

**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS (SOCA) BY HER WORSHIP, THE
EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG, CLLR
DR MPHO PHALATSE ON THURSDAY, 21 APRIL 2022 IN THE
CONNIE BAPELA COUNCIL
CHAMBER, BRAAMFONTEIN, JOHANNESBURG**

We are Building a City of Golden Opportunities

Acting Speaker of Council and Chair of Chairs, Cllr Colleen
Makhubele

Whip of Council, Cllr Tyrell Meyers

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Chairpersons of all Committees of Council

Fellow Councillors

Leaders of all Political Parties represented in Council

Acting City Manager, Mr Floyd Brink

Members of the Fourth Estate

Esteemed guests

And most importantly, our partners, the 6 million Residents of
the City of Johannesburg

Allow me to begin by conveying my condolences to the
Speaker of Council, Cllr Vasco Da Gama, who is currently in
mourning following the passing of his beloved son Robin Da
Gama. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Allow me to also recognize the presence of the family of the
late Rivonia treason triallist Stanley Basil Lollan, who are here
with us today in honour of one of the men arrested in our city
during the struggle for freedom in 1956.

He was accused number 4 of 30 during a trial that many feared would see the biggest names in the struggle executed, including Nelson Mandela, Ahmed Kathrada, Denis Goldberg, Helen Joseph, Oliver Tambo and Joe Slovo.

Born in 1925 in the original Kliptown, Stanley Lollan started his career as a clerk at the Industrial Council for Clothing Company. In the mid-1950s, he took up a position as the Secretary of the South African Coloured People's Organisation, leading to his arrest as one of the 156 activists in 1956.

Stanley was the only Coloured person to be held for the full length of the trial and he was eventually one of the 28 accused who were found not guilty in 1961.

At the conclusion of the trial, Stanley moved to Swaziland but was followed by the South African Police, who caught and assaulted him. He later managed to gain British citizenship and remained in Britain until his stroke in 1987, when his brother brought him back to South Africa, where he died a few months later.

Stanley was an icon and a hero of the struggle who is rarely remembered. That is why we welcome the Lollan family – from Eldorado Park – warmly today and affirm that we are grateful for his contribution to our constitutional democracy, the fruits of which are on display for us today simply by virtue of the diversity offered by our many different Councillors in this house. Men like Stanley Lollan did not live in vain.

Welcome and thank you for honouring us with your presence.

It is the greatest privilege for me to serve you as your Executive Mayor at a time when the city is in dire need of the healing hands of an experienced physician. It is a task I do not approach lightly, and I vow to submit myself daily to the hands of the God who called me to this service. To Him be all the glory!

We are blessed to live in one of the most remarkable cities in the world. The diversity of our people, the geographical location, recreational and business activities, all make the city home to equally colourful, gifted and unique people.

Given its undisputed reputation as the land of opportunity and a shining beacon of hope on the African continent, the City of

Johannesburg attracts visitors from all over the world - 55% from other parts of Gauteng, 36% from other provinces, and 9% from beyond our borders - many of them eventually settling in the city and calling it their home. They all come in search of golden opportunities synonymous with the city's promise of gold. However following years of neglect, mistreatment and abuse, our city now lies in ruins.

The big questions on everyone's mind is 'Can these dry bones come to life? and Can this city truly be restored?'

Recently, a young girl walked up to me with her mother and asked, 'Are you really going to change our future?' Taken aback by her question I looked into her eyes and I answered – 'I promise to do my part. What do you promise to do?'

The city can and will be restored, with each of us doing our part. We need to start by taking responsibility and uniting behind a common mission - to love our city, to nurture, cherish and protect her for generations to come. From resisting the urge to litter, break the law, dump illegally, damage infrastructure, steal manhole covers and whole traffic lights or vandalize critical infrastructure, to reporting such incidents when we see them happen, to being faithful in paying our rates and taxes, fines and levies, we each have a huge role to play in preventing the further decay of our city, while rebuilding it at the same time.

For those of us in business or civil society, the season is ripe for us to support the rebuilding project whether through corporate social investments or through trading partnerships. The rebuilding has already begun.

On 22 November 2021, in an unlikely turn of events, the City of Johannesburg welcomed its first ever democratically elected female Executive Mayor in a 26% minority government. Three weeks later, following long nights of negotiations between political parties battling for the stability of the city, with backdrop of the past recent five-year term, which saw four political administrations, we had no option but to put together only the best team to serve the people of Johannesburg and *Build a City of Golden Opportunities*.

Today, we sit with a 10-member Mayoral Committee, made up leaders from five different political parties. Originally it was the DA, ActionSA, IFP, ACDP and FF+, along with me, the Executive Mayor, forming the 2021-2026 Johannesburg Multi-Party Government. This was achieved with the help of COPE,

UIM, and ATM, who were later elected to the positions of Chair of Chairs and Chairpersons of Committees, respectively. This battle for the city's stability did not end here.

In a final move to undergird the Multi-Party Government, the FF+ conceded its seat in the Executive, making way for the cooption of the PA to bring the Multi-Party Government to a strong 140 of 270 seats in Council. This was the birth of the first 9 political party, Multi-Party Government in South Africa – a government that has vowed to set their differences aside and work together to repair the ruins in our shared pride, the beloved City of Gold.

True to its promise, the Joburg Multi-Party Government tabled its immediate program of action termed 'The Golden Start',

flowing from the 7 Mayoral Priorities committing to give residents, visitors, business, and civil society alike:

1. A city that gets the basics right;
2. A safe city;
3. A caring city;
4. A business-friendly city;
5. An inclusive city;
6. A well run city;
7. A smart city.

The election of the Executive Mayor to the role of Africa Vice Chair for C40 Cities, introduced the green strand that runs through all 7 Mayoral Priorities, driving climate change mitigation and a just and equitable transition to a City of Johannesburg.

The team of MMCs did not waste time getting right down to the work of identifying the root causes of the problems in their areas of responsibility and driving solutions in line with their golden start promises.

Our draft 2022-2027 IDP acknowledges that this municipal administration is large and complex. It has authority over all constitutional functions assigned to it. It also has resources that enable it to deliver on mandates conferred by national government and provincial government, some of which are not fully funded. But it would be a profound mistake to assume that the Council and its municipal administration can fix the City on its own. Partnership is often missing internally. Departments and entities must cooperate with each other. Residents must receive real responses and not be referred to

different components of the organisation and shoved from pillar to post. No entity or department should work in a silo. It is a team effort to turn the City around and therefore the entire Municipality must work like a team.

It was important that in this context, we as the Multi-Party Government, outlined our new vision for this political term of office as “a City of Golden Opportunities: A vibrant, safe and resilient city where local government delivers a quality life for every resident.”

This vision is anchored and predicated upon the seven Mayoral Priorities, which have found expression in the IDP, the budgeting process as well as the strategic framework of all departments and entities.

A city that gets the basics right

For a clean city, MMC Michael Sun has ensured that every household in the city receives waste services weekly including in informal settlements. Pikitup's strategy will be to work with local communities through cooperatives, to deliver waste management services.

In the next financial year, the entity will also mechanise its fleet for better efficiency, getting more done in less time. This plan will include the purchase of new compactors, street sweepers and other specialised vehicles.

To stabilise electricity supply in the city, MMC Sun led the approval of the city's Sustainable Energy Strategy in January. To support this work, the Multi-Party Government

will be hosting an Energy Indaba in the month of May, gathering all relevant and related stakeholders for their collective input into resolving Johannesburg's energy crisis, a move which will see us introducing an energy mix, partnering with Independent Power Producers and small-scale Energy Generators, reducing our reliance on Eskom, and ending these rolling blackouts. In the meantime, City Power has extended its Power Purchase Agreement with Kelvin by 24 months, maintaining security and reliability of supply to our customers currently supplied by the Kelvin Power Station.

The multiparty government will ensure an uninterrupted supply of clean running water to all residents through strategic capital investment initiatives aimed at addressing water infrastructure backlogs as well as securing future growth. We aim to invest R2.8 billion within the next three financial years

to improve the city's water services infrastructure. Joburg Water's Marginalized Areas Programme will ensure that informal settlements are also catered for in their basic water and basic sewer needs.

MMC for Transport MMC Fuzela Ngobeni initiated region-based service delivery blitzes under Phase 1 of *A Re Sebetseng*, launched by the Executive Mayor in February, a program which brings together multiple departments and entities to focus on pothole repairs, reinstatements, resurfacing of roads, traffic signals infrastructure maintenance, cleaning of stormwater infrastructure and kerb inlets, repair of guardrails and road markings. Through the city's partnership with Dial Direct and Discovery Insure, 7524 potholes were filled in just 7 weeks during these blitzes, making our roads safer and preventing costly road-user vehicle repairs. Certainly, we have

made progress in sorting out the City's pothole problem but we equally have more road to cover and we will.

A safe city

Safety is an important driver of investment and economic growth, and under the leadership of MMC David Tembe, 1800 JMPD Officers have been deployed into the inner-city to restore law and order and stimulate safe economic activity. The deployment of JMPD points men has eased traffic congestion particularly during peak hours. The JMPD is strengthening working relations with other law enforcement agencies through various joint operations, including the newly established infrastructure protection drive between JMPD, GFIS, SAPS, SSA and HAWKS Gauteng. This was in response to the recent spate of attacks on the city's critical infrastructure,

plunging whole communities into darkness, and often affecting water supply as well. To contribute towards the city's revenue collection drive, the JMPD has reinstated Smart Roadblocks, collecting in excess of R14 million in just 9 weeks.

A caring city

Care for poor and vulnerable residents is a marker of a city's commitment to a just and equitable society. Through the Health and Social Development portfolio under the leadership of MMC Ashley Sauls I, two new clinics were opened for use by the public in Bophelong near Soweto, and Florida in Roodepoort. The construction of the long awaited Naledi Clinic is also currently underway and in the next three years, 10 new, modern, robustly sized clinics will be constructed in different parts of the city in response to current and projected

needs. The portfolio will continue to fight the scourge of substance abuse through the inpatient and outpatient treatment centres across the regions. Social Development will drive the development of the new state of the art Bertrams Multipurpose Centre near the Ellis Park Precinct in Region F. The centre will house a community hall, senior citizens support, a women's empowerment centre, child aftercare, youth and skills development, a basketball court and office space for regional social development services. The department is in the process of reviewing the city's migration policy, which will serve as a guide on how to best deal with all forms of migration, legal and illegal, interprovincial and international, to ensure a sustainable strategy informed by global best practice and ensuring an integrated approach by all city departments, protecting human rights but also recognizing the inalienable rights of South African

citizens. The city's policies on homelessness, child services, food resilience and older persons are currently also under review and will soon be released for public participation. In the meantime, the migration of retirement villages from housing to social development as approved by council will be fast tracked. In the new financial year, social development will constitute an LGBTIQA+ advisory committee to drive the interests of this often-marginalized group.

Through the Expanded Social Package (ESP), indigent residents will continue to benefit from free basic services, while the debt rehabilitation program has been reinstated to facilitate debt write offs for the missing middle class, pensioners and the indigent buckling under historical debt.

A business-friendly city

The Department of Economic Development under MMC Nkuli Mbundu has managed to drive the draft Informal Trade Policy through the relevant structures and updated it with comments from public participation. Once approved in Council, this policy will afford South African informal traders the opportunity to reclaim their trading spaces. A process has been initiated for GFIS to conduct a property audit of the 29 000 city-owned properties, perform an evaluation of the property values, assess the state of leases and the general repairs and maintenance required to restore the properties and regularize the leases. Where possible, properties will be released to business for better utilization. To drive investment attraction, the Multi-Party government has re-established strong relations with the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI) as well as other business forums to bring

back investment confidence in the city. Some of the highlights include the acceleration of Special Economic Zones at City Deep as a logistics and agri-hub, providing investment incentives for job creation, particularly among the youth. The Multi-Party Government will continue to roll out more opportunity centres to support businesses and entrepreneurs. We will ensure fair access to EPWP opportunities through an audited electronic system. Through the newly established Johannesburg Tourism Company we will promote business and leisure tourism as important job creators. We are also close to finalising the Informal Trade Permit System.

At 15,6%, the City of Johannesburg is currently the largest single contributor to South Africa's gross domestic product

(GDP). But this figure can grow with the help of business, which will reduce our current unemployment rate of 40,8%.

Next month, the City will host a Business Collaborative Conference, in recognition of the fact that a growing, inclusive, and sustainable economy requires business and government to work together.

MMC Belinda Echeozonjoku through her leadership of the Department of Development Planning has started making it easier for the development industry to do business and create jobs. This means improving our services and turnaround times, levels of professionalism and responsiveness, and awareness of regulatory best practice. The city has started a long-term process of scrutinising our policies, by-laws, and

compliance and investigation procedures, while also modernising our service offerings and the City's application and permitting processes.

The city is also working to reduce the backlog of appeals and objections related to the Municipal Planning Tribunal. The city has introduced new turnaround times for follow-up inspections and demolitions by the department's building control and planning law enforcement functions. The Planning Department is now committed to tripling the annual target for the required demolitions of non-compliant and illegal buildings and structures from 30 to 96. This will assist in reducing the number of unsafe and dangerous buildings in the City, as well as reduce the impact of both illegal construction sites and dilapidated and derelict buildings on property valuations.

The Multi-Party Government has initiated and scheduled regular Integrated Night Operations with the department's building control inspectors and Single Law Enforcement unit (along with City health inspectors, EMS, and JMPD metro police officers) to ensure compliance and shut down problematic and non-compliant houses, places of worship, restaurants, nightclubs, and taverns. These operations have been monitored to discover and develop new and improved ways for City officials to work together on contravention cases and investigations.

This Multi-Party Government through the Inner-City Office is working to ensure that the Johannesburg CBD once again becomes a centre of economic and recreational activity, therefore, the MMC along with other key portfolios and stakeholders of the City, are taking hold of Inner-City

compliance and Inner City precinct development through stakeholder and private-sector-partner engagements, Integrated block-by-block Operations, and improved by-law compliance and case management by inspectors and Region F officials.

An inclusive city

The Housing Department under MMC Mlungisi Mabaso is also promoting inclusivity through various interventions. Through the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme (UISP) – we are targeting 10 informal settlements in the upcoming financial year. We will be upgrading them to level three which entails provision of permanent municipal services including bulk connections, water services, sanitation solutions, public lighting, and roads storm water. This is aimed at giving residents of the City of Joburg dignity and to create a good habitable

environment. In the upcoming financial year, we have a target of 2 500 housing units in Regions C, D and F. This, in an effort to address the massive housing backlog amongst other avenues being explored. We are also focusing strongly on the site and service programme which is aimed at giving people serviced stands where they are able to build homes for themselves. In February, 701 serviced sites were launched in Zandspruit by the MMC and the Executive Mayor.

The construction of the Fleurhof Sub Station is almost complete. This sub-station will supply power to units that are yet to be electrified in Fleurhof and surrounding areas.

The Multi-Party Government is aggressively issuing title deeds to provide security of tenure to our residents, whilst ensuring that as we handover homes, we run a concurrent

process of lodging with the deeds office in a timely fashion.

The Hostel Redevelopment project will see the revamp of hostels and upgrading of Community Residential Units (CRUs). We are in the process of approving plans for the redevelopment of all the hostels to do away with apartheid spatial planning.

The Johannesburg Social Housing Company, JOSHCO, has aggressively kickstarted various turnkey projects which will see an envisaged 3 500 housing units at the end of the upcoming three financial years. Together with MMC Mabaso we recently launched the construction of the Riverside Social Housing Development in Region A. Upon completion, this development will yield 1108 social and affordable rental units around Diepsloot, Midrand, Fourways and surrounding areas.

The Community Development Department under the leadership of MMC Ronald Harris is the key custodian of social cohesion in the city. Through the Boots on the Ground Program, the Multi-Party Government within Community Development has been highlighting infrastructure challenges while boosting employee morale.

Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo just launched the Naledi Park in collaboration with the local community and the Ward Councillor, creating a safe space for families to relax. Joining the fight against GBV, the Johannesburg Theatre Truck in collaboration with other departments, hosted a GBV Prevention Day in the beautiful Diepsloot Park.

This government also saw the city hosting the first Johannesburg Sports Confederation Awards Evening. For

those who want to partner with the city to bring out the best of our assets, Community Development is developing a database of Friends of the Reserves, Friends of the Parks and other stakeholders.

A well-run city

Building a City of Golden Opportunities costs money, and regardless of the constrained economic environment in which we find ourselves, we are still obligated by law to deliver services to all residents of the City.

With a loan market that is averse to lending money to municipalities, shrinking grants from the Provincial and National spheres, and a lack of liquidity in the market, the

Multi-Party Government is looking at alternative funding schemes.

As such, the MMC for Finance, Cllr Julie Suddaby, will be embarking on an investor roadshow to raise the necessary funds and attract much-needed investment to fund, among other things, the City's infrastructure projects. We also need residents to pay monies owed to the City. In this regard, we have enhanced our revenue collection programme through Operation Buya Mthetho.

Residents, businesses, and Government Departments have been responsive to the Buya Mthetho campaign and have started to come forward to pay their outstanding municipal bills. We have seen an uptick in payments since January

2022; and we are currently exceeding our target of collecting R4-billion every month.

Delinquent ratepayers who simply do not pay, despite having the means, and who ignore pre-termination notices from the City, will have their services cut-off. Our revenue team conducts up to 1,000 disconnections daily.

Understanding that the economy has not been kind to all residents, especially over the last two-years due to the global pandemic, we have re-instituted the Debt Rehabilitation Programme, which aims to assist defaulting customers to bring their outstanding municipal accounts up to date.

Qualifying customers will receive a 50% debt write-off, with a further write-off on the outstanding debt over a three-year period, if they comply with all the conditions associable with

the programme. Council will soon be presented with a report recommending radical changes to the qualifying criteria. For example, a 100% of debt above 90 days will be written off where the applicant is a pensioner or registered indigent customer. We also asking Council to vote for the inclusion of Old Age Homes, Orphanages and Body Corporate account holders in the criteria.

The city's Group Corporate and Shared Services Department under MMC Leah Knott has also been contributing towards a well-run City of Johannesburg through various interventions.

Over the last two-years, there have been radical service delivery shortcomings due to restrictions placed on how and where people work, we therefore pleased to state that the

100% return to work policy has been implemented from 1 April 2022. No hybrid working options are permitted for essential service departments. This will bolster our efforts to better the city's service delivery programmes.

All vacant positions in senior leadership have been advertised with interviews having been completed for 3 senior management positions.

Maintenance contracts have been awarded for fire engines.

Other contracts are in their final stages to ensure that the city has a full complement of fire engines, with weekly updates being provided to ensure that we stay on track.

Investigations into corruption have been undertaken and completed investigations have been actioned. The residents can expect to see guilty parties fired and looted funds recovered.

City storage facility at Hamburg where fire engines and workshops were being stripped was secured, and assets auctioned off which saw R4 million in income for the City. Other storage facilities and assets are being identified for disposal and new plans for the facilities developed.

A Local Labour Forum has been established to improve relationships with organised labour, enabling, among other things, for real labour issues within the city to be resolved constructively.

In January 2022, City Power launched a Customer Care Centre, resourced with Customer Care Agents with a strong remediation mandate to address communication challenges during the resolution of logged customer queries, and to

ensure that all calls logged by customers are closed efficiently and effectively. The Centre is currently addressing all queries escalated by the ward Councillors.

Furthermore, Service Delivery Centres were operationalised in March 2022, which deals with streamlining the outage management process, proactive communication to customers and councillors and providing milestone feedback on restoration times

In February, we held a successful Municipal Entities Annual General Meeting (AGM), which appointed a cohort of knowledgeable and ethical people who will serve on the boards of the City's 13 entities, including the newly established Johannesburg Tourism Company (JTC).

The establishment of the JTC is aimed at ensuring that Johannesburg becomes a tourist destination of choice on the African continent and that it uses Conventions, Sport, Retail Tourism and Events as key drivers for tourism and economic growth.

Many of our municipal entities are responsible for front-facing service delivery programmes such as the supply of water (through Joburg Water) and electricity (through City Power) as well as Pikitup, which is charged with the responsibility of managing the City's waste.

Joburg Parks & Zoo that manages green spaces; the building and maintenance of roads through the Johannesburg Roads Agency; the Johannesburg Social Housing Company or JOSHCO, that provides housing and housing opportunities for

the City's less economically fortunate residents, are but some of the additional frontline services provided by the City to residents in a sustainable manner in keeping with the dictates of section 152 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

Madam Acting Speaker,

Our ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently is directly linked to the City's well-run entities. We must establish good governance as the gold standard, and in many respects, this must be expressed not only through visible and tangible service delivery, but also through clean audit outcomes from the Auditor-General of South Africa.

During the 2020/21 financial year, not even one of Joburg's entities received a clean audit or an unqualified audit opinion. A whopping R3-billion was spent irregularly, meaning a violation of policies and / or legal prescripts, during the same period. I know it takes time to clean house, but we must move with haste and precision to get the entities functioning within the ambit of the existing legal framework.

The Multi-Party Government is steadfast in its commit to set the entities on track and ensuring that the residents get value for money.

A smart city

Planning has begun for new IT systems to manage leave, employee engagement, learning & development,

recruitment, performance management, consequence management, productivity, and enable hybrid working arrangements so that we are ready for the Future of Work.

There are thousands of CCTV cameras around the city that are not linked, we have therefore started the process of linking different cameras to the Public Safety Integrated Intelligence Operations Centre (IIOC). This will enable us to better detect and respond to crime.

Our City of Golden Opportunities must ensure that we work smart at all levels, which means introducing digital health records for efficiency and better patient care. We will therefore be rolling out digital e-health solutions over the coming year with the aim of digitising patient records, integrating them into other systems nationally and allowing

us to treat our residents in a more insightful, reliable and holistic way.

Madam Acting Speaker,

Building something great, and something that will last forever requires us to all consistently play our part towards fulfilling our vision of Building a City of Golden Opportunities.

The last few months have not been easy, but they have been made easier knowing that I have a team, and that

Johannesburg has team that fully understands the issues facing the city and its residents, and works daily to solve those issues.

I would therefore like to thank all the Members of the Mayoral Committee and the political parties who make up the Johannesburg Multi-Party Government.

Equally, allow to me to convey my thanks to the residents who have been more than patient, supported us when we have done right, and held us accountable when we do not do as expected.

I will give all of myself, to all the residents, all of the time, until my assignment to them is complete.

I will never abandon them.

I will always choose them.

I thank you!

