

SPECIAL EDITION

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JPC CEO ushers in R27 billion first biodiversity development

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JOBURG
PROPERTY COMPANY

Helen Botes: Leading the Transformation of Joburg's Property Portfolio



Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni

Helen Botes, the CEO of Joburg Property Company (JPC)

Helen Botes, the CEO of Joburg Property Company (JPC), is a dynamic and driven leader at the helm of one of South Africa's most influential entities.

With an unwavering commitment to the mandate of the JPC, Botes has been instrumental in transforming the City of Johannesburg's vast property portfolio,

managing approximately 28 000 properties on behalf of the municipality.

Her role is not just about managing real estate; it is about utilising these properties to create economic and social value for the city and its residents.

Beaming with pride Botes announced that

in May she signed an R27 billion investment on council land which would be 34 000 housing units that will be developed on this land.

Fifty hectares of commercial space will be developed 175 hectares of industrial development. A number of schools, and clinics so it's a brand new town city coming up in the south of Jo-

hannesburg.

The project which was conceptualised 12 years ago is the first biodiversity development for the City of Johannesburg.

"We did all the studies. It's the land studies, the traffic, the impact assessment studies, the environmental studies and we then conceptualized the first biodiversity development that the city would have. It's a 3 000-acre piece of land of which 2 000 hectares is undeveloped, and 1000 hectares can be developed.

"So that is by far the biggest contract that I've signed. Since I've joined

JPC, I have signed bigger contracts but this is the biggest and the most exciting one," she said.

Botes joined the JPC in 2008 when the entity only comprised 100 employees and only focused on property management. Today, the agency employs over 1000 workers after it underwent a remarkable transformation and expanded its scope to include facilities managed in 2012.

Two years later, the company further expanded with the addition of 1,200 cleaning staff, solidifying its position as a comprehensive property and facilities

management entity.

The JPC's notable developments under Botes' guidance have left an indelible mark on the City of Johannesburg. One standout project is the Council Chambers, an architectural marvel and a green-star-rated building.

The Council Chambers has garnered multiple awards and showcase the JPC's commitment to sustainable and innovative property development. Botes recalls the pride she felt when revisiting the building years later, describing it as a masterpiece brought to life by the JPC.





Notable projects Botes mentioned include Soweto Theatre, Westbank Building on Beyers Naude Drive, Diepkloof Plaza, Melrose Crossing on Corlett Drive, 27 Boxes in Melville, Newton Junction, Jabulani housing development and Orlando Ikhaya which is under construction.

In addition to high-profile projects, the JPC is also actively involved in smaller leases aimed at promoting social development. Over the past two months alone, the company has approved over 100 transactions for leases to various organizations, including NGOs, schools, and sports

clubs. Furthermore, the JPC oversees the management of taxi ranks and informal trading facilities, contributing to the economic vibrancy of the city.

Botes' leadership extends beyond property management and development. She takes the responsibility of seriously ensuring the safety and well-being of the council's employees.

When the Metro Centre, a council-owned building, was identified as a "sick building," Botes promptly brought the matter to the attention of the council. After years of advocating

for its closure and re-vamp, the council finally agreed.

The Metro Center project will mark the city's first public-private partnership from a property perspective, showcasing Botes' ability to navigate complex challenges and drive significant change.

Reflecting on her journey, Botes acknowledges the difficulties she has faced but maintains an unwavering commitment to her role. Her team's dedication and cohesion have been critical in overcoming challenges and achieving success.

As a leader, Botes emphasises the importance of resilience, perseverance, and not succumbing to fatigue. She advises that leaders must be steadfast, focused, and always maintain the respect and support of their team.

Botes finds motivation in making a difference and seeing the positive impact of her work. She relishes the opportunity to challenge herself and set ambitious goals. She cites the several JPC projects on the pipeline, as a testament to her determination and vi-

sion.

Botes believes that by stimulating economic growth and attracting investment, the projects will create job opportunities and revitalize the construction industry.

In imparting advice to the youth, the CEO emphasizes the importance of humility, hard work, and continuous learning. She encourages young professionals to focus on gaining knowledge and experience rather than obsessing over monetary rewards.

Botes detest arrogance and advocates for a humble and streetwise approach to navigating the professional world. She urges the youth to remain determined and resilient, especially in the currently tough economic climate.

“You wait your turn it is going to come if you work for it. No amount of backstabbing, complaining and crying is going to get you to where you need to get to. It’s just pure hard work,” added, the CEO.



Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni

Filling critical management positions at JPC is at the centre of the entity's turn-around strategy



JPC Board Members and Senior Managers at the entity's strategic meeting session

Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni

Enos Sithole, the newly appointed chairman of the Joburg Property Company, has his work cut as he prepares to lead the entity's turn-around strategy to shape the future of Joburg's property landscape. His

first order of business is to stabilise and address issues related to leadership at the entity.

"We are doing our best to resolve the issue of leadership (at JPC). The board is working around

the clock to make sure we resolve the issue of leadership. We have started the process," said Sithole during an interview on the sidelines of the JPC's strategic session, held at the Joburg Zoo on 14 June

2023. The aim of the strategic session was to gather diverse perspectives and explore innovative solutions to shape the future of the city's property landscape.

We also caught up with the CEO Helen Botes after she had presented a 92-page strategic docu-

ment to the board which she said had undergone extensive workshops and refinement, and was discussed in detail.

The closed meeting focused on various governance issues, the mission, vision, and values of the JPC, said Botes while emphasising the

importance of aligning the goals of the organisation with the vision of becoming a leading, innovative, and preferred public sector property and facilities management agency.

"To achieve our goal of being a leader, we must ensure that our build-



Photo by: Eddie Msweni

Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni



Kgagelo Malatji- Head of Strategy and Operations at JPC

ings and facilities management are in order.

“Our properties should be technologically advanced, utilising biometrics, and our security systems should be smart. We also need to renew leases promptly, maintain an auditable

asset register, and ensure timely responses to citizens’ needs.”

The closed session meeting took place at one of Joburg’s main attractions, the Joburg Zoo, and was attended by the newly appointed JPC board led by Sithole

and senior JPC managers led by Botes. And it came on the heels of exciting developments announced by the City of Joburg’s newly appointed Mayor, Cllr Kabelo Gwamanda.

In his maiden speech a week ago, Mayor Gw-



Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni

Lesibana Ramashafa Acting GM Facilities Management

amanda had revealed that the development of Southern Farms, one of JPC’s major projects, had been approved and the development agreement finalised for the project to commence in the 2023/24 financial year.

“This poses to us a challenge, the expectation is high on us that in the next three months, we have to deliver. The CEO (Helen Botes) has assured me that we have the capacity to deliver. The MMC has entrusted us to deliver,” Sithole said.

Vision and Mission re-revised

In addition to discussing the mission and vision, the board had examined whether the existing values of the JPC were still applicable and relevant while stressing the importance of profession-



Helen Botes JPC CEO

Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni

alism, accountability, integrity, transparency, and care within the organization, Sithole said.

The board also engaged in a robust discussion on various topics, including conducting a strength

and weakness analysis of the JPC. It was agreed that an action plan should be implemented to enhance the organization's strengths and address its weaknesses effectively.

According to Sithole human resources emerged as a top priority during the extensive deliberations. The board acknowledged the need to rebuild the HR department and ensure employee wellness as es-



JPC Chief Executive Helen Botes and the entity’s board chairman Enos Sithole during the recent Strategic Meeting

essential aspects of JPC’s future success.

Finalising the strategic document

Looking ahead, Botes said the expectations were to finalise the stra-

tegic document and seek board approval, which will set the course for JPC’s strategy over the next five years.

Aligning strategic goals with available resources and budget was also

highlighted as a critical consideration for effective implementation and also to ensure that the entity gets clean audits without findings, she said.

The strategic meeting

Photo by: Eddie Mtsweni



| Jabulile Santos, the HR Manager of Joburg Property Company (JPC)

marked an important milestone in the JPC's commitment to advancing Joburg's property landscape. By fostering innovative solutions, aligning goals with resources, and addressing

organisational challenges, the JPC aims to become a catalyst for positive change and profile elevation within the city.

Confident in the progress made, Sithole ex-

pressed his belief in achieving the set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). By focusing on winnable KPIs that can be resolved efficiently, he said he aims to elevate the company's per-

formance above the average, moving closer to the leading cities in the sector.

With the current third-quarter report standing at 63% and JPC at 30%, Sithole envisions reaching a benchmark of 60% or higher to solidify the company's reputation as an above-average performer.

And he was upbeat when he said, the board has expressed confidence that the strategic document would guide JPC's operations, enabling the company to fulfill its mission of excellence in property and facilities management for the benefit of all Joburg residents.



Enos Sithole, the Chairman of Joburg Property Company (JPC)

Joburg Property Company Encourages Youth to Take up Careers in Property Development



Delegates at the Empowoyouth Summit Media stage

With soaring rates of unemployment, particularly among the youth, the Joburg Property Company (JPC) has taken a proactive step towards addressing this critical issue, by encouraging the involvement of youth in the property industry.

Recognising the potential of the property sec-

tor to contribute to economic development, the JPC has launched a series of initiatives aimed at empowering youth and fostering their participation in the industry.

Addressing the youth attending the Empowoyouth week-long summit held at Chris Hani Stadium, Orange Farm last month, JPC acting Chief

Operating Officer Tshepo Mokataka mapped out the opportunities available at the entity to more than 1000 delegates at the entrepreneurial stage of the summit.

“The number of the youth I see here is very humbling and overwhelming. It shows the hunger to do things for



Young entrepreneur from Soweto Itumeleng

yourselves...I am here to encourage you to look at the property direction," Mokataka said.

The JPC was also one of the sponsors for the hybrid summit according to its programme, aimed at bringing the world of work to Orange Farm with 200 speakers, 100 exhibitors, 15 industry stages and 50 master-classes.

Enthusiastic young entrepreneurs set up stalls and showcased their products to thousands of delegates who attended the summit.

Mokataka first outlined the mandate of the JPC saying the entity was mandated to manage the City of Johannesburg's diverse property portfolio which has various assets classes to

maximise economic, social and financial returns for the City,

JPC prides itself on leveraging its property portfolio to ensure investment attraction and retention on council property, SMME and entrepreneurial development, job creation, economic transformation and poverty alleviation, he said.



JPC Tshapo Mokataka

Mokataka said the JPC was working in a comprehensive training and mentorship program designed to equip young individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the property sector.

The programme would expose the youth to a diverse range of topics such as property management, real estate fi-

nance, urban planning, and sustainable development.

By providing these valuable educational opportunities, the JPC is not only preparing young people for rewarding careers but also actively cultivating a pool of skilled professionals within the industry.

Additionally, the JPC was strengthening partnerships with local educational institutions, including universities and technical colleges, to ensure a seamless transition for graduates into the property industry.

By aligning the educational curriculum with the industry's demands, the JPC also aims to bridge the gap between

academic knowledge and practical skills, thereby enhancing employability prospects for young graduates.

In addition to its direct efforts to involve the youth, the JPC has also been actively engaging with property developers, investors, and stakeholders to encourage the creation of more employment opportunities within the industry.

By promoting responsible and sustainable property development, the JPC aims to attract investment, stimulate economic growth, and ultimately create a positive cycle of job creation.



File picture: Itumeleng English/African News Agency (ANA) Archives




Picture Gallery


Photos By Eddie Mtsweni





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