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Johannesburg City Parks in association with BlackBerry to officially open Sandton Central Park to the public

The Sandton Central Park situated in the heart of Sandton will be officially opened by Johannesburg City Parks (JCP).

This exciting development is the culmination of collaboration between Johannesburg City Parks, Sandton Central Management District, Smile Media and Research In Motion (RIM) makers of BlackBerry®. It brings to the residents, employees, public and tourists of Sandton Central a space to relax and take a break from the daily hustle and bustle of the city.

The park, one of the green lungs situated in the heart of Sandton, will now consist of a grassed amphitheatre, sculptured garden beds, indigenous trees, solar powered lights, seating and a magnificent sculptured reading garden. It will help to build a healthier community by providing a space where people can socialise and enjoy recreational activities and events.

“City Parks is pleased to open the park that has seen a noticeable transformation, made possible by BlackBerry. The upgrading of the park has also enabled the eradication of vagrants; which is important towards ensuring that the green space is utilised for what it is meant for; outdoor recreational activity.

It has also made possible the availability of 24 hour security which brings about a general feeling of safety for park users, a key and most welcome element.

“Thank you to the supporters,” says City Parks Acting Managing Director, Mr Bryne Maduka. “Without their backing, this extent of upgrade would not have been possible. City Parks encourages more private sector companies to partner with it towards enhancing green spaces in the city of Johannesburg. As can be seen, in addition to enhancing the lives of citizens, such developments also help to increase surrounding property values,” he adds.

Since the park, situated on the corner of 5th Street and Grayston Drive, was officially handed over to Smile Media and Sandton Central Management District by Johannesburg City Parks in March 2011 for the upgrade, various landscaping initiatives have been implemented. This includes reshaping of the entire slope of the park to create the amphitheatre with terraced grass seating, levelled field and construction of paved solar-lit pathways leading the way to two beautiful formal entrances, celebrating and advertising the park.

Bridging the gap between recreation and a responsibility to the environment means that an eco-friendly approach had to be adopted in the planning of this park. To counteract Sandton Central’s carbon footprint, 38 indigenous trees as well as the spekboom (*Portulacaria afra*) - known to be effective in carbon sequestration (binding atmospheric carbon which is responsible for climate change) - have been planted.

“We are very excited to officially launch the park, one of the green lungs situated in Sandton Central. This project has been a long journey, but knowing the difference this open space is going to make in the area, makes it all worthwhile. The public can now enjoy a world-class multi-functional outdoor experience in the heart of Sandton, within walking distance from Sandton City, various hotels, residential complexes and countless businesses,” says Rookshana Desai, Marketing Manager at Sandton Central Management District (SCMD). SCMD is a City Improvement District (CID) under the management of Urban Genesis Management, a pioneer in urban management and renewal that creates, delivers, manages and inspires exceptional urban places.

"Smile Media ensured the implementation of the upgrade on behalf of the association looks forward to the 11 September 2012 park launch with great anticipation. We thank Johannesburg City Parks for the opportunity to develop and maintain the park as well as Sandton Central Management District and RIM for its amazing commitment to the project”, says Rowan Reiback.

Media are invited to call Noeleen Mattera on 07999 46345, or Rowan Reiback on 083 629 4329 for further information.

Issued by

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