

Official launch of Orlando Pre-World Cup games and issuing of title deeds

14 May 2010

Speech by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Amos Masondo, on the occasion of the official launch of Orlando Pre-World Cup games and issuing of title deeds, Orlando Stadium, Soweto – Johannesburg

Programme Director – MMC for Housing: Cllr Ruby Mathang

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Fellow Councillors

Managers and Officials of Council

Representatives of Civil Society Organisations

The Community of Greater Soweto

Distinguished Guests

The Media

Programme Director, 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 Orlando Pre-World Cup Games and Issuing of Title Deeds.

Perhaps it appropriate to remind ourselves that today, it is a mere twenty seven (27) days before the kickoff to the much anticipated 2010 FIFA World Cup. The City of Johannesburg is on track and ready to host the World Cup. We are ready to welcome all spectators and visitors. The opening and closing ceremonies will be held here in Joburg. The opening game and the finals will be played here. Now we know Johannesburg will host 15 games.

In order to comply with the FIFA regulations the 2010 stadiums have undergone extensive upgrade and construction. Soccer City and Ellis Park Stadiums have been identified as venues for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Furthermore, Orlando, Dobsonville, Rand and Ruimsig stadiums have been identified as training venues.

Programme Director, the winners of Orlando Pre-World Cup Games today will be winning in more one way. We also gather here today to present the title deeds to residents of Orlando.

In the past sixteen (16) years significant progress has been made. More than 2, 7 million houses have been built. This, however, does not mean that we should not acknowledge that there is much, much more to be done.

To fully appreciate what has been achieved, we need to pose a few questions to ourselves:

What does it mean to own a house and the ground on which the house is built? What are the developmental and economic opportunities that present themselves to the owners of such properties? Judging from where we come from, to what extent does such ownership serve as an indicator of progress?

Let us not forget that we are emerging from that period in our history that restricted home ownership to a privileged few, the era of institutionalised racism that sought to deny all those other than whites, ownership of property in general and that of the land in particular. Part of this was to deny the majority of our people their dignity. Thus our struggle was for freedom, equality, justice and human rights.

When our people were forcibly removed from Sophia Town, they were relocated to Soweto mainly to Orlando East, which was registered under Section 43 of the Deeds Registries Act, No.47 of 1937 as a farm portion called Klipspruit 318 I.Q.

When the former president Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela announced that the Greater Soweto areas and less formal township houses would be transferred to the beneficiaries for freehold ownership, Orlando East was not a formalised township hence the transfer of a leasehold title deeds.

Some of the beneficiaries of this community bought the same properties from the Old West Rand Administration Board and Soweto City Council and they received leasehold title deeds prior to the Madiba's announcement.

The City of Johannesburg started the process to convert the township from leasehold to freehold in September 2009 and involved obtaining the following from the Surveyor General's office:

Approved General plans and servitudes, and

Approved Consolidation or subdivision diagram relevant to the formation of general plans.

The Conveyancer had to:

Peruse the conditions of establishment and requests for any amendments,

Peruse section 110 letter stating that all pre-proclamation conditions have been complied with,  
Peruse section 70 of 1970 consent stating that land is not agricultural land as envisaged by the Act,  
Obtain consent from Eskom to register any relevant Servitude,  
Obtain the Original title deed of the farm portion,  
Register any relevant servitudes or liaison with Attorneys of Eskom and Rand Water Board, and  
Apply for opening of Township Register and attending to the registration in the Deeds Office.

The Conveyancer further facilitated a process of ensuring that other General plans that were cancelled are not included in the conditions for freehold by the Surveyor General including Servitudes.

The pre – proclamation conditions were amended accordingly to comply with freehold conditions instead of leasehold.

A township register was opened with a Title number T84755/2009 at the Pretoria deeds office in respect of Orlando East and the farm portion was then Registered as a township on the 9th of December 2009 declaring Orlando East a Freehold Township with effect from this date.

On the 3rd of May 2010 Orlando Stadium celebrated its 51st anniversary and today we announce that this township in which the 2010 FIFA World Cup concert is going to take place is now a formalised and registered township. This means that these titles we are handing over today are no longer under leasehold but under freehold.

Programme Director, this also means that beneficiaries have full ownership of their properties. These title deeds that you are receiving today should be kept in a secure place.

I would also like to urge the beneficiaries of these houses to treat them as assets and where possible they should insure them. They should write wills in order to formalise a process of succession of ownership and avoid family disputes and irregular selling of the properties.

Those who have received leasehold title deeds in the past can now go to the Orlando office with effect from the 24th of May 2010 with their title deeds and ID documents where the City of Johannesburg officials will assist in receiving and recording their receipt. They will facilitate with the Deeds office to have their title deeds endorsed with a stamp that would convert them from leasehold to freehold.

Once the transfers from Pretoria Deeds office has transferred the conditions of the title deed to the Johannesburg Deeds office as well as the servitude conditions from Eskom and Rand Water Board to finalise the conditions of individual properties the City will immediately proceed to transfer the affected properties to the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will be notified through call notes once their title deeds have been endorsed and converted.

In our Growth and Development Strategy we committed ourselves to the concept of sustainable human settlements. We also made a pledge that "the City of Johannesburg will strive to be inclusive and ensure that the poor are taken out of poverty and helped to climb the ladder of prosperity".

Programme Director, today I can proudly say that the City of Johannesburg has fulfilled its commitment of sustainable human settlement.

Sustainable human settlement is not just about housing. It is also about providing secure and dignified residential environments. To this end the City has transferred and still continues to transfer thousands of title deeds to new owners who have occupied houses on a long-term basis for decades.

This township which was under a farm portion is a landmark of Soweto. It consists of world known names such as Orlando Stadium, Orlando Pirates, Orlando High School, Orlando Power Station, etc.

This area is a home to people who contributed to our struggle heroes and legends from various sporting codes and entertainment areas.

In conclusion, Programme Director, please let me wish all the teams the best. Let the best team win!

Thank you