

# The coalition of good remains a bulwark against the coalition of corruption

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Residents of Ekurhuleni,

I stand before you today no longer as the Mayor of this great city, but as the Leader of the Official Opposition in Council.

On 22 November 2021, I was elected by this Council as the Executive Mayor of the City of Ekurhuleni.

Having served residents of Ekurhuleni for more than 25 years, I was under no illusion as to the magnitude of the task that lay ahead.

Over my many years in office, I have witnessed how the ANC and its nefarious partners have hollowed out institutions of accountability and blown the doors wide open for corruption to take root.

Given the number of DA seats in council, I knew it was imperative to foster a culture of inclusivity, opposed to the "insider versus outsider" style of governance synonymous with the ANC.

Reaching across the political divide, I extended a hand to parties represented in council who had a shared vision of the direction this city needed to take to turn its fortunes around.

Those parties who joined hands with me did so knowing that we had to start by getting back to basics.

And that is exactly what we did.

Within two months this administration signed contracts with 47 Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to assist with electricity provision in the city and wean us off Eskom dependence.

A total of 10 solar Independent Power Producers (IPP) will be accommodated at Zestfontein farm Benoni which, upon completion will add a total generation capacity of 90 Mega Watts into the city grid.

This single solar farm alone will be able to off-set 1 stage of load-shedding.

In addition to this, along the eastern corridor, a total of 16 other solar IPP projects are currently in various stages of completion that will add a combined 151 Mega Watt output.

The city has also endeavoured to make use of gas to power.

Three such projects are underway and will feed 117 Mega Watts back into our grid.

By 2024, the city will have commissioned 358 Mega Watts of its own electricity to ensure that we are no longer victims of failing state owned entities.

This, coupled with the energy wheeling agreement, will bring about R6.5 billion worth of investment into the city and the creation of 2500 direct job opportunities.

We have been serious in our attempts to save the city from the malaise of state owned entities that the ANC have run into the ground.

We have removed 13 550 illegal connections as well as cutting off 974 tampered and bypassed meters.

These steps started to secure our energy grid against prolonged outages while increasing revenue collection.

The Department of Energy has provided 2 649 households from the previously disadvantaged group with direct access to electricity.

Over 40 high mast lights and 233 streetlights have been installed in these communities to ensure that residents do not have to endure dark and dangerous nights.

The city has laid just under 6 KM of new pipelines to ensure that areas which did not have access to water previously do now.

- 220 additional water access points have been provided to our informal settlements.
- 15 785 meters have been replaced.
- 5 371 unmetered stands now have meters.
- 3 619 new meters have been installed.

Over 5 water reservoirs have been completed including the KwaThema, Impala Park and Pam Brink Reservoirs.

We undertook to keep our residents safe from sky rocketing crimes that provincial and national governments cannot bring under control.

Since assuming office, 7 651 arrests have been made for numerous offenses ranging from drunk driving, reckless and dangerous driving, drug related crimes, illegal mining, illegal immigration and a myriad of other offenses.

To be tough on crime, and tougher on the causes of crime, the city is investing in increasing localised law enforcement.

In August of last year 473 newly appointed EMPD officers hit the ground to bolster our efforts to combat crime and enforce the city's by-laws.

In the past 12 months, 861 cases of by-law infringements were opened amounting to just under half a million Rand. Almost half of these have been resolved and generating R340 000.00 worth of revenue for the city.

Residents,

I would like to dispel a myth that has been opportunistically peddled by those in red, green, and yellow.

When we assumed office, we were informed by National Treasury that the City was not compliant with the national policy on the provision of free basic services.

We were told that the previous ANC-led coalition had ignored these regulations because in an election year, they felt it prudent to bankrupt the city for political expediency.

As the new administration, we had to implement this national policy before the city was pushed off a fiscal cliff.

We immediately saw that this would have a negative impact on our poorest communities and formulated our Debt Rehabilitation and Reward incentive Scheme that would bring about immediate reprieve to eligible residents.

In terms of this scheme financially stressed residents are encouraged to apply to the CoE for debt rehabilitation. To date we have received over 3000 applications to this scheme resulting in a financial commitment of over R30 million.

Residents that are regular payers have been incentivised to continue their good behaviour by receiving a bi-annual discount.

The second initiative introduced is the Financial Stability Task Team whose mandate it is to focus on collecting outstanding monies from the top 1 000 business debtors.

This initiative has resulted in an additional R18 million that is now in the city coffers.

Many residents and eligible businesses have signed up to take advantage of this programme.

Our debt rehabilitation programme, which will write-off 50% of debt more than one year on the date of application approval, is inclusive of rates, service charges, interest and other costs.

These facts expose the ANC-EFF lie that the multi-party coalition is anti-poor.

The multi-party coalition inherited a city that had a backlog of maintenance and a myriad of service delivery issues.

Years of mismanagement and almost no accountability had caused certain departments to fall way behind on their service delivery agreements.

Since assuming office, the respective MMCs have been working tirelessly, within budgetary constraints, to repair neglected infrastructure and get the city back on track.

We are also under no illusion that there has been a concerted effort by elements in the city to undermine the work of the multi-party coalition – such as the deliberate collapse in regular refuse removal.

Yet despite this, we continued to serve all residents with dignity and pride.

112 Hotspots Illegal dumping (1 hotspot per ward) have been cleaned and rehabilitated.

Bulk containers have been deployed to improve waste management and sanitation in all informal settlements across the city.

Three townships were identified and have been submitted for registration at the Deeds Office. Upon finalization, this will culminate in 5 570 title deeds.

Residents,

Over 70 km of roads have been rehabilitated. 500 square meters of potholes were repaired. 5000 stormwater systems have been maintained.

1.9 km of new roads have been built. Over 550 road signs have been installed and maintained and over potholes have been patched across the city.

Through our investment and development facilitation, the City has intensified its effort to unblock the city's R300 billion investment pipeline.

The City has so far in this financial year, through its direct intervention and investment facilitation, already secured investments to the tune of R8.9 billion, largely coming from sectors such as ICT, Transport and logistics, commercial offices, and warehousing.

In just over a year, the multi-party coalition government I led made vital progress in getting this city back on track after decades of failure.

And we have done so in a climate of hostility and culture resistant to the reforms desperately needed by the people of Ekurhuleni.

We have done so against the backdrop of trying global and domestic economic uncertainty which has made our task that much harder to achieve.

This government has had a positive impact on the lives of those whom we were elected and privileged to serve – the residents of Ekurhuleni.

Every one of the parties represented in the multi-party coalition has served diligently and carried out their responsibilities for the betterment of the resident of Ekurhuleni.

They conducted themselves with the humility befitting of elected office bearers.

I want to thank each of them for their hard work.

Residents, businesses, stakeholders in this city,

I want to assure you that our job is far from done.

I would like to thank you for your faith in this multi-party coalition and believing in the work we have done for you.

To the officials of this city who have worked professionally and with the decorum befitting of public servants, I too would like to thank you for your unwavering support.

Now, more than ever, we remain steadfast in our resolve to ensure that residents come first.

It may be from the opposition benches, but our commitment to the people of Ekurhuleni remains unwavering.

**Councillor Ald. Tania Campbell**

Leader of the Official Opposition: City of Ekurhuleni

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