



a world class African city

City of Johannesburg
Office of the Executive Mayor
City Manager's Office

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16 April 2026

Attention: Board of Directors

The Johannesburg Heritage Foundation
Northwards, 21 Rockridge Road,
Parktown, Johannesburg,
2193

Email: mail@joburgheritage.org.za

RE: STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING RECORDS AT METRO CENTRE AND PLANNED DIGITISATION AND ARCHIVAL PROCESS

Dear Members of the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation,

I am in receipt of your correspondence dated 31 March 2026 regarding the status and safeguarding of records currently housed at the Metro Centre. The City of Johannesburg acknowledges and shares the Foundation's commitment to preserving records of significant historical, architectural, and planning value.

1. Current Operational Status and Safeguarding

Following the Council's decision to vacate Metro Centre on short notice, a substantial volume of Development Planning records remained on-site. We recognize that these documents—including building plans and town planning records—carry immense administrative and heritage weight.

To ensure the continuity of our statutory mandates, such as development assessment and compliance enforcement, the following measures are currently in place:

- **Controlled Access:** The City Manager has authorized limited, daily access for officials to retrieve essential files.
- **Interim Security:** All records remain safeguarded within the building under these controlled conditions pending their final relocation.

2. Long-Term Preservation and Digitisation Strategy

The City has adopted a dual-action strategy to modernize access while ensuring permanent preservation:

- **Comprehensive Digitisation:** The City's GICT department has appointed **Microsoft** to undertake a systematic digitisation project. This process includes sorting, cataloguing, indexing, and high-quality scanning to ensure data integrity.
- **Electronic Integration:** Once digitised, records will be integrated into a secure



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electronic system. This will facilitate efficient access for officials and, where legally permissible, members of the public.

- **Archival Transfer:** In accordance with archival legislation, all physical records will be transferred to the **Gauteng Provincial Archives** for long-term custodianship.

We are currently engaging with provincial authorities to ensure all transfers comply with strict archival protocols.

3. Commitment to Heritage

The City remains firm in its duty to protect these records. We view the digitisation and archival transfer programme as the most sustainable solution to prevent the deterioration of these assets while enhancing their accessibility for future generations.

We welcome continued engagement with the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation and remain open to input that may further strengthen our preservation efforts.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Floyd Brink".

Dr. Floyd Brink

City Manager

City of Johannesburg

Date: 16/04/2026