



## CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

### **Councillor Leah Knott**

Member of the Mayoral Committee  
Department of Economic Development

#### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

For MMC Knott

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#### OPENING:

Thank you programme Director.

- **Executive Mayor** of the City of Joburg; Cllr; Herman Mashaba - in absentia (who would have loved to be present, unfortunately could not make it here today)
- **All Councillors present**
- **Joburg Tourism Ambassadors and supporters**
- **Economic Development Executive Director:** Tembeka
- **Economic Development Directors**, and all staff
- **Ladies and gentlemen** – thank you for taking time to join us today.

Once again it gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone to today's event, as we unveil the much anticipated launch of the Joburg Tourism Visitor Information Centre on Nelson Mandela Square.

As an administration we are dedicated to establishing an enabling environment in order to achieve 5% economic growth and improve investor confidence in Johannesburg. We are committed to creating a visitor-friendly city in line with the Executive Mayor's growth targets of 5%, the top 10 Mayoral priorities and initiatives like *A Re Sebetseng*, *Buya Mthetho* and *Diphetogo*. As we say: *"A Johannesburg that works is a South Africa that works!"*

Aside from the significant role played by tourism in strategically creating and strengthening international relations, and contributing significant economic benefits, hosting business events also contributes to the knowledge economy of host cities, countries and communities.

Joburg Tourism is marking Tourism Month this year by unveiling not only new Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Nelson Mandela Square, but also an updated, fresh website and mobi-app.



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In line with the prioritisation of achieving increased visitor arrivals in the city and contributing towards the economic growth target of 5% by 2021, Joburg Tourism seeks ways of increasing its presence and footprint throughout Gauteng at various strategic locations, which includes Nelson Mandela Square. According to the Liberty Group report (Two Degree, released on 06/09/2017), Sandton has an annual average foot traffic in excess of 24 million, hence it serves as the perfect location for the new VIC.

The location of the VIC in Nelson Mandela Square is ideal as this particular spot serves as a strategic point of arrival for the majority of visitors to Johannesburg before they disperse across the destination. Aside from Gautrain Station and the fabulous shopping on offer in Sandton, the Nelson Mandela statue is also an important drawcard, attracting millions of visitors throughout the year.

The Sandton VIC and website launch has been chosen to coincide with Tourism Month, which takes place from 1 – 30 September annually, with the highlight being UNWTO World Tourism Day, celebrated annually on 27 September.

World Tourism Day was started by the United Nations World Tourism Organization in 1980. This particular date was selected as it was on this day that the laws of the UNWTO came into force in 1970. This is considered as a major landmark for the global tourism industry, as it aims to make people aware about the significant role of tourism in the international community – as well as illustrating how it impacts social, economic, cultural and political values.

United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has declared the 2018 theme as “Digital Transformation and Tourism”. In this spirit, for World Tourism Day 2018, the theme needs to find local interpretation and translation in our 2018 activities, projects and stakeholder engagements, as well as the celebration of World Tourism Day.

#### Joburg Tourism Website and Mobi App Overview

- o One of Joburg Tourism’s core mandates is to provide online tourism information, along with online SMME and association support. In order to



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embrace international technological trends and to remain competitive in the digital sphere, Joburg Tourism has developed a mobile app, while also redeveloping its website to be more user friendly and appealing and to make it mobi-friendly. The website will be launching as [www.visit.joburg](http://www.visit.joburg)

- Joburg Tourism`s operations are guided by the City`s 10 Priority Implementation Plans (PIPs). The Tourism department contributes significantly to two of them, namely: 5% Economic Growth and Job Creation - reducing unemployment to under 20% by 2021.
- The new VIC is situated in the heart of Sandton, Africa`s most iconic square mile, and ideally placed for both business and leisure travellers, who are key to contributing to the 5% growth targets outlined by the City`s administration. The launch of the VIC is also an opportune time to unveil the upgraded, interactive Joburg Tourism website and the new Mobile App – which also present opportunities for tourism-related businesses (SMMEs) to list/verify their details and benefit from exposure on the site and other related marketing initiatives.
- In order to keep up with technological trends Joburg Tourism has developed a mobile app. The key difference between the website/mobi-site and the mobi app are that the website/mobi is not location based, has more information such as news articles, general information about Joburg, business registration, interactive regional map etc. The mobi-App is downloadable and installed as a mobile application and only contains essential listing and location information that a traveller will use whilst he is travelling. The mobi-app has some of the following functions:
  - Downloadable from Play Store and iPhone
  - Interactive with smartphone devices
  - Location based product listings (Location settings needs to be switched on)
  - Distance to various product listings
  - Provides nearest places of interest
  - Personalized trip and itinerary planner (Login required)



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- Add to favourites
  - Events feed which alerts visitor of new events
  - Ability to share listings via various channels e.g. WhatsApp, Social Media, Email, Pinterest etc.
  - Rate an establishment
  - Write reviews
  - Google map view which opens up Google GPS to navigate to product listing
  - Call establishment directly (Dials directly from device)
  - View travel packages
- The key difference between the Visit Joburg mobi-app compared to other destination applications is that any business can register to be on the Joburg Tourism database through the membership database platform and add their tourism packages. Once listed, the listing will automatically appear on the website, mobi-site and mobile app. This is especially beneficial for an SMME product owner to be able to promote their offerings on all platforms and devices.
  - **Value Proposition in Summary**
    - Digitization of information
    - Accessibility of information
    - Efficiency of the tool
    - Real time information availability
    - Innovation and promotion of the tourism products through this platform
    - On-point MobiApp business registration.
    - Cloud destination information
  - The Department of Economic Development's strategic objective is promote Johannesburg to be the number one African destination of choice for both business and leisure in an effort to:
    - Improve seasonality, length of stay and tourist-spend during visits to Joburg.



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- Improve the diversity of the tourism offering in Joburg.
- Build a positive image / perception for the city among local, national and international audiences.
- While I have the opportunity, I would like to remind our visitors, guests and media that *There is More to Joburg Than Business* –In closing I'd like to highlight that *Joburg is Up There with the Best* – not only are we the most visited city in Africa since 2013 (according to the Mastercard Global Destination Cities Index), Joburg is also the only city on the continent that has made it into the **EUROMONITOR INTERNATIONAL'S TOP 100 CITIES** ranking - ranking 37<sup>th</sup> [January 2017].
- Two other recent accolades for destination Joburg include:
  - Significantly improved ICCA Rankings [May 2018]. Johannesburg moved from position 186 to 113 globally, while also improving our ranking in Africa from position 5 to 2.
  - Making TripAdvisor's top ten list in the *Travelers' Choice Awards for Best Destinations in Africa* [May 2018]
  - Maboneng named as one of the World's Coolest Suburbs by Forbes Magazine [9 July 2018]

Thank you