



FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE: JOHANNESBURG IS RISING

Dear Residents of Johannesburg,

This week, I had the privilege of delivering my last State of the City Address at the Cathedral Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, right in the heart of our inner city. My message was clear and unwavering: Johannesburg is boldly laying the foundation for a brighter future. Despite the real challenges our city continues to face, together we are making meaningful progress in rebuilding Johannesburg into a resilient, inclusive, and truly world-class African city. Through unity, we are reclaiming our inner city, strengthening service delivery, investing in infrastructure, and restoring trust in local government.

Johannesburg remains the economic heartbeat of South Africa and Africa, contributing 15% to the national GDP. Even under economic pressure, our city recorded employment growth while absorbing thousands of new job seekers. Today, 99.3% of residents have access to water, 96% have access to sanitation services, 92% have access to electricity, and 87% have access to refuse removal services. These numbers are more than statistics — they are a testament to our shared dignity, opportunity, and hope for millions of residents across our seven regions.

Our Mayoral High-Impact Programme continues to reclaim Johannesburg, precinct by precinct. Through coordinated law enforcement and service delivery interventions, we are restoring order, improving cleanliness, and ensuring that every resident feels safer and more valued. Projects currently underway include the restoration of the Johannesburg Library, upgrades to transport facilities, precinct safety interventions, and major inner city renewal projects. Johannesburg will remain resilient. We will not allow lawlessness, hijacked buildings, or urban decay to define our future.

Our city is currently implementing more than R73 billion worth of infrastructure and development projects. Key investments include Microsoft's R5.4 billion data centre initiative, a R7 billion waste-to-energy partnership, and major water infrastructure developments in Midrand and Brixton. We are also strengthening water and energy security through pipe replacement programmes, embedded generation, smart metering and infrastructure upgrades across all seven regions of Johannesburg.

In 2019, we inherited a financially distressed city. Since then, we have worked to rebuild governance systems, improve revenue collection and stabilise municipal finances. Today, Johannesburg has adopted a fully funded R89.4 billion budget, achieved revenue growth, maintained operational surpluses and introduced debt relief measures for qualifying residents and businesses. These reforms are helping us restore trust and direct more resources toward service delivery.

The progress we are seeing today is the result of a partnership between government, business, labour, civil society and communities. Investor confidence is growing, tourism is returning, and Johannesburg is once again hosting major international events. We thank every resident, community organisation, worker, investor and partner who continues to believe in Johannesburg. We understand that there is still a lot of work ahead. Infrastructure backlogs, water losses, electricity challenges, and unemployment remain serious concerns for many.

But let us be unwavering in our resolve — the foundation is being laid. Together, we will continue to create jobs, revitalise communities, strengthen governance, fight corruption, and build a city that truly works for everyone. Johannesburg is our first love. Its future is in our hands, and together, with compassion and determination, we will build the city our children deserve. But as we move forward, let us remember that Johannesburg also needs our prayers—may we continue to seek guidance, unity, and strength as we shape our shared future.

This is your City.

And together, we are building the Johannesburg of our hearts' desire.

Until next time,
Johannesburg Executive Mayor Councillor Sello Dada Morero

