

**SPEECH BY CITY OF JOHANNESBURG EXECUTIVE MAYOR,
CLLR PARKS TAU, AT JOSHCO'S 10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY AND THE CITY
DEEP PROJECT LAUNCH, CITY DEEP**

3 DECEMBER 2014

Her Excellency, the Minister of Human Settlements, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Senior Government Officials

JOSHCO Board of Directors

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me, on behalf of the City of Johannesburg, to express gratitude to all of you who have joined us here today to celebrate 10 years of affordable rental housing delivery by the Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO).

In celebration of this milestone, JOSHCO has launched the City Deep Social Housing project, which is one of the flagships of its remarkable work in the past decade.

The City's housing vision

Ladies and gentlemen, Member of the Mayoral Committee for Housing, Cllr Bonakele Dan Bovu, has already briefly touched on the establishment of JOSHCO. I wish to take you back to the City's sustainable housing approach that has brought us to where we are today.

In October 2012 we adopted the City's vision which is built around ten priorities. Two of these priorities that are relevant for today's engagement include financial sustainability and resilience as well as sustainable human settlements. The

Johannesburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy – the GDS – clearly articulates our vision to become a resilient, liveable and sustainable city. The projects on show today complement this vision. These projects are also in line with the “Breaking New Ground Policy” set out by the National Department of Human Settlements.

How City delivers sustainable housing

The City’s housing vision is to deliver sustainable human settlements that are safe, affordable, adequately serviced and most importantly, well located to urban opportunities.

In a bid to realise this, the City of Johannesburg has been facilitating the delivery of these sustainable human settlements through the following interventions;

- The delivery at scale of adequate housing in sustainable human settlements;
- Mobilisation of well-located public land for low income and affordable housing with increased densities in this land and in general;
- Ensuring higher built densities, appropriate housing forms with a variety of tenure types, and the densification of existing residential areas;
- Supporting the functioning of the entire single residential property market to reduce duality within the sector;
- Intelligent informal settlement upgrading with a strong economic, public and green infrastructure focus; and
- Effective management of housing environments.

Through our Sustainable Human Settlement Urbanisation Plan (SSHUP), up we have been able to, for example, utilise housing demand and opportunities model to inform strategic plans and policies, identify and secure public owned land within strategic areas, identify and implement state sponsored housing projects as well as introduce incentives to enhance private sector involvement.

The City's priorities

Ladies and gentlemen, JOSHCO's work is within the stated ambit of the City's vision, which is built around the City's key priorities. These priorities are the important bridge linking us to the future through our decisions on the allocation of resources and carefully considered implementation programmes. Through these, the City realises the objectives of developmental local government.

One of the priorities, mentioned earlier, is **our sustainable human settlements programme**, which extends and includes the Corridors of Freedom. The Corridors of Freedom is a long-term development programme, of which its key objective is to address spatial, social and economic inequality in our City.

Three key development priority areas have been identified in line with the Corridors of Freedom. These can be identified as the; linking of the Johannesburg Central Business District - with Alexandra and Sandton via Louis Botha Avenue; Soweto to the CBD along Empire and Perth Streets, and the Turffontein node.

The intention is that the City's residents live closer to their workplaces and are able to reside, work and play within the same vicinity without having to use private motorised transport.

This way, they save on the cost of transport. Indeed, in this regard JOSHCO has also played a significant role. The company has been providing housing for those people in the City who often fall between the cracks and they are commonly referred to as the gap market.

These are the people who earn an income that is either too low to qualify for a bond or too high to qualify for an RDP house. This category of people is those who earn between R3 500 and R7 500 per month, and many spend a large portion of their income on public transport to travel between work and home.

JOSHCO's delivery highlights

Ladies and gentlemen, JOSHCO's mandate as the City of Johannesburg's affordable housing delivery vehicle includes:

- managing all council-owned rental accommodation
- managing and refurbishing staff and public hostels
- developing new rental stock and implementing other mutually agreed housing developments
- providing housing management services and turn-around strategies, where necessary.

Minister Sisulu, I am happy to announce that for the last 10 years JOSHCO has fulfilled its mandate, and continues to do so, by providing decent, affordable, clean and secure rental accommodation - thus significantly improving the lives of an important section of our people who might otherwise lose out.

The City Deep Housing project is a shining example of the City's drive to deliver sustainable housing in good locations that are along transport corridors.

In resettling our people, we are creating a non-racial society where people from different walks of life and social groups can live in harmony and peace. We often talk about social cohesion: this is social cohesion in action. This is a step towards renewing, reclaiming, healing and re-stitching the City, which was fragmented by apartheid.

Through the Corridors of Freedom programme, we are also bringing our people closer to their places of work and to the amenities which improve the quality of life for young and old.

To date, JOSHCO has invested more than R1.8 billion towards making Johannesburg a more liveable city, providing more than 7 000 homes to our people, refurbished and constructed 8 749 units.

In addition, JOSHCO has received an unqualified audit over the past eight years. We are filled with a sense of pride as we celebrate JOSHCO's achievements.

JOSHCO projects

Ladies and gentlemen, let me outline some of the projects that JOSHCO has undertaken in the past 10 years, leading to the restoration of the dignity of thousands of people in this City:

- The City Deep Social Housing Project, which we are launching today, boasts 708 units. A total of 380 of these are conversions from hostel dwellings and 328 have been developed as new greenfield units. This project has already won the South African Housing Foundation award for Best Social Housing Project in 2014. We are set to complete this project in 2015, with amenities such as roads, pedestrian walkways and gardens in place.
- Another project is the Fleurhof Estate integrated development - with flats of 452 units that have one or two bedrooms. It is located on the Main Reef Road - 9.8 kilometres from the city centre. The Fleurhof Estate development offers residents amenities such as schools, parks, shops and places of work in close proximity.
- The Bothlabela Social Housing project, with 520 units, is located in Alexandra, a township once under vicious attack by apartheid. This is also where the late President Nelson Mandela, whose passing a year ago we will be commemorating this Friday, 5th of December, once lived.
- Another is the Casa Mia Social Housing project in Hillbrow with 179 completed units. The Hillbrow, Yeoville and Berea area, as we all know, is the vibrant melting pot of South Africa with people from the African Diaspora, South Africa and elsewhere.
- Last, but not least, is the Kliptown Square Social Housing project in Soweto with 478 completed units. Kliptown, now one of the country's heritage sites, is where the Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955.

Minister Sisulu, these are but some of the few projects undertaken by JOSHCO. More similar projects are in the pipeline, and we have an ambitious, but achievable, plan

to increase the number of housing units to more than 13 600 by the end of June 2017.

Closing – The book about JOSHCO for the Minister

In closing, Honourable Minister Sisulu, I would like to say to you that JOSHCO's excellent work in the past decade has been captured in a coffee-table book titled *Places where people love to live: JOSHCO'S first ten years*.

I have read this book. It is a short but well written and informative read. It offers fresh perspectives and, without patronising anybody, covers the history of human settlements and the problems and opportunities that arise. In particular, it covers the dynamics of settlements in South Africa from apartheid to post-apartheid times.

It critically analysis the history and developmental work of JOSHCO from humble beginnings in 2004, first as Zonkizizwe to the giant that JOSHCO is today - delivering cheap and affordable rental houses to our people.

The book is wonderfully laid out and has numerous illustrations, especially of new and sometimes of skilfully restored and repurposed buildings, breathing life into our City.

It also gives the reader an excellent visual sense of the city's various developmental projects. This includes turning dilapidated buildings into family homes, bringing dignity and togetherness into the lives of many families.

The book has obvious appeal to a wide range of readers - students, academics and the ordinary citizens of our City, and more particularly to those involved in the making and remaking of a city like ours – who are working energetically to overcome the bondage of apartheid social engineering and town planning.

We have printed copies of the book, Honourable Minister Sisulu. As the City of Johannesburg Executive Mayor, I have the very great honour and privilege of presenting a copy of the book to you.

Thank you