



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

**City of Johannesburg speech extract by
The Executive Mayor, Cllr Herman Mashaba**

Another step towards easing traffic congestion as City launch 24-hour Traffic Hotline

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***Note to editors:** Please see below an extract of the speech delivered by Johannesburg's Executive Mayor, Councillor Herman Mashaba, during today's launch of the City of Joburg's 24-Hour Traffic Hotline in Martindal.*

When I became Mayor of this City I promised to bring about changes which would ignite our resident's faith in their government and also deliver services which enhance their daily experiences.

For years, Johannesburg's motorists have not been shy in expressing their displeasure at the little which has been done to make the City's transport network fit for purpose.

Indeed, countless productive hours have been lost by residents sitting in traffic – simply trying to get from one point to another.

Equally, businesses, particularly small to medium enterprises, have singled out our poor traffic system as one of the City's top challenges inhibiting growth opportunities and business confidence.

Today, we launch a new intervention to bring about the change residents of the City have demanded.

Today, we launch the City's new 24-Hour Traffic Hotline.

The hotline is a dedicated way for motorists to have their traffic related complaints swiftly attended to by dedicated operators supported by a specialised and highly responsive task team of 640 Johannesburg Metro Police Officers.

This hotline and task force will seek to address the City's pressing traffic congestion challenges and change the way we move around the City, for the better.

As I have previously announced, the City will also be recruiting 1500 additional JMPD officers for our City – made possible through an allocation of R31 million in the City's recent adjustment budget.

Once recruited, these JMPD officers will further augment our efforts in tackling traffic congestion.

Our transport network suffers from years of neglect at the hands of previous administrations. This long-term neglect can be seen in the City's 10 year critical infrastructure backlog.

Completely reversing our longstanding and complex challenges, with respect to the transport network, will take time and the public's patience.

However, we will not simply rest on our laurels.

We are already implementing other medium term interventions which will provide motorists with relief and also kick-start the recovery of our transport network.

In the past week, the City also began another intervention to progressively curb traffic congestion, particularly at key high traffic volume intersections.

This intervention is in the form of the City's 'No-Join' Policy which will progressively combat challenges associated with traffic signal downtime at key traffic intersections.

To date, the City has addressed issues of downed traffic lights by simply joining cables in the event of an electrical fault.

This created serious problems because each 'join' in the cabling of a traffic light then became an electrical weakness in the circuit – making it vulnerable to wet weather conditions, electrical surges and lightning.

Starting with key intersections, the City will no longer join old cables when an electrical fault is reported at a downed traffic light but replace the damaged cable with a new cable.

Our ultimate goal is to progressively roll out this 'no join' policy on a city-wide scale starting from the beginning of the City's 2017/2018 financial year.

In addition, the JMPD has identified 304 high traffic volume points throughout the City which will be manned by JMPD officers between the hours of 06:00 -09:00 am and 16:00 – 18:00.

This is a further step towards alleviating traffic during peak times.

The Traffic Hotline launched today will not only assist residents by easing congestion, but will also assist the JRA in indicating which traffic signals at key intersections are in need of repairs in line with the 'No-Join' Policy.

It will please residents to know that the City is also enhancing the use a Smart Traffic System to remotely monitor traffic signals and ensure that faults are quickly repaired by the JRA.

Other factors attributing to traffic congestion are:

- Theft of traffic cables;
- Vandalism;
- Accidents;
- Vehicles which have broken down;
- Road construction; and
- Flooding.

In an effort to try and turn this dire situation around, the City has already made funds available in the 2016/17 Adjustment Budget for infrastructure upgrades:

- R6 million to replace cabling in key traffic intersections through the 'No Join' Policy;
- R15 million for emergency storm water interventions across the City;
- R9,2 million for new Storm Water Management Projects; and
- R60 million for JRA to procure the requisite material for pothole repairs.

The City has also increased traffic light security systems in our fight against vandalism and theft.

Finally, we are investing in mobile generators to temporarily supply power to intersections affected by power supply outages.

This will alleviate interruptions to traffic signals which contributes 28% of daily traffic signal outages.

As I stated earlier, the City's weak transport network and infrastructure has been one of our top challenges.

I urge all residents to effectively utilise this hotline. I must also stress, that this hotline is only for the purpose of reporting traffic related incidences.

Indeed, to use it for any other means would defeat its purpose.

We will continue to express our commit to turning this City around by effectively utilising the resources at our disposal and creating a traffic network which allows us to move this City forward.

Cllr Herman Mashaba
Executive Mayor
City of Joburg

For more information please contact:

Luyanda Mfeka

Media Specialist: Office of the Executive Mayor – City of Joburg

Tel: (011) 407 6727 | Cell: 081 744 3171

E-mail: Luyandam@joburg.org.za

Website: www.joburg.org.za