

18-10-2013: ALL ROADS LEAD TO "COMPLETE STREETS" IN CITY OF THE FUTURE

Future street design in Johannesburg will give equal recognition for the rights and needs of all road users – motorists, commuters, cyclists and pedestrians.

Clr Mpho Parks Tau, the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, says the city is committed to the concept of "complete streets" which are safe, comfortable and accessible for all road users regardless of age, ability or method of transport.

"Upgrades to our major city roads – including the highway network – will make provision for all road users and might include dedicated lanes for buses, taxis, cyclists or pedestrians," he said at the launch of a major road construction programme in Rosebank.

"The reality is that the many of our residents still use taxis to travel from home to work and to leisure. More than 60% of users of public transport make use of taxis," says Mayor Tau.

"At the same time we want to promote the use of public transport – through the expansion of the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit and seamless connections to the Gautrain and passenger rail.

"This trend will be encouraged through the expansion of the City's Corridors of Freedom where future economic growth will be directed towards transport arteries and nodes," says Mayor Tau.

"Complete streets" is a modern trend in many global cities and seeks to balance the interests of all road users – with a strong emphasis on safety and liveable communities.

"Public roads belong to all users – not only private car owners," says Mayor Tau. "The roads are community assets and must be transformed to serve the needs of everybody regardless of their mode of transport."

The city has recently launched "complete street" pilot programmes in Ivory Park, Orange Farm, Diepsloot and Bramfischerville and this will be gradually expanded into other areas and suburbs.

Among the programmes under development are providing better pedestrian and cycling links to Rea Vaya stations and key economic nodes such as shopping and entertainment centres. A dedicated cycling lane will be constructed in Soweto – linking the Noordgesig Clinic with schools in Orlando East along Mooki Street.

The objectives of the project are to enhance the appearance of streets and increase the safety of pedestrians and cyclists without compromising the flow of traffic. .

The "complete street" principles will be included in future street designs be integrated into infrastructure planning. A shift towards public transport – and away from private car usage – will also improve Johannesburg's ability to meet its targets for reductions in carbon emissions.

Ends

