

# RECORD OF MEETING BETWEEN GAUTENG MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND BORDEAUX SOUTH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION ON 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022

**GMA NOTE:** We understood there were at least three communities represented at the meeting. Communities represented Bordeaux South Residents Association; Craighall Park and Hurlingham.

## DEFINITIONS

GMA : Gautrain Management Agency  
BSRA : Bordeaux South Residents Association  
EIA : Environmental Impact Assessment

**GMA NOTE:** At the meeting, the GMA set out in some detail the context of the project, including that it is Phase 1 of 5 phases of rapid rail planned by the Gauteng Provincial Government to be implemented over the next 25 years to fulfill multiple objectives including alleviation of road congestion, decrease environmental harm and linking residential areas to places of employment as efficiently as possible. The community representatives indicated that there was no fundamental objection to the principles espoused and that concerns were more about the route, planning processes, impact on properties and the timing of the project.

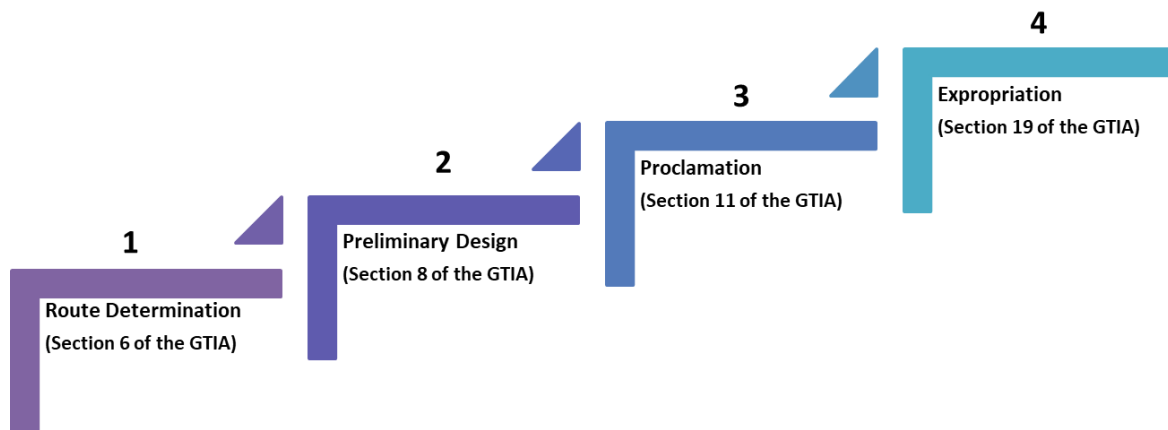
## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GMA AND BSRA

BSRA recorded that it would prefer to work with GMA to explore options regarding the route determination of phase 1 insofar as it traverses the suburb of Bordeaux South in Randburg.

GMA undertook to be transparent in the process and to respect public participation.

**GMA NOTE:** The GMA set out the four phase nature of the planning process that are set out in law (Being the Gauteng Transport Infrastructure Act or GTIA). Although not shown at the meeting, this diagram shows the four stages neatly. The first phase of Route Determination is complete. However, it is to be followed by a stage called Preliminary Design where the technical aspects of the rail design are dealt with in much more detail, the EIA and specialist studies as well as public participation are undertaken. Only after this comprehensive process is complete is the Route Proclaimed and affected properties expropriated. Each stage is sequential and can

only be committed once all the formal requirements of the GTIA and other relevant legislation (especially that around the EIA and public participation) are met. The GMA also gave a sense of the timing of these stages based on past experience of the current Gautrain System. The Preliminary Design is planned to commence in FY 2024/25 and would take approximately 2-3 years to complete. Proclamation follows thereafter and can take up to a year. Expropriation timing depends on specifics for each property, and it is not possible to put a timeline to it at this stage.



The GMA also confirmed that it prefers to engage positively with communities in seeking solutions that can work for all.

### **PREMIERS STATEMENT THAT GAUTRAIN IS NOT GOING AHEAD**

BSRA referred to the media reports that the new Gauteng Premier has put a stop to further development of the Gautrain and asked what this means for phase one (the phase involving the extension of the Gautrain through Bordeaux South).

**GMA NOTE:** The GMA explained that, in addition to the four phases of the GTIA planning processes described above, there is a completely distinct process of Railway Infrastructure Planning and Procurement when funding is allocated, and procurement of construction and operating contractors takes place. This should happen in parallel to the GTIA stages, normally once the Preliminary Design and Proclamation processes are complete once there is clarity on the properties on which the rail line is to be built. The Premier's comments must be seen in this regard in that funding for the Phase 1 construction is not going to be allocated now but planning should nevertheless continue.

GMA explained that they are currently preparing the preliminary route determination of phases 2 and 3 of the Gautrain expansion and it is not envisaged that any further work will be effected on phase 1 until approximately two years time. At that time the Environmental Impact Assessment will be commenced for phase 1 and funding will be required from the Gauteng province.

**GMA NOTE:** The GMA is currently undertaking the route determination for Phases 2 and 3. Please see the notes above regarding the preliminary design for Phase 1. We gave indicative timing of the Preliminary Design in FY 24/25. (i.e. the soonest date for

commencement of the Preliminary Design stage would be April 2024 and the Proclamation of the Route would be between two and three years later.)

The Premier's statement was to the effect that no funding will be provided for the Gautrain in the next financial year. As no funds were being sought for phase 1 of the Gautrain his statement has no effect on phase 1. GMA are continuing with their program on phases 2 and 3.

**GMA NOTE:** The above statement may be confusing, and we suggest it is deleted as it is covered by the preceding notes.

### **WHY OVERLAND?**

BSRA pointed out that the biggest source of concern to residents was the fact that the Gautrain is to travel overland through the suburb of Bordeaux South. BSRA asked if written reasons could be provided for that decision as:

- those reasons could then be shared with the residents;
- insight could be obtained as to why the decision to go overland was taken;
- in understanding the thinking behind the decision, it may be that BSRA can suggest viable alternatives

GMA advised that the reasons appear from their report and should reasons be requested, nothing more will be provided than what is contained in that report.

**GMA NOTE:** This implies that we have information that we will not share. This is not correct - all the information used in determining the route is already in the report and requesting further reasons will not yield anything different.

GMA advised that the current decision on the route is subject to the Preliminary Design Stage which involves design, costing and the detailed EIA process and if, during that process, facts emerge which justify the change to moving the train underground, such facts will be taken into consideration.

GMA advised that some of the most compelling facts are:

**Cost:** it costs 10 (ten) times more to take the train underground rather than overland on a viaduct.

**GMA NOTE:** The relevance of the cost differential between construction on the ground ("at grade"), above the ground (on a bridge or a viaduct) or under the ground (in a tunnel) is that cost is a key criteria in route selection. This means that any route selection must take impacts such as those on the environment, on communities or on society into account and also taking the cost of each option.

**Ripple effect of changes:** it should be borne in mind that any changes effected will cause a ripple effect all along the Gautrain route and it is unrealistic to consider only the cost of effecting a change at one point: one must consider what other changes are necessitated further along the line in both directions.

**GMA NOTE:** The GMA made the point that the Phase 1 route runs for 32 km from Marlboro to Little Falls near Honeydew and it cannot make changes in one area that will then adversely affect another community or compromise the design of the rest of the route. A holistic view is thus required for any changes suggested by communities.

The GMA also pointed out that any tunnels will also require extensive EIAs and that they have their own constraints and disadvantages that must be taken into account.

### **EFFECT ON PROPERTY OWNERS OF LAND WITHIN THE 400 METER CORRIDOR**

BSRA pointed out that as a direct result of the proclamation of the 400 metre corridor, all property owners within the corridor suffered an immediate diminished value of their properties as well as curtailment of certain rights. In light of the fact that the Preliminary Design Stage would only commence in two years time, was it not possible to reconsider the decision to go overland having regard to an issue which BSRA contended constitutes an insurmountable obstacle to the overland route.

GMA advised that firstly they do not agree that there are any insurmountable obstacles and secondly there will be an opportunity to engage with the Design and EIA consultants on this issue when the full Preliminary Design Stage is commenced in two years time.

GMA then addressed the insurmountable obstacle suggested by BSRA, namely the power lines along Braamfontein Spruit.

**GMA NOTE:** Overall the Gautrain has had a positive impact on properties around stations and those near the railway line have extensive mitigation measures to reduce impacts such as sight and noise. The GMA also pointed out that as part of the land acquisition programme, the value of any property to be expropriated is only determined at the time of proclamation. This means that even for properties that will be expropriated there is a valuation carried out by independent experts at that time as to the market value of the property. The better maintained and improved the property the higher the valuation would be. This is included in the GTIA to avoid a situation where property owners cease maintenance and improvements in the mistaken belief that such improvements will not be taken into account. The approvals of applications for any land-use change or environmental authorizations for properties that fall within the determined route remain with the local authority.

### **EXISTENCE OF POWER LINES ALONG BRAAMFONTEIN SPRUIT**

BSRA pointed out that as currently configured, the train viaduct will have to go right through the power lines above the Braamfontein Spruit and suggested that this constituted an insurmountable obstacle to the overland route.

When asked if the GMA had taken into account the 32 (thirty-two) power lines running along the Braamfontein Spruit when determining Route Alignment 3 overland Bordeaux South, the GMA responded by stating that they must have done so.

GMA advised that the movement of power lines is the least of their problems. they moved many power lines for the first Gautrain construction project.

**GMA NOTE:** As part of the Route determination the GMA engaged with all utility owners including City Power and Eskom and the power lines are already taken into consideration. The mitigation of this will be done with technical consideration of options in the Preliminary Design Stage, but the current view is that they do not pose any insurmountable obstacle.

## **REGISTRATION AS AN INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY**

BSRA asked whether it could be registered as an interested and affected party and, if so, how that could be done.

GMA advised that it could register simply by sending a letter to GMA to that effect.

GMA further advised that once BSRA was registered as an interested and affected party, GMA would keep BSRA apprised of developments.

**GMA NOTE:** Although the formal process of Preliminary Design has not commenced the GMA is willing to update a list of interested and affected Parties in anticipation of the start of this formal and regulated process. The GMA suggests that individuals and organisations inform the GMA of their names and contact details. Once the formal Preliminary Design stage starts there will be another opportunity to register formally as Interested and Affected Parties in terms of the GTIA. The distinction is important, letting the GMA know now who is interested and affected party will allow for information to be shared but the formal registration with the rights that flow from this status only starts once the Preliminary Design stage commences.

## **CO OPERATION BETWEEN GMA CONSULTANTS AND BSRA CONSULTANTS**

BSRA advise that it intended to employ it's own experts to engage with the GMA's EIA and other consultants and asked if GMA's consultants would be allowed to engage with BSRA's experts during the formulation of the design, costing and EIA process.

GMA advised that the entire process would be transparent and there would be engagement with communities during the process.

**GMA NOTE:** The GMA said that it would prefer that these engagements happen at the time of the Preliminary Design. This will be at a time when there is information

from specialist studies and more work has been done by the Province's technical specialists. Expert inputs at this stage will be noted and included in the scope of work for Preliminary Design but will not change the current status of the Route determination.

## **WAY FORWARD**

GMA expressed concern as to what would be communicated to BSRA residents about the meeting, citing examples of misinformation being communicated to other communities.

It was agreed that BSRA would formulate a draft report and send it to GMA for their confirmation as to its accuracy regarding the meeting. Once that feedback had been received the report would be amended as agreed and circulated to the residents.

This document was jointly compiled by BSRA representatives and GMA.