

**SPEECH OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG EXECUTIVE MAYOR,
COUNCILLOR MPHO MOERANE, AT THE eJOBURG SMART BILL
MANAGEMENT PORTAL LAUNCH IN BRAAMFONTEIN ON
WEDNESDAY, 06 OCTOBER 2021**

eJoburg Project Owner, MMC for Finance, Cllr Matshidiso Mfikoe

Other Members of the Mayoral Committee present

Members of the Government of Local Unity – the GLU leadership

Local Councillors

Acting City Manager and the Executive Team

CEO of the Metropolitan Trading Company – our digital host

A special greeting to the residents of Johannesburg online

Ladies and gentlemen

Good day

THE PLIGHT OF LATE BLOOMERS

Just this week the world experienced exactly how far we have all progressed into the digital age as a new way of daily living.

The crash of Facebook and WhatsApp just a day ago created significant panic across the globe with many people expressing a serious sense of disconnection to their social cycles and the world over.

Even those who usually pretended that they did not care about what they dismissively called “these things of yours” found themselves caught up in the dysconnectivity to their loved ones, and their business contacts.

Those who were dragging their feet to adjust to the global phenomena have been gradually pushed into the new normal clearly kicking and screaming - and there is no turning back.

BECOMING A SMART CITY

Our role as the City of Johannesburg is to adapt and ensure that we meet the demands of this exciting new age and are equal to all the opportunities and challenges it presents.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have officially entered the Smart Age and only those cities and communities who appreciate what it means will survive and thrive. The level of digital awareness by the city and its people will soon become a competitive advantage in both the local and global economy. Therefore, Johannesburg cannot afford to be left behind.

The motto for our new and exciting e-Joburg service is Zenzele, meaning to be self-sufficient or to do it yourself. The launch of the e-Joburg portal is a step in Johannesburg's journey to become one of the progressive Smart cities.

In their self-titled book, Bill Price and David Jaffe, remind us that "the best service is no service". This philosophy allows the customer to serve themselves, and the eJoburg portal is exactly the platform that makes this a reality for Johannesburg residents.

eJOBURG AS A CONVINIENCE TOOL

Designed and developed in partnership with the company that created SARS' eFiling system, eJoburg is a new and improved tool for delivering smart municipal services.

This is one area where we know we can improve service delivery, improve revenue collection and reduce costs for all those who live in Johannesburg.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is Smart City in practice. What do we then mean by a Smart City?

In the Johannesburg Growth and Development Strategy – the GDS2040 - we defined a Smart City as a city that uses Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an enabler to merge dimensions of smart utilities, smart mobility, smart economy, as well as smart planning and smart governance, among others.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The eJoburg portal is an outcome of long-term planning to take the City of Johannesburg into the Smart City age. The portal is designed to drive automation and self-service - providing convenience to the people of Johannesburg while reducing the load on the city's personnel and resources.

This means our staff will deal with less manual processes and queries, resulting in a higher level of services for those who need to make physical contact with us.

The portal can be accessed from a computer, a cellphone, tablet and even through WhatsApp. Once most residents adjust to the convenience offered by the eJoburg portal, then you can expect to find shorter queues and quicker turnaround times in our walk-in centres.

What is more of benefit to residents, our eJoburg services will be available 24-hours and 365 days a year. This means you will be able to view and pay your account any other day of the week, including Sunday and a public holiday, from wherever in the world you may be.

As of today, the City's residents, especially ratepayers, can register and be authenticated on the portal to start viewing and transacting on their municipal accounts.

For property management agents or businesses with many accounts, the portal offers the ability to create a group account that will enable an authenticated user to register additional users they can delegate their bills management to as a third party.

This means that I can delegate my account to my wife to pay on my behalf, or my mother can delegate her account to any of her children to pay on her behalf.

Ladies and gentlemen,

That is the kind of Smart City Johannesburg has become.

Following today's launch of the eJoburg portal, residents who are already registered users of the City's existing eServices platform, will start receiving a secure email with a link to the improved and officially named eJoburg portal.

All you need to do is choose your username and password, and you will be registered on the new service with your first, or only account automatically linked.

Now, that is how a Smart City should be.

Once registered, residents can easily make payments directly to the city. The service provides for ratepayers to select from a range of payment methods, including a secure instructed debit pull option.

Paying the city using our eJoburg services benefits both the City and the ratepayer as the City receives payments directly and immediately. Furthermore, all payments made through eJoburg are stored in the portal history for future reference.

I strongly encourage residents use our payment services, which are secured and integrated with the banking infrastructure. This will help us better serve you while reducing costs and eliminating manual intervention.

SMART METER READING

Ladies and gentlemen,

The start of any municipal statement is the meter reading. We will therefore soon implement meter reading integration with e-Joburg. This will allow ratepayers to capture their water and electricity reading to create the statement.

Gone are the days of estimations. This will go a long way in ensuring accuracy of the statement and naturally reduce queries and complaints.

In the very near future, residents will be able to log a complaint relating to services provided by the City and receive a reference number without having to speak to a single person.

This is what is in store on the eJoburg portal.

I am certain that once you have used it, you will agree that Johannesburg have made some progress in becoming a Smart City.

I therefore call on all Johannesburg residents to give the eJoburg portal a chance and be part of the progressive digital age.

No one must be left behind.

I thank you.