



## GAUTENG PROVINCE

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### 100 DAYS STATEMENT BY MEC FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, URBAN PLANNING AND CoGTA BY HON. LEBOGANG MAILE

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this important media briefing, where we will give a detailed account of the work we have done since assuming office, as per the electoral prerogative of the people of Gauteng, wherein the ANC-led administration was reaffirmed as their party of choice to deliver on the popular aspirations of our people, especially the working class and the poor.

During the State of the Province Address (SoPA) held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019, Premier David Makhura entrusted us with the huge responsibility of responding to the pressing demands of the people, in relation to human settlements and fixing the functioning of our municipalities. The ANC-led administration committed itself to prioritising the following key areas of work, as part of giving practical expression to the Manifesto commitments of the governing party;

- Economy, Jobs, and Infrastructure
- Education, Skills Revolution and health
- Integrated Human Settlements and Rapid Land Release
- Safety, Social Cohesion and Food Security
- Building a Capable, Ethical and Developmental State

We remain committed to these key focus areas, as we continue to serve our people, consistent with the political programme of the governing party to build a “Better Life for All”, as encapsulated in the Freedom Charter, and successive electoral commitments since the dawn of our democratic breakthrough of 1994.

As part of our **Rapid Land Release Programme**, we are in the process of procuring serviced stands, which we are going to release to those who are ready and able to build houses for themselves, which is also in line with national government’s **Zenzele Programme**. This will go a long way in tackling the housing backlog in the province. As it stands, Gauteng has a housing backlog of over a million, even though we have built over 2 million houses in the past 25 years.

#### Engagements with key stakeholders:

Since assuming office, we have held fruitful and successful engagements with key stakeholders within our scope of work or mandate. We have engaged with the following critical stakeholders: Deeds Office, Social Housing Regulatory Authority, National Housing Finance Corporation NHBRC etc. with the following notable outcomes;

- **Deeds Office** – we have a service level agreement with the Deeds Office, whereby registration should be concluded within five (5) working days if lodgement is submitted by one of the conveyancing firms on the department’s panel. We have also engaged them on whether they

can allow Title Deeds registration without section 113 on old Townships where conditions were not set. This is a work in progress, which we are committed to following through on till we find an amicable and favourable resolution.

In partnership with the national Department of Justice and the Deeds Office, we are exploring the registration of family titles, something which does not exist at present, but is a critical intervention, as there are currently properties that cannot be registered due to family disputes.

- **NHBRC** – our engagements with the NHBRC to ensure amongst other things that their service level agreements with municipalities are strictly adhered to before any construction commences, to ensure quality control and guard against non-completion of projects.

The NHBRC also expressed an interest in working closely with the province on our **Rapid Land Release Programme**, to ensure adherence with technical requirements before releasing land. We will also be working closely with the NHBRC in terms of blacklisting contractors who are guilty of not completing projects.

In conjunction with the NHBRC we will massify consumer education as part of increasing levels of awareness amongst housing beneficiaries about some of the services the NHBRC offers them, such as claims on defective houses.

- **NHFC** – we have committed to working closely with the NHFC, as part of addressing the challenge of the ‘missing-middle’, to popularise their FLISP offering (income around R3501 - 22000pm).

### **Challenges:**

We have taken steps to address the challenges arising from the aftermath of the Bank of Lisbon fire by securing alternative offices for our two departments. This we have done working closely with the Department of Infrastructure Development and Property Management, as custodians of all government buildings. Both departments will be moving to newly revamped buildings, which meet all compliant requirements, over the next couple of months (November 2019).

On the issue of incomplete houses, we have had firm engagements with contractors to go back on site and complete their projects. From our side, we have made a commitment to pay all contractors within fifteen (15) days to address their concerns of late payment. We are also systematically addressing the issue of a backlog of invoices that have not been paid, a process which we hope to complete within the current financial year. We have also identified fifteen (15) projects for immediate rectification, a process which is currently ongoing.

We have taken steps to clean up our beneficiary database and improve beneficiary database management in order to deal with the backlog of the 1996 housing database and ensure that our beneficiary system operates optimally going forward.

We are taking steps to address the challenge of underspending by municipalities on Grant Funding for key infrastructure and housing projects which cause massive service delivery backlogs, by looking to exercise constitutional powers, given to the CoGTA MEC to fast-track service delivery.

We have also been pro-actively engaging our municipalities to work with us to accelerate the declaration of townships in order to deal with the unwanted challenge of growing informality as well as the issuance of title deeds, to give our people security of tenure and a much needed asset that will enable them to better participate within the mainstream economy. We are also working in tandem with our municipalities to catalyze the township real estate market as part of provincial government's Township Economy Revitalisation Programme.

### **Land Invasions:**

We have witnessed a growing scale of land invasions in the province due to land hunger, accompanied by demagogic and populist calls by certain voices, calling on our people to invade land illegally. This has necessitated our resolve to deal decisively with land invasions in the province. We have developed a pro-active Land Invasion Strategy working with other relevant provincial departments and part of the security cluster in order to prevent land invasions. In this regard we done a risk assessment of all provincial land earmarked for development and have set in place security measures to prevent future invasions.

One of the areas that were required to respond to was Lenasia in the South of Johannesburg where we discovered the existence of criminal syndicates that were selling land illegally further encouraging land grabs. We have been working with the relevant municipality to come up with a comprehensive solution that will address the concerns of our citizens in Lenasia and the rest of Johannesburg South and through our work with law enforcement agencies and intelligence services we will be accosting the guilty parties in the not too distant future.

We must reiterate that as provincial government we will be evicting all those who have occupied land and houses illegally to ensure that we allocate houses and land to legitimate beneficiaries. This is important in order to ensure that there is a respect for law and order and the following of due process in our quest to ensure adequate housing for all our citizens.

### **Forensic outcomes:**

As Local Government is a critical sphere of service delivery we are worried about the current state of Gauteng municipalities, as revealed by the Auditor-General's latest findings, as well as our internal State of Gauteng Municipalities Report. We are taking pro-active steps to enhance governance and accountability within our municipalities in line with the Auditor-General's recommendations. We are reinforcing critical Back to Basics pillars to strengthen financial management, capacity and clean governance within our municipalities.

One of the critical engagements we had in this regard was with the Public Service Commission to ensure that we uphold and promote **Batho Pele** principles in the public service. We agreed to work together to ensure the promotion of ethical behavior in the public service, and to entrench and tighten integrity systems at all tiers of governance within the province.

As a result of this of this renewed commitment to clean governance within Gauteng City Region (GCR) we have written instructive letters to Municipalities that have been fingered for corruption through various forensic reports to take decisive action against anyone implicated in corrupt activities. To show how seriously we take the fight against corruption, we have instigated a groundbreaking Committee of

Inquiry to investigate all allegations of corruption across our municipalities, and report back within three (3) months, with recommendations for action against anyone implicated, as well as remedial steps to guard against corrupt activities in future, and ensure water tight systems in pursuit of clean governance.

The days of officials and politicians running amok with the people's resources at the expense of service delivery are well and truly over in Gauteng.

### **Mega/Urban Renewal Projects/Hostel Revitalisation:**

As part of our agenda to spatially reconfigure Gauteng City Region, we have been strengthening and re-orientating our internal systems in order to accelerate delivery of our Mega Human Settlements Projects. A critical step in this regard has been the work we have done in developing a provincial integrated Human Settlements Master Plan to ensure alignment of planning and execution within the various spheres of government.

We have also initiated a Human Settlements Project Bank for GCR which will ensure that all potential Human Settlements projects are placed in one pot and are gauged by a project readiness matrix which will address challenges such as bulk infrastructure, development of projects on the periphery of the urban centre etc. that create bottleneck to our spatial transformation agenda. We are also introducing an Infrastructure Delivery Management System aimed at ensuring timeous delivery of all our human settlements projects through enhancing project management.

We have resuscitated and updated our Urban Renewal Masterplans for the five identified areas: Alexandra, Winterveldt, Everton, Bekkersdal and Kliptown and have allocated budget for work to begin on these within the current financial year. We have also identified and allocated budget for specific hostels to be refurbished and converted to livable family units as part of our hostel revitalisation programme with work beginning in this current financial year. This will help deal with the challenge that we are currently experiencing within our hostels as has been evidenced by recent outbreaks of violence stemming from our hostels in Johannesburg.

### **Conclusion:**

The above details massive work we have undertaken to give practical meaning to the SoPA commitments made by Premier Makhura when we assumed office. Our success will be measured by our collective abilities to deliver in the next coming five years and improve the quality of life of our people, especially those who are dire need of our services.

We thank you!