



GETTING SOUTH AFRICA WORKING FOR ALL

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
MANIFESTO
2026





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LEADER'S FOREWORD

This election is a fundamental choice for all of our towns and cities: forwards or backwards.

In this manifesto we set out how the DA will get South Africa's towns and cities working for all, taking them forwards, and ending their slide backwards.

The destruction of our towns and cities is not normal and it is not inevitable. It must never be accepted as the future of South Africa.

We believe deeply that it can be fixed. We can feel hopeful for the future because we have shown that hope where we govern – in clean government, in better services, in places that work for all.

Each great country is built from the ground up – street by street, suburb by suburb, town by town, city by city.

The Democratic Alliance believes that South Africa can work – for everyone. Not only in a few places. Not only for some people. Not only for those who can afford private alternatives when the state fails. For everyone.

Our promise is simple: the DA will get your municipality working.

We will build stable, professional municipalities by appointing competent people based on merit, not political connections. We will end cadre deployment in local government and restore a culture of performance, accountability and service.

We will get water flowing by reinvesting water revenue into water infrastructure, fixing broken systems, reducing leaks, bringing in technical expertise and using responsible private-sector investment where it can improve delivery.

We will keep the lights on by reinvesting electricity revenue into electrical infrastructure, maintaining grids, enabling municipalities to buy and sell their own power, and supporting households and businesses that can feed electricity back into the system.

We will make communities safer by bringing policing closer to the people. The DA will keep fighting for capable municipalities to receive the powers and resources they need to help fight crime on the ground, supported by better technology, stronger partnerships and more boots on the ground.

We will clean up our cities and towns by restoring neglected public spaces, improving waste collection, maintaining parks, clinics, libraries, beaches, sports facilities and public amenities, and partnering with communities and responsible private-sector organisations to make public spaces safe, clean and useful again.

And we will create jobs and grow local economies by cutting red tape, supporting small businesses and informal traders, improving public transport, fixing infrastructure, releasing well-located land, delivering title deeds and making municipalities investment-ready.

This is a practical plan for the things that matter most: water, electricity, safety, cleanliness, jobs, housing, transport and dignity.

But it is also a plan to restore the trust of South Africans that South Africa can work.

The choice in the 2026 Local Government Election is therefore clear.

More of the same: more broken promises, more broken infrastructure, more corruption, more excuses and more decline.

Or we can choose change that works.

We can choose local governments that serve residents, not politicians. We can choose a future in which every community, in every province, has the chance to work.

That is the future the DA is fighting for.

Because when local government works, South Africa works.

And South Africa can work – for everyone.



Geordin Hill-Lewis
Leader of the Democratic Alliance





OUR PLAN TO GET YOUR MUNICIPALITY WORKING.

THE DA WILL GET YOUR MUNICIPALITY WORKING BY:



Building corruption-free and professional municipalities by appointing competent people based on merit, not political connections.



Getting water flowing by reinvesting water revenue into infrastructure and bringing in private sector investment and expertise.



Keeping the lights on by reinvesting electricity revenue into infrastructure and freeing municipalities to buy and sell their own power.



Making communities safer by bringing policing closer to the people and empowering municipalities with the tools to fight crime on the ground.



Cleaning up our towns and cities by partnering with the private sector to restore neglected public spaces – from clinics and libraries to parks and sports facilities.



Creating jobs and growing local economies by cutting red tape, enabling informal traders to operate legally, and connecting residents to jobs through reliable infrastructure and public transport.



BUILDING A CORRUPTION-FREE AND PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATION



BUILDING STABLE, PROFESSIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THAT DELIVER SERVICES, DRIVE GROWTH, AND PUT RESIDENTS FIRST.

Across South Africa, cities and towns are broken. Political instability, weak governance, and administrative dysfunction have paralysed councils, delayed budgets and stalled infrastructure development. Communities are suffering due to entrenched corruption, chronic mismanagement, and sustained neglect.

Failing water systems, unreliable electricity supply, filthy streets, and neighbourhoods where crime flourishes are hallmarks of ANC-governed municipalities. When basic services collapse, businesses fail, jobs are lost, and municipal finances deteriorate, leading to further decline.

As a result, the majority of municipalities are failing to meet proper standards of financial management, accountability, and good governance. In 2024/25, only 39 out of 257 municipalities received a clean audit. Worse still, eight municipalities received a disclaimed audit – they failed to meet the basic standards required to account properly for public money and comply with the law.

Poor decision-making, neglect and inefficiencies result in local governments losing billions of rands each year. Between 2021/22 and 2023/24 alone, municipalities incurred over R17 billion in wasteful and fruitless expenditure. This is money that should have been used for service delivery such as repairing leaking water pipes, keeping lights on, and fixing roads.

Financial mismanagement also weakens municipalities' ability to collect revenue and sustain basic services. By 2025, households and businesses owed R427.7 billion to municipalities – 88 percent of which is practically uncollectible, reflecting years of weak credit control, ineffective billing systems and a growing culture of non-payment.

At the heart of municipal failure lies the ANC's cadre deployment scheme. Instead of employing qualified professionals, politically connected individuals are appointed to manage multi-billion-rand budgets and critical infrastructure projects. Cadre deployment has destroyed institutional memory, weakened capacity and instilled a culture of impunity as politically appointed officials are shielded from the consequences of poor performance and corruption.



The people harmed most by municipalities' failure to provide basic services are the most vulnerable members of our communities. National Treasury funds over 10 million indigent households to receive free electricity and water, but fewer than one-quarter of these households receive those services due to municipal mismanagement.

The failure of local government is not only a failure of policy or capacity, but a failure of institutional culture. Instead of a service-oriented, accountable, and performance-based culture, there is a culture of patronage in which party loyalty is rewarded, and failure carries few consequences.

Every South African deserves to live in a community where water runs from taps, the lights stay on, refuse is collected and the streets are safe. Municipalities, big or small, should become engines of growth that deliver basic services, fight crime and corruption, and create jobs.

Where the DA already governs, local governments are stable, professional, and relentlessly focused on serving residents and delivering services. Even President Cyril Ramaphosa has publicly acknowledged that "municipalities that do best... are often DA-controlled municipalities". This recognition from the President affirms what millions of residents already know – that DA-led local governments work and deliver services.



WHERE WE GOVERN

DA-GOVERNED MUNICIPALITIES INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE

In South Africa, the quality of services you receive often depends on which party governs your municipality. For example, municipalities in the Western Cape spend an average of R2 860 per person on capital expenditure (capex¹) while, in Gauteng, municipalities spend less than half of that at just R1 055 per person. This means that residents in DA-governed municipalities are more likely to see investment in new water, electricity, and road infrastructure, instead of crumbling infrastructure and a lack of services.

Where a person lives should not be a determinant of whether they or their family can access water or electricity. The DA will provide essential services to the most vulnerable by improving the reliability of service delivery through stronger maintenance systems that prevent their failure, fixing billing and revenue leakages and ensuring that indigent support reaches qualifying households.

OUR PLAN TO BUILD CORRUPTION-FREE AND PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPALITIES

Getting South Africa back on the path towards economic growth and job creation depends on getting our cities and towns working. Without stable, professional municipalities, other reforms will not succeed.

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: ENDING CADRE DEPLOYMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ending cadre deployment is essential to getting municipalities working. The DA will ensure that our municipalities employ competent people by enforcing merit-based appointments, with suitable qualification criteria, and ensuring consequences for poor performance, mismanagement, and corruption. Professional local government requires strong management capability, mentorship, institutional memory, and skills development. DA-governed municipalities will implement mentoring and coaching programmes for junior and middle management, as well as establish structured career development pathways to develop a long-term talent pipeline. Under the DA, municipalities will become professional centres of service delivery excellence.

¹ Capital expenditures, or Capex, are funds used by a company to acquire, upgrade, and maintain physical assets.

Besides ending cadre deployment, the DA will build corruption-free, professional municipalities by:

- **Building a high-performance institutional culture.** Senior management and personnel will be accountable for their actions based on measurable outcomes. Consequences will be established for corruption and lack of performance, as well as recognition for excellence.
- **Holding municipal employees personally accountable for corruption and mismanagement.** The DA will strictly enforce a zero-tolerance approach to corruption and mismanagement. Poor audit findings will no longer be ignored; they will carry consequences for the individuals concerned. The DA will ensure that municipal accounting officers personally repay losses caused by their actions or, in some cases, their failure to act.
- **Strengthening the oversight bodies that keep municipalities honest.** Every DA-run municipality will establish fully functioning public accounts and audit committees – comprised of properly trained members who know how to read a budget, scrutinise spending, and hold officials to account.
- **Making public procurement more transparent.** DA-governed municipalities will be required to disclose details of all goods and services procured, including award details, contract prices, and any premiums paid above the lowest qualifying price – including those arising from preferential procurement requirements.

The DA will restore the financial viability of failing municipalities by:

- **Fixing broken billing systems.** Many municipalities are losing revenue simply because their meter readings are inaccurate and their billing records are a mess. The DA will conduct an immediate audit of these systems to identify where money is being lost and get them working properly – so that residents are billed correctly, and municipalities can collect the revenue they are owed.
- **Ensuring municipalities collect what they are owed.** Too many municipalities allow debt to accumulate until it becomes unrecoverable. The DA will enforce credit control firmly and consistently.
- **Reducing the cost and complexity of municipal financial management.** The DA will explore bulk procurement of a single, standardised financial software system for use across municipalities. This would lower costs, reduce dependence on expensive outside consultants, and ensure that financial management is consistent and reliable.
- **Ensuring that municipal valuation rolls are regularly updated and accurate.** The valuation roll should be reliable and current, since property taxes are a crucial source of municipal revenue. Accurate valuations broaden the revenue base, improve fairness in billing and reduce disputes.
- **Cutting off services for those who refuse to pay or connect illegally.** When municipalities fail to act against non-payment and illegal connections, honest residents end up subsidising those who take without contributing. The DA will enforce the rules consistently and fairly, because a culture of non-payment ultimately destroys the services that everyone depends on.



- **Improving data access in municipalities.** Critical information held by national government – about residents, properties, and incomes – is either unavailable to municipalities, too costly to access, or locked behind bureaucratic barriers. This means councils struggle to bill accurately, identify households that qualify for free basic services and plan effectively. The DA will establish formal data-sharing agreements with national and provincial departments to fix this.
- **Ensuring that the money residents pay for water and electricity is spent on water and electricity.** In too many municipalities, revenue from these services is diverted to pay salaries, plug budget holes, or is simply stolen by corrupt officials. The DA will ringfence this revenue so that it can only be spent on maintaining and upgrading the infrastructure that keeps the taps running and the lights on. *This approach is unpacked further in Sections 2 and 3 of the manifesto.*
- **Ensuring municipalities actually maintain their infrastructure.** National Treasury has set a benchmark for municipalities to spend at least 8 percent of the value of their assets on repairs and maintenance – yet most fall well short of this. DA-run local governments will comply with this standard because a burst pipe or a failing power station that could have been prevented with routine maintenance costs residents far more in the long run than the maintenance itself. The DA further commits to ensuring that councils approve cost-reflective tariffs and structurally funded budgets to secure long-term infrastructure investment.
- **Unlocking private investment in municipal infrastructure.** Where municipalities lack the resources to build and maintain essential infrastructure themselves, we will enter into public-private partnerships (PPPs). Under these arrangements, private companies can design, finance, build, and maintain infrastructure – from water treatment plants to electricity networks to waste facilities – under strict performance agreements that protect residents’ interests.
- **Cutting corruption out of infrastructure procurement.** The DA will work with pre-approved panels of qualified contractors and professionals – vetted through recognised industry bodies such as the Construction Industry Development Board, the Engineering Council of South Africa, and the South African Council of Planners – to ensure that infrastructure projects are awarded on merit, delivered on time, and free from the politically connected tenderpreneurs who have looted municipal budgets for decades.

Millions of people are denied the free basic services they deserve. The DA will ensure service delivery to South Africa’s most vulnerable households by:

- **Ensuring free basic services actually reach the people they are meant for.** The national government allocates money to municipalities specifically to fund free basic services for poor households, but too often this money is misallocated or outright stolen. The DA will use its local government funding responsibly and use part of the equitable share allocation exclusively for free basic services so that no family is denied water, electricity, or sanitation simply because of where they happen to live.
- **Ensuring every qualifying household is registered for free basic services.** Many poor families who are entitled to free water, electricity, and refuse removal are simply not recorded on the system and therefore receive nothing. The DA will run active registration campaigns to find these households and get them signed up, so that they receive the services that are rightfully theirs.

Service delivery failures are rooted in weak technical expertise, poor financial management, outdated data systems and poor organisational cultures. Addressing these capacity gaps and getting failing municipalities working requires:

- **Appointing more engineers, planners and finance officials** to rebuild capacity within municipalities. This will be achieved by recruiting talent from the private sector and focusing on the training of new specialists. These technical specialists are essential for designing, maintaining, and upgrading critical municipal infrastructure. Without sufficient technical capacity, projects are delayed, budgets are mismanaged, and service delivery collapses.
- **Building pipelines of talent** by recruiting, mentoring, coaching, and developing junior municipal employees to strengthen future technical and leadership capacity within municipalities. The development of structured internship programmes, graduate recruitment, apprenticeships, and management development programmes will help municipalities retain institutional knowledge and provide long-term administrative stability.
- **Building data-driven municipalities.** The DA will invest in building municipal data capacity through digital infrastructure, staff training, and integrated management systems. These reforms will allow municipalities to plan better and deliver faster, more transparent, and citizen-centred services.



WHERE WE GOVERN

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION: DA MUNICIPALITIES RECOGNISED FOR EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE

The DA continues to set the standard for municipal excellence in South Africa. At the inaugural SAPOA | Ratings Afrika Municipal Performance Awards, six DA municipalities were celebrated for their outstanding performance. Saldanha Bay and Swartland shared first place in the Best-Performing Municipalities category, followed by Swellendam in second place and Hessequa in third. The DA-led Breede Valley Municipality also received three awards for good governance, while West Coast District Municipality was presented with the best-run Municipality prize, largely due to accomplishing 14 consecutive clean audits and 100 percent expenditure on capital projects. DA-governed Kouga in the Eastern Cape emerged as the province's top performer, and, in Gauteng, Midvaal came out as the top performer.

These accolades reaffirm what even President Ramaphosa has acknowledged: where the DA governs, government works. The DA can make that a reality across South Africa and get our municipalities working for all.

When municipalities fail, they are typically placed under Section 139 administration, allowing provincial and national government intervention. However, this is often ineffective as it only changes leadership without addressing root causes of service delivery failure. Effective intervention requires:

- **Preventing municipal failure:** The DA will encourage provinces to adopt a proactive municipal support model, such as the Western Cape Government's 'Monitoring to Inform Support' approach. Rather than waiting for a municipality to collapse before intervening, this model identifies warning signs early – through performance assessments, site visits, whistle-blower reports, and intergovernmental data – and uses that information to provide targeted support before problems become crises. The result is fewer Section 139 interventions, stronger municipalities, and greater accountability to residents.
- **Supporting failing municipalities.** Where a municipality cannot deliver basic services, the DA will make it easier to bring in capable providers to get the job done. We will ensure that Section 78 of the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) is used to bring in external providers – which is an underused and powerful legislative tool. Municipalities will remain responsible for planning, policy, oversight and tariff decisions, but public utilities, neighbouring municipalities or private operators with the right expertise will be able to deliver services such as water, electricity and waste removal.



GETTING MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEMS WORKING



PROVIDING RELIABLE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, WELL-MAINTAINED SEWERAGE SYSTEMS, AND EFFECTIVE WATER TREATMENT SERVICES TO ENSURE SAFE WATER FOR DRINKING, COOKING, AND WASHING.

Many residents across South Africa do not have access to clean and reliable water, even though it is a human right, guaranteed by our Constitution. Without clean, reliable water, communities cannot prosper, businesses cannot function, and families cannot live with dignity.

Many ANC-led municipalities, such as Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Ekurhuleni, frequently go days without running water. In rural areas, only 36.7 percent of households have access to safely managed water; in urban areas, it is 71.8 percent. Around half of all water supply systems in South Africa pose a high risk of microbiological contamination – meaning the water coming out of the tap can make people sick. And nearly half of all the water that enters South Africa's distribution network never generates a cent in revenue – lost through leaking pipes, broken or missing meters, and failures in billing and collection.

Sanitation dignity is being denied to entire communities. Many South Africans still rely on bucket and pit toilets shared by multiple households, rarely emptied, and posing serious health and safety risks, particularly for children. Where flush toilets have been installed, pump failures and blocked systems leave them unusable, with raw sewage backing up into homes or flowing through open streets. Without investment in proper sewerage infrastructure, and without a reliable water supply to keep flush systems working, sanitation will remain a crisis.



WHERE WE GOVERN

HIGHEST WATER ACCESS

The DA has a firm track record of supplying clean, accessible drinking water and sanitation services to our residents.

In provinces such as Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, safe water access is limited to 86.4 percent and 87.8 percent, respectively. The DA-led Western Cape reported the highest level of access, with 99.8 percent of households meeting at least the basic standard. The 2023 No Drop Report awarded a municipal score of 90 percent or higher to only four, DA-led municipalities: The City of Cape Town, Overstrand, Midvaal, and Swartland local municipalities. This demonstrates our capacity to deliver for residents.

This ability to deliver is further demonstrated by an initiative known as Count Dropula. This programme installed water-monitoring devices in various schools in the DA-led Western Cape. The device has resulted in an average water savings of approximately 400 000 litres per school, per month.

South Africa's water and sanitation problems have been caused by years of systemic neglect. This is because billions of rands in public money are lost to corruption and mismanagement. When municipalities cannot manage finances, maintain water systems, or warn citizens of contaminated water, they strip away a foundation of public health, economic stability, and human dignity. The solution lies in the disciplined and corruption-free management of the resources entrusted to local government.

A DA-led local government will make sure that when a tap is turned on, water comes out. We will build and maintain water infrastructure to ensure that water is clean and safe for drinking, cooking, and washing. We will also ensure that all residents have access to flushing toilets and work to eradicate bucket and pit toilets.

OUR PLAN TO GET YOUR WATER SYSTEMS WORKING

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: RINGFENCING REVENUE FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

In many municipalities, the main obstacle to improved water delivery is not just technical failure, but also the misallocation of funds needed to maintain and upgrade broken infrastructure and expand supply.

The DA will maximise water and sanitation revenue that is reinvested directly into maintaining, repairing, and expanding water and sanitation infrastructure. Our focus will be on replacing ageing pipes, fixing leaks, upgrading wastewater systems, and extending services to growing communities.

The recently announced World Bank Metro Trading Services Program (MTSP) provides performance-based funding specifically to address failures in water, sanitation, electricity, and waste services. Under this programme, funding is released only when municipalities demonstrate sound governance, proper revenue management, and clear reinvestment into infrastructure. The DA will use this funding exactly as intended: to appropriately ringfence water and sanitation revenue and to direct both municipal infrastructure and MTSP grant allocations into infrastructure upgrades and service improvements.

The DA will advocate for similar incentive-based grants from Treasury, associated with the existing municipal infrastructure grant (MIG). This ensures that where municipalities are governed well, more funds will be released to further improve water services.

By combining ringfenced public revenue with responsible private-sector investment, municipalities will be able to address urgent repairs while also planning for long-term resilience. Public-private partnerships will also be used to mobilise additional funding, improve water treatment capacity, reduce losses from leaks and theft, modernise wastewater treatment works, and train skilled technical staff.



Besides ringfencing water revenue for investment in water infrastructure, the DA will fix and expand water infrastructure in municipalities by:

- **Unlocking private investment in water infrastructure through public-private partnerships.** Where municipalities lack the resources to build and maintain water and sanitation infrastructure themselves, the DA will partner with the private sector to get it done under strict service level agreements that protect communities' interests. Priority funding areas will be identified, and partnerships will cover the maintenance and upgrading of water, sanitation, and sewerage systems. Critically, improved billing and revenue collection will underpin these partnerships: private partners need the confidence that there is a reliable revenue stream before they will invest.
- **Recruiting the expertise that municipalities lack.** Where a municipality does not have the engineers, planners, or technical specialists it needs, the DA will bring them in – whether through short-term contracts with individual experts or longer-term arrangements with private or public entities selected on merit. We will prioritise a shared-service model for planners and finance officials across B and C municipalities. By pooling these specific roles and resources, smaller towns can utilise district engineers without duplicating the costs of supporting financial and planning staff.
- **Advocating for the amendment of section 33 of the MFMA** to streamline and expedite long-term PPP and service concession agreements beyond three years, on a facility-by-facility basis, and to fast-track funding and agreements. This is provided they meet criteria for fiscal affordability, public value, and risk mitigation.
- **Allowing for the separation of water service authorities and service providers where appropriate.** This leaves the municipality in charge of oversight and regulation but allows separate providers to actually manage water supply and distribution. This distinction is essential for enabling competitive tendering, allowing the municipality to unlock private technical expertise and capital investment into infrastructure when needed. This will help struggling municipalities to provide a stable and affordable water supply.

The DA will improve water management by:

- **Installing smart meters as water-monitoring devices so that residents can track their own usage in real time.** These devices help households manage consumption, reduce waste, and avoid bill shock. Smart meters can also detect leaks and illegal connections before they become costly.
- **Publishing accessible reports of where water leaks are located** – along with response times to faults, maintenance spending, reliability by area, and progress against performance targets. Transparency is a powerful incentive: when the public can see the data, both municipalities and private suppliers have nowhere to hide.
- **Increasing municipal water resilience by expanding the 'portfolio of water supply'.** A broader supply can be achieved by establishing multiple sources of water, such as surface water reservoirs, aquifers, desalination, wastewater reuse, rainwater harvesting and stormwater harvesting.

The DA will provide water and sanitation to residents and prevent wastewater pollution in the streets by:

- **Including water and hydraulics engineers in decision-making and increasing skill levels.** This will apply to all aspects of water management – waterworks facilities, infrastructure, and distribution. We will establish an organisational culture that places engineers of the highest calibre at the centre of decision-making to manage water effectively.
- **Prioritising investment in wastewater treatment and distribution.** This will be done by allowing local governments to fast-track funding plans from the private sector and using private sector skills. Municipalities will accelerate upgrades to treatment plants and distribution systems by partnering with private operators that have greater capacity and skills, under clear performance and cost controls.

The DA will help communities develop water resilience, protecting them from droughts and water shortages, by:

- **Including drought management in municipal planning.** Plans for droughts should be proactive, not just reactive – enabling municipalities to prepare for disasters and ensure there is always a reserve water supply for emergency situations.
- **Improving the security of water infrastructure,** such as pumping stations, treatment facilities, pipelines, and dams, to prevent infrastructure vandalism.
- **Launching public education campaigns to help residents use water wisely.** Water is a scarce resource, and how we use it matters. The DA will roll out awareness campaigns that give residents practical tools to reduce consumption – protecting both household budgets and the long-term sustainability of municipal water supply.
- **Investing in backup generators for water pump stations.** This will ensure limited water disruptions and that water treatment can continue during blackouts.



WHERE WE GOVERN

NEW WATER PROGRAMME

The City of Cape Town has developed and implemented a New Water Programme, which seeks to add 300 million litres of water per day from new sources by 2031. Some of the initiatives that form part of the New Water Programme include clearing of alien invasive plants, groundwater extraction through aquifers, water reuse, improved infrastructure maintenance and desalination over the longer term.

Some of the City's actions to improve water supply include:

- An invasive alien clearing programme which has already resulted in a gain of 44 million litres of water per day due to the removal of non-indigenous plants.
- The City plans to invest R4.7 billion into projects which bring approximately 105ML per day of groundwater into its drinking supply by 2040.
- A plan to build a water reuse facility at the Faure Water Treatment Plant and Reservoir, which will augment the water supply by approximately 100 million litres per day.
- Ongoing proactive maintenance of existing water infrastructure, which includes upgrading water treatment facilities, expanding storage capabilities, and implementing modern water distribution systems.
- To support this, the City allocated R836.6 million towards the Water and Sewer Pipe Replacement Programme in the 2023/24 financial year alone.
- Establishing water reuse as 7 percent of the City's total bulk potable water supply by 2040.





GETTING ELECTRICITY WORKING IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY



ENSURING RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE POWER THAT KEEPS THE LIGHTS ON, ENABLES BUSINESSES TO GROW, AND SUPPORTS JOB CREATION FOR ALL.

Municipal electricity systems are collapsing across South Africa, leaving millions without the power they need to cook, study, work, and live the dignified life they deserve.

Decades of underinvestment in critical infrastructure such as power stations, transformers, and cables have left ANC-run municipalities unable to keep the lights on. National Treasury recommends municipalities to spend at least 8 percent of the value of their assets on maintenance and repairs – yet around one in five municipalities spends 1 percent or less. The consequences are infrastructure that fails, outages that persist and residents left in the dark.

Since 2007, electricity tariffs increased by an average of over 1 000 percent, while inflation over this period was approximately 174 percent. This means that electricity prices have increased significantly faster than the cost of living. No family should have to choose between keeping the lights on and putting food on the table.

Reliable electricity is central to local economic development. Small enterprises depend on a consistent electricity supply to remain viable, while larger industries require stability to maintain production and employment. A stable power supply can lower operating costs, increase productivity, encourage investment, and create jobs in local economies.

A DA-led local government will get electricity working to ensure that the lights stay on, meals can be cooked, and local businesses - from hair salons to corner shops - remain open and create jobs. A vote for the DA is a vote for an electricity supply which is reliable, affordable, clean and empowers municipalities to buy and sell their own electricity.



WHERE WE GOVERN

RENEWABLE ENERGY PARTNERSHIPS

While many ANC-led municipalities neglect investment in electrical infrastructure, the DA regards this as a priority.

The DA-led City of Cape Town increased utility-scale renewable energy generation in partnership with private producers and small-scale plants. This has managed to protect City Supply Area customers from up to two stages of load-shedding.

This was enhanced by 'The Solar Geyser Panel Installation' programme for indigent households in DA-run Western Cape. Geysers were installed in indigent households, reducing power consumption and helping residents fulfil their basic needs, such as cooking, cleaning, and washing.

OUR PLAN TO GET MUNICIPAL ELECTRICITY WORKING

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: RINGFENCING REVENUE FOR ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In many municipalities, the electricity crisis – like the water crisis – is not simply a technical problem, it is a financial one. The money to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure is being spent on everything except what it was collected for. The DA will change that.

The DA will seek to maximise the amount of revenue collected from municipal electricity sales and reinvest it directly into maintaining, repairing, and expanding new electrical infrastructure and filling skills shortages.

The recently announced World Bank Metro Trading Services Program (MTSP) provides performance-based funding specifically to address failures in water, sanitation, electricity, and waste services. Under this programme, funding is released only when municipalities demonstrate sound governance, proper revenue management, and clear reinvestment into infrastructure. The DA will utilise this funding exactly as intended: to appropriately ringfence electricity revenue and to direct both municipal infrastructure and MTSP grant allocations into infrastructure upgrades and service improvements.

The DA will advocate for similar incentive-based grants from Treasury, associated with the existing municipal infrastructure grant (MIG). This ensures that where municipalities are governed well and use money properly, more money is released to further improve electricity services.

By combining ringfenced public revenue with responsible private-sector investment, municipalities will be able to address urgent repairs while also planning for long-term resilience. Public-private partnerships will be used to mobilise additional funding, improve grid maintenance and generation capacity, reduce losses from infrastructure failure and cable theft, and train skilled technical staff.

The DA will provide a stable and dependable electricity supply so that businesses can grow, public services can function, and residents can be confident that when they flip a switch, the lights will turn on.

To get electricity working, the DA will expand local supply and lower its cost by:

- **Empowering municipalities to buy and sell their own electricity.** Municipalities must be empowered to buy and sell electricity directly from private energy companies without waiting years for national government approval. Contracts with private suppliers can deliver power more quickly and do not require additional funds from the National Treasury. Developing local generation projects will also provide backup supply and drive costs down.
- **Enabling 'prosumers', residents who both produce and consume electricity, to sell their surplus power back to the grid.** Where residents generate more than they need through solar panels, for example, the DA will ensure they are paid a fair, standardised rate for what they feed back into the system. This keeps households connected to the grid, increases the overall supply of electricity, and helps bring down the cost of power for everyone, including those who cannot afford to generate their own.

The DA will improve the power grid's reliability and keep the lights working by:

- **Including electrical engineers in decision-making and increasing skill levels in municipalities.** This will apply to all aspects of electricity reticulation – generation facilities, trading services, transmission, infrastructure, and distribution. These engineers will be of the highest calibre to ensure that power is reliable and affordable. We will prioritise a shared-service model for planners and finance officials across B and C municipalities. By pooling these specific roles and resources, smaller towns can utilise district engineers without duplicating the costs of supporting financial and planning staff.
- **Improving municipal-Eskom coordination** by pushing for clear service level agreements with Eskom, and holding Eskom accountable for timely responses to faults, monitoring, and energy supply.
- **Outsourcing repairs and maintenance of electricity grids and networks with well-defined incentives.** The service providers who maintain the grid will be paid based on the percentage of uptime of the network. This incentivises the contractor and will contribute to protecting against illegal connections and cable theft.

- **Ensuring illegal connections and cable theft are criminally prosecuted.** This involves a layered approach by securing vulnerable infrastructure, enhancing surveillance and monitoring, and using technology and clear reporting channels to detect criminal activity. These measures will be used to bring the full force of the law to bear on criminals who seek to disrupt residents' access to electricity.
- **Managing electricity demand.** This will be done by retrofitting municipal buildings with better insulation and replacing old streetlights with LED bulbs, which are more energy efficient. Demand can be reduced by providing residents with solar rooftop geysers via private suppliers and cross-subsidisation.

The DA will modernise electricity trading and services that provide power to homes by:

- **Allowing municipalities to use private companies to manage critical trading services, such as electricity provision.** Many municipalities lack the funding or expertise to provide or manage these services independently, making private expertise necessary. Capable municipalities may retain responsibility for the ownership, operation and maintenance of their distribution networks while permitting private sector participation in services such as electricity trading and wheeling.
- **Outsourcing network management for district municipalities.** This will be done by bringing together neighbouring municipalities to create a financier-attractive package to obtain the right level of skills and expertise. This would allow for efficient economies of scale, as multiple local municipalities within a district can use joint service providers to better manage their electricity.
- **Publishing accessible, map-based reports showing exactly how electricity is performing in every area** – including blackout hours, response times to faults, maintenance spending, and reliability by neighbourhood. When residents can see the data for their own area, both municipalities and Eskom have nowhere to hide – and it becomes impossible to ignore communities that are being left behind.

Together, these measures will get municipal electricity systems working – from where power is generated, to how it is supplied, managed, and paid for. A DA-led local government will focus on practical solutions that keep the lights on, lower the cost of electricity for households, and hold decision-makers accountable, enabling communities to access reliable and affordable electricity where they live.





WHERE WE GOVERN

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL FACILITY

The Western Cape Department of Local Government, in partnership with Provincial Treasury and development partners, has developed and implemented the Sustainable Infrastructure Development and Financial Facility (SIDAFF). The programme helps municipalities move infrastructure projects from feasibility to funding and implementation, particularly where conventional financing options are limited.

SIDAFF prepares municipal infrastructure projects (through grant funding and feasibility studies), pools smaller projects together to lower borrowing costs, and provides a tiered financing model that matches each municipality with the right mix of debt, credit enhancements, or alternative delivery pathways like public-private partnerships.

SIDAFF's funding process improves residents' lives in the following way:

- **More reliable electricity.** SIDAFF helps municipalities prepare and fund energy projects that are currently stuck, so new power infrastructure gets built, and blackouts are reduced.
- **Faster delivery.** With grant funding for feasibility studies and planning, projects move from paper to reality more quickly.
- **Small towns are not left behind.** A tiered approach means smaller or struggling municipalities get extra support (credit enhancements and alternative delivery), enabling them to also build new power projects.
- **Lower costs through pooling.** By grouping projects together, municipalities can borrow money more affordably, leaving more budget for infrastructure instead of expensive loan fees.
- **Creating jobs and boosting the local economy.** Building power plants and upgrading grids creates construction and maintenance jobs and provides reliable electricity, which helps businesses grow.





WORKING TOGETHER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES



KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE FROM CRIMINALS, PROTECTING OUR HOMES, AND ENABLING BUSINESSES TO THRIVE.

All South Africans deserve to live in neighbourhoods where they feel safe, their children can play, and entrepreneurs can do business without fear of violent crime and extortion. However, under the ANC's watch, the criminal justice system has failed law-abiding citizens.

The ANC continues to pursue a centralised policing model, which has consistently failed to deliver results and is prone to political interference, corruption and criminality. For every hardworking police officer who does their job diligently, there are others involved in criminal activity.

Beyond the corruption, the system is simply under-resourced and under-skilled: specialised units dealing with gangs, serious and violent crimes, and investigations are chronically under-capacitated, leaving the most dangerous criminals with little to fear. Research has shown that the surest deterrent to crime is not the severity of punishment, but the certainty of it. When criminals know that they will be caught and punished for their crimes, they will be less likely to commit them.

Many communities have turned to Private Security, Neighbourhood Watches (NHWs), and Community Policing Forums (CPFs) to fill the gaps caused by the failures of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Private security officers now outnumber SAPS officials by a ratio of 4 to 1, highlighting the critical role that private security plays in keeping our citizens safe. However, instead of integrating private security services into the policing mix, the ANC has decided to treat them as enemies. This is clearly demonstrated by the government's attempt to restrict where and how armed security officers may operate, placing the public at a greater risk.



High crime rates throttle economic opportunities. According to the World Bank, crime has cost the South African economy up to 10 percent of its annual GDP. For 2023, this cost is conservatively estimated at R700 billion, more than the entire police budget itself. This makes South African towns and cities a less attractive investment destination, which limits job creation opportunities.

Crime is a symptom of broader social ills, such as unemployment, poverty and the breakdown of families. After more than 30 years of ANC governance, the national unemployment rate has skyrocketed to its current 32.7 percent, creating the conditions for criminal syndicates and gangs to exploit the desperation of ordinary people who turn to crime to survive.

The DA believes in empowering local authorities to fight crime according to their needs. Our decentralised approach to policing is distinct from the ANC's, which believes in a centralised approach, where plans are made on a national level and imposed on communities by people who do not understand the local crime-fighting needs. The DA firmly believes that local communities know best how to tackle local crime challenges. With a decentralised police force, DA-led municipal governments will be empowered to combat crime wherever we govern and work tirelessly to ensure that communities feel safe.

OUR PLAN TO BUILD SAFER COMMUNITIES

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: EMPOWERING MUNICIPALITIES TO FIGHT CRIME

The DA will continue advocating for the empowerment of municipalities to fight crime directly. By devolving policing powers, alongside an adequate budget, to competent local governments, we can reduce the pressure on the SAPS and bring law enforcement closer to the communities they serve. To make local policing effective, the DA will push for municipalities to receive greater investigative and intelligence-gathering powers.

By allowing greater investigative powers, municipal police forces will be better equipped to investigate crimes initiated by municipal law enforcement and those involving municipal property. These powers would include the gathering of evidence and witness statements, conducting forensic analysis where necessary, and working directly with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to prepare, manage, and follow up on criminal cases.

Additionally, municipalities should be empowered to gather and analyse local crime information in line with existing privacy laws alongside strict ethical safeguards. This will help to better identify crime trends, inform targeted crime-prevention initiatives, and improve public safety.

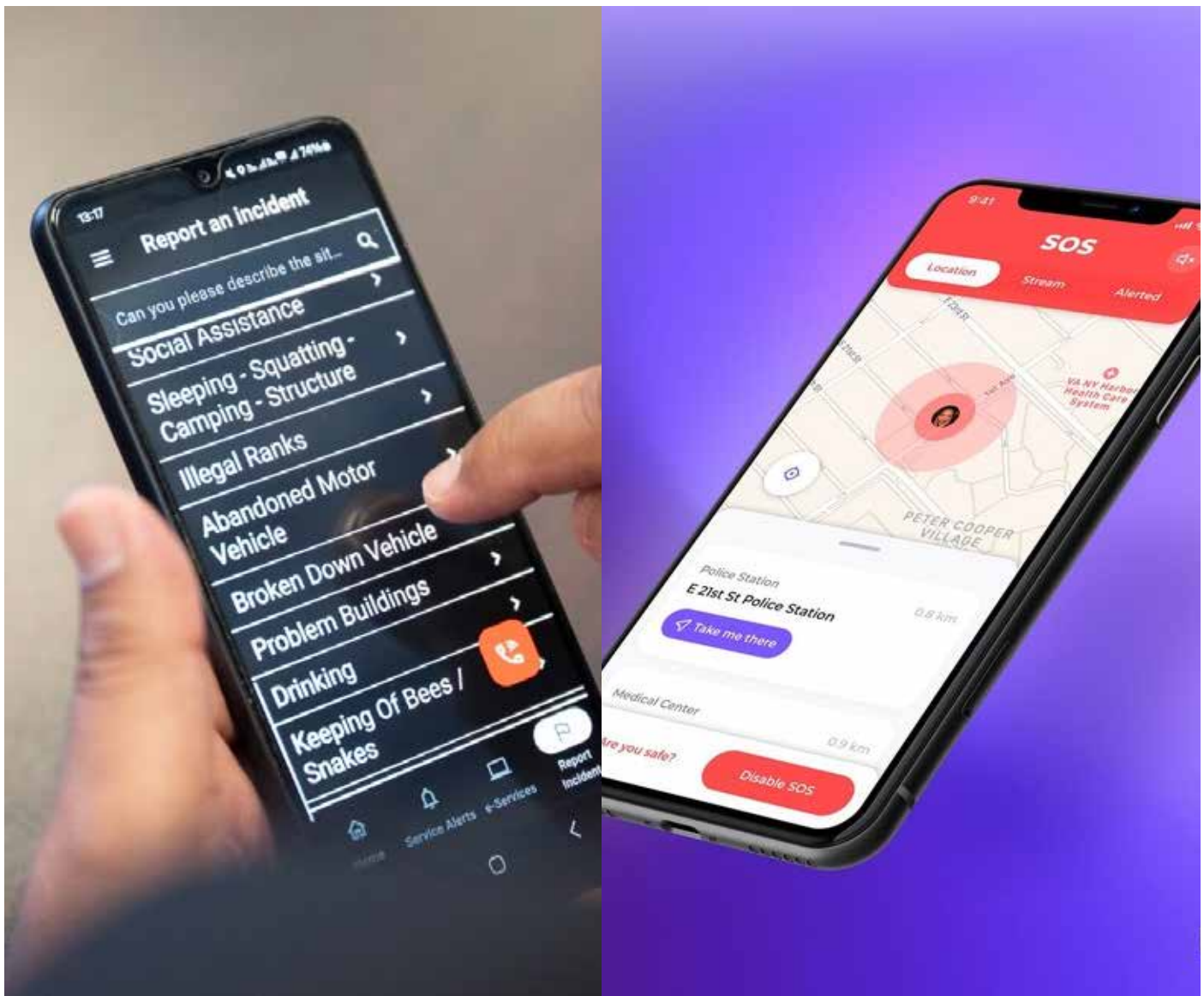
In addition to capacitating local police officers, the DA will improve collaboration between the SAPS and local crime-fighting organisations by:

- **Promoting collaboration among SAPS, municipal police, and the private security industry.** Private security service providers, NHWs, and CPFs can play a vital role in assisting SAPS and municipal police by increasing visibility and acting as first responders.
- **Encouraging intelligence sharing between private security companies, NHWs, CPFs, municipal police, and SAPS.** This requires enabling mechanisms and infrastructure to be implemented, which DA-led governments are willing to invest in.

The DA will increase the use of technology to fight crime, where it governs, by:

- **Creating a municipal application programming interface (API) between incident reporting apps** used by NHWs and private security and municipal police that will allow for the sharing of data between platforms to increase responsiveness and risk preparedness.
- **Investing in smart policing and up-to-date technological advancements.** This includes CCTV cameras, AI pattern recognition, gunfire detection, crime data analysis, integrated and computer-aided call taking, dispatching and mobile in-vehicle enablement systems that make the municipal police more responsive and accountable. For example, the 24-hour joint operation centre in the DA-run Kouga Municipality is a technology-driven command hub that coordinates localised emergency responses in real-time. It enables swift, unified responses and links local traffic departments, SAPS, and private security for coordinated crime prevention and rapid arrests.
- **Publishing dashboards with crime trends and statistics affecting different regions, along with response metrics.** The publication of these dashboards helps analyse where future crime might occur and supports officials in targeted resource allocation to pre-emptively address it. This will inform the crime prevention strategies the municipality is implementing, helping restore public trust in policing officials.





WHERE WE GOVERN

REPORTING ON THE URSAFE KOGUA AND CITY OF CAPE TOWN APP

In 2022, the Kouga Municipality released the UrSafe app. Kouga residents in dangerous situations can now “dial” Kouga Municipality’s integrated intelligence operation centre in Humansdorp using just the sound of their voice. The app activates at the sound of a safe word or the push of a button and immediately alerts the municipal authorities, improving personal safety and accelerating response times.

Also, since April 2026, Cape Town residents have been able to report certain crimes and by-law violations directly through the City of Cape Town mobile app. Users can report 17 types of incidents, including metal theft, electrical tampering, vandalism, public indecency, dangerous animals, and poaching. The app uses very little data, and the City plans to make it free to use soon. All reports are automatically geolocated and sent to the correct City department for a quicker response and follow-up. Users are also able to upload photos and detailed information to help improve reporting accuracy. Additionally, registered users will receive safety and security alerts based on incidents reported nearby, helping them stay informed about issues in their area.

These examples serve as some of the many ways in which the DA’s good governance empowers communities by making services more accessible and allowing residents to play a bigger role in the safety of their own communities.

The DA will create a safer environment for all citizens by:

- **Improving street lighting in high-risk areas and transport routes.** This increases visibility for anti-crime efforts.
- **Introducing incentives from the municipality for individuals providing information** leading to the arrest of vandals and those involved in copper theft.
- **Implementing safer environmental and spatial designs**, such as avoiding secluded walkways, cutting long grass to ensure a clear line of sight and a “safe routes to school” initiative which will include paving, lighting, and learner transportation.
- **Enforcing traffic and parking laws strictly** to ensure the safe flow of traffic in our cities and towns, and to give emergency vehicles greater ease of access on our roads.

The DA will increase the number of boots on the ground by:

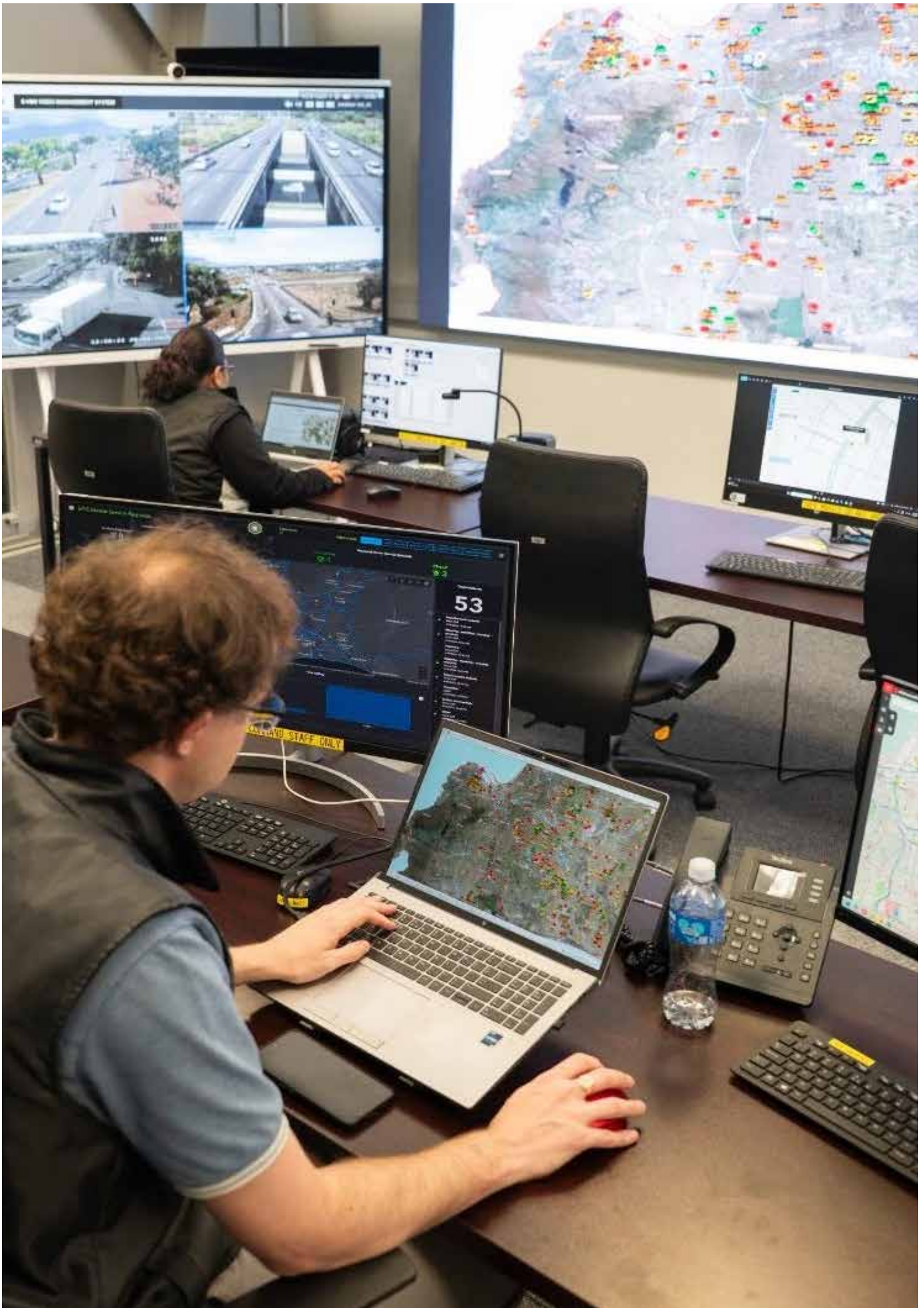
- **Establishing and maintaining effective municipal policing services** in all major and secondary cities and towns that we govern.
- **Initiating a plural policing model**, allowing for supplementary policing capacity to be funded by the state or, where appropriate, private actors.
- **Providing logistical, grant and training support to NHWs and community patrols.** Investing in the skills of community patrollers, such as fitness, communication, first aid and the use of modern technology such as drones, will significantly improve the availability of visible policing in communities. Financial incentives for transport and equipment will also help increase the number of NHWs established, resulting in more boots on the ground to keep our communities safe.

DA-led municipalities will support programs aimed at reducing reoffending and guiding young people away from crime by:

- **Investing in rehabilitative services**, such as identifying underutilised municipal land to be made available for drug treatment, education and employment programmes which will equip ex-offenders with the necessary skills to successfully reintegrate into society, reducing their need to return to crime to survive.
- **Partnering with NGOs for job readiness and youth mentorship programmes.** These programmes can take many forms, such as internships or skills development programmes that will offer our youth alternative pathways out of poverty rather than resorting to criminality.
- **Investing in after-school sport, arts and culture programmes** in our communities so that our children do not fall prey to gang and drug-related behaviours.

The DA will improve emergency and disaster response by:

- **Investing in and maintaining effective emergency municipal disaster response teams** to protect citizens and their property against natural and manmade disasters.
- **Investing in fire safety in our towns and cities** by ensuring that fire stations are maintained, well-staffed, have access to maintained vehicles, and are adequately equipped with the latest firefighting technology.
- **Enforcing building regulations** to ensure the safety of communities against fires and other disasters related to building regulations not being adhered to.
- **Developing municipal Early Warning Systems.** We will protect our residents with real-time alerts about air pollution, heatwaves, fires, floods, and other environmental risks. Using mobile apps and SMS technology, residents will receive clear, actionable guidance on how to stay safe and prepare.





WHERE WE GOVERN

THE LEAP PROGRAMME

The Law Enforcement Advancement Plan (LEAP) is a joint initiative between the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Provincial government to achieve the Western Cape Safety Plan to prioritise safe and cohesive communities.

The primary focus of LEAP is the deployment of more law enforcement officers within priority hotspot areas to stabilise crime and make communities feel safer. Since its inception, around 1 400 LEAP officers have been deployed, which has led to the confiscation of over 700 firearms by 23 February 2025, making the streets of Cape Town safer.

The officers are deployed on a 24-hour basis, 7 days a week and are also executing operations that address contributors to crime, such as drugs and liquor. Numerous arrests and a large variety of drugs and liquor have been confiscated. Approximately 40 294 arrests have been made since the inception of the programme.





WORKING TO KEEP OUR MUNICIPALITIES CLEAN AND RESIDENTS HEALTHY



CREATING MUNICIPALITIES WITH WORKING CLINICS AND CLEAN PUBLIC SPACES WHERE RESIDENTS CAN LIVE HEALTHY AND FULFILLING LIVES.

Every South African has the Constitutional right to live in a clean and healthy environment. However, decades of corruption, mismanagement and misallocation of resources have led to inner cities and towns where streets overflow with filth, public parks filled with rubbish, and recreational facilities that are not safe for use.

Under the ANC, many municipal clinics have failed the communities they are meant to serve, with understaffing, long queues, poor maintenance, crumbling infrastructure, and medicine shortages common across South Africa. At the same time, weak enforcement of liquor licensing by-laws has led to increased alcohol abuse in our communities. Recent studies have linked heavy drinking with contributing up to 7 percent of South Africa's national disease burden, placing extra strain on an already underperforming public healthcare sector.

In South Africa, air pollution is concentrated in major industrial centres like the City of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni, and mining towns in Mpumalanga and Gauteng. A 2025 report by *Greenpeace Africa* estimated that air pollution costs the South African economy up to R960 billion annually, around 14 percent of our annual GDP, and contributed to 42 000 deaths in 2023. Enforcing the current national air quality standard in our cities and towns could reduce air pollutant-related deaths by 22 percent, while achieving World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines could cut deaths by 72 percent.

In ANC-run municipalities, sporadic refuse removal has become the norm. As of 2022, only 60 percent of households benefited from weekly household waste collection, a figure which has been steadily declining from 65 percent in 2016. This exposes residents to unsanitary living conditions, risking their health and the environment. Investigations into waste removal contracts in mostly ANC-run municipalities have exposed how politically connected companies are awarded lucrative tenders without proper processes, invoices are paid for work never done, and public officials have manipulated procurement systems for their personal gain.

South Africa is running out of landfill space – and the way most municipalities manage waste is making the problem worse. Instead of treating waste as a resource to be recycled and recovered, most simply bury it. That approach is unsustainable, and the DA will change it. Due to high levels of waste creation, there is an increased reliance on landfills. The failure of municipalities to utilise waste as a resource through recycling and other initiatives means that they are running out of landfill space, with few alternative options available. Recreational spaces are vital to the holistic well-being of residents. However, due to decades of underfunding and mismanagement by the ANC, many of these facilities have become unusable. Our public parks are overrun with rubbish and have become a gathering space for vagrants. Public parks are littered and unsafe, libraries lack adequate resources, and municipal sports facilities are poorly maintained. This denies communities safe spaces for healthy living and limits the potential economic benefits from hosting events at these spaces.



Clean towns and cities not only look attractive but also attract economic opportunities through investment and tourism. The DA is committed to clean and healthy environments by investing in public health, reducing pollution and creating liveable municipalities. Through these efforts, we aim to improve residents' wellbeing, health, and quality of life

OUR PLAN TO CREATE CLEAN AND HEALTHY MUNICIPALITIES THAT WORK FOR ALL

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: ADOPT A PUBLIC SPACE

Where we govern, the DA will initiate our “Adopt-a-Public Space” programme to revitalise neglected and underutilised public spaces.

Building on the successes of the Adopt-a-School Foundation's programme, municipalities will partner with responsible private sector organisations to maintain, upgrade, and improve public spaces such as municipal clinics, libraries, parks, beaches, pools, and sporting facilities. In doing so, private partners will be able to meet their corporate social responsibility goals, whilst helping the municipality provide clean, safe and well-managed public spaces.

This programme will identify public spaces in need of investment, by consulting with local communities who are currently underserved. The municipality will facilitate transparent agreements between the community and private sector partners to ensure that the community's needs are met.

These agreements will see private sector partners investing in the upgrading, maintenance, and utilisation of identified spaces in exchange for modest branding rights and public recognition.

This programme could support a wide range of community improvements from better-equipped municipal clinics and libraries to cleaner beaches, safer swimming pools, and upgraded sports facilities. It could also create opportunities for skills training, community events, and local economic activity. Additionally, initiatives such as community gardens and tree planting can help address food insecurity, improve biodiversity, and make urban areas greener and more environmentally resilient.

DA-led municipalities will address the shortfalls in municipal health services by:

- **Fighting to ensure that municipalities are properly funded for the services they are required to provide.** Municipal clinics are a case in point – municipalities are legally obligated to run them but do not always receive the provincial funding to do so. The DA will fight for this to change.
- **Providing preventative health and support services** by ensuring municipal clinics have all the necessary medication, equipment and professional staff required to support a healthy population.
- **Developing and implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for inventory, dispensing, and patient counselling at our city clinics. We will also introduce digital dispensing systems in our city clinics to reduce errors and improve turnaround times.





DA-led municipalities will address alcohol abuse in our communities by:

- **Strictly enforcing and re-evaluating by-laws for the allocation and trading hours of liquor licenses.** By actively encouraging resident participation and considering factors such as crime levels, noise impact, parking, traffic, fire and health compliance, proximity to schools or places of worship, we will reduce the negative impacts of liquor consumption on surrounding communities.
- **Locating and shutting down illegal liquor establishments** by empowering our municipal law enforcement while working closely with local communities. This includes improving the responsiveness of municipalities. When contacted, they should deal with queries timeously.

DA-led municipalities will address noise and air pollution by:

- **Implementing and improving noise and air pollution tracking systems in our cities and towns,** by ensuring the maintenance of these systems and working with public and private research institutions to improve local government knowledge on pollution figures and how to effectively reduce pollution levels.
- **Strictly enforcing and adjusting air pollution by-laws to comply with national standards,** to save as many lives as possible and reduce the financial burden of medical bills.

The DA will ensure the appropriate management of landfills by:

- **Ensuring that all waste management facilities and landfills are licensed** to guarantee that significant environmental impacts are identified and mitigation actions are implemented. Permit compliance should be supported by the broad use of a compliance checklist, helping landfill operators fulfil permit requirements and conditions. Non-compliance fees and penalties must be pursued to ensure licensing conditions are adhered to.
- **Encouraging and implementing legislative reforms to ease the establishment of private-public partnerships (PPPs) in the involvement and operation of landfills.** This must include expanding the number of waste types permitted for beneficial use by the private sector.
- **Investing in cost-effective Waste-to-Energy infrastructure.** We will turn the waste crisis into an energy opportunity by investing in Waste-to-Energy infrastructure that reduces landfill dependence, lowers electricity costs, and creates local jobs. By converting non-recyclable waste into usable energy, we will build cleaner, more resilient towns and cities that are less reliant on the national grid.

The DA will improve waste collection services by:

- **Exploring public-private partnerships (PPPs) for waste and recycling collection services.** Where financially feasible, the private sector could be utilised to reduce costs and improve efficiency in waste collection while freeing up municipalities from the responsibility of maintaining their own removal and disposal services.
- **Assessing the effectiveness of dedicated service workshops or private contractors for routine fleet inspections, repairs, and maintenance.** Keeping fleets running requires routine repairs and maintenance. Dedicated workshops can be established with qualified personnel specially trained in servicing waste vehicles. This will ensure that dedicated mechanics are immediately available when breakdowns occur, reducing the time vehicles are out of service.
- **Investigating the leasing of waste vehicles as an alternative to ownership where a business case exists.** Leased vehicles are typically newer, which results in reduced downtime due to breakages. Lease agreements can also include a provision for regular maintenance, and the responsibility for ensuring the required number of vehicles are operational can be placed on the contracted service provider rather than the municipality.
- **Implementing full transparency in all waste collection contracts through a digitised procurement process with real-time monitoring.** Implementing an e-procurement system and GPS tracking of waste collection services will ensure work is done and that payments are justified.

The DA will promote recycling in the municipalities where it governs by:

- **Increasing the number and accessibility of drop-off centres and public place recycling (PPR) facilities.** Easy access to clean public drop-off recycling centre facilities is essential for effective separation at source initiatives.
- **Expediting, facilitating and expanding** the process of establishing municipal and private e-waste recycling and buy-back centres.
- **Increasing the establishment of swap shops in low-income and informal communities.** Individuals who bring recyclable materials to swap shops can receive remuneration in the form of clothes, toiletries, blankets and food. Mobile swap shops have also proven effective, as they can travel to different communities at set times of the week
- **Passing by-laws to progressively phase out the use and sale of single-use plastics, including plastic bags and plastic packaging within grocery stores, in municipalities where we govern.** These single-use plastics must be progressively replaced with biodegradable alternatives.

DA-led local governments will prioritise the maintenance of ecosystems and combat illegal dumping by:

- **Appointing Environmental Health Officers** to strictly enforce municipal by-laws on health standards, pollution and sanitation controls. We will also enforce by-laws to protect the environment from illegal dumping and industrial pollutants.
- **Removing harmful invasive species** through society-wide programmes that employ dedicated task teams tasked with the removal of invasive species and educating the public to protect our indigenous environments.
- **Investing in clean-up initiatives** across public spaces and the wider environment, in partnership with local communities and NGOs, to maintain clean cities and towns residents can be proud of.





WHERE WE GOVERN

COMBATING LITTERING AND DUMPING

The City of Cape Town is combating littering and illegal dumping through its Urban Waste Management By-law Enforcement Unit. Over three months in 2023, the unit issued 580 fines for unlawful dumping, totalling R1 615 100, and 353 fines for littering, amounting to R176 000. For the year 2022/23, an average of 144 fines were issued per month, and in the first quarter of 2023/24, a surge of 115 percent in fines issued occurred, with an average of 311 fines being issued per month.

The City is also providing cash rewards of between R1 000 and R5 000 for information provided by Whistleblowers, which leads to convictions for illegal dumping through its #SpringCleanCT campaign.

The City of Cape Town's crackdown on littering and dumping is an important step to ensure that the aesthetic value of the City is maintained. This will help keep the City's status as a top destination for both domestic and international tourists, while also allowing residents to enjoy clean and sanitary public spaces.

DA-led municipalities will prioritise the well-being of residents in urban planning by:

- **Upgrading public infrastructure to comply with safety and environmental health standards.** Including the upgrading and cleaning of stormwater drainage systems and investing in the upgrading of municipal buildings and facilities, such as municipal offices, clinics, swimming pools, and sporting facilities.
- **Promoting mixed-use urban developments that integrate residential, commercial, and retail spaces into one neighbourhood to address the pressures of urbanisation and promote sustainability.** By reducing the need for long-distance travel, these developments lower carbon emissions and encourage the use of public transport, cycling, and walking.
- **Enabling the sustainable building of housing in low-income communities** through retrofitting projects, for example, solar heating in ceilings to increase thermal insulation during winter. This will reduce the reliance on woodfires for indoor heating, combating the respiratory illnesses associated with them.



WHERE WE GOVERN

EXCELLENCE IN PHARMACY SERVICES

Three of the City of Cape Town's primary healthcare pharmacies have received an A-grade level by the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC). Ocean View CDC, Pelican Park CDC, and Albow Gardens CDC achieved the status in 2025.

A Grade-A rating is the highest recognition a pharmacy can achieve. It signifies full compliance with Good Pharmacy Practice (GPP) standards, covering service delivery, infrastructure, medicine availability, and regulatory compliance.

This reflects the DA-run municipality's commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and high-quality pharmaceutical services while strengthening public trust in the City's primary healthcare system.

They join the Ikhwezi Clinic in Strand and St. Vincent in Belhar, which already have this rating.





BUILDING WORKING LOCAL ECONOMIES THAT ENABLE GROWTH AND CREATE JOBS



CREATING DYNAMIC AND INCLUSIVE CITY AND TOWN ECONOMIES WHICH STIMULATE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, ATTRACT INVESTMENT, AND CREATE JOBS.

Cities and towns are the beating heart of South Africa's economy — but too many have been brought to their knees by years of mismanagement, poor planning, and chronic underinvestment.

Instead of driving growth and creating jobs, they are a drag on both. Businesses suffocate under bureaucratic red tape, unreliable electricity, and failing water and transport infrastructure. Foreign investors look at South Africa and see crime, corruption, and approval processes that take years — and take their money elsewhere.

The informal economy — which is responsible for approximately 19.5 percent of jobs — is being left behind. Informal traders receive little to no support and face a range of obstacles, including a lack of basic infrastructure and amenities and a complex and costly legal framework governing trading permits and compliance.

Public transport failures cut off people from job opportunities. Every day, workers and job seekers wake before dawn and return long after dark because buses do not arrive, trains are unsafe, and taxis are overcrowded. The cost of these commutes consumes wages and drains time that could be spent with family or in productive work. The failure of our transport system has become one of the greatest barriers to employment.

Crumbling infrastructure kills growth and job prospects further. The South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) 2022 *Infrastructure Report Card (IRC)* rated the overall condition of South Africa's infrastructure as a D,² the lowest rating since the launch of the first IRC in 2006. It demonstrates that infrastructure across the country is not meeting residents' needs. The deterioration of infrastructure is the result of poor governance, a lack of maintenance, and low investment. This deteriorating infrastructure includes municipal provision of water and sanitation services, stormwater drainage, roads, and electricity distribution. Failing infrastructure not only disrupts daily life but also deters investment and stalls economic growth and job creation within municipalities.

Cities are growing faster than ever, with South Africa's eight largest metropolitan areas alone accounting for approximately 60 percent of national economic activity while housing approximately 40 percent of the country's population. Urban sprawl displaces low-income households to extremities, resulting in long distances from job opportunities, schools, and public transport routes. A further 2.6 million households continue to remain part of the housing backlog, with these residents still requiring adequate housing in South Africa.



South Africa's cities and towns could be among the most dynamic in the world — but only if we improve how they are run. The DA has the plan and track record to make your municipality work and turn our cities and towns into job-creating powerhouses.

Cities and towns should be the engines that power South Africa's prosperity. They are where creative ideas spark, businesses grow, and opportunities are born. DA-run cities and towns will be engines of growth, buzzing with innovation, attracting investment, and creating jobs that lift people out of poverty and into opportunity. Public spaces will be transformed into thriving economic hubs, municipal assets will be put to work for the benefit of all, and the local business environment will be shaped to help enterprises start, grow, and employ more people.

² SAICE's grading scale ranges from A (world-class, well-maintained infrastructure) to E (unfit for purpose, on the verge of failure requiring urgent intervention)



WHERE WE GOVERN

THE DA TRANSFORMS CITIES INTO EMPLOYMENT HUBS

Under the DA's good governance, the City of Cape Town leads South Africa's job creation. Between 2014 and 2023, the DA-run City of Cape Town increased its total employment by 20.2 percent, leading South Africa's cities in job growth. Of the jobs created, under Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis, Cape Town has created around half a million jobs during his term. This demonstrates a clear correlation between good governance and better economic outcomes.

OUR PLAN TO CREATE WORKING LOCAL ECONOMIES

OUR BOLD SOLUTION: "INVESTMENT-READY" TOOLKITS

DA-led municipalities will implement "investment-ready" toolkits focused on facilitating investor support to make South African cities and towns globally competitive destinations for business and job creation. The toolkit will include measures to attract and retain investment, such as one-stop-shop services, dedicated facilitation units, and coordinated fast-tracked support.

This project will follow the model adopted by the DA-run Western Cape Government (Western Cape Municipal Investment Readiness Support (WCMIRS) initiative), which outlines a diverse portfolio of investment projects across Western Cape municipalities. The initiative aims to encourage infrastructure investment, economic development, and job creation. Some of the highlights of this initiative include the R1.2 billion Cape Winelands Airport Development, the R2 billion Waterfront Hotel and Conference Centre in Cape Town, and other energy and infrastructure projects such as the Touwsrivier CPV Solar Project among others. Partnerships span across private investors, foreign companies, municipalities, and community stakeholders.

By increasing the investment readiness of local governments, DA municipalities will be able to become more competitive and resilient, giving them the opportunity to unlock their full economic potential.

Proactive support for business investment, entrepreneurship and fair public employment is central to job creation. The DA will unlock the economic potential of every city by:

- **Reforming economic empowerment and labour policies to support job creation and inclusive growth.** The DA will continue its fight to replace Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) at a national level with the DA's non-racial economic empowerment model (see the [DA's Economic Inclusion for All Bill](#)). This model will target poverty instead of race, rewarding companies for creating real local jobs, supporting small and emerging businesses based on poverty criteria (inclusive development and social impact), and expanding opportunity in township and rural economies.
- **Undertaking a comprehensive review of red tape and regulation across local government.** This involves removing unnecessary fees, bureaucratic delays in approvals, clearing backlogs, streamlining duplicative compliance requirements and processes, and reducing the costs that prevent businesses from starting and growing.
- **Creating a comprehensive permit inventory and introducing a silence-is-consent principle** (which grants automatic application approval after a certain period) to reduce administrative costs, encourage the creation of new firms, and boost productivity.
- **Supporting small business growth.** As captured in the [DA's Economic Policy](#), this involves, among other recommendations:
 - **Expanding 'One-Stop-Shops' around the country**, coupled with the rollout of a comprehensive Business Starter Toolkit providing step-by-step guidance as well as other important business tools (e.g., checklists, guides, templates, and tools for all stages of business).
 - **Assisting SMEs to access funding** by facilitating opportunities to microfinance initiatives, SME investment platforms, and alternative financing avenues (e.g., crowdfunding and stock exchange listings). This will be achieved through connecting businesses with financial institutions and investors and offering support programmes to build financial literacy and readiness.
- **Integrating tourism into local economic development** to drive local economic growth and create jobs. This has been demonstrated in the City of Cape Town, where tourism injected R27.5 billion into the City's economy in 2024, supporting 106,000 jobs, which demonstrates what is possible when municipalities actively promote tourism.
- **Developing airports and their surrounding areas as economic hubs.** Where airports are located, DA-led municipalities will aim to transform these areas into drivers of local economic growth through attracting logistics, cargo, maintenance, aviation-related, and other businesses that create jobs
- **Creating local advertising and billboard opportunities.** Municipal advertising policies will be reformed to enable small media companies, printing, and advertising firms to benefit from local billboard and public advertising contracts. This will help create jobs and improve local revenue streams.
- **Ensuring that all EPWP appointments** are fair, transparent and free from political interference.

Informal entrepreneurs form a vital part of the local economy and must be supported to operate safely, legally, and productively. The DA will promote their economic participation by:

- **Simplifying registration and compliance.** Complex and costly licensing requirements often exclude informal traders. The introduction of a simplified e-registration system for trading permits will make compliance affordable and accessible, following successful models such as the DA-run City of Cape Town's online application platform.
- **Ensuring fair by-law enforcement and protection of livelihoods.** The impounding of goods will be used only for serious offences to prevent financial ruin for micro-enterprises. Clear and consistent enforcement protocols will be implemented throughout municipalities, demonstrating the DA's dedication to dignity and adherence to the rule of law.
- **Creating more trading spaces.** New, functional trading areas will be identified in high foot-traffic zones, including middle- and high-income areas where demand is stronger. These spaces include parking areas, streets, and pavements to be used at designated hours. Trading sites will include trading structures or shelters for traders to operate, and basic services such as water, sanitation, lighting, and Wi-Fi.

Reliable infrastructure underpins both economic growth and quality of life. The DA's approach will prioritise partnerships and smart investment by:

- **Leveraging public-private partnerships (PPPs)** to finance, construct, maintain and expand key infrastructure projects. Infrastructure areas identified for PPP investments and expansions are water, electricity, sanitation, digital networks (from existing providers) and transportation infrastructure, which enable economic development and service delivery within local economies.
- **Prioritising essential services in municipal planning.** This includes upgrades to water, sanitation, electricity, and digital infrastructure to ensure reliable service delivery and attract investment (including long-term planning that can be communicated to businesses to attract investments). By providing businesses with critical infrastructure, costs are reduced so they can expand their operations, creating a foundation for future economic growth and job creation in their respective communities.
- **Building resilience into municipal planning.** Climate change impacts, maintenance backlogs, and population growth will be factored into municipal planning to ensure long-term sustainability.

The DA will connect residents to jobs and markets through safe, reliable and efficient transport infrastructure by:

- **Improving road and traffic infrastructure.** DA municipalities will prioritise the maintenance and upgrading of roads, intersections, traffic signals, and signage to reduce congestion and improve safety. This will be achieved through better prioritisation of budgets, such as ensuring sufficient allocation for upgrading road infrastructure through grants, including the MIG and leveraging PPPs where appropriate.
- **Continuing to fight for the devolution of passenger rail.** The DA will continue to advocate for the devolution of passenger rail management to capable metros to restore safety and reliability.
- **Planning for connectivity of all public transport systems,** and the seamless integration to rail and road-based public transport facilities and infrastructure, where possible. All transport modes should complement as opposed to compete so that a seamless system, with integrated ticketing, evolves. In DA-run metros, measures will be introduced to provide passengers with a single 'smart' ticket, which allows them to access all modes of public transport (rail, BRT, bus, taxi, etc.).





WHERE WE GOVERN

GETTING YOU TO WORK

In the DA-run City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Government launched a Getting YOU to Work initiative offering free Golden Arrow bus travel to help unemployed jobseekers attend interviews and search for jobs in the metro. Launched in early 2024, the programme has helped over 24 000 jobseekers so far to travel to employment opportunities. In May 2026, in partnership with GO GEORGE public bus service, the programme expanded to include the George area.

The DA is committed to ensuring fair and transparent housing delivery that empowers residents through ownership by:

- **Overhauling the housing allocation system to ensure a fair, transparent, and consistent process for all municipalities.** This would include maintaining a current listing of housing opportunities, linking these to provincial and national housing opportunity databases, publicly posting eligibility requirements on websites for housing, setting up independent third-party oversight and regular audits of the system so that people can see how housing is allocated and have their confidence in the system's operations restored.
- **Delivering title deeds for previously built and new state-subsidised housing,** ensuring legal ownership and supporting the housing market. DA-run municipalities will speed up this process by eliminating red tape and using the smart electronic system for rapid distribution of title deeds through coordination with the Deeds Office.
- **Releasing unutilised state-owned land parcels for housing developments.** DA-led municipalities will work with the national Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, provincial governments, and other public land custodians to unlock well-located land parcels for mixed-use and affordable housing development.
- **Investing in land assembly and the securing of development rights** to derisk developments and support affordable housing delivery. Municipalities should also push for a simplified Municipal Asset Transfer Regulation (MATR) and a review of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) to help eliminate bureaucratic barriers to using public land purposefully, including by incentivising developers to build affordable housing in exchange for reduced cost of public land or development rights.
- **Prioritising well-located state land for medium-density flats** as the default housing typology instead of free-standing properties, where viable.
- **Enabling the densification of existing, well-located, low-density neighbourhoods through municipal zoning reform and infrastructure investment.** This could include updates to local land use plans for mixed-income housing, second units, or small rental units where services already exist.

The DA will take decisive action to prevent illegal land invasions, protect property rights, and ensure that land allocation and occupation are fair, lawful, and transparent. This includes:

- **Standing firmly behind the [DA's Private Members Bill](#) to amend the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998 (PIE Act)** to protect constitutionally entrenched property rights, curb orchestrated land invasions, and ensure that outdated legal loopholes no longer shield unlawful occupation.
- **Putting in place programmes to prevent illegal land grabs and occupations** by capacitating municipal police to respond promptly against any parties who intend to proceed with land grabs.
- **Ensuring responsive community hotlines** where the construction of an informal structure can be reported, and action taken before it is legally viewed as a permanent structure.
- **Ensuring provisions are made for the rapid release of land** where deemed reasonable and necessary to prevent land occupations and grabs. These rapid release programmes must be coordinated between all levels of government to ensure that the best-suited parcels of land are identified, the necessary minimum services are delivered, and they are viable for future upgrades.

On 13 August 2025, Cape Town Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis and Councillor Carl Pophaim visited a Tafelsig resident to deliver her home's title deed.



WHERE WE GOVERN

'TITLE-DEED-TO-DOOR' PROGRAMME

The DA-run City of Cape Town's "Title-Deed-to-Door" programme aims to accelerate the delivery of title deeds directly to beneficiaries at their homes, providing them with formal proof of ownership and long-term security. Through this initiative, the City has already delivered more than 6 600 title deeds. Less than 5 000 transfers remain. The City is fully committed to this mission to ensure more residents gain the dignity, stability, and generational security that comes with owning their own homes.





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