

# National Planning Commission

**Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on  
Human Settlements  
23 February 2011**

## In this presentation we provide...

- › An update on the structure and focus areas of the National Planning Commission
- › An overview of the South African spatial structure, fault-lines, key conclusions
- › An outline of critical questions the National Planning Commission is considering in relation to human settlements
- › An update on what the National Planning Commission is doing in relation to the critical questions.

## **The National Planning Commission is...**

- Made up of 26 Commissioners appointed on 30 April 2010 & was inaugurated on 11 May 2010
- Mandated to:
  - to develop a vision and long-term plan for South Africa
  - to produce sectoral or thematic reports on any issues that impacts on our long-term development
  - to respond to ad-hoc requests by Cabinet (or government in general)
  - to use the lens and tools of long-term planning to help align present policies with the needs of South Africa in the future
- Organised into five thematic working groups: nation building, the economy, human condition, institutions and governance and material condition

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## **In pursuit of its mandate the NPC will...**

- take a broad, cross cutting, independent and critical view of South Africa, to help define the South Africa we seek to achieve in 20 years time
- put forward solid research, sound evidence and clear recommendations for the government
- work with broader society to draw on the best expertise, consult the relevant stakeholders and help to shape a consensus on what to do about the key challenges facing us as a country
- formulate a national vision and development plan to be presented to Cabinet consideration later this year

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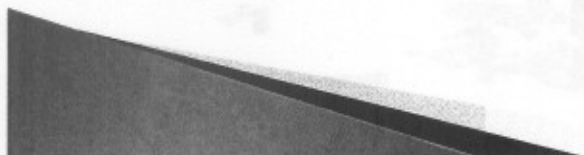
## So where are the fault-lines with our spatial development trajectory?

### ► Some basics:

- A city spatial structure is defined by:
  - the average density (consumption of land per person)
  - the spatial distribution of densities and population
  - The pattern of daily trips

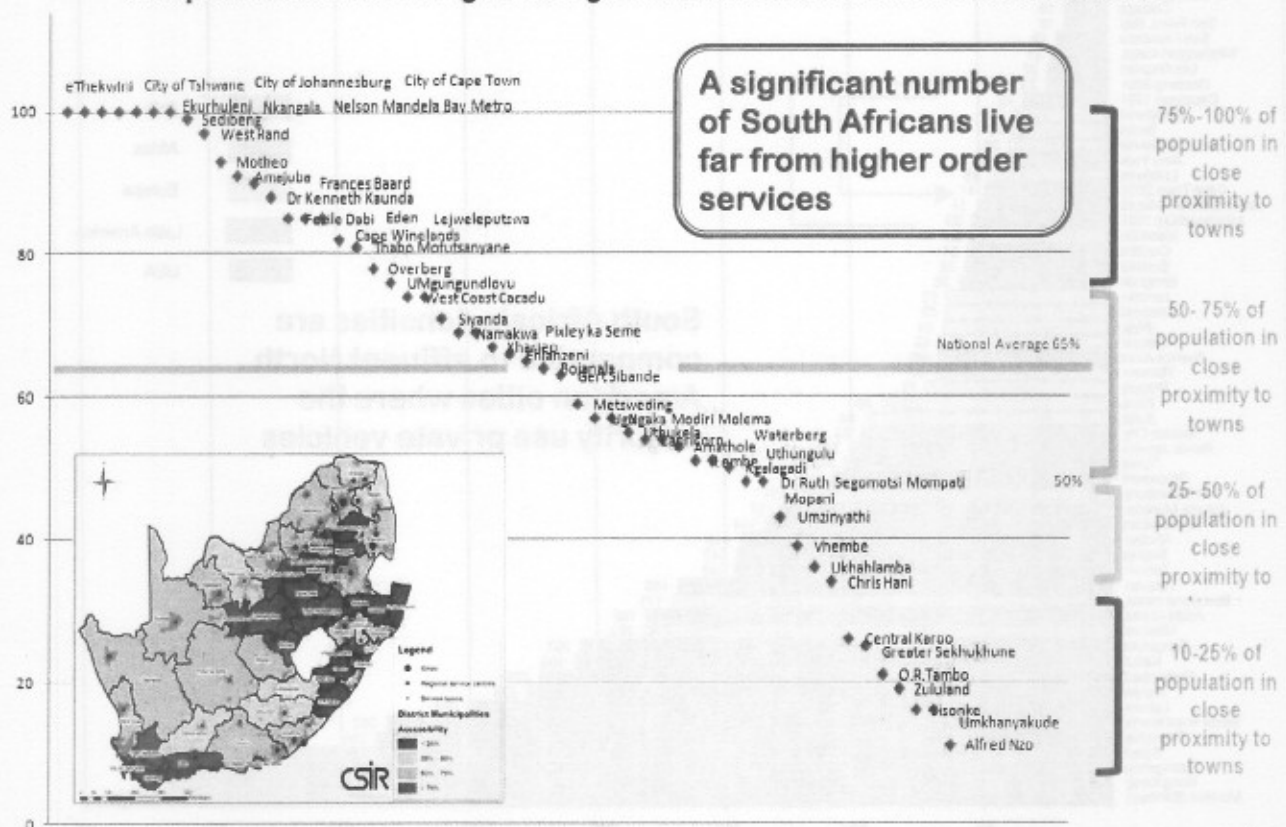
### ► It is deficient when:

- Commuting distances for a significant part of the population are too long to be travelled within a reasonable travel time or/and at a reasonable cost
- The spatial distribution of population and the pattern of trips are incompatible with the main mode of transport affordable to the poor



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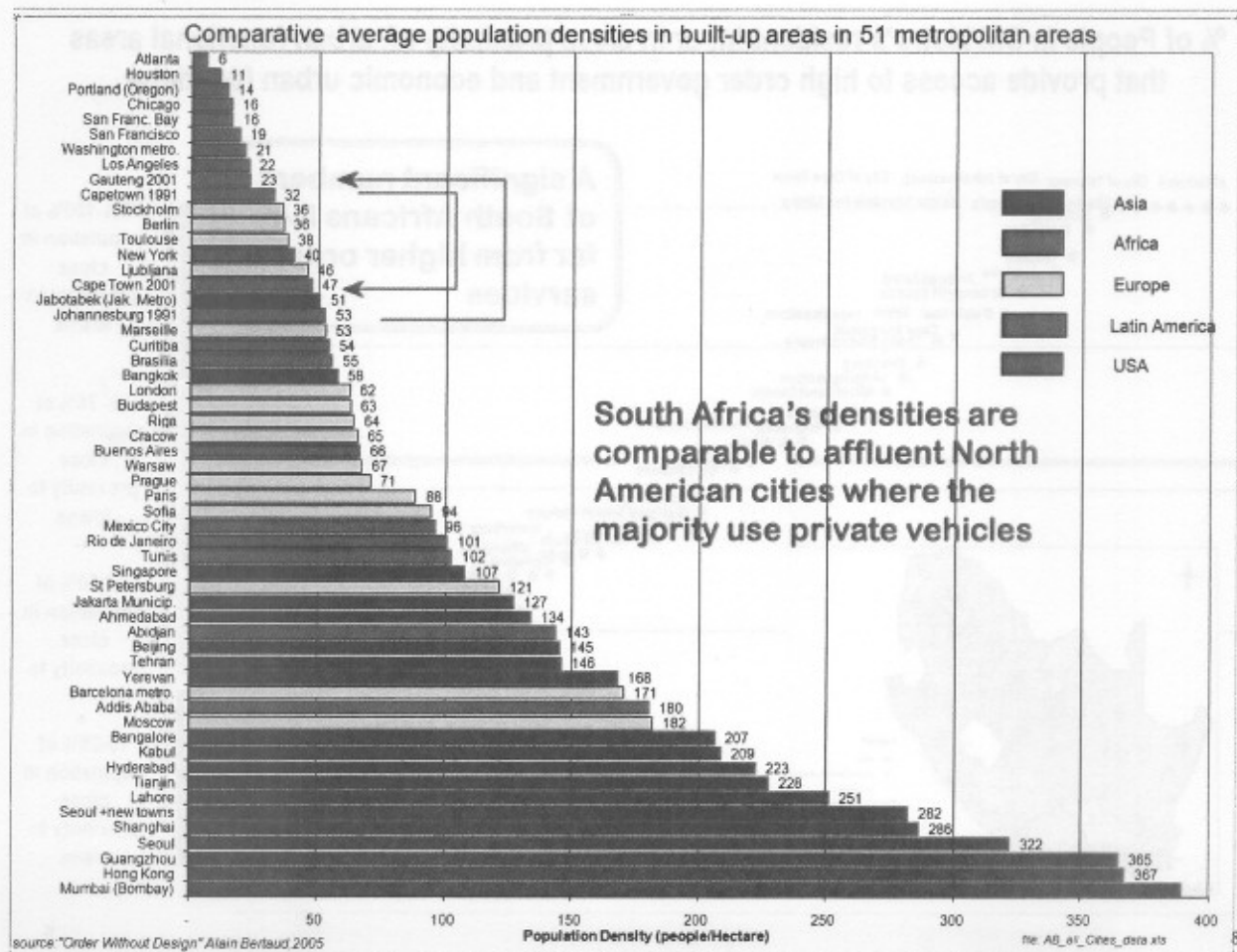
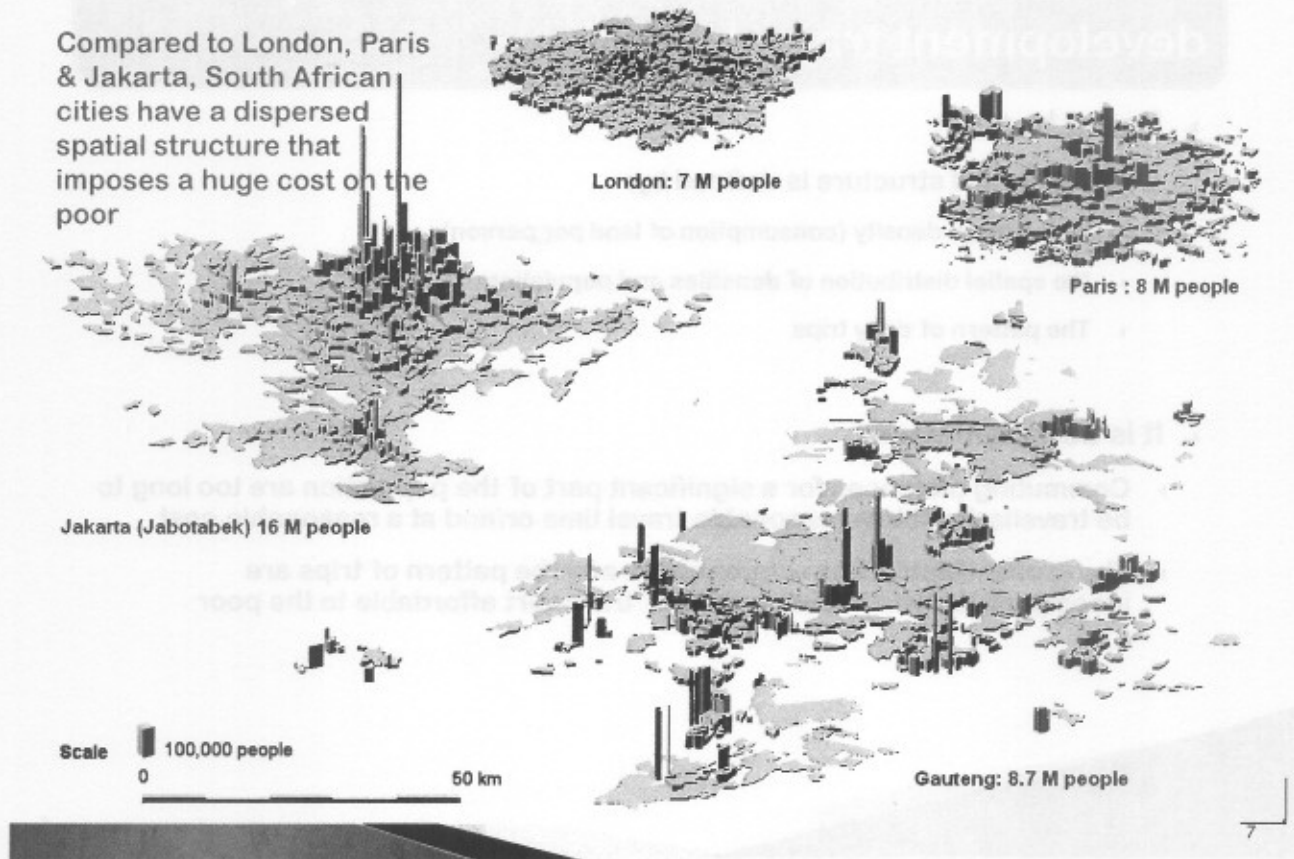
## % of People in DM/Metro's resident in, or in close proximity of, urban functional areas that provide access to high order government and economic urban functions



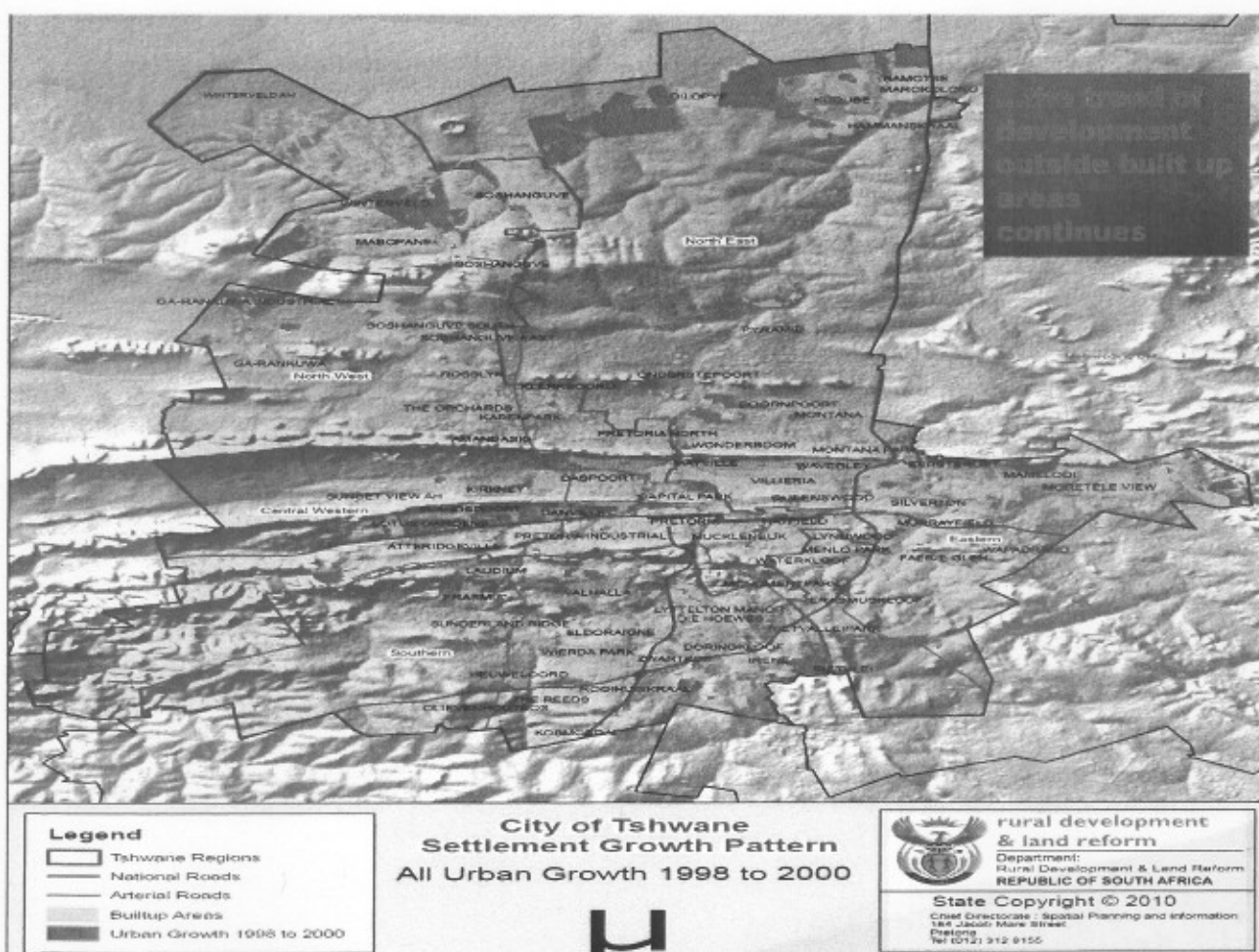
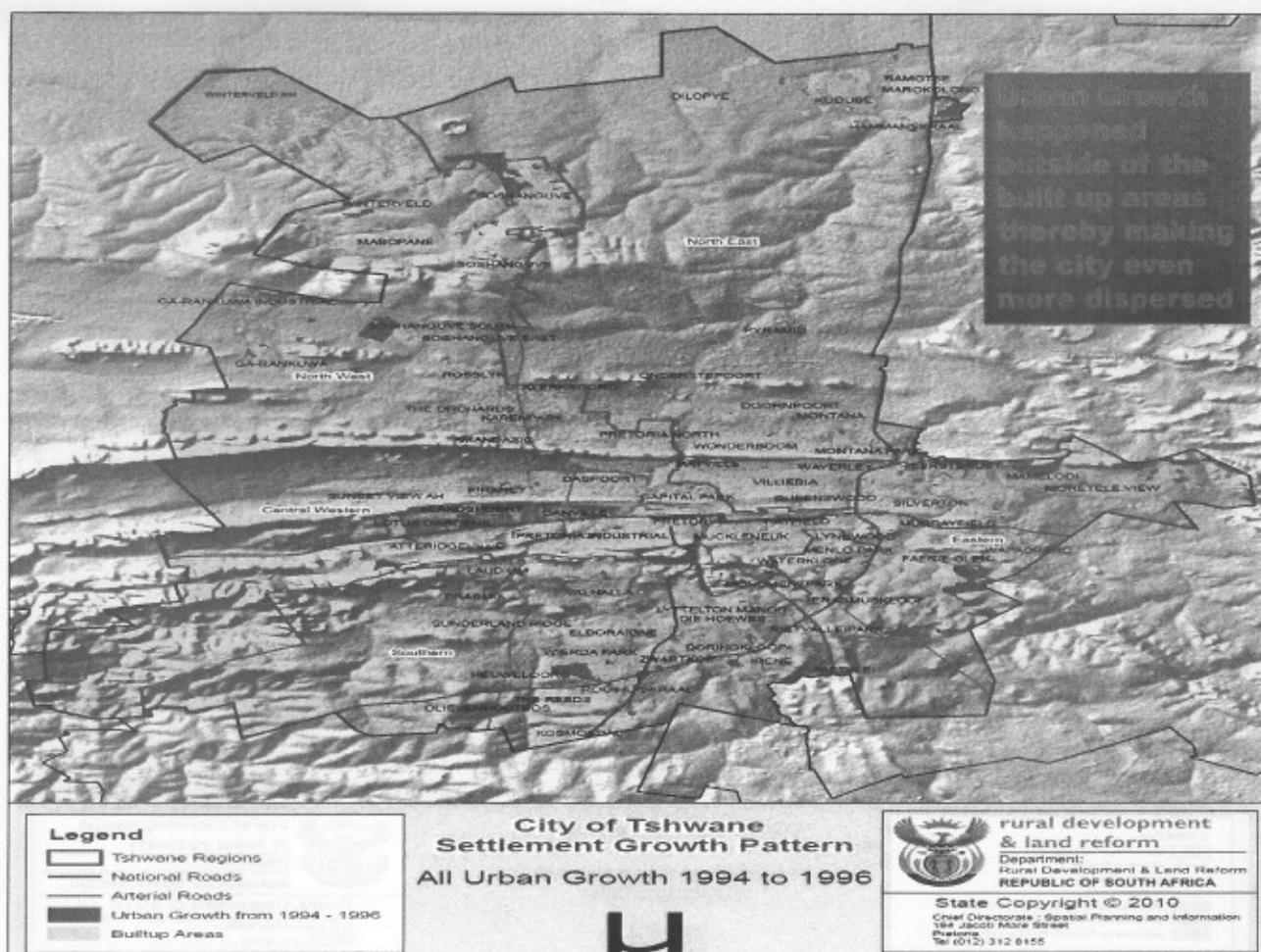
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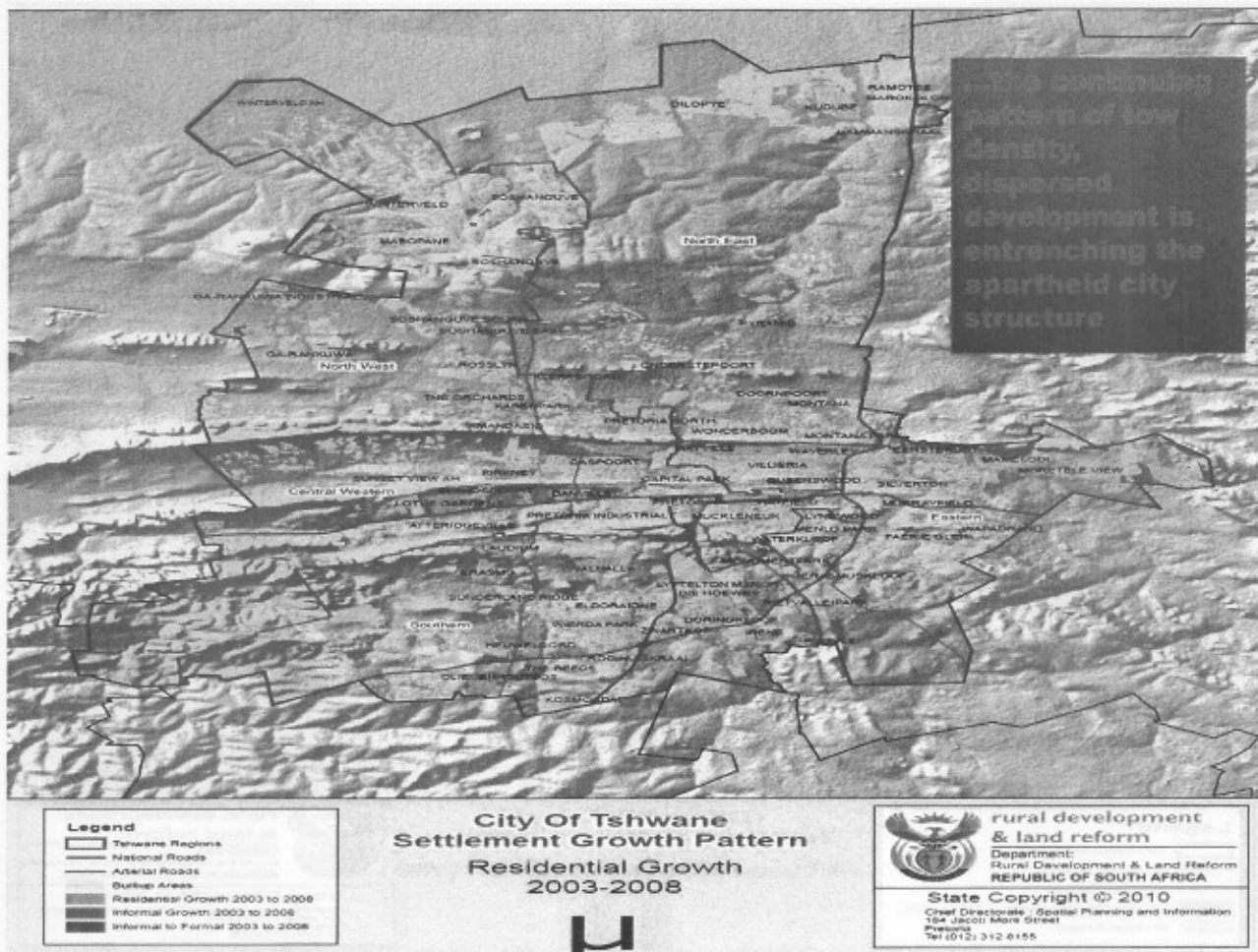
# **Spatial distribution of population in Gauteng (2001 census) compared to Jakarta, London and Paris**

Compared to London, Paris  
& Jakarta, South African  
cities have a dispersed  
spatial structure that  
imposes a huge cost on the  
poor









## The implications of a dispersed spatial structure for the poor...

- ▶ The poor cannot fully participate in the labour market when
  - ▶ They are spatially dispersed beyond 1 hour commuting time from employment areas or
  - ▶ when transport costs represent more than about 8% of income;
- ▶ Spatial dispersion decreases economic opportunity for the poor and reduces the economic efficiency of the entire city.

## Key conclusions from the current human settlement development trajectory

- › The focus on quantity, particularly in relation to provision of housing and infrastructure has entrenched existing inefficient settlement patterns;
- › The past and present delivery models resulted in very low urban densities in relation to international benchmarks for efficient and vibrant urban form;
- › There are inefficiencies in the use of resources such as energy and water; and deficient and poorly coordinated systems of public transportation & other infrastructure networks;
- › There are growing pressures on urban areas on one hand and weak institutional capacity to ensure adequate functioning of towns and cities
- › The quality and availability of service infrastructure such as water and sanitation for livelihood creation and support have been compromised by the legacy of underinvestment in infrastructure over a long period of time and poor management of resources

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## There is a need to rethink human settlement in South Africa...

- › The need to rethink human settlements formation is driven by:
  - Urban, rural and cross-border migration and demographic changes e.g. decrease in household size
  - Proximity to services, employment opportunities, long-term costs of infrastructure
  - Demand for environmental quality and protection of citizens from harmful environment
  - Need to reduce environmental resource consumption (e.g. increasing the energy efficiency of production and buildings, increasing share of energy from renewable sources, limiting urban sprawl, reducing waste disposed of in landfills)
  - Technology changes – extent of change as a result of technology largely unknown, but could enable 'smart cities', but on the negative side, could also increase the digital divide.

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## Critical questions that the NPC is discussing in relation to human settlement...

- How can we build future-looking towns and cities that are economically efficient, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive?
- How do we revive rural areas? Is it about agricultural development and, if so, what types of agriculture? What types of settlements are best suited to the future we seek to build?
- How can we use development in infrastructure to build a more sustainable future?
- How can we use investment in infrastructure and urban and rural development policies to support the livelihoods of the poor? (including, how do we develop approaches towards the informal sector that would support sustainable livelihood development?)
- How do we leverage new and existing technologies to improve the lives of our vulnerable population and also promote more effective forms of inclusive and sustainable development?
- What are the alternative institutional mechanisms to enhance services delivery

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## What is the National Planning doing about these issues?

- › We are undertaking national spatial as well regional spatial trends analysis to gain better understanding of economic, social and environmental patterns
- › The analysis will inform the formulation of a spatial vision/perspective which will form an integral part of the vision and development plan
- › The spatial vision will serve as a framework to guide spatial development including human settlements development.
- › The sense from work done so far is that to reverse apartheid geography, achieve inclusive development and economic efficiency will require bold decisions about both location and timing of major investment, managing trade-offs between competing land uses, and location of future settlements.
- › The spatial vision will find expression in forward looking spatial development frameworks and land use management instruments – to be embodied in land use management legislation

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## What is the National Planning doing about these issues?

- › We are working with Ministers of Human Settlements, Rural Development and Land Reform, Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs, and Environmental affairs develop a new spatial planning and land use management Bill
- › We hope to table the Bill in Parliament during the 2011 session of Parliament & release a spatial vision together with the plan in November 2011 for Cabinet's consideration
- › We are also working with departments to ensure greater coordination of infrastructure investments so that when a settlement is established, the education and health facilities are also built, sewerage treatment plants & waterworks have adequate capacity, and there is adequate public transport investment
- › One of the opportunities we have to address apartheid spatial legacy is to promote development in areas closer to existing infrastructure networks and increase urban densities.



THANK YOU

