SPATIAL TRENDS & IMPLEMENTATION TRACKING

DATA, MONITORING & EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT: **URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN**

PUBLICATION: **3.0 - JUNE 2025**

CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Making progress possible. Together.

A.1

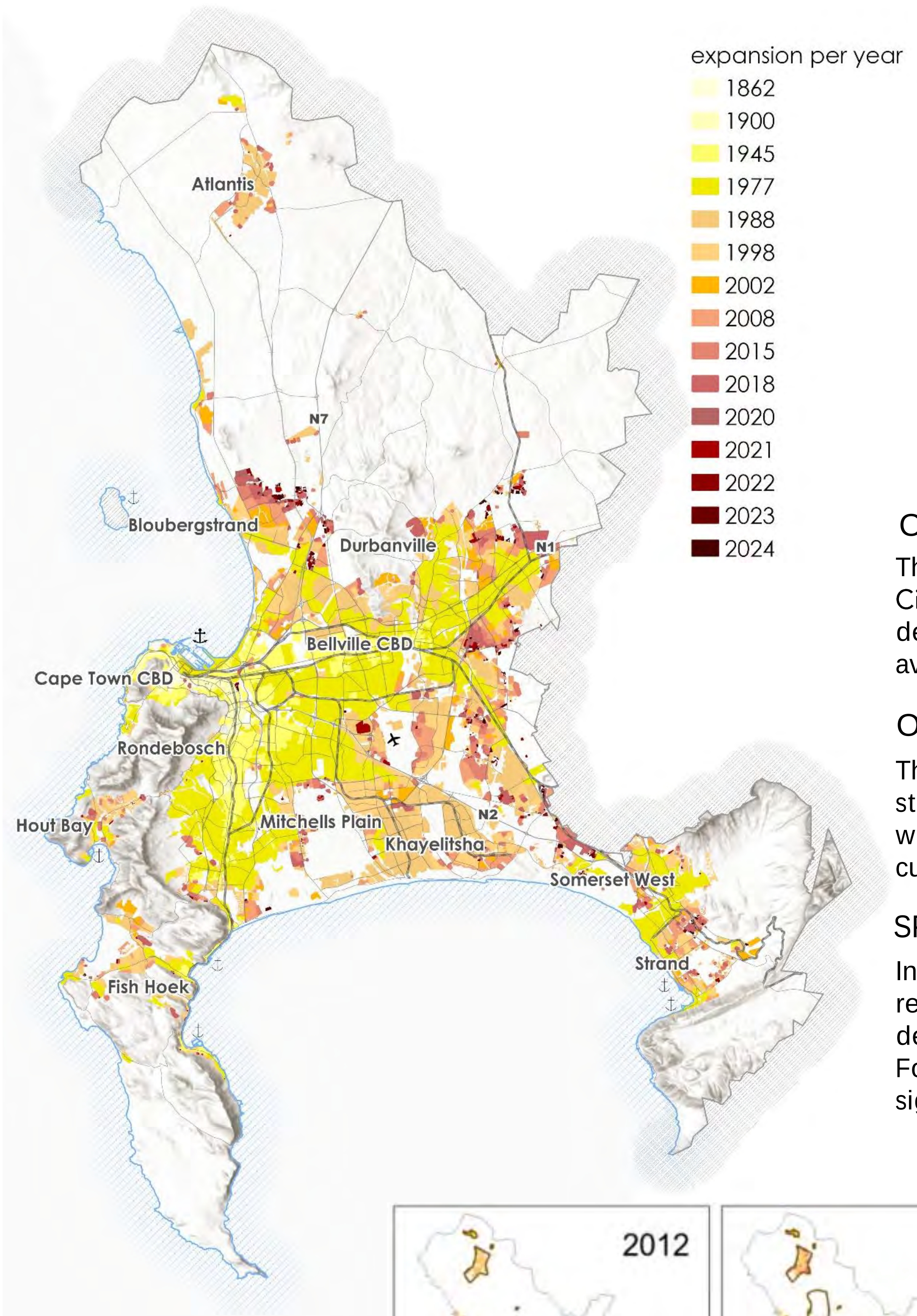
URBAN EXTENT

URBAN FOOTPRINT AND URBAN EXTENT

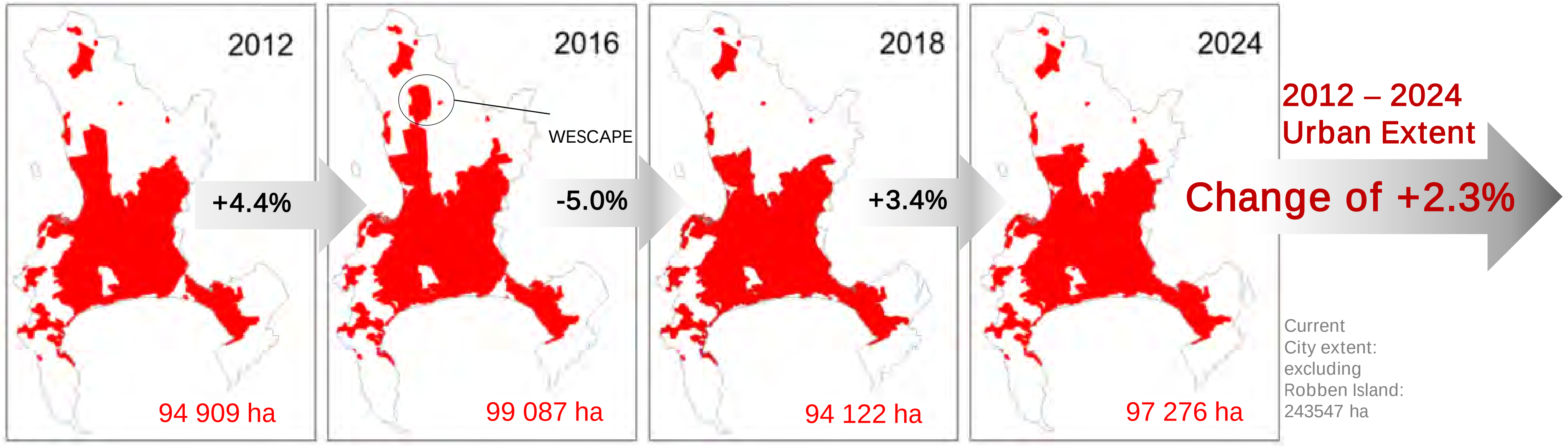
2025 Update

This indicator shows change in area of the City's Urban Footprint i.e. the built environment (2012-2024) & planned Urban Extent over time (2012-2024).

Source: Urban Planning & Design Department , City of Cape Town



Map A1-a: Expansion of Urban Extent per year



Map Series A1-a : Area (ha) of planned Urban Extent – the total area within the Urban Development Edge – per year

OVERVIEW

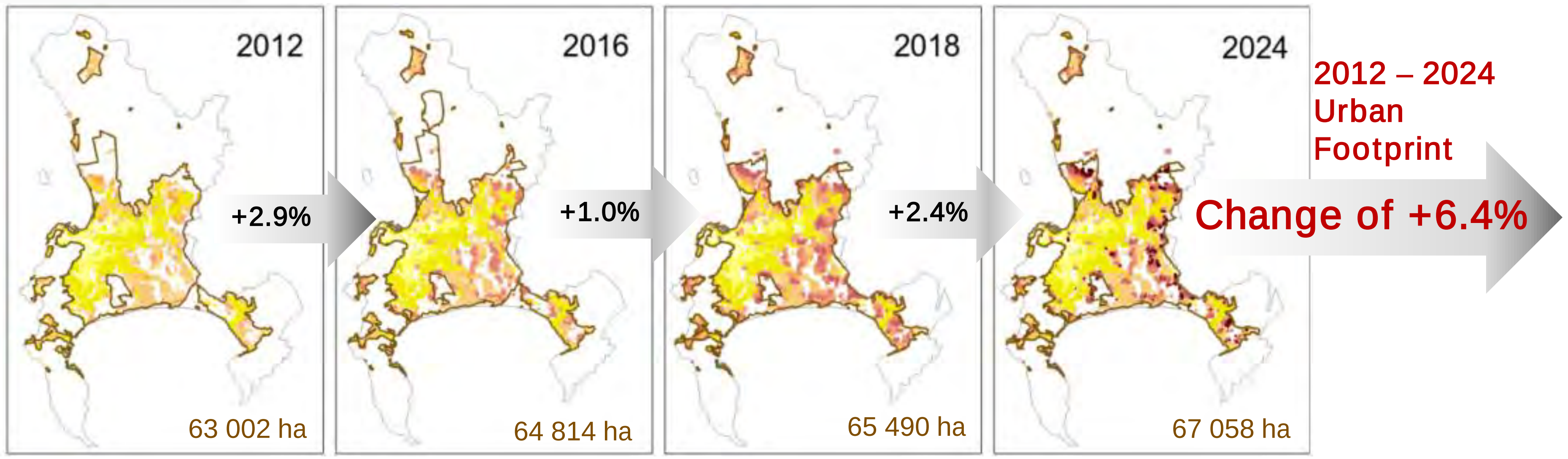
The **Urban Development Edge** (UDE) is a City planning boundary that assists to limit urban sprawl. Land within the UDE and landward of the City's Coastal Edge is known as the planned **Urban Extent**. The Urban Extent includes areas that are undeveloped and that, subject to a detailed site investigation, may be feasible to develop. The 2024 **Urban Footprint** is the land with built structures clearly visible on the latest available aerial imagery (Jan 2025) at a scale of 1:30000.

OVERALL TREND

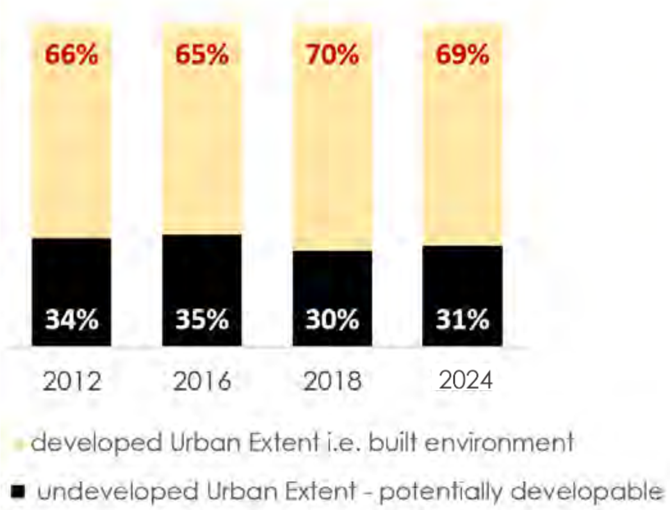
This indicator assists in determining the pace at which land available for development is being consumed and whether City policies and strategies to contain urban sprawl are effective. While the Urban Extent has generally been contained (Map Series A1-a), the Urban Footprint within that Extent has increased by roughly 6.4% between 2012 and 2024 (Map Series A1-b). Approximately 69% of the Urban Extent has currently been developed (Graph A1-a).

SPATIAL TREND (DISTRIBUTION/PATTERN)

In 2016, the Urban Edge incorporated Wescape to the North, a decision later reversed. In 2018, the Urban Edge was discontinued and reference to the boundaries of the City were indicated in the MSDF as Discouraged Growth Areas. However, this led to ambiguities and delays in the processing of development applications. In 2023, the Edge was reinstated as the Urban *Development* Edge. Most recent Urban Footprint expansion has been to the North and East of the City where more affordable properties are being made available but this puts significant pressure on the periphery, increasing the risk of sprawl.



Map Series A1-b: Area (ha) of Urban Footprint (built environment) within the Urban Development Edge per year



Graph A1-a: Percentage developed vs. undeveloped Urban Extent remaining per year

C.3

LAND AND BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

FORMAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

This indicator shows change in **gross residential density** over time (2012-2022) as captured in the City's General Valuation Rolls (**formal dwellings** only, excluding collective living quarters). Data is aggregated by using a square grid comprised of 4ha (200m x 200m) grid cells.
Unit size calculation: total habitable floor area/total number of units

Source: CCT Valuation Rolls 2012, 2015, 2018, 2022

Graph C3-a:
Overall average dwelling extent and gross density (formal only)

OVERALL TREND

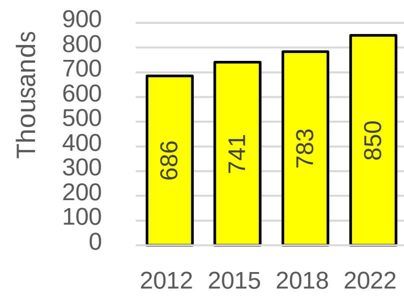
Densification is observed almost everywhere in the city. It occurs in different forms and at varying densities in different areas.

SPATIAL TREND (DISTRIBUTION/PATTERN)

The rate of densification is faster in some areas, and can be ascribed to limited resources (space, housing, infrastructure and money) as well as policy incentives that aim to optimise the use of resources (including travelling time and transport cost). Densification in the city is largely driven by the private sector, including the less-formal and informal sectors (not included here).

Trends observed from the maps depicted in this report include:

- The largest increase in gross residential density between 2012 and 2022 occurred in the Metro South East, and recorded the highest densities (other than the CBD) as of 2022.
- Other significant increases in density between 2012 and 2022 occurred in key development corridors (mainly the Metro South East Corridor, southern end of the Southern Corridor), nodes (CBD, Wynberg-Kenilworth-Claremont, Khayelitsha CBD, Kraaifontein CBD and Somerset West CBD) and new development areas (Rivergate, Parklands, Sunningdale, Fisantekraal, etc.).



Graph C3-b:
Formal residential dwellings

GENERAL ANALYSIS

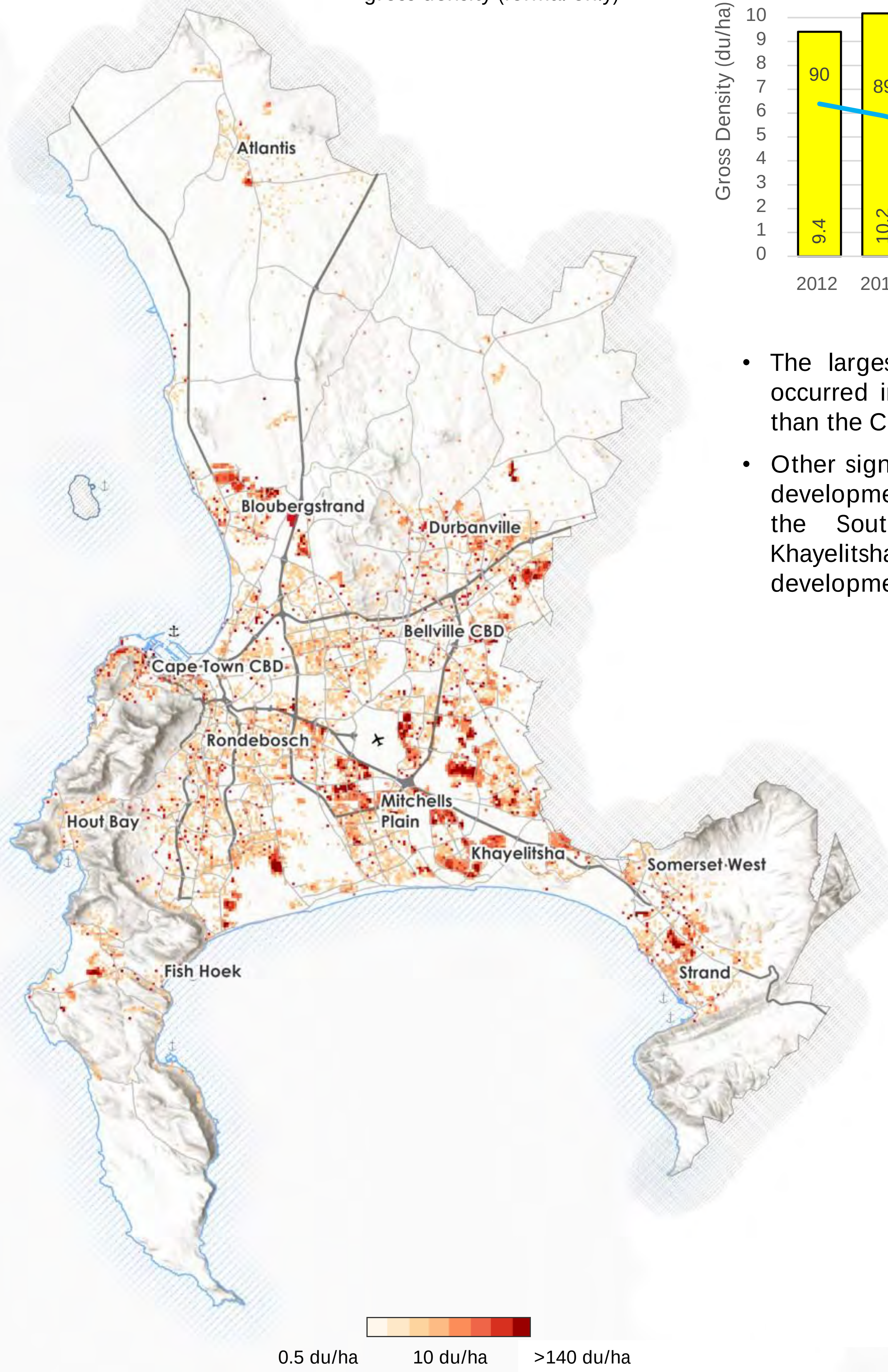
Map C3-b shows the 2022 residential density of formal dwellings (expressed in dwelling units per hectare or DU/ha), i.e. the spatial distribution of dwelling units.

Map C3-a on the left shows the difference in gross residential density (du/ha) between 2012 and 2022, in other words where densification has taken place to arrive at the density depicted on map C3-b.

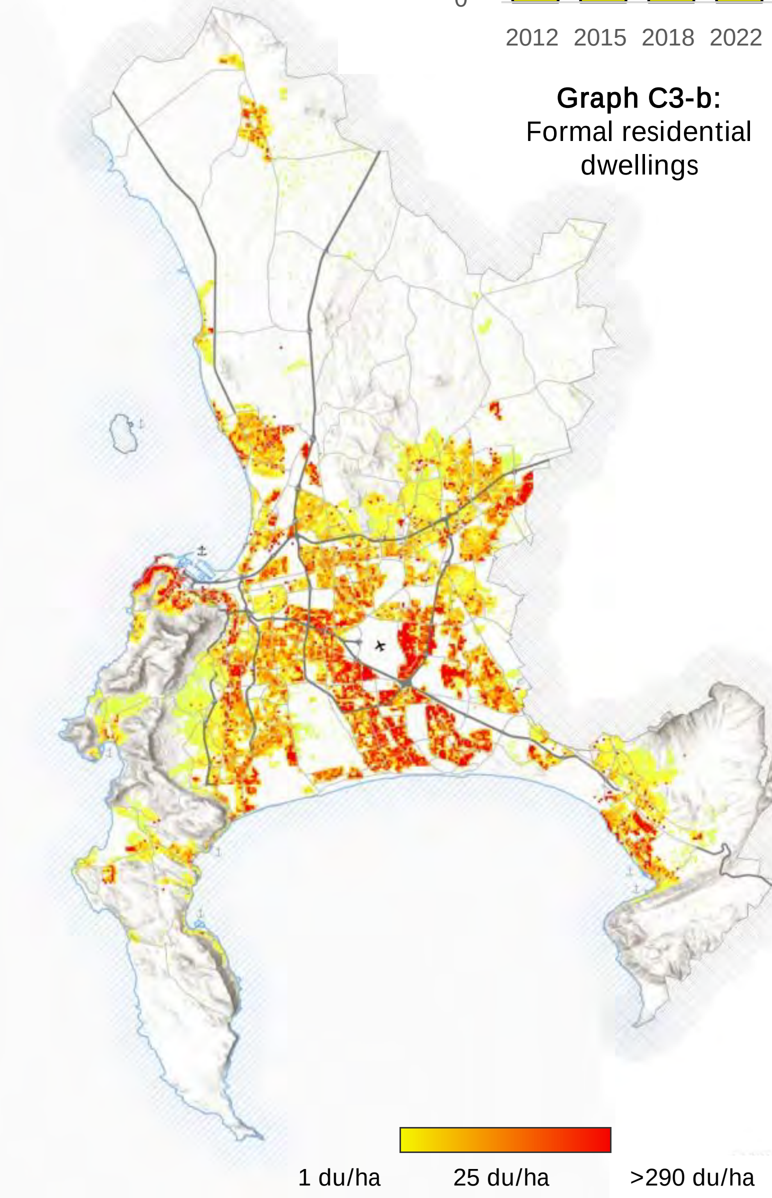
The number of formal residential dwellings increased from ±686,000 in 2012 to ±741,000 in 2015, ±783,000 in 2018 and ±850,000 in 2022 (see graph C3-b). It is of interest to note that the average unit size is ±88m² and that the gross density exhibits a clear increase across the city, albeit at varying rates (see graph C3-a).

When this is taken into consideration together with the overall city-wide increase in density, it points to the fact that densification manifests differently in different areas.

Areas exhibiting notable densification over the last few years include the Metro South East, inner city areas, the Somerset-West area, and locations along development corridors to Fisantekraal and north of Rivergate.



Map C3-a: Change in gross residential density (2012 to 2022)



Map C3-b: Gross residential density (2022)