



Dear CoJ Employee

I am happy to announce that the City's Council has approved our plan for tackling the housing challenge within the inner city and creating safe, clean and connected communities with access to economic opportunities.

On Thursday, Council made 12 City owned properties available for the purpose of creating quality low cost housing within the inner city. Since coming into office, revitalising the inner city has been a critical component of our administration.

There is no doubt that one of the highest challenges we face in the inner city is access to affordable housing and the increase in hijacked buildings.

It is estimated that some 30 000 accommodation units are required in the short term to address the needs of the most vulnerable households within the City.

The City has conducted an audit of some 500 bad buildings, 84 of which are confirmed as hijacked. 24 of the 500 bad buildings belong to the City. All of these buildings represent opportunities for creating affordable housing.

Through the Inner City Housing Implementation Plan, we are set to make the inner city housing market work better for the poor.

Public-Private partnerships are crucial to this strategic approach.

A number of private role players already operate within the City providing social housing. Working together with these private developers, the City will be better able to meet the increasing demand for quality low income housing.

To create incentives which bring more partners on board, the City has committed to fast-tracking development approval requirements and providing required bulk infrastructure services for driving development.

In the coming week, the City will invite private partners to submit proposals for the development of our 12 buildings. In assessing these proposals, chief amongst the City's considerations will be:

- the investment to be made in developing the buildings;
- the number of high density units to be developed within the building;
- the cost of rentals to be charged given the City's priority for the provision of accommodation for low income households and students;
- the degree of skills development set to take place through artisanal training during the construction phase; and
- the number of jobs created and skills transferred during and post the development.

As part of our efforts to reclaim the inner city, we will continue to intensify

multidisciplinary raids within hijacked buildings in order to fight criminal slum lords who live off the desperate need of our residents. The City is also conducting socio-economic and needs audits of those living within those buildings in the hope of providing much needed support.

Further to this, the City is taking all possible steps to determine the identity of the true owners of hijacked building in order to begin the process of reclaiming these spaces. Where owners cannot be identified, the City will look to expropriate these buildings so as to utilise them for housing development.

Of course, revitalizing the inner city also requires we address safety, cleanliness and access to economic opportunities within the City. To this end, the JMPD has recruited 1500 new officers who will provide enhanced visible policing within the inner city.

The City has already allocated R50 million to Pikitup to include a third shift to clean the inner city.

I am confident that by working together with all sectors of society, we will be able to turn the inner city into the heartbeat of the City and a place of opportunity for all our residents.

**Cllr Herman Mashaba**  
**Executive Mayor**  
**City of Johannesburg**