

Mayoral Address – Ordinary Council 29th July 2024

Good morning,

Speaker, Aldermen, Deputy Mayor, Whip of Council, Councillors, Acting Municipal Manager, Directors, Officials, Members of the Public, the Media and to our residents tuned in on our YouTube Channel.

As we convene this council meeting to discuss the important matters at hand, I think it is pertinent to speak on some of the highlights and projects that we are undertaking. The AG report was published earlier this week and George Municipality received yet another clean audit for the 2022/2023 financial year, we are one of 34 municipalities who received this audit status. In the report, George Municipality was also used as a best practice example in terms of our water infrastructure projects. This is a massive endorsement to the work we do in our municipality, and I wish to congratulate our council and staff on this achievement.

Furthermore, I would like to make our residents aware of the projects we have undertaken as a municipality in this past month. I will refer to them by Department.

Civil Engineering Services

We are upgrading roads along our GIPTN routes in the following areas:

- The following upgrades are set to start in Mid-September 2024 until March 2026:
 - Mission Street from Clinic to Fern Streets.
 - Rose Street from Haydn to Hibiscus Streets.
 - Heather and Haydn Streets from Beach Road to Rose Street.

- Tabata Street from Mbewu to 26th Streets.
- 26th Street from Tabata Street to Nelson Mandela Boulevard.
- PW Botha Boulevard from Main/York Street to Nelson Mandela Boulevard.
- The following upgrades are set to start in Mid-September 2024 until October 2025:
 - Ngcakani Street from Matrose to Vulindlela Streets.
 - Ncamazana Street from Ngcakani Street to Nelson Mandela Boulevard.
- Protea Street will be upgraded from Fern to Marygold Streets. This project is set to start in Mid-September 2024 until April 2025.
- The Following upgrades are set to start at the end of August 2024 and until April 2025:
 - Beer Street from Fotheringham to Oerson Buys Streets
 - Woltemade Street from Beer to Rietbok Streets
 - O'Connell Street from Fotheringham to Niewoudt Streets
- The Airway Street curve improvements are currently underway and will reach completion in December 2024.
- The Wellington intersection upgrades are also currently underway from Aspeling to Stockenstrom Streets. These upgrades will reach completion in October 2024. These upgrades are a massive undertaking and I have complete faith in Cllr Browen Johnson and the Civil Engineering department to complete these works successfully.

Corporate Services

In an effort to decentralize our government and bring services closer to our residents, I am happy to announce that our preparation for the launch of the

Pacaltsdorp satellite Thusong Centre is well underway. The centre is set to officially open its doors during Thusong week (16 – 20) September 2024. Tenants such as SASSA and Home Affairs will now have a presence in Pacaltsdorp ensuring that our residents now have greater access to their services, along with other tenants.

Our Corporate Services Auxilliary Unit completed the replacement of asbestos roofs at the Pacaltsdorp and Thembaletu community halls as well as the roof at Blanco creche. Furthermore, the team also completed the installation of paving at the Chris Nissen Creche in Uniondale and Sonneblom creche in Touwsrante.

I am also happy to announce that George Municipality will once again play host to the prestigious Funda Mzantsi reading competition which will be held in September 2024. This competition will surely be a boost for our municipal area and tourism as various establishments look to our town for accommodation and recreational activities during their stay. A huge congratulations to Cllr Johan Du Toit and the corporate services department on the work that you are doing.

Human Settlements

From a human settlement perspective, we handed over eight homes to beneficiaries in our Metro Housing development, all beneficiaries received their title deeds.

Our department also conducted a title deed outreach in ward 9, Thembaletu this past weekend where a total of 17 title deeds were handed over to respective homeowners.

On the Wednesday, the 28th of August we handed over almost 80 homes to beneficiaries in Rosedale Erf 325. Of these homes, 52 title deeds have been finalised and properties registered in the names of the new owners. A total of 24 transactions are currently with the transferring attorneys and we are awaiting registration of the properties.

Additionally, five structures were built and paved for families who were affected by fire and storm damage. We have also processed 17 applications on the Western Cape Housing Demand Database (WCHDD) for the month of August which brings our waiting list to a total of 20 215 applications. I would like to commend Cllr Jean Safers and the Department of Human Settlements for the amazing work that they are doing.

Financial Services

Our area office project is well underway as our staff members from our financial services team has started working in our area offices on a rotational basis to transfer skills and assist the area offices where needed. The results of this project going forward will be invaluable to residents in our community. A huge thank you to Cllr Marais Kruger and the staff in our finance team who have worked tirelessly to ensure that we were able to submit our annual financial and annual performance report to the Auditor General by the end of August for the commencement of the annual external audit process.

Electrotechnical Services

In terms of improving the telecommunication security to George, we have completed the MRDG project for the overhead to cable replacement to the

Witfontein tower. I would like to thank Cllr Donovan Gultig for his role in this department.

Community Services

From a Community Safety perspective, we are focused on the compilation of draft plans for the next phase of our Integrated Operational Centre. Strides are being made to implement a 24-hour shift system for these operations. Thank you, Cllr Brendon Adams and Community Safety, for this massive effort as we look towards ramping up the safety of our residents.

Tourism

On the 28th of August, George Tourism officially launched their new slogan, George Naturally. Minister Ivan Meyer was at the launch and lauded the work of our team. Congratulations Cllr Marlene Barnardt, to Joan Shaw and her team.

All in all, I would like to thank our councillors and administration for the continued hard work in ensuring that services are rendered to our residents. To our residents in Haarlem, please remember that our mayoral committee and officials of the municipality will be at the Haarlem Community Hall tomorrow, 30th of August, from 10h30 – 15h00 for our Mayoral Outreach programme.

Thank you, Speaker.