

Launch of the Growth and Development Livable Theme

10 August 2011

Briefing notes by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Mpho Parks Tau, on the occasion of the launch of the growth and development livable theme at Emoyeni – Johannesburg

WELCOME to the first theme of the Growth and Development Plan – Liveable Cities. Our goal is to get the basics right through improved service delivery and to start moving towards a City administration which can both conceptualise and realise plans which will accelerate growth and transformation in the City.

The GDS is currently based on the same principles as set out in the 2006 GDS, these are:

- Supporting the Poor
- Diversified and Inclusive Economy
- Building Sustainable Human Settlements
- Resource Security and Environmental Sustainability
- Achieving Social Inclusion
- Promoting Good Governance

The current draft GDS (July 2011) has identified a number of focus areas which outline various goals and objectives. The focus areas identified in the draft GDS are:

- Liveable Cities
- Resource Sustainability
- Health and Poverty
- Governance
- Transport
- Community Safety
- Environment
- Economic Growth
- Smart City

These goals will help us to shape the vision of Johannesburg. We call on all the people of Johannesburg to engage with us on these various themes in the next nine week public outreach programme, we urge communities to engage us on these critical issues.

Liveable Cities

Liveability means different things to different people as their day-to-day experiences will differ according to their circumstances. However, most of you will agree that the following underpins the liveable concept:

- Safety/Crime
- International Connectivity
- Quality Architecture
- Transport
- Environmental Issues, e.g. (Climate Change and Global Warming)
- Open Space
- Urban Design

- Business Conditions
- Proactive Policy Developments (e.g. poverty, water scarcity, demand site management, etc.)
- Stability
- Health Care
- Culture & Environment
- Education
- Infrastructure
- Housing

The Draft GDS identifies several challenges that must be addressed to improve the livability of the City. These challenges include:

- The environmental impact of the City's traffic congestion and reliance on private transport pose a challenge to sustainable resource management.
- The City to cater for the needs of the poor – access to public transport and affordability of transportation is important.
- Spatial segregation has resulted in long travelling distances and major portions of disposable incomes spent on transport for a large part of the city's population.
- Population densities in Joburg are low and the development patterns created by urban sprawl are not supportive of efficient transportation systems.
- Private developer led housing developments (townhouse complexes) have created islands of exclusion adding another layer to an already fractured and divided city. Johannesburg has the highest number of road closures and secured estates in South Africa.
- Though at a slow rate, the growth rate of the city increasingly places pressure on providing housing (in all income brackets).
- The City is also faced with the challenges of improving the living conditions in existing areas where there are still backlogs in terms of housing provision.
- Housing solutions need to acknowledge and respond to changing demographics and increased diversities.
- Joburg is facing the challenges of water supply, water demand and water quality.
- Joburg's economy is resource intensive and needs to move to more renewable resources.
- The management of solid waste needs to be changed.
- The City will experience the impacts of climate change, most visible in increased flooding.
- The City has a significant funding gap, which, unless bridged, will imply adverse consequences for long term service delivery.

The 2040 GDS document proposes a series of goals and objectives to address the challenges identified above. The following describes some of the GDS goals:

- Building liveable communities and thereby improving the health and well-being of all our communities

Objective 1: Reducing urban sprawl

- To reduce urban sprawl by using incentives, mechanisms, land use controls and planning to densify strategic locations in the City.

Objective 2: Adopt incremental tenure approach

- There are two critical issues that need to be addressed with regards to informal settlement upgrading.
 - Firstly the location of the settlement, upgrading on the periphery of the City come at huge social costs to communities the high cost of transportation exacerbates poverty in informal settlements.
 - The second issue is ensuring tenure but tenure that is far more flexible and does not lock the urban poor into a serviced RDP stand.
- The incremental upgrading tenure approach is critical in this regard and must be adopted as an approach and method for ensuring better well located settlements and tenure that can be strengthened and upgraded over time.

Objective 3: Increase small-scale rental supply

- Affordable rental to households earning less than R 3500 a month will be a priority in the future, giving residents far more rental choices and options.
- It will involve harnessing the power of small-scale renters across the city.
- It will involve developing regulation and incentives for small-scale renters.
- These interventions may range from adjusting town planning regulation for backyard shacks in township areas, to providing incentives for increasing supply of garden cottages in suburbs to improving quality of rental stock inner city suburbs.
- Small-scale rental already supplies accommodation in townships.
- In the future the potential for broader reach both in terms supply and economic opportunity will be maximised.
- The City must develop innovative regulations for standards and service levels.
- The scale of affordable rental has been limited but would be increased over the coming decades.
- This is important to ensure more housing choice and mobility in the City.

Objective 4: Transform our townships

- 49% of Johannesburg's population live in townships there are significant opportunities for increasing small-scale rental in township areas while simultaneously improving the quality of the built environment in townships.
- The city will scale up its efforts to transform townships.
- This will involve developing transformative plans and using finance e.g. Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant and private sector capital to drive new capital investment in townships.

Objective 5: Building an Inner City for the future

- The Inner City represents many of the liveable urban features we aspire to building by 2040.
- It offers appropriate densities, high levels of economic intensity and is the most walkable space within the Joburg. There have been considerable positive developments in the Inner City.

- The focus to transform the Inner City is through major improvement and investment in infrastructure, new housing and turnaround of 'bad buildings'- the City needs a major capital works programme to generate jobs and drive new growth in the construction sector.

Objective 6: Promote compact and dense CBDs across the City

- Localised CBDs will be developed and promoted with increased densities, mixed use developments and potential for City Improvement Districts.
- Townships are currently characterised by medium population density in single dwelling low rise housing.
- The built form may change over time with consolidation and parcelling of individual erfs

We call on Civil Society to partake in the special roundtables where we will be ready to listen to the residents of Johannesburg input to shape the future together.

This is "Joburg our city, our future, we are all players, so let's get involved".

Thank you