

Launch of the Joburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy (GDS)

21 October 2011

Speech by the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, CLR Mpho Parks Tau, on the occasion of the launch of the Joburg 2040 growth and development strategy (GDS), fnb stadium “Soccer City” – Johannesburg

Introduction

Fellow Citizens, honoured guests, friends, it is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to share this day with you and to be part of this very important event – the launch of the Joburg 2040 Growth and Development and Strategy (GDS).

Not far from here, fifty six years ago, the Freedom Charter was adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown on the 26th of June 1955.

The Freedom Charter talks of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and a prosperous society as well as one characterised by socio-economic prosperity and advancement.

The Freedom Charter requires all of us; the government, civil society organisations as well as local communities to work together. It is in the same spirit that we have included all voices to collaborate in producing our shared vision for Johannesburg.

Towards the 2011 Local Government Elections, we committed to working together with the people to build better communities

It is from this basis that the Joburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy was borne.

We have collectively decided to review the 2006 GDS based on the context that we are now faced with. We also realised that the City will have to become more resilient in order to adapt to these changes and challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, food insecurity and increasing inequality - to name but a few.

Subsequently, the draft GDS 2040 Strategy was launched which formed the basis of our outreach process with stakeholders.

The GDS Outreach Process

The objectives of the GDS Outreach process were:

- to open up a public discourse on the key challenges confronting the City;
- to obtain input and suggestions from stakeholders and local communities ; and
- to capture the imagination of Joburg residents and stakeholders around the city’s visioning process

Programme Director, throughout the nine weeks we have engaged a wide range of stakeholders and we acknowledge the participation of: academics, technical experts, learners, community organisations, informal traders, people with disabilities, business chambers and forums, educational institutions, as well as the dedicated effort and unwavering commitment by the citizens of this great city.

It is clear that the GDS Outreach Process has also made great strides in bringing the citizens of Johannesburg closer to the City of Johannesburg.

We received new ideas, fresh insights, valuable and constructive criticism prompting the update of the strategy. We released a 58-page draft strategy on 2 August 2011; but today we have a 118 page City Strategy that has been extensively developed and has inspired a shared sense of ownership. Once again Programme Director, it is our duty to express deep gratitude and appreciation to all of those who have added their contribution towards this collaborative initiative.

The GDS outreach process has been of tremendous significance in building a collective and shared vision of the future city of Johannesburg that we all aspire to live in.

Our vision

Programme Director, we have agreed on a common vision for the future. The vision has been developed by capturing the important values, aspirations and ideals that various stakeholders expressed throughout the GDS outreach process.

Our collective vision is about:

“Johannesburg - a World Class African City of the Future – a vibrant, equitable African city, strengthened through its diversity; a city that provides real quality of life; a city that provides sustainability for all its citizens; a resilient and adaptive society.”
Joburg. My City – Our Future!

Real quality of life requires that everyone enjoys easy access to a range of services that improves their quality of life and enhances their sense of belonging and patriotism.

We will partner with the people of this city to constantly find new ways of expressing and celebrating our diversity.

Equally we commit ourselves to embracing the important position on the African continent, that we will be a city that embraces its African identity representing the spontaneity and vibrancy of our diverse cities across this continent.

We will be a sustainable, liveable and resilient society by 2040. To be sustainable we will ensure that the collective citizen's needs of the future are not compromised by the actions of individuals. We will be a society that acts in unison as a collective and places the needs of the collective before the needs of individuals.

GDS Roadmap: Towards Implementation

Programme Director, on 10-11 October 2011 the GDS Lekgotla was held wherein we all agreed and acknowledged that:

- We are faced with a number of developmental challenges and in many instances the issues that confront us are similar to that which is on the agenda major cities in the world – from Lagos, New York, London, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo and others.
- Our City is more than tarmac and concrete- it is also about socio-economic development, transformation and redress;
- From a service delivery point of view, we are all of the issues that need to be addressed in the short-medium and long term.

Furthermore, based on the input and issues raised by stakeholders and communities during the GDS outreach process, it has become very evident for us that we need to “Change the course”.

We will re-direct and reorient our collective energy to a new direction so that we work collectively as a City with all Departments focusing on achieving the short term goals so as to pave the way for the long-term realisation of the GDS. We also need to build on the lessons and best practices of the last 3 months- service delivery imperatives programme.

Programmer Directors, we also agreed that there was a need for governance and institutional reform with efficiency being an integral part of the GDS which is in line with commitment of building a responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system.

Our primary focus will remain firmly fixed on human development and on improving the quality of life of our people across all regions and all communities. All of this will be done within the context of fiscal responsibility and according to the high standards of prudent financial management we have set ourselves and process on the road of developmental local governance and changing the spatial structure of a divided city of the past

In the short term Programme Director, we have identified number interventions and these include:

- Reprioritisation of our expenditure (budget) to address revenue challenges, infrastructure and systems to align our trajectory into the GDS 2040.
- Addressing the issues of unaccounted water and electricity as well illegal connections
- Improving commercial losses
- Improving stakeholder relations and enhance the quality of interaction with residents and clients in the spirit of Batho Pele.

We would like to reiterate our commitment of ensuring that in the City of Johannesburg, excellence in basic service delivery and operational efficiencies, controls and accountability becomes that norm and these are non-negotiable.

We will expedite the process of developing of concrete programmes and flagship initiatives for both medium to long term and these will be announce during the State of City Address as part of the revised Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Budget in 2012.

Closing remarks

Early today, the sitting of Council unanimously adopted the Joburg 2040 strategy. As Councillors, we agreed to work together in our respective roles to take forward this, the views of the people we represent.

We recognise that the real work of the Growth and Development Strategy starts now. We accepted the collective responsibility to make the choices we are called upon to make. We are committed to ensuring that mechanisms are put in place to implement to continuously evaluate our work.

The time has come for all of us to assume responsibility as a collective, roll up our sleeves and dedicate ourselves to the task at hand. The people of Joburg deserve this from all of us.

Working together, let us continue to build Johannesburg into a World Class African City for all! Together with the people of this great City, we are building better communities and building a better Johannesburg.

Thank you