

# ORANJEZICHT HIGGOVALE SAFETY SITUATION

We are experiencing what feels like a **surge in crime in our suburbs** - street robberies, trespassing, break-ins and theft, muggings, drug use, etc. In light of extremely thinly spread SAPS services (at best only 3 patrol vehicles servicing all of Bo Kaap, Tamboerskloof, Gardens, Higgovale, Oranjezicht, Vredehoek and Devils Peak residential areas) we have **two potential ways to reduce crime**:

## 1 : OH WATCH

This is an existing community safety organisation run by volunteers and assisted by Watchcom, the security hub for the neighbourhood watches in the City Bowl.

As of November 2023, only about 15 regular members of the watch contributed R7 000 p.m. **This is not enough to fund the operations of OH Watch**, which currently operates / coordinates:

- A number of armed response vehicles, one each from FADT and CBAR operate in the OH Watch area and assist the watch with emergencies and respond to street camera alerts when not attending to their clients.
- Members volunteer to respond to incidents where possible.
- 8 OH Watch License Plate Recognition (LPR) overview cameras (we are about to replace 3 that are not currently operational).
- Street cameras are monitored and all alerts sent to Watchcom to organise and coordinate a response. Watchcom also monitors the LPR camera alerts and crime reporting WhatsApp groups of OH Watch. In addition, residents can call the Watchcom landline for emergencies.
- OH Watch hosts six WhatsApp groups for crime reporting and response.
- OH Watch communicates with members via a monthly newsletter, a Facebook page and website.

**OH Watch is currently in the red by approximately R5 000 per month, reducing our available funds rapidly.**

## 2 : SPECIAL RATES AREA (SRA)

Approximately 50 formal SRAs and CIDs (City Improvement Districts are the business equivalent of residential SRAs) exist in Cape Town at present. They provide supplementary services (e.g. safety, cleaning, maintenance, social) funded by mandatory monthly payments from all residents / businesses, collected by the City on the SRA/CID's behalf. **OH Watch is not an SRA.**

The SRA application process requires a Steering Committee to hold three public meetings in the suburb to determine community needs, compile a 5-year business plan and budget, and provide feedback on a City-run public participation process on the plan.

60% of property owners must give written consent for an SRA application, which must be submitted by any 30 September and starts by 1 July the year after.

**Setting up an SRA takes considerable effort and buy-in; the earliest possible date of commencement for an OH SRA is 1 July 2025.**

<https://www.capetown.gov.za/Family%20and%20home/residential-property-and-houses/private-properties/special-rating-areas>

## PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

We call on all residents to join OH Watch and to please set up a monthly donation to:

**OH Watch**  
**FNB 201511**  
**Acc: 622 124 836 80**  
**Ref: Name & Surname**

Or use the **SnapScan** code below to setup a regular contribution.

supported by

**OH Watch has existing and effective structures that can be strengthened with minimal effort and utilized with immediate effect:**

- With adequate funding OH Watch could coordinate an integrated street view camera system that is monitored, with dedicated vehicles responding to alerts.
- With as little as R80 000 per month, the watch could operate its **own dedicated response vehicle**.
- Assuming 1 300 private properties (including flats), and considering the many guest houses, Airbnbs, and other businesses in the area, **we should raise this comfortably with ~R100 per owner per month.**
- This should be our first approach - we will evaluate and communicate residents' responses in February 2024.



**24H WATCHCOM EMERGENCY 021 422 4222**