

The OBSID Board of Directors is submitting these comments to the Table Bay LSDF from the perspective of the future requirements for urban management in Observatory, where we operate as a Special Ratings Area urban management organisation.

We note that the major trends for the future of Observatory include:

- Continued densification of both Observatory and key nodes around Observatory, particularly Woodstock, and also the introduction of development on the Two Rivers area. The latter also introducing greater connectivity through Observatory to Maitland with the Berkley Road extension.
- The intention for this densification to be more inclusive than it has been to date through mechanisms such as social housing and inclusive housing policy mechanisms.
- A rationalisation of public spaces, with no major public spaces identified in Observatory (rather, Trafalgar Park in Woodstock is highlighted, as well as TRUP)
- An intent to improve NMT, although the majority of the LSDF focus on NMT for Observatory is centred on the Two Rivers area, rather than improvements to the whole of Observatory, including areas where people currently live, work, study, move through and visit Obs for cultural activities
- An implementation plan that recognises urban management, but in our opinion is thin on detail and over-emphasises the importance of CIDs, without recognising that CIDs are only resourced to be “top-up” role-players. In our opinion the City of Cape Town will need to increase its baseline level of basic services to keep up with growth in demand, as growth in population occurs in order for these “top-up” services to remain meaningful and prevent an overall decline in service levels.

Based on the above we submit the following comments. We welcome opportunities to engage further on these.

Overall, the cultural heart and civic attributes of Observatory appear forgotten or lost with the significant attention given to integrating new development planned for TRUP and densifying the adjacent nodes of Woodstock and Mowbray/Rondebosch. This has the potential to create an Observatory that is impacted by development all around it, without a clear plan on how those impacts are managed.

While the NMT and other efforts to integrate TRUP are important, the rest of Obs must not be neglected because it will continue to be impacted by densification both within Obs and in all surrounding nodes. We note the following key aspects that require further consideration:

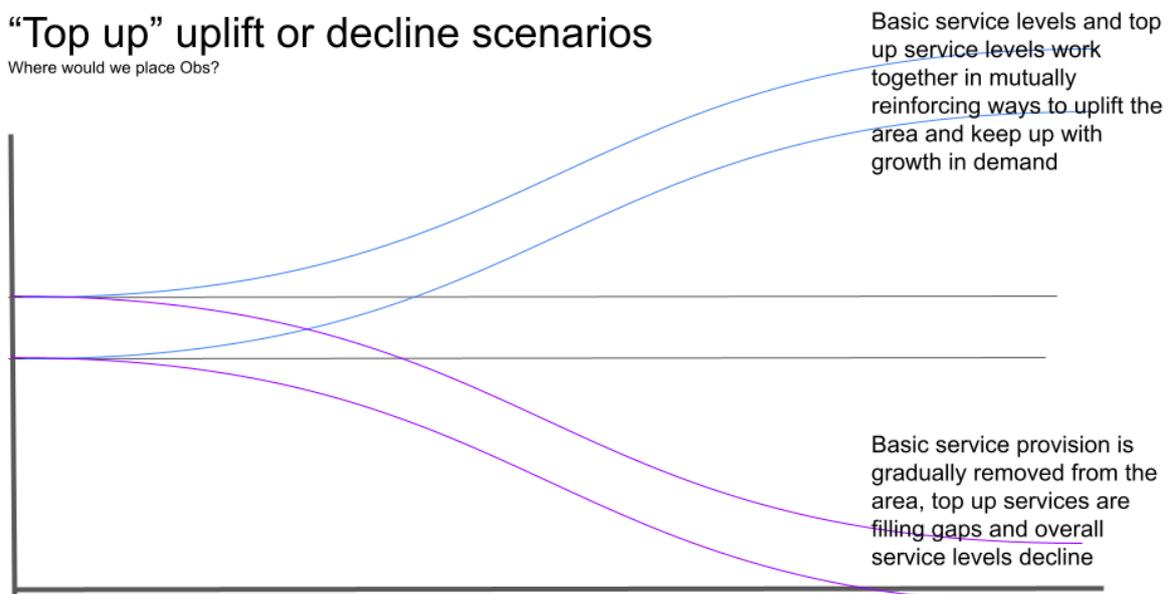
1. We note that the Observatory Policy Plan is being withdrawn. We recognise that it is an old Plan and many elements of it would need to be updated to reflect the City’s current emphasis. However, the LSDF does not go into sufficient detail for Observatory to fully replace the plan, and therefore leaves gaps from a planning and urban-design perspective.
2. Urban management: As Observatory and the surrounding areas densify, pressure for services such as cleansing, maintenance of urban infrastructure and public spaces, public safety and social development will all increase. As OBSID we have been experiencing this first-hand in recent years. We have also been experiencing a shift

in the City's understanding of our role as CIDs – having been initially established as “top-up” services, to augment basic levels of service provision provided by the City, but more recently we are experiencing a withdrawal of City services from areas where CIDs are active. Given that the levy calculation-model is distributed across rate payers as they grow, this is an unsustainable urban management model.

- a. The implementation plan for urban management requires greater emphasis on the City's own contributions to increase service levels as a first starting point, and consideration and engagement with CIDs and other role players regarding sustainable models to keep up with the growth in pressure on our services as areas densify, intensify and diversify.
- b. CIDs are also incorrectly classified as economic development role players - this is true of those CIDs who cover commercial nodes, but many SRAs are covering residential nodes. The City's view of SRAs and CIDs requires updating in terms of the role that CIDs are playing in networked governance dealing with complex social issues, basic service delivery, and urban growth-management.

### “Top up” uplift or decline scenarios

Where would we place Obs?



3. Traffic and transport - traffic through the streets of Observatory is already an issue the community complains about - most notably cars (and minibus taxis) driving through residential streets to avoid Main Road traffic, to take short-cuts to Liesbeeck Parkway and the N2 or M5, as well as large freight/trucks using Lower Main Road to access the port. We believe that this situation can be improved with:
  - a. A clearer hierarchy of mobility for Observatory, and appropriate traffic calming measures to support that hierarchy.
  - b. A specific plan for Station Road, most notably with the impacts of the Berkley Road extension taken into consideration.
  - c. A specific vision and plan for Lower Main Road, which is also considered a linear cultural and civic heart of Observatory, and key economic centre for the community of Observatory (while the LSDF has highlighted the Obs Library

as the civic heart of Obs, this shows little understanding of how the cultural life of Obs really occurs. The linear connections and flows from the Community Hall, Train Station, and along Lower Main Road need to be protected).

- d. An investment plan for existing and new public transport nodes and access.
  - e. NMT plan that focuses on the whole of Observatory (not just TRUP), and includes access to the train station, Lower Main Road, Groote Schuur Hospital, and key public spaces such as the Village Green, Malta Park and Liesbeeck Parkway, the various parks etc.
4. Community and social assets and facilities:
- a. There are no clear plans for any of Observatory's smaller parks - we assume this level of detail is not appropriate for the LSDF. However, we wish to share that the OBSID, together with community members and relevant Observatory civic groups, does run a public spaces programme. We dedicate some of our resources to supporting the upkeep of these spaces, and we run special projects relating to public arts, infrastructure, greening and activating these spaces. OBSID are currently running a process to better understand opportunities for the Village Green, and would welcome opportunities for these to be formally captured in City processes and plans.
  - b. The Observatory community has been requesting a process to improve the operational and maintenance plans for the Community Hall. We note that the Maitland/Ndabeni area has a focus on "Improve access to public facilities and upgrade the public environment in civic precincts", which includes such a process for the community hall, and request the same for Observatory.
  - c. There is no clear plan for the sports precinct around Malta Park and Hartleyvale. This is an important transition space between Observatory & the green space of Liesbeeck parkway, and its use will become under pressure with development of TRUP. These assets need to be protected as community accessible social and sports spaces. Hartleyvale in particular serves a very wide sporting community and should be recognised for that role, while Malta Park has traditionally served a more local community of Observatory and Mowbray.
  - d. The Liesbeeck river-corridor is a key leisure and green asset, as well as community-building asset used for various clean-ups, birding, fitness etc activities. The LSDF should ensure visual and easy physical access to the water's edge, including at Berkeley Road extension, to ensure the continued community value of this asset, as well as from an urban design for physical safety perspective.
5. Informal trade:
- a. Very little attention is given to informal trade apart from a brief mention of trading along Lower Main Road and Station Road. We would like to request that a future trading plan should cover the whole area, including TRUP.

The OBSID would welcome the opportunity to engage in further planning for the area, on the items identified above and in collaboration with our members, the Observatory community at large and key civic partners representing the interests of Observatory.