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## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN REPORT

FOR

**THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY  
– EXTERNAL HEARING: ORLANDO EAST COMMUNAL HALL**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Petitions Standing Committee (PSC), chaired by honourable Ezra Letsoalo, will convene a one-day external petition hearing at the Orlando East Communal Hall, situated in Orlando East, under ward 31, located in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The External Hearing will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

In accordance with the petitions system, internal and external hearings are a form of escalation when authorities (after numerous extensions) do not submit reports, which are required to resolve petitions. The petitions that will be tabled during the external hearing are diverse in issue, including illegal occupation of land, building of schools, RDP housing matters and the maintenance and upkeep of hostels, indicating the myriad nature of petitions. The 10 petitions which will be tabled were selected from the large pool of City of Johannesburg region petitions that the PSC has in its historic backlog.

## 2. AREA COMPOSITION<sup>1</sup>

The City of Johannesburg is a Category A Metropolitan Municipality which is one of the three Metros of the Gauteng Province and one of eight in South Africa. The City is divided up into seven regions, and Orlando East (Ward 31) is located in Region D. Johannesburg is the most advanced commercial city in Africa and the engine room of the South African and regional economy.

The municipality shares boundaries with two other metropolitan municipalities, to its north the City of Tshwane and to its east the City of Ekurhuleni. To its west it shares boundaries with Mogale City and other parts of the West Rand District Municipality. To its South is Emfuleni and Midvaal Local Municipalities, which form part of the Sedibeng District Municipality. The city was established in 1886 when gold was discovered by Australian gold prospector George Harrison. It is the site of South

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<sup>1</sup> Information is based on the following sources: [PROFILE: city of johannesburg METRO \(cogta.gov.za\)](https://www.cogta.gov.za/profile/city-of-johannesburg-metro) and [City of Johannesburg Ward 31 \(79800031\) - Profile data - Wazimap](https://www.wazimap.com/city-of-johannesburg-ward-31-79800031) ; [Soweto, Johannesburg | South African History Online \(sahistory.org.za\)](https://www.sahistory.org.za/soweto-johannesburg) (accessed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2023)

Africa's oldest township, Alexandra. It also has the largest township in Southern Africa, the South Western Townships (SOWETO), which was formed as a labour reservoir for the Gold Reef. This township is also the place where the Freedom Charter was drafted, as an aspirational guiding document which inspired South Africa's liberation struggle and Constitution.

The city also holds the most wealth on the African Continent at \$248 billion, it is the financial capital for the continent hosting the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the largest stock exchange on the continent and the 16th biggest in the world. Johannesburg generates 16.5% of the country's wealth and employs 12% of the national workforce. More than 70% of South African companies have their headquarters within the City of Johannesburg. It also ranked 8th (behind Durban) as the city with most trees with over 23,6% of it being covered by trees, it is the city with the most Jacaranda trees surpassing the 70 000 Jacarandas hosted by its neighbour The City of Tshwane City which is nicknamed after the tree which is native to South America.

The city also provides the highest number of jobs compared to other cities in the province i.e. 2.13 million people or 41.88% of the total employment in Gauteng Province is employed within the Metro. The City, has for much of its history been a magnet for entrepreneurs and work seekers. However, over the past couple of years, growth in crucial job creating industries such as manufacturing and mining has declined significantly. This, compounded with the low economic growth contributed to the high rate of unemployment. This requires the City to pursue *inter alia* extensive investment in old and new infrastructure to support economic growth and create jobs.

Based on the 2011 census, the population of Orlando East Ward 31 (host ward) is 26 801. Orlando is a township in the urban area of Soweto, South Africa. The township was founded in 1931 and named after Edwin Orlando Leake, Mayor of Johannesburg from 1925 to 1926. It is divided in two main areas: Orlando West and Orlando East. The area has a young population as the median age in ward 31 is 28 with 50% of the population being female. The most spoken home language in the ward is isiZulu (33%), followed by seSotho (19%) and Xitsonga (15%). 60% of its population



were born in Gauteng, whilst 13% were born in the Limpopo, 8% outside South Africa and 5% were born in the Eastern Cape. 63% of households are headed by men. The average annual household income in the area is R30 000. Only 41% of the population is employed, leaving 30% that are either unemployed, not economically active or discouraged work-seekers. 56% of the residents have internet access from their mobile phones. 42.5% completed matric or higher.

This Environmental Scan Report was conducted two weeks before the external hearing to gauge general issues faced by the community around wards: 28, 30, and 31. The researcher and the senior Information Officer conducted three interviews. Two face-to-face interviews with councillor Mr. Bongani Dlamini (Ward 30), and councillor Mr. Molefe Mohau (Ward 31), and a telephonic interview with councillor Peter Ndou (Ward 28). Cllr Bongani Dlamini will be the “host ward Cllr” since the venue is in his ward.

**3. Key findings from the interviews:**

<p><b>Service Delivery</b></p>	<p>The ward cllr’s (30 &amp; 31) shared that the coalition government scenario in the City of Johannesburg has not been good for service delivery in Orlando. The Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA) has been slacking with repairing potholes, installing speedhumps and repairing damaged stormwater drains. Road markings are now faint and need re-painting. There is a need for road resurfacing, and additions of street curbs, especially on the old roads which do not have them. Petitions have been submitted to the COJ Section 79 Petitions Committee but no joy thus far. Some of the issues, are merely around long turnaround times, and not that the municipality does not do its work. Refuse is collected on Wednesday, but some community members don’t take the bags out, and end up illegally dumping the refuse bags in open areas around Orlando. Community members offer piece jobs to young men that have substance abuse issues, to go dispose of the refuse bags, anyhow. The communities on the outskirts of Orlando, are especially guilty of the practice. Street</p>
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light bulbs are replaced when needed, but there is an issue with the City seemingly hiring foreign nationals, as if Orlando does not have graduates with skills and qualifications in electric works.

The City has urban inspectors, and they are very prompt at identifying issues, like the high mass light bulbs will be replaced and there is talk of them being converted to solar due to cable theft. There are big challenges with regard to electricity in the area and there was some protesting on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. Electricity is supplied by Eskom and many people have “bridged” their metre-boxes. With the increasing number of backyard dwellers (due to Orlando’s close proximity to Johannesburg), the grid gets overloaded often, and the sub-station’s collapse. When the power goes off, people are scared to call Eskom to report the matter, because they have “bridged” their Distribution Board (DB box). There is a need for a review of the Expanded Social Package (ESP) Policy, to be reviewed in line with inflation. For example, the electric units being offered need to increase, in line with the increasing electricity tariffs per unit.

Moreover, some community members, in an effort to safeguard the sub-stations from theft, have locked them with their own padlocks, and when Eskom comes along to fix matters, they are not able to, because the sub-stations are locked. The community made contributions in previous IDP processes that they require a shopping centre, e.g. Orlando Square at the site of the informal settlement (Coal Yard) once it has been cleared.

Ward 28 is comprised of a small portion of Orlando and the larger part of Diepkloof. Like any other community, they are

faced with service delivery challenges. Some of the streetlights are not working, although the counsellor indicated that he reports those streetlights, the city power only fixed some and left others. Ditowane and Luthern blocks have not had electricity for over three months now. The two blocks had a power challenge previously and they made some arrangements with Eskom to come and replace the cables. Eskom agreed with the community to incur the cost of replacing the cable and each household will pay a monthly amount of R500 to Eskom until each has covered an amount of R6000 00. Once the cable was fixed, the community reneged on the agreement. Now Eskom is refusing to assist them since they are still owing them some part of the R6000 00. There a lot of potholes around the ward, both in the Orlando and the Diepkloof sections. Cars are damaged by the state of the roads. All these road challenges were reported to City of Joburg but to date, there is no progress in terms of fixing those potholes. There is a sinkhole between Diepenaar road and Mangwale high school. The city came and closed the sinkhole but when it is raining, it reappears again. The city indicated that to fixed it permanently, it requires a lot of money and currently they don't have that budget.

Due to old infrastructure, the area experiences blockage of the sanitation line. The blockage flows into the streets and the smell is unbearable. When contacted to come and assist, the Joburg water don't respond, and it is frustrating to both the community and the counsellor. This creates friction and loss of trust between the community and the community.

<p><b>HOUSING IN THE AREA</b></p>	<p>The ward cllr’s (30 &amp; 31) shared that ...The area has two informal settlements in the area: coal Yard and Mthonjeni. Through a council resolution block relocation was underway and occupants were being relocated to housing projects in Lehae. But, the process halted, and due to a lack of foresight, the empty shacks were not demolished, or the area was not protected from an influx of more shacks, and now, there are many people that have built their shacks at the site of those that have been relocated, thus, setting the Municipality back.</p> <p>There are many backyard dwellers that have 1996 – 1999 C-forms and there are not being prioritized and instead, informal settlement dwellers are prioritized. There is very little housing stock and old applicants are not being prioritized. Some are even opting for rentals with the Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO), despite not having sustainable incomes, like the elderly. Currently Jo’Burg Water is installing pre-paid water metres in the area and pre-paid electricity metres are steadily being installed. There is a real problem with how the local Master of the High Court is processing Intestate Succession matters, especially in regard to family homes now falling into single ownership etc. There seems to be little verification being done when letters of executiveship are being produced, therefore, disinherit some beneficiaries as a result of lack of verification with .e.g. Home Affairs.</p>
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<p><b>HEALTH FACILITIES</b></p>	<p>The ward cllr’s (30 &amp; 31) shared that ...Orlando Clinic is understaffed and under resourced. There is no adequate provision for chronic patients whom are elderly. They wait in long queues just like everyone. There is a need for a centre that will help the young that are suffering from substance abuse.</p>
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<p><b>Education facilities</b></p>	<p>The ward cllr’s (30 &amp; 31) shared that ...There is a need for additional classes per grade, due to population growth. Moreover, there is a need to re-introduce scholar patrol personal in schools as there is a real need, with fast cars, or better yet, there is a need for additional street calming measures near schools. Moreover, there is a need to beef-up extracurricular activities at schools, because it seems like they are not being prioritized.</p>
<p><b>Recreational facilities</b></p>	<p>The ward cllr’s (30 &amp; 31) shared that ...The parks that are around the area are being vandalised. There are many open spaces which are not being maintained, in terms of grass cutting. During the IDP process, the community of Orlando East aired that they want a recreational park, so that they don’t have to go to Thokoza Park. There is a need for children’s parks with appropriate equipment, and not just gym equipment in parks. Moreover, there is a need for the refurbishment of sporting facilities in the area near no.2. grounds. Unfortunately, the fencing around these parks is continuously being stolen. At least, concrete bollards need to be installed. 10-years ago, A JOSHCO projected called Orlando Ekhaya project demolished/displaced two soccer fields and these were never rehabilitated, and the community needs those fields to be re-built.</p> <p>Ward 28: <b>Parks and recreational facilities</b>-During the renovation of the Orlando stadium in 2010, some concretes were taken and dumped in soccer fields next to Job Rathebe junior secondary School. Those concrete slabs have been there ever since, a lot of letters were written to different entities</p>



	including department of arts and culture and no one has bothered to come and remove those slabs. They are a danger to the community, as they harbor criminals. People are robbed and some even get raped there. An urgent intervention is required to remove those slabs.
<b>Crime</b>	The ward cllr's (30 & 31) shared that ...The Orlando Police Station is under-staffed, under-resourced and overstretched. It caters for too many areas; it does not have enough vans and cars and there are not enough staff. The introduction of Crime Wardens has not be communicated well, and its coordination with SAPS is not clear to the community. They see the Crime Warden cars, but they do not know how they operate.
<b>Unemployment</b>	Ward 28: <b>EPWP</b> - Due to youth unemployment, the EPWP programme is mainly focused on employing a lot of youth in the ward. Although not enough, the programme has made some inroads in terms of providing the youth with employment opportunities.

### Report Limitations

Purposeful sampling was used as a methodology. Purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases/individuals whose insights will illuminate the questions being pursued (Button 2016: 401). Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. This environmental scan report is based on three interviews with cllr Ndou (ward 28), and cllr M0hau (ward 30) and cllr Dlamini (ward 31). Thus, it captures sentiment of these individuals, and it is not an exhaustive analysis of the entire community.

**Key things to keep in mind which community members might raise at the External Hearing:**

- The community renegading from their Eskom Debt.
- Intestate succession matters with family homes being “given” to a single beneficiary due to the local courts not doing due diligence.
- Recent sewer slippage in the area and the fear of contamination.
- Ongoing electricity matters and the May 31 Electricity protest.
- Local sport fields being used for dumping rubble and never being rehabilitated.
- Informal settlements always getting preference over people that applied between 1996 – 1999.