

City installs high tech CCTV security on Vilakazi Street

Speech delivered by the Executive Mayor of Joburg, Cllr Herman Mashaba, on the occasion of installing CCTV security in Vilakazi Street, Soweto, 19 July 2017.

We are gathered in notably one of the most famous streets in South Africa and perhaps even the world.

Vilakazi Street boasts not only the homes of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates – that of former president Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu – but also serves as one of South Africa's most famous tourist attractions.

The untimely death of Mr Khwesi Hudson spoke to the state of lawlessness that was allowed to become the order of the day in our City; it was his passing that prompted me to take action.

During that visit I promised that the City would install CCTV cameras system in Vilakazi Street to enhance the safety of business owners, the public and tourists visiting this popular area.

Today, I am proud to return having delivered on my promise.

Today, 25 newly installed CCTV cameras will go online. Today's event is dedicated to the memory of the late Mr Hudson, and others like him, who have fallen victim to crime.

The Department of Public Safety has included Vilakazi Street as part its Smart City Rollout Plan.

By working together with community leaders, stakeholders, five strategic points were identified where the CCTV cameras were ultimately installed.

Running on fibre optics, the cameras are connected to the Department of Safety's Intelligence Operation Centre (IOC), where the view from each of the cameras are monitored 24 hours a day.

These cameras can zoom in to more than 150m in any direction; provide full high definition images even at night; count people; identify an abandoned or removed object; and provide intrusion detection to secure areas.

From this moment on, we will be able to monitor the area around the clock for any possible criminal activities.

I have committed my administration to help create a safe and enabling environment for business owners, and this includes the businesses in Vilakazi Street and Soweto.

With the surveillance by these cameras, I hope that as a City we can positively contribute to ensuring that the business owners in this street, and the broader area as a whole, conduct their affairs in a safe environment.

More than 700 people are employed by the restaurants in this street alone. Businesses in this street are feeding and clothing families and educating our children and many people have had their dignity restored by finding employment here.

For this reason, in keeping with international best practice, the introduction of CCTV cameras will assist with both enhancing safety in the area, as well as enhancing the entire Vilakazi precinct from both a tourist and investment perspective.

Tourism is one of the drivers that are contributing to the City's goal of achieving 5% economic growth by 2021.