



Dear Residents of Johannesburg,

On Tuesday, I visited the site of the tragic building collapse at Amethyst Business Park in Ormonde. The rubble was a sobering reminder of the devastating consequences when safety standards are not upheld. This collapse claimed the lives of nine people, while three others remain in hospital receiving medical care. Behind these numbers are families whose lives have been permanently changed—fathers, sons, brothers, and breadwinners who left home for work and never returned.

On behalf of the City of Johannesburg, I extend my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones mourning this unimaginable loss. We share in your grief and recognise our responsibility as a city to prevent such tragedies wherever possible.

Investigations into the cause of the collapse are underway. Early indications suggest that building plans were not submitted to the City for this development, which constitute a serious violation of Johannesburg's building regulations.

The City will fully cooperate with all investigations to ensure that the truth is established and that those responsible are held accountable. This tragedy has also drawn national attention. Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Dean Macpherson has confirmed that the Council for the Built Environment will investigate whether professional negligence, misconduct, or violations of building standards contributed to the collapse. National government has also indicated that broader regulatory oversight in the construction sector will be reviewed.

While the investigation will determine the exact cause, we must confront a difficult reality: incidents like these remind us that enforcement and vigilance must always remain strong. As city leaders, we accept that ensuring compliance with building regulations is a responsibility we must uphold with even greater



urgency and consistency. Johannesburg has experienced painful reminders of the consequences when infrastructure safety is compromised.

The Usindiso Building fire in Marshalltown in 2023, which claimed 76 lives, exposed the dangers of neglected buildings and inadequate safety systems. More recently, incidents such as the Doornfontein explosion and the Doornkop structural collapse have reinforced the importance of strict oversight in how buildings are constructed, maintained and occupied. The City's building by-laws exist for one fundamental reason: to protect human life. They ensure that structures are safe, that fire protection systems are in place, and that electrical and gas installations meet the required standards.

Before any building is constructed, extended or structurally altered, plans must be submitted to the City for approval so that qualified professionals can assess whether the structure is safe. When these processes are ignored or bypassed, the results can be catastrophic—for individuals, families, and our entire community. For this reason, the City of Johannesburg will intensify enforcement of building regulations across the city. Inspections of high-risk and unfinished developments are being prioritised, and buildings suspected of non-compliance will be investigated without delay. Where violations are identified, decisive action — including stop-work orders, penalties and legal action — will be taken.

At the same time, building a safer Johannesburg requires collective responsibility. Developers must follow approved plans and engineering standards. Contractors must refuse to cut corners for the sake of speed or profit. Property owners must ensure that renovations and structural changes are lawful and properly inspected. Residents also play an important role by reporting illegal or unsafe construction activity.

Johannesburg continues to grow and attract investment, and development is essential to creating jobs and improving the quality of life for our residents. But development must always be responsible and safe. Progress that compromises safety is not progress at all.

We cannot remove the pain caused by this tragedy, but we can honour those affected by learning from it, strengthening our oversight, and enforcing our regulations more firmly.

The lives lost in Ormonde must remind us that safety is not optional.

Until next time,

Johannesburg Executive Mayor Councillor Sello Dada Morero

