

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

## City takes transparency to the next level

***Note to editors: the following is an extract from a speech made by Mayor De Lille at the launch of the City's Open Data Portal today, 27 January 2015.***

Today the City of Cape Town takes another step towards becoming the first digital city in Africa, with the launch of our Open Data Portal. Four months after being approved by full Council on 25 September 2014, the portal will go live today for the first time.

During our tenure as the World Design Capital for 2014, we wanted to find a way to use design to make government more transparent. As such, our Open Data Portal is the City's contribution to the World Design Capital 2014 legacy.

This is a historic day, as we join cities such as New York, London and Helsinki that have forged the way for cities to make their data sets available to the public. In today's knowledge economy, access to data is instrumental in becoming competitive.

The City is making its data available to all for free and in a useable format. This will enable innovation, as entrepreneurs are empowered to use the data to create new applications. As a City that believes in transparency, making this data available will empower residents to hold us accountable.

An Open Data Steering Committee has been tasked with monitoring the implementation of the policy. Various City directorates are represented on the committee. The nine members will meet on a quarterly basis to approve the data sets that will populate the portal, as well as requests for additional data sets.

On Friday 23 January 2015, the Open Data Steering Committee met for the first time and approved the initial datasets to be uploaded. Thus far, 25 data sets have been uploaded to the Open Data Portal. These include City budget data and the location and boundaries of all district parks, community parks, cemeteries, and MyCiTi bus stations and routes. Information about tenders which have been awarded can also be found on the portal.

Existing sources of information that have been added to the portal at the outset include the following:

- Economic Areas Management Programme (ECAMP) data
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) viewers
- Service Level Agreements
- Statistical reports and underlying data

The population of additional data sets will take place incrementally and we envision that hundreds of data sets will be available over time.

We have made every effort to ensure that the data is available in various formats. In addition, the portal has been designed to customise to any device that can access the internet, including cellphones with internet connectivity (not only smart phones). Data can therefore be downloaded to cellphones as well.

We would like to encourage members of the public to request the data they would like to see via the portal. This can be done by clicking on the 'Suggest a data set' tab on the Open Data Portal [homepage](http://ctcs.capetown.gov.za/OpenDataPortal/Default) (<http://ctcs.capetown.gov.za/OpenDataPortal/Default>). You will be required to provide your name, e-mail address and details of the request. We will check whether the data is available and then notify you, indicating how long it will take to compile and post the data to the site.

The portal also has a feedback function and we would like to urge the public to share their thoughts and experiences of the portal with us.

Today's launch marks a new era for the City of Cape Town. We believe that this will not only enhance transparency and accountability, but further improve the competitiveness of the broader economy of Cape Town. Our Open Data Portal is another bold stride that we are taking to create an enabling environment which will attract investment that generates economic growth and creates jobs.

Making public sector data available for anyone to use will allow us to tap into the creativity of business and society. It will assist us in building a better city and allow us to truly make progress possible together.