



Department Builds Innovations in Pretoria

With offices scattered all over Pretoria and Johannesburg, South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry could not provide anything close to one-stop investor services. There was no coordination, no synergy and no effective support for businesses. But thanks to an innovative new program implementing public-private partnerships, the department developed, built and moved into new offices in April 2004, ahead of schedule and under cost.

Developed collaboratively by USAID and local partners, the approach to unifying the department's offices was based on simple — but ambitious — objectives: construction had to occur in central Pretoria, contribute to the city's revitalization, and emphasize the use of small business, especially black-owned enterprises. Local businesses showed considerable interest during the bidding process before Rainprop Consortium was chosen to spearhead the building of the low-rise campus in August 2003.

After identifying some deserted property on the Apies River, the city agreed to consolidate the land and invest in the surrounding area as part of a larger urban renewal effort.



Photo: USAID/Reverie Zurba

Construction of new offices for the Department of Trade and Industry has helped revitalize parts of Pretoria.

While most of the buildings were derelict, one art deco masterpiece was renovated to become the department's child care center — the first for a government department in South Africa. When another part of the designated land, once a gas station, was found to be severely polluted, the original owner, an oil company, returned to clean up the site.

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Not only has this project improved the capacity of black-owned businesses and reinvigorated parts of downtown Pretoria, it has also saved the government money. Indeed, South Africa's National Treasury has institutionalized the approach to such an extent that the government now requires that any new infrastructure project follow its model.

But the real significance of the project is not measurable in dollars or bricks and mortar. It was conceived to be — and has already become — both an instrument for and a symbol of the complete transformation of public service in South Africa. Once based on detachment, risk avoidance and rule compliance, public service delivery is becoming a fully collaborative, team-based, customer-focused culture. Accountability and responsibility have merged under South Africa's new Public Finance Management Act, and, already, two major national institutions have adopted the same new model for service delivery using the same low-rise campus approach in the city of Tshwane. The two agencies will build more than a million square feet of new office space with a private sector infusion of nearly \$165 million (R1 billion) in capital investment using public-private partnerships.

Success Story

