

Planning for Cities in Transition: Urban Conservation and Urban Development in Potchefstroom, South Africa as a Case Study

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Abstract : The world is undergoing the largest wave of urban growth in history due to rapid urbanization. Africa's fast rate of urbanization is being driven by several factors such as population growth and migration. Urbanization results in development pressure on existing infrastructure, and numerous existing buildings are being destroyed in the process. Many of these buildings are built by environmental heritage resources which are part of the city's heritage and are therefore valuable. Many built environment heritage resources are currently being destroyed due to development pressure, while others are facing the risk of destruction or abandonment. There are different approaches that inform urban development and urban conservation. The modernist and post-modernist dichotomy has played an influencing role on how development or conservation of built environment heritage resources are approached. The fragmented nature of historical urban conservation paradigms and theories are also reflected in the evolution of policy and legislation that guide urban development and conservation of built heritage resources. Urban development and conservation have a long history of being guided by separated policies and legislation. However, recent international and South African policy and legislation had started to acknowledge the importance of integrating urban development and urban conservation. Spatial planning guides urban development and can be used as an integrative tool. With the aforementioned in mind, the main research question that guides this study is: What role does spatial planning play in the coexistence of urban development and urban conservation in a city in transition? The main purpose of this research is to use spatial planning as a tool for integrating urban conservation and urban development with reference to built environmental heritage resources. A qualitative research methodology is going to be employed in which a singular case study will be used as the research design. A qualitative document analysis will be used to collect data. Potchefstroom is going to be used as a case study as it is the oldest town in the North West province therefore is rich in built environmental heritage resources.

Keywords : built environmental heritage resources, document analysis, spatial planning, urban conservation, urban development

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