

TECHNICAL TOUR 2: Johannesburg Inner City

Tour organized by the City of Johannesburg (Johannesburg Development Agency)

Date: 16 July 2013
Time: 14:00 – 17:30

SUMMARY

The inner city of Johannesburg is well on the way to achieving its vision of being a vibrant and inclusive world-class city. Significant regeneration and redevelopment has taken place in the last decade, and the story of inner city regeneration is a remarkable tale of a transformed society and new opportunities for all.

While the inner city has experienced boom times and periods of decline, the recent sustained upturn in economic activity and the rising residential population can be ascribed to wide-spread commitment to the Inner City Charter and the vigorous implementation of this shared vision. The key to the successful turn-around has been the commitment shown by all stakeholders and the formation of effective partnerships between the municipality, the private sector and community organisations.

The City of Johannesburg has supplied consistent leadership by ensuring that plans are translated into action.

One example is the preparation of the Inner City Urban Design Implementation Plan which translates the inner city vision into detailed spatial guidelines for different precincts.

Another example of city leadership and public-private partnerships is the Johannesburg Development Agency's implementation of area-based regeneration interventions. The JDA's research demonstrates that the substantial public investment in strategic regeneration areas has resulted in even more significant private-sector investment.

This tour will allow delegates to experience inner city precinct developments that demonstrate some of the lessons learnt in Johannesburg. These are:

1. Constitution Hill.

Constitution Hill is a development that required intergovernmental cooperation to establish the neglected heritage site of the Johannesburg fort and prison as a justice precinct, site of the Constitution Court, and a museum that presents South Africa's dark history in a sensitive way that contributes to building a democracy based on protected rights, shared values, and equal opportunities for all.

2. Park Station precinct, and the core inner city

A drive through the heart of the inner city will give delegates an understanding of the complexity of the development space including: the primary transit node (Park Station precinct), the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit infrastructure, the provincial government precinct, public environment upgrades such as sidewalks, squares and parks, banking precincts, the mining precinct, development potential and the Newtown Cultural precinct.

3. Braamfontein

This is a precinct that has experienced a growth in the residential population driven mostly by conversion of office buildings into student housing. It has also been positioned as a cultural precinct with theatres and art galleries drawing visitors from across the city. The new Gautrain Rapid Rail service, a popular market on Saturdays, new bars and restaurants, and inner city sporting activities have made this a busy and popular neighbourhood and recreation destination.

At each stop, delegates will hear about lessons learnt from private sector partners, municipal officials and community representatives.