

Sedibeng 2015 State of the District Address by Executive Mayor Mahole S Mofokeng. 26 May 2015. Vereeniging Civic Theater.



PART ONE (INTRODUCTION)

Madam Speaker, Ladies and gentlemen, greetings on this auspicious occasion of the Sedibeng 2015 State of the District Address.

Allow me to recognize the MEC for the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements and Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), the Honorable Jacob Mamabolo who is representing the Premier, the Honorable David Makhura.

Let me also greet and welcome our Executive Mayors of our three Local Municipalities, Honorable Greta Hlongwane, Honorable Lerato Maloka and Honorable Bongane Baloyi.

Madam Speaker, I also welcome and extend my warmest greetings to the Provincial Secretary of the ANC in Gauteng, Comrade Hope Papo and other ANC PEC and REC members who are present with us here today.

As I greet them I also wish to add my congratulations to the PEC members on their successful election in October 2014, and to the recently elected REC of the ANC in Sedibeng elected last month. An REC that I have the honour of leading as its Chairperson.

On the same note, I welcome and greet all leaders of the Alliance; the African National Congress, South African Communist Party, Congress of South African Trade Unions; SANCO, organs of Civil society, and Mass Democratic Movement.

Let me also greet and welcome the former Regional Chairpersons and Secretaries of the African National Congress in Sedibeng Region.

The State of the District Address is a pronouncement for all the people of Sedibeng of all political persuasions, of all races, and of all religions.

So wherever your political loyalties rest and whatever your faith or belief, this is your SoDA as well.

We also welcome Miss SA second princess Ms Ntsiki Mkhize and Ms Earth, Ms Roberta Ndlovu.

Lastly, I want to welcome my special guests, leaders of the religious fraternity. You have been with us through thick and thin. Even though I know that some of you could not join us here this afternoon but I know that they are with us in spirit. Please continue to pray with us.

Honourable guests, ladies and gentlemen, let me pause at this stage to also welcome and greet our guests who have managed to grace our 4 satellite venues and who are viewing this live broadcast via the DSTV satellite on Channel 901.

Greetings to those at:

Saul Tsotetsi who are under the direction of the Programme Director Clr. Mamogo Mntambo

At the Sicelo Multi-Purpose Hall our Programme Director Clr Pruis Boland is coordinating this viewing in Midvaal.

Similarly, at the Ratanda Multi-Purpose Centre our Programme Director Tsepo Moloi is running our satellite venue there.

For this year, in a unique arrangement, the Vanderbijlpark Sakekamer has gathered its members at the Three Rivers Lodge to view this broadcast. They will have a focused discussion there on matters of business and economics. My Greetings to Chairperson Hester Davis, her Executive, and to the members of the Sakekamer.

Madam Speaker and the people of Sedibeng, we meet this afternoon, a day after we have celebrated Africa Day.

We marked Africa day guided by the theme: “We are Africa – Opening the doors of learning and culture from Cape to Cairo”.

Africa Day provides us here in our country with the opportunity to reconnect and recommit the support for all interventions to develop a progressive and better Africa. An Africa which does not fight herself, but rather for an Africa which strives to stand tall and proud amongst the other continents of the world.

The theme of the month of May, “**We are Africa**” is a declaration and celebratory statement of pride.

It fosters inclusivity from all stakeholders.

It is most unfortunate that when we should be celebrating the dream of O.R Tambo that Africa can never be free unless South Africa is free which was realized 21 years ago, a year before he passed away, that we have recently witnessed hatred against fellow Africans in our country.

We in Sedibeng are still fortunate to have escaped the ugly tentacles of xenophobia thus far.

Attacks are taking place unabated in other parts of our beloved country.

I want to applaud the people of Sedibeng for their understanding that South Africa is not an island but part of the broader African continent. May this spirit prevail forever.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, on the 31st May 2015 the region of Sedibeng will be remembering the 113th year of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging. This treaty ended the Second Anglo-Boer War better referred to as the South African War, which was between the South African Republic and the Republic of the Orange Free State against the British Empire.

This is but just one of the historic events which placed Sedibeng on the map of world history.

Talking of history, I would like us to reflect further on the importance of this month which comes to an end in few days’ time.

Each year on the 1st of this month, the world observes Workers Day.

On May 2, 2011, the U.S. Special Operations Forces are said to have killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, after having declared responsibility of killing of over 3000 people in US on the 11th of September 2001. May their souls rest in peace!

The 2nd of May also marks the birthday of Pope Leo XIII who was born in Carpino, Italy in 1810 and died in 1903. He was elected Pope in 1878 at age 67 and lived to govern the church for another 25 years, laying the foundation for modernization of Church attitudes toward a rapidly industrializing and changing world.

On the 2 May 2015, we also recognized a day that would have marked the 197th birthday of the founder of Communism, Karl Marx who died in 1883.

He is best remembered for having co-authored Das Kapital and the Communist manifesto.

Here at home on the 10 May 1994, former political prisoner, Tata Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as president of South Africa.

Before I launch into the serious content of my address, it will be a mistake not to congratulate ‘*the unstoppable train*’, Kaizer Chiefs for winning the Premier Soccer League for this season.

Many of us in the opposing side will agree with me that it is time for healing. Kaizer Chiefs showed that through proper preparation success follows.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is fourth year of the current Sedibeng administration which also happens to be a grand finale State of the District Address before the final address in 2016.

It is for this reason that we have carefully adopted the theme for SoDA 2015 as follows, “***Celebrating the Achievements of 20 Years of Democratic Local Government***”.

Democratic Local Government was phased in from 1995, through the Pre-interim, interim and fully democratic phase in 2000. The journey has been a 20 year journey, and 15 of these years has been in the fully democratic phase.

The establishment of the Sedibeng District Municipality in 2000, marked the beginning of a system of local government in our region that has often been misunderstood.

Our residents grapple each day with trying to understand who does what? Emfuleni or Sedibeng, Midvaal or Sedibeng, Lesedi or Sedibeng?

Madam Speaker, our theme which is ‘***Celebrating Achievements of 20 years of Democratic Local Government***’ brings us to the next phase of our transition in which our government strives to implement radical socio-economic transformation, and to address inequality, poverty and unemployment.

It is undeniable that many of our communities still face challenges in their daily lives.

It is for this reason that together with the private sector in our region, we strive to reduce severe unemployment and to overcome the legacy of illogical spatial development.

We do this by strengthening community participation and building effective, accountable and clean local government.

PART TWO (Working with the Gauteng Provincial Government)

I read a bumper sticker that reads:

“Teamwork Divides the Task and Multiplies the Success”

It is this spirit that I wish to address the partnership we are forging with the Gauteng Provincial Government.

Madam Speaker, ladies and Gentlemen, strong synergy between the three spheres of government has huge benefits for the people of Sedibeng. It ensures that we are directing our energies in the same direction, that we are complementing each other’s work and that we are working together to make Sedibeng a better place for all to live in.

We were therefore, greatly inspired when on the 23 February 2015, the Gauteng Premier delivered a State of the Province Address that ensured that each and every part of the Gauteng Province was given due consideration for development.

In his address the Honorable Premier spoke extensively of the ‘Southern Corridor’ of Gauteng. This Southern Corridor are the Provincial plans for the people of Sedibeng.

The Gauteng Provincial Government seeks to create an even and equitable development across the province and the Premier openly declared, and I quote him:

“Gone are the days when some regions and municipalities will be neglected as the Cinderella’s on the periphery of the provincial economy. We need deliberate and conscious action by the entire City region leadership to reverse spatial injustice and economic marginalisation of Sedibeng and the West Rand.”

To take full advantage of this fresh approach, alignment between our Growth and Development Strategy, the National Development Plan and the Provincial Ten Pillars of radical Transformation, Modernization and Re-industrialisation programme of the Province is essential.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is imperative that we know and understand what the TMR encompasses. Since we are undertaking significant alignment to this programme, let me restate the Ten Pillars which constitute the core mandate of the fifth administration of the Gauteng Provincial Government. It includes:

1. Radical economic transformation
2. Decisive spatial transformation
3. Accelerating social transformation
4. Transformation of the State and governance
5. Modernization of the economy
6. Modernization of the public service and the state
7. Modernization of human settlements and urban development
8. Modernization of public transport and other infrastructure
9. Re-industrialising Gauteng as our country's economic hub
10. Taking a lead in Africa's new industrial revolution.

This means that whilst we will continue to do the many things that we do as our normal business, we will partner with the Gauteng Province and the national departments on various projects. Of these projects, two have been elevated to the status of 'Game Changers' by the Gauteng Provincial Government.

Allow me to deal with the two Game Changers that will indeed stimulate the radical transformation of the Sedibeng Region as we know it. They are encapsulated into two tongue twisters that we in Sedibeng will need to get into our daily vocabulary. It is the HYDROTROPOLIS and the AGRITROPOLIS

The Hydrotropolis

Born out of the need for accelerated spatial transformation to realize the vision of new democratic and integrated South African city, we will be working with the Gauteng Provincial Government to leverage our competitive advantage of the majestic Vaal River, to establish a new City. Linked and anchored by the water of the Vaal, this Hydrotropolis, or River City, will be a series of developments

that aims to create a new Metropolitan Precinct, new Retail Developments, Residential Developments, A Marina and Lifestyle Centre along the banks of the Vaal River stretching from Vaal Marina in the East to Vaal Oewer in the West.

Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have harnessed several years of plans and ideas to consolidate a dream of a future Vaal River City. I could speak to you for hours on end, and not adequately convey the vision. So instead let me share with you for the next 2 minutes the collective dream.

As stated already, the long term vision of the Vaal River City will include developments in Vaal Marina and Vaal Oewer that will complement the developments you saw in that clip. As these developments are established and as they grow they will connect to current and new developments that include the Gauteng Highlands Project and the residential hub of Savannah City.

People of the Vaal, these projects are not just plans that may or may not materialize they are a reality.

On the 06th May 2015, the Gauteng Premier, Honourable David Makhura together with our MEC, Jacob Mamabolo, turned the soil to kick start the Vaal River City Development. It's now a reality.

Savannah City was during the last few SoDA's a project in planning. Today it is a reality on the ground. In brick and mortar. We can show houses and roads and if you want to live in Savannah City, you can go and purchase a house as we speak. It is now a reality.

The Vaal River City will see private sector partners investing more than R4 billion into this development. The development is estimated to be worth between R7 and R11 billion, and will create up to 7 500 jobs in the construction phase alone.

The multiplier effect of similar projects is about 1.5 times which will result in economic spin-offs of between R3 and R5 billion for this region.

The Agritropolis

The second significant 'Game Changer' for Sedibeng will be the focus, acceleration and development of the Agritropolis'

This is a multi-faceted project that will include a wide variety of interventions. These include among others:

- Substantial recovery of underperforming farms that are already established in the Sedibeng.
- Release of land for new farming initiatives, including co-ops and a focus on high demand crops and high demand livestock farming.
- Improvements to infrastructure to supply inputs to the farms as well as facilitating distribution. Road and rail infrastructure needs will be accommodated in another linked project which I will come to shortly.
- Planting and harvesting fresh produce is not enough. We must add value to our products. Agri-processing will be another key component of the Agritropolis.
- Already National and Provincial intervention is underway and is called 'Project Rebirth' to turnaround, realign and expand the Vereeniging Fresh Produce market.

Sustainable Human Settlements

With regards to Human Settlements over the next four years, more than 120 000 houses in the Southern Sedibeng Corridor will be built. These will be amongst others, in the following areas:

- Boiketlong;
- Golden Gardens;
- Evaton;
- Vereeniging,
- Savanah City as already mentioned
- Ratanda and the
- R59 Corridor.

While these 2 Game Changers will occupy much of the work of councilors and officials, 6 other Strategic Projects will be embarked upon.

The need for a **FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS HUB** has long been on our list of priorities in the Vaal. We are pleased that the MEC for Roads and Transport has had 2 engagements with us, which included industrial role players such as Arcelor-Mittal and Samancor, to move up the timeline for a Freight and Logistics hub. I'm pleased to say that we also visited a suitable site for its location and with the

support and contribution of the private sector we aim to accelerate this project. The Agritropolis will also be a key user of the Logistics Hub.

While we lost some momentum on the implementation of the **SEDIBENG REGIONAL SANITATION SCHEME**, we are pleased that through the intervention of the National Minister of Water Affairs and Sanitation, we have overcome some of the challenges that brought the expansion of the Sebokeng Sewer Works to a standstill. The current work being done together with the upgrade of the Meyerton Works should tell you that this project is now well underway. We look forward to its roll-out until we realize all the components including the new Waste Water Care Works which will secure our sewer capacity needs into the future.

This year we will once again continue with the roll-out of our fibre optic project. For 2015/2016 we have started rolling out fibre in Midvaal to improve links to government offices. We will also utilize this fibre for more CCTV coverage in Midvaal. Our project is now linking up with the **GAUTENG E-CONNECT PROJECT**. We applaud MEC Barbra Creecy for intervening when she visited the Gauteng Monitoring Centre and found that Sedibeng was not linked to the Provincial Network. Within weeks a link was installed in our IT centre here in Vereeniging which will be used to support MEC Lesufi's schools programme as well as linking clinics and hospitals etc.

The Gauteng provincial government is supporting our **LIBERATION STRUGGLE AND HERITAGE ROUTES** and has already invested in a new Youth and Memorial Centre in Boipatong. We also envisage significant support for the many projects that we have in Sedibeng that marks our past and our notable contribution to the liberation of the country. Just to remind you that our five key heritage projects are:

- The Vaal Uprisings Commemoration
- Sharpeville Massacre Commemoration
- Boipatong Massacre Commemoration
- Treaty of Vereeniging Remembrance
- Celebrating the signing of the South African Constitution

Ladies and gentlemen, we must concede that we have underperformed with regard to providing alternative energy. While we were let down by poorly performing suppliers, we also did not make

sufficient progress in this regard. We therefore welcome the Provincial Gauteng Energy Strategy, which will assist us in accelerating projects of solar energy, alternative lighting, waste to energy and a whole range of other projects.

PART THREE (The move to the Metro)

There is a saying that says...

“Be Patient. Good things come to those who wait”

So let me therefore address the elephant in the room. The move to a Metro.

The move towards Metro remains firmly on track. There is consensus that the future of the Gauteng province is a Global City Region of five Metros.

The announcements have been made, the Demarcation Board is busy with the ward Delimitation process and we are on route to being a Metro.

On 03rd and 04th March 2015, we met at our District Wide Lekgotla in Vereeniging and Sedibeng with its three local municipalities, which by the way included Midvaal, received presentations by our administrations on the state of readiness to implement a transition process. We are able and ready.

The legal challenge by Midvaal will run its course and we keenly await the outcome.

However, I must say that with every single passing day that we are not implementing the Transitional Plan, our move to a healthy, vibrant, economically sound and effective Metro is being compromised.

The people of Sedibeng deserve the best Metro we can deliver, not one that is compromised by a rushed transition.

We still have time for a solid transition, but we need a resolution of the pending legal challenge sooner rather than later.

PART FOUR (Spatial Transformation)

John P Kotter said:

“Transformation is a process, it’s not an event.”

Over the period of time of democratic local government, the Sedibeng Space is being transformed. Yes we can do more to accelerate radical spatial transformation, but the changing face of Sedibeng must be recognized.

The R82 corridor is currently being transformed by the road upgrade underway. Soon it will be high speed, smooth flowing corridor which will move goods and services quickly into and out of the region.

The R59 corridor continues to flourish. On a weekly basis we see new developments springing up along the R59. New industrial parks, new small manufacturers are streaming into Sedibeng along this corridor. We are pleased that the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport has the road on the radar for upgrade and maintenance.

Working together with our locals and two other spheres of government we know that the best strategy for growing the economy is the retention and growing of existing business which in turn will lead into attracting the new ones.

The Zones of opportunity along the N3 which include the R23, the R550 and the R42 also show significant Corridor development.

The New Vaal River City will accelerate a new Government Precinct, a new Waterfront Precinct and will also stimulate the Barrage road developments.

Let us just consider how the barrage road corridor has developed. A few years ago the only notable development along this road was Pick N Pay. Then along came Makro, followed by Builders Warehouse, then a 3 km long industrial and office park, now we have Presidents Hyper just completed.

Our townships are also developing rapidly.

Many chain stores who have ventured into our townships, such as Game etc, tell us that they are amongst their best performing stores.

Evaton Plaza, once a small shopping Centre is now a thriving mall and is now called Evaton Mall.

The Thabong Shopping centre has also now flourished into an attractive and thriving mall.

Mayor Maloka and I cut the ribbon at the Heidelberg mall. Extensions to Vaal Mall are currently underway.

In Three Rivers, opposite the Riversquare Mall, River Walk opened and is now fully operational.

The Vereeniging Station and Taxido Taxi rank upgrade is now well underway.

You must be aware that these large developers don't speculate when the private sector invest huge amounts of money into these developments. They conduct proper market research before they risk their cash. I don't have to tell you what their research says, the results are visible in brick and stone.

Yes, the Vaal is indeed a Metro. Sooner or later, preferably sooner, but a Metro it will be.

Please do access our full 2015/2016 IDP which can be downloaded from our website from tomorrow, or accessed from our offices and libraries.

Chapter Three has our full Spatial Development Plan and it makes very encouraging and interesting reading.

We are transforming the space called Sedibeng.

PART FIVE (IDP Deliverables for 2015/2016)

Madam Speaker we must continue to work hard. Will Smith said ...

“Never let success go to your head. Never let failure go to your heart.”

It is in this spirit that we forge ahead with our daily work. In addition to the 'big things' that we will do in the next year, we will also continue to do the many useful smaller things that add up to big things.

In the next year, and under the Five-R's Plus Two, we will do the following.

To continue to **REINVENT THE ECONOMY** we will

- Operationalize the **Regional Tourism Organisation** to be functional. The Deputy Minister of Tourism attended our recent Tourism Awards and expressed great satisfaction at our

programmes. She also pledged more support for our initiatives. I might also add that we are pleased to report that the new political leadership in our sister city, Volta Mantovana in Italy, have pledged support for assisting our tourism development.

- Tourism **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT** is crucial to sustain and build products in the tourism industry. We will continue our internship program. We thank the private sector for taking in these interns and for providing them with the experience they require to be employable in the sector in future.
- SDM will increase **CWP and EPWP** roll out programmes in an effort to create jobs and provide some relief to thousands of young people in our area.
- Continue with the implementation of the **FABLAB** through products simulation.
- There are several programs linked to the Agricultural Sector and I have given some hint of them in the Agritropolis input so I will not expand on them here.
- On the 17 April this year, the Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry addressed SMME's in this very Theatre. I would like to touch on two notable outcomes from that meeting. Firstly, the DM spoke about many services the DTI has to support and assist small businesses. He also indicated that if Sedibeng was to avail a space, those services could be accessible to people in the region. We have moved swiftly to avail a space at our Vereeniging City Centre building. We will now set it up with the DTI to make these services available to our residents. Secondly, the DM invited us to join him in Cannes in France as he led a delegation to promote film making in South Africa. The DM announced that Sedibeng will be given the full backing of his department and the national Film and Video Foundation. Watch this space as we lobby to bring some huge events to Sedibeng.

To push for RENEWING COMMUNITIES, we will

- Facilitate the upgrading of the **INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS** with access to basic services and secure tenure (Local/Provincial/National partnership)
- Facilitate enrolment to **NATIONAL UPGRADING** support programme.
- Update and improve our **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK** and improve the Geographic Information Systems.
- Promote the **REGENERATION OF TOWNSHIPS** through Public and Private Funding.

- Identify **LAND PARCELS** owned by state to facilitate growth in strategic sites for economic and social development
- Develop a **REGIONAL MASTER PLAN** for water, sanitation and electricity
- Coordinate the establishment of the **FREIGHT AND LOGISTIC HUB**, SEZ and strategic economic nodes.

For the REVIVING of THE ENVIRONMENT, we will amongst others:

- Push for the Reduction of atmospheric pollutants to comply with AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS.
- See the development of a CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE strategy.
- Implement RENEWABLE ENERGY programmes in the district.
- Facilitate REHABILITATION OF LAND parcels to contribute to ecosystem resilience
- Push for the protection of INDIGENOUS FOREST assets
- Promote SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT and minimization of waste through improved collection, disposal and recycling and increase landfill sites with permits.
- Identify and develop strategy for facilitating the REHABILITATION of derelict and ownerless INDUSTRIAL SITES.
- Ensure greater alignment of SUSTAINABILITY criteria in all levels of integrated and spatial planning as well as the restoration and rehabilitation, and management of DEGRADED ECOSYSTEMS.
- Continue to render Environmental MUNICIPAL HEALTH SERVICES to all communities
- Manage ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS from industrial and related activities

To **RELEASE HUMAN POTENTIAL** internally we will

- Improve **LABOUR RELATIONS** and maintain conducive working environment

- Continue the significant spend on training and development
- Support implementation of our newly established **Employee Assistance PROGRAMME** which is showing many benefits already.

Externally we will:

- Support maternal and child **HEALTH SERVICES**
- Support the prevention and management of non-communicable and **CHRONIC DISEASES**
- Coordinate the **DISTRICT HEALTH COUNCIL (DHC)** activities.
- Roll out the Ward-based implementation of **HIV&AIDS** and TB programmes.
- Implement a wide range of projects to promote Community Safety including CCTV Surveillance. Promote **PUBLIC ACCESS TO SAFETY INFORMATION** and build public confidence in the police services.
- Implement key **HERITAGE PROGRAMMES** which I have alluded to already earlier in my address.

The **REINTEGRATING THE REGION** is ongoing as we:

- Develop Transport Corridors
- Expand Fibre Optic Network
- Strengthen our IGR framework and relations beyond the District, Province, Nationally and Internationally.
- **Madam Speaker**, the new deal on e-tolls is one of the attempts to help move the province forward. You will remember that last Wednesday on the 20 May, Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that a single, reduced tariff will apply to all motorists within the vehicle class whether they have e-tags or not, which meant the current standard tariff of 58c per kilometre for light motor vehicles will be reduced to 30c per kilometre. This is indeed good news to us the people of Gauteng. This is an illustration that ours is a peoples centred government which is at all times ready to listen and address the concerns and complaints of its citizens.

To Promote GOOD GOVERNANCE we will

- Do the many good things we have been doing in relation to our Clean Audit. Madam Speaker, I must take the opportunity to say that as a collective we must share with our people the many accolades we have received for our second successive Clean Audit Outcome and for our Performance Management System. We are proudly displaying here on this stage Awards received from:
 - The Auditor General of South Africa
 - The South African Local Government Association
 - The Institute of Municipal Finance Officers (IMFO)
 - Effective Intergovernmental Relations
- **We continue to implement our ANTI-FRAUD AND ANTI- CORRUPTION PLAN.**
- Implement and monitor a long term plan model for efficient **MANAGEMENT OF UTILITIES.**
- Conduct **RISK ASSESSMENT OF ASSET BASE** to identify areas requiring improvement in municipal financial and administrative efficiency;
- Have firmer **INTERNAL CONTROLS** to respond to internal audit reports and recommendations more effectively;

To DEEPEN DEMOCRACY we will

- Convene Izimbizo and the Annual STATE OF THE DISTRICT ADDRESS to account to communities.
- Convene STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS for the review of the IDP.
- Observe national and local COMMEMORATIVE DAYS.
- Strengthen IGR STRUCTURES.
- Develop campaigns for NATIONAL IDENTITY AND SOCIAL COHESION.
- Convene Joint Mayor's Forums and Joint Mayoral Committee engagements.
- Support a strong MORAL REGENERATION MOVEMENT and Develop sustainable moral regeneration programmes for the district.
- Expand mandate of the PETITIONS COMMITTEE into a Public Participation Committee
- Continue the Effective functioning of MPAC

The full details of our IDP Deliverables are contained in our IDP and I encourage you to engage with the full text.

PART SIX (Budgets)

Dave John Maxwell said ...

“A Budget is telling your money where to go, instead of wondering where it went.”

To support the implementation of these programs in our IDP, we have today also adopted a matching budget to finance our capital programmes and projects and to run the operations of the municipality including paying salaries to our employees.

The budget we have adopted today is based on a total revenue of R359,8 million.

The total Operational Expenditure is R359,6 million.

This will ensure that if there are no shifts during the course of the financial year, that we will close 2015/2016 with a surplus of R124,993.00

Contained in this budget are capital projects of R13,6 million.

Our income is predominantly based on grants. These grants, sourced from the National Treasury, are made up of Equitable Share of R245,7 million, and FMG Grant of R1,2 million, and EPWP Grant of R1 million, and Rural Roads Infrastructure Grant of R2 million and a Demarcation Transition Grant of R1,8 million.

From our Provincial Treasury we will receive grants of R7 million for our HIV & Aids programmes, R818,452 for the agricultural mechanization equipment maintenance, and R2million for the establishment of a milling plant.

Our budget remains highly constrained as we remain victims of an unsustainable financial model of funding for District Municipalities based on our powers and functions.

The Macroeconomic forecast pitches the Consumer Price Index Inflation rate between 6.2% and 5.3%.

The rising costs of running our operations is closer to 7% and the salary increases being demanded and paid is also closer to 7%.

The increase in our equitable share is only 2.3%, which is a major challenge that we have to grapple with.

With no other sources of revenue, we have no way to make up the difference other than cutting back drastically on our operational costs. The Auditor General has each year raised the issue of our 'Going Concern' in our Annual Audit.

To remain viable we continue to implement a list of austerity measures, we continue to leave vacancies unfilled through a process of natural attrition, and we plan ahead and ensure that we survive.

So while the District is constrained, we continue to play our coordinating and facilitating role and we make things happen. That is our value add.

Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentleman, we are a District Municipality with three Local Municipalities. Alone, each of us will feel disempowered to make a huge impact.

Yet if we look at our budgets collectively, we see a significantly different picture.

In the next year Midvaal will run an operational budget of R986m, Lesedi R588m and Emfuleni R5 billion.

The capital budget of Midvaal for the next year is R90m, for Lesedi its R44m and for Emfuleni its R522m.

If you add these to the Sedibeng Budget Local Government in this District will operate on a R7 billion budget and will expend R672 million on capital projects.

The key challenge therefore remains, as we have often said in our motivations for a Metro, that of having a strategic alignment of our collective spend.

In the coming year, the District aims to rely more heavily on current legislation to ensure that we do better at this coordination.

PART SEVEN (LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES IDP's)

It was Steve Jobs who said ...

“Great things in business are never done by one person. They are done by a team of people.”

Our Local Municipalities are part of our team. Together we are Team Sedibeng.

This State of the District Address therefore cannot be viewed in isolation from the IDP's of our three local Municipalities. The Mayor of Midvaal, Mayor Bongani Baloyi presented his State of the Municipality Address on 18 May 2015 and in his address he made the following key points:

- He noted the alignment of the Midvaal IDP to the 'Five-R's plus Two' of the District and went on to emphasize the need for tight alignment. Sedibeng District applauds this effort.
- The address spelt out the 8 Key Performance Areas which are organized under the themes of Caring, Safety, Inclusivity, Being Well Run, seizing opportunities and being Forward Thinking.
- Reference to the National Ministers 'Back-To-Basics' programme was also welcomed.
- Mayor Baloyi expanded on key infrastructure programmes that include among others the upgrade to the Meyerton Waste Water Treatment Works by the National Government, improvements to road networks including Steve Biko road in ward 10 and rebuilding Jan Neethling Road.
- The District also welcomes the provision of toilets in Boitumelo, Piels Farm and Khayalitsha.
- The reference made in the Midvaal SoMA to the Agritropolis marks the beginning of an extensive programme that will require working together with the Sedibeng District and the other spheres of government. We truly look forward to “unlock the agricultural potential of Sedibeng as the food basket of the Gauteng City Region and position the region as an Agrotropolis.”

The State of the Municipality Address of our Emfuleni Local Municipality will be held 29 May 2015. Mayor Hlongwane, we look forward to your address and I will not endeavor to steal your thunder. I will instead raise curiosity by saying the following about your 2015/2015 IDP.

The expenditure that Emfuleni will make in infrastructure is most welcome and often unrecognized. When a substation is upgraded, it has no visible impact. It will create stability to the grid and so it prevents a collapse moving forward. It is therefore a preventative expenditure that hardly anyone will notice or applaud.

In the coming year Emfuleni will spend:

R26m on Bulk water supply from Quaggasfontein reservoir to Johandeo

R24m on various Eskom intake substations

R17m Planning, designing and construction of Klip River Drive West, Gen Hertzog & Nile, and Gen Hertzog intersection in Three Rivers

R13m on Construction of Wepener Road in Ironsyde

R7m Construction of roads and stormwater in Debonair park

R6,9m on Bulk water supply from Evaton reservoir to Dadaville

R6.8m on Construction of roads and stormwater in Beverly Hills

R17m on various substation upgrades of 11Kva and 88Kva .

Madam Mayor, I trust that the community will attend in numbers as you expand further on the significant spend you will be making on capital projects on Roads and Storm water, Primary Health Care, Parks and Cemeteries and Waste Management among so many others.

Mayor Lerato Maloka will be hosting the Lesedi State of the Municipality Address immediately after their Council sitting before the end of this month.

In the Lesedi SoMA, Mayor Maloka will make announcements regarding:

R1,5 million for Organisational re-engineering.

Upgrade to the Vichkuil Water Tower worth R10m

Upgrade to the bulk sewer at Kwazenzele at a cost of R12m

R12m will also be spent in the next year on Roads and Stormwater upgrades.

We also look forward to the Mayor's announcements on the Tecino Industrial Development Planning and the establishment of a landfill site in Devon.

With the support of the Department of Environmental affairs, R6m will be spent on the beautification of Ratanda.

PART EIGHT (Conclusion)

As I reach my conclusion, I remember the saying.

“Never skip to the happy Ending. You might miss the best part of the story.”

I trust that this SoDA has shared with you the best parts of our story.

OBITUARIES

As I conclude this address, I would like us to take a moment to remember those who are no longer with us who touched our lives so profoundly. These are some of the great people who, since our last SoDA have left us:

- We remember Dr. Steven ‘Kalamazoo’ Mokone who was a soccer legend and the first black South African to play in European League. He left this world on the 20th March 2015.
- Richard Teboho Henyekane died on a car crash on the 7th April 2015.
- On 14 April 2014, we also lost one of our stalwarts from Roshnee, Dr Abdul-Haq Patel, who passed away at the age of 94. Dr Patel served with Madiba in the Congress Offices before being encouraged by Madiba to go to university. As a medical doctor he served all his professional life in Evaton.

- We also said Farewell to Minister Collins Chabane who is remembered for having joined the ANC and its MK underground mission in Angola at an early age of 17 years. Comrade Chabane was elected to parliament in 1994, and has served in all administrations since, including in the Limpopo Provincial Government. Blessed with many talents, he also headed a marimba band called Movement and recorded two CDs. His untimely early death is indeed a great loss to all of us
- We also buried a revolutionary comrade Sthembiso Radebe, a committed community activist and leader to the end.
- We also recently lost Senyaka, an artist, whose real name is Thula Kekana. He was the son of Moses Kekana, who was among the anti-apartheid fallen heroes. Ntate Moses was one of the founding members of the ANC Youth League in 1948. He was also instrumental in the Evaton bus boycott in the 1950s. His son Senyaka was born in the midst of the historic bus boycott which changed the face of South African politics.
- On Saturday, 23 May, we bid farewell to one of the veterans of our liberation struggle, Mme Ruth Mompati. Mme Mompati was conferred by the African National Congress the highest honour, Seaparankoe. This makes her one of the rare breeds in our country. She will be remembered for her bravery and selfless contributions to our country. She joins many other heroes, heroines and martyrs who have left this place of the living since our last SoDA of 2014.

May their souls rest in peace!

Madam Speaker, the road ahead is full of challenges. Soon we will be headed into our elections for our new Council representatives. I want to thank all my fellow Councillors and officials who share in the awards and accolades we have received. I want to acknowledge the relations we enjoy with our opposition parties who engage with us in a robust manner, but free of vindictiveness and animosity. We are a vibrant multi-party democracy.

I thank my family for their constant support.

I continue to be the humble servant of the African National Congress and of the people of Sedibeng.

I thank you.