

"We're addressing the painful legacy of a divided past"

By  Katja Hamilton

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Premier Alan Winde left no stone unturned in his no-holds barred State of the Province [address](#) (SOPA) today.



Source: Supplied. Premier Alan Winde presented his SOPA in front of Betty Zodumo and Duli Mkinase who run Siyakula soup kitchen in Gugulethu, Durisani Nisodo from Ikasi Soccer School in Khayelitsha and Marlon Parker, the founder of RLabs.

This is the third time that SOPA has been held at a remote destination with livestreaming capabilities made available to attendees.

This year's SOPA was held in Velddrif.

Winde's focus remained firmly on addressing unemployment and boosting the economy in the Province.

He argued that we will not be able to do this by going back to the way things were before the pandemic: "The gap between the resources that we have to recover, and the damage caused by the pandemic is too large. That is why we must push back against going back to normal, and we must push forward, to do even better. To do so, we need to rethink, we need to focus and we need to innovate."

Addressing unemployment

Winde said from the first quarter of 2020 to the third quarter of 2021, unemployment in the Western Cape increased by 132,000.

"While we still have the lowest expanded unemployment rate in South Africa, this statistic is very worrying."

Winde provided concrete examples of how the Western Cape Government is addressing this as part of a 10-year framework to bolster the province's economy by creating jobs and preparing for the launch of more social-housing projects

"We need to embrace densification particularly given that the Province's population is set to grow by 1.4 million people in eight years, bringing the total population figure to 8.5 million up from 7.1 million," Winde said.

On a macro level he spoke of maintaining and upgrading the province's roads, bridges and improving the efficiencies of Saldanha Bay and Cape Town's ports, and how this would lay the foundation to attract investment to the province.

"We intend to continue to invest in road infrastructure, launching three new road upgrade projects this financial year. This is in addition to 91 road projects currently in progress in various phases, worth approximately R3bn," Winde said.

Winde stressed the importance of Government strengthening its public-private partnerships.

"We must get used to urban densification"

He applauded the completion of several social-housing complexes in Cape Town, among them the Western Cape government's development of the Founders Garden site, in Cape Town, into an integrated high-rise, residentially-led, mixed-use development in the form of a rental scheme, which maximises the provision of social and affordable rental housing, while also providing open market rental units.

The completion of Conradie Park was set as a blueprint for other such social-housing complexes he would be driving in future. Conradie Park is a new mixed-income, mixed-use housing development in Cape Town. The R3bn, 22-hectare development – a partnership between developers Concor and the Western Cape Government – comprises more than 3,500 homes. It's located near main arterial routes and the Mutual and Thornton railway stations in Pinelands, a Cape Town suburb best known for Mutual Park, the enormous local headquarters of Old Mutual.



Source: Supplied. Conradie Park, which has become a blueprint for a successful social-housing development model in SA.

The Conradie Better Living Model is one of seven game changer projects to improve the lives of citizens in the province and serve as a model for how we can unlock the economic potential of state-owned property," Winde said.

"We're addressing the painful legacy of a divided past."

Social-housing developments underway

"We have numerous social housing projects under construction including the Belhar CBD development, in partnership with the University of the Western Cape. We will soon be adding another social housing development to this mix through the Founders Garden Artscape Precinct development, which is smack-middle in the Cape Town CBD. To get this project off the ground, we have so far determined the project feasibility on a financial, legal and technical level, which are critical first steps. We have also designed the development procurement documentation that includes a Request for Proposal and a draft Sale & Development Agreement," Winde said.

He said he has also now received public comment on the Western Cape's new Inclusionary Housing Framework, which will soon come before the provincial cabinet for consideration.

"This framework, which leverages our development planning powers, will see many other mixed-use developments in the future."

Take-aways from the Premier's speech are:

* His intent to plan **five mega health infrastructure projects** over the medium-to-long term. "This will significantly modernise this platform to ensure that we have a pipeline right into the future. These include the Belhar, Klipfontein and Helderberg regional hospitals, the Tygerberg Central Hospital development and the Swartland District Hospital," Winde said. Preparation is commencing for the Belhar and Klipfontein regional hospitals, and detailed planning to enable a public-private partnership for the Tygerberg Central Hospital development has also begun. This will take place in collaboration with the World Bank.

* **The launch of a Violence Prevention Unit** to be established in Western Cape Department of Health. This will be the first violence prevention unit established by a government in South Africa.

While this dedicated violence prevention unit will be responsible for identifying and designing interventions to reduce violence in communities across the province through an evidence-based public health strategy, they will leverage an all-of-society approach to implementing these initiatives, in conjunction with partners at the local and national levels.



Source: Supplied. Conradie Park

"Our Health Department tracks data that can help us better understand violence, including alcohol-related harms, gender-based violence or children at risk of violence, to name a few. This analysis is possible because our health department was

the first in the country to go digital, including 265 primary healthcare centres, 181 mobile posts, 51 acute and specialised hospitals, 28 intermediate care facilities, 49 EMS stations and 17 forensic pathology laboratories. This department has the size, reach and capacity to put real momentum behind this project."

* Winde said at present in the province there was one policeman allocated to protect 507 people, whereas the numbers should be one police person per 300 citizens. To this end, **Province will ramp up police oversight**, with the Department of Community Safety renamed Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety in the Western Cape.

"We will significantly expand our monitoring of police stations across the province, with a focus on gender based violence (GBV) and domestic violence responses, police conduct, visible policing, and crime investigation efficiency."



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The provision of safe, efficient transport a priority

* There will be the creation of a new department solely responsible for infrastructure in the Western Cape, through the merger of the Human Settlements Department, and specific components of the Transport and Public Works Department, including the Western Cape's property portfolio and its road programmes.

This Infrastructure Department will be tasked with working together with local governments in the Western Cape, the National Government as well as the private sector to ensure that quality, catalytic infrastructure projects are completed that will help inclusively create jobs. They will also take forward the establishment of a Schedule 3D Infrastructure Entity.

To this end, Province will create a department responsible for mobility, which will include transport programmes, such as the Blue Dot Taxi pilot, its transport regulation mandate, and its extensive traffic management operations.

"This Mobility Department will focus on finding specific, innovative strategies to improve mobility in the Western Cape, especially in the greater Cape Town area, given the very serious failings of the National rail network."

Following this policy announcement today, Western Cape Government will embark on a detailed consultation programme with all stakeholders and will provide regular updates both internally and to the public.

ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

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