

Programme Directors

Mr Speaker, Cllr Andries Mabena

Member of Executive Council for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, MPL Speedy Mashilo

Member of Executive Council for Culture, Recreation and Sport, MPL Thandi Shongwe

Members of the Provincial Legislature present

Representatives from the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders

Former Mayor, Ben Mokoena

Former Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu

Former Executive Mayor, Mike Masina

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Chief Magistrate, and all esteemed members of the office of the magistrate

The Council Whip, Cllr Semakaleng Nkadimeng

Acting Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality, Cllr Mthimunye

Executive Mayors, Speakers, Chief Whips and Members of the Mayoral Committees from other Municipalities in the province

Our Acting Municipal Manager, Mr Bheki Khenisa

Municipal Managers and HODs present

Fellow Councillors and political parties represented in Council,

Councillors and Ward Committee Members from our 29 Wards

Major. Daniels - Battalion Second in Command, 4SAI

Sergeant Major Sifundza -Acting Regimental Sergeant

Major General Lentsoane – Cluster Commander of the South African Police Services

Members of the 4SAI Motorised Battalion and South African Police Services

Representatives from business, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations

Our Special group in the community (elderly, children, women and people with special needs)

South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) AND Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (IMATU) leadership

Soccer legends

- ✚ Mr Big boy Kholwane
- ✚ Mr Isaac Chirwa
- ✚ Mr McDonald Rhee Skosana
- ✚ Mr Rudolf Gardener Seale
- ✚ Mr Eddy Taukubong

Distinguished guests

Media

Dignitaries from Swaziland and Mozambique, a special welcome to you and thank you for gracing our shores in celebration of the two events

Comrades and friends

I also want to acknowledge my family, those who come from near and those who come from far, I truly appreciate your presence.

Zakhamuzi zase Steve Tshwete Local Municipality....Ngiyanibingelela nonke Sanibonani, dumelang, goeie more, good morning, habusheni

It is an honour and privilege for me to deliver this inaugural speech as the Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

As we all know that the former Executive Mayor, Alderman Mike Masina resigned last month. I wish to thank him for the sterling work he performed during his term of office as Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, by ensuring that this Municipality remains one of the best performing local Municipalities in the country. We wish him all the best in his pursuit of new opportunities.

Let me also take this opportunity and express my sincere gratitude to the African National Congress, for placing their trust and confidence in me, and my fellow Members of the Mayoral Committee, to address new challenges our Municipality faces.

I am confident that together as a community, different stakeholders, political parties of Council and the workforce of the Municipality.....

We will build a more vibrant community for future generations as we all work together to realise the core aspirations of delivering quality services to our communities.

We will continue to grow a community in which we can be proud of!

We know it is possible because our former Mayors since the dawn of democracy, Councillors Ben Mokoena, and the late Comrade Sydney Choma who served under challenging and difficult circumstances, during a period of vigorous resistance against change by the apartheid structures persevered against all odds and steered our Municipality to the path we are treading.

We also know it is possible because our first democratically elected Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu selflessly contributed immensely to the development of this Municipality. Your outstanding performance will always be engraved in our memory.

We are where we are today as a community because of their work, and now the baton has been passed to us.

Now it is our turn to run as fast as we can and work as hard as we can – to take the helm of one of the best Municipality in the country and make it even better.

**Siyanibonga nina nonke bobaba nabomama
nentsha yethu ekuzinikeleni kwenu ukuthuthukisa
nokwakha lomphakathi wethu esiwuthanda kangaka!
Re a le boga**

**Sithi qhubekani niwuthande loMasipala wenu
ngokusebenzisana. Niqhubeke njalo ngokukhokhela**

izinsiza zikaMasipala ukuze nathi sikwazi
ukuqhubeka nokuthuthukisa umphakathi wethu.

Programme Director....

Today is also a particularly special day for us in our continent as we commemorate the 55th anniversary of the formation of the African Union. Formerly and aptly called the Organisation of African Unity.

It is during this month that we remember the founding fathers of the OAU, the likes of, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Patrice Lumumba of Congo, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria and many others who had their own vision for Africa.

It is during this month that we recall the words of Dr Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana when he said “Africa will never be free until the whole continent of Africa is free. Of course South Africa was almost the last country to be liberated in the African continent.

Thanks to comrade Thabo Mbeki and Olusegun Obasanjo for their role in the reformation of the OAU and their sterling work on NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development).

Namhlanje njengoba nibona abaningi bethu bevunule izingubo zamo sesiAfrica, kungoba sigubha usuku lweAfrica Day lapho ke sikhumbuzana ngendabuko yethu thina maAfrika.

Ahi tsakeleni siku leri na vutivi bya ndzavuko wa hina ma Afrika.

MAYIBUYE..... ¡AFRICA!!!!

Fellow residents and visitors...

Allow me during this occasion to convey my deepest condolences to the family, colleagues and friends of one of South Africa's legendary photographers, Mr Sam Nzima. We are thankful to the President Ramaphosa for declaring a Special Provincial Funeral for him.

Comrade Nzima gave the world a glimpse of the struggle of the oppressed and exposed the brutality of the apartheid government towards learners and students.

We will especially remember his iconic photograph of a dying young Hector Peterson which became a symbol of resistance against the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in the black schools.

The photo also galvanized the international community to swell the ranks of the anti-apartheid movement. May his soul rest in peace!

Though Nzima and others captured the memories which changed the course of history in South Africa, it is unfortunate that in our midst we did not have the privilege of photo-journalists to capture similar events, which happened on our doorsteps. We have students, in the likes of Musa Ephraim Mthethwa, Thandi Skhosana, Leonard Shorty Maseko, Theodorah Hlaku Thabana who laid their lives

during the struggle against bantu education. This history will never be told because their deaths did not make news headlines in a similar manner as Hector Peterson did.

Programme Director,

In fact, our Municipality has produced gallant freedom fighters within our Province in the likes of Cowen Ntuli, January “Che”Masilela, Dobo Maseko, Reuben Mnisi, Beamy Damane, Ndondo Mampane, and many others whose names are immortalised in the plaque of our struggle against apartheid.

Guided by their example, our promise is simple and straight forward. We will serve our community and work with fellow Councillors in an open, positive and engaging manner and build the future in which all may share in the wealth of our town and have a better life.

This year, we will also celebrate the centenary of the birth of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and another giant of our struggle, Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu.

As we honour and celebrate these two political giants who fought tooth and nail for the birth of this democratic society, let us put behind us the era of negativity, discord, infightings, malice and disunity and build a Municipality we will all enjoy.

Today, as we take the first steps of the next three years, our main focus will be on,

 Inclusive Economy

 Spatial Transformation

- Township Economy and Urban Renewal
- Youth Development
- Safe and clean city campaign.

On inclusive economy, we will unlock our economic opportunities by creating an environment that is conducive and empowering for businesses to grow and thrive thereby creating the much needed jobs.

As the home of the largest Stainless Steel factory in the country and many Coal Mines and three Eskom Power Stations. Our weakness remains lack of beneficiation, which leads us to export most of our raw materials to other provinces or out of the country and buy the finished products back.

We are going to look for investors and manufacturers into the beneficiation process of our raw materials and add value to our local economy by producing the finished products locally.

This will be a great boost to our local economy, particularly the township economy which is one of our main focus areas. We will say more about township economy later.

We will rely on our local market for investment, which includes amongst others our 20 mines, 50 local industrial companies and Eskom. Therefore it is possible to do this.

We will also boost our township economy by attracting many other subsidiary industries relating to the mining sector, transport, manufacturing and retail sectors to invest.

We are currently exporting our milk for processing to other provinces. We will look for investors to build agro- processing plants for milk by-products such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, in our townships.

And we will explore other agricultural opportunities since we are situated within South Africa's maize triangle, with a strong agricultural component.

We will continue to maintain a healthy relationship with business so that we can continue delivering successful combined community projects which we have seen in past.

We are open for business and committed to working closely with all stakeholders to grow the local economy, create sustainable jobs and promote skills transfer.

Our infrastructure has aged, we will therefore make key investments by upgrading our electricity, water and sanitation infrastructure so that we can cope with the demands of our clients and community.

We will take advantage of the Maputo Development Corridor, as more industries such as motor

workshops, hotel, overnight bulk carriers, stopping over places, will be required.

As more heavy vehicles using the route, there will be a need for specific transport related industries such as filling stations, motor vehicles workshops, spares and even new vehicle sales, or selling parts, etc.

This will give more people the opportunity to be trained to work in these industries.

We will also upgrade our sports facilities, parks and recreation and other community amenities to make it easier to get to our Municipality, whether to visit, to live, to work or to start a business.

Programme Director....

In our Town Planning, we will be a smart and liveable town as we are currently reviewing our Town Planning Scheme by-laws which will encourage precinct development and human integration for business to thrive.

We are also working on reviving and revitalising our CBD by encouraging and promoting more residential development.

By bringing more people to live in the CBD, we will create the necessary commercial base to support the wonderful array of independent retailers, restaurants and service providers in our CBDs for decades to come.

The old abandoned properties will be restored and ultimately replaced with beautiful green spaces and quality residential and commercial developments.

I also wish to commend Council for the bold step to completely eradicate the informal settlement of Newtown. This is one of the few initiatives in the country.

Already, 118 RDP houses have been handed over to the beneficiaries of Newtown. At the end of this project, 1000 houses will be completed and handed over.

This is indeed a huge milestone for a mid-size Municipality like ours.

There are a number of other housing projects throughout the Municipality which I will present during the upcoming budget speech.

Programme Director...

We will soon launch the clean and safe campaign wherein we will install CCTV cameras in our Streets and Townships, to increase our fight against criminality in our Municipality.

Another important asset in our community is our youth. We will demonstrate both a focus and determination to invest in our young people.

We remember the words echoed by the former ANC President, Oliver Tambo when he said: “A country that does not value its youth, does not deserve its future.”

And as Mayor I look forward to the public participation meetings where we will finalise the youth development strategy, as a means to help our young people.

By working to engage the youth in the community issues of today, we will help our youth to develop into future leaders.

Programme Director....

We are convinced that the diversity of our community is one of our greatest strengths. And we will act as one Municipality more now than ever before.

The community of Kwazamokuhle for instance still feel like a step child of the Municipality.

We hereby make this commitment and re-assure you that tangible steps will be taken in a bid to address this issue.

Several projects have been lined up in the quest to improve your lives. As we endeavour to address service delivery backlog, we are looking forward to working with the residents of Kwazamokuhle.

To this end, we have decided to set up a Mayoral Office in Kwazamokuhle. The office will be staffed daily to allow the community to be able to table their views directly with my office and specifically with me.

In practical terms, we shall endeavour to visit this office at least once a month, to hear the views of the residents and address their concerns regarding service delivery issues.

This is in line with our Government's Batho Pele Principle, which is ensuring the provision of excellent service to our people.

We will work on strengthening and restoring our stakeholder engagement and management from every sphere of our community to the same table to discuss and resolve issues.

When we do that, we develop a strategic direction where our entire community moves forward as one – where we are working not in isolation or at cross-purposes, but moving in the same direction where we look for win-wins, avoid duplication of effort and offer services more effectively and more efficiently.

As Mayor I extend my hand in partnership to our community organizations, to our local businesses and neighbourhood associations, to our public sector employers and other institutions.

On the land topic Programme Director...

We are aware of the growing impatience of our people about the need to be allocated land, 24 years into our hard fought democracy.

We are building a country where a person's prospects are determined by their own initiative and hard work, and not by the colour of their skin, place of birth, gender, language or income of their parents.

Consistent with the resolution which was taken at the 54th Conference of the ANC last December, our national government has resolved to fast track the policy of Land Expropriation Without Compensation.

It is for this reason that the national ANC workshop was held on this matter. We are eagerly awaiting for the resolutions so that we can move forward.

I therefore make this humble appeal to our communities to exercise some patience in this regard.

Your need for land is being attended to, but it must go through proper structures of our Government, as our country cannot afford anarchy.

Delivering his State of the Nation Address on the 17th of February this year, President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa re-committed our country in the fight against corruption.

He called upon All of Us, to fight against State Capture which, he said, denied our people, especially the poorest of the poor, the much needed resources to improve their lives. We cannot agree more to this profound statement.

We therefore call upon you to report corruption, whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head and rid our Municipality of this cancer.

It is our determination that at the end of our term, consistent with the objectives of our manifesto, and province, this Municipality must be geared towards a radical socio-economic transformation.

It is by no means an easy task, but through your efforts and needed support, no task is insurmountable.

Our ultimate goal should be to turn around our Municipality into the Number 1 African City, working together with all stakeholders.

Fellow Councillors, let us set the example of a new brand of politics in our Chamber – an atmosphere that encourages intelligent and reasoned debate, where we each come with an open mind and work to make the best possible decision in every case.

We will have differences of opinion, but those differences will only serve to challenge us and to ensure we arrive at the best possible decisions.

Let us show our community it is possible to disagree, but still maintain a mutual respect and attitude of teamwork that at the end of the day focuses on moving our Municipality forward together.

As I conclude, I would like to express my profound appreciation from the support of the Speaker, Chief Whip, members of the mayoral committee councillors as well as the community.

The Acting Municipal Manager and his staff must also be commended for their hard work and thank them for organising this event. I look forward to working with you all to achieve a better life for our community.

Last but not least, I wish, from the bottom of my heart, to thank my dear wife and my family, for their unstinting support in allowing me to avail myself when called to duty by our movement, the African National Congress. To my wife and family, I love you.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SERVING YOU

WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

I THANK YOU ALL!!!!!!.