



## CITY OF CAPE TOWN

### STATEMENT BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR, ALDERMAN DAN PLATO

#### **The Coronavirus is going to get worse before things get better, now is the time to pull together so we can get through this**

It goes without saying that on 27 March 2020, life in South Africa changed. It has been almost two months since many of our lives and businesses came to a grinding halt. While President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the nation-wide lockdown in an attempt to contain the spread of the coronavirus and allow our health services the critical time they needed to prepare for the increase in COVID-19 infections that is coming, many of us also began to face sudden and unexpected hardships.

Countries and cities across the world are having to find new ways to grapple with the unprecedented challenges that are affecting us all. This virus is tough, and we all need to prepare ourselves for the tough times ahead. We must be prepared for the realities of this pandemic that has seen hundreds of thousands of lives lost across the world. We have not yet reached the peak in South Africa. Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time to honour the dignity of the human spirit and come together.

As a government, we have had to work rapidly to find ways in which we can continue delivering services and ensure that our frontline staff have the necessary support and personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect themselves while they continue to do their work. We have procured PPE equipment for staff and front line workers, and have been extremely grateful for the thousands of masks that have been donated to the City by private businesses. We have distributed these masks to residents across the City as well as to our frontline staff.

We have **equipped and capacitated our clinics to perform COVID-19 screening** and testing across the Metro, and we have conducted door to door screening in many communities. As the virus has spread we have adapted this approach and working hand in hand with the Western Cape Government we have shifted to a more targeted screening and testing approach to contain the hotspots being identified.

Working with the Western Cape Government, we have assisted with setting up **quarantine and isolation facilities** across the City in anticipation of the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

We have had to put measures in place to ensure that our services limit the spread of the virus. For instance, all our **MyCiti stations and other public transport interchanges (PTIs) are sanitised several times a week** and we have intensified the cleaning protocols for MyCiti and at minibus-taxi facilities around Cape Town since the start of the lockdown. Limitations have been placed on MyCiti buses in terms of the number of passengers we carry and their hours of operation, to ensure social distancing while our queue management system also prioritises social distancing at all PTIs.

The City has also **installed 93 water tanks in informal settlements** across the city, each with a capacity of 2700 litres, in order to enhance access to water, as part of its COVID-19 mitigation action plan. More than 25.7 million litres of water have been delivered via trucks to informal settlements to step-up access to water.

Over and above the administration's efforts, our Councillors have agreed to reprioritise funds originally earmarked for community development initiatives in their ward allocation budgets, to provide emergency food relief. This will greatly supplement our existing efforts to **support and equip soup kitchens** throughout the metro to provide a warm meal to thousands of residents in need. While the National Government remains the primary stakeholder when it comes to food relief, the City has had to do what it can to help our residents while plans were being made at national level. This is why, as part of our plans, we will continue to work through our ward structures to identify beneficiaries and to make facilities available for the storage and distribution of food. Support will also continue to be given to NGO partners through the Mayor's special relief fund.

## STATEMENT BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR

All of this is how we are dealing with the 'now' but we have put just as much effort into preparing for the recovery too.

### **Post COVID-19 planning**

We have developed a dynamic economic recovery plan, as well as a social recovery plan. We continue to adjust our economic impact modelling & scenarios and we are working with small and big business to ensure that we try our best to minimise the loss of employment. We are not only implementing measures to deal with the current crisis, we are putting just as much energy into planning for the recovery too.

We have pushed for more businesses to be allowed to go back to work, and we are glad to see that the National Government has agreed to some of these requests. We have called for the list of essential items to be expanded and again, we appreciate that the National Government has expanded this list. Of course, there is much more that can be done, and we will continue to prioritise the safety of our residents while responsibly calling for the opening up of our economy because we simply cannot allow our economy to be stalled any longer.

All of this forms part of the **Dynamic Operating Framework** that was rapidly developed and adopted during the early days of the lockdown, and continues to be tweaked as new data becomes available.

I know this is a tough time for many of our residents. I want to assure you that the City of Cape Town is doing everything we can to continue delivering services, to ensure that our services make your lives easier wherever possible, and that you have the support you need to get through this challenging time.

My office remains open, and our councillors are all still hard at work, so if you need to raise any concerns with us we are here, and we are available for you. I know our residents are resilient, you have already proved this when we overcame the worst drought to ever hit our city, so let's continue working together because we can achieve so much more when we have a united approach to tackling the difficulties that come our way.

I want to reiterate, in the tough times ahead, myself and the leaders around me will be there to support you, and to grieve with you when loved ones are lost. We are all in this together. In the times ahead, we are as prepared as we can be. Let us join hands and get through this together. We are in this together as one city.

**COVID-19: One City Together.**

**End**