

PROPERTY INVESTMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

JPC's role in unlocking investment, regenerating Johannesburg and driving inclusive property development.

Joburg recovers nearly R100m in illegal billboard crackdown



Among the billboards dismantled were adverts for well-known brands.

The City of Johannesburg has recovered nearly R100 million in revenue after intensifying its crackdown on illegal outdoor advertising, with officials warning that enforcement operations will continue until all non-compliant advertising structures have been removed.

Inside Metros accompanied the City of Johannesburg, the Joburg Property Company (JPC), the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) and City Power as officials re-

moved illegally erected billboards along Republic Road and other parts of the city.

Among the billboards dismantled were advertisements for well-known brands, including Fanta, RocoMamas and Smirnoff. City officials stressed that the operation targeted illegally erected structures, not the brands being advertised.

The operation forms part of the City's "No to Il-

legal Outdoor Advertising” campaign, launched in December 2025 under the leadership of City Manager Floyd Brink.

The campaign seeks to enforce the City’s Outdoor Advertising By-Laws, recover lost municipal revenue and improve public safety.

The City said the Outdoor Advertising By-Law of 2009 is clear that no advertising structure may be erected without prior municipal approval.

All advertising signs require written approval from the Council, as well as consent from the property owner.

According to the City, outdoor advertising companies previously contributed only about R4 million a year.

Since the compliance campaign began, that figure has risen to nearly R100 million, highlighting what officials described as substantial revenue losses that had deprived the municipality of funds for infrastructure maintenance and service delivery.

Speaking to Inside Metros during the operation, the City’s Executive Director for Development Planning, Eric Raboshakga, said illegal billboards posed a significant public safety risk.

“If you look at where these things are, they’re a public safety issue. Drivers cannot have all these distractions on the road. causes accidents and other problems. We don’t want a city where people simply do as they please. We want people to invest and do business in Johannesburg, but they must follow the proper process.”

Raboshakga said owners of illegal billboards erected on private property could face penalties of up to 12 times the normal rates and taxes, while structures on public land could be

removed once the required notices had been issued.

“Billboard approvals remain valid for five years, provided operators continue to comply with all conditions.”

However, approved structures must be erected within six months or the approval lapses, requiring a fresh application.

“These approvals are temporary. They are not permanent rights. If you don’t build within six months, you must start the application process all over again,” Raboshakga said.

He added that the multi-agency operation extends beyond illegal advertising, with officials also targeting illegal electricity connections, unauthorised infrastructure and other by-law violations encountered during enforcement operations.

During Tuesday’s operation, Inside Metros witnessed one illegal billboard being dismantled after officials discovered that the advertising material had allegedly been removed overnight before demolition crews arrived, raising suspicions that details of the operation had been leaked.

Responding to questions from Inside Metros, Raboshakga acknowledged that maintaining operational secrecy remained one of the City’s biggest challenges.

“We try to keep the circle very small, but sometimes operations continue into the following

week. That's when information begins to spread, and we lose the secrecy around the operation. Without that secrecy, it becomes much more difficult to carry out the operations," he said.

The City said compliance inspections would continue across Johannesburg to eliminate illegal outdoor advertising, improve public safety and ensure advertising operators contribute fairly to municipal revenue.

It urged the owners and operators of structures identified as illegal to approach the relevant municipal offices to regularise their applications in accordance with the Outdoor Advertising By-Laws.

Officials warned that the enforcement campaign would continue until all non-compliant outdoor advertising structures had either been regularised or removed.



JPC backs SAIBPP drive to transform property sector through real opportunities



The JPC recently attended the South African Institute of Black Property Professionals Convention in Durban.

The Joburg Property Company (JPC) says the transformation of South Africa's property sector must be measured by the opportunities created for young black professionals, women, township enterprises and emerging developers.

Speaking at the 2026 South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) Convention in Durban, JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga said the industry must move beyond conversations and ensure that historically disadvantaged practitioners are given meaningful access to the property value chain.

SAIBPP is a leading professional association in South Africa dedicated to transforming the property sector by promoting diversity, equity and opportunities for black property practitioners.

For JPC, its partnership with SAIBPP forms part

of a broader commitment to building a more inclusive and competitive property industry.

Makhunga said SAIBPP had played an important role in shaping transformation in the sector over the past 30 years.

“For three decades, SAIBPP has championed transformation, professional excellence, enterprise development and inclusive participation within South Africa's property sector. Its mission of increasing the participation of historically disadvantaged practitioners continues to shape a more representative and competitive industry,” he said.

He said the convention had become more than an annual gathering, describing it as a platform where ideas are challenged, partnerships are forged and the future of the built environment is shaped.

Makhunga said transformation should not remain an aspiration, but must be visible in ownership, leadership, procurement, enterprise development and professional opportunities.

“We must ensure that young black professionals enter the industry not only with qualifications, but with opportunities. We must create pathways for emerging developers to participate meaningfully in large-scale developments.”

He also called for women, youth and township enterprises to be placed at the centre of the property value chain.

“We must ensure that women, youth and township enterprises become central participants in the property value chain and not just observers of it,” he said.

Makhunga rejected the view that transformation means lowering standards, saying the goal is to expand opportunity and unlock talent across the sector building an industry that reflects the full potential of South Africa,” he said.

As custodian of one of the country’s largest

municipal property portfolios, JPC says public property must be used as an economic catalyst that supports investment, job creation, small businesses and urban regeneration.

Makhunga said property is “not merely about land and buildings”, but a platform for inclusive growth and social justice. He said JPC’s role is not only to safeguard municipal assets, but to unlock their value for residents, investors, businesses and future generations.

He said Johannesburg remains the economic heartbeat of South Africa, but its future depends on decisive leadership, stronger partnerships and renewed investor confidence.

“Our responsibility as leaders is to match that belief with decisive action. To regenerate our cities. To unlock strategic public land. To modernise our infrastructure. To embrace technology. To restore investor confidence,” he said.

Makhunga said ethical leadership, transparency and accountability would be critical in ensuring that public land delivers meaningful public value.

He said JPC was committed to working with SAIBPP, developers, financiers, municipalities and communities to create developments that are commercially viable, socially impactful and environmentally sustainable.

“Our greatest legacy will not be measured by the number of buildings we construct. It will be measured by the opportunities we create, the communities we uplift, the businesses we enable, the jobs we generate, the confidence we restore, and the future we leave behind,” he said.

JPC central to unlocking Joburg investment, transforming city



Tshepo Makola says funds generated through municipal property helps infrastructure development.

As Johannesburg works to revitalise its inner city and stimulate economic growth, the Joburg Property Company (JPC) is playing an increasingly important role by unlocking municipal land and buildings for development, generating revenue for the city and supporting spatial transformation.

This is according to City of Johannesburg Chief Operating Officer Tshepo Makola, who says JPC's position within the city's Economic Cluster reflects its strategic role in driving investment and helping deliver Johannesburg's long-term development objectives.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 2026 South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) Convention in Durban, Makola said JPC's responsibility extends far beyond managing

municipal buildings.

"Remember that JPC is an entity of the city, and their work as an asset manager is to facilitate the release of those properties. The release of the land, but also using that asset to be able to generate sufficient revenue that we can reinvest," he said.

He said that the revenue generated through municipal property helps fund infrastructure investment and supports broader city development programmes.

"As the asset manager and as the landlord, through long-term leases we are able to achieve additional revenue, including outdoor advertising. So they help us with generating the required revenue," Makola said.

The city's focus on property-led development is closely linked to its broader strategy of revitalising Johannesburg's inner city while creating more opportunities for investment and affordable housing.

Makola said one of the city's priorities is to redevelop underutilised and problem properties to support inclusive urban renewal.

"The city developed a problem property policy that is at council for approval. At the heart of it, it's about creating affordable housing. What you need in the inner city is affordable housing," he said.

He said developers will be given opportunities to redevelop suitable municipal properties into mixed-use precincts that combine residential and commercial activity.

"Property developers must be able to take back those properties which we will put out to the market. They will then redevelop the properties to create social affordable housing, together with commercial development. Participation that is already there will support the residential development within the inner city," he said.

Makola said successful inner-city development benefits both residents and the municipality by expanding Johannesburg's revenue base.

"If you have development in the inner city, the city generates revenue. And that additional revenue is reinvested in the development of the city, which benefits the citizens," he said.

He added that implementation of regeneration projects is coordinated through a project implementation structure that brings together several municipal entities and departments, including JPC, the Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO), Development Planning and the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police

Department.

"We have the project implementation team that I chair almost every second Tuesday to track progress and implementation across different departments and entities. We have standing members like JPC, JOSHCO, Development Planning, JMPD, and those departments. And that's how we manage those projects," he said.

According to Makola, JPC's work is closely aligned with Johannesburg's long-term development strategy because of its ability to unlock the economic value of municipal land and property.

“Remember, JPC is within the economic cluster. That's why they sit in the economic cluster, because of their ability to unlock the economy through the asset, which is the land parcel and some of the properties and businesses that we have.”

He explained that the City, as JPC's shareholder, ensures the entity's work supports Johannesburg's broader growth agenda through its planning and governance processes.

"We approve their business plan, we approve their five-year IDP, and through that process, that's how we ensure that JPC is aligned through the city's long-term goals and achievement of economic growth through using the land as a key lever or key asset to transform the city's economy," Makola said.

JPC targets billions in private investment by unlocking Joburg property portfolio



JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga.

The Joburg Property Company (JPC) is increasingly positioning itself as a key driver of investment in South Africa's economic hub by using municipal land to attract private sector funding for developments that support housing, education and economic growth.

Rather than relying solely on public funding, the City of Johannesburg-owned entity is packaging strategically located properties and inviting investors, developers and financiers to partner with the city on projects that deliver long-term value for residents.

JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga told Inside Metros that investment attraction has become one of the organisation's core priorities.

"We have to attract investment using property. We have to package those pieces of land and make sure that we then go out and attract and look for partners that can work with the city to do a development of some sort," he said.

Makhunga explained that municipal land gives the city an opportunity to unlock investment that would otherwise not flow into Johannesburg.

He cited student accommodation developments as one example of how JPC is leveraging public assets to attract private capital.

“That is money that ordinarily would not be available in the city. We package a piece of land, take it to the market and ask the private sector to invest. That’s investment attraction. That’s how we attract these billions and billions in terms of investment that we are talking about,” he said.

According to Makhunga, JPC has set itself an ambitious investment target for the current financial year.

“If you look at our scorecard... we have a target of R5 billion which we are meeting. So you can see that in a year, we have to at least attract five billion worth of investment using the portfolio for us to move forward,” he said.

Among the developments currently underway are student accommodation projects at the University of Johannesburg’s (UJ) Auckland Park campus, as well as new developments around the UJ Soweto campus and Orlando precinct.

Makhunga said these projects demonstrate how municipal land can be transformed into developments that respond to market demand while supporting the city’s development agenda.

While JPC provides access to strategically located land, he said the success of these developments depends on collaboration with private sector partners that bring specialist expertise and funding.

“The opportunities are massive. That’s why we are here at SAIBPP (South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners),” he said.

“They have expertise in construction,

development, and securing funding. We then leverage our asset and have a vision in terms of what we want to do. They come on board and we partner with them to ensure that that development is realised.”

Makhunga pointed to developments such as Alexandra Mall and Newtown Junction as examples of projects facilitated through JPC in partnership with the private sector.

“*Both Malls in Alexandra including Alex Mall, were facilitated through JPC*”

He said forums such as the SAIBPP Convention provide an opportunity for municipalities, developers and financiers to engage directly and identify projects that can unlock economic growth.

“Government has an asset, a strategic asset, which is land and buildings. The people sitting here, the financiers here, they’ve got the money. So we have to match what we have with what the market wants,” he said.

How JPC's catalytic developments are building complete communities across Joburg. How JPC's catalytic developments



JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga.

For the Joburg Property Company (JPC), catalytic developments are about far more than delivering houses. They are designed to create integrated communities where residents have access to schools, healthcare facilities, businesses, public amenities and economic opportunities.

As the City of Johannesburg's property development and asset management entity, JPC plays a central role in packaging municipal land for large-scale mixed-use developments that address the city's housing backlog while supporting long-term economic growth.

Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga

said these projects are intended to reshape how communities are planned by combining residential, commercial and public infrastructure within a single development.

"Planning is very important, and these developments must be carefully planned to ensure that they address affordable housing backlog. A lot of them are ensuring that we are addressing the market, which is affordable housing," he said.

According to Makhunga, large-scale developments must cater for every aspect of daily life rather than simply providing homes. "There's no way you put up 45 000 housing units

and [don't] think of schools, hospitals, clinics, you name it. So it really brings about all other public facilities that must actually support a mega project," he said.

Among the projects being driven by JPC are Southern Farms, Lufhereng, Riverside View and other catalytic developments that form part of Johannesburg's long-term spatial development strategy.

Makhunga said every one of these developments begins with municipal land.

"So a lot of these projects that we're talking about will have been packaged and dealt with by JPC in one form or the other," he said.

Using Riverside View as an example, he explained that JPC manages the land transaction process, secures the necessary approvals, packages the development opportunity and appoints a developer before construction begins.

"It all starts with a piece of land," he said.

Southern Farms is one of the city's flagship catalytic projects and illustrates the scale of JPC's vision.



We conceptualised the entire Southern Farm as a mega project, mixed-use development that's going to deliver over 45 000 housing units.



He said the project has already passed key governance and compliance milestones, with the first phase now focused on installing the infrastructure required before residential construction can begin.

"Currently... we are constructing the phase 1 roads and installing stormwater infrastructure. It's a construction site. We have not yet constructed a unit, but we are making sure that all services are actually being rolled out to enable the development," he said.

Beyond addressing the housing shortage, Makhunga said catalytic developments generate wide-ranging economic benefits for surrounding communities.

"When you do that, then you create jobs, you create a new rate base for the city, creating new SMMEs that will actually come into the space or creating opportunities for them to thrive. Because now we are creating a new demand in the area," he said.

He pointed to Cosmo City as an example of how strategic development can transform previously underutilised land into thriving communities.

"If You look at your Cosmo City, there was nothing at some point. There was a only 1 farm, but now we are thriving community and now there's livelihood and it addressed some housing backlogs. We are applying the same approach at Lufhereng and Southern Farm. That's a new city where people will come and actually live," he said.

Why Johannesburg's inner-city revival begins with property



Revitalisation of the inner-city is a key project.

Revitalising Johannesburg's inner city is one of the City's flagship programmes, and at the heart of that effort is the Joburg Property Company (JPC), which is unlocking municipal land, preparing development-ready sites and working with the private sector to restore investment in the urban core.

JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga says the entity is leading the property component

of the City's regeneration programme, ensuring that strategically located municipal properties are transformed into developments that support affordable housing, business activity and economic growth.

“For us, the mayor really focused on the issues of.. the inner-city rejuvenation. We have to get the inner city right. We have to regenerate that urban core,” Makhunga said.

He explained that the programme is not centred on a single development but on a coordinated pipeline of projects that aim to bring new life to Johannesburg's city centre.

“We have packaged more than 47 developments, most of which are in the inner city, because that’s what we’re focusing on. We want to ensure that we

contribute significantly in addressing the issues of affordable housing challenges,” he said.

According to Makhunga, one of the lessons from previous development programmes was that many sites were released before they were ready for investment, creating delays for developers.

“The pieces of land that we released, we knew that they didn’t have development rights, they were not development ready,” he said.

He said JPC has since changed its approach by ensuring sites are properly prepared before they are offered to the market.

“We’ve learned from that, and now we’ve repackaged some of these things and we focus on making sure that we put the development rights, so that whoever is a developer must focus on developing,” Makhunga said.

The regeneration programme also extends beyond municipally-owned land.

Makhunga said the City is increasingly working with private property owners to accelerate investment in the inner city, recognising that many buildings requiring redevelopment belong to private companies rather than the municipality.

“For us as a city to get the inner-city rejuvenated, it means we must collaborate with the private sector, because there are lots of properties that are owned by the private sector,” he said.

Through the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, the City has established a process of engaging property owners to identify obstacles to redevelopment and determine how the municipality can assist.

“We engage them to say, what are your plans, what is it that you need, how do we partner with you?” he said.

Makhunga said creating an investment-friendly environment is essential because the City cannot regenerate every building on its own.

“The city will not have, and does not have, enough resources and capacity to address each and every decaying building in the inner city. But we have to create an environment where we can engage the private sector,” he said.

Another important aspect of the regeneration programme is addressing abandoned and hijacked buildings.

While JPC provides property expertise, Makhunga explained that the entity works alongside other municipal departments and law enforcement agencies because criminal activities associated with hijacked buildings fall outside its mandate.

“We have critical role in addressing those matters, but we don’t deal with criminal elements from our side. We provide the property information that allows them to address those issues,” he said.

For Makhunga, restoring confidence in Johannesburg’s inner city is about more than redeveloping buildings.

“We want to ensure that we bring back investor confidence in the city, especially in the inner city.”

He believes that successful regeneration will stimulate business activity, unlock investment, support small enterprises and help address Johannesburg’s housing shortage.

“It means businesses must thrive in that area. It means people that currently are not benefiting from their own property because they’re hijacked, now they’ve got their asset value back,” he said.

JPC wants mixed-use developments to reshape Joburg's future

The Joburg Property Company (JPC) is rethinking how public property is developed, moving away from single-purpose projects towards mixed-use developments that combine housing, retail, transport, commercial space and public facilities.

According to JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga, the approach forms part of the City's broader strategy to maximise the value of municipal land while creating developments that are financially sustainable and better serve residents.

He said every piece of municipal land should be viewed as an opportunity to unlock greater economic and social value.

One example is the planned redevelopment of the Jack Mincer Taxi Facility, which JPC is helping to package as a mixed-use precinct rather than simply rebuilding it as a transport interchange.

"We are not rebuilding what you see now. We are now coming up with a mixed-use development because that's a piece of land where we can unlock value," Makhunga said.

He said the redevelopment recognises that transport facilities naturally attract businesses, commuters and residents, creating opportunities for more integrated urban development.

"When you've got taxis, you already have a market. People want to live closer to where the taxis are in the inner city. So why just have a taxi rank when you can have a taxi rank on a certain level and have affordable housing on top?" he



An example of modern, multi-purpose urban development in the Johannesburg inner city. Source: City of Johannesburg

said.

The project is also expected to include retail and commercial components, creating multiple income streams that help support the long-term sustainability of the development.



You cannot just have a taxi rank without thinking about how to put retail and so forth around it. But once we must also consider residential development and achieve appropriate density on the site.



He believes this approach will make developments more attractive to investors while creating places where people can live, work and access transport in one location.

For JPC, mixed-use developments are also about avoiding mistakes made in the past, where public infrastructure was built without considering how it would be maintained over time.

“One thing that we have done very poorly both as a city, and a country, is to build new facilities without incorporating adequate maintenance arrangements into the development model,” he said.

He said future developments must be commercially viable from the outset.

“Is it commercially viable? Those are the things that you must look at. Otherwise, we will keep on building these new facilities that down the road will actually become bad buildings as well if they are not properly maintained,” Makhunga said.

Beyond the Jack Mincer project, Makhunga said the same planning philosophy is being applied across a number of developments as the city seeks to regenerate key precincts and maximise the value of municipal property.

JPC’s role includes packaging development-ready land, securing the necessary approvals and working with other municipal entities to ensure projects move from concept to implementation.

“We are working very closely with the Department of Transport to ensure we satisfy all,” he said.

He said developments should no longer be viewed as isolated projects, but as opportunities to create vibrant urban precincts that serve multiple purposes. By combining transport, housing, retail and commercial activity on a single site, JPC believes municipal land can generate greater value for both residents and the city over the long term.

and Ownership		
		
Southern Farms Biodiversity Development Delivering 45,000 housing opportunities Job opportunities R27 billion investment spend R16 bn from the appointed developer R11bn from government – USDG/ HSDG	Riversands Affordable Apartments A R1.7bn social housing initiative in Diepsloot Phase 1, providing over 2000 units with supporting community infrastructure.	Soweto Gateway Development A transformative mixed-use development to be an iconic entrance into the Soweto – a place to live – work and play.

Mega Projects. Source : JPC

How JPC is balancing commercial growth with social development goals



Generating revenue for the City of Johannesburg while expanding access to affordable housing and public infrastructure is a balancing act that sits at the heart of the Joburg Property Company's (JPC) mandate.

As the city's property entity, JPC is responsible for managing municipal land and buildings, but it also has a responsibility to ensure those assets contribute to Johannesburg's long-term economic and social development.

Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga said the organisation deliberately pursues both commercial and social objectives when planning developments across the city.

"The advantage we have is that we have a dual mandate. We have both a social mandate and a commercial mandate," Makhunga said.

That approach is reflected in the location of many of JPC's developments, with the entity placing a strong emphasis on township projects that encourage local economic activity while improving access to services and amenities.

"many developments are located in township. We're putting another project in Alex. We've got a project in Diepsloot. Our objective is to invest in any areas that are generally underserved by the private sector" he said.

Because the City owns strategically located land across Johannesburg, Makhunga said JPC is

able to unlock development opportunities in communities that have historically attracted little private investment.

“But it’s more than just development. It’s about community facilities that we put in those areas as well,” he said.

One example is the Chiawelo Precinct in Soweto, where JPC worked with the Department of Human Settlements and private developers to create a mixed-use development that combines commercial activity with community infrastructure.

“If you look at the Chiawelo precinct as an example, a lot of it is JPC-driven. We packaged that and we partnered with Human Settlements. We put a mall with developers sitting there and we’re expanding in terms of what is sitting there,” Makhunga said.

He said similar work has taken place in Alexandra, where JPC facilitated the development of two shopping centres that continue to stimulate economic activity in the township.

“We’ve got two successful malls in Alexandra that were facilitated through JPC. And that’s township economy. If you go to those malls, you can see the amount of economic activity that is taking place,” he said.

While commercial developments contribute revenue to the municipality, JPC also uses municipal property to address broader developmental priorities, particularly the shortage of affordable housing.

He said the entity continually seeks the right balance between projects that generate income for the city and those that deliver social benefits to residents.

“Our portfolio must perform together,” Makhunga said, explaining that commercially successful projects help strengthen the city’s financial position while supporting investments in developments that respond to Johannesburg’s social needs.

Looking ahead, Makhunga said JPC intends to expand its footprint across all seven regions of Johannesburg rather than concentrating development in traditionally well-served areas.

“We intend to extend this work across all seven city regions. All the townships from Region A to G. We’re not just looking at the suburban areas. We are really, We are very deliberate about supporting local economic development in townships,” he said.

“
*We are creating
opportunities that
did not previously
exist.*”

Metro Centre redevelopment set to anchor Johannesburg's civic renewal



The Johannesburg Metro Centre in Braamfontein. Picture: Wikipedia Comms

The planned redevelopment of Johannesburg's Metro Centre is expected to become one of the City's most significant urban renewal projects, with the Joburg Property Company (JPC) leading the property transaction process to transform the ageing municipal headquarters into a modern civic precinct.

The redevelopment forms part of the City of Johannesburg's Office Space Optimisation

Programme. The Metro Centre has remained closed since 2023 after structural and safety concerns rendered the building unsuitable for occupation, forcing municipal departments to relocate to temporary offices across Johannesburg while the City developed a long-term redevelopment strategy.

JPC Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga said the scale of the project means it cannot be

delivered by the City alone and is therefore being pursued through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

“The Metro Centre was closed following a mayoral resolution. We had to engage National Treasury for a Public-Private Partnership,” Makhunga said.

He said the City has already appointed a transaction adviser to help package the project and ensure it complies with National Treasury’s PPP requirements.

“The city doesn’t have the money to actually redevelop the Metro Centre on its own, so we’ve now appointed a transaction adviser who’s actually helping us to package the Metro Centre,” he said.

The transaction advisory and feasibility work is being supported through National Treasury’s Programme and Project Preparation Support Grant. The current phase includes technical assessments, preliminary costing, needs analysis and risk identification before the project proceeds to procurement.

The redevelopment has previously been estimated to cost more than R2 billion, while Executive Mayor Dada Morero has indicated that the overall investment required could be around R3.2 billion, subject to the outcome of the ongoing technical and financial studies.

For Makhunga, however, the value of the project extends beyond restoring an ageing municipal building.

“Metro Centre redevelopment is a strategic development for the city. It is a long-term strategy of how the city moves away from renting private offices and utilising its own building,” he said.

The City intends to consolidate key municipal entities into one headquarters, allowing residents to access a range of municipal services from a single location.

“If I want to open my account, I go to one building and I get everything done. Johannesburg Water is here, City Power is here, Pikitup is here. Right now it’s scattered all over, and that’s the whole vision of the office space optimisation,” Makhunga said.

He said bringing departments and entities together will also improve coordination across the municipality while making better use of one of Johannesburg’s most important public assets. Located in the heart of Braamfontein, the Metro Centre is expected to play a key role in supporting investment in the surrounding CBD and strengthening confidence in Johannesburg’s urban core.

“ We also look at it as a revitalisation of the inner city because the Metro Centre is right in the inner city. ”

According to Makhunga, much of the planning and technical preparation has already been completed, with the next phase focusing on finalising the financial model and selecting a private development partner.

“We have to make sure that we package it right, get the right financial model and get the advice of the National Treasury,” he said.

Once completed, the project is expected to restore one of Johannesburg’s most recognisable civic landmarks while supporting the City’s long-term efforts to improve municipal operations and encourage renewed investment in the inner city.

Smarter property management equals better value for Joburg



The Johannesburg Commissioner Street. Picture: Linda Gary

While the Joburg Property Company (JPC) is best known for catalytic developments and urban regeneration projects, much of its work happens behind the scenes through the management of one of the country's largest municipal property portfolios.

From protecting municipal land against illegal occupation to improving lease management and

increasing revenue from outdoor advertising, JPC is focused on ensuring that public assets deliver greater value for the City of Johannesburg.

Chief Executive Officer Musa Makhunga said the organisation's first responsibility is to safeguard municipal property while identifying opportunities to improve its financial performance.

“We are the custodian of municipal property assets that are spatially situated in the City of Johannesburg,” he said.

JPC’s responsibilities include property development, asset management, lease management, facilities management and outdoor advertising on behalf of the municipality.

“We also deal with asset management on behalf of the city. We do all the asset management in terms of the entire property portfolio of the city,” Makhunga said.

He said that since taking office, and strengthening JPC’s approach to asset management.

“We looked at where we’re leaking revenue in the city. There was a lot of revenue that had been leaking through agreements that were allowed to lapse and not renewed.”

One of the most notable improvements has been the outdoor advertising portfolio.

“When you look at year-to-year, the portfolio used to bring about R4 million per annum to the City of Johannesburg,” Makhunga said.

Following changes to the way the portfolio is managed, annual revenue has increased dramatically.

“The board stretched it to R150 million... and we’re now talking of over R100 million. Here we’re not talking about billing; we’re talking about revenue collection,” he said.

Beyond revenue generation, JPC is also responsible for protecting municipal assets from illegal occupation and preserving their long-term value.

“We put strategies in place so that we don’t get land invasions. We work very closely with the JMPD because once we lose the value in the property, it is very difficult to then sell and add value to the City of Johannesburg,” Makhunga said.

He said commercially performing assets strengthen the City’s financial sustainability while enabling investment in developments that respond to Johannesburg’s social priorities.

JPC also works with municipal departments by allocating land needed for public infrastructure and service delivery projects.

“If JRA needs a piece of land to do a road, we allocate it to them,” Makhunga said.

For Makhunga, improving systems and organisational culture has been just as important as improving financial performance.

“A company is as good as its people,” he said, adding that JPC has focused on helping employees understand how their work contributes to the organisation’s mandate and ultimately benefits Johannesburg’s more than six million residents.

He said the improvements are beginning to reflect in JPC’s performance, with more developments moving from planning into implementation and stronger returns being generated from municipal assets that support the City’s long-term growth.

City of Joburg outlines reforms to make inner-city property development easier



The City of Johannesburg says it is removing some of the biggest regulatory barriers facing property developers as part of efforts to accelerate inner-city regeneration and encourage greater participation by emerging developers.

This emerged during a panel discussion on “Reclaiming the Core: Strategic State Asset Alignment” at the 2026 South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) Convention in Durban, where government officials and industry leaders discussed practical measures to unlock investment through state-owned property.

City of Johannesburg Chief Operating Officer

Tshepo Makola said the municipality had identified several obstacles that make it difficult for developers, particularly those entering the property sector, to redevelop buildings in the inner city.

“So what are we doing as the City of Johannesburg to facilitate that?” Makola asked before outlining a series of reforms already being implemented.

He said one of the biggest challenges is the cost of development charges.

“The first is, of course, the development charges are burdensome for entrepreneurs who are just

starting. Because we have the regulatory muscle as local government, we are able to waive those costs, and we should be able to waive those costs,” he said.

Makola said the City is also reviewing the impact of municipal tariffs on redevelopment projects, using sewer charges as an example.

“If we were to convert the sewer tariff model a based on agency usage rather than applying a general sewer tariff to every property, it reduces the cost from the tenant, but it reduces the cost from the owner,” he said.

He explained that lower operating costs would improve the financial viability of developments while allowing owners to reinvest profits into upgrading existing buildings or acquiring additional properties.

The City is also examining how rates and taxes are applied during the redevelopment phase.

“Majority of our practitioners, once they acquire their property and they have a period where they are developing, as local government, we still charge them rates and taxes as if the building is already operational and they have tenants, and that’s an additional cost and a burden that we are putting,” Makola said.

He added that Johannesburg is looking at incentives to deal with debt linked to distressed and hijacked buildings, saying that reducing these financial pressures would make it easier for legitimate property owners and developers to bring buildings back into productive use.

Beyond financial incentives, Makola said the City is also trying to reduce lengthy approval processes that often delay development projects.

He said a dedicated one-stop team has been es-

tablished within his office to coordinate approvals across municipal departments.

“What we’ve created is a one-stop shop where if a developer comes with a development and these are the regulatory requirements, whether it’s development planning, whether it’s emergency services, bylaws, I have a very small team and I focus on that submission to reduce the approval time,” he said.

According to Makola, long approval periods increase development costs and place additional pressure on entrepreneurs seeking funding.

Reducing those delays, he said, is one of the most effective ways municipalities can support investment without introducing new legislation.

He stressed that local government cannot transform the property sector on its own, but it can create an environment where developers are better positioned to succeed.

“It is very difficult to transform when you do not control the levers of transformation.”

Makola said the City is also exploring ways to work more closely with institutions such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the Public Investment Corporation and the National Empowerment Fund to improve access to funding for developers, while the municipality focuses on releasing suitable land and streamlining approvals.

“It is not the role of local government to transform the property sector, but we must provide the support to do so,” he said.

Photo Gallery

