



MAY 2013
FUTURE CAPE TOWN SUMMIT

Summit Proceedings and Discussion Paper: Drawing the line on urban sprawl

“We have inherited urban sprawl as a legacy of apartheid planning, with people pushed out to the periphery. We can’t draw them all back into the centre, but we can reconnect them better to each other and to opportunities.” - Kevin Roman (Former Chair of the Board of the Cape Town Partnership)

BACKGROUND

1 Towards a definition of Urban Sprawl

The concept of urban sprawl has received a considerable amount of attention since the 1980’s. Even though this may be the case, there still remains no overarching definition or consensus of what urban sprawl is. Despite this challenge, there are social theorists who argue that it is more useful to define urban sprawl as an ongoing development from compact to the completely scattered (i.e. multi-centred and dispersed). Stated differently, sprawl is “a matter of degree and not an absolute form”.¹ Based on this definition, sprawl can be further divided into three categories, namely: low-density continuous development, ribbon development (i.e houses bordering roads or along routes of communication) and leapfrog development.²

2 How urban sprawl is affecting cities globally

Urban Sprawl is often associated negatively, with changing the city landscape and consequently the quality of life of its residents. Factors such as the loss of agricultural land and open space, the higher cost of infrastructure, congestion, the lack of access to services, mobility and social interaction and environmental concerns are among the consequential effects. Despite the negative assumptions associated with urban sprawl, it is important to note that there remains a lack of detailed empirical evidence to determine whether the case of sprawl is either a positive or a negative one.³

3 In the longer term, the cost of urban sprawl to be borne by public authorities (through the provision of infrastructure and services) and by the population (through higher costs for basic services and for transport) will be considerable.⁴

4 Cape Town has largely inherited and struggled with the impacts of apartheid spatial planning

Apartheid legislation was intent on regulating the movement and settlement of non-white people in urban areas and resulted in people being pushed to the outskirts of urban areas. The impact

¹ Chin, N. 2002. Unearthing the roots of urban sprawl: A critical analysis of form, function and methodology. *Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis (CASA) Working Paper Series (no. 47)*, March 2002. London: Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis.

² Leapfrog developments can be described as “building new infrastructure and houses at a distance from an existing urban area where the land is less costly” (See Holcombe, Pope & Blast, 1999. *Urban Sprawl: Pro and Con, Perc Reports*, Vol.17(1): 1-20.)

³ Chin, N. 2002. Unearthing the roots of urban sprawl: a critical analysis of form, function and methodology.

³ (CASA Working Papers 47). *Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis (UCL)*: London, UK.

⁴ The State of African Cities 2010 Governance, Inequality and Urban Land Markets. 2010. UN-HABITAT: Nairobi. Accessed: http://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/UNH_StateofAfricanCities_2010.pdf

could be considered a form of accelerated, planned urban sprawl. Amongst others, the following legislation played a role:

- a The *Natives (Urban Areas) Act, 1923*⁵ deemed urban areas in South Africa as "white" and required all black African men in cities and towns to carry out permits called "passes" at all times. It made each local authority responsible for the blacks in its area. Anyone found without a pass would be arrested immediately and sent to a rural area. The country was divided into prescribed (urban) and non-prescribed areas, movement between the two being strictly controlled.⁶ This Act was consolidated by the 1945 Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, which imposed essentially the same restrictions.
 - b The 1950 *Group Areas Act*⁷ enforced the segregation of the different races to specific areas within the urban locale. It also restricted ownership and the occupation of land to a specific statutory group. This meant that Blacks could not own or occupy land in White areas. While the law was supposed to apply in converse, it was essentially land under Black ownership that was appropriated by the Government for use by Whites only.
- 5 What are the reasons for the occurrence of Urban Sprawl?
- a *Rapid urbanisation* comprises a major contributing factor to urban sprawl. Population growth is strongly linked to the migration of people into the city where push and pull factors entice people into the cities. Push factors may include a lack of basic services, a lack of housing and unemployment in rural areas, whereas the pull factors would comprise the features that migrants will find attractive in search for a better quality of life. This, in turn, facilitates a greater demand for resources and infrastructure, which is briefly expanded on below.
 - b The attribution of rising income and *consumer demand* for housing and more living space is another suggested reason for urban sprawl. Lifestyle consumption has fuelled the need for greater infrastructure, amenities and residential space close by, thereby forcing more low-density development on the city's outskirts.
 - c As desirability and low-density development takes effect, so does the increase in *transportation* and mobility in higher density areas.⁸ Consequently this leads to a greater dependence on roads and highways to connect different parts of the city, coupled with

⁵ Accessed: <http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/native-black-urban-areas-act-no-21-1923>

⁶ Horrell, M. 1978. *Laws affecting race relations in South Africa: to the end of 1976*. South African Institute of Race Relations: Johannesburg

⁷ Accessed: <http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/south-african-government-passes-group-areas-act>

⁸ Maya, M. 2008. Transportation Planning and the Prevention of Urban Sprawl, *New York University of Law Review*, Vol. 83: 879-910.

congestion. Routes around transportation also makes the city more accessible, leading to linear branch development.⁹

- d Other factors to consider would be the lack of proper planning in policy, a developer concentration on single family household units, a lack of public regulation on construction and development on the periphery, a lack of affordable housing and a higher cost of living within the centre of the city.¹⁰

CONTEXTUAL: CAPE TOWN AND URBAN SPRAWL

6 Urban Sprawl in the local context: the case of the city of Cape Town

Cape Town has grown over the past 20 years ‘in a low-density manner’, which, according to city authorities, poses a drastic threat to sustainability in the city. From 1985 to 2005, the city’s developed area has increased by 40%, while an additional 700 000 people were added to the population between 1996 and 2006. According to the 2011 Census statistics, the population of Cape Town currently stands at 3 740 026 million, compared to 2 893 249 million in 2001.¹¹ This growth spurt has resulted in a housing backlog as well as the exertion of pressure on existing infrastructure.

- 7 Cape Town has a comparably low urban density. The African Green City Index, which evaluated 15 African cities, including capital cities and leading business centres, found that aside from Pretoria, Cape Town is the least densely populated at 1,500 (persons/km²).¹² This compares to an average of 4,600 for all 15 cities. Cairo, at 19,100 people per square kilometre, is the densest city in the African Index; without it, the average density falls to 3,500 people per square kilometre. In contrast, the 22 major cities evaluated in the Asian Green City Index have an average population density of 8,200 people.

- 8 Urban sprawl contributes significantly to Cape Town’s carbon footprint. According to Cape Town’s Climate Change Action Plan,¹³ its “coal-based electricity supply, urban sprawl and predominantly road-based transport system” are causes of its “relatively high carbon footprint”.

⁹ Bhatta, D. 2010. *Analysis of Urban Growth and Sprawl from Remote Sensing Data*. New York: Springer.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Strategic Development Information and GIS Department, December 2012. City of Cape Town: Cape Town. Accessed: http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/stats/Documents/2011%20Census/2011_Census_Cape_Town_Profile_Change_from_2001-2011.pdf

¹² African Green City Index: a summary of the Green City Index Research Series. 2012. Economic Intelligence Unit. Siemens Inc. Available: <http://www.siemens.com/press/pool/de/events/2012/corporate/2012-06-rio20/gci-report-e.pdf>

¹³ Moving Mountains: Cape Town’s Action Plan for Energy and Climate Change.(1st Ed). 2011. City of Cape Town: Cape Town.. November 2011. Accessed: http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/EnvironmentalResourceManagement/publications/Documents/Moving_Mountains_Energy+CC_booklet_2011-11.pdf

- 9 Two-pronged approach to dealing with urban sprawl. The *Cape Town Spatial Development Framework*¹⁴ states: “Cape Town should not become a sprawling conurbation that absorbs all the surrounding towns in its growth path in an unplanned and uncoordinated manner”. The overall intention of the Cape Town Spatial Development Framework is to guide and manage urban growth, and to balance competing land use demands, by putting in place a long-term, logical development path that will shape the spatial form and structure of Cape Town. It identifies the *Densification Strategy and Development Edges* policy as direct responses.
- 10 Urban sprawl affects transport systems and mobility in Cape Town. *Cape Town’s Densification Strategy*¹⁵ explains that “long travel distances have been created by urban sprawl with fragmented and disperse urban activity patterns making it difficult to develop a viable public transport system. This negatively impacts on the mobility of poorer people who are dependent on public transport (travel and fuel costs). Sprawl conditions are threatening the place-making qualities and urban vibrancy of neighbourhoods, districts and the City as a whole”. The strategy views densification as “a necessary step to promote the longer term sustainability of Cape Town’s valuable, natural, urban and rural environment”.
- 11 Cape Town’s urban edge line to prevent urban sprawl. The City of Cape Town’s *Development Edges Policy: Urban and Coastal Edge*¹⁶ is a city-approved spatial planning policy aimed at limiting urban sprawl and piecemeal development, while encouraging greater urban densities and a more compact urban form. An Urban Edge line has been demarcated around the city, and urban development is discouraged outside of this line. The policy outlines stipulations for outer edge development, the conservation and protection of the natural environment as a valuable resource, as well as emphasising infrastructure and service delivery in creating access for the poor in particular.
- 12 A fiscal model to alter the sprawled spatial dynamic of the Western Cape. The *Future Cape Contextual Report*¹⁷ attributes the sprawled spatial dynamics of Western Cape settlements to the fiscal model that drives local government decisions. It elaborates that most municipalities are responsible for raising their own revenue, relying heavily on property taxes, which effectively means that private property development initiatives that cater for middle- and upper-class consumers (households and companies) are generally allowed to develop in areas that are spatially distant from working-class areas. This is to nurture valuable land markets that can yield

¹⁴ The Cape Town Spatial Development Framework: Statutory Report. 2012. City of Cape Town: Cape Town. Accessed: https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/sdf/Documents/SDF_Technical_Report_2012_Interactive.pdf

¹⁵ Cape Town Densification Strategy: Technical Report (1st Draft for Comment). August 2009. City of Cape Town: Cape Town. Accessed: http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/sdf/Documents/Densification_Strategy_web.pdf

¹⁶ Cape Town Development Edges Policy: Urban and Coastal Edge. (1st Draft for Comment). August 2009. City of Cape Town: Cape Town. Accessed: http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/sdf/Documents/Development_Edge_Policy_web.pdf

¹⁷ Future Cape Contextual Report. February 2012. *African Centre for Cities & The Sustainability Institute*, University of Cape Town. Cape Higher Education Consortium: Cape Town.

optimal rates income. Moreover, these areas also tend to be key to the high growth rates that the country strives to attain and maintain.

IMPACTS OF URBAN SPRAWL

- 13 Sprawl can cost governments 30% more in terms of the investment in infrastructure and maintenance. The cost to government means that less is available for redistribution, sorely needed in post-apartheid South Africa. UN Habitat argues that a dispersed spatial pattern, i.e. sprawl, means that “water and sewerage pipes and electricity lines need to be extended over longer distances to reach relatively fewer people. Services such as waste collection, police and fire protection require greater expenditures. Public transport may be unviable; dispersed patterns depend on individual transport, which requires public investment in roads that can be 30 per cent higher than compact patterns”.¹⁸
- 14 Urban sprawl impacts heavily on Cape Town’s transport subsidies. Cape Town spends more than double in subsidies on transport than it does on housing. Of recent, an amount of R696 236 000 was allocated to the Western Cape Department of Transport to subsidise public transport services. For Cape Town in particular, its central bus service alone receives approximately R700 million in annual subsidies from national government¹⁹. Public transport is heavily relied upon by the majority of the workforce citizens and the urban economy is equally reliant on its services as productivity is often affected.
- 15 A hypothetical sprawling South African city will cost approximately R10 billion more over 10 years.²⁰ Moreover, low-income households would gain the most from a compact city growth trajectory: The Financial and Fiscal Commission modelled two hypothetical growth strategies, one simulating sprawl and the other a compact city, under which low-income households showed a 24% difference after 10 years. This would be largely due to a savings on transport costs: as it stands, “approximately half of the lowest income band and over 18% of the second-lowest band spend in excess of 20% of their disposable income on public transport.” For transport infrastructure alone, it will cost more than R9 billion per year; though by adopting a compact city model instead, could lead to a 33% savings. In addition, sprawl will lead to a carbon emissions increase of 55%, compared to 33% for a compact city, over 10 years.

¹⁸ Stephenson, K., Speir, C., Shabman, L. & Bosch, D. 2001. The Influence of Residential Development Patterns on Local Government Costs and Revenues.. In: *Urban Planning for City Leaders*. (2nd Ed). 2013. UN-HABITAT: Nairobi. Available: <http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/14833/1/rr010051.pdf>

¹⁹ Nicholson, Z & Coetzee, K. 2013. ‘Council eyes R700 m subsidy’, *Cape Times*. April 19, 2013. Accessed Online: <http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/council-eyes-r700m-subsidy-1.1503406#.UXjv2rVJPms>

²⁰ The Financial and Fiscal Commission, Submission for the 2012/13 Division of Revenue — Technical Report. Available: <http://www.ffc.co.za/index.php/component/content/article?id=152#20132014TechnicalReport>

SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION

On the 2nd of May 2013, Future Cape Town hosted its first Summit on the topic of Urban Sprawl in Cape Town. This mid-morning session took place at the Protea Breakwater Lodge Hotel, and hosted a small gathering of local government officials, urban developers and planners, as well as academics. The aim of the Summit was to create a forum to discuss the contentious issue of urban sprawl, and formulate a way to facilitate sustainable spatial urban growth in the City.

This document provides a summary of the main themes that were discussed, as well as a list of proposed recommendations in accordance with the aims and objectives of summit.

ATTENDEES

MEC Robin Carlisle

Bulelwa Makalima-Ngewana

Kendall Kaveney

Nancy Odendaal

Rory Williams

Khalied Jacobs

Gabs Pather

Rashiq Fataar

LAYING DOWN THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN CAPE TOWN

During the Summit, there was a general sense of agreement and awareness on the challenges facing the Cape Town city-region from a built environment perspective. In particular, urban sprawl was seen exacerbating these issues, and will potentially have a very deleterious effect on the city in the future if it is not dealt with timeously.

The Summit panel raised the following as key problems: a lack of accountability in the process of responding to urban development applications, inadequate civic engagement and lack of political willingness to address the planning legacy in the City. Developments are often pursued as a matter of

political expediency rather than as a result of sensible planning, and there was also a sense that tough decisions were put off because of political considerations.

The proposed Wescape development at Atlantis came up several times during the meeting, as a particularly problematic issue. Although the development is touted as “eco-friendly”, its distance from the city, low built density, and the fact that it is largely intended for middle and upper income brackets (despite being marketed as a low income housing solution) means that it is likely to exacerbate inequalities and increase infrastructure costs in the city.

The point was strongly made that public housing projects often have several serious shortcomings, which are likely to cause major problems going forward. An example shared was the inability of the city to align housing provision with economic development, leading to poor people being given houses they cannot afford to maintain, located on the margins and with densities inappropriate for them to obtain economic betterment. The result is asset depreciation and the growth of city sprawl, without concomitant economic growth.

It was noted, particularly in the case of RDP or social housing, that expectations around receiving a particular type of home (single dwelling with a backyard) had been created – in Cape Town, as it has been across South Africa – without debating whether this was the most appropriate solution. It was also noted that the widely-adopted single dwelling units were often both expensive for the local government to build and of a poor quality. The Summit panel agreed that compact multi-storey housing would be a more effective form of social housing.

Another point was that urban sprawl prevents the land from being used to its best potential, and pushes the edges of the city ever outwards. This has major costs associated with it in terms of infrastructure provision. Furthermore, sprawl tends to create social and cultural fragmentation by pushing people out towards the margins, and care must be taken that relocating people to better housing does not further aggravate this.

Lastly, there was also a sense that the City suffers from a great deal of suspicion between racial groups, accompanied with a ‘NIMBY’ (Not In My Backyard) attitude towards most developments and the inclusion of diverse people groups in particular neighbourhoods.

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE URBAN FORM

The Summit panel generally agreed that Cape Town cannot continue to be developed as it has been up until now. Infill of under-used spaces and densification were agreed on as necessary steps to begin changing the spatial character of the city, as detailed in the Densification Strategy of the City of Cape Town. Currently the city is amongst the least dense in Africa.

Mention was made of the need to ensure that urban edges, as set out in the Development Edge policy of the City of Cape Town and which define spatial limits to what land can be developed and services extended, do not become malleable. It was noted that the possible extension of the urban edge and approval of Wescap would result in Cape Town displaying all typologies of urban sprawl, namely, peri-urban growth, informal urbanization and leapfrog development.

It was also acknowledged that there is currently little motivation or incentive for developers to create dense or low-cost housing projects. This was due to lower land costs for developments on the urban edge, as well as the existence of almost insurmountable civil, bureaucratic and legal hurdles to creating dense infill developments or low-cost housing within the city. The Summit panel believed that steps should be taken to make it attractive for developers to create these developments within the city limits, such as improving zoning laws, freeing up unused land owned by the various government structures, and providing clear incentives.

Comment was made that quality development in the city is often hobbled by political agendas, and that decisions are often made in terms of political expediency and vote-winning, rather than guided by sound and sustainable urban form or design principles. It was further noted that many of the decisions that need to be made in terms of development in the city will be extremely politically unpopular, and are thus unlikely to be made by those with a political agenda.

CIVIL BUY-IN: BUILDING A NON-PARTISAN VOICE FOR SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE CHANGE

The Summit panel believed that there is a need to get civil buy-in for development policies that favour density and infill. Their suggestions about the way forward include:

- The creation and communication of a compelling vision for the city and region, with need for clear buy-in
- The need to come up with numbers and hard facts to show politicians, decision makers and citizens the economic and other implications of various decisions

- Changing of the expectations and desires around housing, public land and the future city
- In terms of low-income and affordable housing: the need to rephrase political debates from simply discussing the provision of housing, to addressing issues around increasing access to economic opportunity

DEBUNKING MYTHS ON THE URBAN LAND SITUATION IN CAPE TOWN

The Summit panel challenged two common misconceptions regarding Cape Town:

1. That Cape Town lacks the space for new development (i.e. that the city is full); and
2. That the problems caused by the apartheid design of the city are insurmountable.

In doing so, the Summit panel highlighted large portions of state land within the city centre and established suburbs that are ideally situated for densified housing. However, it was explained that there has been an inability on the part of local, provincial and national government to open it up for development.

Even where government land has been made available for development, these are often passed over by private developers, as they do not consider dense low-cost projects to be profitable. This problem is exacerbated by the high cost of land and then large number of regulatory hurdles.

Furthermore, the Summit panel blamed the ineffective redevelopment of Cape Town as the reason for the perception that the apartheid design problems cannot be solved. It was agreed that a lack of political, policy and financial congruence was a significant factor for this deficiency.

POSITIVE STORIES IN CAPE TOWN NEED TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

The Summit panel believed that positive developments in Cape Town were often not highlighted or shared. There was consensus that focussing solely on the problems facing Cape Town is a narrow approach, and there are benefits in discussing, engaging with and studying stories of more positive developments in the city.

The following case studies were mentioned during the summit:

1. Mitchell's Plain: The community is showing signs of becoming a workable middle-class neighbourhood. It currently has the lowest amount of backyarder dwellings of any township community in the Western Cape. A number of Mitchell's Plain residents are now working in the

area, and major investments in the rail facilities have improved the commuting experience significantly.

2. Pook Road: A small informal settlement, which has relatively low crime and is well serviced by the community.
3. The Swartland: It was claimed that high levels of economic growth have led to the disappearance of informal settlements in this region.

The Summit panel noted that these achievements do not appear to be linked to any formal planning policies but are rather a product of each community's efforts, as well as economic growth.

SUPER URBAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: A NEW KIND OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INSTITUTION

A surprising outcome of the Summit was the overwhelming agreement on the need to explore a kind of Super-Urban Development Agency to oversee and co-ordinate development in the City, across departments, political parties and tiers of government. This body would ideally be non-partisan, exist outside of political structures, and have a great deal of independence, allowing it to pursue the difficult decisions that need to be made.

Part of this body's mandate would be educating civil bodies and politicians about the need for certain development decisions, hopefully creating a forum for constructive debate. Mention was made several times of the now-defunct Housing Board and its effectiveness in serving in this arena, and how its dismantling had negatively affected housing delivery in the City. The Summit panel also discussed the successes achieved by autonomous bodies in developing Cato Manor as well as projects dealing with informal settlements in Hong Kong.

THE ROLE OF FUTURE CAPE TOWN

The Summit panel enquired about the role of Future Cape Town. As highlighted above, the Summit panel concluded that there is a need for stronger civic movement devoid of political motives.

Says Rashid Fataar, Managing Director: "Future Cape Town strives to be a strong independent advocate for constructive urban debate and development".

To achieve this, Future Cape Town is looking for the right partners to build a strategy to stimulate discussion, resulting in civic education in government, the private sector, amongst interest groups and, most importantly, with the public to create an awareness of the issues impacting the city.

For more information please visit: www.futurecapetown.com

ANNEX

A: Various conceptions of Urban Sprawl (*even though a standard definition does not technically exist*):

- a. “Low density, auto-dependent land development taking place on the edges of urban centres, often ‘leap-frogging’ away from current denser development nodes, to transform open, undeveloped land, into single-family residential subdivisions and campus-style commercial office-parks and diffuse retail uses”²¹
- b. It may involve low-density residential developments or so-called “edge cities” (clusters of population and economic activity at the urban fringe) that give rise to business activity like office buildings, retail and even manufacturing. It can take the form of planned communities that have their own “downtown” or are aligned to a lake or park. Or it can occur as individual houses pop up across formerly rural landscapes.”²²
- c. “The excessive spatial growth of cities”²³
- d. “The spreading of urban developments...on undeveloped land near a city”²⁴
- e. “The expansion of an urban area into areas of countryside that surround it”²⁵
- f. “The scattering of urban settlement over the rural landscape...When two cities are close together the intervening rural space becomes peppered with new developments.”²⁶

²¹ Soule, D.C. (Ed). 2006. *Urban Sprawl: a comprehensive reference guide*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press

²² Nechyba, T.A. & Walsh, R.P. 2004. Urban Sprawl, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 18(4): 177-200.

²³ Brueckner, J.K. 2000. Urban Sprawl: Diagnosis and Remedies, *International Regional Sciences Review*, 23(2): 160-171.

²⁴ Merriam Webster Dictionary. In: Gillham, O. 2002. *The Limitless City: a primer on the urban sprawl debate*. Washington D.C: Island Press.

²⁵ Encarta World English Dictionary. In: Gillham, O. 2002. *The Limitless City: a primer on the urban sprawl debate*. Washington D.C: Island Press.

²⁶ Harvey, R.O & Clark, W.A.V. 1965. The Nature and Economics of Urban Sprawl, *Land Economics*, Vol. 41(1): 1-9.

B: Future Cape Town media release on Wescap

Future Cape Town was party to a packed meeting hosted by the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the Cape Institute for Architecture (CIA) on Wednesday night at which Wescap's defenders were able to take questions from professionals of the built environment.

The project planners and architects, ARG, were presented by principals Gita Goven and Alistair Rendall. Their defence was able but free of surprises, or any of the major breakthrough ideas that social media commenters had hoped for. After a spirited discussion, the audience was left with no new rationale to justify a project of this scale in this location. Wescap's proponents chose to lead with an economic argument for the viability of the new exurb, which raised more questions than it resolved. The consortium's sums on job creation, the reservation of housing by income level, operating costs and bulk services inspired lively debate, but unfortunately the developers of Wescap were not present to answer these in greater detail.

Comments from the audience, and from discussants Vanessa Watson, tended towards the negative. Several prominent professionals questioned the most fundamental aspects of the project, including the figures and transit/mobility figures produced by the CommuniTgrow consortium driving the Wescap project. The nuclear aspect – Wescap will lie mostly within Koeberg's evacuation zone – is perhaps the most concerning of these. The consortium's evacuation proposals seem founded on a series of optimistic assumptions more reminiscent of Zurich than Cape Town.

However, Goven and Rendall rebutted with a historical analysis of why their vision was different from similar projects attempted elsewhere, and why it would succeed where more orthodox initiatives inside the existing edge had repeatedly failed. The thrust of their argument was that the glacial pace of densification and economic diversification inside the existing edge meant that a compact Cape Town might yet be generations away, and that exciting and potentially liberating new spaces and opportunities were possible at the land prices and densities Wescap would achieve. However, some voices in the audience said that faults in the current system did not justify an embrace of greenfield development so far beyond the city limits.

The city has currently approved the extension of Cape Town's urban edge to accommodate Wescap – which currently sits with the MEC for Environmental Affairs at the Western Cape Government – but environmental impact and zoning approval are still pending. All parties agreed that another meeting, at minimum, was in order.

Future Cape Town will in addition to its participation in Wednesday night's event be releasing the proceedings and major themes from the inaugural Future Cape Town Summit which covered the topic of urban sprawl in Cape Town.