



WEST RAND DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

16 APRIL 2021

State of the District Address by Executive Mayor D.S Thabe

Honourable Speaker of the West Rand District Municipality:

Alderman Nonkoliso Tunzi-Hawu;

Chief Whip of Council- Cllr Smuts Monoane;

Executive Mayors Present;

Speakers and Chief Whips of Local Municipalities;

Chairpersons of the respective MPAC's in the region;

Members of the Mayoral Committees;

Honourable Members of the District Municipal Council;

Honourable Members of the Local Councils;

Leadership of Political Parties;

Municipal Managers and Staff Members;

Religious Leaders;

Renowned Guests;

Members of Media;

Comrades, Compatriots, Friends;

Ladies and Gentlemen

Madam Speaker, as a point of departure, may we take a moment of silence to pay tribute to all our West Randers who have fallen prey to the silent enemy looming amongst us in the shadow. West Randers, stand firm, it too, shall pass!

Our matriculants, you have continued to make us proud, year in year out. Even in a pandemic, here you stand – tall, and 83.5% strong. Honourable Members, let me highlight that 50% of our matriculants obtained university bachelors entry. This gives testament to our strength in education as a region.

Honourable Members, gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide is a social ill that has left no sector of society untouched. Against this, we have ensured a focused approach on conducting on-going awareness and educational campaigns, information dissemination via our website (www.wrdm.gov.za) and various platforms, we have also continued to support Victim Empowerment Centres. It must be reported Madam Speaker that the Executive Mayor of the West Rand District Municipality (Cllr Dennis Thabe) was recently appointed as a member of the Gauteng Provincial GBV Committee representing the West Rand Region, on the same token the three Executive Mayors of the constituent local municipalities of the WRDM are to form a committee that will deal with GBV related matters in the region.

Compatriots, as you are aware, the month of April is normally welcomed with mixed feelings, and emotions by most South Africans, this month reminds us of the painful prize paid by some of our struggle comrades such as the late Thembisile Chris Hani; the late Solomon “Kalushi” Mahlangu who laid down their lives for the freedom of black South Africans on the one hand and on the other hand it is a month that brings lots of great memories on how

majority of our people in 1994 stood anxiously in long queues to cast their first democratic vote in the history of this country. We also commemorate our struggle icon and human rights campaigner Charlotte Maxeke and other selfless women of her generation who fought against oppression at a time when such defiance was met with unrelenting force. To date, the month of April commemorates Freedom.

With Jean-Jacques Rousseau famous phrase, "man is born free, but he is everywhere in chains. Madam Speaker, we are everywhere in chains. We are in chains of wearing a face mask, social distancing chains, quarantine chains, curfew chains, sanitising chains, temperature gauge chains, the looming of death upon us and our loved ones' chains. Madam Speaker we live in a time where we are confronted with death and dying, coupled with compromised immune systems from those that are resilient and bear the brunt.

Nonetheless, it is Viktor Frankl who once said, if there is meaning in life at all, then there must be meaning in suffering. Suffering is an enduring part of life, even as fate and death. Without suffering and death human life cannot be complete.

Madam speaker, as we define our tasks in life to enable us to complete our lives, what we realise is that meaning in life differs from man to man and from moment to moment. Thus it is impossible to define the meaning of life in a general way. Questions about the meaning of life can never be answered by sweeping statements. "Life" does not mean something vague, but something very real and concrete, just as life's tasks are also very real and concrete. They form man's destiny, which is different and unique for each individual. No man and no destiny can be compared with any other man or

any other destiny. No situation repeats itself, and each situation calls for a different response.

Sometimes the situation in which a man finds himself may require him to shape his own fate by action. At other times it is more advantageous for him to make use of an opportunity for contemplation and to realize assets in this way. Sometimes man may be required simply to accept fate, to bear his cross. Every situation is distinguished by its uniqueness, and there is always only one right answer to the problem posed by the situation at hand.

The scourge of covid-19 has propelled us in a direction that requires a different response as we search for meaning in our suffering. Behavioural Scientists have argued that we need to abandon our old ways of doing, and adopt a new paradigm to enable us to embrace our new normal. The new normal in this regards, relates to opportunities that lies in chaos. Opportunities to redress, build resilient institutional and societal capacity to deal effectively with any future pandemics and disasters within the West Rand Region.

Madam Speaker through the State of the District Address, I will provide context on how we have embraced our new normal - our response to the pandemic, our forward thinking in terms of our development priorities as a region. Firstly, I will give context on the covid-19 response structures and secondly, provide context on the development priorities which translate into our regional 14 outcomes.

Madam Speaker in response to pandemic, National and Provincial Government(s), Metro(s) and District Municipalities were requested to establish coordinating structures for the administration and governance purpose. These structures were established as follows: National, Provincial

and District Command Councils supported by their respective Command Centres and Emergency Operations Centres. District Command Centres and Emergency Operations Centres in this regard are responsible for driving programme implementation as per the six pillar strategy in the case of Gauteng Province identified to address Covid-19 initiatives.

Honourable Speaker, through these structures we are in position to monitor the pandemic in real live data.

As at 8th April 2021, the region recorded 24 832 cumulative positive cases, with 96% recoveries and 1% active cases. Increase in active cases per 100 000 population within sub-districts is as follows: Mogale (11.4%) Rand West (4, 4%) and Merafong (8, 4%). The District currently averages 8, 2% increase in active cases. Whereas comparison for increase in new cases per 100 000 population within the sub-districts is as follows Mogale City (300%), Rand West City (100%) and Merafong City (100%). The District currently averages 666.7% increase in new cases. 39 667 of cumulative contacts traced and monitored, where the cumulative ratio is 1 is to 2 (1:2). Total screening to date is 2 901 396, total testing 65 660 and 773 deaths. 424 (54.9%) are female and 349 (45.1%) are male. 669 of deaths (87%) recorded among those aged between ages 40 and 90 years. 552 of death (71.4%) have comorbidities.

To date, progress in terms of the six pillar strategy is as follows:

Pillar 1 – Comprehensive Health Response

We continued to conduct employee health and safety programs which includes amongst others, screening of employees at all municipal buildings on a daily basis, and the use of the WRDM Modular Clinic which serves as a testing site for all municipal officials within the West Rand as and when cases

arise; Employee Wellness sessions and training; Cleansing and Sanitization - Daily cleaning of all premises in terms of the protocols and collection of medical waste by DOH; Deep Cleaning and Sanitization - periodic decontamination carried out in all Municipalities as well as roll out of the Regional vaccine programme.

Pillar 2 – Infrastructure Provision

We have ensured continued intensification of measures put in place to address and fast track any blockages and back logs with regards to service delivery projects and services such as water, electricity and sanitation.

Pillar 3 – Enforcement and Compliance

We continue to intensify law enforcement operations in compliance with the Disaster Management Regulations and special focus placed on liquor outlets, taverns, public transport, burial places, formal and informal businesses. Madam Speaker GBV remains one of the most serious crimes that needs to be addressed on continuous basis, hence Speaker intensive programmes and awareness campaigns are conducted on weekly basis. Training of Peace Officers to assist in the enforcement of by-laws currently being planned by MCLM. Arrive Alive Campaigns and Covid-19 awareness is done by Local Municipalities and WRDM's Public Safety Dept, including various key Public and Private Sector Entities and role players.

Pillar 4 – Economic Response Plan

As a region we continued to ensure a focused approach on non-financial support to our business communities with regards to the issuing of permits continuing in accordance with lockdown regulations. We are also piloting a series of mentoring/capability development programmes for SMME's, such as

Hawker permits, business inspections, new businesses registrations with CIPC, emerging farmers support assistance, EPWP Municipal Initiative participants. Through the Capex Delivery initiative we have been able to identify and address blockages in Capex delivery in order to expedite spending.

The district and its constituent local municipalities have committed where possible to ensure timeous payment of service providers especially SMME's in order to avoid collapse of these businesses. We have also continued to monitor Social Labour Plan's (SLP's) in ensuring that respective mining houses are implementing their SLP commitments as approved by DMR, we also continued to ensure that SMMEs are empowered through subcontracting from large development projects implemented in our region such as Umphakathi Regional Mall and Umphakathi Centre). SMMEs are linked to other funding institutions such as DTIC and GEP to access start-up capital to revive their almost collapsing businesses as a result of covid-19 pandemic. The region has also identified different Industrial clusters such as Bokamoso Ba Rona, West city and West Rand Mega Park that will form part of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and High Growth Firms as catalyst for repositioning the economy of the West Rand.

Pillar 5 – Social Mobilisation and Social Solidarity

We activated and operationalized ward-based war rooms as part of the District Command Council to facilitate ward-based interventions across various Covid-19 hotspots areas in the region. Special attention is given to all wards that are identified as hotspots throughout the region and provincial sector departments are constantly ensuring that these wards are assisted as when intervention is required, interventions include: (Education, Health

Awareness and Social Support – R350 Relief Funds pay-outs at various Post Offices, Food Security and Shelter for the Homeless).

Pillar 6 – State Capacity and Adaptability

The region implemented this pillar to ensure a focused approach on embedding the new normal from a perspective of transitioning from the OLD to the NEW service delivery value chain which is underpinned by alignment and implementation alternative service models i.e. the District Development Model / West Rand Shared Services Centre Model, etc.

While Covid-19 pandemic has created a state of disarray and panic within the world of work, it has also changed our lives and has highlighted a number of areas that the District has identified as critical lessons to acknowledge and drive in an effort to build a more resilient region. It has encouraged emergency preparedness in such that Local Governments need strong disaster preparedness and emergency management systems that can identify vulnerable pockets and respond to challenges quickly as they arise. Enhanced systems and data Integration, Local bodies need platforms for cross coordination and communication to rapidly deploy resources where they are most needed.

Madam Speaker, allow me to provide context of the key specific outcomes as contained in our 14 regional outcomes:

OUTCOME: ROBUST FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Honourable Speaker, I am proud to announce that we have managed to receive once again an unqualified audit opinion but this time around with significantly reduced number of audit findings from 24 to 7 under the current regularity audit conducted by the Office of Auditor General South Africa. The

District has no findings under supply chain management. This achievement of the WRDM demonstrates the intention of the whole region moving towards the attainment of clean governance. The financial sustainability of all the municipalities within the region is gradually improving due to the implementation of the financial turnaround strategies and cost containment policies tabled in various Councils of the respective municipalities. The finalization of the municipal financial recovery plan for the District (presently under implementation with the assistance of the Provincial intervention) aims to assist the municipality with a permanent solution to generate its own revenue and develop a model to sustain underfunded/ unfunded mandates.

Madam Speaker we can report that there is a significant improvement in Intergovernmental Relations between the WRDM and its local municipalities encouraged by amongst others the effective implementation of the District Command Council and the District Development Model, and it is behind this background that the WRDM also started to recover the long outstanding contribution owed to it by the local municipalities.

It is not a secret that the impact of Covid-19 has landed municipalities in the region on the back foot, and this led to the increase in municipal debt, and therefore as an effort to remedy and minimise this pressure municipalities within the region have entered into payment arrangements with key creditors such as Eskom, Rand Water and other major creditors to ensure compliance with Municipal Finance Management Act.

In the 2019/20 financial year the WRDM developed a financial turnaround strategy aimed at achieving radical revenue enhancement in the immediate, medium and long term as well as effective expenditure management. The key strategic focus was to improve the generation of municipal own revenue and

strengthen the municipality's financial position. It is through this exercise that the municipality was also able to table an acceptable budget in the 2020/21 financial year.

To further ensure compliance to regulatory prescripts, I must report that the procurement of covid-19 PPE and related items by the WRDM has been done in accordance with Supply Chain Management prescripts and recently promulgated MFMA Circulars and Guidelines issued by National Treasury following the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic. As a result, no findings on the procurement of PPE and related items were raised by the Auditor General, and the municipality continues to report accordingly on the procurement of PPE to the relevant authorities.

Madam Speaker, we have also established a Resource Mobilisation Task Team, to explore innovation around financial sustainability of the District in the unforeseeable future. There are also innovations been explored around streamlining of our IGR processes to yield decisive decision making, this is done together with our Constituent Local Municipalities. This exercise should also assist to embed key policies and transformation strategies such as, the District Development Model, West Rand Regional Shared Service Centre, and West Rand Regional Plan. Our Shared Services Centre approach was identified as a deliverable of our Municipal Financial Recovery Plan. Through Shared Services we currently have a missed opportunity of benefiting from a total of R933 million conservative approach, R1.4 billion moderate approach and R2 billion aggressive approach District wide.

OUTCOME: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND TRANSFORMATION; SKILLED, CAPACITATED, COMPETENT, AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

From an Institutional Planning and Transformation perspective we pride ourselves on moving municipal performance from 76% in 2018/19 to 83% 2019/20 financial year, tse-ke-di-levels Madam Speaker! Our 17% variance is as a result of targets not achieved due to covid-19 National Lockdown as well as the dire financial constraint of the municipality. We envisage the implementation of the District Development Model will assist to turn the situation around.

Honourable members, to maintain our performance accolades, we accede to the premise that, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. What do we mean by this Honourable Members? Madam Speaker, please allow me to spend some time on people and soft issues, the impact, thereof, on service delivery efficiency and effectiveness.

Madam Speaker, we have contextualised our service delivery value chain and offering from an Inside-Out model, which pulls from our West Rand Shared Services Feasibility Study, what this posits is that, in order to improve service delivery in the external environment, the District internal operations and capabilities must first be improved. The Inside-Out model illustrates the integral relationship between the internal capabilities of the District and the fourteen (14) regional outcomes of our Regional Plan, which has been the cornerstone of our regional developmental agenda since August 2016. The model, Madam Speaker, highlights the need to get internal issues right in order to drive success in the external environment – for this, the internal and the external environments need to be in alignment.

Internal capabilities are centred firstly on people employed within the municipality, and secondly on finance, process, and customer service capabilities. This underlines people, finance, processes, and customer service as the core of the internal municipal environment that drives delivery of regional outcomes within the municipality. With regard to people in particular, a strategic and professional HR function is critical to ensuring the appropriate skills are in place to support the required internal capabilities. A capable and well-capacitated internal environment is key to producing the products and services required to meet the needs of the external environment.

The model equates addressing of the needs of the external environment as successful delivery of the 14 regional outcomes, which are as follows: 1. Basic Service Delivery Improvement 2. Accountable Municipal Administration 3. Skilled, Capacitated, Competent, and Motivated Workforce 4. Ethical Administration and Good Governance 5. Safe Communities 6. Educated Communities 7. Healthy Communities 8. Sustainable Environment 9. Build Spatially Integrated Communities 10. Socially Cohesive Communities 11. Reduced Unemployment 12. Economic Development 13. Robust Financial Administration 14. Institutional Planning and Transformation

A specific example of the Inside-Out Model can be seen within Human Resource (HR). HR is crucial to ensure skilled, happy and productive employees in a virtuous cycle. The virtuous cycle occurs in the 'inside' portion of the model. When employees within the municipalities have high morale and are supported by the required resources (finance, staff, skills etc.) and efficient processes they produce high-quality customer service which in turn

translates into successful delivery of the 14 regional outcomes within the District.

Madam Speaker, against this context, we will be embarking upon a journey to the higher road, it was our intention to commence with the journey in 2020/21 financial year, however, due to the outbreak of covid-19 we had to postpone. Honourable Members, we will, however, be commencing with the journey again in 2021/22 financial year. The journey amongst other things is deep rooted in implementing the Inside-Out model, where we will place a strong emphasis on re-igniting our employees' fire, passion, vigour and engagement towards inculcating a high performance culture within our District.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, Compatriots, it is important to point out that the journey to the higher road as was earmarked for 2020/21 financial was to take place in an environment free from corona virus. What we are beginning to see is a corona virus thriving environment. This environment, does two things to you as an individual: you adapt or you die – sad reality Honourable Members, very sad indeed, we are laterally burying people, day in day out! To date, the region has lost 13 employees in all four municipalities due to Covid-19 related illnesses.

Now, Honourable Members, if you adapt, obviously you have survived the pandemic, now, what becomes problematic is that you have endured post trauma. The covid-19 post trauma has a lingering effect, both physically and psychologically. On a physical level, your immune system is compromised. On psychological level, your mental health is compromised. Now, what does this mean for our workforce, our service delivery agents/champions who are at the coalface of service delivery, whether they are working remotely or in

physical settings? It means they are not the same people we know, as their productivity has been affected and there is a potential that productivity will be affected further into the future, including other constructs that measure productivity within the workplace i.e. engagement levels, etc.

This, Honourable Members, forces us to reconsider our Human Resources Practices, Strategies and Interventions – to ensure a more focused approach on the alignment of people and work in a pandemic. This suggests a revamp of our Employee Wellness Programmes and the likes. Our journey to the higher road, Madam Speaker, will ensure we look into these issues with a fine tooth comb.

OUTCOME: BUILD SPATIALLY INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

From a Human Settlement perspective, the WRDM is still playing a co-ordination role within the region in the execution of project delivery.

With regards to Social Housing, the Golden West Social Housing Institute completed the first 126 units with their turnkey construction partner, Messrs Crimson King Developments in the Westonaria Borwa Mega Human Settlements Project, situated in Rand West City LM. It envisages that an additional 456 units are still to be completed in this project.

Mega Human Settlements Projects within West Rand Region are intended to deliver the numbers needed in terms of meeting the housing backlog and aggressively transform the spatial patterns in Gauteng. This is a move away from one project delivery approach to a more clustered method – in order to maximise output in the provision of decent houses and impact on the eradication of informal settlements.

The new Mega cities are intended to promote social, racial, economic and cultural integration. Additionally, the concept of Mega Cities reinforces the key principles and considerations of spatial reconfiguration, township economy revitalisation and massive infrastructure investment as a means of transforming settlements and cities into productive cities that are inclusive, sustainable and founded on principles of good governance. All the new cities will have major socio-economic benefits with regard to decent employment and economic inclusion.

As the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements rolls out the Mega Cities programme, there is a need to form key partnerships to ensure proper planning and provision of all required infrastructure services such as water, sanitation, electricity, energy, roads and social amenities. The following are the projects that are in different phases of development within the region:

- **Affrivillage** in Rand West City Local municipality is intended to yield 9880 units in its completion, completed 1596.
- **Montrose** is in Rand West City Local municipality is intended to yield 13792 units in its completion, awaiting quality assurance.
- **Westonaria Borwa** is in Rand West City Local municipality is intended to yield 6500 units in its completion, completed 1902.
- **Western Mega** is in Rand West City Local municipality is intended to yield 9385 units in its completion, still in the planning phase.
- **Dan Tloome** is in Rand West City Local municipality and is at planning stage, completed 1166.
- **Elijah Barayi** is in Merafong City Local municipality is intended to yield 12491 units in its completion, completed 3138.

In addition to the above -mentioned Mega Projects, Mogale city is currently proposing the development of Nooitgedacht 534 JQ property as Mega Human Settlement project. This property consist of different portions of land that need to be integrated to form **Valley Country Lifestyle Estate**. This will be added to the rest of the other Mega Human Settlements projects.

Honourable members, Speaker what is common in all the Mega Projects is insufficient bulk infrastructure supply which requires funding.

Madam Speaker, the title deeds restoration programme is moving at a snail pace. The backlog of title deeds to be issued within the West Rand including houses of pre and post 1994 RDP houses has not been finalised. There is a need to issue these title deeds from the old stock and wrap up legacy projects. Concluding this will make way for the mega human settlements projects in Gauteng which are going to make a major impact and dent on the existing backlog.

In order to accelerate the issuing of title deeds it will be important to streamline the work of various stakeholders who are in the value chain of title deeds. This therefore means stronger coordination is needed between all stakeholders to accelerate issuing of title deeds. There are various processes that are delaying this process, which include processes in the municipalities, Department of Human Settlements, Surveyor-General, Deeds Registrar, conveyancing firms and so on. From 2014/15 to 2019/20 financial year we have issued 6130 title deeds which included both Pre 1994 and Post 1994 RDP Houses.

Madam Speaker, transformation of the mining towns through the creation of sustainable integrated human settlements and the Revitalization of Distressed Mining Towns Communities Programme is on-going, Messrs Shisaka has been appointed to develop a business and implementation plan for the West Rand District Mining Towns. West Rand District Municipal Council adopted the plan. Projects have been identified and TPS Development Projects appointed to develop the Project Readiness Matrix for the WRDM.

Honourable members as you may be aware, the District is spatially characterised by a dispersed spatial structure, with various towns and informal settlements spread across the entire municipal area, whilst the rural areas consist of a large number of farms, as well as agricultural holdings. In an endeavour to address this, we have advanced with the development of the Spatial Development Framework (SDF), where the framework will address spatial, environmental and economic issues confronting both the urban and rural areas of the district. The first draft of the SDF was compiled by Messrs Plan Associates. This draft was published for public comments during 2020, and currently internal & external comments are incorporated into a final document. Once this document has been completed by the service provider, a final WRDM SDF will be submitted to the WRDM Council for approval.

In so far as land use applications are concerned the matter is receiving attention through the established District Wide Tribunal, to date, the Memorandum of Agreement between the 3 Local Municipalities and the WRDM is in place, where the WRDM serves as the custodian to the Tribunal.

Furthermore, the WRDM has advanced with the establishment of an Evaluation Panel to evaluate all nominations to serve on the Tribunal.

OUTCOME: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, EDUCATED COMMUNITIES, SOCIALLY COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

In an effort to ensure environmental sustainability we have currently commenced with “We Love Bekkies Project”, which aims to promote waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste and focusses on implementing the waste management hierarchy, and with the ultimate aim of diverting waste from landfills. To date, 10 beneficiaries were identified for this project with a budget of R150 000.00.

With regards to the introduction of alternative energy technologies and fuelling options we have provided 1916 methanol stoves across the District, this assists to raise awareness with regards to pollution in informal settlements through understanding energy needs and providing suitable alternative energy technologies. This also raises awareness on both health and safety dangers associated with the use of “dirty” and inferior traditional fuels and technology i.e. Brazier (Mbaula/konka) and paraffin stoves, and benefits of using clean technologies and fuels. This requires a shift and change in behavioural pattern of energy consumers.

On Early Childhood Development Centres (ECD’s) we conducted **543 health surveillance of premises** inspections on ECDC’s in accordance to the MHS By-Laws of the WRDM and 400 were found to be compliant – more work must still be done in this area in an effort to ensure compliance rate of 66%

improves. 5 ECDC's were supported with books and advisory services that helps in developing children storytelling and reading skills.

In ensuring healthy communities, we have conducted a total of 3540 inspections on food premises within the District of which 1427 were compliant, a clear demonstration that we still have more work to do in order to encourage safer food handling in accordance to Regulation 638. In the same space a total of 14 136 foodstuffs were removed from shelves as part of the fake food campaigns with a total of 39 law enforcements campaigns conducted.

And as part of monitoring the safety of food a total of 216 food samples were taken by Environmental Health Practitioners for laboratory analysis testing and 88 was found to be compliant - more work must still be done in this area in an effort to ensure compliance rate of 41% is improved.

Over 856 water samples were taken for laboratory analysis in line with Water Quality Standards methodology SANS241, against this, it is eminent that the region complies with the Blue Drop Status, in that 96.5% of our drinking water is safe and is off good quality.

In terms of environmental management we managed to generate R 25 000 through the issuing of four (4) Atmospheric Emission Licenses. About 16 industries and mines have been inspected across the region as part of ensuring compliance with National Air Quality Act and reduce exposure of communities to toxic air pollution levels. As part of intergovernmental relations, the Municipality with the assistance of the National Department of

Environment, Forestry and Fisheries has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the South African Weather Services for management and maintenance of the two Ambient Air Quality Monitoring stations located in Mogale City and Rand West City Local Municipalities since August 2019 to date. The main aim of this partnership is to ensure that the two air quality monitoring stations are properly maintained as per the National Standards.

A total of **119 funeral undertakers'** premises have been inspected in line with Covid-19 Regulation on the management of Covid-19 human remains and Regulation 363.

Towards ensuring a socially cohesive District, 196 women were nominated to participate in the girls' football event which was sponsored by Messrs Triviron Projects and Management. We supported 5 Schools to participate in the Segarona rural schools Arts program aimed at identifying talent, supporting life orientation and to sustain cultural activity. Due to covid-19 we could only conduct 4 awareness campaigns in line with gender and disability.

Madam Speaker, we can depict in the report of Stats SA that the youth of this country at the ages between 13 and 35 represents 42% of the total population. Given the youthful nature of the South African population, much of the socio-economic challenges faced by the nation, including poverty, inequality and joblessness, poor health are largely encountered by the youth. Poverty and inequality are prioritised of the development policy which aims to create an enabling environment for youth development. Madam Speaker the district municipality has appointed youth facilitators in each department of this organization to deal with youth related programmes and support in each

functional area of this municipality. Madam Speaker the WRDM in its endeavour to support youth empowerment has provided an office space to the National Youth Agency (NYDA) to deliver on its mandate of advancing youth development through guidance and support initiatives across sectors of society and spheres of government. Madam speaker, this enables young people from the region to have easy access to NYDA offices, in order to get Information on their services.

The National Department of Tourism (NDT) together with the Gauteng Tourism Authority (GTA) partnered and implemented a Tourism Monitor programme that included identification of tourism sites and attractions. Deployment to these sites was for the duration of 3 years or 36 months, which ceased at the end of December 2020.

This project provided 200 unemployed youth in Gauteng with employment and skill training of which the West Rand had received 35 opportunities. Preference was given to ensure regional spread focusing on township establishment experiences. The NDT was the project sponsor whilst GTA was the implementer and EPWP was the funding agent/partner, with amongst others, responsible for the payment of stipends. The tourism monitors were placed at different establishments throughout the region and equipped young people with the much needed exposure and experience. The District played an important role of arranging placements for the monitors. Madam speaker, I am happy to report that the National Department of Tourism is embarking on a new 12 months programme to train, capacitate and deploy 600 unemployed youth (minimum of 2 per local municipality) in all 257 municipalities across the country. The main objective of this programme is to

collect tourism and related data needed to understand the tourism footprint and to build a National System that will host content for the entire tourism sector. This programme will also equip youth with Entrepreneurial skills as the youth will be trained on ten accredited courses for the New Venture Creation qualification (NQF Level 2). The youth will earn a monthly stipend of R3498 for 12 months, at a daily rate of R159. Discussions to finalize the commencement of the programme are still underway and we shall share the information at the relevant platforms.

OUTCOME: SAFE COMMUNITIES

Madam Speaker, in an effort to ensure that the West Rand communities feel and are safe, fire and rescue services responded to 686 fire related incidents and 664 Rescue and Motor Vehicle Accidents. In spite of the challenges faced by the District Emergency Management Services, we still managed to meet and exceed our attendance time's targets of 84% in 10 minutes in urban areas (84% fire incidents and 88% rescue incidents) and 20 minutes in rural areas for both fire related incidents 95% and motor vehicle accidents 98%.

On the 11 December 2020, the entire Public Safety department conducted a multi-agency and multi focused live emergency simulation exercise at R563 Hekpoort, which objectives was to test our logistics, physical capabilities, communications, knowledge and skills. Our main aim was to ensure that all organisations are fully prepared for all types of emergencies. The exercise was also an excellent training event from the point of view of experiential learning, helping participants to develop confidence in their skills and providing experience of what it would be like to use the plan's procedures in real event. The main objective of this exercise was essentially to test

rigorously the concept of operations from the coordinated central response by multiple agencies, make role players feel more comfortable in real emergencies and build morale amongst all services.

Madam Speaker, in line with combating the spread of covid-19, during hard lock down and beyond public safety played an instrumental role in ensuring that public places were sanitised effectively i.e. Malls, Banks, Fuelling Stations, Shopping Centres, Taxi Ranks, Clinics, Fire Stations, The WRDM and 107EOC just to name a few. Volunteers from the Disaster Management Unit as well as reservists from Fire Services also assisted with these campaigns.

In order to ensure compliance with the national building regulations, the fire prevention section conducted 521 building inspections at various premises in the district. The section approved 252 building plans and conducted 196 hazardous material inspections. 72 fire investigations were conducted to determine the causes of fires. We firmly believe that effective fire prevention assist with limiting the number and size of major fires and fire related fatalities and also protect the economic infrastructure against fire damage.

Madam Speaker, Our Public Information Education and Relations continues to conduct awareness safety programmes, to date 82 awareness programs were conducted ranging from learn not burn, water safety and firework safety where vulnerable members of our communities was assisted through training sessions and workshops to minimise the effects of emergency incidents and to lessen the chances of fires occurring in their houses and communities. We managed to address 8 274 community members through

the awareness campaigns that were conducted. The awareness programs assist with curbing the number of community members perishing in fatal fires during our fire season.

The Emergency Management Services of the WRDM is active in the Agricultural Sector and continues to provide support and coordination to the 11 registered Rural Fire protection Associations in the West Rand. This support assist to minimise the impact of wild land fires during the winter season and consist of coordinating and administration between the different provincial and national bodies responsible for giving effect to the National Veld and Forest Fire Act. The municipality have an agreement with Working on Fire and deploys teams to assist during major veld fires as part of the strategic partnership with other Organs of State.

The academy offers high level training in line with national and international standards, resulting in world class level of competence in Emergency Management Services. Courses on offer vary from basic firefighting and first aid training to more advanced training in Hazardous Materials and various Specialised Fire & Rescue courses. Also included is the Officer development and Competency training in support of our efforts to improve proficiency levels.

The Academy is still awaiting approval to be registered at the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) to present the Occupational Certificate: Firefighter.

Application processes at Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) to present the National Certificate: Emergency Services

Supervision: Fire and Rescue Operations, however, this has been delayed due to Covid-19.

Southern African Emergency Services Institute (SAESI) registration will be initiated once the abovementioned registrations have been realised. This International recognised registration will allow us to present the Fire Fighter 1 & 2, Hazmat Awareness, Hazmat Operations and Rescue technician courses. Through our Academy we also provide commercial training for businesses and individuals wishing to obtain basic in the fields of first aid, firefighting and hazardous materials as well as any Fire & Rescue related competency training.

In line with community safety, the following interventions have been included in the Community Safety Plan:

- Improved By-Law Enforcement (as well as joint Disaster Management Regulations Enforcement)
- Improved Rural Safety
- Reduction in women and child abuse
- Safety in public places
- Improved inter-agency relations
- Community participation

These are all part of daily Community Safety operations however they are not achievable by the WRDM in isolation but requires multi-discipline, multi-sectorial interventions. It requires strong relationship with stakeholders and day-to-day joint efforts.

In order to sustain these interventions, programmes such as the District Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee, Rural Safety Committees, Woman and Children Safety Campaigns, Road Safety Campaigns and Victim Empowerment, programmes were undertaken in consultation with stakeholders such as NGO's, SAPS, CPF's, Local Municipality Public Safety Units, Private Security Companies etc.

In order to improve enforcement and By-Laws, all Magistrates approved the WRDM: Street and Miscellaneous By-Laws; however, the Magistrates of Fochville and Westonaria have not approved the By-Laws as yet, and the municipality is currently persuading the said authority to approve. It is worth noting that the By-Laws has been approved by Krugersdorp, Randfontein and Carletonville magistrates' courts.

The Community Safety (together with Fire and Rescue and Disaster Management) continues to drive initiatives that includes multi sectorial and multi-agency community safety operations to ensure a safe living environment and resilient communities to crime, these operations includes but are not limited to Arrive Alive campaigns, Easter Road Safety Campaigns, Festive Season Safety programs aimed at ensuring a safe environment especially during the specific public holidays.

The District in conjunction with the Gauteng Provincial Community Safety and SANRAL, has established the Road Incident Management System (RIMS) with the main aim of reducing road accidents and ensuring safe roads throughout the District. There is an appetite to legislate RIMS so as to promulgate protocols and road incident management processes. Currently the key task

of RIMS Steering Committee is to continuously conduct Post Incident Assessments (PIA's) at all serious accidents in order to put measures in place to prevent reoccurrence of incidents of a similar nature and to ensure Traffic Management Standardization. The RIMS Steering Committee is functional and holds meetings regularly. Regular RIMS simulation exercises is conducted on major traffic arteries across the District which involve all relevant agencies to ensure an effective response to major traffic related incidents. The Communication Hub also has a very large role to play in the response to incidents as per RIMS protocols.

Madam Speaker, our Communication Hub which was established two years ago was recently expanded further to focus on community complaints on emergency response as well as crime prevention and other community related services. The Communication Hub also functions as an early warning system.

In November 2020, the district facilitated the establishment of three By-Law Enforcement Forums in Mogale City, Rand West City and Merafong City Local Municipalities. These by-law enforcement forums operate in a multi-disciplinary approach, which includes: Health, Electricity, Traffic Department, Town Planning, Building Control, etc. These forums plan and execute By-Law operations and inspections and take action against people who are non-compliant with a host of Laws and By-Laws such as Illegal Occupation, Illegal Buildings, non-compliance to fire safety, health related issues, etc.

On an ongoing basis our Disaster Management Division conducts assessments and awareness campaigns at schools, factories, shops and other

institutions in order to assess the safety of structures and evacuation processes in conjunction with all relevant role-players. The Division compiles evacuation plans for schools, factories, etc. in a way that is easily executable and that complies with all standards. We want a proactive approach to disasters rather than reactive, furthermore, our Council adopted the Disaster Management Framework aimed at giving effect to the disaster risk management.

OUTCOME: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT REDUCTION

Madam Speaker, as per the pronouncement made by Premier David Makhura in his State of the Province Address, Gauteng is taking a lead in re-igniting economic reconstruction and recovery.

Honourable members, as a result of the pandemic, the global economy finds itself in a state of chaos, where South Africa, Gauteng and the West Rand are not immune from this chaos. What becomes inspiring are the opportunities that lie amidst the chaos. The economic landscape needs to be transformed at an alarming rate to respond to the new normal. The recovery, resilience and robustness of the our economies going forward, requires innovation and forward thinking, ability to utilise existing paradigms efficiently and effectively, ability to change and respond quickly to changes as and when. This is the economy we envisage in the new normal.

Having said this, our priority Honourable members is focus on our high-growth sectors and infrastructure investment projects that will unlock the transformation, modernisation and re- industrialisation of the different corridors within the District.

These sectors are:

- Automotive, Aerospace and Defence
- Transportation and logistics
- ICT and digital services with a focus on the gig economy
- Energy, with a focus on new technologies and diversifying the energy mix
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Food, Beverages, Agro-processing, and agribusiness
- Construction and Infrastructure
- Financial services
- Cultural and creative services
- Industrial Cannabis

The West Rand, as a strategic partner and contributor to the industrial hub of Sub-Saharan Africa has adopted a strategic posture of participating in the industrialisation and re-industrialisation agenda of the province, country and continent.

As outlined by Premier David Makhura the development of the single multi-tier Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is the primary anchor of the industrialisation agenda. Where it should be priority to have at least one SEZ in each district or metro, specialising in distinct sectors and industries in each corridor.

Madam Speaker, we are excited to report that work on the West Rand SEZ is progressing well. Approximately 100 hectares of land was made available by Sibanye Still Water Pty Ltd, along the N12 Corridor. Where the Premier committed to ensure that the final approval for the SEZ is obtained this year so that construction of bulk infrastructure can commence before the end of

this year. According to the Premier the completion of the SEZ should be realized by 2024.

In preparation for the implementation of this SEZ, the region has engaged Sibanye Stillwater with a view to make land available for the establishment of the SEZ and had identified Busmark to have them as a key tenant. Subsequently, a project steering committee is in the process of being established comprised of the following partners, Busmark, West Rand District Municipality, Sibanye Stillwater, Rand West Local municipality, Mogale city, Merafong LM and Gauteng Department of Economic Development.

The identified economic precinct that will form part of the SEZ will focus on the following economic activities:

- Bus and Truck heavy commercial hub;
- Western Accelerator SMME incubation centre;
- West Rand Logistics Centre and Food City Hub;
- West Rand Agri-Parks; and
- Agro processing

Busmark as an anchor tenant has already appointed Aurecon South Africa, and its sub-consultants, to work on the precinct development. The first Phase of the Industrial development will create 2 890 jobs during construction and 500 permanent jobs and will mainly accommodate Busmark. The second phase will be on agro-processing which will double the number of jobs. A site visit was undertaken with the Deputy Minister of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) Mr F Majola.

Madam Speaker, with regards to Bokamoso Ba Rona Agri-Industrial Hub, Provincial government, National government, State Owned Enterprises and

the private sector companies have partnered on agri-processing industrial cluster initiatives on the West Rand. Sibanye-Stillwater, Merafong Local Municipality and the Far West Rand Dolomitic Association have made available approximately 30 000 hectares of land to facilitate the development of this agri-industrial hub.

We have identified two most important assets in the West Rand namely mining land and water pumped by the mines and as such a Steering Committee of key stakeholders has been established to leverage these assets to build a large scale agri-industrial cluster in the West Rand. This Committee includes Sibanye-Stillwater, the Far West Rand Dolomitic Association, the Gauteng Infrastructure Financing Agency, and the West Rand Development Agency who are the founding members.

The objectives of the programme are to:

- Make West-Rand into the agri-industrial hub of Gauteng which drives continuous technical, commercial, institutional and developmental innovation.
- Build a sustainable post mining economy and development framework.
- Promote the export of high value, relatively labour-intensive agricultural produce, with a particular focus on downstream value addition.
- Create jobs with agriculture skills transfer.
- Promote Black Economic Empowerment including the development of entrepreneurs and industrialists.
- Facilitate comprehensive local socio-economic development
- Facilitate and promote community participation.

A program manager and fund manager for the Program has been appointed. A memorandum of agreement has been signed by all the four founding members who are WRDA/WRDM, Sibanye Stillwater, Far West Rand Dolomitic Association and Gauteng Infrastructure Financing Agency (GIFA).

To date, a Memorandum of Incorporation for a Not-For-Profit Company (NPC) to oversee the development of the program and to house relevant assets is in the process of finalization. The terms of reference between all four parties has been signed. Furthermore the founding members established a project Implementing Agent which is currently ceased with all matters pertaining to the finalization and implementation of this project.

The program manager is currently busy with the mobilization of funds for the establishment of the project. Sibanye has approved a seed capital of R10.6m which will initially focus on the concept development of the different initiatives in the West Rand.

The West Rand Mega Park

On Tuesday the 13 April 2021 the Maximum Group and Afribix has officially announced their partnership to develop a R20 billion West Rand Mega Park which will create more than 50 000 permanent jobs and 7 500 temporary jobs

Maximum Group is planning to establish a unique industrial, International Agri City and Fresh Produce Market known as West Rand Mega Park in the West Rand. The Agri-City will include industrial and manufacturing to complement the development in order to enable value chain creation with local SMMEs.

The West Rand Mega park project is earmarked to be implemented along the N12 near Lenasia on the side of the West Rand. It will be a major catalytic

project and enabler of future growth in the Rand West region. The Food Hub will include:

- Fresh Produce market,
- Meat Market,
- Egg & Dairy market,
- Seafood market,
- Flower market and
- Liquor market.

Furthermore, the development will include:

- Cold Storage facilities,
- The Square - public square with a number of restaurants,
- Agri Processing and
- A 40 000 sqm Wholesale Mall.

Provision of bulk infrastructure is the biggest challenge. Madam Speaker, we are now beginning to spot a trend as this is the same challenge we have with our Human Settlement Projects. Nonetheless, agreements with ESKOM on the way forward regarding electricity are thereof in the process – contingent upon that, there is power from both side to enable uninterrupted communication – on lighter side, Madam Speaker. This is a major milestone as the electricity is one of the major hurdles for development in the area.

Madam Speaker, the Maximum Group has expressed an interest in acquiring another piece of land where the West Rand Mega Park can be extended as well as the extension of the logistics hub as an agricultural hub and Food city.

Krugersdorp Game Reserve Project

The KGR conservation area was established in 1963 through a donation of the land to the Krugersdorp Municipality by Harmony Gold Mines on condition that it is kept in perpetuity as a nature reserve. The facilities at the KGR includes a restaurant, accommodation, conference facilities, a caravan park and other outdoor facilities. It also offers terrain for adventure activities such as a 4x4 track, running trails and mountain biking activities.

The wildlife in the game reserve is considered an attraction in terms of tourism value, while contributing to the ecological and conservation importance of the reserve.

The West Rand District Municipality has prioritized the tourism sector as one of the key growth drivers and has prioritized it as such in the Integrated Development Planning framework of the District, and this is an important lever in the strategy to diversify the District economy, especially considering possible anticipation of mining closures. The Game Reserve has numerous biodiversity and tourism assets with catalyst potential to create jobs, economic opportunities and overall positive economic impact. The potential of the Reserve to attract tourists is enormous given the location in close proximity to Gauteng and the World Heritage Site, The Cradle of Humankind. It is generally served by well-developed infrastructure and is easily accessible through major national roads. The Reserve through intensive collaborations with various stakeholders, both private and public role-players in the tourism sector could potentially tap into a broad diverse market. These collaborations should aim to increase tourist volumes to Mogale City and ultimately improve the positioning of the Reserve in the market. The Krugersdorp Game reserve is owned by Mogale City Local Municipality and has been made available to

West Rand Development Agency (WRDA) to facilitate investment and the development of the game reserve.

Advert for the Expression of Interest (EOI) was done through GIFA and submissions were evaluated. The next stage which is currently underway is the compliance with the Public Private Partnership (PPP) toolkit for property owned by a municipality.

GIFA has appointed a service provider to conduct a feasibility study which will help the Institution to determine whether the proposed project is financially, legally and technically feasible for the Institution.

West Rand Academy

The West Rand Academy is located at Westonaria Borwa, within the West Rand District Municipality area.

Sibanye Stillwater / Gold Fields South Deep Gold Mine / Westonaria Community Trust / South Deep Education Trust has partnered to fund the initial stage of the project

The WRDM, Sibanye-Stillwater, South Deep Mine together with other stakeholders have identified that an academy or college is required in Westonaria since there are no institutions of higher learning to provide skills that will support the vision of the region to be developing the agriculture sector and reducing reliance on mining. To support the municipality's development plan (IDP) construction of the West Rand Academy has been identified. There will be different schools or faculties with the school of Agriculture and Engineering forming part of the first phase.

The project cost is an estimated amount of R 60 million for the total project and Phase 1 an estimated amount of R25 million. Sibanye Stillwater has

donated the land for the Academy. The total area is 14 Ha of which 5 Ha will be used for Phase 1. The appointment of a project managing company has been concluded through Sibanye procurement processes and construction should commence soon.

N12 Corridor task team

Madam speaker, we have already established N12 Corridor task team comprised of the Presidency, DTIC, Premier Office, Department of Economic Development, WRDM and its LMs. This team madam speaker will be responsible for coordinating and streamlining the implementation of all the above mentioned initiatives along the N12 in our region.

Unwinding / Disestablishment of the WRDA

In line with the Council Resolution which approved the unwinding/disestablishment of the WRDA, I would like to report that the process has been finalised as of end of March 2021 immediately after the completion of the external audit. It is also important Madam Speaker to report that Agency received a clean audit from the Auditor General. All the initiatives that were facilitated will continue to be monitored and managed from the West Rand District Municipality by the Department of Regional Planning and Reindustrialization. Furthermore, the staff compliment of the WRDA are already transferred to the WRDM effective from the 1 April 2021

OUTCOME: BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT

Madam Speaker, in an effort to ensure improved service delivery through transforming the spatial form of urban centres and increase access to amenities, especially for the poor located in marginalised settlements areas, such as townships to become more liveable, equitable, sustainable, resilient,

and efficient as well as to support economic opportunities and social cohesion. Our Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme is currently in its 3rd phase focusing in Finsbury area. The project commenced with the Designs in line with the precinct plans and move into the implementation of the precinct plan. The project made provision for the following:

- Provision of Walkways along the widened road to complement pedestrian movement between the two townships
- Road widening, Repair and Rejuvenation along R559.
- Erection of Street lights along new sidewalks amongst other things

Honourable members, service delivery improvement requires more effort more resources and is deep rooted. The issue regarding our state of infrastructure which is in precarious condition, is hampering District wide development and needs urgent intervention.

Our infrastructure is old and often made of materials that are obsolete and pose a health risk viz. Asbestos Cement Water Pipelines, Cast Iron Water Pipelines, Clay Sewer Pipelines, etc.

In addition, due to the expansion of Urban Development, the infrastructure has become undersized requiring replacement or duplication. The result of this is that pipelines, electricity substations and transformers, Water Reservoirs, Elevated Water Towers, Waste Water Treatment Works, Solid Waste Land Fill Sites, Storm water Pipelines, etc. have reached their design capacity. Madam Speaker, the entire District needs around R 8, 2 Billion to address the backlogs in terms of the state of infrastructure.

These are the stumbling blocks hampering development within the District. It is envisaged that the development of the District Wide Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan will identify crucial infrastructure projects for implementation.

Bulk Infrastructure to Human Settlements

Madam Speaker, in line with Bulk Infrastructure to service Human Settlement projects, it is generally expected that the Locals would provide Bulk Infrastructure. However, the Locals do not, in the main, have spare capacity to provide these Services neither do they have funds to install the Bulk as required.

Generally, the Locals utilise the MIG / USDG to provide Bulk Infrastructure, however, due to other demands as indicated earlier the LM's require these Grants to sustain existing infrastructure. To date, MIG expenditure for only Rand West and Merafong City is at 47% with an initial allocation of R 156 million, whereas Mogale City's allocation of IUDG is at 52% with an initial

Perhaps another funding model needs to be developed to ensure that there are adequate Bulk Services available to service Human Settlement Developments. This could be a holistic approach that needs to be adopted where provision is made for the Development inclusive of Bulk Services.

Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan

The West Rand District Municipality intends developing a District Wide Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (DWIIMP). The DWIIMP will be composed of the following:

- Roads Master Plan
- Storm water Master Plan

- Electricity Master Plan
- Water & Sewerage Master Plan
- Integrated Waste Management Plan

Over the past few years, tenders were advertised, however, due to financial constraints an appointment could not be made. The DWIIMP has been punted at various forums. Officials in the Premier's Office have had sight of the Terms of Reference and are very supportive of the initiative and have recommended that DBSA be approached for Grant Funding. They have, however, proposed that the development of the Plan be undertaken in two Phases.

Phase 1 would focus only on the most catalytic projects required to support the region's priority economic projects. This could entail detailed master planning for specific areas of economic importance. Consultation with various sectors would be required to identify these catalytic projects and Master Planning for these areas undertaken. Phase 2 would then be to prepare detailed sector-based Plans.

An application for Grant Funding has been submitted to DBSA. An engagement between officials of the Premier's Office, DBSA and the WRDM had already taken place.

The WRDM is in the process of obtaining a Council Resolution together with letters from the Local Municipalities supporting the development of the DWIIMP which would be part of the application. The development of the DWIIMP is critical in light of the imminent implementation of the West Rand Regional Plan 5 Year Plan, which aligns to the District Development Model.

Madam Speaker, transport and mobility are important success criteria for a developmental state, against this, the National Department of Transport

(NDOT), as part of the S’Hambe Sonke Programme, has provided grant funding for the implementation of Road Asset Management Systems (RAMS). The strategic goal of the RAMS Grant is to ensure efficient and effective investment in rural roads through the development of Road Asset Management Systems (RAMS) and the collection of associated road and bridge inventory data, condition assessments, and traffic information. Improved data on roads will guide infrastructure investment, improve accessibility to and mobility of rural communities.

The RAMS programme was extended to the West Rand District Municipality (WRDM) late into the 2015/2016 financial year. The WRDM then appointed a Service Provider to implement the project in the then four local municipalities within the WRDM.

The contract with the Service Provider terminated at the end of June 2018 and it was decided that the programme would be managed in-house. The RAMS project is set to run to the end of the 2020/2021 financial year. The objective of the grant is to assist District Municipalities to develop in-house skills and human resource capacity and to create employment for unemployed graduates.

At the end of the project, District Municipalities (along with their Local Municipalities) should be able to fulfil their role as a transport planning authority and to utilize the RAMS as a planning tool for prioritizing transport infrastructure expenditure.

Madam Speaker, the Programme has proceeded satisfactorily. There are currently four Technicians working on the programme with the second round of visual condition inspections of roads and associated infrastructure being undertaken.

A Service Provider was appointed to enhance the capacity of the team so that the RAMS Programme can be implemented in-house in totality. The advent of Covid-19 Lockdown has, however, negatively impacted practical site inspections and training.

Madam Speaker, still on roads and mobility, Gauteng Department of Roads & Transport has indicated that they intend extending the Passenger Bus Subsidy Service to the West Rand. Interactions have commenced with a Project Steering Committee being put in place. A vast amount of groundwork needs to be undertaken before the Service Commencing in the area. Amongst others, these include:-

- Determining appropriate routes that will add value to the commuters.
- Engaging with the Local Municipalities
- Engaging with the Taxi Industry
- Engaging with the affected commuters
- Determining procurement processes to be followed
- Signing Memorandum of Agreements / Memorandum of Understanding with relevant organisations.
- Determination of Timetables, Bus Stops, Depots, etc.

The current status is that all the Metros and Sedibeng District Municipality in Gauteng receive a Subsidised Bus Service that is funded and administered by the GDRT. The existing contracts with the Bus Operators have not been advertised for many years with contracts being extended as required. A directive has subsequently been made that the contracts must be advertised and new appointments made. The appointment would be for 7 years. Initial

engagements have indicated that the Department is looking at allocating approximately 400 000 km/annum to the West Rand District.

The Taxi Industry has been sensitised on the possibility of a Subsidised Bus Service being established in the West Rand. The Taxi Industry was acceptable of this initiative with the understanding that they will be allowed to enter into a Negotiated Contract with the GDRT if they so desired.

The current MMC: Roads and Transport has been communicating with the Taxi Industry indicating that he will support the Negotiated Contract Concept. The National Land Transport Act allows for Contracting Authorities to enter into negotiated contracts with operators in their areas as a once only, with the understanding that future appoints will have to follow the normal procurement processes.

The WRDM has submitted a letter to the MEC in motivation in support of the Negotiated Contract Concept. A formal response is awaited.

Now, Honourable Members, in line with the Minibus Taxi Routes Mapping Project & Minibus Taxi Facilities Survey Project, the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport (GDRT) has commissioned the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to undertake a survey relating to all Minibus taxi facilities utilised by taxi associations within Gauteng. This action was in line with resolutions taken during the 2016 and 2019 Minibus Taxi Summits.

This survey is a follow up to the Minibus Taxi Routes Mapping Project (MTRMP) concluded earlier in the year 2020 by the GDRT which entailed the

developing of a scientifically defensible minibus taxi routes database reflecting taxi routes being driven by the Taxi Industry within Gauteng.

The MTRMP & the Minibus Taxi Facilities Survey Project (MTFSP) is part of the development of the District Integrated Transport Plan (DITP) and the Local Integrated Transport Plan (LITP). The MTFSP is the next step to map minibus taxi facilities and investigate an appropriate network hierarchy and associated infrastructure necessary to support safe, effective and efficient minibus taxi operations. On completion, the results will be incorporated into the updating of the DITP and LITP.

The CSIR will co-ordinate the MTFSP project and will work closely with municipalities, political heads and the taxi industry to ensure the success of this project. All existing mini-bus taxi facilities within Gauteng, either operational, non-operational, formal or informal will be surveyed.

Officials of the WRDM and the Local Municipalities are members of the Project Committee. It is expected that members will assist in providing, amongst others, oversight and risk mitigation functions associated with implementing primary data collection, including facilitation of data collation and communication with relevant stakeholders at appropriate municipal platforms. Seen in the light of the afore-mentioned the participation of local municipalities within the West Rand is crucial.

Copies of all the West Rand DITP and LITP's were forwarded to the CSIR to work from as a basis for this project and an indication was provided that ranks located within mining houses would also be considered. The GDRT has

extended an invitation to local branches of SANTACO and Gauteng National Taxi Association (GNTA), the two recognised Associations in the West Rand, to engagements. Databases in possession of GDRT and CSIR is being assessed by the associations for accuracy. Supervisors and Evaluators obtained from the associations will be trained accordingly in order for work to commence.

Furthermore Honourable Members, the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport (GDRT), commissioned the professional services of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) as the implementation agent to undertake the Gauteng General Household Travel Survey (GGHTS).

This household travel survey is primarily required for strategic transport planning purposes within Gauteng and is a provincial wide primary data collection project aimed at collecting information about Gauteng household travel patterns.

The objectives of the Survey are:

- To enable both province and municipalities in Gauteng Province to undertake improved integrated transport planning,
- Facilitate continuous update of strategic transport models,
- Enable continuous measurement of the provincial transport system's performance against set standards
- Enable future planning to be undertaken on a needs basis.

The GGHTS 2019 / 20 was completed with the handover of the Document by CSIR to the MEC: Roads & Transport taking place at the offices of the CSIR on 15 October 2020.

All indications are that transport service delivery is being overwhelmed by changing travel behaviour.

It is noted that personalised travel needs are on the increase. These appear to be fuelled by reduced household sizes. Settlement patterns do not seem to be taking advantage of higher capacity public transport infrastructure and services, evidenced by the increased use of lower capacity transport modes. Nonetheless, walking remains a very important means of travel. Consequently, the provision of non-motorised transport infrastructure remains critically important.

Intra-municipal travel remains high, which in turn requires municipalities to continue to invest in transport planning and management capabilities. Inter-municipal travel is also significant, requiring the province to invest in capabilities that will enable integrated transport service delivery across municipalities. The East-West corridor in the province (Ekurhuleni-Johannesburg-West Rand) remains a mobility anchor and would need to be prioritised for inter-municipal transport integration purposes.

The MEC, at the handover Ceremony, tasked the CSIR to undertake a further component where the effects of covid-19 on Household Travel Patterns are surveyed. The results would become an Addendum to this survey.

Honourable Members,

As I gear for closure, let's remember that when we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. Most of you seated before me have endured pain and hardship at extreme length as a result of the pandemic. Your physical and psychological wellbeing have been put to test many a times during this period.

Honourable Members, Viktor Frankl still reminds us that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

West Randers, we have choose our way, we have readjusted our sails to sail the stormy seas, we have remained steadfast, and have continued to whether the stormy seas.

Our District Command Council, District Command Centre and Emergency Operations Centre you have been very instrumental in the fight against the pandemic and drawing efforts towards our recovery as a region from all fronts, we thank you! Our men and women who have been at the coalface of the pandemic, you have served us well, we thank you! Our officials who have worked remotely and on a rotational basis to keep our operations afloat, we thank you!

God Bless West Rand!