

Statement by the City's Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille

City of Cape Town seeks to become the first digital City in Africa

In the next sitting of full Council on 25 September, the Open Data Policy and Portal will be considered. This initiative is part of the World Design Capital and sees how we can use design to make the City and government more transparent.

The City of Cape Town generates a significant amount of data that is potentially useful to residents. In the Information Age, making public sector data available for anyone to use as they wish allows us as government to tap into the creativity and innovative thinking of business and society to assist us in building a better city. This allows us to truly make progress possible together. Providing access to our data underscores our commitment to being an open, transparent and accountable government.

After public participation and a number of engagements with both international counterparts such as the previous Mayor of New York, Mayor Bloomberg; Mayor Jussi Pajunen of the City of Helsinki as well as the Western Cape Government, the City has decided to take an unprecedented step in South Africa.

Through the Open Data Policy, the City aims to establish and incrementally populate a single online open data portal for information and data generated by the organization that would be free and accessible to members of the public. The policy has gone through an extensive internal and external consultation process.

The comment from the public during this process included many specific suggestions related to the implementation of the open data project and the development and management of the open data portal. As a result, the City has followed a prudent approach which allows our Information Systems and Technology team a three-month period after the approval of the policy to develop the open data portal where the information will be stored.

The City has identified existing sources of information from which data will be added to the portal at the outset. These sources include:

- Economic areas management programme data (ECAMP)
- Development information resource centre data
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) viewers
- Links to our City Planning Portal

- Environmental, planning, community facilities and infrastructure-related data
- Statistical reports and underlying data
- Departmental reports that are already available to the public

Data will be made available free of charge and, as far as possible, in open data format as per the policy.

There will be categories of information for release that will be considered in terms of their applicability to service delivery and matched against legislative requirements, including privacy laws. Full details relating to this are contained in the policy.

An Open Data Steering Committee – which will include members of the public – will monitor the implementation of the policy as well as approve requests for additional data sets.

As this administration continues to strive to make Cape Town a world-class city, I hope that the approval of this policy will receive unanimous support at the September Council sitting.

The City of Cape Town seeks to become the first truly digital City in Africa. This project feeds in to our Smart City strategy which includes projects such as our extensive broadband digital inclusion strategy; our eServices offerings; our FreeCall Lines; and our Smart Cape facilities which are available at public libraries throughout the city.