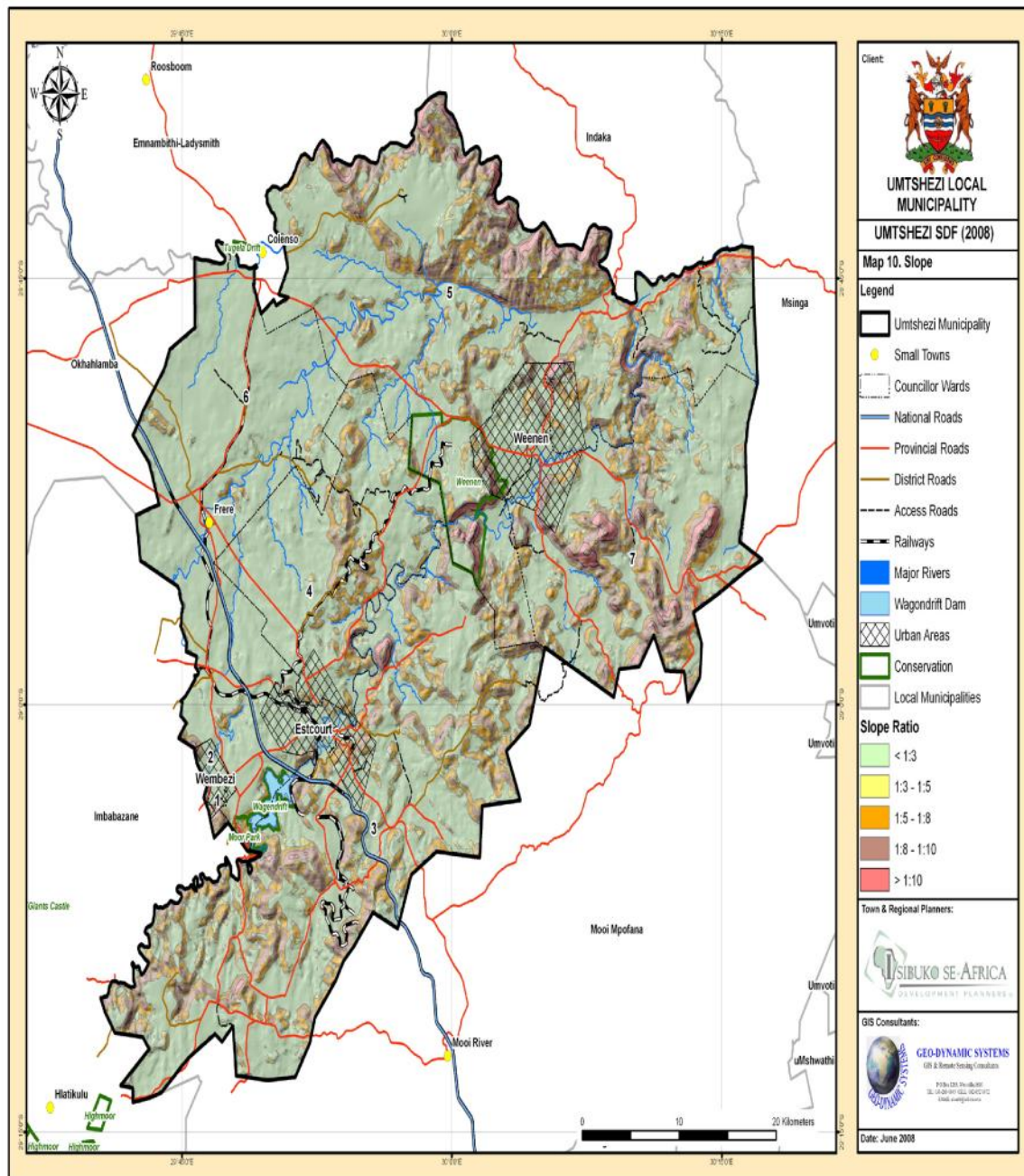


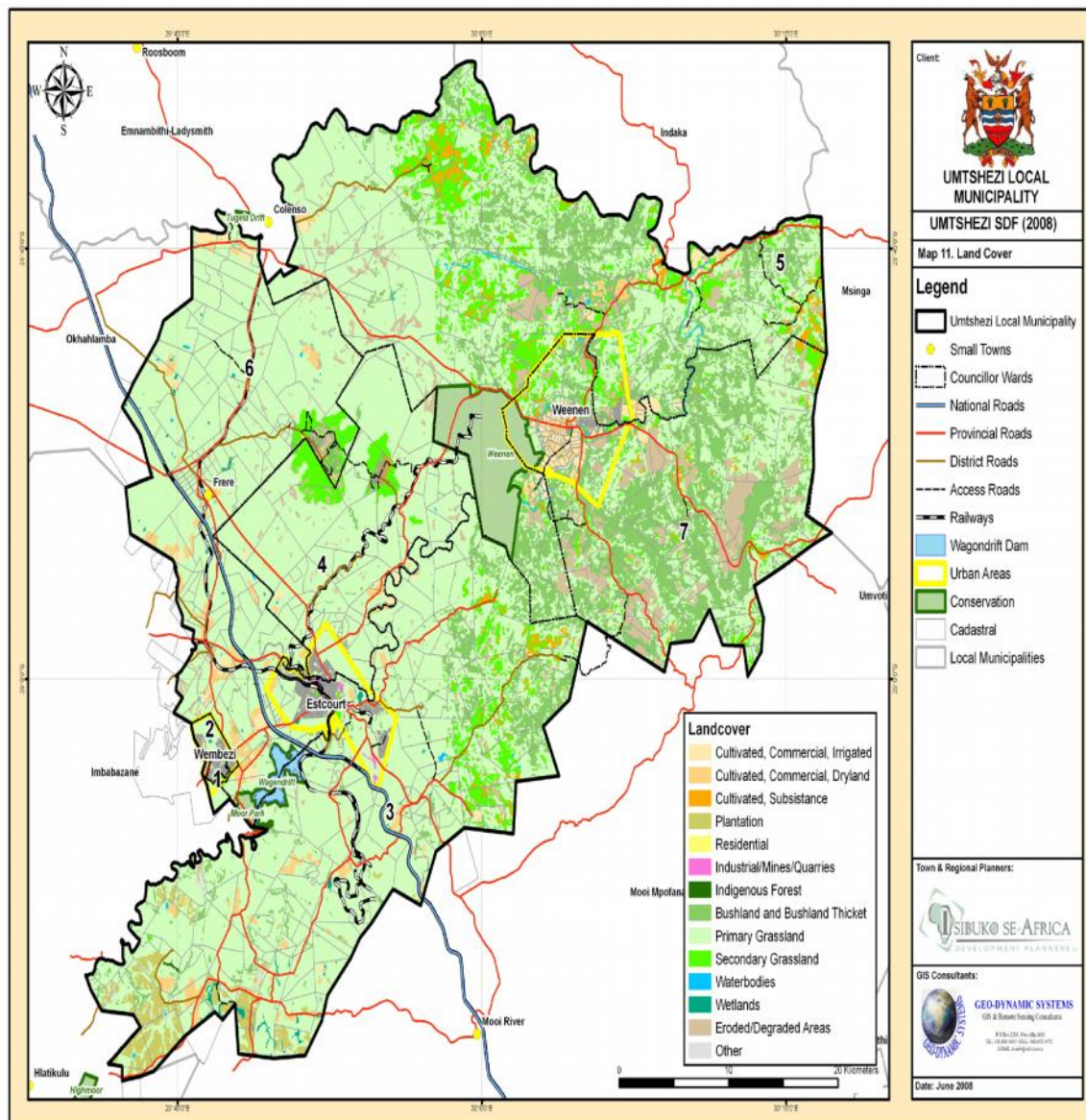


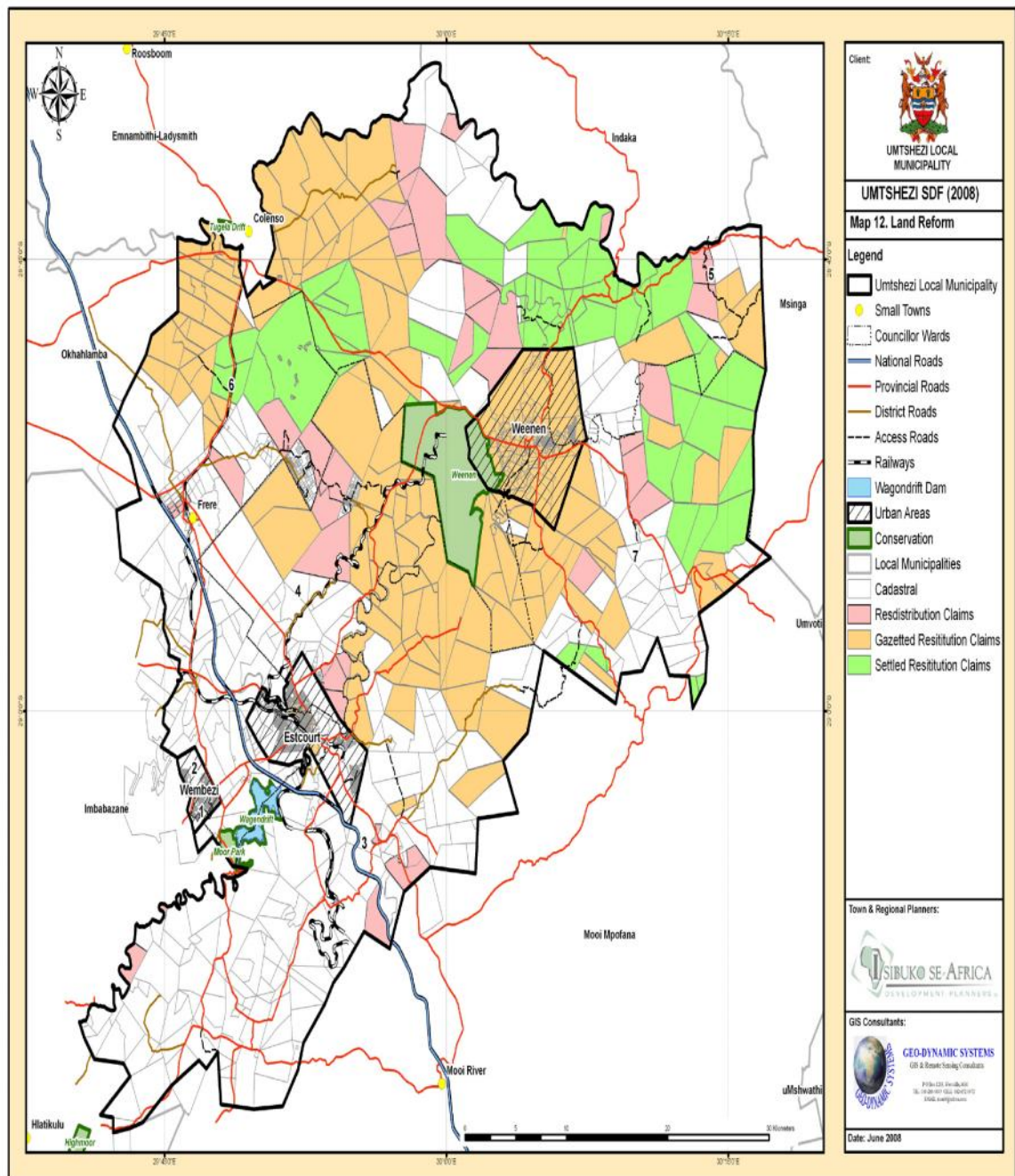


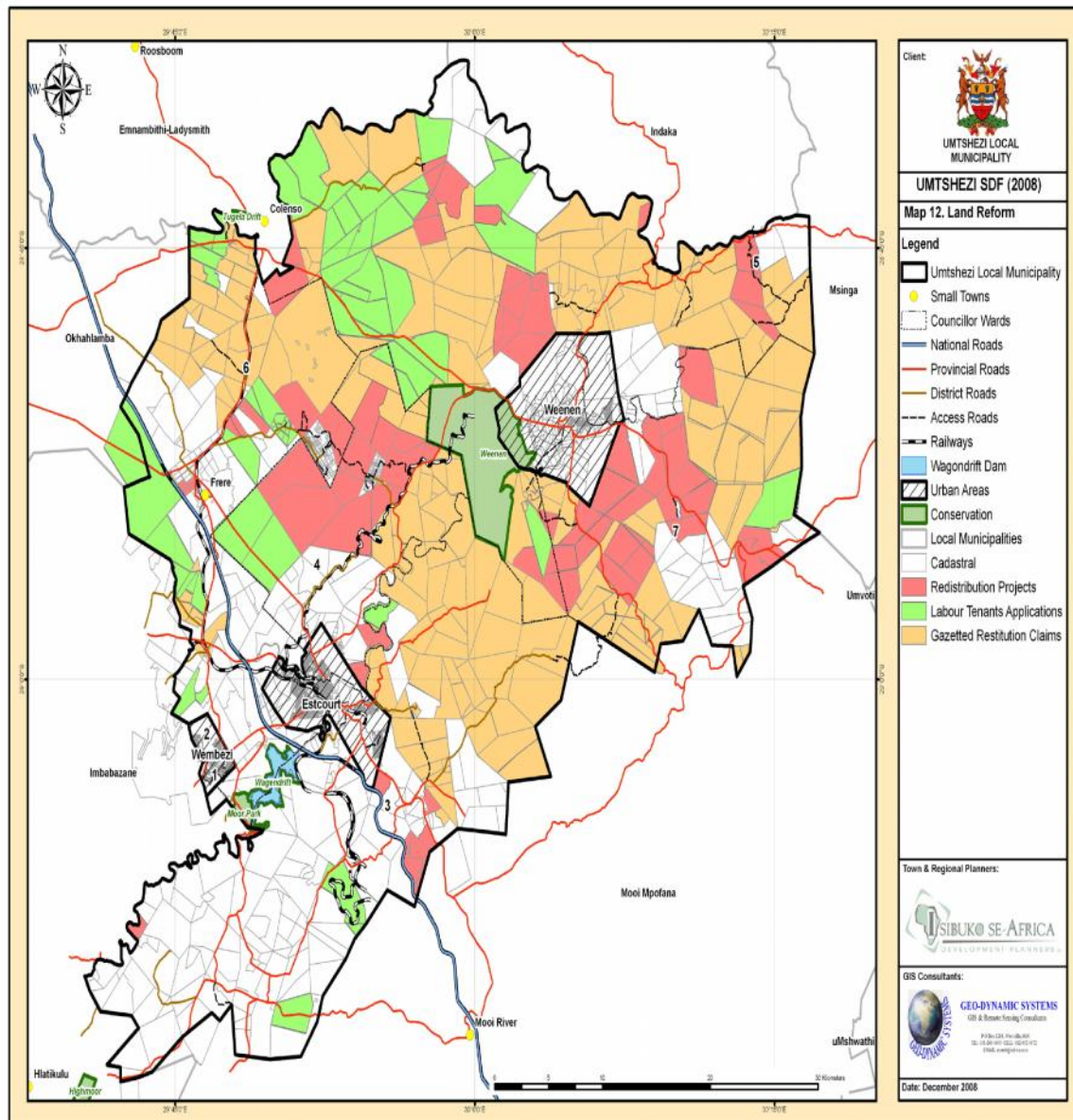


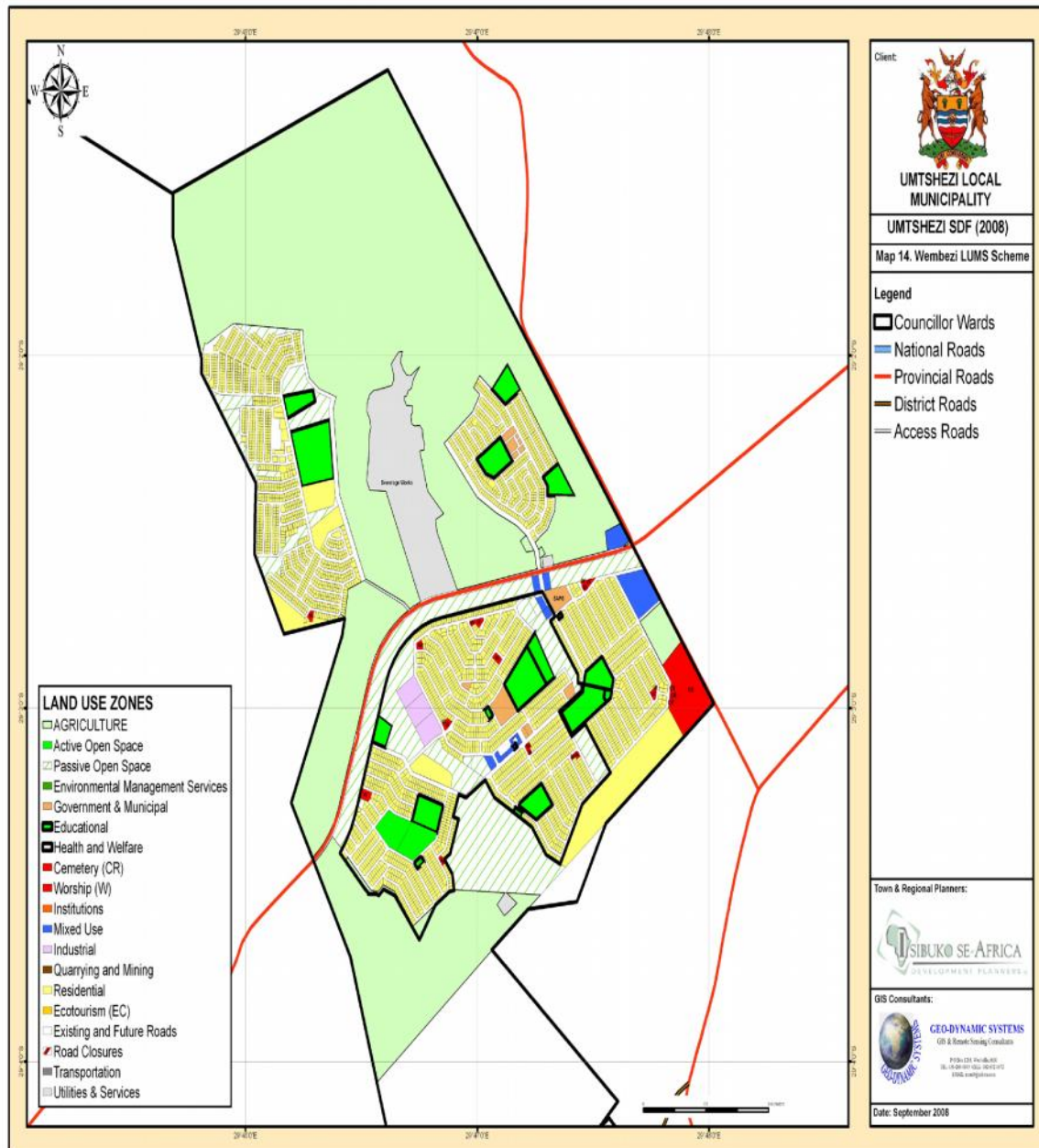


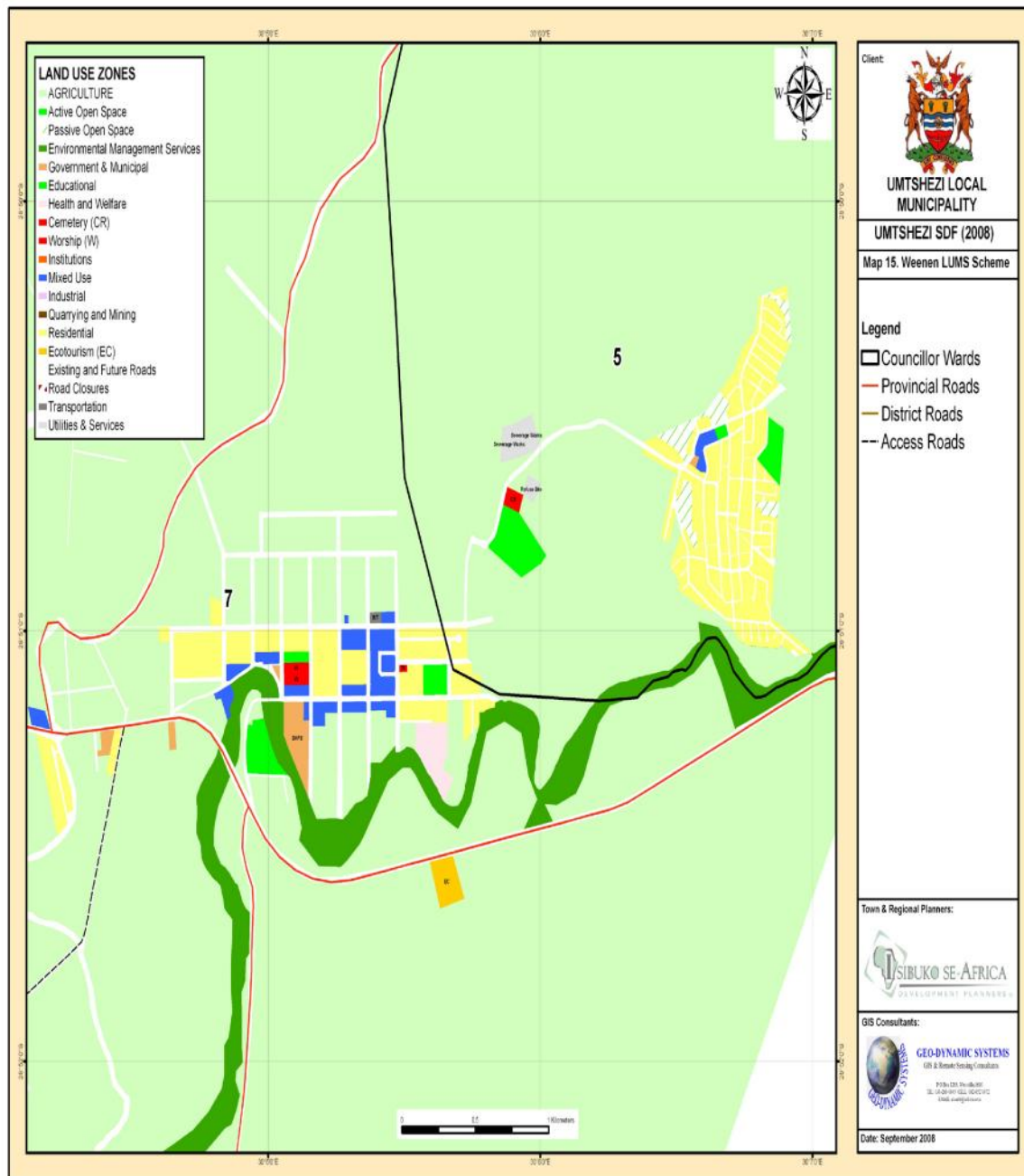


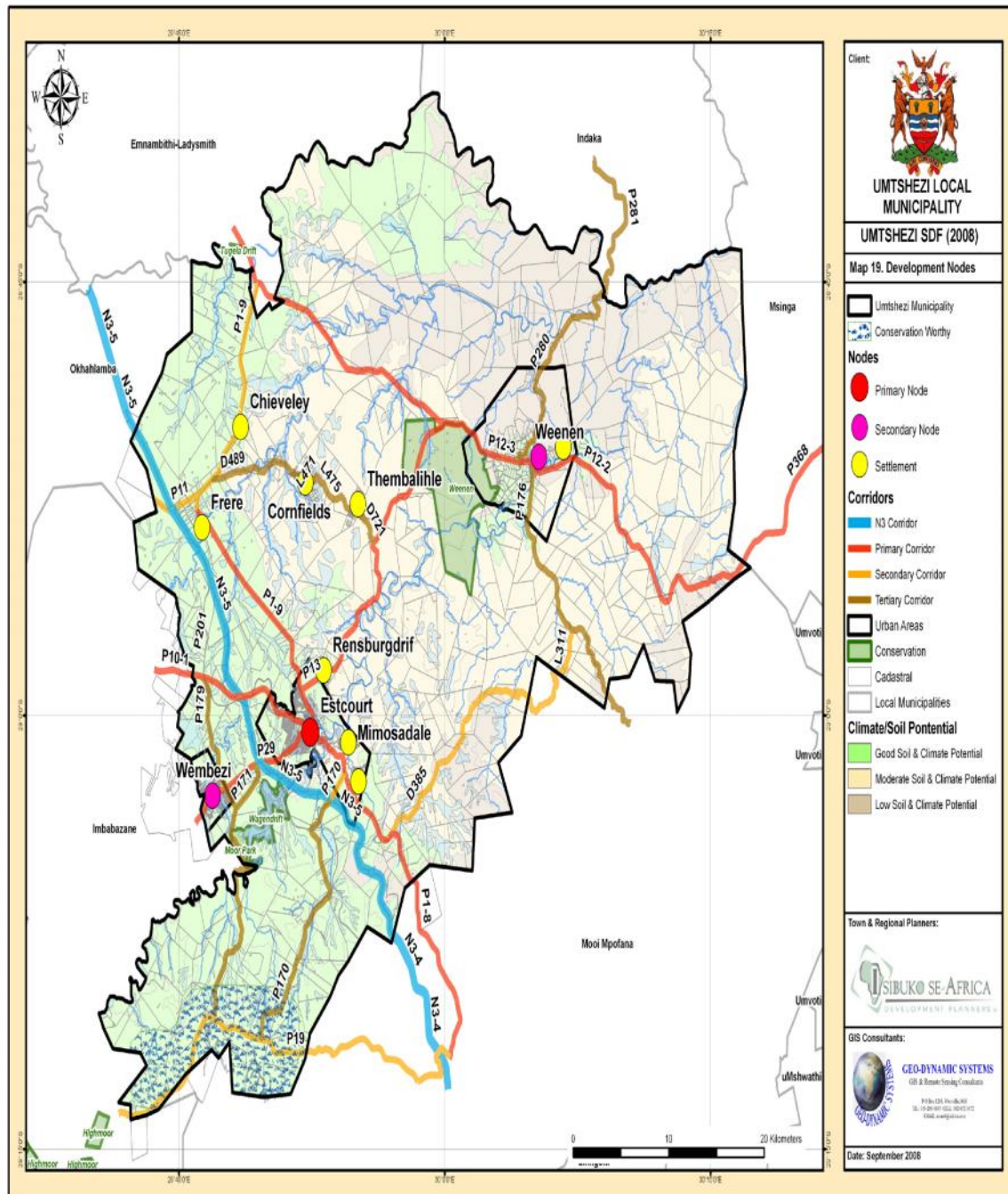


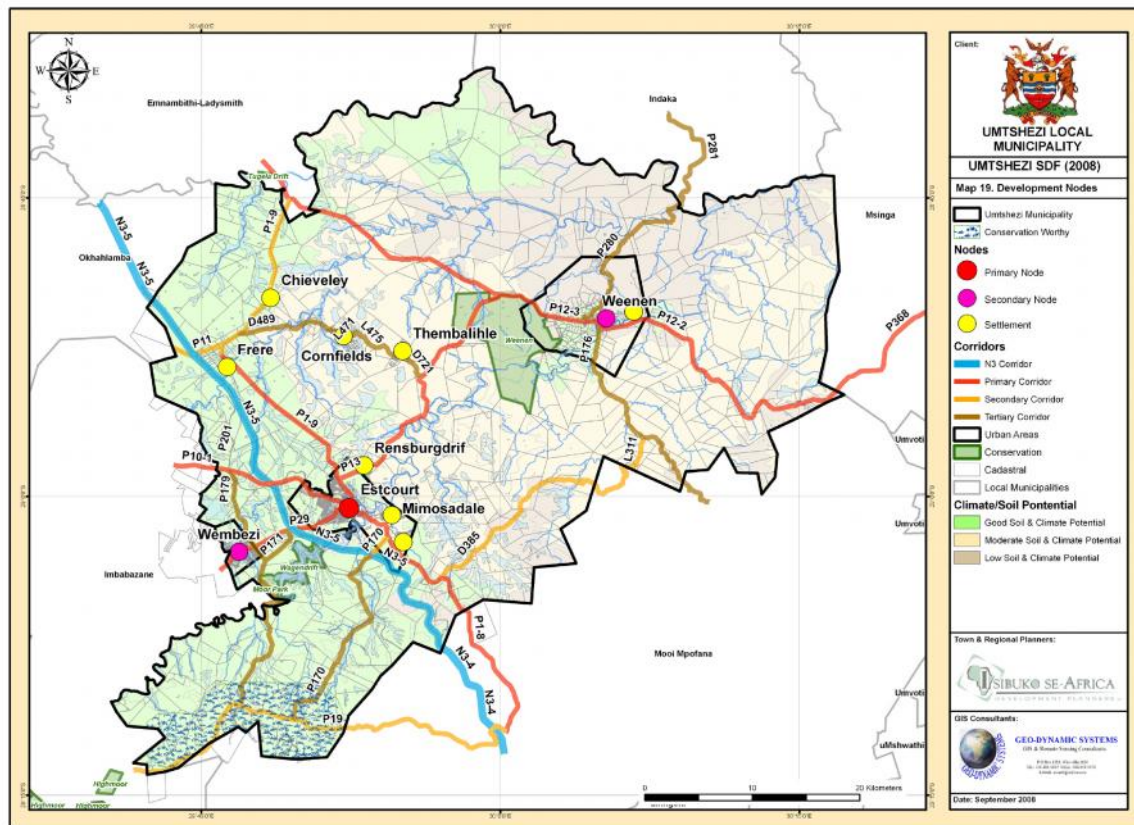


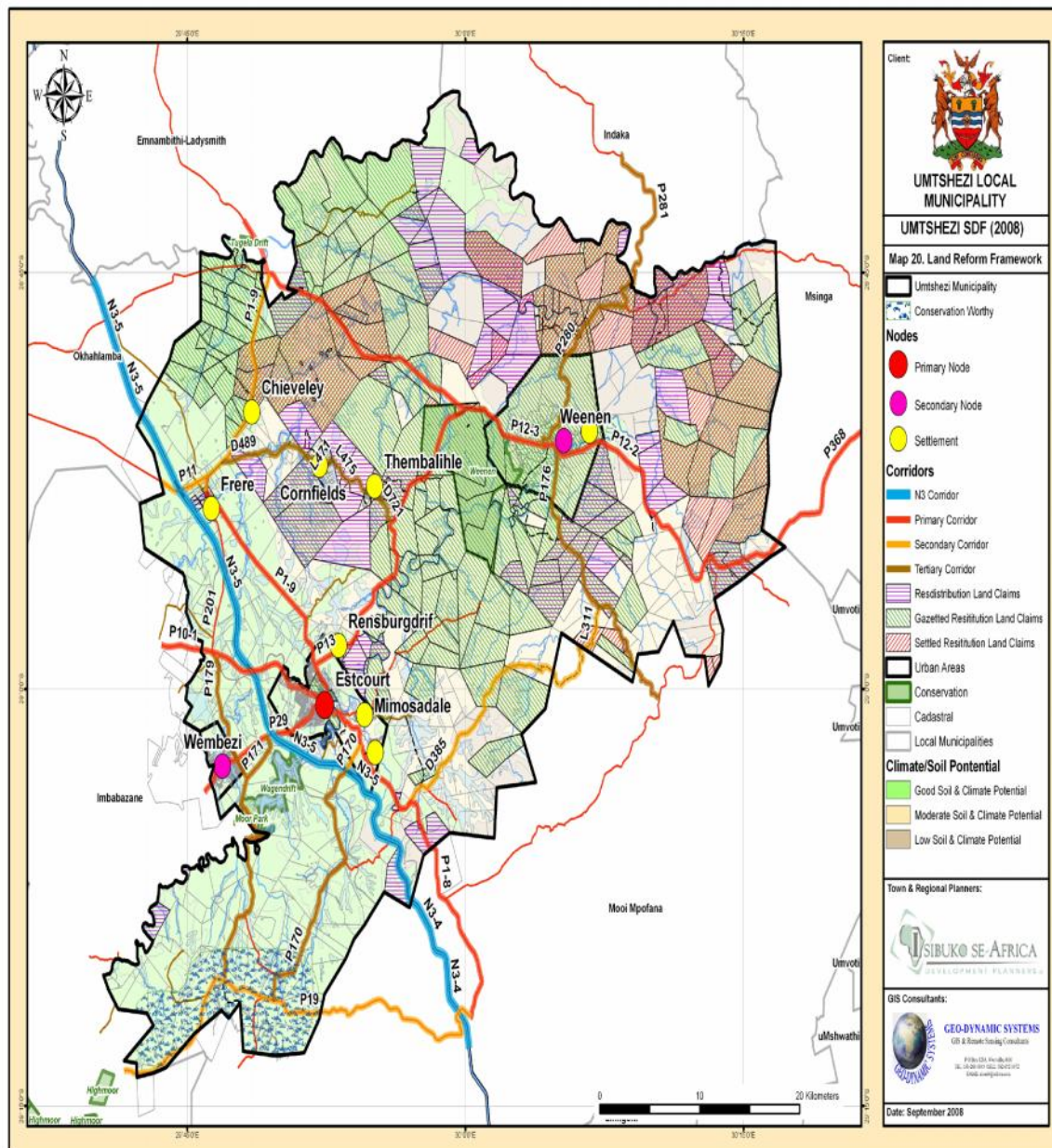


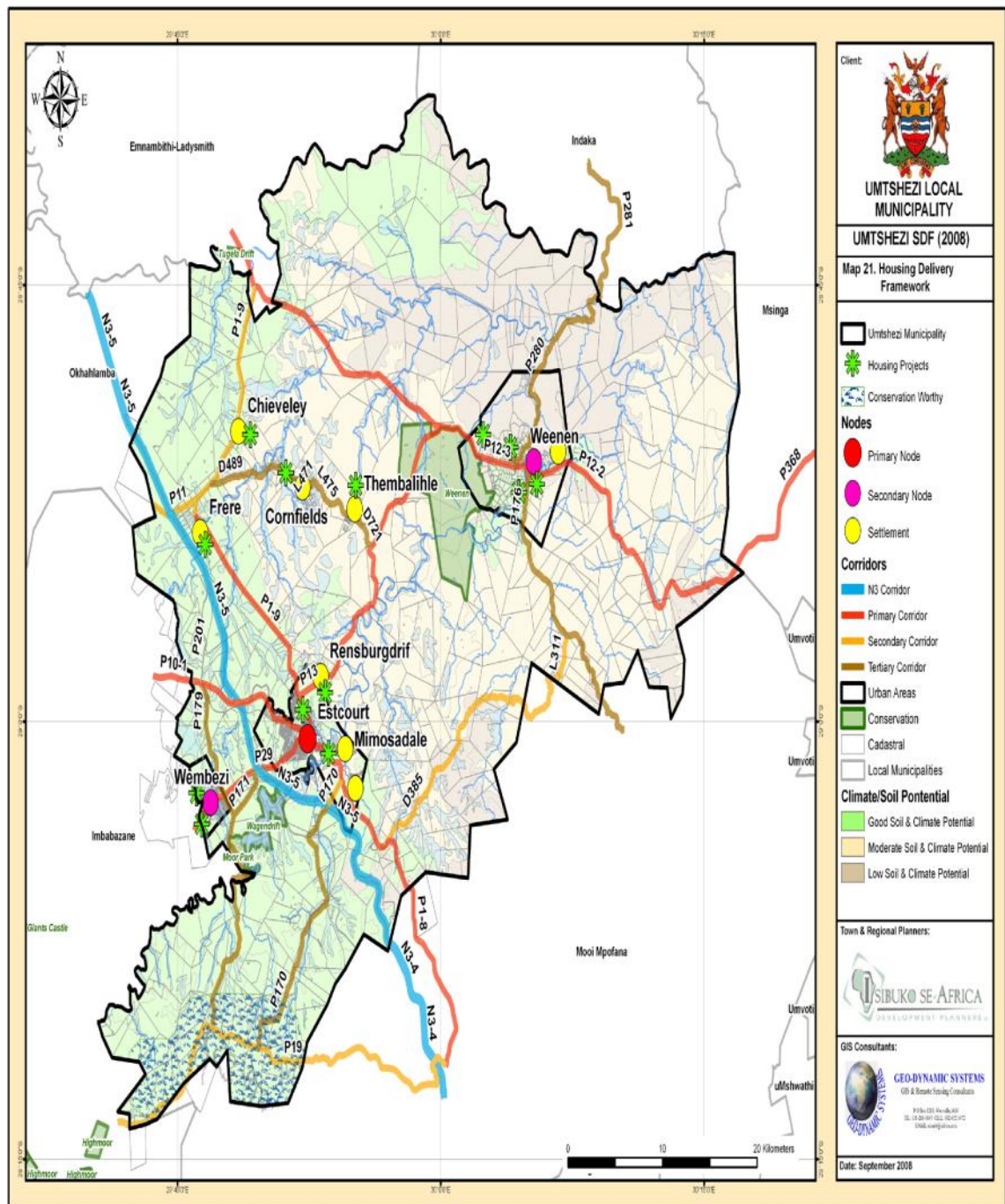


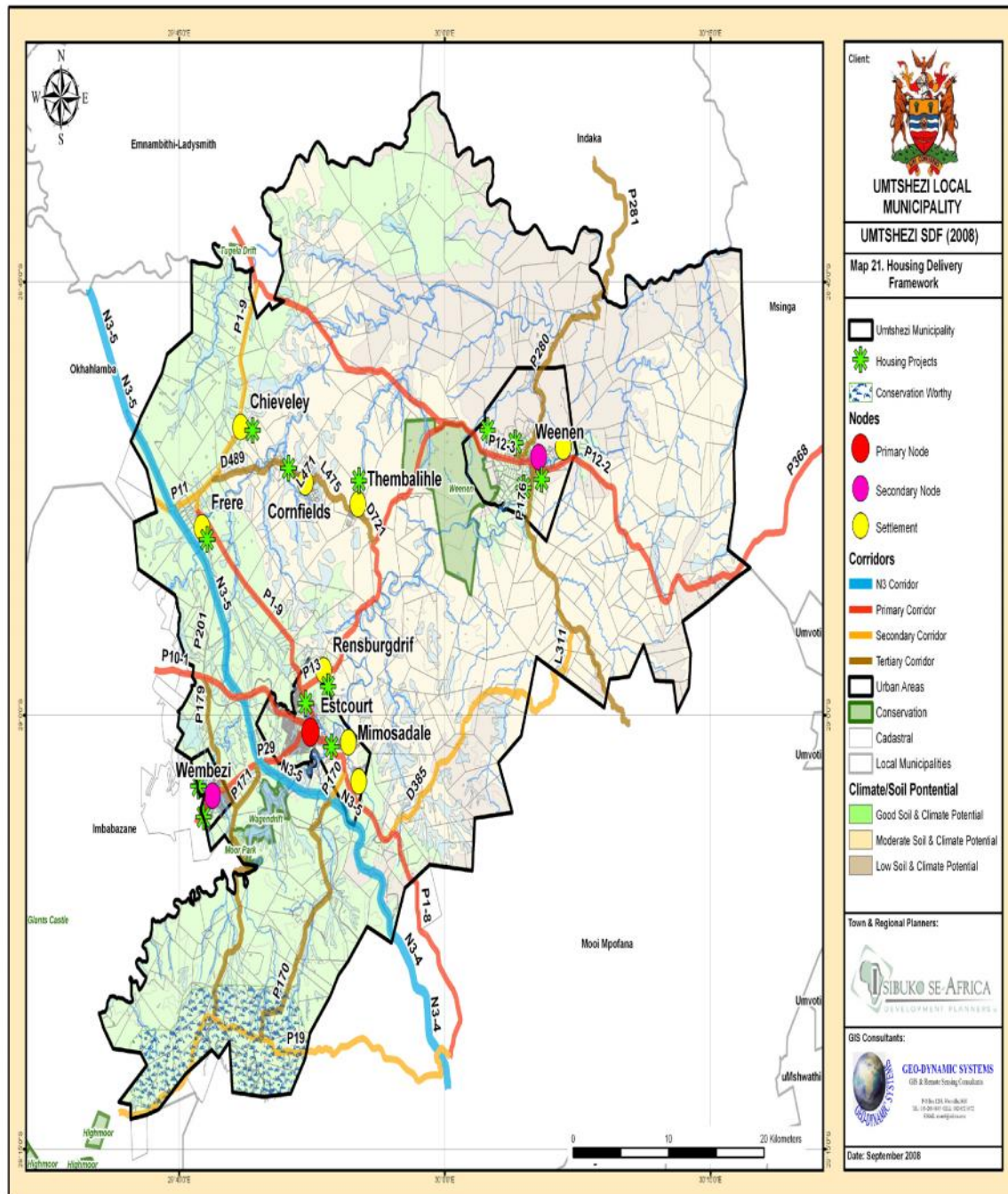


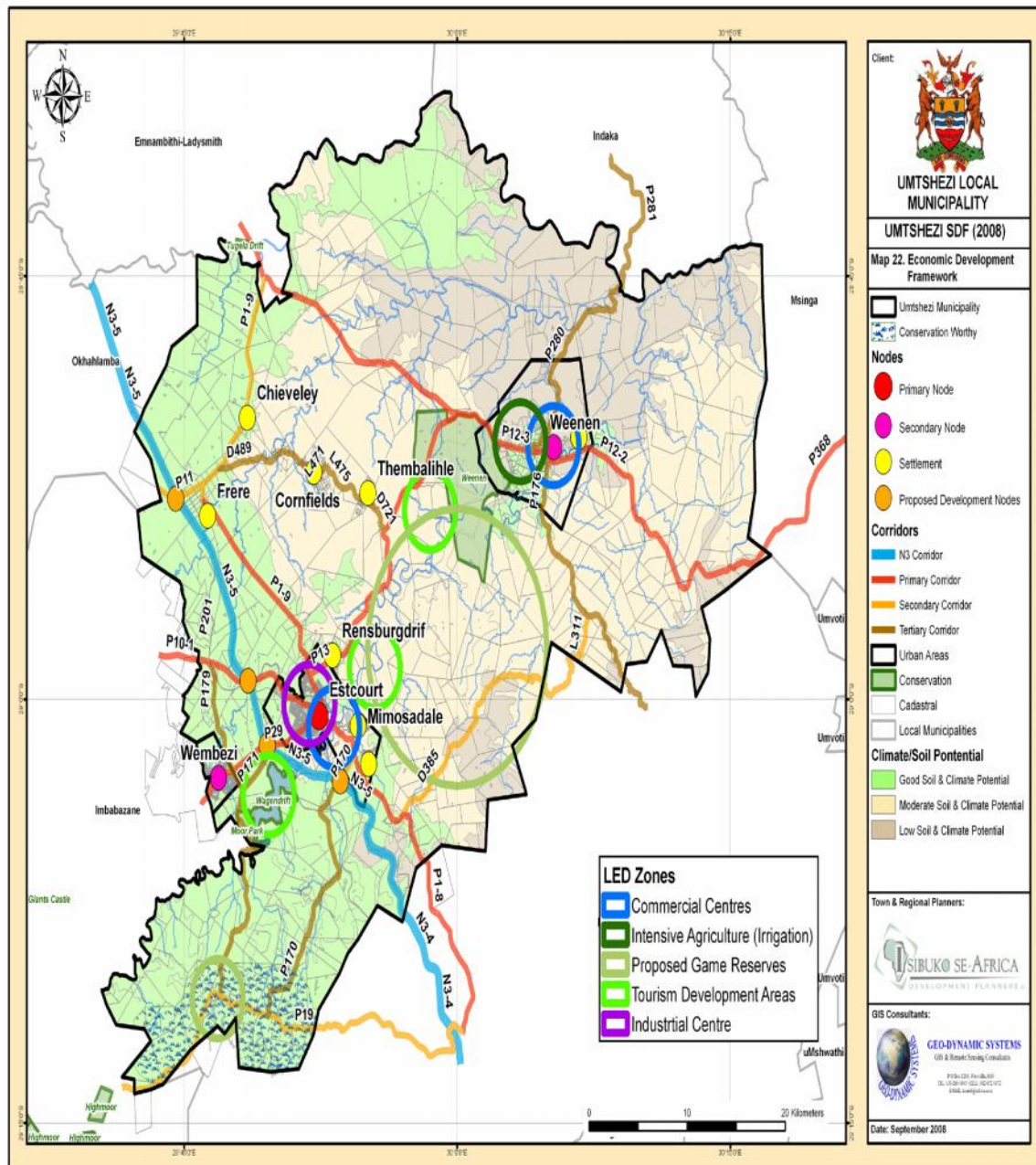


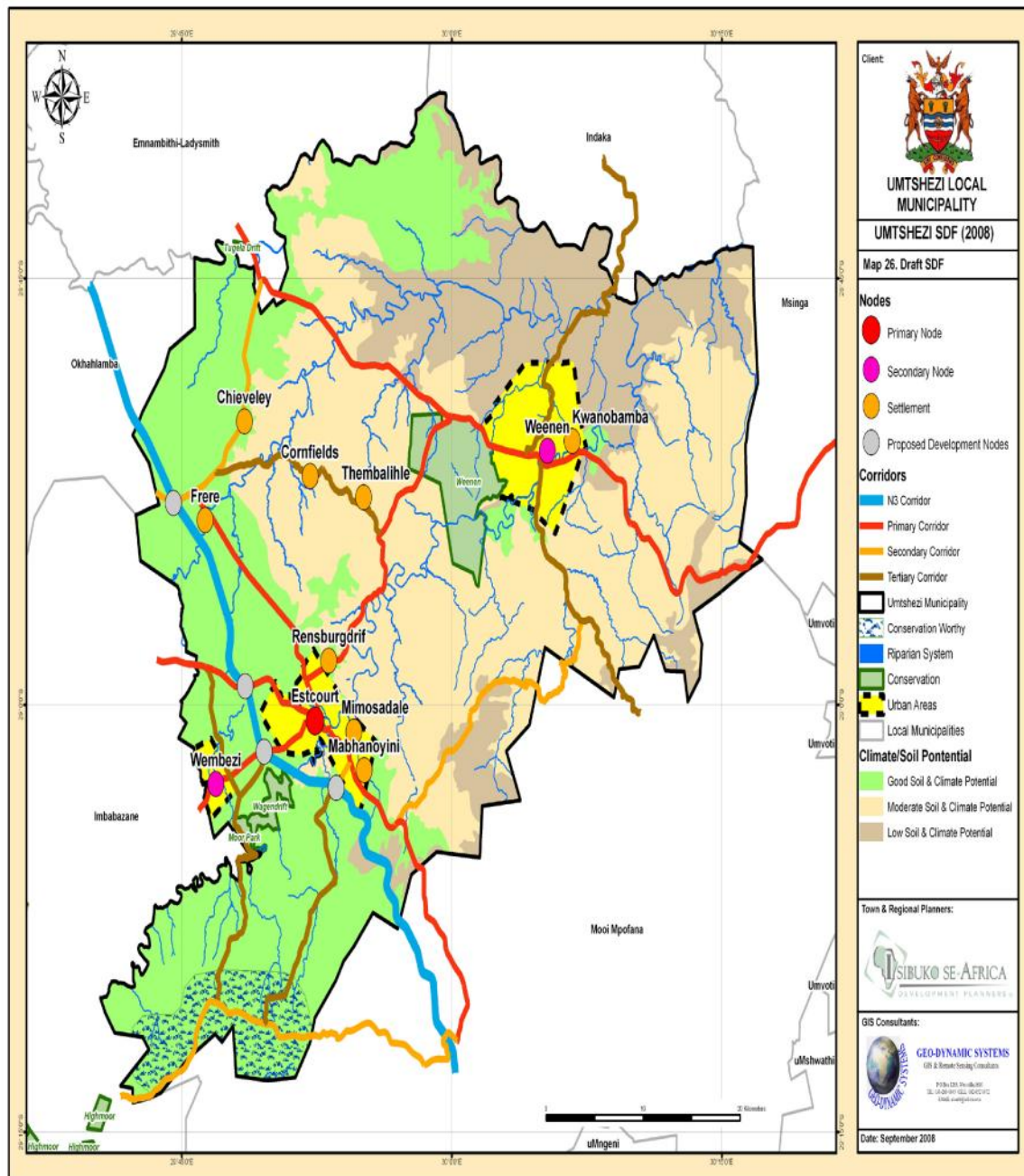


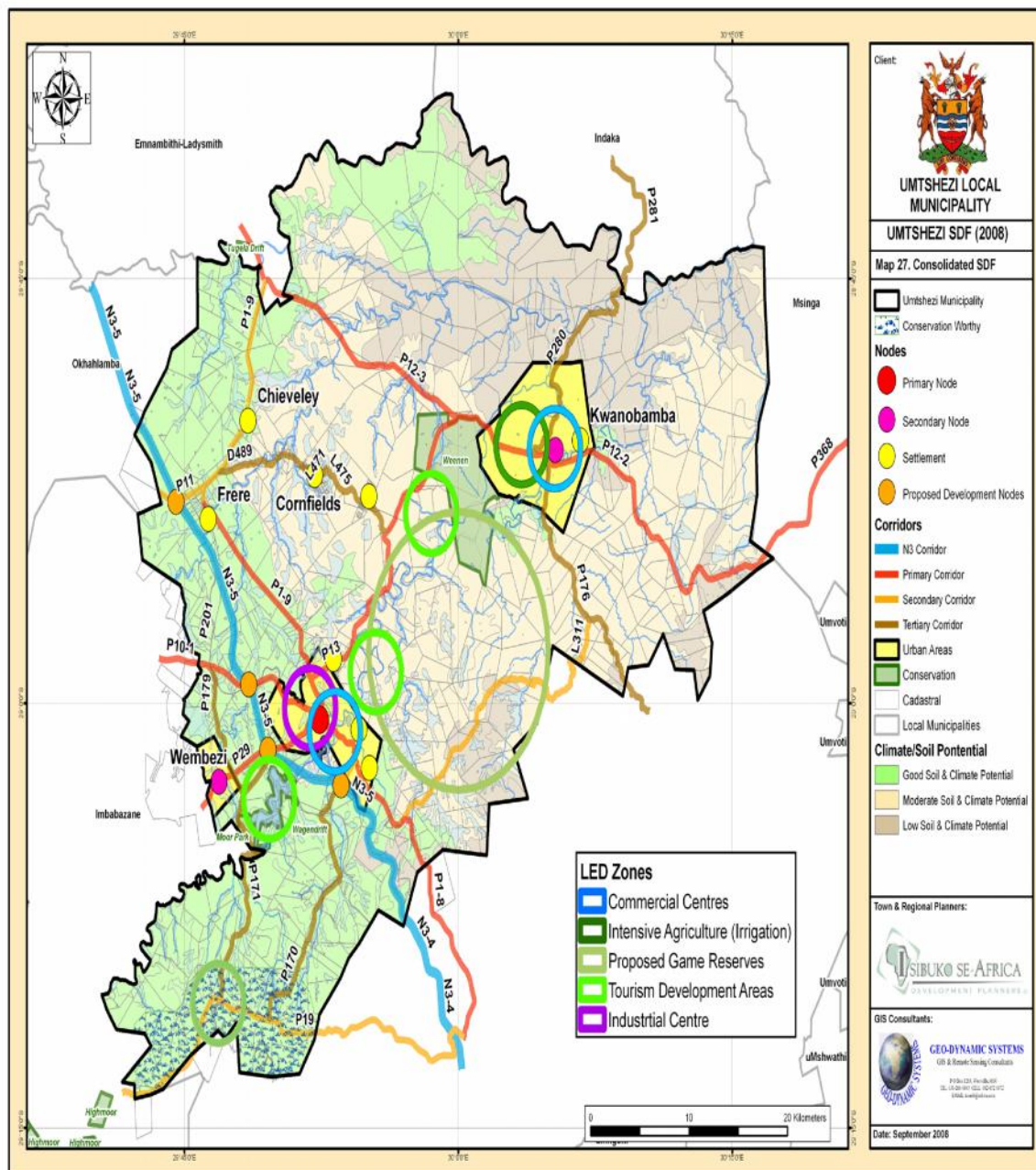


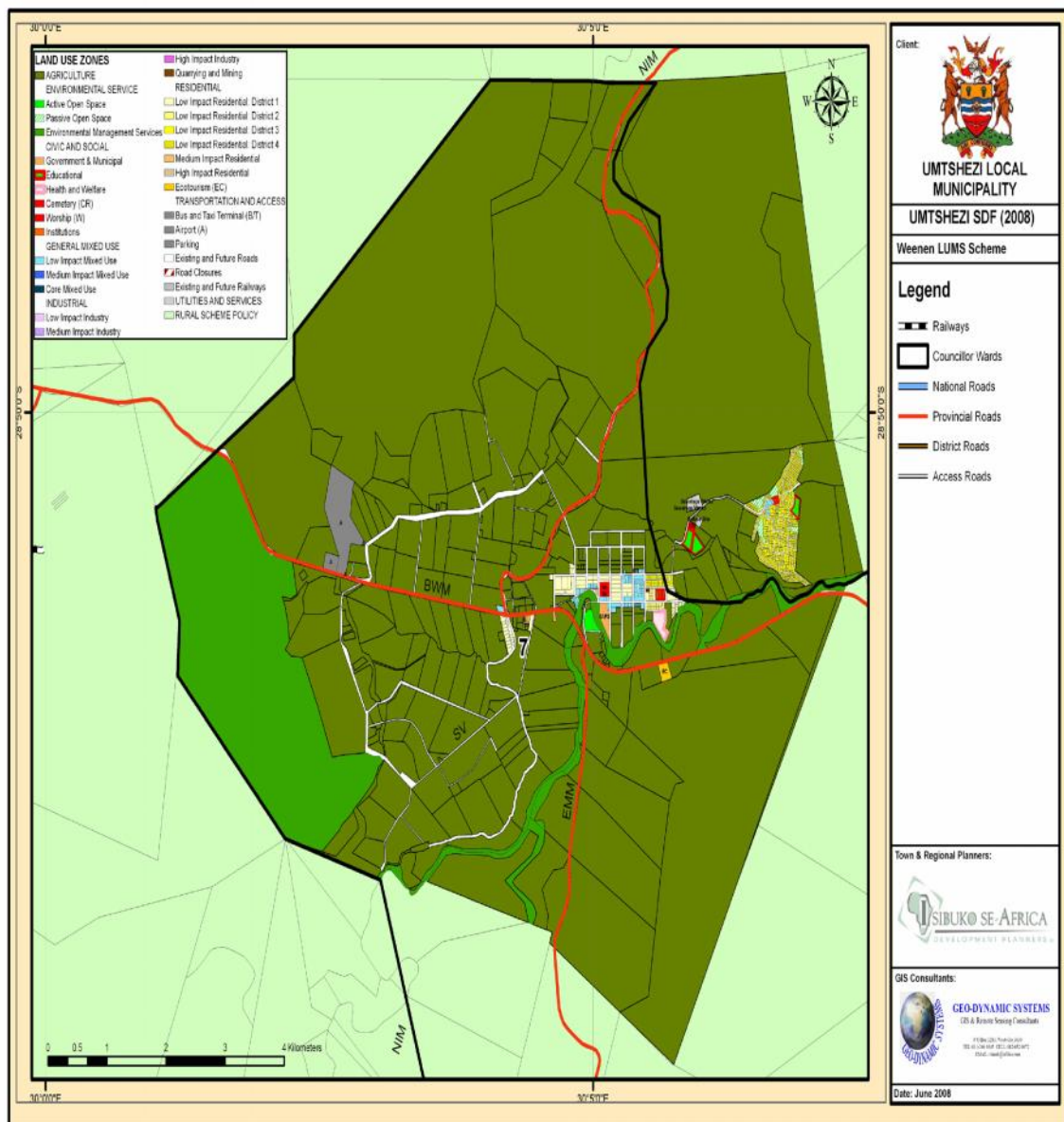












CONCLUSION

1. SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND LUMS

- Our SDF has been approved and adopted by Council. LUMS as well has been adopted. We take pride on the fact that we have a well-prepared SDF, which is fully aligned to the PSEDS and the NSDP. We have improved drastically on the Implementation Plan for the rollout to ensure the full implementation of the recommendations reflected within our SDF. This was designed to ensure that we implement all the recommendations within our adopted SDF. EMP was prepared as part of the adopted SDF. Proper incorporation of all environmental sector plans was realised this time around. We have covered the details of our Capital Investment Framework within Our CIP. This will give a certain degree of indication of the proportion of our municipal budget that will be spent on priority corridors and nodes identified within our SDF. Further details to this are also provided within our comprehensive adopted SDF. We have accordingly considered all matters of emphasis earnestly to try and ensure ongoing improvement in our current IDP.

2. IMPLICATIONS OF KZN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 6 of 2008

- We are aware of the implications with respect to the anticipated role of the municipal IDP to assist in the processing of certain types of Development Applications and with respect to LUMS as we start to implement the provisions of the PDA. We are prepared to incorporate norms and standards into our Integrated Development Plans and Scheme. We take joy to the fact that our municipality has fully participated and is participating in the PDA process since it was inception. This municipality has been and will continue to participate in all intergovernmental engagements. We have a diligent IDP Manager who always strive hard to source information for the organisation and go an extra mile to engage all sector departments in an attempt to ensure proper alignment with all their sector plans and MTEF's.

RESPONSE TO MEC LETTER

The comments of the MEC are noted. The High Level Spatial development Framework forms part of the full SDF and therefore it is not form part of an annexure.