

Impact Assessment of Long-Term Growth Options in Mossel Bay

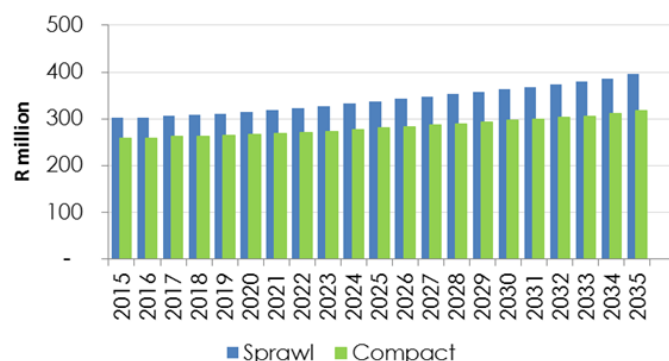


The Western Cape Government were concerned that local municipalities were making development planning decisions without fully appreciating the long-term impact of these decisions on financial viability and the environment. PDG undertook a study in 2013 to assess the long term financial and non-financial impact of spatial growth patterns in seven Western Cape municipalities. This study sought to apply the same methodology to one municipality, Mossel Bay, with additional detailed information around environmental impacts to assess the impact of sprawling versus compact growth options.

PDG, City Think Space urban designers, Anchor Environmental consultants and Setplan urban planners undertook the transport modelling and municipal financial modelling using the Municipal Services Finance Model, which projected the capital and operating costs and revenues to the municipality over 20 years. The non-financial impact that were assessed included loss of agricultural land and biodiversity, spatial integration and access, and heritage and landscape impact.

The modelling showed a capital saving of the compact urban form over the sprawling scenario and in increasing operational cost saving of compaction over time. This required higher tariff increases than the compact scenario, which would have adverse impacts on local businesses, higher-income households who will have to pay higher tariffs, and the local property rates base. The compact scenario demonstrated the savings and efficiencies that can be achieved, and along with the appropriate support from council and appropriate spatial planning and land use management, can put Mossel Bay on a path that is better aligned with the principles set out by SPLUMA. The Mossel Bay study area is

Mossel Bay: Capital required



already sprawling, and current densities are so low that the densification target of 25 dwelling units/hectare cannot be achieved with the 20-year window of growth. However, the desired density target can be achieved if the trends of contained growth and continued strategic densification are continued beyond the 20-year time frame. The study recommended that decision-makers in council, government departments and the private sector work together to promote strategic public investment through the effective clustering of social and public facilities, sustainable infrastructure provision, and densification along appropriate corridors, underpinned by a planning-led budgeting approach.

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MBGO PROJECT:

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