



From the Executive Mayor's Desk: Johannesburg Must Work

Dear Residents of Johannesburg,

On Sunday, 26 July 2026, more than 25 000 residents took to the streets of Johannesburg for the 702 Jozi My Jozi Walk the Talk, and I want to reflect on what that day told us about the city we are building together.

For years, Walk the Talk has been part of this city's calendar, but this year's edition, hosted by Radio 702 in partnership with Jozi My Jozi and the City of Johannesburg, was the largest in the event's history. That figure, 25 000, is not one I take lightly. It is proof, not promise.

For too long, our commitment to reclaiming the inner city has lived in speeches and hashtags. On 26 July, it lived in the streets, in families walking through Newtown, Maboneng and Victoria Yards, along three routes of 5, 8 and 15 kilometres that began and ended in the heart of our city.

I have also seen the comments from some participants about litter and cleanliness on parts of the route, and I will not pretend those concerns are not fair.

In recent weeks, Pikitup has faced significant disruptions caused by protest action at several depots, affecting waste collection across parts of the city. While the entity is implementing measures to restore normal operations, this does not diminish the frustration residents experienced, and neither should it.

That is why I raise it here: the same residents who were honest about dirty streets are part of the 25 000 who still came out to walk them. That tells me something important. People are not walking away from this city. They are walking through it, expecting it to be better, and telling us plainly when it is not. That is exactly the standard I want to be held to.

I was struck, too, by who chose to stand alongside us. Standard Bank, Gautrain, Nando's and PRASA all backed this walk, with Gautrain and PRASA keeping transport free for participants on the day.

When private capital puts its name and its resources behind an inner-city event of this scale, that is a stronger signal for Growing Johannesburg's Economy than any paragraph I could write. It tells me the renewal of this city is no longer a story we are telling alone.

I know that safety remains the question most residents ask me, directly or indirectly, whenever we speak about the inner city, and I heard it again from walkers on the day. It is why I could stand in the CBD, Newtown and Maboneng and watch families move freely through streets we are working every day to restore.

This year's walk also put a spotlight on homelessness, through the Mi-Change voucher system built into

the day, and every route was designed to be wheelchair- and pram-friendly. In a month in which we honour the contribution of women to this country, I was glad that inclusion was not an afterthought stitched onto the programme, but part of how the day was built from the start.

Taken together, the crowd, the honest criticism, the private sector backing and the security on the ground all point to the same conclusion.



Nobody walks 5, 8 or 15 kilometres through our streets because they have given up on this city. They walk because they still want Johannesburg to work, for residents, for businesses, for a country that watches this city as a measure of its own health.

That is the standard I am holding this administration to, on waste collection as much as on safety, on the routes people complained about as much as the ones they praised. Johannesburg must work, and on 26 July, 25 000 residents showed me they are still willing to walk beside us while we make that happen.

Until next time,
Johannesburg Executive Mayor Cllr. Sello Dada Morero