

**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS 2021 DELIVERED BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR  
MOLOANTOA GEOFFREY MAKHUBO.**

4 MAY 2021.

***THRIVING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW***

Madam Speaker,

I wish to pause for a moment of silence in remembrance of all the residents, staff members, front line workers, siblings, parents, children, and friends who succumbed to the Covid-19 virus....

In reflecting on the pain brought on by this virus, I am reminded of this poem by Sylvan Kamens and Jack Riemer:

At the rising of the sun and at its going down

We remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

We remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

We remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

We remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn

We remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live;

for they are now a part of us

as we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength

We remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart

We remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share

We remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make

We remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live;

for they are now a part of us as we remember them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

When the COVID-19 pandemic first touched our soils, there was an immediate disruption to our social equilibrium. One poet said: We fell asleep in one world and woke up in another.

Places of worship (and I dare say 'safe spaces') such as mosques, churches, and temples, where religious people visit to find solace in times of crisis were suddenly deemed unsafe.

Not visiting parents and friends became an act of love. In our language we say, 'amahlathi aphelile'. There was nowhere to turn to.

The way we greet had to change. No longer with the intimacy of handshakes or hugs, but with the precaution of the elbow (greeting). Today I greet you differently in the same spirit.

Isolation, quarantines, closed borders, closed campuses and places of learning, travel bans, empty stadiums, amongst other things, put interpersonal relations and social coexistence to a serious test.

Not to mention the dire health and economic impacts that we still continue to feel.

We entered a state of disaster.

This forced governments around the world to effectively abandon whatever hopes and dreams they had for the advancement of their respective citizens and divert resources towards responding to the single most fatal health emergency of our generation.

However, Madam Speaker, and perhaps most worrying, early evidence indicated to us that the health and economic impacts of the virus were going to be carried disproportionately by the poor. Creating a kind of social crisis with the potential to weaken economies while shedding jobs.

Covid-19 has exacerbated the fault lines in our developmental trajectory. Through targeted interventions and policy in dealing with inequality, unemployment, poverty, food security, we must act urgently! Do more, Do it faster, and do it better!

The United Nations Secretary-General, during the launch of a COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan on 23 March 2020 emphasised ***"We must come to the aid of the ultra-vulnerable – millions upon millions of people who are least able to protect themselves. This is a matter of basic human solidarity. It is also crucial for combating the virus. This is the moment to step up for the vulnerable."***

This, fellow councillors, is the space in which we find ourselves: governing this City in a period of a public emergency!

Madam Speaker – Cllr Nonceba Molwele

Chief Whip of Council: Cllr Solomon Mogase

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Mr Paul Mashatile - ANC Treasurer General

Speaker in the Legislature – Mrs Ntombi Mekgwe

Hon. Amos Masondo - Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP)

Hon. Parks Tau - MEC Gauteng Economic Development

Chief Apostle Khumalo of AmaNtungwa Royal Kingdom

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Leaders of all Political Parties

All Chairpersons of Council Committees

Fellow Councillors

Acting City Manager: Mr Floyd Brink

Managers and Officials of Council

Distinguished Guests

Civil Society Organisations

The Media

Fellow Citizens

Ladies and Gentlemen

As we enter into the final lap of the term of office, we will do well to remember how far we have come and how much further we still need to go.

We stand on the shoulders of giants such as Ntate Isaac Mogase, to whom we dip our banner in salute and honour of the great City they struggled to forge a united City from what was hitherto fragmented along the lines of race.

Ntate Mogase passed on April 27, 2021, Freedom Day.

As one of the founding Mayors of the first non-racial local government structures in South Africa, Ntate Mogase pioneered the transformation agenda of Johannesburg.

In twenty-one years since the dawn of developmental local government, the agenda of this institution has been guided by a long-term vision backed by clear interventions that aim to transform Johannesburg. An agenda that aimed to improve quality of life, achieve spatial justice, reimagine the economy and create a better life for all. In August 2016, this agenda was disrupted. Programmes that sought to create a promising future were no longer on the City's landscape.

As we commemorate Freedom Day, let us be reminded that those freedoms were not free. It is precisely the sacrifices of Ntate Mogase and all those who have departed that propels us to steer the City in the direction only they could be proud of.

We also observed Workers Day in this month. The administration acknowledges and celebrates the incredible efforts of all the workers who have given their sweat and blood in rebuilding our City.

4 December 2019, with the incoming of the Government of Local Unity, marked the end of a political disruption (i.e. the first disruption), and a clear path onto the commitment to rebuild and recreate from the governance failures that characterized in the first three years of the political term.

The Government of Local Unity immediately brought to the fore 11 strategic priorities and 13 strategic programmes to govern the City for the remainder of this term. These 11 priorities are:

1. Good governance
2. Financial sustainability
3. Integrated human settlements
4. Sustainable service delivery
5. Job opportunity and creation
6. Safer city
7. Active and engage citizenry
8. Economic development
9. Sustainable development
10. Smart city
11. Minimizing the impact of COVID (and future pandemics)

However, the most unprecedented disruption – the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e. the second disruption) – which occurred a mere three months into the ‘new’ administration, had disastrous effects on our plans to recover Johannesburg’s promising future from the ‘first disruption’.

COVID-19 saw governments at all levels, including ours at the local level, operating in a context of radical uncertainty and faced with difficult trade-offs given the health, economic and social challenges it raised.

Beyond the health and human tragedy of the coronavirus, it is now widely recognized that the pandemic triggered the most serious economic crisis since the Great Depression.

And this is where this administration had to start from.

We had to both respond to the worrying state of Johannesburg’s finances and collapse of good governance; as well as the additional debilitating effects that COVID had on our economy.

As the crisis unfolds, the impact on the city’s bottom line will be driven not only by overall economic conditions but specifically the parts of the economy where revenue is generated.

The task of this government then is to suitably respond to these challenges and ensure that the responses have a lasting affect on the daily lived experiences of residents.

The world after COVID-19 will be different — as it is after any disaster. And COVID-19 will accelerate changes that have been brewing in cities for a long time. The result will be a new kind of city, different than what we have seen before. A City that should be able to withstand economic shocks in a robust manner. A City that thrives for a better tomorrow!

Ladies and gentlemen,

## **1. Governing in a Public Emergency**

On 17 March 2020, as the Executive Mayor, I called an urgent Mayoral Committee meeting as a response to the pronouncements of President Cyril Ramaphosa around the management and spread of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The City’s approach was to prevent, contain and manage the spread of the COVID-19 through efficient and equitable deployment of resources to regions and the most vulnerable areas, particularly areas of high volumes in human traffic and informal and densely populated settlements.

We activated our Disaster Management Centre which oversaw the monitoring and implementation of our counter measures and response to cases reported and suspected cases.

Clinical teams were deployed to support the elderly and vulnerable persons through-out the City. This includes assisting the tracking and tracing efforts of those who have potentially been exposed to persons confirmed as infected with the virus.

The Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) was directed to monitor and enforce strict adherence to the guidelines outlined as per the declared National State of Disaster. This is evident in the numerous roadblocks that had been undertaken during the period particularly to check lockdown compliance, as well as JMPD's continued presence in public spaces such as malls and populous communities.

Johannesburg Water provided emergency water supply to informal settlements to support the call for increased personal hygiene and an increased frequency in the servicing of VIP toilets in informal settlements.

The Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO) identified sites and facilities that could be utilized in support of clinical services for the self-isolation and quarantine of persons whose permanent residence arrangements were not conducive to effectively self-isolate and quarantine. This was specifically to support the poor, homeless and vulnerable.

And on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2020, the City launched the Hlapa Matsoho campaign at Mangolongolo Informal Settlement in collaboration with the private sector. This was a City initiative aimed at educating residents of Johannesburg, specifically in informal communities, about the importance of washing hands with soap.

These and other City interventions characterised the state of governance for the Government of Local Unity (GLU) administration. We were (and still are) responding to an emergency: a global pandemic the likes of which necessitated quick responses and quick results.

Fellow councillors,

The 2016 local government elections introduced us to the politics of coalitions on a scale never experienced before in Johannesburg. Today, after the collapse of the 2016 arrangement we have a coalition of several parties led by the ANC in the GLU comprising of IFP, AIC, Al Jamah, UDM, and COPE, collectively agreeing to restore the Growth and Development Strategy (GDS2040) as the lodestar strategy in the organization.

The City of Johannesburg's GDS recognizes that in the context of rapidly changing world key strategic decisions needed to be made to fundamentally restructure the City and its processes.

First formalized in 2011, the GDS encompassed Johannesburg's committed to pro-active service delivery and the creation of a City environment in 2040 that is resilient, sustainable and livable – as we continually strive to become an equitable, non-racial, prosperous, non-sexist and just society.

More pressingly, lessons from the GDS present an opportunity to imagine a post-pandemic reality. One where livelihoods are protected, jobs reinstated and recreated, poverty alleviated, the negative effects of urbanization controlled, and where residents continue to feel safe in their City.

The strategic choices presented through Joburg 2040 GDS are difficult choices that need to be made but ultimately ensure Johannesburg's long-term survival and transition into a livable city, as well as finally assists the transition of Johannesburg into the next generation of great cities across the continent.

As we have seen, cities are at the front line of coping with the pandemic and its lasting impacts; and have been critical to understanding what drives exposure to the virus, what its impacts will be, and – crucially – how to confront the pandemic.

We must, in addition, take stock of the long-term opportunities and challenges facing infrastructure worldwide; and propose a set of policy recommendations that aim to enhance infrastructures' contribution to economic and social development in the years to come, especially as the world enters the post-Covid period.

In doing so we must respond by catapulting Joburg into a future whereby we:

- **Rebuild our adaptive capacities,**
- **Transform our economic trajectory, and**
- **Thrive for a better tomorrow.**

## **2. Reflection on performance in an emergency**

At the occasion of the renaming of the Tambo Memorial Hospital, Boksburg, in 1998, Former President Nelson Mandela echoed these words to the newly hired health workers at the hospital:



*Whether you change the linen or stitch up wounds, cook the food or dispense the medicines, it is in your hands to help build a public service worthy of all those who gave their lives for the dream of democracy.*

With these words, the Former President urged public servants to view their jobs with a sense of duty.

Fellow colleagues, I too implore you to do the same. Especially during these times of hopelessness and uncertainty amongst residents; let us fulfil our duties to ultimately improve the lives of our residents.

Their quality of their lives, especially during these trying times, depend on our efforts. We dare not let them down.

Madam Speaker and fellow residents, before I share reflections on the City's performance, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the thousands of employees of the City of Johannesburg.

I wish to also extend my deepest appreciation to a select group of men and women whose importance underpins the success with which the City of Joburg, and indeed South Africa, has navigated the perilous waters of Covid-19. This pandemic has shown, without doubt, that frontline workers, are integral to the fortunes of our City.

As uncertain as these times have been, your courage in the face of near calamity has proven immense in giving assurance that there shall indeed be a new day.

While Covid has brought economic difficulties to many residents, I cannot help but reflect on the emotional scars you carry from having to witness the devastating health consequences of this virus.

I thank you for standing in the gap, for nursing our City to health, for your passionate sense of service and your immeasurable sacrifice.

The City tips its collective hat to you all.

I salute you.

Madam Speaker,

The City of Johannesburg under its current leadership has always had a particular understanding of the problems that residents of the City of Johannesburg face. To echo

Former Mayor Parks Tau in his 2016 SOCA: *“we, as the government of Johannesburg, our great City, have understood that to eradicate poverty we must create prosperity”*.

Fast forward to 2021, we as the government of today realize that prosperity is not only limited to the targeted service delivery programmes that we have initiated. Instead, for the residents of this great City to truly be prosperous, we ought to also target their hearts and minds. That is, we need to bridge the gap between what we deliver, and how it is experienced by residents.

Our interventions therefore need to take into account the new post-recovery era, wherein we ensure the uninterrupted flow of accelerated service delivery.

We have agreed that communities are owners of the municipality; they are therefore our most important stakeholder. And for us, as the closest sphere of the government to our people, it is important that our efforts derive a tangible value add for them.

Nevertheless, Madam Speaker, one of the ways we sought to contribute towards the economic recovery of our great City was to ensure that services proceeded uninterrupted throughout the various lockdown periods.

This was in addition to implementing the emergency mode interventions that required us to act quickly in mitigating the effects of the pandemic.

## **2.1. Delivering services in a crisis**

Fellow councillors,

World over, infrastructure - for instance, transportation, power, water, and telecom systems - underpins economic activity and catalyses growth and development. However, gains from infrastructure are only fully realized when projects generate tangible public benefits.

And the gains from reliably providing quality and accelerated services are fully recognized by this administration.

Water supply is crucial to the lifeblood of the City. While we acknowledge that there are areas that continue to experience water challenges, we commit ourselves to responding to this with long term solutions.

City Power is exploring the feasibility of alternative energy sources, in order to diversify its energy mix. This has a potential to address some of the electricity supply constraints, as well as ensuring that all communities are provided with reliable and continuous energy supply to improve quality of life and contribute positively to economic development. We continue to engage with ESKOM to find a lasting solution to the electricity supply crisis in Soweto and

surrounding areas. Similarly, we must mobilise communities to curb illegal connections in communities which plunges the communities into darkness.

Pikitup as an entity must shift focus to the waste economy as it expands services to areas not previously serviced. Illegal dumping and littering continue to remain a challenge. Whilst the City has the KleenaJoburg campaign, we encourage residents to keep Joburg clean and dispose of litter in a responsible manner.

The quality of our roads has become most worrisome. The Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA), and Johannesburg Parks and Zoo (JPZ) are hard at work as they continue efforts to improve our road infrastructure. We are happy to announce that the private sector has joined in our efforts to maintain our roads with the aim to reclaim our status as a World Class African City.

Madam Speaker,

To address spatial inequality, the Corridors of Freedom programme was meant to combine living and working spaces, linking efficient public transport networks to 'productive' centres in the rest of the City.

However, as we know, the programme was discarded and replaced with populist rhetoric that ultimately did nothing to restitch the apartheid spatial planning make-up of Johannesburg.

On the American housing epidemic of 2016/2017, Harvard sociologist Matthew Desmond said in his book titled 'Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City':

*Healthcare providers have helped me see that decent, safe housing can promote physical and mental wellness; and engaged citizens have shown me the civic potential of stable, vibrant blocks where neighbours know one another by name. (2016)*

Human settlements are critical due to the legacy of apartheid, which had at its heart a spatial policy. The imprint of apartheid spatial policy has proved difficult to eradicate and has in fact become more entrenched since its abolition. The outcome of these policies are some of the most inequitable, inefficient, unjust and unsustainable settlements in the world.

Its impact on the quality of life and livelihoods of the poorer members of society is especially devastating. However, we must turn the corner. And to do this, we must ensure the following:

- Efficient land utilization, advancing spatial transformation.

- Commitment to densification in targeted nodes and inclusionary housing models.
- Expand the supply and range of housing, including affordable units and Serviced sites, to meet the needs of low-income, moderate-income, middle-income, and special needs individuals.

We endeavour to work with the Department of Human Settlements to urgently implement the Memorandum of Understanding on resolving the Alexandra housing challenges.

The big two universities in the City as well as several TVET colleges are putting pressure on the City to house students. To respond to this, the City is undertaking a process to change the mandate of JOSCHO to include the provision of affordable student accommodation.

Parallel to this process is our continuous drive towards ensuring the dignity and durability of the land and space.

We have to this effect established a single law enforcement unit where residents can report all planning contraventions, from illegal land use to illegal signage and outdoor advertising.

## **2.2. Governing in declining economic conditions.**

Fellow Councillors,

As alluded to earlier, the City has not been immune to the crisis posed by COVID-19 on the economy.

We have re-committed ourselves to creating an enabling environment wherein we rebuild Johannesburg's economy by focusing on growing the economy to create employment, as well as reducing poverty and inequality (back to basics).

The City continues to increase its support to informal entrepreneurs with the view to develop productive township economies and promote local manufacturing, as well as the revitalisation of industrial parks in partnership with National Treasury and Gauteng Provincial Government.

Increasingly, cooperatives have become a viable means of alleviating poverty and job creation in South Africa. They are also particularly crucial to local economic development.

Youth development also continues to be the focal area of our targeted responses.

I am reminded here, Madam Speaker, of an experience I had in Ivory Park during the door-to-door campaigning that we all do outside of these walls when we are wearing our different colours:

Each door that we approached was opened by a parent asking us to create employment opportunities for their children. \*\*

The parents were merely affirming what we all know: young people today are a major resource for not only the development of financial prosperity, but for social changes as well.

Youth empowerment is pursued by promoting youth rights, youth activism and in community decision making. Empowerment is necessarily a process of inculcating values to equip the learner to lead a life that is satisfying to the individual while being in accordance with the cherished values and ideals of the society. **At present it is the most effective means that society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future.**

As part of our commitment to the development of young people, the City has moved the Youth Directorate to centre for purposes of effective mainstreaming.

The City also launched the Youth Cooperative Development Programme in Ivory Park.

Success stories from existing City of Joburg Cooperatives were also shared during the launch.

Mr Mapiki Joseph Sambu from 'Bontle Ke Tlhago' Cooperative shared how his recycling business has managed to grow and employ 15 people who earn on average R4 500 a month. They have also won major awards and recognition in their recycling business and continue to provide opportunities for their community members in Diepsloot.

Entrepreneurs and SMMEs are the backbone of any economy and require effective support for their success. Against this backdrop, the City aims to establish itself as the entrepreneurial City of the future that offers concrete solutions to pressing issues such as unemployment.

Which is why we launched two additional opportunity centres (formerly known as business hubs) namely the Joburg Market Opportunity Centre, and the Eldorado Park Opportunity Centre.

To date, the City has 10 operational opportunity centres placed where members of the community, especially emerging small businesses across all sectors, can walk in for assistance and advice on entrepreneurship and business support issues.

### **2.3. Investing in community and social development by building partnerships**

Madam Speaker, the attainment of a development-driven sustainable urban environment and smart infrastructure are both collectively key towards ensuring a high performing metropolitan government, thus improved quality of life.

Of importance to note is that a great part of this administration was characterized by the Covid-19 pandemic which led to the restructuring and adjustments of a few initially intended approaches to service delivery, to ensure an effective approach to dealing with the pandemic.

The services we provide, therefore, are not merely services for the sake of, but indeed they are mechanisms to **improve the overall wellness of residents**. The **psychology of service delivery** tells us that when we ensure uninterrupted flowing of water, for instance, we not only improve sanitation, but we also provide peace of mind.

The **deliberate wellness programme** that we have embarked on, has the capacity of improving not only the economy in the tangible sense, but also the **emotional economy**.

As a part of the response, the City is continuously responding to the much-needed human and social development aspect of our social fabric. This is evidenced in the continuous handing out of title deeds; addressing the housing backlog by providing home-seekers serviced stands to build houses for themselves; the formalization of informal settlements through electrification, water and sewer management; as well as the continued rollout of low-cost social housing developments.

The City's Safer City strategic programme also encompasses the emotional economy because a safe environment for residents means improved mental and physical wellness.

Fellow residents,

The City continues to grapple with crime, grime, and general lawlessness. These have also increased due to Covid-19's effects on job losses and general feelings of hopelessness.

Lawlessness and its various manifestations range from serious crimes such as murder, rape and hijacking to relatively minor ones such as petty theft, public drinking and other violations of the by-laws including the unlawful occupation of land and buildings.

Additionally, Johannesburg is characterized by tens of thousands of people living in unlawful occupations in high-rises, warehouses and houses, which have not been legally classified as "informal settlements", but rather labelled as "hijacked buildings".

While there are cases of title-deed fraud and illegal rent collection, most of the residents of these buildings, both South Africans and foreign nationals, belong to low-income groups: informal workers and traders, recyclers, the unemployed and precariously employed, contract workers, cleaners, security staff, and beggars/the homeless, among others.

Unlawful occupation of land is largely caused by “jumping the queue” of housing allocation, the criminal act of illegal selling of land, and the encouragement of unlawful land occupation for political gain and financial gain.

We therefore must urgently deal with scourge of land invasions (including the phenomenon of building hijackings) within the prescript of our legal and policy framework.

Our approach is to prevent, to contain and to reverse unlawful occupation of land. This will include a comprehensive wider and pro-active approach to unlawful occupation of land and buildings.

We will also work with the National government to strengthen our efforts in this regard.

Our anti-unlawful land occupation unit will take prompt action on-site against unlawful land invaders. This will include confronting invaders to cease and vacate the land; demolition and dismantling incomplete and uninhabited structures (shack farming); and obtaining the necessary court interdicts and eviction orders.

We aim to work with all stakeholders including national and provincial governments, the judiciary, private landowners, communities affected by unlawful occupations, and civil society, in order to end the scourge of land invasions.

However, regardless of whether one sees a crime as major or minor, the victims want and deserve justice. The people of the City need to feel secure in their homes and when out on the streets.

A major part of winning the war against lawlessness and the rampant violation of the by-laws is to have solutions that are tailor-made for specific areas and involve all affected by the issues raised.

To this end, the City reintroduced the Joburg 10+ ward based policing programme, deploying 10 officers in each of the 135 wards and responding to the specific challenges in each ward.

Other Safer City interventions include relief and shelter to flood and fire victims; roadblocks to assess compliance with COVID regulations; the launch of the Local Drug Action Committee; and the continuous removing/ impounding of illegal vehicles off the roads.

Fellow councilors,

Bridging the gap between the people and the state is a necessary component to residents becoming the authors of their destinies.

By adopting the principle of Active Citizenry as one of our strategic priorities, the City has sought to bring residents closer to municipal functions and programmes through the following interventions:

- Mayoral Imbizos;
- The 120 days Service Delivery programme;
- Calling for public inputs towards Renaming William Nicol Drive to Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Drive;
- The CBP and IDP consultation processes;
- Partnerships and MOUs with various institutions, entities (i.e. C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, UNDP churches) and universities;
- Media interviews and roundtables; and
- Gender-based violence awareness walks (Yellow for survivors).

Minimizing the effects of the pandemic in cities has also become an active feature of post-Covid urban management strategies.

As a response, the City through Council approved a Debt Rehabilitation Programme that includes additional relief measures for ratepayers amidst the ongoing COVID -19 pandemic.

The new programme includes an increase in the qualifying property value from R600,000 to R1.5 million following calls from residents for the City to review the terms and conditions of the initial relief programme, which was first launched in 2019.

The improved relief programme will see qualifying ratepayers receive immediate relief through a 50% debt write off.

Other interventions we embarked on to minimize the impact of the pandemic include the distribution of food parcels; conducting roadblocks to assess compliance with Covid regulations, and nightclub raids to access compliance with regulations.

Furthermore, while the City has shown support and discouragement towards any prejudice and victimization directed to members of LGBTQI+ communities, it is just as important to



ensure that there is active engagements communities to raise awareness and create stern regulations that discourage this type of behavior; with the view to make sure that the victims are aware that they are accommodated and can feel safe in their City.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) has also become a profound and widespread problem in South Africa, with its effects rivaling that of the COVID-19 pandemic. GBV has thus been aptly termed as the 'twin pandemic'.

The United Nations have called it the "shadow pandemic". Except it is not in the shadow, but very much in our eyes as women's bodies continue to pile up at the hands of men. The City has, in the first quarter of this financial year, launched a 24-hour substance abuse and Gender Based Violence Crisis Line through the iThemba Crisis Line.

#### **2.4. Managing the administration in difficult times**

Madam speaker, when we assumed office in December 2019, there was an emergency of institutional governance. We inherited an institution not only lacking experience, but one that was riddled with governance failures, in areas of procurement, as evidenced by the challenges around fleet management. The policies of insourcing although well intended, good intentions were peppered with maladministration and corruption threatening the stability of the institution from within and outside.

Moreover, the City's internal systems neared collapse, low revenue collection, financial mismanagement was high, record irregular expenditure, absence of the City on all international platforms, and demoralized local government staff among a myriad of challenges.

At the same time, our frontline and essential staff were tasked with responding to Covid-19, with the aim to ensure that all services were rendered and that Joburg continued to deliver. I would like to once again salute our frontline and essential services staff for their sterling efforts during this period of disaster.

Despite the challenging institutional and macro- economic environment due to the pandemic, the City managed to collect 86.3% of the revenue, against an adjusted Covid-19 risk target of 88% for the 2019/20 financial year, as well as acquired a surplus of R3.7 billion for 2019/20 FY.

Encouragingly, the City still collected more revenue by 6%.

Furthermore, the City's Financial Position is in solid standing, with total assets increasing by 5%.

The City has remained focused on continuously strengthening its financial position whilst actively pursuing the achievement of its service delivery goals.

Madam Speaker,

The challenging conditions that prevailed in 2019/20 did not deter our efforts to perform. The City has again achieved an unqualified audit opinion, as was the case in the previous financial years. We therefore continue to strive towards a clean administration and the highest standards of corporate governance.

As I have mentioned on various occasions, one of the top priorities of this administration is to root out corruption and malfeasance. We continue to strengthen the capacity of risk, audit, compliance and raising the moral and ethical calibre of our employees.

The withdrawal of the City from global commitments and agreements as well as SALGA locally in the preceding three-year period damaged the City's reputation as leading City. As a global thought leader, Johannesburg made significant strides in ensuring that its developmental agenda could be replicated across the globe and to other cities locally.

Now and in the future, Johannesburg embraces the view that the countries' future is dependent on success of Africa – and African local government in particular. From a geopolitical perspective, this ensures that Johannesburg's drive to achieve an proactive global agenda is aligned to the commitment of upholding the strategic interests of the continent. The City will continue to leverage the number of strategic benefits of ensuring that Joburg fulfils its aspirations in the metropolitan age.

We have much more to do to restore this City as it emerges from this difficult period.

## **2.5. The New Reality: Smart Cities and the Fourth Industrial Revolution**

Ladies and gentlemen,

During his 2021 State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa outlined plans for a new Smart City in Gauteng which is aimed at changing the social and economic apartheid architecture.

This will be in Lanseria and the Gauteng Province along with the City of Joburg have adopted the project.

As such, the Lanseria Smart City project is expected to contribute towards the creation of new regional city nodes which will result in the attraction of investments into the area, as well as

provide for a conducive environment for job creation and opportunities for communities in and around the Lanseria area.

We in the Johannesburg administration see this as a perfect opportunity to encourage the evolving of our City toward a Smart City as not merely a “Nice-to-Have”, but instead as an absolute necessity for this City to retain its status as the economic hub that supports and determines the growth trajectory of South Africa.

### **3. Thriving for a new tomorrow**

As we continue to govern in the period of a public emergency, our cities are our best hope. They are also increasingly viewed as the best vehicles for achieving sustainability because they represent the public institution closest to the people and the problems facing them. Meeting these mounting challenges and negotiating the path to sustainability in the coming decades will require significant advances in urban governance.

The Joburg 2040 Growth and Development Strategy notes that "city strategies must navigate the uncomfortable tension between defining a chosen development growth path and accommodating uncertainty." One of the identified uncertainties is the impact of globalization and the benefits and risks of being part of an interconnected world. The GDS comments that “This interconnectedness simultaneously promotes growth and opportunities while making cities vulnerable to global change”.

To thrive for a better tomorrow we must:

**Inspire:** - We will focus on growing social cohesion and citizen commitment to transforming the city, inspiring citizens.

**Display positive activism:** - We will serve citizens by demonstrating a proactive belief in the importance of a city transformed from its Apartheid divisions, and the need for a revival of our commitment to the poor.

**Demonstrate boldness:** - The City will display no fear in dealing with tough challenges and hard strategic choices – applying the same boldness to the transformation of its own institution, thereby building a strong, competent capable local government to deliver on our vision.

**Be realistic:** - We will give implementation force to our GDS and new Five year IDP, through ensuring the development of clear, achievable and realistic outcomes and targets for transformation.

Madam Speaker and fellow councillors, cities and their surroundings require a new urban governance based on open-decision-making, with the active participation of local stakeholders and with the aim of defining the best policies for the common good. There is a need for levels of improved self-sufficiency, which may spark new creativity – in terms of societal practices, and in terms of new forms of work, new ways of delivering services, and new ways of organising. Let us also support efforts volunteerism and community co-production. Let there be more examples of active partnerships and mobilisation coming together in times of crises.

At this point we must consolidate and accelerate implementation to thrive for a better tomorrow. There is a coherent plan backed by clear programmes towards the end of this term.

Madam Speaker and fellow Councillors, I wish to focus on the following six areas:

1. **Work together to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic.** We must acknowledge what Covid-19 has revealed about the city's realities but we must build the agility, adaptability, learning based systems that capture lessons learnt so that we are better prepared for any forms of disruption.
2. **Forging new economic pathways** – that aim to rebuild, transform and modernise the Joburg economy for a new reality.
3. **Entrench our transformational agenda** by ensuring spatial restructuring, economic transformation, agriculture and food security, resource resilience, smart city.
4. **Ensure high impact service delivery.** This continues to be under scrutiny, and we must focus on addressing these comprehensively. We must find the balance between basic service delivery (bread and butter issues) vs transformational programme is critical.
5. **Restore trust and faith by building a new social compact** to ensure improved public confidence/perceptions. We must have proactive communication and stakeholder engagements that seek to revitalise society. Citizens must play meaningful roles as positive members of and contributors to 'society' and societal change.
6. Focus on a concerted effort to **confront the digital divide** which is currently reinforcing inequality and preventing the City's youth from engaging in new and emerging economies.

#### 4. Defeating Covid-19

In his State of the Province address in February of this year, Premier David Makhura said: *“One of the lessons we have learnt is that without social mobilisation and society-wide support, it will be difficult to win the battle against pandemics.”* The City’s response in this regard will shift to contributing toward the National COVID-19 vaccination strategy. This aims to ensure that sufficient supply and adequate access to a safe and effective vaccine to achieve population immunity to COVID-19. The Country has adopted a phased approach to vaccination rollout:

- Phase 1 – Health Care Workers
- Phase 2 – Essential Workers, persons with co-morbidities, persons >60 years
- Phase 3 – Other persons > 18 years

The City will play a prominent role in Phase 2 and 3 which will entail:

- Identifying target population – consideration of different ways of reaching various target groups
- Demand Generation – facilitating communication and stakeholder engagement to increase uptake of vaccines once they become available.
- Identifying vaccination sites, service delivery models – consideration for use of fixed facilities or outreach teams or hybrid models underpinned by site readiness.
- Administering of vaccines – to be undertaken by trained vaccinators at dedicated vaccination sites

COVID-19 has challenged our communities in ways once considered unimaginable. It will require us to find new ways to ensure there is continuity and compassion at the service delivery level as we engage with customers. This disruption means that COJ must focus on:

- Simplifying mechanism of service delivery and actual services with citizens being at the centre
- Embedding strong digital services in order deliver services equitability through various platforms,
- Ensuring business and service delivery continuity that are most essential to communities now and into the future,
- Embedding helpful communication strategies to dispense information that is deemed important by communities.

- Reprioritising service provision and investments in the context of changing demands of service (as part of a New Normal)

The road to a better future requires the City to consider which services are most important to communities. The above focus areas will allow COJ to refocus on its purpose within the communities it serves and to ensure equitable delivery to all customers in a 'post-COVID-19' world.

## **5. Forging new economic pathways**

Councillors,

Johannesburg is the City with a unique African character, world-class infrastructure in telecommunications, transportation, water and power, health care, and educational facilities. This contributes to its appeal as a popular tourism destination. However, the City also faces challenges relating to unemployment, climate change adaptation, urban development, and spatial transformation, all of which have an impact on the tourism sector. New development initiatives by National, Provincial and Local government are seeking to further enhance the role of tourism in Johannesburg's economic development.

Mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and adjusting to a different set of global economic dynamics takes place against the backdrop of the fundamental socioeconomic challenges which have faced government in the country and city over past decades.

In the City, the economic response actions to mitigate the socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 shock on the businesses and residents of the City are the immediate priority. As many businesses and jobs as possible need to be protected and secured and support provided to the worst affected.

The focus must then shift to supporting and facilitating recovery of Johannesburg's economy as public health containment measures are eased. The City economy will need to adjust to a world economy changed by the pandemic to remain and become competitive.

The growing size and importance of our City make it arguably the single most important entity to foster sustainable economic production as opposed to merely being consumption driven. Cities are often a better spatial unit by which to conceive of such activities given the diverse nature of cities since their management can be more responsive to urgent problems. One such approach is the through the Township Economy.

The City will ensure that vibrant and sustainable township enterprises as part of building an inclusive, labour absorbing and growing economy are created. The township economy

provides an economic pathway that establishes the social and economic value of townships and ensures that the township enterprises become key players in the City economy.

## **6. Entrench our transformational agenda**

Managing spatial inequality means that the City develop a logical and implementable strategy for how livelihoods of the poor will be supported spatially.

This includes indicating where affordable housing, employment opportunities and economic opportunities will be located with respect to services and existing employment opportunities. This requirement should not be confined to human settlements only, but requires that plans also pay attention to the location and agglomeration of economic uses with a specific focus on how these will benefit the poor. This focus does not exclude the needs of the formal economy (for economic growth, for promotion of formal sector employment and economic development) but is allied to it.

Fellow Residents,

To realise the vision of a sustainable, economically viable town and a desirable place to live – ultimately improving quality of life, this administration will focus on arresting the decline of urban areas, improve public environments, all while enhancing infrastructure and promoting equitable access to economic opportunities.

In line with the Mayoral Imbizo held on 2 December 2020, we will drive short-term high impact interventions that are aligned to community needs. This includes:

- a) tarring of roads and stormwater including public lighting,
- b) access routes with public lighting and
- c) conceptual/design work for public open space management.

It should be noted that the abovementioned interventions will continue into the new medium term. In parallel, we will ensure that all projects currently being undertaken in the Greater Orange Farm area (wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 131) are driven in a manner that results in rapid and effective completion such that communities can start to realise the benefits,

In order to realise the vision of a sustainable, economically viable town, we need to develop a long-term plan that highlights engineering, social and economic infrastructure requirements,

In the current financial year, we are working on updating the Urban Development Framework (UDF) for Orange Farm which will need the development of Precinct Plans.

The update of the UDF and Precinct Plans (envisaged to be completed in FY21/22 Q2) will form the basis for the projects we will undertake over the new medium term that will be managed in an integrated manner.

Similarly, as part of our area-based developments, one of the key interventions required in Ivory Park is centred on infrastructural, streetscape and public environment upgrades with an emphasis on public safety through the provision of adequate and well-lit pedestrian walkways and traffic calming measures.

The Greater Kliptown area has been the focus of numerous planning initiatives and projects over the last decade. The main focus has been on the implementation of a housing programme – from new social housing projects and new subsidised housing to considering the re-blocking of existing informal settlements; and various urban regeneration initiatives.

Entrenching our developmental agenda is not only about installing services and ensuring that access is available to all. It is about ensuring that we unlock our townships as true city districts that involve the culture, vibrancy and character of all that it espouses.

## **7. Ensure high impact service delivery.**

Service delivery must be executed in a customer-centric, transformative, and sustainable manner, to improve the quality of life of citizens. Service delivery is intrinsically entrenched in the Joburg 2040 GDS, particularly in Outcome 2 of the Strategy. The City has made significant strides in terms of service delivery, backed by accelerated capital investment through the implementation of a 10-year capital programme and as a result over 92% of city's households have access to basic services. We wish to re-introduce co-production as a high impact method of ensuring services in a manner that citizens no longer passive recipients but active participants.

In order to get the basics right towards the advancement of quality delivery, the City remains committed to the following (amongst others):

- Provision of Reliability & quality basic services
- Improving access to basic services
- Investment in water, sewer, electricity & refuse infrastructure
- Co-production in delivery of basic services



- Repairs & Maintenance (planned and unplanned maintenance – maintenance mix ratio 40/60)
- Reduction in networks outages
- Investment in smart technologies like Smart meter rollout; Alternative waste treatment technologies; intelligent infrastructure network and Battery storage, PV and EV.

Lastly, in order to ease the burden to all residents of the city, Council has resolved to provide free 6kl of water to all households, electrification of both informal and formal settlements, clean our city three times a day, build houses that promoted integrated human settlements and upgrade and maintain road infrastructure.

## **8. Restoring trust and faith by building a new social compact**

Madam Speaker, “Citizen Involvement” is about allowing ordinary citizens to assess their own needs and participate in local planning, budgeting and decision-making. This is critical for improving resource allocation, accountability, building trust and reducing corruption. It is also critical for the creation of more inclusive and cohesive communities, and increases the number and quality of initiatives that originate from communities.

Building a new social compact requires trust, belief and wholeness - trust in their co-participants, belief that participation can make a difference, and feeling socially included. We must ensure strong participation, where citizens need to understand the purpose of and want to exercise their right to participate in local issues.

We commit ourselves to accurate, transparent and full information also increases the willingness to participate (knowing where and how to participate), while local institutions should be prepared to facilitate this participation.

To thrive for tomorrow, we must do the following to address cohesion and to focus on the following dimensions. We need:

- A set of common values which create a sense of belonging;
- Economic inclusion and opportunities to participate in the labour market;
- Genuine participation in local affairs;
- Tolerance of differences and diversity; and
- Legitimacy of local institutions, in particular, how well they represent the needs of citizens and mediate conflict.

One such way that the City is forging new social compacts is through our Service Level Agreement (SLA) with TVET colleges offering vocational training in the Johannesburg region. South West Gauteng College (SWGC) positively responded to this initiative and a signing of an MOU between the college and the City was promised.

The City is in full support and is willing to afford students with the necessary work experience. This has culminated in an important moment wherein SWGC has entered into a partnership with the City effective 29 April 2021 and will see the placement of 80+ students in various City departments.

This is aligned to the City's objective to accelerate our efforts to provide skills to young people of Johannesburg.

## **9. Confronting the digital divide**

Fellow residents,

In 2021, the City finds itself at the beginning of a new decade, grasping a new opportunity to leap the City forward. Recent events related to the COVID-19 Pandemic made it more evident that our city must prepare for future events of equal or greater magnitude.

Rising to the challenge of meeting the challenges presented by this unforeseen event, accelerated the City's review of the way it delivers services and how to leverage technology to protect the well-being of our employees, citizens, and essential operations.

The outbreak broadened our perspective to the importance of digitisation and 4IR capabilities to ensure this City is an agile and adaptable institution no matter the natural or human-made challenge that we may encounter in the future.

In this decade, this City will more proactively converge the use of technology within our traditional service delivery mandates. We will use global experiences and learnings to accelerate the municipality to the future its residents deserve.

The City seeks to achieve a higher global ranking as a Smart City to demonstrate its determination to maintain global competitiveness and, in so doing, create a caring, engaged and responsive City.

As we forge ahead, it must be evident that the City's core departments and entities are better informed by data to target new approaches to implement their mandates, which will improve

the well-being of our residents. We must begin to experience a more productive and efficient City that continues to be a place we love to live, to do business and invest in.

A caring City that effectively engages residents as partners who contribute to finding solutions that create healthier, more prosperous communities. The ultimate results of these things will increase the levels of trust and expectations of residents for their local government.

While solutions may not always be technological, they will always be innovative, smart and address the core needs of our residents and fulfil our brand promise to be a World Class African City.

Lastly Madam Speaker, as we approach Mother's Day in a few Sundays from today, I wish to acknowledge those mothers who fear for the future of their children and sometimes grandchildren.

Some of them feel helpless and paralysed because their children seem to have lost their lives to drugs and other abusive substances.

We have heard your cries and seen your sad faces. We are not deaf to the cries of the many women who fall victim to domestic violence and sometimes even femicide, because of their partners who come home inebriated and under the influence of drugs.

The link between substance abuse and Gender Based Violence is well documented.

Even in the fight against drugs and substance abuse, we reiterate our belief that the people of the City must be co-producers rather than passive recipients of services delivered by the city.

The line will aid the City's response of providing support and linkage to social support services. It will also assist with safety, security, mental health, and access to justice for victims of substance abuse and gender-based violence.

Fellow Councillors, we have little option but to seek ways of working together because the people of Johannesburg expect no less. We are committed to fight for the future of our young people and sometimes those not so young, currently gripped by the violence and hopelessness of drugs and alcohol abuse.

The future of our young people is worth fighting for. As former President Nelson Mandela said, "The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow."

And we will never give up fighting for their right to enjoy their place under the glorious Joburg sun. Our young people are our greatest inspiration behind us transforming and building into a thriving metropole.

Madam Speaker,

The disruptions, crisis and emergencies have taught us one valuable lesson. **We must build a better tomorrow for us to thrive.** As we move into the second decade of our GDS, we need to ensure that our vision of the future can be realized.

Fellow residents,

Imagine a Joburg with new economic centers in the east linking Midrand, Ivory Park, Tembisa and Kempton Park; connected to the Lanseria Smart City in the north west; repurposing the CBD as a place of opportunity; developing the area around FNB Stadium/Aeroton, and linking it with Riverlea and Diepkloof in Soweto.

Imagine consolidating commercial development and new post mining industries on the west of Soweto and linking it with Randfontein, Lenasia, and Krugersdorp. We must also envision the development of another new "smart city" in the Deep South by linking it to existing economic and social spaces by a modern public transport system.

The City of tomorrow is one where there are new landmarks for opportunity. It is a place where all homes are digitally connected and where Joburg is a safe city for all its residents. Let us work together to make this a reality. We must ensure that we are smart, clean, and green, empowering the youth and vulnerable, supported by an accountable government, and an active, engaged citizenry.

With those words, I wish to encourage all residents to exercise their democratic right and vote in the upcoming Local Government Elections, taking place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2021. In our democracy, your voice matters. As Abraham Lincoln puts it: "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

I also wish to thank our partners in the GLU, without whom many of our targeted interventions would not have been possible.

And to you, councillors of this great City for lending me your time and helping us – and the residents of the City – pass budgets and items that strive to better the lives of our residents.

To the staff members of this municipality – may we realise the freedoms we promised residents in our lifetime. May their lives be richer because of us, and not despite us.

To my family for walking this journey with me.

I thank you!

