

**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR,
COUNCILLOR MZWANDILE MASINA, 27 MARCH 2018**

Madam Speaker - Cllr Patricia Kumalo;

Chief Whip of Council - Cllr Jongizizwe Dlabathi;

Madam Chair of Chairs;

Chairperson of the Oversight Committees;

Members of the Mayoral Committee;

Leaders of Political Parties;

Honourable Councillors;

City Manager – Dr Imogen Mashazi;

Leaders of Business and Captains of Industry;

Leaders of the Labour Movement and Organs of Civil Society;

Members of the Media; and

More Importantly, the residents of Ekurhuleni;

Sanibonani. Molweni. Avusheni, Dumelang. Greetings to you all.

Let me take this opportunity to greet Council on this important occasion which marks the second *State of the City's Address* since the last local Government Election. As you might have seen throughout the build-up that we themed this year ***The City and the State of its People***. When we took office in August 2016, we delivered a statement which carried hope and aspiration of the people of Ekurhuleni, and today we are here to give full account and how the Administration continues to serve you, the people of the City, with honesty, humility and dedication.

We deliver this speech on the eve of the Easter holidays, when many of our people will be heading to various destinations, either for worship or a much-needed break. As our people and the rest of the South Africans hit the roads we wish all those who will be travelling safe travels and a happy and peaceful Easter weekend.

We deliver the speech six days after Human Rights Day, a day that will always be connected with the painful killing and maiming of our people in Sharpeville, who took to the streets in opposition to the draconian apartheid laws. Equally, we commend work well done by Justice Moseneke, which has concluded yet another painful chapter of Life Esidimeni - the unfortunate incident saw 144 people perishing. We hope the families will find closure on this painful incident and we too, would like to extend our most sincere condolences for your loss.

As a City we experienced a shooting of one of our colleagues, Ward 61 Cllr Nkosi; let me take this opportunity to wish him a speedy recovery and we remain hopeful that the law enforcement agencies are doing everything possible to apprehend the

criminals. We condemn the senseless attempt to his life and we will not rest until those criminals are arrested.

I must also take this opportunity to call for calm and a speedy resolution of the impasse between Eskom and the community of Ncala section in Katlehong. The situation has dragged on for far too long and our children and elderly citizens are the most affected. We will continue with mediation to find a lasting solution. We call for both community leaders and leadership of Eskom to return to urgently act on this matter.

The ruling party, the ANC, and the Government of South Africa have declared 2018 the year of Nelson Mandela: renewal, unity and job creation. We reaffirm the eloquently articulated emphasis, firstly by President Ramaphosa and secondly by Premier Makhura, when they said, “We should honour Madiba by putting behind us the era of discord, disunity and disillusionment”.

President Cyril Ramaphosa further said, ***“We have dedicated this year to Madiba’s memory and we will devote our every action, every effort, every utterance to the realisation of his vision of a democratic, just and equitable society.”***

As a City, we reiterate the call that we shall use the year to reinforce our commitment to ‘ethical behaviour and exemplary leadership’. In celebrating this centenary we must emulate his values, morality and stature in order to make a positive difference in the lives of our communities within the City. The City will unveil a package of activities to celebrate this icon and the hero of our people.

Madam Speaker, this year also marks the centenary of two phenomenal women in our life time, the legendary Mama Albertina Sisulu and our own Mama Margaret Gazo, both

stalwarts of the anti-pass law march by the women in August 1956. These were selfless women who are among those who re-defined the role of women in the struggle for liberation.

We remember them and their contribution to the freedom we all enjoy today, let their memories never fade away for many generations to come.

Now let me give an account of our CoE's performance and plans with regards to **GOVERNANCE**.

Madiba said, "It always seems possible until its done".

We have placed the agenda of women emancipation very high. The City of Ekurhuleni appointed the first female City Manager, Dr Imogen Mashazi, who is academically qualified and well experienced in local government. We currently have 41% of all our senior managers being women and we promise to ensure 50/50 once all vacancies are filled.

As we speak, most of the senior manager posts have been filled with professionals from the City. Gone are the days of being told our local people are not suitably qualified to handle the affairs of the City.

The review by National Treasury on FINANCIAL HEALTH indicated that the City of Ekurhuleni is financially stable and moving in the right direction, in particular our operating, capital budget as well as our cash balances.

We have increased Capex from R4,1 billion to R5,1 billion and we will continue ramping it up in the outer years, and the target is to reach R10 billion by 2021.

Our Capex expenditure was sitting at 87% when we took over the administration. I'm happy to report that in the 2016/17 financial year we recorded 91,4%. Looking at our performance I'm confident that 2017/18 will further improve going forward.

The grant expenditure was at 82% and currently is at 97%, meaning we are not returning large sums of moneys to National Treasury meant for infrastructure, unlike our neighboring metros, as reported by South African media over the past weekend.

The City's COLLECTION RATE was 92,1% in the last financial year and the two quarters of 2017/18 it was 93,34%, which is quite positive. We thank our residents who continue to pay for their services and we invite those who cannot afford to register as indigent, so that we continue providing them with services.

The SOCIAL SECURITY PACKAGE, which benefits no less than 110 000 households cost the City R3,5 billion, as we continue providing 100KW of electricity, 9KL of water and other basic services, including the indigent.

We have maintained an UNQUALIFIED AUDIT opinion for the City, however, we are concerned about the City's entities which have regressed. We now have an operation CLEAN AUDIT process in place to ensure good governance.

To better manage municipal entities, we will soon implement recommendations of Section 78 to ensure efficiencies and good governance. We dare not fail to move with speed.

MSCOA went live on 1 July 2017 and the City has now procured ERP to enable full compliance.

We maintained our Moody's rating at Baa3/Aaa.za. This makes it easier for the City to raise funds in the financial markets and, as you may be aware, we have agreed on raising loans through bonds.

During the period under review, an external service provider (GCRO) conducted a *Life Style Survey* which showed that 86% of people have access to basic services, this is slightly higher than the provincial average.

In our efforts to fight fraud and corruption within our system of governance, the City has to date suspended seven senior officials, amongst them are two HODs. We will not tolerate any form of corruption or maladministration in Ekurhuleni. If you know you are doing something wrong, you'll soon be caught, exposed and arrested. If you know any wrong doing, please come forward and report to our new Commissioner of Integrity, who will soon be appointed to enhance work already done by MPAC and law enforcement agencies.

We now turn our attention to the **ECONOMY** of the CITY.

Nelson Mandela once said, "Money won't create success, the freedom to make it will."

We've seen the national economy improving slightly over the last few quarters at an average of 1,3% - mainly due to the high performance of sectors such as agriculture, mining and manufacturing. Indeed, 2017 was a year of recovering with the primary sectors accounting for 14,9%, recording the highest growth relative to other sectors.

When the new administration took over office, we consolidated our overall economic strategy in what is now known as the Ten Point Plan to revitalise our local economy. We are now in the

implementation phase which must assist the City to contribute to employment, investment and transformation.

These national developments are important as Ekurhuleni's economy is anchored by manufacturing, mining and agriculture. As the City, we now have an approved Aerotropolis Master Plan, paving the way to consolidate our strategic location as an Airport City.

Ekurhuleni anticipates higher levels of investments, especially within Aerotropolis corridors. Our approach is to maximise capabilities in a smart and advanced manufacturing, aviation and aerospace, logistics and transportation industries to drive competitiveness, radical socio economic development and transformation that will ultimately benefit the people of Ekurhuleni.

We hosted the Investment Conference in June 2017, and continued to intensify our efforts to unlock the City's R300 billion pipeline investments. We are pleased to announce the following projects that resulted in the R7,2 billion inward investment into the City:

- Prasa Gibela
- M&T Development
- Riverfield
- Green Reef
- Glen Gory
- OR Tambo Airport – Jewelry Precinct, and
- Tambo Springs inland port, amongst others

In order to enable these investments, the City identified the need to expedite and facilitate the installation of bulk infrastructure as provided for in SPLUMA in terms of Sections 49(2) and 49(5). We

have since budgeted for bulk infrastructure for “development ready” projects. Indeed, we are a City at work.

We have begun work on key institutional reforms that will make all of these plans a practical success. Key among these reforms is our current plan to create a Central Investment Clearing Committee.

This Central Investment Clearing Committee will have the impact of reducing turnaround times in the approval of such crucial items such as land zoning, building applications and the availability of bulk infrastructure, among others.

It must also assist investment applications with outstanding matters of compliance without sending them from department to department in a manner that consumes time.

This coming year we are working to produce partnerships and incentive schemes that can attract public and private sector investment to the City as we revitalise our industrial economy.

Our incentive scheme will combine rate rebates, negotiated tax holidays and joint applications to attract investment from public investment institutions for investment projects from R10 million and above.

We will be working to put up practical legislation to effect this investment incentives strategy. We are also moving to establish as a matter of law and operationalise the Ekurhuleni Development Agency.

It is through this agency that we will be able to practically link up with government departments such as the Department of Trade and Industry.

With regards to unemployment, the national average is 26,7% and this is extremely high compared to other developing countries. As the City, we recorded the highest unemployment rate at 33% due to an increased number of active work seekers. Effectively, we are the victims of our own advances.

At the same time, Ekurhuleni recorded the highest (98,000) new jobs over the past year. If this trend continues, we are likely to push back frontiers of poverty and underdevelopment in our Metro. We are experiencing job losses as a result of factory closure and general decline in industrial activities

We can learn from Tata Madiba when he said, *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the World.”*

Therefore, our efforts to conceptualise the University of Ekurhuleni must be understood in this context. The City has made progress around the planning of the Ekurhuleni Applied Sciences and Technology University.

We held a successful University Symposium that gave us valuable insights on the path to take towards realising this vision. This new generation university is currently being conceptualised and is envisaged to be established within the City of Ekurhuleni.

Council will soon finalise the appointment of the University Advisory Panel consisting of technically competent specialists who will advise the City on the best possible model.

Since our political decision to increase the bursary fund from R10 million to R100 million, the City has been able to substantially increase the number of intake into tertiary. To date, we can report that the City of Ekurhuleni has been able to assist 1 757 students in their pursuit of academic qualification during 2017/18. As we continue to sustain the current bursary holders, we have also

resolved to award an additional 500 new bursaries to academically deserving students out of the 2 802 bursary applicants that met the qualifying criteria.

This is how we are contributing in dealing decisively with the circle of poverty by ensuring that more deserving children from poor families are enrolled into the Institutions of higher learning. To young people we say, let's work together systematically to fight youth unemployment.

The City will continue making bursaries available for first year students and our ambition is to take the bursary fund to about R250 million by the time we leave office in order to continue complimenting the free education that has been announced by the ANC led Government starting from 2018.

All of these efforts bring into reality the vision of the Freedom Charter - *to open up the doors of learning and culture to all the youth and people of our country regardless of class background, race and gender!*

In order to support local businesses and industry, we committed R12 billion over the MTREF period to procure from 2 000 local entrepreneurs. We will soon finalise the Mintirho set aside programme and we are certain that lots of local entrepreneurs will benefit.

We have received not less than 6 000 applications and they are all going through various stages of evaluation, we commit concluding the entire process before the start of our new financial year. In order to mainstream and institutionalise this intervention, we have reviewed our Supply Chain Policy to enable no less than 30% procurement from local businesses.

We have also aligned our EPWP Policy to ensure that no less

than 30% of projects value are localized to the ward and/or area where the projects are implemented to ensure that local labourers are employed and local businesses are supported.

We have already begun to set up a business support and incubation system that will lead our enterprise development initiatives.

The objective here is to encourage entrepreneurship and assist with technical expertise young people to build sustainable and profitable businesses cooperatives in various services and goods sectors.

To date, since the appointment of 102 Vukuphile contractors in 2017, all 102 contractors have been allocated works amounting to R102 million. We envisaged that once they have successfully implemented these first projects and have gained some site experience, more projects will be allocated during the 2018/19 financial year in line with our SOCA 2017 pronouncements.

We have also made progress in our commitment to boost agriculture. This financial year we will be releasing 80 farms to commercial farmers and for the development of small farmers. Our agriculture strategy is underpinned by a policy of availing land, providing seeds and implements as well as support for market access especially for the emerging farmers.

The Freedom Charter commits that *“Land shall be shed amongst those who work it”*.

Our other priority, which is related to our strategy of economic development, concerns the consolidation of an efficient and dynamic public transport system. This is critical when viewed in the context of our ambition to draw in investment towards building a modern post-Apartheid city.

We need a public transport system that, together with a well-developed roads infrastructure network, must create a safe and easy movement of workers and goods within the range of the developing city. Safe and reliable public transport can result in private sector creating additional shifts to contribute in productivity and lowering unemployment rate in the City.

Madam Speaker, the movement of our people from their homes to work must be made seamless. In this regard, we have continued our work to bring to operation our bus rapid transport system, which we call the Harambee. We have experienced some challenges in its rollout but have now put in place tight monitoring systems that must lead us to operationalise it before the end of this financial year.

We recently accepted the memorandum from the local taxi industry and are continuing to engage them. They are an important stakeholder in this initiative and our continued cooperation is crucial for the project's success.

We may be the last metro in Gauteng to operationalise this project, but I dare say that ours is unique, among other features, such as iconic stations.

We will therefore press on with our plans to build Ekurhuleni as the first post-Apartheid city.

This is part of redesigning the spatial profile of the region so that we transcend the social Apartheid planning that kept our region only as a labor concentration camp for limited minimal jobs without diverse economic growth opportunities.

To achieve this objective, we want to increase the touch of

modernisation to improve our outdated industrial assets that our region has, whilst roping in new innovation and entrepreneurship in order to produce new assets.

We are also teasing out a quick strategy to improve telecommunications infrastructure in the form of fiber optics for faster and cheaper broadband. That will make doing business easier with reliable access to Internet facilities just as it will improve the learning experience for learners in schools.

Therefore, investment in technology is amongst our core policy imperatives and our Information and Communications Technology Department is playing a leading role in that regard.

As we remember the gallant generation of freedom fighters who would have turned 100 years old such as Margaret Gazo, Albertina Sisulu and Nelson Mandela. We have a responsibility to bring to life the ideals for which they struggled.

They are of the generation that defied laws of oppression, marched against a state built on racial oppression and actively produced the Freedom Charter as a moral and policy alternative to the ideology of the day.

We now turn our attention to **INFRASTRUCTURE CLUSTER** to give a high-level report and plans.

They insisted through the Freedom Charter that - *There Shall be Houses, Security and Comfort!*

It is our collective consciousness, informed by the struggles of those who walked before us, that we committed ourselves to providing decent, secure, modern and well-resourced human settlements to our people.

Our programme of building hope, security of tenure and affordable housing to different households has been on full swing starting with ensuring that our people receive their Title Deeds as a form to return their dignity. The City is currently in position of over 11,000 Title Deeds which we in a process of giving them to rightful owners, let's work together.

We also are moving with speed with regards to service sides even though many are still being prepared before allocation. We committed to 59 000 and we are well on target to achieve this number. Already, over 4 333 sides have been serviced and allocated to their rightful owners.

The City has launched three of the six Mega Projects working together with Provincial Government (Leeuwport 19 453, John Dube 10 265 and Daggafontein 17 180), which will help us meet the 100 000 housing units that we committed through our manifesto as the ANC in Ekurhuleni. We will soon launch the remaining three Mega Projects just to make sure there is dust all over Ekurhuleni.

I can confidently say the Esselen Park once launched will give us 7 100 yields, Clayville 14 138, Tembisa Ext 25 with 3 510 yields, Chief Albert Luthuli, Heldewyk 12 954, Tsakane Ext 22, 6 441, Brakpan Old Location 7 547, Van Dyk Park 3 350 and Palmifontein 3 687. The project in Palmridge is at its planning phase and we expect 5 000 yields once it gets off the ground.

The people of Eden Park West, of Moleketi Extension 1 and 2, in Etwatwa, Alra Park and Germiston Fires Station have witnessed us building subsidised social housing units in their communities. We shall continue with this work in other communities across the city, in partnership with the provincial government, throughout our term of office, because ours remains a course of realising decent

housing for our people.

The City of Ekurhuleni will have a diverse community of mixed human settlements that will bring together people of different class positions and race. It will be an active demonstration of our willingness to build a united, prosperous, and non-racial citizenry that shares social and economic resources.

Madam Speaker, we have always made the bold claim that we are a government that works for the poorest sections of our society. This position is informed by our understanding that poverty and underdevelopment in the South African context was systematically engineered to exclude the African majority from economic opportunity, sustainable social livelihoods and a fair chance at existing in conditions of full humanity.

That is why we have a programme to recognise and improve informal settlements around our City. Our people residing in all our informal settlements deserve and need a proper provision of basic services that include water, lighting, sanitation, refuse removal and access roads.

It is for this reason that we have been rolling out the re-blocking programme, which is a process of reconfiguring the current layout of informal settlements and re-organising the ground plane in such a manner as to optimally utilise space to promote the health, safety and well-being of households, with a particular focus on promoting accelerated service delivery to informal settlements.

The City first identified six informal settlements to form part of the Liveable Informal Settlements Re-blocking Pilot Programme. This was followed by a successful completion of Phase 1 of the electrification of Winnie Mandela Informal Settlement where 725 households were given electrical connections to the

temporary/shack structures.

The number of informal settlement has since been increased to 20 which have been provided with electricity. Places like Winnie Mandela informal settlement now have an estimated 16 600 households that are connected to the power grid since the start of our administration.

Madam Speaker, we will continue with the programme of electrification of all informal settlement once we've followed proper processes including making sure that reblocking is done. We said last year that all municipal land occupied by our people will be given to them for further development this is not tantamount to promoting land invasion.

The rollout of streetlights that assist us in building safer communities has also increased. We are concerned about the safety of our people so much so that even a pensioner can move freely in their neighbourhood without the fear of being mugged. We have installed streetlights in many areas from Boksburg to Vosloorus, Brakpan to Tembisa, Alberton to Kwa-Thema, Katlehong to Tokoza and many other areas within the City.

At the same time, we have reduced electricity losses to 11.9%. This is a positive trend as we cut down on illegal electricity connections that have been feeding off the revenue of the City. On the side of the community, innocent lives who may have been endangered by exposed power lines are now going to be saved.

The City has budgeted an amount of **R30 million** for the refurbishment of the rental stock that includes the flats and the hostels. We want to improve the quality of these housing facilities and to bring them to a standard of human habitation with clean water, sanitation and waste management services.

Our efforts to bring back dignity to our people through the provision of sanitation services to informal settlements has greatly improved. In the last year, we have provided chemical toilets at an improved ratio. We have moved from 1 is to 10 to 1 is to 5 family usage ratio per toilet facility in informal settlements. As a caring city, we are in the process of identifying more dignified sanitation solutions for our people living in informal settlements.

Our programme to upgrade and invest in our infrastructure has now commenced. We have 28 consultants planning for over 2 000km of water and sewer pipes, upgrading, replacement and extension.

We have 50 reservoirs creating additional storage for the City. We are constructing 20 Pump Stations and decommissioning 50 redundant Pump Stations.

We are currently metering 40 000 properties, especially those that have been unmetered resulting in water losses.

Coming to water security, we have invested in improving our water generation and management capacity so that we can guarantee the provision of clean, secure and reliable water to households, businesses and institutions.

Last year we added 20 Mega Litres of water storage capacity. We complemented this by investing in the repairing and maintenance of existing water infrastructure in order to reduce leaks and save water, while work he started in earnest to construct reservoirs in strategic areas.

As we continue to improve the mobilisation of our people, goods and services, in the past financial year we added 61km of new roads to the existing road network. Amongst these is the upgrading of Joe Mzamane in KwaThema, Voortrekker Drive in

Edenvale, Sagittarius Street in Katlehong and Modise Street in Duduza. In an effort to preserve the assets of the City, more than 100km of the existing road network infrastructure was rehabilitated in the past financial year.

We have further conceptualised, and are now setting in motion, a number of catalytic infrastructure projects in roads improvement and construction. The projects were planned for a three-year Medium Term Financial and Revenue Framework starting from the 2016/17 financial year.

These projects are Vlakplats, aka Nyoni Park Road, widening, doubling of Barry Marais, and widening of Monument and Pretoria roads in Kempton Park and Benoni. In addition, the intergovernmental initiative between provincial government and the City of Ekurhuleni has yielded good results towards the implementation of the Aerotropolis Road Network Masterplan.

This will be displayed by the construction of PWV15, a link between R21 and N12 in 2019. The project is aimed at deviating and alleviating traffic from the already congested Gillooly's interchange from R21 direct to N3 in Heidelberg. Sod turning for the PWV15 is scheduled for the second quarter of 2018/19.

We have heard the cries of our people about the poor conditions of our roads and the lack of proper roads thereof, I am happy to announce that this financial year, we will conclude a number of road construction and improvement projects. We plan to construct an additional 30km of new roads to add to the existing road network. A huge portion of this will be directed towards the Eastern region which has a higher backlog than the other regions.

We further undertake to do maintenance work on more than 3 000km; this includes rehabilitation and the patching of potholes.

We now have a comprehensive plan to rehabilitate more than 30km of formal gravel roads and continue to improve access to informal settlement.

Furthermore, in response to unprecedented weather patterns, which result in massive floods and damages to properties, we will add 38 systems of stormwater infrastructure mainly extension of culverts, pipelines and attenuation facilities to minimise the impact.

We have intensified our efforts to build a clean city with communities that have regular and efficient refuse collection. Clean neighbourhoods are important also in the reduction of illnesses amongst young children and the general health of households.

We will finally implement in full scale the KEEP EKURHULENI CLEAN programme. Those who forwarded their applications should give us sufficient time to fix the teething challenges we experienced. We do not want political interference; the process has to be fair and accommodate all applicants.

For informal settlements we have received 50 Tuk-Tuk donated by Provincial Government and, as the City, we will add an additional 70 Tuk-Tuk, which will be deployed in the informal settlements to improve waste collection.

In the areas where we have contractors, we will institute forensic investigations so that we are able to determine value for money, and that services that we pay for as the City are received in a manner that is stated in the contract. We have heard challenges faced by community-based contractors, in particular around the Tembisa area, and we hope to resolve challenges that has

resulted in workers not knowing who is the employer and what are the conditions of service.

We also engage the unions with regard to workers who are waiting for pensions, we are planning how best to manage their exit. Those workers who steal our time by sleeping under the trees, should be warned, we cannot tolerate stealing of public resources.

The upgrading of dumping sites for waste disposal has also been carried out by our administration. We continue to do this and search for innovative solutions to waste management.

Having said this, I wish to appeal to our communities to join us keep our environment clean. Let us change our mindsets and avoid illegal dumping.

On the **SOCIAL CLUSTER**, we want to take this opportunity to report on the progress we have made since the start of the term.

Mandela remarked that, *“There is nothing I fear more than waking up without a program that will help me bring a little happiness to those with no resources, those who are poor, illiterate, and ridden with terminal diseases.”*

Madam Speaker, in the 2017/18 State of the City Address we made a number of strategic commitments in the areas of healthcare and social development that we have delivered on. We announced plans to build 12 more clinics with modern facilities over the Medium Term.

Recently we opened Esangweni and Seloape Thema clinics, which boast 16 consulting rooms each – meaning more people can get

assistance at the same time thus reducing queuing times. Construction plans are already underway for additional new 10 clinics to cover the 5km radius principle.

We have been working with the Provincial Department of Health with regards to the provision of extended hours in Clinics. This has given us 29 clinics that give a combination of 24 hour services in 9 clinics, 12 hours in 2 clinics and Saturday morning services in 18 of our clinics.

In this financial year, we plan to add 5 more clinics in the 24 hours and 12 hours service plans. Ethafeni Clinic in ward 14 and Goba Clinic in ward 55 should be providing these services at the beginning of April. Winnie Mandela in ward 3, Tembisa Healthcare Centre in ward 6 and Katlehong North Clinic in ward 50 will be open for these extended hours later in 2018 and into the 2019/20 financial year.

The 21 Chronic Medication Pick-Up Points that we established are proving to be a huge success. Indeed, our people realise their importance and they have grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

In improving and broadening the service, we have since partnered with commercial Pharmacy Groups such as Clicks, Pick 'n Pay, Dischem and Medirite to also serve as Pick Up Points for chronic medication. Today we have 44800 patients registered to received their chronic medication at Medicine Pick-Up Points, both external and internal.

This has helped to drastically reduce the long queues in clinics and hospitals at the end of each month, with people waiting for hours on end just to collect their medication.

As part of our continuing fight against HIV/AIDS, we have also

managed to reduce mother to child transmission from 1.4% in the previous financial year to 1.3% in the current period. We are on course to completely eliminate this kind of transmission and guarantee absolute survival chances to all our newborn babies in the city.

Our Indigent Policy, which is part of the City's social package, provides free basic services to poor households with an income below R3 000. This social package has come at the cost of R3,5 billion per annum because the ANC led Coalition Government in the City cares.

The availability of free water, sanitation and refuse collection services to these households goes a long way in making life bearable. We have a total of 102 000 households registered for this type of social assistance, and we remain determined to register more.

Importantly, we have stated that the Indigent Policy Programme is a stop-gap measure. The long-term plan is to provide social interventions that improve chances of finding employment and improving overall household income so that our people can afford to pay for municipal services.

A further 469 households were afforded garden implements and seeds as part of our small shoulder food security programme and poverty alleviation intervention. This programme helps households to produce their own basic food stuffs in order to spare their little finances for other household needs.

Similarly, our commitment to providing Early Childhood Development Centres in townships is progressing well. This year we will complete three Early Childhood Development Centres in

Vosloorus, Tsakane and Eden Park. These centres will benefit many children from poor communities within the City.

Madam Speaker, we continue to face the scourge of drug and alcohol abuse. In this regard, I wish to send a clarion call to our people to assist law enforcement agencies to nab the drug peddlers.

The City through the Health and Social Development department in partnership with the Provincial Department of Social Development, launched two drug rehabilitation and treatment centres in Alra Park and Witpoort, in November last year and October 2016, respectively.

Since the launch of these Community Based Treatment Centres, about 2000 people benefited. On our part as government, we shall continue rolling out rehabilitation centres. However, as the cliché goes, 'prevention is better than cure'.

Sport remains a critical part of human development. It also a great source of social cohesion and plays a critical role in keeping our people healthy and off the streets, where they might be absorbed into crime and other social ills.

We have many capabilities to succeed in promoting sport in our area. These include over 200 water bodies, golf courses, stadiums, informal soccer fields, tennis courts and many more.

We have taken a decision to cancel the SA Golf Challenge after the contract expired. We will use the savings to launch our Mega Event, which will be inclusive and help reposition the City.

The Department will submit a proposal and through supply chain, choose the best proposition that will ensure social cohesion.

The programme of the renaming of our major Onramp and Off-ramps within the National Roads will soon be undertaken in consultation with communities.

We have also started a process of renaming the Germiston Theatre after our late Icon Dumi Masilela. We honour his artistic talent and we hope this gesture will go a long way in healing the family and the Industry at large. We plan to open the State of the Art Theatre end of May 2018.

As you are well aware, the City will be commemorating the 25 Anniversary since the untimely passing of Chris Hani. We concluded the process of buying his former home and work is now underway to complete family Museum. During the Month of April 2018, we will announce a programme to commemorate the life of Chris Hani.

Through our EMPD, we will be building new precinct to increase visibility of our Metro Police. We have finalized the conversion of 729 Peace Cops into Traffic Wardens. We have, to date, recruited 100 Land Invasion Officers and we have 270 officers on training currently. We intend to increase the Metro Police by an additional 500 officers.

We await the procurement of Specialised Vehicles such as nyalas, water cannons as well as arresting vans amongst others.

Operation Sesifikile and Operation Fiela will be continued as it bears in fighting crime in our communities.

Our Emergency Department will continue building Fire Stations in Strategic areas to ensure faster response to emergency

situations. In the last Financial Year, we procured over 34 new ambulances to replace the old fleet.

Through our Community Safety Department, we shall implement Safe City Program to install Cameras across the board.

As the City, we salute Community Safety Officers for their bravery and sacrifices displayed in the performance of their duties. We dare not fail you.

The task of governing even a city such as ours is no small fit. It is riddled with challenges, but we are determined to rise to the occasion. As the late former President of the ANC and South Africa, Nelson Mandela, once observed:

“... courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

We are determined to surmount the courage and fortitude to lead the City of Ekurhuleni till the last day of our term of office. Our leadership is geared towards achieving the political objectives of a transformed City that we set for ourselves since coming into office.

I must also make a special mention of the support that we continue to receive from other political authorities. Madame Speaker, we thank the rigorous support that we receive from Council in our collective bid to fulfil our respective mandates.

I must also thank the ANC Caucus, thank our coalition partners and thank the political leadership of the Regional ANC for the overall guidance and support.

I also wish to thank my family, in particular my wife who continues to be a pillar of strength and support me in my work.

Today, in delivering this State of the City Address, we are restating our commitment to those tasks and invite all of you to join us as we pull up our socks for yet another year!

I wish to conclude by quoting Tata Madiba, “After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.”

It is not yet uhuru, work continues to better the lives of our people.

I thank you!