



Issues and opportunities in spatial data handling in local municipalities

Lesley Nake ^{a,*}

^a *Blouberg Municipality, South Africa - lestechp@gmail.com*

* Corresponding author

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Abstract:

Spatial data identifies the geographic location and characteristics of features on the earth's surface. It is a critical tool in the decision-making processes for spatial development within municipalities. Local municipalities however still struggle with the collection, maintenance, updating and management of spatial data due to factors such as absence of specialized surveying and GIS units within the organizational structure. This affects the capabilities of municipalities to effectively execute its tasks. Some technology such as LiDAR is inaccessible to local municipalities due to its cost which prevents utilization of modern technology in development planning. This paper seeks to highlight the challenges that are being faced by local municipalities in spatial data handling with a hope to open a dialogue that improves the availability and use of geographic information in planning. The equipping of local municipalities with the infrastructure, human and financial capacity would enable them to become active players in the spatial information community contributing to information in the South African Spatial Data Infrastructure.