



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

**State of the City Address by Executive Mayor of Johannesburg
Cllr Herman Mashaba**

We dedicate this term of office to the forgotten people of Johannesburg

Delivery: 03 May 2017

Release: Immediate

Speaker of Council, Cllr Vasco Da Gama
Chief Whip of Council, Cllr Kevin Wax
Chair of Chairs, Cllr Alex Christians
Members of the Mayoral Committee
Fellow Councillors,
City Manager, Dr Ndivho Lukhwareni
Distinguished guests
Members of the Media
And most importantly, the Residents of the City of Johannesburg

I greet you all.

Today marks exactly nine months to the day since the historic, local government elections were held across our beautiful City.

These elections will forever be remembered as the moment that our young democracy matured – with the peaceful transfer of government through the ballot box.

Last year's elections indicated a clear political realignment in our City and others across South Africa.

The people of Johannesburg spoke and their voices were loud, clear and unambiguous.

They want to see real change and bold steps taken to move Johannesburg forward into an era of change.

They want a government that is committed to rooting out corruption, improving service delivery and ensuring that an environment is created that will generate jobs for our people.

The people have chosen a diverse group of parties to lead them.

Our people have elected this government intentionally so that no single political party can abuse their power in our city ever again.

They have done so because their lived experience of suffering requires something different from before.

The fact that our government is required to engage and collaborate with different parties to find solutions to our residents' many challenges, is making our government stronger.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our coalition partners and the EFF for the role they have played, and continue to play, in saving this city and country.

Because, a Johannesburg that works, is a South Africa that works.

Councillor Mzobanzi Ntuli, MMC for Housing, and Councillor Helen Makhuba, MMC for Transport.

Both of the IFP, continue to play a critical role in our administration.

I thank you both.

Councillor Meshack van Wyk of the ACDP and Chairperson of our Community Development Section 79 Committee.

I thank you Sir.

Councillor Thandiwe Nonthenja of the UDM and Chairperson of our Municipal Public Accounts Committee.

I thank you Ma'am.

Councillor Franco de Lange of the Freedom Front Plus, and Chairperson of our Economic Development Section 79 Committee.

I thank you Sir.

Councillor Razak Noorbhai of Al-Jamah, and Chairperson the Environmental and Infrastructure Services Section 79 Committee.

I thank you Sir.

Councillor Devanand Maharaj of COPE, and Chairperson of the Legislature Section 79 Committee.

I thank you Sir.

And although not a coalition partner, I would also like to express my deep appreciation to the EFF, led in Johannesburg by Councillor Musa Novela.

For your honest and robust engagement with this administration.

I thank you Sir.

Every political party involved in this arrangement of our government has recognised that our people could not survive another five years of what has been before.

We recognised that the residents of our City required each one of us to put aside the things that make us different from one another, in the interests of what we all have in common – a desire to deliver change.

Irrespective of political affiliation, we all wish to see Johannesburg transform into a more inclusive and prosperous City.

Allow me to take this opportunity to recognise the presence here today of the Provincial Leadership of our coalition partners.

From the IFP, the Honourable Bonginkosi Dlamini,

From COPE, the Honourable Lefu Honong,

From the ACDP, the Honourable Lydia Meshoe,

In their absence here today, I would also like to thank

The Honourable Jaco Mulder, from the Freedom Front Plus.

And Mluleki France, from the UDM

And although not part of our coalition agreement, I recognise and appreciate Honourable Mandisa Mashego from the EFF.

I thank you all for your commitment and your support for change in our City.

Let me also take this opportunity to recognise and appreciate the presence of the Leaders of my own Party, DA Gauteng Leader, John Moodey; DA Johannesburg Regional Chairperson, Khume Ramulifho, and DA National Spokesperson, Refiloe Nt'sekhe.

I thank you for your continued support and guidance on this important journey.

Finally, I want to assure the residents of Johannesburg, we are committed to being a government for every single one of you, regardless of your political affiliation.

Mr Speaker,

I would like to pay a special tribute to our City Manager, Dr Ndivho Lukhwareni, who joined us on the 1st of December, 2016.

Dr Lukhwareni is highly experienced, skilled and qualified.

He understands our vision for change and he is, without doubt, the right person to manage its implementation.

City Manager, I thank you for your tireless dedication towards turning this City around and I look forward to continuing our work together over the coming years.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we reflect on the current state of the City and map a way forward to the realisation of our vision, we must all be alive to the City's enormous challenges that we have inherited.

It is essential that we are honest with ourselves and our residents at all times to ensure that we can start to rebuild our resident's trust in their government which has eroded over many years.

Ladies, and Gentlemen, this administration is not about 'quick fixes' or 'silver-bullets'.

In our City, change will not arise from such things.

We are going to fix this City:

By getting our priorities straight for the first time.

By focusing on the basics for the first time.

By paying attention to the bread and butter issues of service delivery.

Having said this, I am not going to spend my time talking about how our City has ended up in its current state and who is to blame for it.

The voters of our city have already done that.

As the Executive Mayor of this City, I do not get to pick and choose my responsibilities.

I have inherited a City, and mine is to accept the full and unconditional responsibility to work on making our City a better place for all of its residents.

History is going to be made today in this chamber.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I stand before you today to deliver to the residents of our City, perhaps for the first time, the true State of our City.

Because we must take our residents into our confidence, and be honest about the current state of our City.

Because, like so many things in life, change has to start with an honest assessment of the real state of affairs.

This is required so that we can roll up our collective sleeves and get to the work of creating a better Johannesburg, knowing the true magnitude of the task ahead.

Government has to be in tune with the people they serve.

Too many of our residents remain without the dignity of work.

Johannesburg today has 862 000 unemployed people, with an unemployment rate of over 30%.

The youth of our city are the greatest casualties of this crisis, facing an unemployment rate of over 50%.

By accepting and continuing with the projected 1.6% economic growth rate for our city, we will not be able to reverse the high rates of unemployment.

Our city's infrastructure is crumbling.

Neglect to prioritise maintenance and repairs of city infrastructure, has produced a ten year R170 Billion unfunded gap on capital infrastructure.

It sits under our roads and pavements, out of sight and out of mind and not a priority historically.

The lights are starting to go out at some of our 60 year-old, overloaded electricity sub-stations; part of a R69 Billion backlog.

Water losses have reached 31% and there are currently 371 leaks per kilometer of water pipes in our city.

Our roads have a reported repairs and maintenance backlog exceeding a staggering R5 billion.

We have inherited a housing backlog, conservatively estimated at 300 000 units, and an average delivery of only 3500 housing units per year.

Putting aside the impact of migration into our city, it would take a century to resolve the current housing backlog alone.

It is clear that the existing state of affairs is simply unsustainable.

The indignity caused by this lack of adequate housing is best seen by the 181 informal settlements which have mushroomed across the city.

There has been a chronic underinvestment into our informal settlements.

More than half of these informal settlements have no basic services.

I am angry that a government could justify spending money on lesser priorities while our people are subjected to the most desperate conditions in these informal settlements and their dignity is being trampled on.

Since taking office, we have been inundated with cases of corruption, nepotism and fraud.

Indeed, corruption is not a strong enough term for what was taking place in the City; it was outright, shameless looting.

Lawlessness has been allowed to become the order of the day in many of our communities and by-laws have been rendered worthless.

Dozens of buildings have been hijacked by slum lords and far too many families and communities have been destroyed by drug lords and crime.

We have a city where it is the criminals who operate with impunity, while our residents live in fear.

Noting these serious challenges I stand before you in amazement of this new Council Chamber.

This R360 million Council Chamber.

It truly is a spectacular building, however, I am left thinking about all of the roads, houses and clinics that could have been built with this money.

What is clear from last years' historic elections is that our residents' demand for change requires a clear break from the previous way of doing things.

Because following what has failed before, is not going to achieve change.

We can no longer conduct business as usual.

It is now time for business unusual.

It is going to take time to turn around the years of neglect, incorrect priorities, decay and mismanagement in our City.

The sheer magnitude of the backlogs that we have inherited, are staggering.

But like all enormous challenges, the only way to address them is one step at a time.

While asking our residents for their patience, I wish to assure our residents that change is on the way.

Day by day we are taking steps towards delivering change to all our residents.

Day by day we are making progress towards creating a more inclusive and prosperous Johannesburg.

Mr Speaker,

In mentioning progress, I think it is important for me to highlight the many steps this new administration has taken towards addressing the key challenges since coming into office on the 23rd of August 2016.

Soon after taking office, I met with the senior administration and the political leadership of the City and we developed a Ten Point Plan to guide us on our journey.

One of the more difficult challenges we have inherited was a budget and an Integrated Development Plan, that represented the business as usual approach, passed only a few weeks before voters demanded change in our City.

Even as I speak here today, we are forced to operate under the budget and plan of a government that was voted out by the people of our City.

So this Ten Point Plan, represented a way for the new coalition government to start making its own impact within the limitations of the highly regulated legislative environment.

Much progress has been made and today I am pleased to report to you where we stand on these matters.

The first part of the plan is to ensure that the entire City embraces the environment of a new coalition government.

This is necessary to help us move forward with speed and ensure that every employee of this City has respect for the electorate's wishes.

From my own interactions with employees and officials it has become clear to me that the vast majority understand and embrace our residents' demand for change.

The second part of the plan is to run a responsive and pro-poor government with a focus on redress.

I have stated on numerous occasions that this administration is unapologetically pro-poor.

Too many of our residents remain without the dignity of work and incapable of supporting their families.

Spatial and income inequality continues to define the city's landscape with poor communities suffering from inadequate service delivery in comparison to their more affluent counterparts.

We cannot build the city we all so deeply desire, when so many of our people can only look from a distance at prosperity, reaching out, and being unable to access it.

Addressing this is a non-negotiable that our entire city depends on. It is a project that every resident must join hands with government to work together to achieve.

At the time of announcing our Ten Point Plan, I committed that when we determine our budget for the 2017/2018 financial year, it will focus on the most deprived in our city.

Today, I am pleased to announce that in our 2017/18 proposed budget we aim to ensure that a minimum of 60% of the City's capital expenditure is directed towards projects in traditionally poor and underserviced communities.

Allow me to spend some time looking at the steps we have already taken in line with our pro-poor agenda.

Our adjustment budget, which was passed in February, afforded us our first opportunity to ensure that we redirected funding towards poor communities.

Although legislation only permitted us to make minor adjustments, we made sure that those adjustments focused on Johannesburg's forgotten people.

- We achieved the allocation of R546 million for the purpose of electrifying incomplete housing units;
- We achieved the allocation of R41 million to electrify five informal settlements where children have never studied with even the assistance of a light bulb;
- We achieved the allocation of R51 million for the purchase of additional busses for Metro Bus, with a further R5 million for the refurbishment of our current fleet, to ease the burden of people getting around our city;
- We have initiated a programme of tarring roads in impoverished areas in Doornkop, Lawley, Mayibuye, Tshepiso, Protea South and Ivory Park;

- We allocated funds that achieve the extension of the operating hours of five additional clinics that will operate seven days a week, because people do not only get sick during working hours;
- We have increased funding to the Johannesburg Social Housing Company amounting to R219 million.

This increase will be dedicated for the purpose of purchasing buildings that will be refurbished within the inner city.

These building are to be converted into low cost rental stock that will house 1164 families;

- We achieved an allocation of R49 million to Pikitup for additional cleaning shifts in a bid to clean up our City with a focus on the Inner City and Informal Settlements.

This has also led to the employment of an additional 640 residents;

- We achieved an allocation of R5 million for the completion of the Shared Industrial Production Facility in Alexandra.

This will serve as a fully serviced shared production facility for Alexandra based SMMEs operating in the informal manufacturing sector;

- We achieved the allocation of R2 million for the construction of homeless shelters in our city.

Homelessness robs many of residents of their dignity and with this commitment we can finally begin addressing this challenge head-on;

With these adjustments, a very real sense of the promise of change is beginning to emerge.

Much more significant change will be derived from the tabling of our first budget for the 2017/18 financial year later this month.

In the coming weeks and months, the forgotten people of our city will begin to see developments and improvements where they have previously seen nothing.

They will start to see projects accelerating and progress taking shape.

I have a vision for the City of Johannesburg to be under construction. So that wherever you go, you are never out of eyesight or earshot of projects coming to benefit communities.

However, I would like to touch on a new project I recently launched, to electrify 1000 households in Meriting and Finetown informal settlements.

This is a project close to my heart as I visited this community during the election campaign last year and listened to the community's heartfelt pleas for assistance after years of empty promises to provide them with electricity.

Upon the completion of this R24.5 Million project, the families of Meriting and Finetown North will be able to light and warm their homes against the coming winter, and these two communities will be less vulnerable to tragic fires.

This is the business of local government.

But most importantly, the electrification of informal settlements, will ensure that our residents need not resort to illegal connections, which have resulted in six avoidable deaths during the past financial year alone.

Our administration is serious about improving the quality of life for our poorest residents and providing quality services to the forgotten communities.

Another issue close to my heart is education.

Growing up in poverty I knew that education was the greatest tool I could use to free myself from the shackles of poverty.

We need interventions to provide young children from disadvantaged backgrounds with quality care, allowing their parents to pursue work opportunities knowing that their children are in a safe learning environment.

As a local government, we are aware of the fact that basic and tertiary education falls outside of our constitutionally defined competencies.

However, where we can make a difference – and where we will make a difference – is in the field of Early Childhood Development.

On the 30th of November 2017, I launched the City's revamped Early Childhood Development Programme.

It involves an extensive public, private partnership with the Hollard Foundation.

This initiative targets the most under-privileged wards in our city.

We have set a target of ensuring that 400 non-compliant ECD Centres across our city are compliant with land use by-laws by June this year.

We have a target of ensuring that an additional 6000 children are included in the ECD programme by June, 2017.

Finally, we have a target of training 3800 ECD practitioners by June 2017 which will provide them with the necessary skills training to ensure quality learning for our children.

The third part of the Ten Point Plan is to achieve a minimum of 5% economic growth in Johannesburg by 2021.

We cannot reverse the unemployment of 862 000 residents with anything less than this.

It is an ambitious target but it is what we require to bring this city's unemployment down.

We want Johannesburg to be the engine room of South Africa's economic growth.

This cannot happen at the current projected growth rate of around 1.6%.

We need to create an enabling environment for businesses, especially small businesses, to flourish and thereby become employers of our people.

Our plan, while under the final stages of development, will contain particular focal points.

There is no doubt that one of the key elements for reversing unemployment within the city relates to our ability to make it easier to set up businesses.

We have identified 20 key performance standards in this respect.

These standards involve various subjects including building plan approvals, rezoning applications, installations of new meters and clearance certificates.

You see, we cannot influence the national political uncertainty in our economy.

But we can do, is provide certainty that Johannesburg is the best place to come and set up a business.

In line with this priority, we allocated an additional R3.6 million to Development Planning to capacitate the units that address these key performance areas in our adjustment budget.

Although it is still early days, the work of this team is already yielding positive results.

Small businesses create jobs. They have an abundance of potential waiting to be unlocked and they have the ability to expand into employers of our people.

That is why small business development is one of the key focus areas of this administration.

Since the beginning of the 2016/2017 financial year, 7,374 Small, Medium and Micro-Sized Enterprises were assisted by SME Hubs over nine months, amounting to an average of 819 SMMEs per month.

This is more than 50% above the 533 SMMEs supported per month, achieved in the previous financial year.

There are now a total of seven Hubs throughout the City and our plan is to double this to 14 Hubs by the end of the 2017/18 financial year.

This will result in two Hubs being located in each of Johannesburg's seven regions, where young prospective entrepreneurs can receive support.

This is expected to increase the number of SMMEs supported through each Hub per month to 1,250 by June, 2018.

Ultimately, each Hub will assist more than 2,000 SMMEs per month by the end of the Mayoral Term, representing a four-fold increase in the size of our SMME support programme.

We will also aggressively expand the rollout of our free wifi network across the city. This will include rollout to public libraries and municipal clinics.

Earlier this year, I announced a decision to revamp the *Jozi@Work* programme. It has resulted in a few marches, invasions of our building and threats of violence.

I stand here today, unperturbed.

You see, this programme was a wolf in sheep's clothing.

In principle, co-opt programmes that marry service delivery objectives with work opportunities is a good principle.

But like so many good principles, the *Jozi@Work* programme had a dark underworld.

Because when middle men get awarded multi-million Rand contracts to run these projects, they become indebted through their newly achieved wealth.

And then these same grateful, overnight millionaires, must go and select people to benefit from the work opportunities.

Somewhere in the middle of this mess, in some cases, were ward councillors, ready and waiting to assist.

They had no official indigent list to work off.

So I ask you, on what basis do you think people got chosen?

We will move forward with a new model to council which will cut out the middle-men, allowing us to engage the services of more people seeking work opportunities.

Work opportunities will be fairly allocated on a rotational basis off a legitimate indigent register.

The only basis for ones placement on this list will be socio-economic criteria.

Despite what the critics say, this move will not kill work opportunities.

Instead, it will increase the amount of people who can fairly benefit from these temporary work opportunities.

However, we have to create lasting economic growth that stimulates the development of businesses which will provide our residents with real jobs.

It is vital that we throw open our doors to make Johannesburg an easier and more attractive destination to do business.

I am in the process of establishing an investment desk in my office to deal specifically with Investor and Business Relations.

This will help to expedite the resolution of issues facing our developers, investors and business people.

This will help to avoid unnecessary delays in much needed development and investment which will assist to stimulate job creation in our city.

The fourth element of the Ten Point Plan is to create a professional civil service that serves the residents of Joburg with pride.

A prerequisite to our success is ensuring that all 33 0000 employees of the City uphold my motto of 'service with pride'.

When our residents engage with our civil servants they must feel that they have been dealt with in a professional and caring manner.

A professional, committed and responsive civil service will help to attract investment, which will in turn stimulate economic growth and job creation.

In light of this priority, soon after taking office, we initiated an independent skills audit.

This was to ensure that every manager in this City is in their position because of what they know, and not who they knew.

This audit is reaching its conclusion and we will make its findings available to the public.

If we are going to be a truly responsive and caring government we must listen to the concerns of our residents.

There are few matters that frustrate our residents more than the flawed billing system we have inherited.

It is essential that we look for long term solutions to this challenge as this will not only improve our relationship with our residents, but also allow us to improve revenue collection.

This, in turn, will allow us to spend more money on improving infrastructure and delivering better services to our residents.

The process, to appoint a service provider who will assist us to resolve the billing challenge, is ongoing and we are hoping to finalise this appointment by the end of the current financial year.

Once this service provider has been appointed we will work with them to analyse the errors in our systems and find lasting solutions.

This process has involved conducting a diagnostic exercise focusing on the four elements of our billing system.

The first is the development of the indigents list, and the system that ensures that the poorest in our city receive free basic services without charge.

Every month they will receive 50 kilowatt hours of free electricity, between 10 and 15 kilolitres of free water, as well as free sewerage and free refuse removal services.

The second is to ensure that our property valuation process is improved.

In the last property valuation process the city had to file over 60 000 objections against its own service provider.

This shamble cannot happen again.

The third is the improvement of our revenue collection. Our reality is that we have to collect more revenue.

On this point, I am delighted to inform everyone that during the month of March 2017 we collected just over R3 billion in revenue.

The budgeted amount was R2.6 billion and it is the first time that the City has ever gone beyond the R3 billion mark.

The Outbound Collection Unit which has been reconstituted after the removal of an external contractor, was able to collect R275 million in March.

MMC for Finance, Cllr Rabelani Dagada has informed me that he is confident that we will reach the R4 billion mark in monthly collections by the end of July 2017.

This is something that should be celebrated and I congratulate the team at Revenue for the progress that is being made.

Our challenge now, is to maintain this.

The final leg of this process is to improve our systems that resolve billing queries.

Our residents go through hell and back to resolve their issues and this administration is committed to being more caring and more responsive.

There are currently over 48 000 open billing queries in the City, of which 26 000 are 90 to 365 days old.

To attend to this matter with urgency, we have reconstituted the Back Office Unit within the revenue department and made provisions for overtime so that they can resolve the open queries.

The Back Office Unit started working on the 3rd of April 2017, and their target is to resolve all open queries by the end of the current financial year.

I would like to thank our residents for their patience and assure them that we have heard their cries for assistance and intervention.

Change is on the way.

I referred earlier to the sobering R5.8 billion backlog in repairs and maintenance of our road infrastructure in our city.

I have declared war on the potholes in our city and we are prioritising the repair of failing road surfaces.

Through our adjustment budget, we provided an additional R88 million in funding to the Johannesburg Roads Agency.

This was to procure the materials and personnel to address these vital repairs.

I am pleased to announce that following our adjustment, in the month of March alone, an impressive total of 17,696 potholes were repaired in the City of Johannesburg.

Progress is being made and we are committed to improving the state of our roads.

We cannot deny that there is an enormous mountain to climb, however we will continue to commit more resources, better technology, newer equipment and better trained teams to respond effectively to this challenge.

Road and transport infrastructure is a way for people to access jobs, a way for businesses to access markets and one of the ways we create connected and integrated communities.

A transport network which functions like a well-oiled machine is a prerequisite to us having a thriving economy in Johannesburg.

Mr Speaker,

The fifth part of our Ten Point Plan is to ensure corruption is public enemy number one in the City of Johannesburg.

Corruption steals from the poor and must be stopped.

I have zero tolerance for corruption, in both the public and private sector.

Following the appointment of General Shadrack Sibiyi, to head up our new internal investigations unit in the City, we have made solid inroads into exposing corruption and ensuring that those found wanting face the full might of the law.

To date this unit has exposed and prevented fraud and corruption estimated at R2 billion across a number of different departments and entities.

30 City employees have been arrested since the establishment of this unit and we will be keeping a close eye on the progress of those cases before court.

In addition 91 employees have been suspended and three senior officials have resigned as a result of these investigations.

I have always said that the corruption exposed to date is only the tip of the iceberg when it came to the outright looting that was taking place in our City.

Today, I can confirm that over 300 cases are currently being investigated and the total monetary value alleged to be lost or misused as a result of fraud and corruption is over R10 billion.

This figure is utterly sickening. This level of corruption could not have taken place in a vacuum. It is without doubt that many a blind eye was turned in leadership.

This is money that should have been utilised to provide much needed service delivery to communities throughout Johannesburg – especially the poor.

If we are to meet Johannesburg's service delivery needs, every cent counts.

That is why we will continue to vigorously pursue every allegation of corruption.

The days of a gentle slap on the wrist or re-deployment to another department are over.

We will expose wrongdoing and ensure that those implicated are suspended, face criminal prosecution and monies recovered.

In our continual fight against corruption we have to rely on the Hawks and the National Prosecuting Authority in order for our investigations to achieve the arrests and convictions they require.

As a City we have continuously engaged these critical institutions. During my first 100 days I promised residents that I would hold these institutions accountable if results are not achieved.

Regrettably, it came to my attention that there has been serious interference in our cases and I was left with no option but to lay a complaint with the Independent Police Investigations Department.

We welcome IPID's decision to investigate the serious allegations of defeating the ends of justice and abuse of power, and we look forward to the outcomes of their investigation.

I will never tolerate any form of interference in our fight against corruption.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Earlier this year, Council voted to amend the Supply Chain Management Policy.

This gave birth to the very first open tender system in the City of Johannesburg.

Bid adjudication meetings are now held in rooms open to the public, to the media and to all interested parties.

For too long these processes have operated behind closed doors and away from public scrutiny, allowing for corrupt practices to fester.

We have also begun a process of reviewing the Supply Chain Management Policy with the intention of ensuring that tenders are broken down into smaller parts in order for small businesses to benefit.

The sixth part of our Ten Point Plan is to produce an official housing waiting list.

Many of our residents have lost trust in their government due to deep rooted corruption in the housing allocation process.

It is time to rebuild the trust of our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The frustration of our communities lies in the fact that people have been sitting on housing lists since 1996, which remain a secret.

With the historical, institutionalised corruption in our City, how can we expect housing applicants to believe in the legitimacy of this process?

I am delighted to announce that for the first time in the history of Johannesburg, I am in possession of a completed housing list, bearing the names of 152 000 residents.

We are going to make this list public, so that anyone can query their position on the list, and know where they stand.

It will take time to address this housing backlog, but, at least people will know that nobody can be inserted above them unfairly, benefiting from personal connections.

An audit of the housing waiting list is currently underway, so that its integrity is beyond reproach.

In the near future I will be unveiling the mechanisms that the City will roll out to ensure applicants can know where they are positioned on the housing list.

The seventh part of the plan is to produce a list of all incomplete housing units within the City where construction had ground to a halt.

During my election campaign, I was horrified by the number of incomplete housing projects, where beneficiaries could only look on from a distance in their shacks.

Tragically these units stood empty for long periods of time, in most cases, due to failures of the City to provide services and necessary funding to these projects.

Within two months of us coming into office this list was completed and detailed over 3000 housing units that require work to enable our people to take occupation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to announce that we will complete 1841 of these housing units in this current financial year.

To do so, we are making use of a R546 million to fund the electrification of these incomplete housing units.

City Power has already begun work on electrifying these units to ensure that their hand over to assigned beneficiaries can be fast-tracked.

We are planning to host official handover ceremonies in July.

Our eighth part of the plan is to fast-track the delivery of title deeds to the beneficiaries of the City's housing projects.

The handover of title deeds is a top priority of this administration, especially given the chronic legacy of this City failing to do so.

For example, in the 2013/14 financial year not a single title deed was handed out to a beneficiary in Johannesburg.

Within the first few weeks of coming into office, we had processed 2000 title deeds that were ready to be handed over to beneficiaries, some of whom have been waiting for decades to own their homes.

I have been involved in a number of these distributions and I was touched by the stories of suffering behind these title deeds.

I was deeply honoured to be able to hand over our first title deed to Mrs Anna Dikgale.

Ma Anna, is a 70 year old widow, who had been living in her Diepkloof home since 1963.

She looks after her grandchildren and great grandchildren in this home and relies on a social grant to sustain her family.

Ma Anna represents the story of thousands of people in this city.

In fact, Ma Anna, had tried to have the City attend to her request in order to be provided with her title deed since 2007, but the City was unresponsive.

Over five decades later, Ma Anna has finally being provided with the dignity of her own title deed.

Title deeds help to restore our people's dignity, by providing them with ownership of property which can be passed on to their children and grandchildren.

Importantly, having a title to a home provides our residents with the economic opportunity to better their lives and enter the mainstream economy.

To date, we have handed out 2800 title deeds to beneficiaries.

I am delighted to announce that we have an additional 1100 title deeds that are ready to be handed over to our residents.

In the next month, I will be distributing these title deeds to beneficiaries from communities including Ivory Park, Pennyville, Lenasia and Rabie Ridge.

This is the change we promised our residents when we came into office last year.

The ninth priority in our Ten Point Plan was to initiate a pilot project for a clinic to operate for extended hours.

A great city must also provide its residents with access to quality healthcare.

When we entered office, all the City's 81 clinics only operated from 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

This was wholly inadequate to deal with the serious health problems our communities are facing.

I launched the Extended Hours Pilot Project at the Princess Clinic in Roodepoort on the 31st of October 2016.

This clinic went from the usual operating hours to being open from 7am to 10pm, Monday to Friday, and weekends from 7am to 1pm.

On my first visit to Princess, during the election campaign, I came into contact with the Maziko family who suffered from an extreme health crisis.

The family lived in a small two room shack without water supply.

The oldest daughter contracted tuberculosis and suffered from at least two fits per day.

During my interactions with residents in the community, a number of people told me of family members, neighbours and friends who had contracted a respiratory disease.

The residents of Princess – like the Maziko family, are forever etched in my heart – and they should never have to suffer such indignity and deprivation of basic rights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I dedicated the launch of the pilot project to the Maziko family.

I am equally delighted to stand here today and inform you that the project has been a resounding success.

From November 2016 through to February 2017, in just three months, a total of 10,791 patients visited the Princess Clinic.

As a reflection on the need for the extended operating hours, almost 3000 of those patients were seen during the extended hours.

We have experienced a few emergency cases since the extension of operating hours at Princess Clinic. Patients' lives were saved in two specific cases.

A three year old boy was rushed to the clinic due to shortness of breath, and diagnosed with pneumonia. He is alive and well today.

A pregnant woman in labour arrived at the clinic and received emergency care before being rushed to hospital. Both mother and child are well.

Given the success of the pilot, we allocated R4.3 million in our adjustment budget to extend the operating hours of an additional 5 clinics.

Effective from the 1st of April 2017, the City has rolled out extended operating hours at the following clinics:

- Freedom Park;
- Hicensile;
- Randburg;
- Zandspruit;
- And Albert Street in the inner city.

These clinics are now open from 7am to 10pm on weekdays and from 7:30am to 1pm on weekends and Public Holidays.

Through this adjustment budget, we have also set ourselves the task of improving the infrastructure of some of our City clinics.

This process also includes an increase afforded to the Langlaagte Pharmacy Distribution Facility to improve the efficiencies of the distribution of medicines to all our clinics.

These important developments will go a long way in ensuring that our residents have access to quality healthcare without compromising their livelihoods.

It also gives me great joy to announce that we will be allocating funding in our 2017/18 budget to extend operating hours at even more clinics across our city.

This project has the potential to transform access to health care in Johannesburg, especially to our poorest residents.

A proper functioning health care system is vital to us achieving our economic growth targets because a healthy city is a working city.

The final element of our Ten Point Plan, is to revitalise the Inner City of Johannesburg and bring people and business back into the heart of our city.

Over the years, the Johannesburg inner city has suffered from gross neglect, with crime, drugs and filth becoming commonplace.

This has resulted in the flight of capital to areas such as Sandton, Rosebank and Midrand.

Historic buildings have been abandoned or hijacked, dirt has piled up and crime has spiraled out of control.

This can largely be attributed to a lack of political will to address this in our City.

The revitalisation of our inner city is pivotal in our quest to unleash Johannesburg's economic potential and realise our target of a minimum of 5% economic growth by 2021.

Our vision for the inner city is to make it the inclusive, modern and diverse heart-beat of Johannesburg.

It truly has the potential to become a model for a modern, post-Apartheid, South African city.

Let me make one thing clear, it is the poor that have suffered the most as a result of the inner city's decay.

I was stirred to action after reading a publication called 'Kidz Chronicle' which included messages addressed to me.

A Grade 6 learner wrote:

"The inner city has got deep secrets. It stinks in there because toilets are not clean, there are mice and rats and there are sometimes dead bodies."

Most concerning was a learner's exposure to people who:

"Inject themselves with drugs every morning when I go to school."

No one, and especially not our youth, should be exposed to such trauma.

It is an utter disgrace that this has continued unabated for so long.

We are making substantial progress in our quest to develop a plan for the inner city's renewal.

We are close to completing our analysis of all City-owned buildings with the intention of converting them into affordable, low cost housing for our residents to accommodate workers closer to their places of work.

These buildings will also be converted into affordable commercial spaces for the benefit of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

As mentioned earlier, we allocated R219 million to JOSCHO in our adjustment budget.

This money will be used to purchase buildings in the inner city that will be refurbished and converted into low cost rental stock that will house 1164 families.

For too long parts of Johannesburg, particularly the inner city, have been associated with grime.

I am committed to ensuring that this becomes a thing of the past.

We allocated an additional R49.2 million to Pikitup in a bid to clean up our city.

This is through additional cleaning shifts in the inner city and within our informal settlements as well.

Since entering office, we have doubled the cleaning shifts of Pikitup in the inner city, including a night shift to serve businesses operating at night.

Crime is another major problem plaguing our inner city which must be addressed if we are going to make it a safe place for our people to live, work and play.

The latest official crime stats released last year revealed that the inner city is the most dangerous area in Johannesburg.

The Department of Public Safety and the JMPD have already launched a plan which has seen the enforcement of by-laws and visible policing dramatically increased in the inner city.

When we entered office, I was shocked to find out that the JMPD was operating with a shortage of 1500 officers.

I was baffled that this was allowed to take place in the face of rampant crime that was destroying so many of our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In our adjustment budget, we allocated R31 million to JMPD for the recruitment and training of an additional 1500 JMPD Officers.

The recruitment process is currently underway and prospective candidates have until tomorrow to submit their applications.

I encourage men and women of the highest integrity, and with the passion to serve their communities, to come forward and apply.

I believe this to be a major breakthrough in the City's efforts to combat crime, enforce by-laws and manage traffic congestion.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We cannot shut out the drug problem by ignoring it – we need to decisively tackle it head-on.

During the election campaign I promised the residents of Johannesburg that if elected Mayor, I would create a specialised drug unit within the JMPD.

On the 21st of November 2016, I delivered on that promise to our residents when I declared war on drug lords as we launched the new K9-Narcotics Unit.

I am exceptionally proud of the work which has been done by the City's K9-Narcotics Unit.

To date, the Unit's track record in drug related crime busting has yielded much success.

The Unit's greatest success thus far was the drug bust in Glenvista in which Kat and TIK as well as drug manufacturing chemicals worth a combined R9.5 million were captured.

The suspects arrested in this raid were believed to be the source of hundreds of drugs dealers across Johannesburg and their arrest marked a major breakthrough in our efforts to get rid of drugs off our streets.

In total this Unit has affected 597 arrests and recovered 100kgs of drugs, 463 stolen or hijacked vehicles, 1044 stolen items of property and 52 firearms.

I want to express my deepest appreciation to this Unit for their high level of professionalism, and most importantly, the integrity and commitment they continue to show on a daily basis.

They are REAL heroes of our city.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Traffic congestion and downed traffic lights is another frustration our residents suffer on a daily basis.

To assist in addressing the issue of traffic light failure in our city, we have established a specialised JMPD unit.

This unit operates as a rapid response team to downed traffic lights in order to provide relief to our residents while the broader issue of traffic light repairs is being addressed.

This unit is now staffed with over 600 people.

We have also announced our 'No Join' policy in respect of traffic lights.

Until recently, the City has addressed issues of downed traffic lights by simply joining cables in the event of an electrical fault.

Each 'join' in the cabling of a traffic light is an electrical weakness in the circuit that makes it vulnerable to rain, electrical surges and lightening.

We have allocated R6 million to replace cabling in key traffic intersections to initiate the 'No Join' policy which will be expanded upon in the 2017/18 budget.

In our efforts to achieve the rule of law in our city, we have taken a decision to bring back dedicated municipal courts, through a funding arrangement with the Department of Justice.

This will serve to ensure that by-law infringers are dealt with speedily, so that consequences are assured for anyone who breaches our by-laws.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Looking at these developments, in line with our Ten Point Plan, it is without doubt that day by day and step by step, we are beginning to make real and lasting progress in the City of Johannesburg.

However, beyond what we have achieved, it is important that our residents know where we are going as a new administration.

To meet our challenges, we are carving out a new strategy for the City of Johannesburg. This strategy aims to prioritise our residents' most pressing needs.

It is a plan that no longer places the poor on the fringes of our society but one that places them at the heart of our agenda.

It is a plan that gives the city's forgotten people a voice that resonates throughout the whole of this government.

Much of this will be fully expressed in the City's upcoming 2017/18 budget that will be announced later this month.

Over the past month, both the proposed 2017/18 budget and the integrated development plan were open to extensive public comment and consultation.

When we tabled the draft budget in March 2017, I made the point of saying that our IDP and budget required the input of our communities to be completed, in the image of the change they have demanded.

Despite premeditated attempts to disrupt these meetings, we successfully held 31 cluster conversations and 8 Regional IDP Summits.

This process of public consultation has been invaluable, ensuring that the budget and IDP truly reflect the change our communities have demanded of us.

Underpinning this administration, at its very heart, are five pillars which will be the bedrock on which change is going to be delivered to our residents.

The first of these five pillars is to grow the economy and create jobs.

We see economic growth, which creates jobs, as the central enabler for realising opportunities for all residents.

It is an irrefutable truth that people with the means, improve their circumstances more effectively than any government has ever proven capable of doing.

Because people with the dignity of work reduce the pressure on housing backlogs, clinics, and free basic services, allowing the City to focus more resources on a smaller number of people.

In the coming months we will be unveiling the economic policy of our administration that will take this city to 5% economic growth by 2021.

It will be aimed at driving down our crippling unemployment.

This is our pledge to the 862 000 unemployed people of our City.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to announce, that we will be adopting an approach to insource some of the identified services consumed by the City.

I would like to give my appreciation to the members of the EFF, who have worked closely with this administration on this issue.

From the 1st of January 2018, we will initiate the insourcing of security services in the City of Johannesburg. Currently the City of Johannesburg spends R360 million on security services.

It produces a situation where the City is effectively paying R16 000 per security guard, and yet each individual guard is earning in the region of only R4000 per month.

As a City, we are kept safe by these guards. It is time that we return the favour and provide them with the security of permanent employment and better pay.

We will also be looking at the contracted services of catering and cleaning, and determining how we can follow a similar model of insourcing.

The second pillar is to enhance quality of life by improving services and taking care of the environment.

We want our residents to live in a well-run city where they do not have to worry about potholes, broken street lights and crumbling infrastructure.

Therefore a cornerstone of our development plan is to ensure improved access to quality and affordable basic services, safe roads and well-maintained public spaces.

The preservation and protection of the natural environment for the health and wellness of current and future generations is also a vital component of this pillar.

One of our key interventions is the reintegration of City Entities.

Johannesburg has operated under a complicated and cumbersome model of service delivery from independent City Entities, operating under Boards of Directors.

The only winner in this arrangement has been bureaucracy.

The losers of this arrangement, has been the residents of our city.

When these City Entities are reintegrated, their personnel will be regionalised so that front line service delivery capacity is located in the seven regions on our city.

This kind of capacity does not belong in any ivory tower, it belongs close to where the people are and where the service delivery issues are that impact their lives.

The third pillar is to advance pro-poor development that provides meaningful redress

The residents of Johannesburg still live with the legacy of our country's past, visible in the uneven development of the different communities that make up our city.

This necessitates government to recognise that the painful legacy of our past continues in our communities lived experience today.

It has rendered so many people vulnerable, as outsiders looking in at the economy.

At the same time, efforts at redress must focus on, amongst other imperatives, creating more inclusivity.

Inclusive communities embrace and welcome diversity and the City must do more to ensure that space is provided where all members of the public can come together.

In this regard, the key directive in our budget process has been to ensure that a minimum of 60% of capital expenditure must be spent in poor communities.

It must drive the delivery of services, infrastructure investment and efficiency of transport for the benefit of the most vulnerable in our city.

Our approach to housing is going to see a shift in direction.

I have long adopted the view that the City's historical approach of building 2500 to 3500 houses per year, in the face of such an enormous backlog, was simply embracing failure.

We must not continue with approaches that have failed before.

This administration is going to be developing a progressive focus on the approach of Site and Service.

This involves the provision of fully serviced plots of land, onto which beneficiaries can be settled.

These beneficiaries would bear the responsibility to build their own homes on top of these serviced sites, allowing us to provide this solution to many more people than have historically benefitting from RDP housing.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to announce that the model of extended operating hours at clinics, is now going to be replicated in our community library facilities.

In the new financial year, we will be rolling out extended operating hours at 10 Regional Libraries across the city.

They will provide a safe, conducive environment for communities to access these facilities, and for learners to study in the right kind of environment.

The criteria used to select these libraries has focused on communities where children study without the support of electricity.

These libraries will operate in the following areas from 9am to 8pm, Monday to Friday, and from 9am to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays:

- Diepsloot and Ivory Park North,
- Randburg,
- Florida,
- Protea North,
- Sandton,
- Yeoville and
- Orange Farm and Ennerdale

I celebrate this achievement, and look to this as another key intervention that can be expanded upon in future financial years.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In working with our coalition partners and the EFF to identify strategic interventions we discussed the tragic case of the residents of Slovo Park.

I must also credit the EFF for bringing this matter to Council by way of a motion, passed before Council in our meeting last week.

The residents of Slovo Park have suffered from the deepest neglect, and their environment provides no dignity whatsoever.

In November 2015, the residents of Slovo Park took the City to court due to the failure of the City to provide any development in this area.

The court agreed with them, and has instructed the City to intervene to provide services.

Can you imagine, 20 years after democracy in South Africa, a situation where a community named after Joe Slovo, had to take the City to court in order to receive even the most basic of services?

I am pleased to announce that our coalition government and the EFF will be taking significant steps to rectify this situation.

The residents of Slovo Park will have to wait no more once we pass our budget for the 2017/18 financial year.

A dedicated and focused intervention into this community is going to be made this year that will pave the way for electricity, water and sewerage connections.

The fourth pillar is to build caring, safe and secure communities.

We realise that one of the greatest challenges faced by our residents is crime and a lack of safety.

The rule of law must prevail in Johannesburg.

We envision a caring City as one which is close to its residents and ensures that when community members engage with it, they are heard.

Our work in expanding the JMPD, the K9 Unit's impact in the fight against drugs, and the establishment of Municipal Courts speaks volumes of our focus on this pillar of our government.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The fight against drugs cannot be exclusively focused on policing, it has to involve prevention and care for the victims of this deadly trade.

I am very pleased to announce that we will be launching a series of pilot projects to expand the services offered at our clinics to include drug rehabilitation services to communities highly impacted by drugs.

At five clinics in the city, dedicated and trained public health professionals will be appointed to administer rehabilitative medical services to the victims of this horrific trade.

They will serve as a referral link from communities to outpatient facilities, and act as the vital conduit for our communities.

A dedicated hotline will be set up so that the residents of our city can access these services.

I am pleased by this vital first step for the City.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am also proud to say that we have started to take receipt of the 28 new fire engines that will assist our aging fleet.

Their arrival is well-timed to deal with the winter season fires that leave so many homeless in our informal settlements.

The fifth and final pillar is to institute an honest, responsive and productive government.

It is the key to achieving all the above pillars I have mentioned.

For Johannesburg to achieve its developmental goals over the next five years, communities must be able to develop a high level of trust with the City.

Residents need to know what their money is being spent on and they must have a say in how we plan for their futures.

Where something cannot be done, we must take our residents into our confidence and explain why, while searching for solutions.

And when it can be done, we must move heaven and earth to achieve it for our people.

I promised this kind of honesty during the election campaign, and it is this kind of honesty our residents will receive.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am committing this administration to the forgotten people of our city.

In the past, this City left many people behind.

These, were the forgotten people.

They just thought as residents of this city, that they were entitled to a government that cared for them.

They are the people who reported service delivery issues into the black hole of bureaucracy.

They are the people who remain no clearer now than they did in 1996 as to when they may receive a house.

They are the people who live in the informal settlements without services.

They were treated like the City was doing them a favour by receiving their calls or complaints.

They saw the City spending money but were left wondering, *“What about my road, my house, my traffic light, my electricity?”*

This administration is going to focus on the forgotten people.

We will dedicate this term of office to them, the forgotten people of Johannesburg.

Cllr Herman Mashaba
Executive Mayor
City of Johannesburg

For further information, please contact:

Tony Taverna-Turisan
Director of Communications
Office of the Executive Mayor
City of Johannesburg
Tel: 011 407 7375
Cellular: 082 920 9708
Email: tonyt@joburg.org.za