



**Remarks at the Sod-Turning of the Court Crescent Project
presented by
Cllr Xola Pakati**

20 March 2020

Programme Director, Cllr Vaaibom

Councillors Present

Chairperson and Board Members of the BCMDA

Municipal Manager, BCMDA CEO and the Management of the City

Contractors of the Court Crescent Project

Ladies and gentlemen, good morning!

It is an honour for me to be speaking here at this Sod-Turning Ceremony for the Court Crescent Project, which is one of the flagship projects of the City.

It is however sad that I speak to you at a time where our country is tense, with high levels of fear and anxiety due to the COVID-19 outbreak which has been declared a global Pandemic by the World Health Organisation.

The President has declared a National Disaster due to COVID-19 and earlier in the week we announced a number of measures that we will be taking as a city in order to minimise the spread of this highly contagious virus, thus protect the lives of the residents of the city.

What is clear is that the virus will impact on the economy and that we should devise measures that will ensure that it is resilient. The hardest hit will be the tourism sector as most international flights have been cancelled.

This is where we need the wisdom of critical institutions in our city such as the BCMDA.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important that I remind you that the BCMDA is a critical vehicle that is required for us to drive the agenda of economic growth and development. We have deliberately created the agency to be an agile institution that attracts investors into the city leveraging on socio-economic infrastructure. We have also tasked it to boost our economic fortunes through tourism, social and economic development.

The agency extends the capability of the municipality with respect to the identification, planning and implementation of development projects in the metro. Managing and commercialising our key land parcels and properties is thus at the core of its mandate and it is what we need to see happening.

We have been making a point that the agency has been doing well in terms of corporate governance, but we need to see more action on the ground. The good corporate governance culture in the agency must produce good performance improvements in the delivery of projects.

It is with excitement therefore that we get to do the sod-turning for the Court Crescent Project, which is one of the flagship projects of the Agency. This is decisive because the immense value that we will derive from this project is far greater than the city's investment in it.

We are of the view that this project will unleash the economic potential of our city, revitalise the beachfront and serve to affirm the credibility of the agency in the market. I am more confident that the finalisation of the project will not only improve the look and feel of our beachfront but will be a catalyst for more investment into our beachfront.

We are therefore pleading with the project managers and the contractors to treat this project with the necessary seriousness. This is not only about the Court Crescent upgrade but about many other economic spin-offs that will result from it.

Lastly, what we want is for the project to be finished on time, without any hassles.

I Thank You!