



Dear Residents of Johannesburg,

Johannesburg stands at a crossroads. Across every corner of our City, from the heart of the inner city to the vibrant streets of our townships, the pulse of daily life beats on. Spaza shop owners rise before dawn, street traders hustle to serve their neighbours, and small businesses push forward despite heavy odds. It is you - the men and women working tirelessly, often in silence - who keep families afloat and our local economies alive.

Your resilience is the true foundation of our economy. But resilience alone is not enough. For too long, our local economy has operated under immense pressure. Unemployment remains heartbreakingly high. The cost of living rises while too many entrepreneurs - mothers, fathers, young dreamers -



struggle without the support, infrastructure, or protection they need to grow. At the same time, we have seen areas where disorder, non-compliance, and unsafe practices have undermined trust and placed communities at risk.

This cannot become our normal. We cannot accept it. Reclaiming our economy begins with restoring order - creating the safe, fair, and dignified environment every resident deserves. An economy that works is one where mothers feel safe shopping for their children, traders who follow the rules, and every community knows their wellbeing comes first. That is why the City has intensified by-law enforcement, inspections, and compliance measures across trading spaces.

Where there is non-compliance, there will be consequences. This is not about punishment - it is about protection. It is about building a city where everyone who does things the right way is given a fair chance to succeed, and where trust in our local economy is rebuilt, one honest day's work at a time. At the same time, reclaiming the economy means reclaiming opportunity. The township economy must work for you, the people who call it home.

For too long, many local entrepreneurs have faced barriers to entry, including limited access to funding, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient support systems that make it difficult to expand and compete. This must change - and it will. We are taking real, deliberate steps to open the doors of opportunity wider - so that more South Africans can participate, own businesses, trade, and grow right here in their own communities. This is not about exclusion. It is about fairness, balance, and long-term sustainability. A strong local economy is one where opportunity is shared, where participation is broad, and where no one is left on the margins.

Reclaiming the economy also means investing where it matters most. The township economy is not peripheral, it is central to Johannesburg's future. To unlock its full potential, the City is investing in better trading infrastructure, formalising and supporting trading spaces, strengthening support for small businesses and informal traders, expanding access to markets, and breaking down the barriers that stand in your way. At the same time, we are enhancing safety and compliance across all trading environments to ensure that growth is both sustainable and trusted.

We are also committed to making sure that township businesses are not left behind in the digital age. We are supporting access to connectivity, digital tools, and new market opportunities - so you can compete, innovate, and thrive. Because real growth is only meaningful when it reaches you - where you live, work, and dream.

Our direction is firm. We are building an economy that is truly inclusive—where your participation and benefit matter. We are building an economy that is regulated and fair, where standards are upheld and communities feel safe. We are building an economy that is resilient, where local enterprise is not just supported but celebrated. And we are building an economy that is accountable, with no room for disorder or unfairness. Johannesburg cannot afford an economy that excludes its own people. Nor can it allow conditions that undermine safety, fairness, and long-term growth.

Until next time,

Johannesburg Executive Mayor Councillor Sello Dada Morero

