

Gaborone

Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, was created as the time of independence approached. The city was built to satisfy two fundamental needs, which are the effective administration of Botswana and the promotion of a modern economy. The city's major employer is construction and majority of Gaborone's workers are employed in activities that provide commercial and government services.

Gaborone is a small city that is predominant in the rural region. The city lies at latitude 29°09' S and longitude 27°20' E. It is located on a vast plain at 980m above sea level with low relief and rare isolated hills. Kgale hill is a granite outcrop, which rises to 1220m above sea level. Towards the north of the city lies the Oodi Hills also granite outcrop 1170m above sea level. Towards the west lie the Gabane Hills, which rise to 1190m above sea level and are located at the head of the Segoditsane River.

The Notwane river valley dissects Gaborone. This river flows southwest northeast along the eastern boundary of the city and is controlled by the Gaborone dam. The Segoditsane River flows west east through the city and forms the main tributary to the Notwane River. The Naledi stream in the southwest and the Marapoathutlwa stream are the smaller streams that form tributaries to the Notwane River.

The towns that surround Gaborone are Tlokweng towards the southeast, Mogoditshane towards the west.

Land is used for various purposes mainly for commercial, residential, and industrial, and secondary uses such as civic and community functions, which include government and town council offices, social services and recreational facilities, and transportation, which is land set aside for the construction of roads and railways.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Each town has a Central Business District (CBD) and a number of subsidiary centres. Some of the subsidiary centers are small, intended to provide convenience goods and services within a walking distance.

In Gaborone, the space provided for the CBD (The Mall) has proved to be inadequate over time. When Gaborone was planned in 1963, it was not expected to experience such rapid growth. The Mall was planned to serve a population of 20,000, a figure surpassed within 10 years. Because there was no space for growth at The Mall, most growth has taken place in subsidiary centers such as the Broadhurst Mall, the station shopping centre and the African Mall. A recent feature is the development of large shopping centres within subsidiary centres. Examples of these centres are the OK complex in Francistown, and the Kagiso shopping centre in the Broadhurst Mall in Gaborone.

A site for a new CBD for Gaborone has been identified west of the railway line. The objectives in developing the new CBD include creating an attractive area that will be a focal point for Gaborone residents and people from outside, including tourists and ensuring that the CBD is well connected to other parts of Gaborone, and ultimately to the immediate region and the entire country. Other objectives involve providing investment opportunities for small and large investors and ensuring that the CBD is accessible by all modes of transport.

The principles that have guided the design of the CBD include that it should be compact and concentrated and that transport routes within the CBD area should allow unhindered circulation of people and vehicles, but greater priority should be given to pedestrians. Another principle included was that it should be developed as a balanced mix of built-up and open spaces. In addition to transportation, there is provision for commercial blocks and public spaces.

The development of the new CBD should have started in 1995 and was to take place in three phases (1995 - 2003; 2004 - 2009 and 2010 - 2015). The proposed land use structure is shown in Table 22.7. Access to the CBD will be provided from existing and planned roads: the former include P.G. Matante Road, Nelson Mandela Road and Molepolole Road; the latter is the proposed Khama Crescent Extension.

The CBD plan gives priority to public transport and pedestrians. A number of civic and community functions are expected to be located here. However, the leading land use will be commercial. The CBD is being planned to provide a first class shopping district to serve Gaborone as well as the immediate region and the entire country. A full range of commercial uses, including retail and office use, is proposed. A modern shopping center, to be the anchor (and main attraction for customers), has been proposed for one of the blocks. It will be possible to provide for office space since there will be no restriction on the height of buildings, especially in the center of the CBD.

Recreation and open space is the last land use category. The CBD has been planned to play a role as the national center for culture, entertainment and tourism. Indoor activities such as films and concerts, and outdoor activities like sporting and cultural events, are all provided for. However, some people have argued that Gaborone is already over provided with shops. Therefore, it is unlikely that investors will want to put money into the new CBD.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

A major category of land use is industrial. In all towns an area has been set aside for the manufacturing industry. However, owing to the low level of industrialization, some of the land is used by commercial and other service activities. A survey carried out in Gaborone in 1994 found that about 25% of land use was commercial in the Broadhurst industrial area, while the proportion was 32% in the old industrial site. The non-industrial activities found here included general dealers, furniture shops, stationary suppliers, bars and bottle stores, banks, restaurants, government offices and craft shops.

To promote orderly development of land and to ensure there is no mixing of incompatible activities, the government has produced guidelines on the location of non-industrial activities in industrial areas. The activities allowed are those which provide an essential service to industrial processing such as repair, or which complement it, such as banks and post offices, laboratories and restaurants. However, other commercial uses, referred to as 'restricted' uses, are also allowed in industrial areas. These include filling and service stations, motor dealers, hardware and furniture shops, clinics, and printing and publishing.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Gaborone, when planned at independence, was a segregated- but according to income. The socio-income groups constituted a polarization of development and were reflected in the standard of services provided to each area. However, in 1973, the government decided this policy unacceptable and introduced a policy of mixing areas of different types of housing. The policy was first accomplished in the Broadhurst area of the city.

There are some areas in Gaborone, such as White city and Extension 4, the government was funding and assisting the town Councils, and the Botswana Housing Corporation, in building low-income housing. But later on the government adopted the site-and-service policy, which they provided for lower income groups.