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Media Release

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Metro Centre Modernisation Forms Part of Johannesburg's Digital Future

The City of Johannesburg acknowledges recent public commentary regarding the Metro Centre and understands the concern this has generated among residents and stakeholders.

While public discourse has focused on the condition of a legacy municipal asset, it is equally important that residents are presented with the full picture - one that reflects the decisive work currently underway to modernise City systems, protect critical institutional records, and advance Johannesburg's Smart City agenda.

Under the leadership of City Manager Dr Floyd Brink, the City administration has since the beginning of this year been driving a deliberate programme of institutional reform aimed at strengthening governance, improving operational efficiency, and ensuring long-term service delivery resilience.

The Metro Centre transition forms part of a broader strategic transformation away from outdated, paper-based systems toward integrated digital governance that is more secure, efficient, and fit for a modern metropolitan government.

City Manager Dr Floyd Brink said the City's responsibility is not merely to manage legacy infrastructure challenges, but to actively implement sustainable solutions that strengthen institutional capability and improve service delivery for residents.

"Johannesburg is a city in transition and transformation. Responsible governance requires that we confront inherited operational challenges honestly, while implementing practical, future-focused solutions. Our residents must be assured that this administration is taking decisive action to protect critical City records, modernise our systems, and build a smarter, more resilient municipal government capable of serving a world-class city."

Through the Development Planning Department and the Group Information Technology, the City is implementing a structured records preservation and digitisation programme to secure critical planning documentation and improve governance, access to information, and operational efficiency.

Executive Director of Development Planning, Eric Raboshakga, said the work currently underway represents a significant milestone in safeguarding the City's institutional planning records while modernising how these records are managed.

“For many years, municipalities have relied heavily on physical records systems that are increasingly vulnerable to environmental risks and operational inefficiencies. What we are doing now is taking decisive steps to preserve critical planning information while ensuring these records become more accessible, secure, and future-ready through digitisation.”

Significant progress has already been achieved:

- All scanning equipment required for the digitisation programme has been delivered, installed, and is operational;
- Deployment of the digital records management system into the City’s quality assurance environment has been completed;
- Network mapping of scanning infrastructure to the staging environment is being finalised;
- Metadata configuration is being completed to enable full operational testing and workflow readiness;
- More than 30 boxes of planning records have already been packed and prepared for digitisation;
- Integration work between the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) and City property management platforms has commenced;
- Multiple high-capacity scanners, including specialised large-format scanning equipment for oversized planning documentation, are already in place.

The scanning process is scheduled to commence this month.

The City is also engaging with the Provincial Department of Sport, Arts and Culture regarding the appropriate archival preservation and transfer of physical records once the digitisation process has been completed.

This integrated approach ensures both preservation of institutional heritage and modern accessibility.

Group Chief Technology Officer Aubrey Mochela said the digitisation initiative forms a critical pillar of Johannesburg’s broader Smart City transformation programme.

“Digital transformation is no longer optional for a city of Johannesburg’s scale and complexity, it is essential. The systems currently being implemented will significantly improve how the City manages information, enhances operational continuity, strengthens governance controls, and ultimately supports faster, smarter service delivery to residents. This is foundational work for a truly modern municipal administration.”

While operational constraints, including electricity interruptions and severe weather conditions, have affected the pace of some physical processes, the City confirms that progress has continued.

The City rejects any suggestion that no action is being taken.

The evidence clearly demonstrates an administration actively addressing operational realities while simultaneously implementing reforms that position Johannesburg for the future.

The Metro Centre matter must therefore be understood within the broader context of institutional renewal and strategic modernisation and not as a static symbol of decline, but as part of an active transition toward smarter governance.

Under the leadership of Dr Floyd Brink, supported by executive management across Development Planning and Group Information and Technology, the City remains focused on delivery, innovation, transparency, and building a stronger Johannesburg for all residents.

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Issued by the City of Johannesburg

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