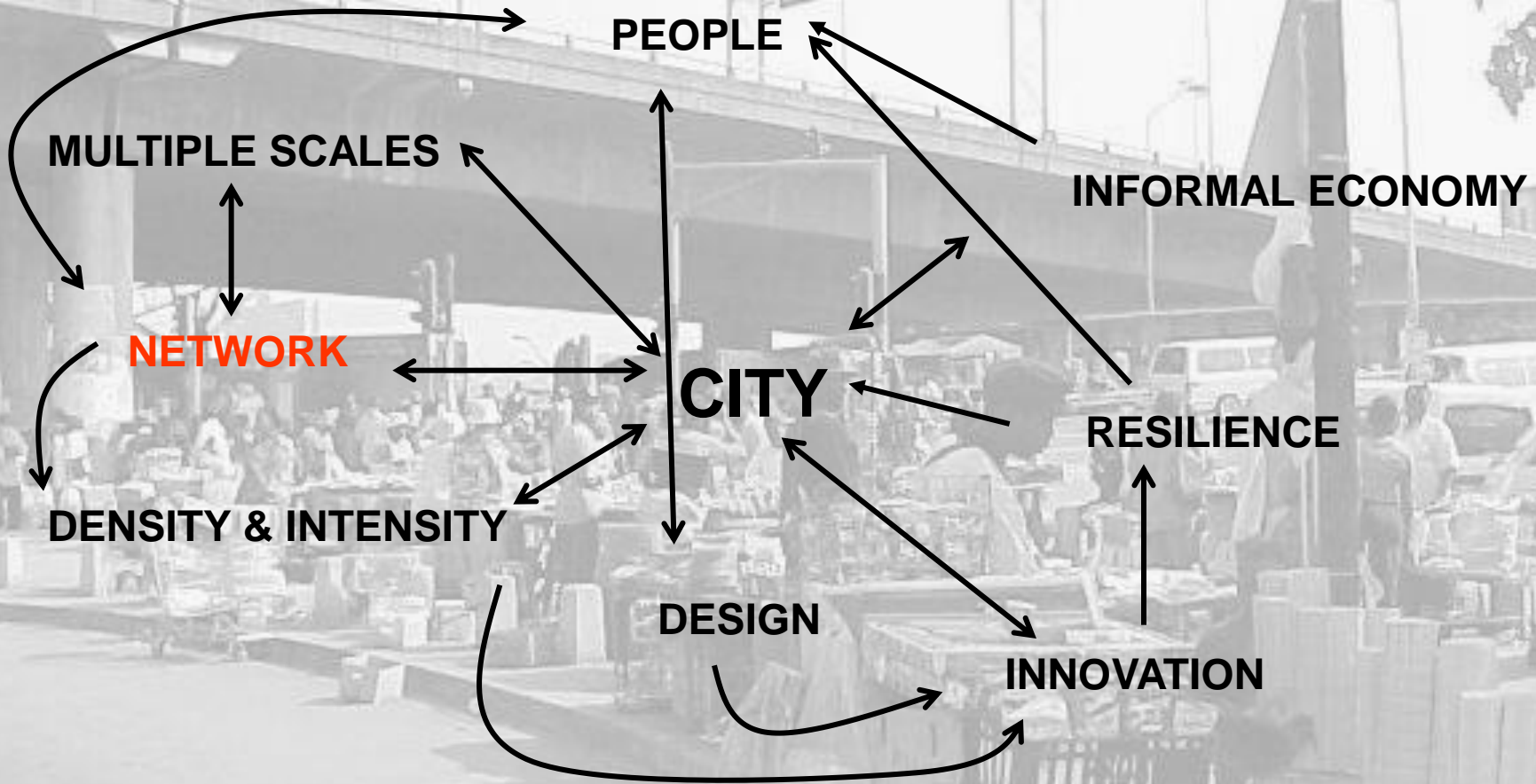




Resilience: Designing with the Informal Economy in Mind

- “cities don’t make poor people they attract poor people”

Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*



“the very density of population – the interwoven webs of social networks and myriad communities- creates more possibilities, per square meter for any single individual, than they might have otherwise. But while necessity is the mother of invention, intensity breeds innovation...helping communities find their own solutions brings not only innovation but ultimately builds resilience.”

Judith Rodin, *Design with the other 90% Cities*

Why is the Informal Economy Important?

What does the Informal Economy have to do with Resilience?

How do we design for Resilient cities?

Hypothesis : Cities that enable the informal economy (within the context of a developing country) contribute to the resilience of the people and consequently the place.

How do we Define the Informal Economy?

- ‘ the informal sector captures one type of activity in informal employment – work that takes place in unincorporated enterprises that are unregistered or small. However there are additional types of informal employment outside of informal enterprises; for example people working in formal enterprises who are not covered by social protection through their work, as well as domestic workers, casual day labourers...
- (Source: <http://wiego.org/informal-economy/concepts-definitions-methods>)

Why is the Informal Economy Important?

Rapid Urbanisation:

- 3.5 billion people now live in cities this is more than half of the worlds population

Rapid urbanisation is due not only to population growth but also to peoples perceptions that see coming to the city is the only means of emerging from poverty by obtaining work and the potential of access to opportunities– whether this is real or perceived it does not matter.

Why is the Informal Economy Important?

In developing countries – not including agricultural workforce – more than half to $\frac{3}{4}$ of workforce are informally employed

<http://africancentreforcities.net/programmes/applied-urban-research/informal-economies/urban-informal-economy-statistics/>

NORTH AFRICA

48%

LATIN AMERICA

51%

ASIA

65%

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

72%

“If informal employment in agriculture is included, as is done in some countries, the proportion of informal employment greatly increases: from 83 per cent of *non-agricultural* employment to 93 per cent of *total* employment in India; from 55 to 62 per cent in Mexico; and from 28 to 34 per cent in South Africa.” (<http://wiego.org/informal-economy/statistical-picture>)

Why is the Informal Economy Important to RSA?

- **Street vending is a dominant work activity in South Africa's informal economy. In 2007 there were over 500,000 street vendors in informal employment, of whom about 360,000 were women. As a share of jobs in non-agricultural informal employment, street vending comprises 15 per cent.**

(Source: Wills, 2009: 1-3)

Why is the Informal Economy Important to Durban?

- Since 1996 Durban's population has grown by just under 20%.
- Durban's economy went through major turmoil in the 1990s losing almost half all employment in clothing and textile sectors (around 30 000 jobs).
- In 2011 the unemployment rate in Durban was 20.4% and that for South Africa was 24.7%.
- These factors combined to increase demand for and reliance on informal activity and employment – both linked to formal and informal businesses.

What do we need to consider when designing for the Informal Economy?

People in informal employment have are exposed to poor working conditions and low earnings and have no protection from risk.

Focus is often on formalization through taxation and regulation - not protection to reduce risk in the work and in the workplace

Key understanding:

Any design intervention that has any hope in being successfully adopted needs to improve productivity and asset value (economic benefit) and reduce risk.

Design does not need to be a physical intervention as this alone is unlikely to change peoples lives – it could be a simple response to understanding a complex system



Space Syntax

Warwick Junction Precinct



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Warwick and the Informal Economy

Warwick is an 'urban interchange'

400 000 commuters pass through here daily

5000-8000 traders

Earning between R1000 and R8000 per month

Mielie traders alone turn over R1million a month

iTrump then project manager, Richard Dobson, stated that "Warwick is a South African example of the inclusion of the poor into an urban economy and it can be a model for developing a strong, practical vision of where we want to go with our cities".

In endorsing the iTrump project, international informal sector expert Professor Keith Hart from Glodsmith's University (London), stated: "*Warwick Junction has provided exhilarating proof of how poor people, in sensitive collaboration with urban planners, can enliven a city centre, generate employment for themselves and expand services for the population at large*".

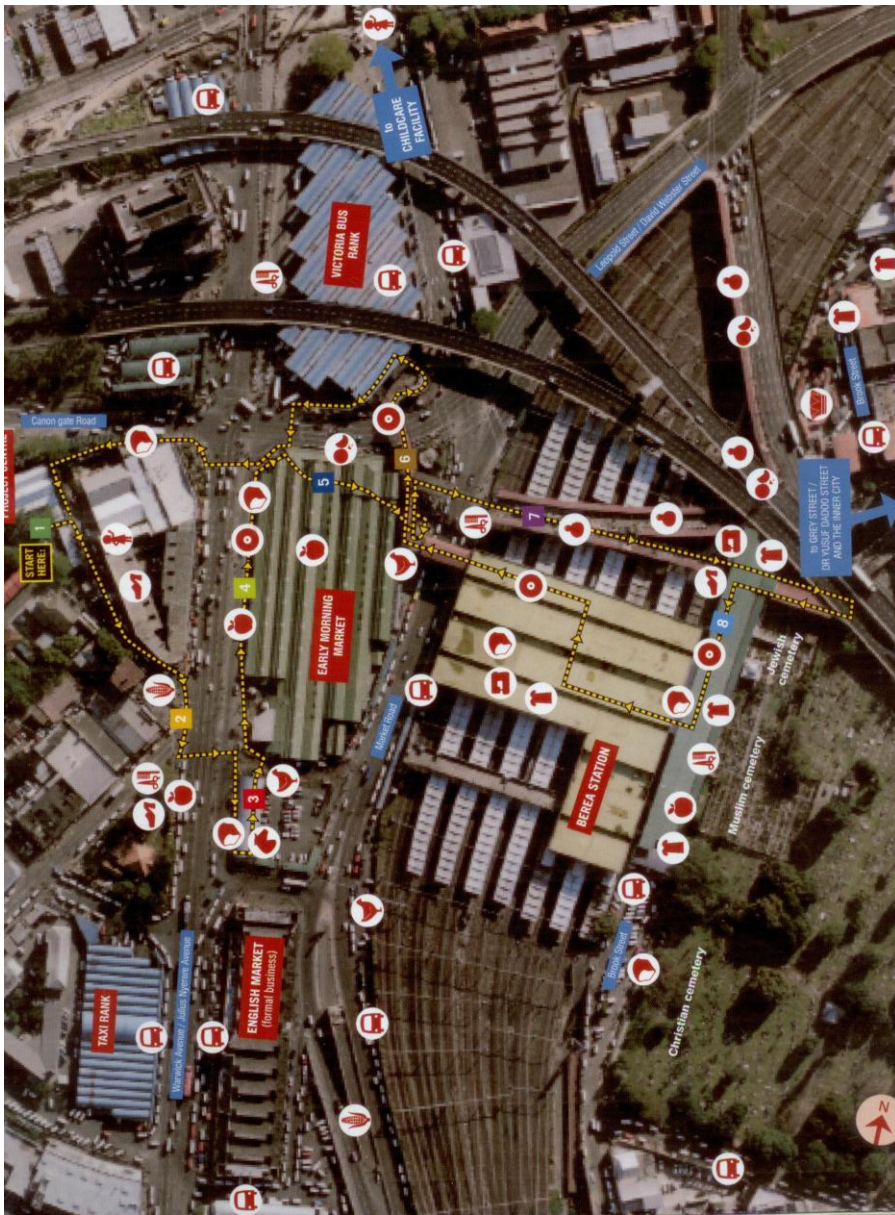


Notes:













1. The Land use information depicted here are from the 2012 Greater Warwick Land Use Survey.
2. The Greater Warwick Land use Survey was conducted by, amongst others, Town and Regional Planning students from the D.U.T. The survey was conducted in collaboration with TDH and the eThekwin City Architects.
3. The survey was conducted between December 2011 and October 2012.
4. Alternative street names are shown in brackets.







Legend

Generalized Use	
Blue	Commercial
Cyan	Service
Pink	Light Industry
Purple	Heavy Industry
Red	Medical
Orange	Institutional
Yellow	Residential
Light Green	Open Space
Dark Green	Vacant
Grey	Unknown/ Lower Floors
Brown	Parking
Dark Grey	Storage/ Warehousing
Light Blue	Taxi/ Bus Rank & Related
Red	Worship /Religious
Light Green	Other

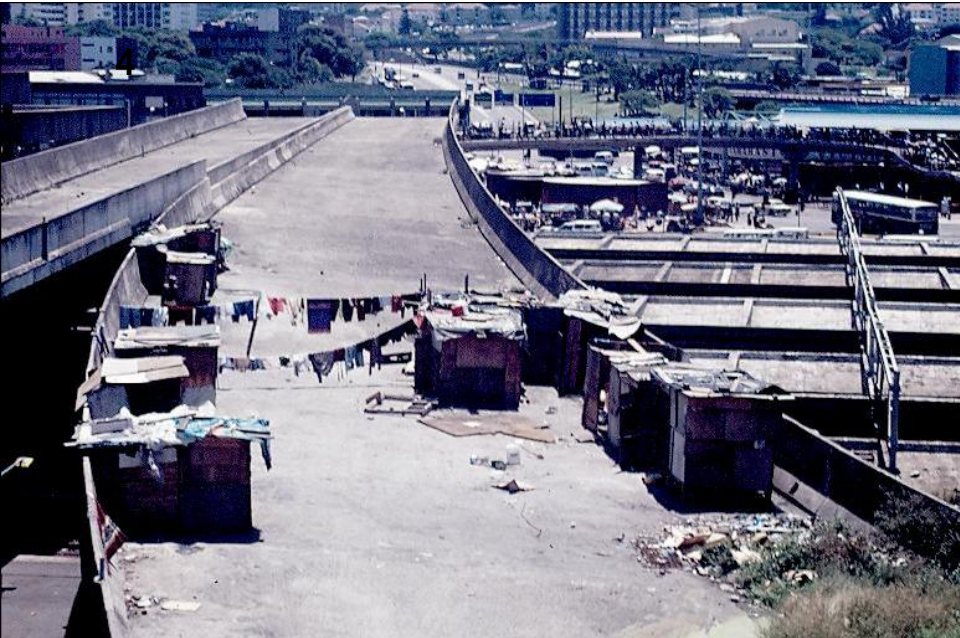


Dobson, Working in Warwick

	food
	barbering
	sewing
	clothing
	fresh produce
	clay
	cows' heads
	mealies
	music
	chickens
	shoe repairs
	traditional medicine
	beads
	taxis and buses

	1 The Project Centre
	2 Fresh Produce
	3 The Bovine Head Market
	4 Mixed trading strip
	5 The Early Morning Market
	6 The Music Bridge
	7 The Traditional Medicine Market
	8 The Brook Street Market

Warwick and the Informal Economy



Urban intervention with major impact on reducing risk for traders in their work and workplace

Clustering and providing legal place to trade + services + security

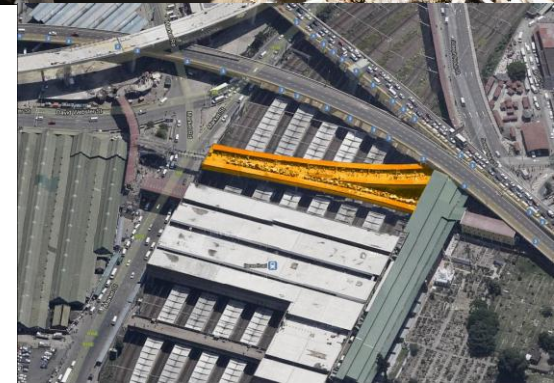
Benefits: Now operate longer hours

Living conditions improved

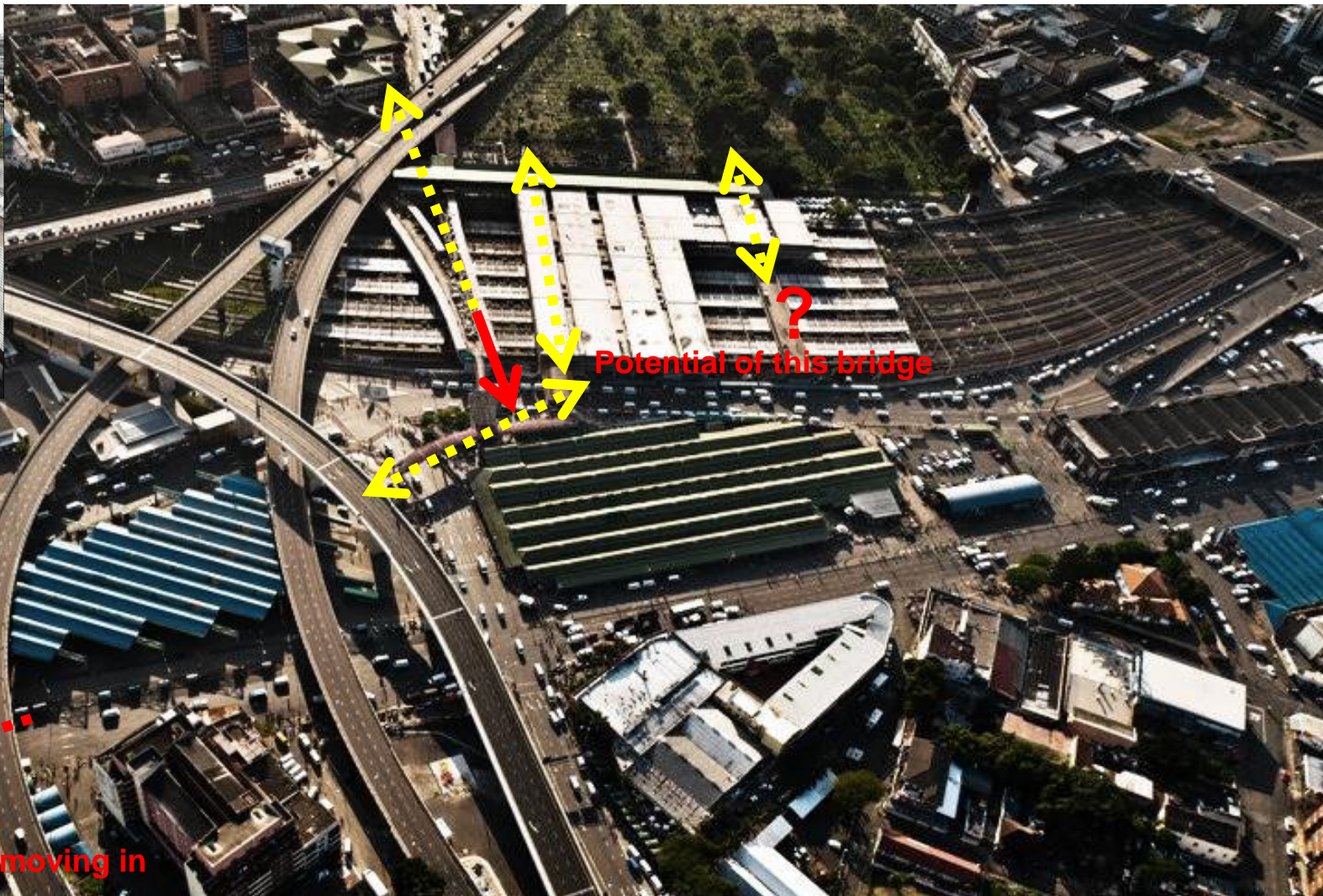
Spin off effect: Additional route stitching the city benefit other traders across the way

Improved access to transport

Dobson, *Working in Warwick*



Warwick and the Informal Economy



Warwick and the Informal Economy



Location – product:
Lime and Mpepho sellers



Responsive : Leisure and service trade



Location – product: Pinafore sellers



Mobility: Maximising opportunity

What do we need to consider when designing for the Informal Economy?

This process of organisation is not so dissimilar from the self organising process in cities with regards to land uses, spatial accessibility and their location.

Movement-sensitive land uses locate on movement-rich streets.

Less movement-sensitive uses locate around the corner.

In this way, historic cities organise themselves, mixing land uses in a natural way that people understand intuitively.

So consequently

Any urban design needs to be informed by the nature of existing trading facilities – what is sold and where, how it is displayed as well as pedestrian flows.

Pedestrian counts establish a threshold for how many traders can be accommodated

Street trading is dependant on passing feet and re-design needs to bare this in mind

Some trade is not dependant on foot traffic – specialised services and products can be in less busy places as people will seek them out.

Dobson, *Working in Warwick*

What do we need to consider when designing for the Informal Economy?

Further considerations:

- Has to be participatory not top down approach
- Needs to be proactive as well as responsive
- Understand the systems – they are complex and interconnected - intervene without upsetting the system.
- Only way one can do this is through a multidisciplinary team –with expertise extends beyond the confines of industry norms and expectations

Conclusion

“the very density of population – the interwoven webs of social networks and myriad communities- creates more possibilities, per square meter for any single individual, than they might have otherwise. But while necessity is the mother of invention, intensity breeds innovation”
...helping communities find their own solutions brings not only innovation but ultimately builds resilience.

Judith Rodin, *Design with the other 90% Cities*

Society, the economy and the city structure are interconnected and interdependent

Within the theoretical realm of structure and agent (Bordieu) or support and infill (Habraken)– we as designers create the structure / the support - essentially the enabling devices
People are the agents inhabiting or cohabiting space as meets their needs

Conclusion

Cities structured to enable economic life –allow people to develop their own livelihood strategies and in so doing they become resilient

Resilience of the people contributes to the resilience of the place which communally contributes to the resilience of the city.



Thank you

RESILIENCE

INFORMAL ECONOMY

NETWORK

CITY

PEOPLE

DENSITY & INTENSITY