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MEDIA STATEMENT

To: News Editors
From: Kgamanyane Maphologela
Director: Communications & Stakeholder Management
Date: 19 March 2026

City of Johannesburg rejects false narrative on billing system “collapse”

The City of Johannesburg firmly rejects recent sensational claims alleging a widespread “collapse” of its billing system affecting 1.5 million customer accounts.

These claims are factually incorrect, misleading, irresponsible, and risk creating unnecessary panic among residents, the property sector and investors. There is no evidence to support assertions that the City’s systems have collapsed or that property transfers across Johannesburg have come to a standstill. Media houses are urged to verify information with the City before publishing, to avoid misinforming the public.

Facts on municipal accounts

The City confirms that it does not have 1.5 million municipal accounts. The verified number of active municipal accounts currently stands at 1,075,793 across all regions.

“The claim that 1.5 million accounts are frozen, that no manual processes exist, or that property transfers have halted is simply untrue and unnecessarily alarmist,” said Acting Group Head Revenue Shared Service Centre, Lufuno Mashau.

“No credible evidence has been provided to support these figures.”

Payment processing remains stable

The City reiterates:

- Payments made through official City channels are processed and reflected accordingly
- Isolated delays experienced in February 2026 have been resolved

- There is no widespread issue affecting payment reflection
- Customers with accounts in good standing are not at risk of disconnection, in line with the City's Credit Control Policy.

Property transfers continue

Property-related services remain operational, with both online and manual systems fully functional.

Clearance applications continue to be processed within 30 days, with certificates issued within 24 hours of payment confirmation.

Performance data confirms continued service delivery:

February 2026

- 4,921 clearance figure applications received
- 4,830 processed within 30 days
- 3,468 clearance certificate applications received and paid
- 3,449 issued within 24 hours

January 2026

- 4,894 clearance figure applications received
- 4,686 processed within 30 days
- 2,962 clearance certificate applications received
- 2,946 issued within 24 hours

In addition, the City issued over 10,000 clearance certificates per quarter in the first two quarters of the 2025/2026 financial year—demonstrating sustained operational capacity.

Ongoing stakeholder engagement

The City maintains structured quarterly engagements with conveyancing stakeholders, including the Johannesburg Attorneys Association, to ensure transparency, resolve challenges and improve service delivery.

Improving customer access

The City continues to roll out enhanced digital platforms to make it easier for customers to log queries and ensure issues are resolved within short and reasonable timeframes, improving overall service delivery.

Commitment to system stability

While technical challenges may occur from time to time, these do not constitute a system collapse. The City continues to strengthen system resilience through ongoing stabilisation and modernisation initiatives aimed at improving customer experience and operational efficiency.

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