The Joburg Turnaround Plan is gaining momentum

Dear Residents of Johannesburg,

I have pledged to be transparent and accountable in overseeing the governance and finances of our complex city, all in the interest of serving you better. With that in mind, I'm reaching out this week following our discussion on Tuesday, 21 July 2026 with the Minister of Finance, Enoch Godongwana, along with senior officials from the National Treasury, the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, David Mahlobo, and the Gauteng MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Jacob Mamabolo, focusing on the reform agenda that is vital for the future stability and governance of our city.

I am pleased to confirm that the Gauteng Provincial Government, the National Treasury, the Department of Water and Sanitation, and the Ministry of Finance have joined forces to prioritise a coordinated reform effort.

This initiative aims to boost metropolitan governance and tighten financial controls. We welcome ongoing collaboration on these reforms, which are designed to strengthen metro service delivery, improve financial health, and ensure long-term sustainability.

The metro reform agenda zeroes in on beefing up municipal financial management, enhancing revenue collection, improving infrastructure planning, and fostering better governance and accountability. It also targets operational efficiencies and creates a more conducive environment for economic growth.

The key takeaway from our discussions is a reaffirmation of the Joburg Turnaround Plan, supported by Council decisions, which focus on instilling financial discipline, rebuilding institutional capacity, and embedding data-driven systems and interventions.

The Mayoral Lekgotla has crafted an Action Plan that puts governance improvement front and centre. Supported by provincial and national partners, the City is taking proactive steps to strengthen financial oversight, boost compliance, and support smarter decision-making.

These efforts will help improve audit results, reinforce consequence management, upgrade financial reporting, ensure adherence to legislation, and cultivate a culture of accountability across the administration.

On the energy front, we are intensifying efforts to improve efficiency and cut electricity losses through smart technologies, better operational management, and tighter revenue protection. This is crucial as we address the R2.1 billion overspend on bulk electricity purchases and work to enhance revenue collection, strengthen City Power operations, and fast-track renewable energy solutions.

The Johannesburg Inner City Revitalisation Programme remains a top priority. This was reaffirmed by both the Minister Godongwana and the Gauteng Provincial Government, emphasizing the revitalisation of the Johannesburg CBD as a key economic and administrative hub, alongside other CBDs like Randburg and Lenasia.

The partnership aims to attract investment, upgrade public infrastructure, improve urban management, address safety concerns, and advance spatial justice — all aimed at restoring confidence in Johannesburg as a leading African city.

I'm also happy to report that Minister Godongwana has committed to helping settle undisputed municipal debts owed by provincial departments. As of 31 March 2026, Gauteng provincial departments owed R1.431 billion to Johannesburg. Clearing this debt will help improve the City's cash flow and boost service delivery.

The reform efforts are already bearing fruit. I can confirm that from 1 July 2026, funds for Joburg Water will be ring-fenced. Equally important is the progress we're making to turn around unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure. Our focus on consequence management is paying off, with positive results emerging through disciplinary measures and reports to MPAC, in line with our UIFWE Reduction Strategy.

Finally, the Minister Godongwana and the National Treasury have welcomed the progress under the Joburg Turnaround, especially with Moody's outlook turning positive, a boost also reflected in the lifting of the JSE suspension.

These are clear signs of the solid groundwork we're laying to restore the confidence of residents and investors alike. The Minister has also committed to returning in September to review our progress — a visit we eagerly await, because we have nothing to hide and everything to show.

Through ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, National Treasury, Gauteng Provincial Government, and our strategic partners, the City is pushing forward with reforms that put governance, financial sustainability, and citizen-focused service delivery at the heart of our transformation efforts.

Our ultimate goal is to build a city that is financially sound and works for everyone.

Until next time,

Johannesburg Executive Mayor Councillor Sello Dada Morero