

THE ALEXANDRA RENEWAL PROJECT

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What is the Alexandra Renewal Project?

The Alexandra Renewal Project began in February 2001 when the State President Thabo Mbeki, at the official opening of Parliament, said that the Government plans to redevelop Alexandra.

Alexandra is in the north east of Johannesburg, Gauteng on the banks of the Jukskei River. The area has many problems including for example:

- Many people who are unemployed and poor
- Overcrowding with a lot of informal dwellings in public areas, roads and schools.
- Local Government services like water, roads and electricity that are old and do not work properly.
- Schools and social services that are not operating well.
- High levels of crime.

The Project will be undertaken over seven years and has a budget of R1,3 billion. The Project is being implemented by a number of organisations including national, provincial and local government, the people of Alexandra, the private sector, state corporate agencies, non-governmental agencies and community based organisations.

The Project is being managed by the Provincial Government Department of Housing. In addition a project team has been established made up of officials from Provincial or Local Government and technical experts.

What is the purpose of the Alexandra Renewal Project?

The aim of the Alexandra Renewal Project is to upgrade living conditions and human development within Alexandra.

This will be achieved by:

- **Reducing unemployment** by creating work opportunities for the people of Alexandra.
- **Creating a healthy and clean living environment** including parks, clean rivers and unpolluted air, well managed Local Government services and access to effective health and social services.
- **Providing Local Government services** that are well managed, affordable and are paid for.
- **Reducing levels of crime and violence** by ensuring that there are motivated police officials who have the correct equipment, improving the criminal justice system and ensuring that there are sufficient emergency services equipment and well trained staff.
- **Creating an effective housing environment** that provides a choice of affordable houses, as well as upgrades the existing houses.
- **Dedensification** where people living in informal structures will be moved to appropriate areas.

What will the Alexandra Renewal Project do?

The Alexandra Renewal Project will undertake many different projects. Some of these projects include:

Economic development

Developing small business enterprises: A database of small business enterprises will be developed. Training will be provided on management, financial and tendering skills. An informal sector market facility will be developed. A number of demonstration projects will be undertaken.

Promoting investment in Alexandra: Alexandra will be promoted so as to encourage new businesses to invest in the area and expanding existing business.

Optimising land use: Specific economic areas will be developed and expanded including existing industrial areas, Pan Africa Square etc.

Develop human skills in Alexandra: A programme will be undertaken to assist individuals living in Alexandra to acquire skills and access work by upgrading the services of the Labour Centre in the Greater Alexandra area.

Housing

Upgrading of existing houses: Assistance will be provided to encourage owners of existing houses to upgrade these houses.

Development of new houses : New housing will be developed both within and outside of Alexandra. These houses will be both for rental and ownership.

Transfer of publicly owned housing : Publicly owned housing will be transferred to legal tenants using the Government's Discount Benefit Scheme.

Backyard rental accommodation : Owners of accommodation in backyards will be assisted in upgrading this accommodation.

Redevelopment of the hostels : The hostels in Alexandra will be redeveloped into single and household units.

Redevelopment of warehouses: Some of the factory premises and warehouses in Marlboro South will be redeveloped for housing purposes.

Relocation of informal dwellings: Informal dwellings within the flood plain of the Jukskei River and its tributaries, school sites, S'stwetla, London Road and other areas will be relocated to more appropriate areas

Spatial Planning and the Environment

Overall plan for Alexandra : An overall plan for Alexandra will be developed showing how each area should be used. A land use plan supported by Inspectors will be put in place to make sure that the land is used in this way.

Parks and recreation : Parks and recreation areas will be developed. Trees and vegetation will be planted and maintained.

Upgrading of cemeteries: The existing cemetery in Alexandra will be upgraded and maintained.

Water and air quality: Water and air quality will be monitored and programmes will be put in place to ensure that they are kept clean.

Jukskei River : The Jukskei River will be cleaned and a recreation area with parks and other activities developed.

Engineering services

Water : Water services will be upgraded and provided to each stand. Fire hydrants will also be upgraded to the proper standards.

Sanitation : The sewerage system will be upgraded and provided to each stand. A toilet construction programme will be implemented.

Waste management : All households will be provided with a refuse bin. Public open spaces and streets will be cleaned on a regular basis.

Electricity : The programme to upgrade electrical services in Alexandra will be continued including electricity to houses, streetlights and public open spaces.

Roads and stormwater : Damaged roads in Old Alexandra will be repaired. All the roads on the East Bank will be surfaced. Sidewalks will be constructed on main roads. London Road will be upgraded. A maintenance programme will be developed to ensure that all roads are properly maintained in the future.

Taxi Ranks: Existing taxi ranks will be upgraded and new ranks developed where required. Taxi stops will be developed on main taxi routes.

Social services

Schools: Schools will be refurbished and new schools built. A Further Education and Training programme will be implemented providing laboratories, technology and media and art and culture centres in some schools. A Centre for mentally and physically challenged learners will be upgraded.

Teacher Learning Centre: A multipurpose teaching and learning centre of excellence will be developed. This Centre will provide support to teachers and will provide an Adult Basic Education and Training programme.

HIV/Aids: Many programmes to address the challenge of HIV/Aids will be undertaken including both education and the provision of facilities to assist the victims of this disease.

Upgrading of Edenvale hospital: Edenvale Hospital will be improved and used as a referral hospital for Alexandra.

Clinic facilities: Clinic facilities will be improved both in terms of upgrading existing clinics, building new clinics and providing training to staff at the clinics.

Mental Health Programme: A mental health programme will be undertaken to increase facilities available, support to families and training to counsellors.

Welfare services: Welfare services will be improved through better co-ordination and integration and training of social workers. There will be special programmes for youth criminality and unemployment, violence against women, children and the aged and alcohol and drug abuse.

Sports and recreation: Existing sports and recreation facilities will be upgraded and new facilities will be built. A new library and study centre will be built.

Heritage: A history of Alexandra will be written and historical places restored. A museum will be developed to show the rich history of Alexandra.

Arts and culture: A range of arts and culture activities will be undertaken including art, poetry and drama competitions, a graffiti wall and poetry readings.

Public safety and security

Police Stations: Police stations will be upgraded and extended. The skills of staff and equipment will be improved.

Fire and emergency services: Staff will receive additional training, equipment will be provided and facilities improved so as to ensure better service delivery.

Victim support: A programme to provide support to traumatised victims of violent and sexually related crimes will be implemented.

Metro Police: Metro Police will be established including the development of a Service Delivery Point on the Far East Bank. Traffic Safety Services will be improved and a Junior Traffic Training Centre established.

Public Safety Partnership: The Public and Private Sector will be encouraged to work together. A Partnership Forum will be established and the transfer of skills encouraged.

How will work be allocated?

In order to promote economic development and directly benefit the people living in Alexandra as much work as possible will be allocated to the people living in the area.

If the necessary goods and services cannot be obtained from the people living in Alexandra itself they will be obtained from enterprises owned by formally disadvantaged individuals in accordance with the Government's principles of redressing inequities resulting from the apartheid era.

In order to do this the following will be implemented :

- Contracts will be structured in packages or parcels that are the right size for Alexandra based enterprises.
- Tender requirements and documentation will be structured so that they are easy to complete.
- Special arrangements will be made to inform Alexandra based enterprises of contracts.
- When assessing tenders preferential points will be given to individuals who live or operate in Alexandra.
- Partnership arrangements between Alexandra based enterprises and other non Alexandra based enterprises will be encouraged.
- A roster system will be established so that work will be allocated on a rotational basis.
- A process will be established to provide part time work on a rotational basis to individuals in Alexandra.

A message from the MEC for Housing

I am very pleased and honoured that the Alexandra Renewal Project has been made the responsibility of my Department. I and the Project Team am committed to ensuring that the Project is implemented quickly and fairly, in a way in which all stakeholders are heard and accommodated, where possible.

This is a large task that we have been given and it is more than just our responsibility. Every person living in Alexandra has a role to play and will benefit from this project. In order for us to be successful we need all stakeholders to support and work with us.

We are in this together!!

Alexandra is a unique and exciting place. All who live there feel a special bond with the area, despite the many problems. We believe that this Project will make Alexandra even better.

*Paul Mashatile
MEC for Housing, Gauteng Province*

For more information on the Alexandra Renewal Project visit our website at www.alexandra.co.za