

SOGA

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Building
a Smart City
Together



Executive Mayor
Cllr. John Mosema Makoro Mpe

Speech delivered on Friday 24 June 2022

Polokwane Municipality

Reaga
Polokwane

**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS (SOCA) BY HIS WORSHIP, THE EXECUTIVE
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF POLOKWANE, CLLR MOSEMA MAKORO JOHN MPE,
ON 24 JUNE 2022 AT JACK BOTES HALL, POLOKWANE**

Madam Speaker, Cllr Wilhemina Modiba,

Council Chief Whip, Cllr Adolf Rapetswa,

Mayors of our local municipalities,

The representatives of the Zion Christian Church, as well as the St. Engenas Zion
Christian Church and the leadership of South African Council of Churches
representing the church,

Beng Mabu, Maaparankwe Bahlomphegi Magoshi a rena,

Fellow Councillors,

Leadership of our glorious movement, the ANC and its Alliance partners,

Leadership of the official opposition, the EFF, and all political parties represented in
Council,

Acting Municipal Manager Mr Ramakuntwane Selepe and your management team,

Representatives of various government departments and entities,

Members and leaders of organised labour, SAMWU and IMATU,

Representatives of vulnerable groupings: youth, women, elderly and people living with
different abilities

Members of the Business Community,

Members of various sporting fraternity

Members of the academia,

The Mpe, Sefara and Molepo families,

As well as my other relatives that are here, this morning

Distinguished members of the media,

Fellow residents of Polokwane who are present in this hall and listening from various
media platforms,

Good morning to all of you! Thobela! Kgotsong!

We are honoured today that we are joined by two children from the Manaka and Mothiba families who tragically lost their mothers in the hands of a serial killer. The three Manaka learners are Karabo who is in Grade 2, Sammy in Grade 8 and Kagisho in Grade 11. They are accompanied by their grandmother Mrs. Cate Manaka. The Mothiba learner from Leshikishiki High School in Ward 1, Lerato Mothiba who also lost her mother from these cruel deeds, is here with her father, Mr Mothiba. You are also acknowledged. We also sadly remember the alleged serial killer who accepted responsibility for killing our women in the previous court appearance in Seshego.

Let me also appreciate that the Siloe School for the Blind, which wanted to send a whole team of 45 learners to come and be guests of the Executive Mayor today. Unfortunately, due to the fact that schools are in recess, they had to send a delegation to come and represent them. These is a grade 6 learner Seipati Seroka who is accompanied by her School principal Mrs Lebelo RA and the educator Mrs Monyela MR.

Let me also acknowledge Muvhango crew as well as other entertainment activists who are here with us this morning.

Once again, good morning to all of you!

Honourable Speaker,

I am indeed privileged to stand here this morning to present the 2022 State of the City Address for Polokwane Municipality, the City of Stars. Please allow me to thank all of you for honouring us with your presence this morning. It is the greatest privilege for me to serve at this challenging time when there is heightened demand for service delivery and economic development. I want to assure you that this is not a task that I take for granted nor lightly. I pledge to serve you without fear or favour and remain the humble servant of the people of this great City, when I took oath. And I believe that

working together we will reclaim victory against persisting challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequalities and build a prosperous future.

Honourable Speaker,

The fundamental message we conveyed to the people of Polokwane at the beginning of our term of Council was that of change. As the greatest philosopher to have ever lived, Karl Marx, once remarked, *“The philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it”*. Accordingly, we aim to achieve meaningful change in this City that impacts positively on the lives of our people.

In the same breath, let me once again extend a hand of friendship and appreciate the willingness to work together with all political parties represented here in Council. For the few months that I have been at the helm as the Executive Mayor, you have proven that you are indeed committed to put aside political differences but work for the common cause of serving people of Polokwane.

I solemnly believe that it is only through robust debates and diverse opinions that you have shown that we are able to progressively build a much better and prosperous City. Like we have said before that we are after all brought together in this council by the common objective of achieving a better life for all the residents.

Let me also pay tribute to all stakeholders, in particular all our traditional leaders who are not just our main stakeholders but co-governors in our various communities. Let me also appreciate the presence of Chief Matsila from the Vhembe district who has join me as my guest. You are welcome.

We all know that unless we work together as various municipalities, we would not be able to achieve our common objective of defeating the demon of poverty and unemployment. In this regard, I want to acknowledge the Executive Mayor of

Capricorn District Municipality, Cllr Mamedupi Teffo and all our local Mayors in the district who have joined us today. We are always together, working to find ways to complement one another.

Let me also acknowledge ordinary men and women, from our rural and urban, rich and poor, and everyone, our cleaners, street hawkers, domestic workers, petrol attendants, taxi operators and the business community for continuing to play their significant role that they play in building, bit by bit, brick by brick, a city of our dreams. Indeed, the slogan *Reaga Polokwane* has been displayed in various ways.

Madam Speaker,

Allow me to also acknowledge that we are in this house today because there are so many of our residents who have heeded to the call to participate in our public participation efforts. They came in large number to have ever seen in Polokwane to make their inputs in ensuring that as we govern, we do govern according to the will of the residents.

Renewed Mandate

Honourable Speaker,

Our experience in local government has given testimony to the words of wisdom uttered by former ANC President Oliver Reginald Tambo when he warned us in 1977 that *"You might think it is difficult to wage a liberation struggle. Wait until you are in power. At that stage you will realize it is actually more difficult to keep power than to wage a liberation war"*.

The people of Polokwane gave us a mandate to lead and provide sustainable basic services; develop infrastructure; achieve local economic recovery; fight poverty; improve our spatial development from that of apartheid; and enhance financial viability.

In response to this, we worked hard to understand the strategic areas and operations of the municipality so that we can come up with a turnaround strategy and be able to perform out political oversight that will steer the municipality towards being self-sufficient and financially resilient.

In our response to this commitment, we embarked on an engagement campaign with various stakeholders and partners of the municipality, both internally and externally including power and water utilities which are Eskom and Lepelle Northern Water. We also undertook working visits to our various Clusters within the municipality. And we want to thank our residents for the positive response. We also visited projects under administration.

Public participation and rapid response approach

We have introduced, as new Council, the Rapid Response public participation whereby the municipality is now more problem solving orientated. We take action on site and immediately resolve our people's issues and challenges. This was an unprecedented approach by this new leadership of the municipality to ensure that we do not come to communities only to listen to you but, as we listen to you, we also have human and other resources to respond to your service queries and challenges immediately. No one can forget those meeting where issues relating to billing, water and electricity were immediately resolved much to the delight of many residents.

Madam Speaker,

I must also emphasise that during these stakeholder's engagement process, change was central message and this is a message that continues unabated. We do so on the premise that, if all of us understands the critical nature of this institution and the hope we carry on our shoulders for the people of this province, then change is inevitable. We have made an assurance to the people of Polokwane that ours is a change for the better and we dare not fail them,

Ka go realo, ke rata go tšea sebaka se, ke leboge badudi ka moka ba Polokwane ge ba kgonne go amogela molaetša wa rena diphetogo le go tla ka bontšhi mo makgotlego a rena go bontšhana le rana tšeo re swanetšego gore re di fetoše. As I have said before, we witnessed the largest numbers of our people coming to the IDP consultation meetings, thereby demonstrating their keen interest in building a better Polokwane together. We dearly thank the people of Polokwane for this commitment. We also accept that the issues raised during these meetings including water, roads and unemployment are very genuine and relevant. And these are the matters that our budget seeks to address.

Customer Care

Madam Speaker,

Ours is change that also encapsulates getting back to a culture of ethical leadership and efficient customer care because the people of Polokwane deserve better – they actually deserve the best. We need serious improvement on our customer care including integration of technology into how we communicate and get feedback from communities. A modern call centre should be at the centre of our customer care strategy.

The community at large has registered its frustrations on the ineffectiveness of the current call centre. The municipality has since done adequate research by ensuring a smart solution is sought to ensure that the citizens are able to interact with the municipality through the convenience of technology.

We will establish a proper integrated call centre that is efficient and effective with proper registration and reference number that goes away when the issue is resolved. We will unveil the introduction of a smart way of resolving our communities' issues in the form of a smart app on your phone where you will report any issue within the municipality.

A seamless exchange of communication is now possible through technology where any matter of service delivery can be uploaded on an app and tracked accordingly. The municipality has already commenced with the procurement processes and the appointment of a credible service provider will be made in the first quarter of the new financial year.

Madam Speaker,

We also understand that change starts with our attitude when interacting with our residents. As mandated by the governing party, the ANC, we can never fail on this renewed service delivery approach.

It is for that matter, ladies and gentlemen and colleagues, that we have inspired our officials to work differently. Like we said during the IDP consultations that we can no longer continue to work in a manner as if we are doing our people a favour. In fact, it is our people that have made us a favour by giving us an opportunity to work for Polokwane and to work for them. And for that, we better not disappoint.

Renewed Vision

Ladies and gentlemen and fellow residents,

We are starting this new Council with a renewed vision to build better communities. And this is the commitment we want the State of the City Address to recommit ourselves to perform and to achieve. This is because when we accepted this responsibility, we made a pledge to demonstrate commitment, collaboration, and collective leadership that is equal to the task at hand. Notwithstanding our challenges, we have made significant inroads towards development, delivering the basic services that are so needed by our communities.

Metro Path

We must continuously remind one another that Polokwane remains the only hope of attaining the vision of having a metropolitan city in Limpopo. It is for that reason that I commit this Council that during this term of office, we will move Polokwane from Grade 5 to 6, thereby realizing our vision of becoming a Metro. We believe that through improved revenue collection, as well as the introduction of smart meters and prepaid system for payment of services, it is possible and doable that the vision of moving Polokwane from Grade 5 to 6 can be achieved. Let me remind our residents that it was the very same Executive Mayor at the district of Capricorn at the time that was able to move our district from Grade 4 to 5. However, I want to emphasise that no single individual possesses the monopoly of wisdom to achieve this.

It is only through collective approach; it's through working together that we can do more. Polokwane remains the socio-economic and political nerve centre of our Province and I believe it is the destination of choice for many and the entire SADEC region for economic opportunities and religious purposes. We remain proud to be the home of Zion Christian Church and the St. Engenas Zion Christian Church. These two biggest churches are hubs of religious tourism as they bring millions of people to our province and City.

We want to take this opportunity once again to appreciate the role that the churches, in particular the Zion Christian Church and the St. Engenas Zion Christian Church and many other churches in our city, are playing in terms of the renewal for moral regeneration and also ensuring that we build a society that is ethical and peaceful.

Like I have said before, unless Polokwane works and give hope to its residents, the province will never have hope for the realisation of a metro. Unless Polokwane works harder and prospers, Limpopo will never prosper. The relationship between our success as Polokwane is quite intertwined with the success of our province. It is true that you will never claim to have visited Limpopo unless you have been to Polokwane.

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow residents,

During consultation with communities and various stakeholders, the people confirmed that whilst a lot has been done since the advent of developmental local government to defeat the injustices of apartheid, a lot still needs to be done to ensure proper financial management and good governance, better roads, deliver clean and reliable water supply, provide proper sanitation and housing, create opportunities for jobs and grow the city's economy. These are our priorities that we have identified for the next five years.

And these priorities were further attested by our people during consultations who said to us that their problems and challenges remain that of water, roads and unemployment.

There are number of major programmes that we are going to drive in order to grow the economy. Part of which include the establishment of eco-estate and creating a special economic zone or industrial park around Polokwane airport.

Local Economic Growth

We have committed to the communities that the municipality will pioneer local economic activities that are geared to enduring the journey in our endeavour to ensure that Polokwane attains the Metropolitan status and positively develops the lives of our communities. This is the commitment that we have made and I believe that, in the leadership of our Council and our administration, we are having men and women who are capable to make us reach that destination and realise the vision of a metro and the first metro in Limpopo.

We are now on the road to new economic growth path as we strive to ensure that our communities are moved out of the poverty line and are participating in the inclusive economy of Polokwane. We must ensure that our supply chain processes support

entrepreneurship development and produce and groom successful business giants in order to undo the injustices of the past and address inequalities.

2022/23 BUDGET

Financial Management

Without proper financial management and without ensuring that the money budget works on what it is budgeted for. Without us rooting out any form of corruption and corrupt elements within our system, without us ensuring that we have the right people for the job, without giving hope to the young graduates; we will not be able to build a Polokwane that is envisaged to be the greener pastures and city of dreams for the Limpopo Province. The best of the best must be the ones who get opportunities to work for this great city.

The budget

I am happy that today as I am delivering the State of the City Address, I am also announcing that Polokwane has passed a budget of R5.1 billion for the 2022/23 financial year. This will increase to around R6 billion in the next two years. Therefore, this puts Polokwane on the right developmental course.

This financial year, Polokwane has registered over R1.7 billion in revenue collection (excluding VAT refunds from SARS). This is short of about R250 million to make the R2 billion threshold for grade 6 cities which are in the Metropolitan grading. We believe that this is within reach and it is possible that we can meet this objective.

We will ensure zero-tolerance to any wastage of funds and escalations of prices with huge difference when it is government that procures. We will also show zero-tolerance to those who unethically and illegally temper with their meters and cause the loss of much needed municipal revenue that is needed to meet our service delivery objectives

Around R900 million or 20% of the 2022/23 financial year's budget is ear marked for capital projects where 88% of the capital budget is allocated to roads, water and sanitation and energy services. This is to ensure that our infrastructure is strengthened in order to deliver the basic services the city requires for growth and improving the lives of our citizens.

Tariffs

Madam Speaker,

It is regrettable that due to global and domestic economic downturn the municipality had to increase its tariffs for water and electricity by 9% and 7.47% respectively while all other services such as rates and taxes were increased by 5.3 % (which is the inflation rate at the time of budget preparation plus 0.5%).

The rate of increase in electricity is in line with the NERSA guidelines while the increase for water services is in line with the increase from the Lepelle Northern Water. The rate of increases will favour our consumers. We are all aware of the huge spike in fuel costs that has spiralled almost out of control of late and has resulted in inflation touching almost 6% at the moment. This is much more than the increase in our tariffs for other services.

We also believe that consumers will be somewhat relieved from the electricity increases of 7.47% as this is almost half of the increase of 15% in the 2021/22 financial year. This is indicative of our continuous consideration of the plight of our consumers when determining the tariffs (in particular water and electricity) as we have done in the past three financial years detailed as follows:

Water tariffs

For the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years, our increases to the consumer for water tariffs was 7,5% as opposed to the increase by the water board of 8,5%. While in the 2021/22 financial year the increase to the consumer was 8,5% in line with the increase from the water board of the same amount with no additional percentage added.

Electricity tariffs

For the 2019/20 financial year, the increase to consumer was 13,07% while the Eskom increase to the municipality was 15,63%. For the 2020/21 financial year, the increase to the consumer was 6.22% while the Eskom increase to the municipality was 8,76% For the 2021/22 financial year, the increase to the consumer was 15% while the Eskom increase to the municipality was 17,8%

Expenditure Category from Operation Budget

The above-inflation increases in the tariffs from Eskom and the water board remains a concern. However, we are exploring cost efficient innovations in the reduction of the Eskom bills such as the use of alternative energy sources (solar) and the use of power banks or energy storage systems.

A research and feasibility study will also be undertaken to explore the possibility of creating a separate water entity under the control of the municipality in the attempt to avoid the current water disruptions experienced by the Lepelle Northern Water. This long-term outlook will ensure that we plan our water requirements and availability well into the future so as to avoid our own Day Zero experienced by other municipalities across the country.

As part of building Polokwane, we will prioritise critical vacancies such as technicians, plumbers and law enforcement and many other that will help speed up provision of

quality services to our communities. We have said before that the people of Polokwane deserve the best and the best is what we will do.

This will also result in the reduction of expenditure incurred in outsourcing these services. Included in this initiative is the planned temporary appointment of artisans freshly qualified from higher learning institutions. This will ensure employment and the much-needed transfer of skills to these students who require skills to empower their careers.

Around 29% of operational budget goes to employee costs, around 23% goes to bulk purchases such as Eskom and Lepelle Northern Water, around 21% goes to contracted services, around 12% goes to non cash items such as depreciation and debt impairments whilst the rest goes to other expenditure such as fuel and inventory.

Indigent Support

We continue to assist the destitute. Provision is made in the operating budget for the subsidizing of indigent households to around R270 million. This subsidy includes a free 6Kl of water, 100 units of electricity, a 100% subsidy for refuse removal and sewerage charges. A 100% rebate on assessment rates will also be given for Indigent households.

Audit Improvement Outcomes

The municipality remains committed in improving the audit outcomes for the 2021/22 financial year. To achieve this objective, the municipality has implemented the following measures:

- Appointment of 3 qualified Chartered Accountants
- Preparation of interim annual financial statements
- Commencement of an interim audit by the AGSA
- Implementation of an audit action plan through weekly meetings

Revenue Protection Unit

The RPU had been established since 2019 and the impact thereof can be seen by the consistent credit control and revenue collections relative to the budget.

For the current financial year our revenue collections have exceeded the budget by R208 million or 10% more than anticipated as we remain committed in applying our policies through our credible billing system that was implemented in 2019.

What is of concern is the number of illegal electricity and water connections perpetrated by households and businesses. In the endeavour to protect our revenue sources, the unit has been utilizing technology and data analytics to monitor and identify with accuracy meter tempering or bridging by both households and businesses.

This smart technological approach has resulted in the identification of over 300 bridged meters and still counting. Hefty penalties have been levied as per Council approved by laws.

The municipality will continue to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to meter tempering and we encourage the community at large to avoid this unethical practice immediately. Other strategies include the cash flow strategy introduced last year October which will further enhance our cash flow position going forward.

Key financial achievements

Spending of conditional grants of 93% was achieved at the end of the financial year as opposed to the 91% achieved in the prior financial year.

The Municipality has awarded contracts to the value in excess of R603 million (R603 987 836.50 to be exact) as at 31st December 2021, which are single and multi –year Projects.

The SCM Forward Planning in terms of Demand Management has been improved. The major Projects which relate to the current year were advertised well in advance in the previous financial year.

Revenue Collection

The low rate of collection and unfavourable socio-economic conditions of households and businesses, mainly due to the COVID pandemic, have weakened the capability of municipalities to sustain themselves in the provision of services from the available financial resources. However, we still have to ensure that we align our planning to include innovative ways of revitalizing our financial sustainability in order to deliver the required services. Polokwane Municipality is not immune to economic difficulties experienced nationally and globally. As a result, financial prudence is needed.

Debt Incentive Scheme

The COVID-19 pandemic has had serious financial consequences on many members of the community. Although the municipality has introduced a system of arrangement that lessens the financial burden of consumers, a distinct debt incentive scheme will be introduced in the first quarter of the new financial year to assist with lessening the burden for consumers.

The scheme will be conditional on certain criteria where all will benefit especially those that are most financially distressed. The scheme will be opened for a limited period and extensive communication will be conducted once the scheme is approved by Council. We encourage all consumers to register on time to take advantage of this once-off programme.

In this regard I want to thank all the residents who always pay for their services on time. It is what makes us a better city and better municipality within the province. We

cannot be the number one revenue collecting municipality if our residents don't pay for the services. We believe that more and more residents particularly here in the city and Seshego, including Westernburg, are inspiring those residents in Mankweng and Sebayeng who still do not pay for their services.

The more services are being paid, is the more we will reinvest the utilisation of the revenue to implement projects that improves their living conditions. We have made a commitment that where people pay, we will tar more streets, make sure that the lights are on and that other services are better. It is only through revenue that we can improve the operation, maintenance services.

This coming year we will be introducing a system of street lights that will ensure that those who are keen on vandalising and stealing our infrastructure will no longer find cables to steal. We will be introducing built-in solar street light and apollo lights through the residential areas.

Audit Outcomes

Honourable Speaker,

We remain committed to improve the municipality's audit opinion from qualified to unqualified and eventually to clean audit.

This undertaking is backed by clear steps that we have already taken which include the fact that for the first time in Polokwane, we have prepared the nine-months interim annual financial statement. And we have called the Auditor-General to audit us before the real auditing season. We also recently appointed another Chartered Accountant in a form of Deputy CFO, Mr. Thabo Nonyane from Capricorn District Municipality who has helped our district to achieve to consecutive clean audits.

(Deputy CFO, Mr. Thabo Nonyane whom we believe will enhance the capacity of the finance team under the CFO. He brings colourful experience and achievements of clean audit outcome at Capricorn District Municipality.)

Secondly, we have engaged and agreed with the Auditor General to undertake an interim audit and our Management is hard at work in ensuring that all matters AG raised in the previous audit are resolved. On the other hand, we have appointed additional two members of the Audit Committee to close existing vacancies with the view to strengthen the work of the Audit Committee and one of those two, Mr. Ngobeni who is a chartered Accountant has also been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Audit. With these measures, we look forward to improved Audit.

Further to aspiring to deliver improved audit we are hard at work to reposition the financial state of our municipality through cash strategy that we have introduced. We have also made sure that management adhere to the principles of these strategies which is basically to implement their programmes within the set allocations per month. This will make the municipality to recover from the current dire financial strains.

Anti-Corruption

The biggest disappointment for our communities will be if we allow corruption, fraud and nepotism activities to continue taking place in the municipality without taking steps against the perpetrators. It is our firm belief that corruption remains the enemy of the people. You will be aware that we have already instituted disciplinary actions against those who have been fingered by Auditor-General. We have already introduced consequence management and committed to a zero-tolerance approach against fraud, corruption, maladministration and nepotism. We are serious about running a clean municipality.

When we started with the disciplinary action, there were those who felt very strongly that they are probably going home and decided to resign.

I want to assure residents that it is not that Makoro started chasing the people away when he joined the municipality.

The truth of the matter is that when we came in, we started implementing consequence management that those found on the wrong side of the law must account for their wrong deeds. As you have seen, we have witnessed many deciding to jump ship. However, our commitment remains that as we will be embarking upon forensic investigation of certain areas within municipality, those who are found to be on the wrong side of the law, will not be off the hook. They will still be recalled through the justice system to account for their wrongdoings to our municipality.

I want to commit to the residents, I know that I have a backing of the Council as a whole, that we will investigate any wrong-doing. If there are those who believe that they will continue with what they have been doing; we have made them aware that all those wrong things that have been associated with the brand Polokwane – such a remarkable city – must think twice because we will be at the forefront of fighting against and eliminating all those bad things within our system. There is only one choice – it is either you comply with the principles of ethical leadership or you make way for those seeking employment in their large numbers and seeking to serve our people with honesty and integrity.

Pressure on Infrastructure

Madam Speaker,

Polokwane is indeed a remarkable city Its geographical position and as the capital city of the Limpopo Province makes it a calabash of rich diversity and recreational activities that makes it a place, we are proud to call home. It is for that reason all of us must be proud to be residents of this great city. We must be proud to call Polokwane our home. This has attracted many people from elsewhere in the province and outside the province to come to Polokwane in search for economic opportunities and a place to

reside. According to Stats SA, the population of Polokwane has more than doubled in the past years.

Unfortunately, this rapid increase in the population size has come with a number of challenges for the city, particularly the development of the infrastructure required to support this increase in population and growth.

It is for that matter, amongst others, which include the fact that when Polokwane was built, it was not built for all of us but the selected few.

Madam Speaker,

I now have a privilege to focus on the public infrastructure that we have been building over the past financial years and what we will still build in the coming financial year.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Honourable Speaker,

With regards to By-Law Enforcement and Security there are various activities that have been undertaken through CCTV Cameras and the Safer City Project. In 2020/2021, the municipality was nominated by National Commissioner of Police as a pilot amongst other 10 cities in the country to implement the Safer City Project. Council has endorsed the Safer City Project and committed to ensure its successful implementation.

In addition to the increase of by-law enforcement officers that I have alluded to, this financial year we will embark on a programme of increasing CCTV cameras across the city. This will ensure that we are able to monitor the movement of people and criminals who steal and vandalise our infrastructure. Next time when you are around town just know that we are watching you. This is part of our programme to build a safer

city and to allow people to reclaim their streets and reclaim their nights. It must be safe to walk and drive in at any time in Polokwane.

The effective functioning of our 93 CCTV Cameras is key to the success of this project. To give this project impetus, R2.6 million has been allocated to ensure continuous maintenance of the cameras. Further amount of R1.5 million is allocated for expansion programme of putting CCTV cameras in more intersections, which in this case will be 9 (nine) Cameras. This project will bring us into strong partnership with the private sector and the SAPS in combating crime within the city.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Honourable Speaker,

Former President Nelson Mandela reminds us that *“Sport has the power to overcome old divisions and create the bond of common aspirations”*. Guided by his words as the municipality we are all out to ensure that there are adequate sports facilities which will serve to open doors for our people to be involved in sport of their choice.

Softball Stadium

Honourable Speaker,

Limpopo is the home of softball and to demonstrate support to this stated truth, Polokwane Municipality has received funding from Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) through the UIDG to design and construct an international softball stadium over the next 3 years. This is the first international softball pitch in the country. The five-diamond softball stadium forms part the drive to position Polokwane as a world-class sporting hub. This stadium has been positioned to be close to other sports facilities such as netball courts, rugby fields and two soccer stadiums in that area. For the 2021/2022 financial year R30 million was budgeted and it raised the stadium from

ground zero to progress level where the diamond shape of the facility is visible and admirable. For the coming financial year R21.7 million is allocated to ensure that we progress towards completion of the project. This is a multiyear project.

Other Sports facilities which are allocated budget for construction or refurbishment are as follows:

- Ext 44/78 Sports and Recreation Facility (R6.9m)
- Construction of Sebayeng/Dikgale Sports Complex (R1.1m)
- Construction of Mankweng Stadium (R8.6m)

Peter Mokaba Stadium Activities

Honourable Speaker,

The existence of various facilities in the municipality should serve to attract major events that have great potential to boost the city's economy. Already, for Peter Mokaba Stadium we have Marumo Gallants as they are using it for the DSTV Premier League Soccer Matches.

We just received commitment from Sekhukhune United that as from this year they will relocate from Tembisa to play their home Premier Leagues games at Peter Mokaba Stadium. As if that is not enough, we have just received commitment from Moroka Swallows – out of my interaction – with the owner Mr. Mogashoa. We have received a written commitment that during the next league season, Swallows Football club will play their major games with big clubs like Kaizer Chiefs, Orlando Pirates and Sundowns here at Peter Mokaba stadium.

These developments are a clear demonstration that our city has capacity to host events which will contribute to social cohesion and most importantly grow the city's local economy. As you would be aware, tomorrow the city is hosting Annual Mayoral

Marathon which it is envisaged that it will attract close to 2000 runners. As from next year, this marathon will be rebranded Polokwane City Marathon and no longer Polokwane Mayoral Marathon as the aim is to promote the city and not the Mayoral Office. On Sunday there is a Boxing Tournament to be hosted in Meropa. Lastly, in October 2022 all Municipalities across the country will be assembling in Polokwane for their annual municipal games.

These events and many others that are taking place in Polokwane will inject life into the city and create more opportunities to ordinary people who are making an honest living like our street vendors and many others who rely on the informal economy for their survival.

Lastly on sports, I would like to congratulate Magazi Football Club which is from the Municipality for ascending to Glad Africa Championships after it reached the final of the ABC Motsepe League play-offs.

I must say that we remain committed to work with Baroka and Polokwane City football clubs for them to reclaim their glory days. We will continue to support them by ensuring that they continue to use our facilities whilst they are in the first division.

We will continue to position our city to be the Provincial Centre of sports activities and programmes as we embark on this journey of building Polokwane.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Madam Speaker,

Polokwane provides conventional waste collection services in urban areas that include the city, Seshego, Mankweng and Sebayeng. However, we are aware that areas such as Indian Centre and other parts within the Inner-City area do not represent the dream city we want in terms of cleanliness.

It is in our plan for this coming financial year to pull massive cleanness campaign which will continuously involve Taxi Associations, Hawkers, Councillors, Ward Committees, Civil Society organisations and churches to ensure we reclaim the cleanness of the City. With this effort in place, I want to assure that I will be taking the lead to ensure that we clean the city and protect the environment. Further we will conduct education and awareness to empower our communities to understand their responsibilities in terms of handling the waste they generate.

We also want to warn those who are indulging in illegally dumping waste across the municipal area that our law enforcement team will be on the lookout for them to ensure maximum compliance with our Waste Management By-laws.

During our IDP consultations our rural communities have also expressed their frustrations about lack of effective waste management services in their areas.

We fully share their concerns as at the moment only 51 rural villages receive weekly communal waste collection service. We are hard at work to improve the rural waste services hence already we have constructed the following Transfer Stations which are currently fully operating:

- Mangaka Transfer Station just outside Mmotong Wa Perekisi
- Vaal Kop Transfer Station
- Dikgale Transfer Station
- Makotopong Transfer Station

At the beginning of this financial year 2021/22, we also opened a massive rural Landfill Site which was constructed for R25 million in Aganang Cluster. In the coming financial year, the construction of Molepo Transfer Station will commence and it is budgeted at R5.2 million. We will also purchase two (2) waste compactors at R4.3 million in an effort to build internal capacity to render waste management services with our own trucks and employees and eventually fully phase out contracted services. This information I am sharing represents and demonstrates the municipality's commitment to expand waste management to rural areas. We call on rural communities to fully use

these facilities and also to take care of them and protect them from the scourge of vandalism and theft.

Poor participation and interest by the general public in waste management best practices or adverse matters such as illegal dumping of waste, building rubble, littering in river banks, open spaces and along the streets, stealing and vandalism of waste equipment such as bins, No Dumping Boards and skip containers to sell at scrap yards is a serious concern that requires all of us to act on. Such behaviour must be condemned at all cost to ensure that we all contribute to building a Polokwane that we are proud of.

WATER SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Madam Speaker,

Meetse ke bophelo! Water is the most important resource to encourage both social and economic development within communities. Through concerted effort there has been improvement in the provision of infrastructure for this basic service in the municipal area at and above RDP standard. During the IDP consultations our communities ranked water as number one service delivery priority and called on us to be responsive to the challenges they are facing in most areas where there is no reliable water supply.

URBAN WATER SUPPLY – GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT

Madam Speaker,

To advance our short-term intervention on our water challenges, the municipality is currently advancing massive ground water development programmes and the progress of the projects is at advanced stage.

The scope of work has allowed for the implementation of the projects to collect, treat and distribute water from newly identified groundwater resources to existing storage reservoirs located within the Polokwane Urban Complex (Polokwane, Seshego and Perskebult). A total volume of **19,8 Mℓ/day** will be supplied under average flow conditions from the identified groundwater resources to the Krugersburg, Potgieter, Doornkraal, Seshego and Perskebult reservoirs while peak flow conditions of approximately **35,8 Mℓ/day** would be achieved.

The scope of work includes the equipping and upgrading of **67 boreholes** (Sterkloop boreholes, Sandriver South boreholes, Sandriver North Boreholes, Bloodriver Boreholes, Pilgrimshoop boreholes, Seshego boreholes, Polokwane individual boreholes), pumping mains from the boreholes to two new water treatment plants at Sandriver North and Seshego, two new water treatment plants (Combined design capacity of treatment works is 26 Mℓ/day with a Peak flow capability of 35,8Mℓ/day).

These projects are in an advanced stage of implementation and although there have been delays largely due to the COVID19 pandemic, their completion is expected in the first quarter of the new financial year (August/September 2022/2023). A budget of **R15 million** is set aside to complete the work in the new financial year.

These projects received massive funding from Water Services Infrastructure Grant and Regional Bulk Infrastructure Gant over the MTREF and their progress is as follows:

- Sand River North Treatment Works, **R151 643 977** and progress is at 79%
- Seshego Water Treatment Works, **R190 391 610** and progress is at 85%
- Sterkloop and Sandriver South Wellfield Development, **R88 959 047** and Distribution 98%
- Sandriver North Wellfield and Polokwane boreholes development and distribution, **R108 569 458** and progress is at 93%

- Bloodriver Wellfield and Seshego boreholes development and distribution, **R75 390 102** and progress is 98%

URBAN BULK WATER SUPPLY

Alongside the short-term measures already we are rolling out medium term strategy which reinforces our resolve to have Polokwane water challenges being history in one of the good days in the future.

Medium term interventions to improve water supply to Polokwane Urban and Rural communities will include upgrading of the Lepelle Northern Water (LNW) infrastructure (Olifantspoort Water Scheme and Ebenezer Water Scheme), to convey available and additional surface water to Polokwane Local Municipality. LNW requires and estimated **R13 billion** for upgrades to existing infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure to supply an estimated additional 30ML/day to Polokwane Local Municipality.

We want to appreciate the recent allocation of over **R1,4 billion** to Lepelle Northern Water. This will ensure that we increase our much-needed water sources both at Olifantspoort and Ebenezer water schemes. In this regard, we want to thank President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa for heeding to our request of making this project a priority for this financial year.

The long-term solutions to our challenges which will add to both short-term and medium-term measures are currently led by Department of Water and Sanitation. This includes the proposed private public partnership with mining water users, the department and all affected municipal water authorities.

Rural Water Supply

To give dedicated focus to each and every cluster on rural water supply, Polokwane Municipality has been sub-divided into 16 RWS and each scheme is allocated budget either for planning or implementation for water reticulation each financial year to improve the rate of water supply in rural areas and reduce the backlog in households with access to water. To that effect; Molepo and Chuene-Maja Water Treatment Plants are complete at a combined cost of **R65 million** to provide additional 6 Ml/day to the community. Chuene/ Maja plant has been restored after theft and vandalism of infrastructure took place and further plans are in place to install PLCs and a SCADA system for ease of use and monitoring.

The pump station in Matobole has been upgraded and is successfully reticulating water to Bergnek, Marulaneng, Ga-Mothiba, NareLetsoalo. A **3 mega litre** reservoir is currently in progress in Tjataneng village which will store water for distribution to the various villages in the vicinity. The additional water will benefit **10 544 Households** in Chuene Maja RWS.

Various other projects in the Moletjie East, Houtriver Regional water schemes have been completed in this financial year, but have been affected by vandalism and theft of infrastructure.

The delays in the electrification of boreholes are also a contributing factor in not getting adequate supply of water to the communities. These are matters that we are engaging ESKOM with a view to resolve them.

Madam Speaker,

For the 2022/2023 financial year a total budget of **R162 million** is allocated to Water and Sanitation as well as reticulation of sewer. The following projects are the highlight of some of the projects that will be implemented:

- Agananang RWS phase 3 (Ramalapa, Mashamaite, Makgodu and Mars (**R30.3 million**))
- Segwasi RWS (**R5.4 million**)
- Olifants Rws (Mmotong wa Perekisi phase 2 (**R6.9 million**))
- Mothapo RWS (**R6.9 million**)
- Chuene Maja RWS phase 10 (**R6.9 million**)
- Sebayeng/Dikgale RWS (**R4.3 million**)

We have no doubt that these projects will make a difference in the lives of our people and their communities and will restore their dignity.

Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant

As part of Phase 2, a contractor was appointed for construction of earthworks for the regional wastewater plant. The project was completed in March 2021 at a cost of **R118 million**. The tender for Civil, Mechanical & Electrical has been advertised and the construction is expected to commence in the second quarter of 2022/23 FY. The estimated construction value for the civil works is approximately **R400 million**. Our intention is in the end to relieve the current waste water treatment plant found in Ladanna and ensure that the smell is actually a thing of the past.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT - EXISTING WASTEWATER PLANT

We will also be finalising Polokwane Wastewater Treatment Works which has a design capacity of 26 Ml/day and it has been overloaded with the increase in population and increase in development.

RURAL SANITATION

Madam Speaker,

A total of 920 VIP toilets has been allocated in the current 2021/2022 financial year and the implementation was undertaken under Aganang Cluster. A budget of approximately **R62 million** has been allocated for the 2022/23 FY to provide about 3500 VIP toilets. This will continue to make impact in improving lives of our rural communities.

I have requested the Water and Sanitation to explore the possibilities of ensuring that where there is water, we do not continue to do VIP toilets but we implement projects that ensure that even rural households receive flushing toilets.

ROADS AND STORM WATER

Construction of proper and long-lasting roads remains the backbone of our economy. This is why we have decided to change our strategy on construction of our roads and to that effect we will focus on tarring of key economic roads which have high traffic volume, pave priority roads with reasonably low traffic volume which will result in inter – connectivity of our villages for convenient travel of our communities. We are phasing out regravelling, which was implemented through contracted services. It is our considered view that there is no value for money on this method of road construction as during rainy season it gets washed away and therefore not durable. Any form of regravelling will be done at small scale through our internal road maintenance teams. As we have said before, paving of our roads will create much more needed jobs but also ensure that we buy these bricks locally which will also create secondary jobs for our people.

As Polokwane, in the previous years we upgraded roads from gravel to tar in various clusters for example in Luthuli in Seshego, Makanye Road (Ga-Thoka), Ntsime to Sefateng and access roads to Maja, Moshate and Molepo, Chuene Maja cluster phase 3. Furthermore, the following internal streets in Seshego Zone 8, Toronto, Mankweng unit E (Vukuphile), Excelsior in Mankweng Unit A, Seshego Zone 2, Seshego Zone 3,

Seshego Zone 4, Seshego Zone 6, Seshego Zone 5 and Seshego Zone 1 were also upgraded successfully.

There was also a project to upgrade storm-water system in the municipal area and another project to rehabilitate streets in Seshego through the Vukuphile project and also to upgrade traffic lights and signs and installation of road signage. Another key project was the construction of None Motorised Trunk at Ditlou, Freedom, Zondi Maphanga, Kgoro, Realeboga and Braamfisher Streets in Seshego.

The total km roads upgraded from gravel to tar in 2019/20 financial year in Seshego, Mankweng, Molepo and Sebayeng clusters is 27.98km. The total rehabilitation of streets in Seshego cluster is 2.5km, total regravelling in Aganang, Moletjie, Seshego, Dikgale, Mankweng and Molepo is 97.6km. The total grading of roads in Aganang, Moletjie, Seshego, City, Dikgale, Mankweng and Molepo) is 904.3km. These highlights our achievements in the past financial years.

Madam Speaker,

In the financial year 2022/2023 we will continue to deliver roads infrastructure to our communities both in rural and urban areas of the city, which we believe will position us to attract more investments that will promote the much-needed economic growth. The council has approved **R230 million** to ensure that our task to build road infrastructure rolls out with much more impetus. The budget is drawn from Capital Reserve Replacement (CRR), Integrated Urban Development Grant (IUDG) and Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG).

The following projects highlight just few of the many projects we are going to implement:

Rehabilitation of the city project: Rehabilitation of Burger Street from Hospital Street to Suid Street (**R1.7 million**), Rehabilitation of Compensate from Rissik Street to Suid

Street (**R869 thousand**), Rehabilitation of build Suid Street from De Wet Street to Webster Street (**R1.3 million**), Rehabilitation of Macdonald from Boshoff to Suid (**R2.2m**) **Tarring of roads in various clusters:** Upgrading of road D3432 from Ga-Mosi (Gilead Road) via Sengatane to Chebeng in Ward 6 (**R3.8 million**), upgrading of road from Mohlonong to Kalkspruit (**R6.9 million**)

The institution of traditional leadership plays an important role in developmental matters affecting local communities as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. on that note, traditional leaders made an input on the prioritisation of some of the road projects during the Magoshi Forum, this as part of the Municipality's strategic planning and service delivery efforts. The City listened and the following projects are earmarked for implementation in the 2022/23 financial year because of their valuable input:

- Upgrading of approximately 2.0km arterial road in Ga-Rampheri connecting to Ga-Mothapo D4032 of at a cost of R7 million
- Upgrading of approximately 2.05km access road from Ga-Thaba in Molepo/Chuene/Maja cluster at cost of R7.9 million
- Upgrading of approximately 0.7km Boshega to Tshebela, Boyne Road at a cost of R7.0 million
- Upgrading of approximately 0,6km access road from gravel to tar Subiaco via Noko to Mountain View at a cost of R6.0 million

Paving of internal roads to University Road in Toronto in Mankweng (**R6 million**), Paving of Aki Street in RDP Section SDA1(**R5 million**), Paving of internal street connecting 137th and Helen Joseph Roads in Seshego Zone 8 (**R6 million**), Paving of Internal Street in Utjane to D3363 in Ward 40 (**R5.3 million**), Paving of internal street in Moletjie Ga Hlahla (**R5.2 million**), Paving of internal street from Solomondale to D3997 in Ward 32 (**R6 million**), Paving of road in Ga Thoka from reservoir to Ga Makanye in Ward 29 (**R6.5 million**)

As part of multi-year project implementation, planning on some of the projects will be undertaken in the 2022/23 financial year.

- Paving of internal streets in Molepo/Maja/Chuene cluster (approximately 0.1km at Phuti D4032 connecting to the Bakgaga Ba Mothapo Traditional Authority offices) at a cost of R940,241.00
- Upgrading of road from Silicon to Matobole at a cost of R700.000.00
- Paving of internal streets at Mankgaile, gaMokoatedi to D4040 until Ga-Rachidi at a cost of R600,000.00

Implementation of the above projects bears evidence of a carrying government, one that values the critical role played by traditional leaders in local government development and governance.

As part of our commitment to have our own yellow fleet which will ensure we grade our roads which are not yet tarred or paved **R13 million** is budgeted for the purchase of three (3) graders and two (2) TLB`s. This will directly benefit our rural clusters. Again, in the outer years we will impress on the council to provide more budget to continue to build capacity in terms of our yellow fleet to enhance service delivery.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR LEETO LA POLOKWANE

We have also sought to improve our transport infrastructure to provide great experience and smooth ride in Leeto La Polokwane. I think colleagues are aware that Leeto la Polokwane has now started to improve its ridership numbers – from the buses that were running empty for few months to buses that are always full in serving our communities. Our people are growing confidence in this service and we are proud and we commit to improve and improve.

The key infrastructure that should ensure effective and smooth operations of our buses is still under construction and in certain instances it has experienced delay from non-performing service providers. The construction of the bus station at General Joubert

Street next to Shoprite Checkers and the Depot in Zone 8 suffered major delays due to non-performance of the contractors, which led to the termination of one for the depot due the dismal failure to construct the project. To continue with historic task of building the infrastructure for our buses **R120 million** has been allocated from Public Transport Network Grant (PTNG).

Madam Speaker,

This allocation will see the following projects continuing with implementation, which constitute a sample of the whole lot under that will be implemented:

- Construction of Bus Station upper Structure at General Joubert Street (R20m)
- Widening of Sand River Bridge Trunk (R33m)
- Upgrade and Construction of Trunk Route WP1 (R12.6m)
- Construction of bus depot Civil Works WP3 (R13)
- Construction and provision of Bus Depot Upper Structure in Seshego (R20.2m)

OPERATIONS OF LEETO LA POLOKWANE

Madam Speaker,

Leeto La Polokwane will become a more effective transportation system and a catalyst for economic development in the next five (5) years.

Effective transportation is one of the key ingredients in the City's drive towards realisation of metro status. Meanwhile, the fundamental objective of the government's implementation of Integrated Public Transport Networks (IPTNs), is to ensure that the commuters have a reliable transport system thus to transform the public transport sector and integrate various modes of transport. Polokwane has successfully implemented Phase 1A of its IPTN, named Leeto La Polokwane.

The City and Esilux company continue striving to ensure that the system delivers to the customers on its promise of a safe, reliable and convenient transport system.

As part of future expansion, plans include implementation of Phase 1B, covering the rest of Flora Park, Nirvana/Westernburg and Seshego routes which is earmarked to complete the planned full Phase 1.

Madam Speaker,

As I alluded above the bus operations began at a slow pace with very low passenger numbers. By November 2021 the busses ferried less than 120 passengers per day. However, eight (8) months later the bus service has been growing with increasing passenger numbers observed daily averaging 1 200 passengers per day. We anticipate that the ridership will continue to grow as part of the newly Council-approved Leeto La Polokwane Turnaround Strategy which focuses on improving ridership by among others increasing bus stops, route optimization and meeting our customer needs. The issue of empty busses is now a matter of the past.

We would like to thank Leeto La Polokwane passengers for their continued support and we urge those residents who have not yet used Leeto La Polokwane to come and “Journey with us”. It is also important to thank our citizens for constant feedback about the performance of Leeto La Polokwane. When the buses were running empty you came out strong to say that cannot happen under your watch. To that effect we listened hence today we are sharing this statistical information which demonstrates remarkable improvement. Once again, we thank you.

In the same breath, the community should be aware of the challenges of Leeto La Polokwane. As we celebrate the improvement of the operations of the busses, we are equally disturbed that we still have buses (Twelve (12) nine (9) meter) buses that have not been delivered but paid for. We will in due course embark on disciplinary action or investigation to find out how or why were the busses paid for in advance without any

assurance or security for the people of Polokwane's money. While we want to expand this service, we will not leave any stone unturned to address the wrong doing with regard to Leeto La Polokwane. We will not rest until we have launched a full investigation in this matter and other related matters that stand as improper deeds by those involved.

It is also our intention that the bus system must expand to areas such as Mankweng and Moria so that as people go to church and to the university, they can have access. This will also ensure that as the community commutes to work the busses could assist with alleviating the traffic congestion at Dalmada area by encouraging people to use the busses.

ENERGY SERVICES

Polokwane Municipality distributes Electricity within the City and Seshego only. The rest of the rural portion including the two townships, Mankweng and Solomondale are in Eskom license area. The Electrification projects are funded by Integrated National Electrification Programme (INEP). Due to the strategic geographical location of Polokwane municipality, and the fact that Polokwane is the capital city of the Limpopo province, the growth of the population and urbanization affected the process of electrification as villages closer to the city grew massively, making the target for access to electricity a difficult one. This resulted in adopting a priority list on how villages had to follow each other, which brought about fairness.

ELECTRIFICATION PROJECTS

Rural electrification is one of the most challenging areas as currently Eskom is experiencing major capacity challenges in rural Polokwane. To that effect out of 140 villages, only eight (8) can be connected in the current and next financial year. A report was sent to council for allowing electrification to take place only to those villages that have capacity. Going forward it is important that our identification of the energy

projects be aligned to the capacity of Eskom, which is what has been started in conjunction with Eskom.

We are engaging with the National Government with the view to have two forms of electricity – the one that we buy from Eskom and the other that we will generate in partnership with independent power producers in order for us to address the problem of capacity at Eskom.

During the 2019/20 financial year, a total of 2 172 homes in Boikhutsong Phase 2, Saaiplaas, Cloedsdam and a portion of Extension 78 were electrified. 857 homes were electrified in Boikhutsong Phase 2 in Mankweng. This was one of the projects that was delayed by a number of stoppages by the community until they were interdicted to allow the project to be finished and for the community to enjoy electricity in their homes. In the city cluster, 617 households were electrified to cover half of Extension 78 during the 2019 financial year. A project to cover the remaining 440 households is currently underway and almost at completion stage.

For the current 2021/22 financial year the municipality is implementing the following projects:

- 455 households in Seshego Ext 133
- 202 households in Ga-Thaba
- 66 households in Feke/Matshane
- 1089 households in Boikhutjong phase3
- 440 households in Extension 78

Other projects include electrification of urban household in Extension 40.

Solar Water Geysers

We are also embarking on solar water geysers as part of the energy savings. Additional offer of 6000 units received from Department of Minerals and Energy and

currently 5080 units have been delivered and waiting for 1020 units to be delivered. We will target both the poor and middle-income households for free solar geysers in the coming years.

OTHER ENERGY PROJECTS

Public Lights

We have a mandate to distribute a reliable and uninterrupted electricity service in our license area, in this case the City and Seshego. Further, in addition to that, the municipality has high mast lights in the Eskom Licensed area wherein the maintenance is carried out by the municipality. In its licensed area again, the municipality is responsible for public lighting and traffic Lights which the maintenance section is responsible for keeping them in a working condition.

Illumination of public spaces remains one of our priority areas. During the 2019/20 financial year 25 high mast lights were installed with a budget of **R10 million**. Out of these, only 12 were energised and 13 still awaiting to be energised due to Eskom capacity issues. Approximately **R3 million** has been allocated for high mast lights for the current financial year. This figure has been increased to **R5 million** during 2022/23 year.

Most of the electrical infrastructure has to be replaced to increase its capacity to be able to provide sustainable supply of energy to the city. Approximately **R63 million** has been allocated for this function between 2019 and 2021.

These include flagship capital projects like the construction of the Bakone Substation and installation and replacement of other critical infrastructure across our substations.

Madam Speaker,

Council has approved **R109 million** to ensure we continue to build capacity and strengthen our electricity distribution within the City. The following projects are a sample of the overall work we have to discharge on electrification:

- Install New Bakone to IOTA 66kv double Circuit GOAT line (**R26 million**)
- Build 66kv Bakone Substation (**R17.3 million**)
- Install bulk Supply power to new Pietersburg Switching station (**R10.4 million**)
- New Pietersburg 11kv switching Station Phase 2 (**R15.9 million**)
- Electrification of Urban Households in Extension 40 (**R9.6 million**)

THEFT AND VANDALISM OF MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Honourable Speaker,

Polokwane is under siege from theft and vandalism of critical infrastructure such as street light cables and pole covers that are removed and sold as scrap metal in exchange for cash by criminal elements. In some instances, the thieves switch off circuit breakers to be able to carry out their nocturnal activities when the lights are off. The theft has escalated to street meter boxes which are being removed for exchange of cash at scrap metal. On continuous basis and at a heavy cost, the municipality energy team tirelessly carry out the required maintenance and repairs to ensure that electricity supply to the citizens of this great city is sustained despite these challenges.

We are proud of our By-law enforcement response team for the sterling work they have done to curb this scourge since March 2022. This team has been patrolling every night since March and they have been able to arrest about 12 suspects since the start of their patrols to date and handed them over to the police. If it was not of their intervention and hard work our City would be stripped of all cables in critical economic centres such as industrial areas.

We encourage them to do more and perform to their ultimate best. We are moving with speed to increase their capacity in terms of recruitment of additional law enforcement in the next two months. All scrap metals within the city are called upon to work with the municipality and the police to rid our City of these elements

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

We are quite aware that part of the problem in Polokwane remain that of mushrooming of unplanned and uncontrolled settlements primarily in the rural areas and privately owned farms which create serious challenge in terms of ensuring that services and infrastructure are being provided.

Madam Speaker,

Our intention with housing or human settlement is to take advantage of the second level accreditation to improve provision of house. I have also directed the Polokwane Housing Association and our housing department to explore new ways of building RDP houses. This will include building high density structures like townhouses or flats that goes up as opposed to the common RDP houses that we are used to. This will assist with curbing backrooms that results in high consumption of water and electricity that is a common challenge. It will also deal with the issue of land use and the available space.

The Municipality has successfully installed all engineering services with the assistance of the Department of COGHSTA for Polokwane extension 133, 134, 126 and 127 and Extension 40 in order to eradicate the informal settlement by relocating and allocation of sites in the formal township as well as reducing the housing backlog. In all of the above townships, top structures (RDP houses) have already been built except extension 126 and 127 that is currently been in the relocation process.

Polokwane Ext 78 (Disteneng)

The transformation of Disteneng or Ext 78 from an inhabitable area where our community suffered under inhabitable conditions to what is now what the community there can call home, is one of our good stories to tell about restoring the dignity of our people. Already 1425 RDP were allocated in 2019\20 which has made the area a fully-fledged residential area. The Municipality has already begun with the development of the sporting facility in the area, which will serve to provide the young people in the area with opportunity to play soccer and other sporting codes and above all it will serve as tool for social cohesion.

Approximately one thousand seven hundred (1700) beneficiaries were re-settled on formally demarcated sites. The remaining households were relocated to a holding area in Ext 106. Engineering services were installed and now these residents are being relocated to properly established township with installed engineering services at Ext 126 and 127 in the Seshego area. Basic engineering services like water and sanitation are being installed. All these efforts are meant to reclaim the dignity and pride of our people under the democratic government.

Polokwane Ext 133

Polokwane Ext 133 in Seshego is another approved project with almost three thousand (3000) sites with 1184 for RDP and Gap 1509 and high income 284 which was approved for the benefit of the people of wards 11, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 37 for residential and other land use purposes. To date, approximately 1184 Breaking New Ground sites were allocated and engineering for the township complete. Approximately 350 homes have been built on the RDP sites and additional allocation for about 900 top structures already constructed. Basic engineering services like water and sanitation are being installed. The living conditions of our people must on continuous basis change for better.

Polokwane Ext 134

Polokwane X 134 was approved for the integrated sustainable human settlement. It will have approximately 1399 BnG sites to address the backlog prior 2009 as approved by the Council. The GAP and high income with an allocation of 1163 housing will be released as soon as possible to address the beneficiaries within the data base and are earning between R 3500 and R15000.

Polokwane Ext 40

There are various other areas that have been identified to establishment of new township alongside the Matlala Road. The new township will be established at the portion 150 and 160 of the farm Sterkloop. This is part of our programme to grow Polokwane in all directions. This is to use a corridor approach in Polokwane so that it is not only development on the sides of Bendor suburb or toward R81, but that we formalise settlements along the R71.

I have also directed our Spatial Planning and Land Use department section to change some of the zoning of the areas and accept that Dalmada is no longer a farming area. It is an area available for settlements, but also for other business developments.

CATALYTIC PROJECTS

In order to simulate economic activity within the city, we have identified among others, the following catalytic projects and we are also working with the Provincial Government, particularly Premier`s Office, Department of Public Works and Limpopo Economic Development and Environment Department.

The expansion of the inner city is also part of our programme. This means in the next financial year we will also be declaring certain areas to be areas specifically allocated for a 24hour economy which include development of restaurants and hotel alongside

the Suid Street in the city. As well as the Eco-Estate development at the Polokwane Game Reserve. This will include other catalytic development projects like the Cultural Hub at Bakone Malapa.

Bakone Malapa Cultural Hub

Municipal Council donated land to the Department of Public Works and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture for the development of the Arts and Culture Hub at Bakone Malapa. Township development has started. According to plans the hub development should commence around September 2022 and will among others include: film Studios & Film Archive, Workshop - Training Area, Manufacturing Area, Retail, Hotel, Arena, Incubator, Theatre etc.

This project will unlock the Dilokong Corridor as part of steering the city's economic development in a new direction. Approximately **R13 Million** from the IUDG will be utilised for servicing the Township and installation of Bulk services. The Theatre development is estimated at **R80 million** as per the provincial plans and budget. This will set our Arts and Culture Sector on the growth path and our youth will be major beneficiaries of this development

Special Economic Zone

As I have mentioned, we will strive to grow our local economy. The city has seen the opportunity around the airport for the proposal of the Special Economic Zone or Industrial Park as a key to turnaround the Polokwane International Airport. Accordingly, the feasibility study has already been approved by the Council and submitted for further approval by the different provincial technical forums.

Madam Speaker,

There other catalytic projects which include the Academic Hospital, relocation of the Provincial Legislature from Lebowakgomo and its location in the city and the Science Park. These developments and others on municipal land in summary will provide an estimated **R4.3 billion** for top structures value that will contribute to the growth and economic development and creation of more jobs. These projects are at the centre of the City of Polokwane`s path towards much anticipated metro status in the coming few years.

EPWP: EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM (EPWP), COMMUNITY WORKS PROGRAMME AND CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Madam Speaker,

We will continue with the Extended Public Works Programme where we target the poor of the poor. This will be coupled with the Community Works Programme. For the current financial year 2021/22, the Municipality had an EPWP target of 3658 and has exceeded this target by creating a total of 4215 work opportunities, both on capital and operational projects. We have for the financial year 2021/22, also received an allocation to the value of **R7.9 million**. This is a conditional grant paid to public bodies (Municipalities) to incentivize job creation, that is, best performing and reporting Public Bodies are rewarded through this grant. The goal of the EPWP Integrated Grant is used to provide funding to expand job creation efforts in specific focus areas, where labour intensive delivery methods can be maximized and enable the expansion of job creation in line with the EPWP guidelines. For the next financial year 2022/23, we received an allocation of **R11.5 million**.

VUK'UPHILE CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Municipality in partnership with the National Department of Public and Infrastructure, embarked on a Contractor Learnership Programme, called Vuk'uphile. A total of ten (10) Learner Contractors completed their classroom training and have

acquired a qualification through CETA called “Supervision of Construction processes”. The Municipality has allocated each learner Contractor two projects for practical purposes. These projects are funded from the municipality’s own funding sources. With the availability of the budget, they will be given their third and final projects as part of the program exit.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMME

Through the implementation of the Community Work Programme, the Municipality aims to provide an employment safety net, by providing a minimum level of regular work opportunities to participants, with a predictable number of days of work provided per month. This programme is funded through the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). The programme employs participants for two (2) days in a week and eight (8) days in a month. This programme supplements the existing livelihood strategies of participants and provides a basic level of income security through work. It is targeted at unemployed and/ or underemployed people of working age, including those whose livelihood activities are insufficient to lift them out of poverty.

For the 2021/22 financial year, the Municipality created a total of 2589 work opportunities through the Community Work Programme. It is our wish to see this programme benefitting all the rural wards, however, this is entirely dependent on the additional allocation from the funding Department.

Delays in Projects Implementation

Honourable Speaker,

I take this opportunity to plead with our communities to join hands with us as we strive to deliver quality projects on time. I have minced no words previously when I said Polokwane Municipality has no more room for non-performing contractors. We will

stop at nothing to ensure that projects are delivered within the agreed period and are of the agreed quality. Those who do not comply will be terminated.

Partnership with the Community

Madam Speaker,

The vision remains to build the city of our dreams. The first metro for the people of Limpopo Province. I believe that working together we shall rise above poverty and inequalities and build a prosperous future.

I therefore count on partnerships with our hardworking and disciplined municipal workers of Polokwane, our communities, business, traditional leaders and all other stakeholders.

Working together we shall and must find long-lasting solutions to financial, governance and developmental challenges facing the City as we move towards the realisation of a vision to become the first Metro in Limpopo.

The time has come for this Council, the Mayoral Committee, all councillors and each and every employee of Polokwane to roll up our sleeves and commit themselves to the task of building a Smart City.

As I conclude, please allow me to once more invoke the wisdom of uTata Nelson Mandela, when he said that *"I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."* We shall never tire in our efforts to build the City of Stars, the City of our Dreams!

With your support, I am optimistic that we shall succeed.

The past few months were not easy, but we sailed through because we have a team that fully understands the issues facing the city and its residents, and works daily to solve those issues. I take this opportunity to thank all the Members of the Mayoral Committee and the political parties who make up this Council. We thank you for your ongoing commitment to build the City of Polokwane.

May God bless the people of Polokwane.

I thank you! Reaga Polokwane!



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