

Mayoral Address – Ordinary Council 5th December 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 today's council meeting, I would like to highlight some of the good work that our municipality is undertaking. Firstly, George Municipality has just received its fourth consecutive clean audit outcome – I have announced this in our council meeting on the 29th of August but feel it pertinent to mention it yet again. This is a massive endorsement to the work we do in our municipality and once again, I wish to congratulate our municipal staff and council alike.

As we move on to the agenda of the day, I would like to inform our residents of our undertakings as a municipality per department.

Civil Engineering Services

The 2024/25 financial year is the fourth and final year of the BFI grant, and I am pleased to announce that the entire R1.115 billion grant will be fully spent by the end of this financial year.

There are 12 main sub-projects, and various phases of the sub-projects have been completed while others are nearing completion.

To ensure that George Municipality remains a water secure municipality I would like to inform residents that the Kaaimans River raw water pumpstation now pumps water into the Garden Route Dam. Along with this, the Garden Route Dam's bulk pipework upgrades supply raw water to the pumpstations, which then pumps the water to the balancing dams that feed the Water Treatment Works. These components have already added significantly to George's raw water supply security. The temporary potable water package plant will continue to supplement the portable water supply until the additional 20MI Water Treatment Works extension has been commissioned in 2025.

The construction of three new reservoirs, elevated towers and pumpstations in Pacaltsdorp East and West, as well as Thembaletu East are progressing well and according to schedule.

As we look at the rapid expansion of our municipal area, I am excited to announce that the construction on the upgrade Thembaletu Sewer Pumpstation number 6 is set to commence in January 2025. This upgrade will provide additional capacity for growth and development in the Thembaletu area.

The IUDG which funded the upgrading of the water pipeline networks in our Parkdene and Conville communities is nearing completion. As a responsive government we listened and responded to the needs of our residents, and I am happy to report that these necessary upgrades will

provide much needed relief to residents who were inconvenienced by frequent pipe bursts.

Various projects which are being funded through the Flood Municipal Disaster Relief Grant (MDRG) are still in process with the intention to complete all works by the end of June 2025. One of the most significant projects has been the first phase of the upgrading of the stormwater system in George South. With our most recent heavy rainfall events, we have found the works completed to date has had a positive impact on the stormwater system. We will be looking towards applying for additional grant funding to complete all phases of this extensive and costly stormwater upgrade. Furthermore, all efforts are being made to ensure that Rooidraai Road, Phase 1 and 3 will be mostly completed and opened to the public for the December holiday with finishing off work recommencing after the Builders Break until March 2025. Phase 2, the last phase of this project will be implemented once our budget is confirmed.

At this stage, I would like to make mention that we are ensuring that our services are brought to residents across the George area, from Pacaltsdorp, to Thembalethu, to Conville, to Parkdene to George South. Services are being carried out so that every area benefits according to their needs.

In terms of GIPTN, I would like to give a progress update for the timeframe between July – November 2024:

1) Infrastructure Development

) Construction is completed on the following projects:

) Golf Street Phase 1 and Ngcakani Steet Phases 1A and 2 have been finalized which marks key milestones in improving public transport routes.

) Active Projects Include:

) O'Connell Street

) Beer Street Phases 1 & 2

) Protea Street Phases 1 & 2

) Mission Street

) PW Botha Avenue

) Ngcakani Street Phases 1B & 3

) Improvements to the Airway Curve are progressing on schedule

) Wellington Street intersection UA improvements

) Projects in the Design Phase:

) Conceptual designs for Airway Street, Beukes Street, Genesis Street, and Pine Street are underway, pending funding and approvals to advance further.

As we move on to traffic management innovations, I would like tot to inform our residents that a pilot project for automated traffic management has been introduce along the Beach/ York Street corridor in collaboration with a specialist supplier. This system employs real-

time data to dynamically adjust traffic signals which will reduce congestion and improve flow during peak traffic hours. If this pilot project is successful, this approach may be expanded to other areas to enhance traffic management during and after construction activities.

While there are many highlights to identify and celebrate, there are also some challenges that we face.

The R505 million Public Transport Network Grant (PTNG) allocation has accelerated project timelines, creating financial and operational pressures.

Despite these challenges, I would like to reiterate that we are committed to ensuring that progress is made throughout this great city!

I want to thank every single official at Civil Engineering Services, the Director, Jannie Koegelenberg and our MMC Brown Johnson for your continued hard work. Your efforts and commitment to the betterment of George Municipality do not go unnoticed.

Community Services:

In this department we focused on various aspects including a response to illegal dumping, safety at our beaches, and getting ready for the upcoming festive season, to name but a few.

In this department we have done the following:

- Appointed 55 beach monitors
- Took delivery of two new compactors and a hook lift truck in November, this is part of our waste transport insourcing strategy
- To respond to illegal dumping, we appointed 304 EPWP workers, 12 co-ordinators and two compactor drivers. These will be spread across 12 blocks which covers all 28 wards.
- We have commenced with public education in Thembalethu to address informal structure fires and the limited access created by illegal connections. This will be an ongoing project.
- As our residents know, preparation for the summer season is in full swing and the fire department has converted their JetSki into a JetRib (this means that they have added a rubberduckt hull). Fire services will now have two Jetribs available for response and will be doing standby at the beaches during hot, high-pressure days.
- The NSRI will be the service provider for lifeguards again this year and we are preparing for a full and busy summer season.
- Traffic services have appointed 12 reserve traffic wardens for the festive season to assist with regulating traffic surrounding our beach and high congested areas.
- We have also embarked on various road safety campaigns throughout George, these include awareness campaigns with ECDs, pedestrians and motorists.

- We also conducted road safety programmes at Dellville Park Primary School.
- Four additional traffic officers were recruited, and they will assume duty in January 2025.

On the law enforcement end:

- Shops were visited on a weekly basis and law enforcement along with Environmental Health Practitioners responded quickly to complaints. The most successful being the closure of a wholesaler after dumping expired products. Fines were issued by law enforcement and a charge was laid at the SAPS under the National Environmental Management Act of 1998.
- Furthermore, we were successful in our operations with the Garden Route District Health Practitioners regarding spaza shops.
- Quite a few shops were closed for non-compliance.
- Expired goods were removed from shelves at the discretion of the health practitioners who accompanied law enforcement.

This department has been extremely active in ensuring the safety of our residents and that our municipality remains clean and green. In doing so they have created nearly 400 job opportunities! By accompanying district health practitioners, we also ensured that we

remained compliant with the instructions as delivered by the president to ensure that the spaza shops within our municipal area are safe and the goods that they sell are safe too.

Earlier this week I had the opportunity to hoist the blue flag at Victoria Bay along with Cllrs Kleynhans and Barnardt. Along with Victoria Bay, Herold's Bay and Wilderness received full blue flag status and Leentjiesklip has a pilot status. It fills me with so much pride that our beaches have been declared as safe and compliant, especially ahead of this festive season. At this point I would like to thank Director of Community Services, Dawie Adonis, for his stellar work in the department along with managers and the rest of the officials. A special thank you to Cllrs Adams, Kleynhans and Roelfse for the oversight role that they play within this department as well.

Corporate Services:

In terms of corporate services, we have obtained a local service provider to attend to off-site storage and the back scanning of municipal records. This will allow for the timeous retrieval of when information is requested by the public and will also speed up administrative transactions.

We have also worked on the replacement of old furniture with concept furniture in Central Records to accommodate more staff when they do come on board.

Furthermore, in a joint venture with our municipal department of social development, we hosted a successful march for 16 days of activism for no violence against women and children at Kretzenshoop Primary School and just this last Sunday we hosted a fantastic World AIDS day event in our main hall.

Thank you to our Director Bevan Ellman, our officials, Cllrs Melvin Roelfse, Nosiselo Mbetse and Johan Du Toit for the work that you do in your quarters of this department.

Electrotechnical Services:

This department has various ongoing projects, with the most significant projects being the infrastructure upgrades of:

- New Thembalethu Substation
- Glenwood Substation upgrade
- Protea Substation Upgrade
- Proefplaas Substation establishment of 66/11 KV transformer capacity
- Upgrading of the George Substation
- Finalised 17 high mast lights throughout the greater George Area
- We have also been extremely successful with our TID rollover with 98% of our meters fully upgraded.

Due to a knock-on effect, some of these projects were impacted and delayed by the fact that the Thembalethu substation could not be switched on. This is due to various houses that were erected under

the 66 KV lines without proper authorisation. As a result, this creates an unsafe living situation for the community. As a municipality we are pleased to note that public awareness meetings have commenced this will assist us in mitigating risks. Once this has been completed, the energising of the substation can commence.

As part of the Glenwood and Protea Substation upgrades, the municipality also reached a milestone earlier last month when one 15/20 MVA transformer was moved from Glenwood Substation to Protea Substation in order to free up the space at Glenwood for the new transformer that needs to be delivered to site.

In terms of renewable energy, I am particularly excited to announce that we have reached a milestone as our department met with the transactional advisors that was appointed for our municipality by the Western Cape Government in order to pave the way for George to procure energy from Independent Power Producers (IPP's). This is a very exciting note to end off the year. Thank you to our team at Electrotechnical Services and Cllr Donovan Gultig for the great work you have been doing.

In closing, I would like to mention that we are listening to the plight of our residents, we know that electrification of informal settlements is one of our most pressing issues and we are making strides in ensuring that this is realised. We have also met with residents from Hansmoeskraal regarding the road to Gwaiing, we are trying to our

utmost to ensure that we heed your call. Then, I would like to thank our Acting Municipal Manager Mr. Godfrey Louw for the stellar work you are doing here at George Municipality.

Thank you.