

SPEECH BY ALDERMAN DAN PLATO

EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CAPE TOWN

FULL SITTING OF COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER – 10:00 WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 2011

Councillors, City Manager, officials, members of the media and the public.

Speaker, the last month has been a particularly devastating one across the world, especially with the earthquake and tsunami that wreaked havoc in Japan and its surrounding countries. The City of Cape Town sent four members of its Fire and Rescue Services to be part of the Provincial Disaster Management Urban Search and Rescue Team that is providing assistance in Japan. They arrived back this week and I thank them for fearlessly volunteering to assist.

They have joined us in the chamber today and please can we give them a round of applause. It is at times like these that the international world has to rally together to assist its fellowmen in their time of need. Our thoughts are with all the people who have suffered as a result of this disaster.

Closer to home, Speaker, we have seen a sharp increase in deaths on our roads and in fires. Just over a week ago we lost nine people in a single fire. Such tragedies are unacceptable. I cannot imagine the loss experienced by the family and communities across the city. The City's entire Fire and Rescue Services staff must be commended for their efforts. They have been tested to the utmost during this season.

I urge all Capetonians to please practise fire safety methods and, moreover, to drive safely and carefully during the upcoming Easter holidays. The City will continue its zero-tolerance approach to those who

drive under the influence or speed – my advice is to not take chances, the police know the back roads as well. I would like to remind all road users to respect each other no matter if you are driving a car, bus, mini-bus, bicycle or walking – we must all respect each other’s rights to use the road and behave responsibly.

Speaker, elections are upon us once again. Despite these five year cycles that bring change and often uncertainty, it is our responsibility as the governing agents of Cape Town to ensure continuity and stability for our residents.

A time of change is unsettling. But it must be repeated and emphasised that it will be business as usual up until and beyond Election Day. Our core business is service delivery and that is what we will continue to focus on. Let this also serve as a reminder to all councillors: Your primary function is to serve your constituents. Campaigning and electioneering should not inhibit service delivery.

As you know the City of Cape Town plays host to a number of internationally and locally acclaimed events. In order to earn our place as a destination and events capital of choice, we have to continue working hard to attract a balanced portfolio of events – from small to major. This portfolio must include sport, entertainment, arts and culture and business. As the local government we will, of course, continue with our events around service delivery and opening of facilities that serve the community and also civic events to acknowledge, involve and provide a better quality environment for our residents.

We have a range of incredible natural settings and world class facilities here in Cape Town – Table Mountain, our beachfront, Kirstenbosch, the new Green Point Urban Park, the Cape Town Stadium and the Cape Town International Convention Centre – to name but a few. We also have an

established event industry, international expertise, experts in the City of Cape Town and seasoned providers of goods and services.

Cape Town has just hosted a series of successful events – The United Nations Water Day, the International ICLEI conference, Human Rights Day, the Cape Town Carnival, the Cape Town Festival, the Cape Argus Pick n Pay Cycle Tour and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival. The Cycle Tour has contributed an estimated R500 million to the economy and the Jazz Festival over R500 million.

I would like to congratulate the event organizers and City officials on a job well done. I also want to thank the spectators and visitors who support these events.

Above all, I want to thank from my heart the Capetonians themselves who continue to be such excellent and welcoming hosts to our visitors. This is essential for that special visitor experience that turns visitors into unpaid ambassadors. I would like to apologise for the inconvenience of road closures, some noise and other disruptions these events inevitably bring. While it is sometimes unavoidable, we do our best to manage it. And I believe you will agree that the economic benefits for our city and people far outweigh any negatives. Thank you Cape Town!

In the City of Cape Town the importance of good communication with our residents is acknowledged. This communication happens through public participation processes, community meetings, the opportunity to comment on City policies and plans and personal interaction with Councillors. We also communicate through the news media channels in the metro and the City's prize-winning newsletter for residents, City News, other publications and our website.

Last week, for the first time, the annual PRISM Awards Ceremony for excellence in communication was held in Cape Town. The City entered its communication work and campaigns in several categories and competed successfully with leading private sector companies. The Institute for Public Relations and Communication Management (PRISA), through its PRISM Awards recognises excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management.

The City won three silver awards. The first was in the 'media liaison' category for responding to media enquiries and providing a constant flow of information. The second silver was for the 2010 World Cup transport communication plan for informing residents and visitors of the public transport system. The third was for 'travel and tourism'. The City also received two bronze awards in the 'Soccer World Cup campaign' and 'launch of new service' categories.

The City can be proud of these achievements and of successfully hosting the top South African players in the communication industry here in Cape Town.

Speaker, I commend all City staff that are involved in media relations, it is an often forgotten, but vital component to effective service delivery.

The City of Cape Town has recently been awarded Housing Accreditation by National Government, a move which will see the City have more control over housing delivery in Cape Town.

The City's Housing Directorate will now be responsible for the administration and approval process of housing projects. The City has overcome the first hurdle in a long process to increase the efficiency of housing delivery.

The City will still receive funding for housing projects from Provincial Government, but will control all other processes, including quality control and monitoring of housing projects. For the beneficiaries of housing projects this means that any problems will be dealt with in a consolidated manner by the City.

Speaker, I have recently attended the sod-turnings of several housing projects that that have been undertaken by the City. The Housing Directorate is working tirelessly to complete projects within the stipulated timeframes.

A few projects that are set to be launched over the next few months are:

Happy Valley Phase 2	1 400 opportunities	Eerste River
Ilinge Labahlali	324 opportunities	Nyanga
Kleinvlei Erf 901	66 opportunities	Blackheath
Ocean View (Mountain View)	547 opportunities	Ocean View
Pelican Park Phase 1 (BNG)	2 000 opportunities	Pelican Park
Pelican Park Phase 1 (Bonded)	1 200 opportunities	Pelican Park
Witsand Phase 2	1 835 opportunities	Atlantis

The City of Cape Town is working all-out to launch the first network of MyCiTi bus routes in May, subject to concluding negotiations with the affected public transport industry and acquiring the necessary operating licences. This will be a major milestone in our far-reaching plan to transform public transport across the city through the new Integrated Rapid Transit system, branded as MyCiTi.

This first network will run between central Cape Town and the West Coast suburbs of Table View, Parklands, Sunningdale, Blaauwberg and Big Bay –

areas where there is no rail service and traffic congestion is becoming untenable.

There will be three elements to this bus network, namely:

- An interim feeder service, with about 120 stops, that will move people between the areas of Parklands, Sunningdale, Table View, Blaauwberg and Big Bay, and the Table View trunk station, where they can catch a bus to central Cape Town. This interim service will be in place until a permanent feeder network is launched.
- A 'trunk', or main route, which will run between Cape Town and Table View, with stops all along the R27.
- A temporary feeder route that will operate in the central city, linking the Civic Centre to the Waterfront, Loop and Long Streets, and Gardens.

Most of the new feeder routes in the areas around Table View will run along existing bus and taxi routes, and the stops are 300m to 400m apart, for easy access.

The launch date of this temporary service depends on the outcome of intense negotiations that are currently under way with the companies that will operate the MyCiTi buses. These companies were formed by the existing public transport operators that will be directly affected by the first phase of the service. Negotiations with the existing public transport industry to form new operating companies for the service are governed by law.

In compliance with these provisions, staff in our IRT Department are continuing the negotiations with the new companies that were formed to operate the MyCiTi buses. The staff are being helped by two highly skilled

negotiators who were chosen in consultation with the mini-bus and scheduled bus organisations.

The IRT is an enormously complex and challenging project. However, it will unlock many social and economic opportunities, and we remain wholly committed to its success. Our staff continue to work extremely long hours to make this bus service available, and we are happy to say that good progress is being made. We eagerly look forward to the launch of the first phase.

Speaker, there has been an increase in dumping in our rivers. The City of Cape Town condemns all types of pollution, especially in our rivers and catchment areas. Cape Town has an extensive network of rivers and wetlands which fulfil diverse ecological, aesthetic, recreational and infrastructure network functions. Over the past few decades, however, many of these watercourses have been adversely affected by pollution. The challenge, therefore, is to protect our inland water systems from the impact of pollution, and to restore the quality of inland water sources to acceptable levels.

Speaker, clean neighbourhoods will restore pride and dignity to the residents of the area and communities will be uplifted by transforming their neighbourhoods themselves. I encourage all residents to join the campaign and help the appointed staff to clean up their neighbourhoods.

Speaker in this regard, the Solid Waste Bylaw Enforcement Team will shortly be initiating special operations to combat the unacceptable behaviour of littering and dumping.

The team will be undertaking blitz-like operations which will see a group of officers arriving, without warning, in a specific area to hand out heavy fines for all waste-related offences.

The cigarette stompie thrown on the ground may become the most expensive smoke you have ever had at R500 each. Likewise, for that cooldrink can, sweet paper, chip packet and other litter.

These efforts are for the benefit for all the residents. It is just selfish and unacceptable that a few make it difficult for the many. The quality of our environment has to be maintained to ensure that the city will be sustainable for generations to come.

Speaker, the City's Disaster Risk Management Centre is vigorously implementing risk reduction measures to mitigate the effects of possible flooding and storm damage for the winter season in formal and informal settlement areas.

Although the South African Weather Service has forecast that the western parts of the Western Cape are likely to have below normal rainfall this winter, the City's disaster teams are taking no chances and are making sure that hazard management plans are reviewed and instituted.

It is the aim of this Council to reduce and to mitigate the risk that severe winter storms may have on our community.

In this regard, public awareness is of the utmost importance. Our officials from all Directorates are raising awareness levels amongst all communities regarding the risks that bad weather may pose and how we as a City can assist vulnerable communities by implementing risk reduction measures. This will ensure that we have preparedness plans in place that will allow us to effectively respond to situations where communities find themselves in distress.

Speaker, the city's CBD has recently seen an increase in the numbers of homeless people on our streets. This is a problem worldwide which has no quick fix solutions. It is natural and commendable that residents want to help these vulnerable members of society. However, giving money directly to the homeless is condemning that person to a life on the streets. The Cape Town Central City Improvement District has an ongoing campaign called 'Give Responsibly'. It encourages residents to rather give their money, time and support to various organisations in Cape Town that work tirelessly to provide an alternative to life on the streets. These non-profit organisations will be able to channel your donation effectively and help break the cycle of poverty and dependency. For information on NPO's in your area, contact the CCID's Social Development Department on 021 419 1881 or visit www.capetownpartnership.co.za

Give where it will make a difference.

Speaker, I once again urge the public to please drive safely over the next month that is filled with public holidays. Your safety is of the utmost importance to us.