

State of the City

Address 2006

03 April 2006

IN his 2006 state of the city address, Johannesburg executive mayor Councillor Amos Masondo said it is imperative that we "reaffirm our commitment to strive for a better tomorrow".

Programme Director - Mr Pascal Moloi
Madam Speaker - Councillor Ntingane
MECs and Members of the Provincial Legislature
Executive Mayors
Members of the Mayoral Committee
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Leaders of all Political Parties
Chief Whip of Council - Clr Bafana Sithole
Fellow Councillors
Managers and Officials of Council
Distinguished guests
The media
Fellow Citizens

We meet today, Madam Speaker, to reaffirm our commitment to strive for a better tomorrow. The progress made by the previous Council is well known. We are building on this solid foundation. So we gather here this morning, not only to reflect on victories scored or problems encountered but to also answer the question: What more should be done to catapult and catalyse local government delivery and take it to greater heights.

In order for us to give a meaningful response to this question, we need to clarify what the relationship is between our long, medium and short-term planning. We need to shed light on where we want to be in the long-term, our approach to development, the objectives we intend to pursue in this five-year term and explain who will do what and how in the next year.

Madam Speaker, on the 1st of March, the citizens of voting age in this City, in their numbers, cast their ballots in different voting districts. This act was preceded by an intense contest. Each player - they range from political parties, interest groups and individuals - sought to present a sound lucid case. What an experience! Many of us gathered here this morning, will agree that this was indeed a bruising election campaign. At the end, however, the voters were able to carefully consider and weigh up the various options that were presented to them. It should be the view of every democrat to accept, as a matter of principle, that the voters have chosen and chosen well. So, Madam Speaker, the people have spoken and the rest is history.

The work done by this municipality in the past five years is an account that confirms significant progress and achievement. It is work achieved, as I have said before, by Councillors who can truly be regarded as pioneers.

These Councillors, the true pathfinders, were able to utilise this young institution to grapple with and in many instances to successfully address the numerous complex challenges that

arose in the past five years.

In these circumstances, there were many political sceptics who added a negative dose that sought to consistently paint a gloomy picture of Councils and Councillors. Depicting these institutions as creations littered with countless failures. Looked at in this context, regardless of this pessimism, one can only express gratitude to those who served in the last term, to the excellent work that was done to benefit many local communities.

In his message, in the foreword of the ANC 2006 Local Government Manifesto, President Thabo Mbeki says that what we need is "a plan to make local government to work better" and states that "during the first five years of democratic local government we have worked together to change the lives of all our people for the better. We have achieved a great deal already. But much more needs to be done".

Madam Speaker, our election manifesto states that: we have a plan and we will, to quote the President one more time "intervene to ensure that Councils work better and are accountable to the community". In the City of Johannesburg, as the executive political authority and the executive administrative authority, as Councillors and the Municipality, we commit ourselves to do more.

What have we done and what is it that still needs to be done?

Our report, now a book, entitled "Reflecting on a Solid Foundation", provides a detailed account on work done in the past five years. This book needs to be read for itself. What needs to be said and emphasised is that we intend to deepen and build on this solid foundation as we move to the future.

Democracy and Good Governance

Our system of community participation has become a distinctive feature of the work done in the first five years.

We made Mayoral Roadshows a regular feature of the political life of the City. This effort included the regular visits to communities in each of the eleven (11) administrative regions by the Executive Mayor, the Mayoral Committee, managers and senior officials. During these Roadshows:

- we listened very carefully to the needs and concerns of residents;
- we reported back on what work had been done to address issues raised at previous meetings;
- we received petitions and ensured that we acted on them
- we sought to ensure that those who are in government are better sensitised on issues that were of critical concerns to communities;
- as well as ensure that the people themselves had a better grasp of what government is and the work it does.

Today our Integrated Development Plan outreach is a fairly well oiled exercise, run through three different phases of community meetings and report backs throughout the year. The process to draft the Integrated Development Plan for the City ensures a meaningful involvement of communities in the identification of local priorities and the eventual allocation of resources during the budget process. We are confident that our primary planning document and our budgets have reasonably reflected the will of the communities especially those that have generously given on their time and engaged with us during these outreach processes.

In addition, we have put in place and established a working system of ward committees. The system of Ward Committees had teething problems in the initial stages but I can report with confidence that there has been a marked improvement in this regard in the current financial year with more than 70% of these committees actively participating in democratic processes such as the compilation of the Integrated Development Plan and the budget outreach meetings.

Madam Speaker, please allow me to take this opportunity to urge the newly elected Councillors to use this committee system within their wards and to ensure that they serve as effective channels of communication between the City and residents. Councillors should not treat ward committees as a matter of mere compliance to legislation but as a powerful tool that ensures accountable local government and sustainable service delivery. In this way we can accelerate the pace of transformation in Johannesburg, and correctly so, through a people-driven process of change.

Councillors have been elected to serve this City and all the people that reside in it. This is not an opportunity for self-advancement or enrichment but for service and commitment.

All the ANC Councillors have already signed the code of conduct that says the following:

*"I stand to serve the community.
I solemnly declare that I stand to be elected as a representative of my community, without motives of material advantage or personal gain.
As a councillor of the ANC I will place my energies and skills at the disposal of my community, and carry out the tasks given to me. I will work side by side with the whole community as we strive to build a better life for all South Africans.
I will fight against corruption in any guise or form.
I will listen to the views of the community and hold a public meeting with all community members to report back on my work, at least four times a year.
I will live in the community that has elected me.
I will do my best to build and develop my community.
I will uphold the policies of my organisation, the African National Congress."*

On behalf of the ANC Councillors, I would like to reaffirm this commitment today in this meeting, the official opening of Council, and I would like to call on the representative of all the parties and political groupings in Council to join us in dedicating our energies and capabilities, for the next five years to the service of this great City and to all the people who live in it.

As elected representatives our duty and responsibilities go way beyond the mere attendance of meetings. Each and everyday one of us must also be an activist who is able to work together with the communities we represent to end the blight of poverty and underdevelopment that still afflict large sections of our communities and together with the people to find the relevant creative solutions.

When we look at the increased number of women that have been elected to this Council on 1 March 2006, a trend that was also reflected in the composition of our new Mayoral Committee, I can only feel a positive surge of pride. This is part of our ongoing effort to advance the cause of gender equality especially in this critical and important sphere of local government.

In the words of former ANC President, Oliver Reginald Tambo "they now have the opportunity to liberate us men from antique concepts and attitudes about the place and role of women in society and in the development and direction of our revolutionary struggle". These women are not only here to add a new dimension to gender equality but to ensure that reconstruction and development become a reality at local government.

Another aspect of good governance is how we have built relations with other spheres of government and the work done internationally. We now have sister city agreements with New York, London and Birmingham. We are proud of the links and fraternal relations we have built between the City of Johannesburg and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Apart from the sister city agreement we have with Windhoek, we are pursuing links with Matola in Mozambique, Lusaka in Zambia and Nairobi in Kenya. We also enjoy many other relationships with many cities across the world in forums such as ICLEI, which promotes sustainable development.

In this term of office, we will significantly improve our participation in the SALGA structures and work even harder to make Nepad more of a reality at local government level.

Madam Speaker, the 1990s presented this City with many critical challenges. We must remember that our City was in a financial and institutional crisis. We had to take some tough decisions. And not everyone agreed with them, and for sometime relations with unions and staff were strained. I am happy to report that over the last five years we have built sound labour relations. We accept that once in a while a rupture will occur but on the whole we have built industrial relations that are very sound. We intend to deepen this even further.

Batho Pele and Customer Care

A number of things have been done over the last five years to enhance Batho Pele and customer care. The City of Johannesburg again commits itself to service that is friendly, courteous and compassionate but, above all, effective delivery and greater efficiency. We will continue to treat people with respect and dignity. We will continue to strive for excellence and attain standards in service delivery that seeks to exceed the present achievements.

We have rolled out a truly unique performance management system. This remains a Johannesburg specific intervention that remains unequalled by our peers. Madam Speaker, we have gone out to identify credible individual outside of government to constitute our

'remuneration and performance panel'. This panel is made up of an academic, a businessperson, and a representative from the Public Service Commission, an expert on human resource management and a former Director General of a provincial government. This panel has assisted us in clarifying performance indicators, assessment of performance and helped to realise delivery targets that we have set for ourselves. It has ensured greater levels of fairness and that the voice of people out there is taken into account. We have learnt valuable lessons that can be shared with other municipalities and similar institutions.

We have put in place various contact points, most notably People's Centres in every Region and a call centre, our Joburg Connect. The call centre can handle any kind of service delivery query directly or can redirect these to a relevant department or someone in the administration who can provide a response in a reasonable time. In addition we have introduced 'e-service' on the Joburg website. Today, anyone can go online and register to receive their bills electronically, check the progress of their planning applications, and do a whole host of other things. We in Johannesburg are not prepared to be left behind by advancing technological development and globalisation.

Customer Service and Revenue

There have been some key areas of customer concerns in the last five years. In this regard, it is worth highlighting challenges with our billing system and the processing of development applications. Both these areas have received significant attention.

As you are aware, in the first half of 2004, we had a level of dissatisfaction with our billing system. The peak of this problem was in March 2004, when approximately 7.5% of our customers lodged complaints. After careful examination, we responded, Madam Speaker, by making some management changes.

The new management team was quickly able to ensure that the number of new queries requiring resolution was drastically reduced and also that the rate of query resolution was increased. As a result, our present position is that only approximately 1% of our customers raise problems every month and the number of outstanding queries is approximately half a percentage of the customer base. We will continue to address this matter. The figures at our disposal suggest that the problem is under control. Many will agree with me that there is no crisis.

We have launched Programme Phakama. This programme, is currently underway, and will re-engineer the way that our various business units work together on matters relating to property transactions, metering and billing. It will also ensure that all business units use a common IT platform for these transactions.

In this term office, Programme Phakhama would have been completed and it will ensure a full business process integration of the revenue and customer interface of the value chains across the City. We will implement a single co-ordinated value chains for revenue and customer relations management, we will implement a single IT system to support both value chains and we will ensure completeness of revenue and maximise collection.

Financial Sustainability

Madam Speaker, it is worth mentioning that, we have brought stability and predictability to the way in which we manage the financial affairs of the continent's premier City, Johannesburg.

Allow me to remind you one more time, that in the 1990s this City was in a very serious financial crisis. Over the past five years practical financial planning and management has become a norm in the City.

- 2000/2001 the rate of collection for revenue billed was only about 86%. Over the last five years we have steadily lifted this. At the end of 2005 the 12 months moving average on our collection rate was 93% and in a number of months this past year it was above 100%.
- We have turned yearly deficits into regular annual surpluses, and we now have a strong cash position. We still have a large outstanding debtors book, but we no longer spend money we are not sure is going to come in, so this is manageable.
- We have written off some of the unrecoverable debt owed to us by poor people who simply cannot afford to pay. And we are now exploring some innovative options to recover debt we believe is recoverable.
- We are well on the way to achieving an audit that is unqualified, and our national credit rating has improved, in 1999 the City obtained its first credit rating from Fitch Ratings and an investment grading of BBB+. In 2003 this was upgraded to A-, which was reaffirmed in 2004. At the same time a newly appointed credit rating agency, CA Ratings, assigned us an A 'flat'.
- These improvements have re-inspired confidence in the financing community, so much so that we were able to issue the first municipal bond in South Africa since the emergence of the new democratic dispensation and local government institutions. This received the bond of the year award from the Bond Exchange of South Africa in November 2004. We have issued a second bond since, and we have negotiated with a number of financial institutions for a 'domestic medium term notes programme' that will see City bonds of up to a total value of R6 billion issued between now and the year 2010.
- By being able to raise more finance more cheaply we have been able to grow our capital budget. In 1999/2000, the City's capital budget was only R295 million. In the past five years we have increased this ten-fold. Our Maintenance and Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) is above R3 billion this year, the largest of any municipality in the country.
- The City has been able to bring down its cost of borrowing by an average of over 2% in the last 4 years.
- Already Johannesburg contributes over 16% of the total economic value added in this country and provides 11.3% of the total national employment. I have no doubt Madam Speaker, that these percentages will continue to grow, as will our current 20% share of the country's wholesale and retail trade sector.

In this term of office, we will ensure that the following is achieved:

- Implementation of an Activity Based Costing methodology, which will drive the allocation of resources for the City and its Municipality Owned Entities.
- Maintaining the CAPEX above R3 billion for the medium term period.

- Establishing innovative funding mechanism that will enable the City to accelerate its CAPEX and increase its budget to between R4-5 billion by exploring Public Private Partnerships and other alternatives.
- Launching the 'People's Bond', the Retail Municipal Bond, intended for the citizens of the City and will come with low affordable denominations of between R500-R1000 per bond. This will contribute to the promotion of the serving culture of the citizens and also instil a sense of pride and responsibility on the City's capital assets.
- Establishing the City's own Insurance Captive Vehicle through which the City and its Municipal Owned Entities will manage down its insurable risks and thereby reducing the cost associated with insurance.
- Establishing and launch a SME "Working Capital" Fund for the SME's contracted by the City and its Municipal Owned Entities. The fund will be owned and funded by the City with a turnover of 12 months.

Basic Services

In the past five years, we have seen spectacular progress in the delivery of essential services to communities across the City. Already more than 98% of the people of Johannesburg have access to basic services including the allocation of free basic water, electricity, sanitation and solid waste removal.

Madam Speaker, starting from this term of office until the end of the term in 2011 or not later than ninety (90) days thereafter, the City will endeavour and do everything in its power to ensure that every household has access to running water; that every home has access to electricity; that every family can enjoy the security of adequate sanitation and the efficient removal of waste.

Delivery Infrastructure and Services

The Infrastructure and Services portfolio, suggests an emphasis on the ongoing focus of improving service delivery, targeting the poor and the previously disadvantaged communities. We will continue with the maintenance of existing infrastructure. We will also be seeking to extend the infrastructure to those areas where none is in place.

Madam Speaker, allow me to talk about some of the concrete development and service delivery improvements we have made with this bigger capital budget that I have been talking about:

Johannesburg Water

- One of the most important projects during the last term of office has been Gcin'amanzi. Gcin'amanzi means water preservation. This has rolled out "pre-paid water meters" to large parts of Soweto, fixed (replaced) pipes and connections that were causing huge unaccounted for water losses. By the end of the project 162 000 households would have benefited. Unaccounted for water has been reduced from over 40% at the start of the last term office to 32% at the end.
- An estimated 43% of households in areas already addressed by Operation Gcin'amanzi are able to manage their consumption within the 6 KI allocation of free

water monthly, as a result they do not have to pay anything for water. The remaining 57% spend, on average, R41.61 a month to buy additional 7.9 KI, over and above their free 6 KI basic water allocation.

- The global average water consumption has fallen steeply in areas of Soweto where the project has been underway, for over 60 KI per household per month to just 10.3 KI
- Over 600 ventilated pit latrines (VIPs) have been installed in informal settlements since the inception of Johannesburg Water.
- Johannesburg Water won the best Customer Services Award for 2005.

In this current term of office Joburg Water's priority is to further the reduction for unaccounted water, eradication of water and sanitation service backlogs, improve services in informal settlements and to extend and sustain service improvements across the City.

Pikitup

- Madam Speaker, we can proudly state that waste collection services were extended to many parts of the City that never had them before. Over 600 000 of our new 240 litre bins were rolled out to households across Joburg. Today over 98% of households enjoy weekly refuse collection.
- A significant innovation was Project 100 Spots. The "Spots" in the projects were illegal dumpsites in Soweto. These were a health hazard to a number of local communities. Many of these have been cleared of dumped waste, enjoy on going monitoring and are now strictly controlled. Many of these cleared Spots have been transformed into neighbourhood parks where children can play without the risk of diseases.
- Pikitup piloted the Waste-licensing project in December 2005 and it will be implemented in carefully selected sites during this term of office.
- The introduction of a new technology in the waste plan will ensure bulk storage recycling and other areas of waste.
- Pikitup is already involved in the rehabilitation of closed landfill sites.
- The inner city represents a special challenge of urban management. In this term of office, we need to take the efforts of urban renewal and regeneration to a higher level. The challenge of achieving a clean city requires urgent attention. A radical plan is required to turn the situation around in a significant way. Failures of the past can no longer be tolerated. The inner city is the face of Johannesburg. It mirrors this great City in many ways. To change this situation around we require both a strategy and a detailed 24-hour implementation plan.

City Power

- City Power has rolled out thousands of new connections over the last term of office. It has also spent tens of millions of Rands on improving public lighting.
- City Power has begun an intensive upgrade programme in order to achieve the following:
 - To reduce the average age of equipment through maintenance.
 - To replace the obsolete equipment.
 - To upgrade the overloaded networks in order to compensate for natural and anticipated load growth.

- To remove the equipment which is unsafe to operate.
- To achieve standardisation across all areas in order to reduce downtime and have more available emergency stock.
- To eradicate the makeshift solutions and
- To ensure higher plant availability.

In this five-year of office City Power will embark on a vigorous campaign in order to significantly reduce levels of outages, to have more connections and to improve public lighting. It will install universal public lighting; it will use alternative energy sources such as solar, retrofitting of lights bulbs to save electricity amongst others.

Johannesburg Road Agency

One of our proudest service delivery achievements in the last five years is in the area of roads. Many of our citizens have always taken for granted the fact that the streets in their communities are tarred. It will be inconceivable for many of you here today, who live in areas that are tarred to imagine driving home on a gravel or if it rains, on a muddy road.

But Madam Speaker, this has been the daily reality of millions of our citizens.

In 2002 we said that all gravel roads in Soweto must be tarred by the end of December 2005. Indeed a few months ago, the City of Johannesburg celebrated no less than 314 kilometres of tarred roads at the cost of R485 million five months ahead of the deadline we had set for ourselves.

We intend to extend this programme to cover areas such as Orange Farm, Bram Fischerville, Ivory Park and others.

Economic Development

Joburg 2030, Madam Speaker, was approved in 2002, is the City's strategy for growing the economy to the benefit of all residents. Joburg 2030 highlights key barriers to economic growth in Johannesburg and proposes interventions to reduce these constraints. A dedicated Economic Development Unit (EDU) was established to drive these interventions and it has begun to implement several key projects in the current Mayoral term.

One of the most important economic developments over the last five years which will also continue on to this new term is the Soweto Development Initiative, the Soweto Empowerment Zone and the Orlando Ekhaya project which is possibly the most significant development in Johannesburg, after the Alexandra Renewal Project. What makes Orlando EKhaya particularly significant is the large investment it will generate. Ultimately over R1 billion will be invested in the precinct.

These developments are beginning to interest investors who have historically looked to the north of the City to put their money into new business projects and ventures in the South. The Kliptown development as well as the Jabulani CBD anticipated work will remain on our radar screen in this term of office. The Kliptown project stands out as a proud beacon of what can be further achieved in similar projects elsewhere in this City.

Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market

The Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market has a database of over 12000 farmers, some of whom employ at least 5000 people. In January 2006, the Market launched an outreach programme to over 3000 black farmers. The Fresh Produce Market is visited by 35000 customers everyday who source various produce. The Market also attracts customers from neighbouring countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique.

The Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market Strategic Initiatives for the next five years are:

- Modernisation and refurbishment of the infrastructure including IT, Process and Systems.
- Add essential activities as requested by users of the Market: processing facilities and meat market packaging facilities.
- Expand activities to other African countries and assist where possible with the construction of fresh produce distribution centres.
- In collaboration with government departments such as Health and Education as well as other industry role players to stimulate consumption of fresh produce through the promotion of healthy life styles and related programmes.
- Help to establish fresh produce training academy as well as a Skills Development Facility to cater for traders as well as relevant management skills and target South Africans and other nationals.
- Review and modernise Market By-Laws and align them to current industry trends. (Last update 1978).
- Position the Market well and ensure it establishes and retains a loyal supplier and customer base. Ensure on going financial management, accountability and good governance.

Johannesburg Tourism Company

In February 2006, the Johannesburg Tourism Company launched Soweto Tourism Information Centre (STIC), a one stop shop for tourist in Soweto. The Centre aims to be a virtual and actual gateway to Soweto for foreign and domestic tourists providing information and booking services.

At the end of June 2006, Johannesburg Tourism Company will launch another Information Centre, the Park Station Tourism Information Centre. A Centre that will cater for boarder shopping. The Centre aims to be a virtual and actual gateway for foreign visitors who come and shop in Johannesburg. It will provide information on places to shop around in Johannesburg and booking services for all tourism activities within the City.

Development Planning and Urban Management

Madam Speaker, urban renewal has remained an important part of our agenda. The turn around in the inner city of Johannesburg is indeed happening and the results speak for themselves. There is the Nelson Mandela Bridge, Metro Mall, the lighting in Newtown and several New Town Cultural Precinct developments, the Constitutional Hill, the upgrading of

Braamfontein, the development and refurbishment of Drill Hall, the upgrading of Main Street and the Brickfields Housing Project among others.

Other developments which are less visible but with the same impact as the ones above are; the installation of CCTV cameras throughout the inner city, and the establishment of numerous City Improvement Districts, have made a significant impact. If we keep going at the current pace, together with provincial government and other role players, I am confident Madam Speaker, that no-one here will associate the inner city with 'crime and grime' a decade from now.

Madam Speaker, the establishment of the Development Planning and Urban Management portfolio, demonstrates our commitment to transforming and integrating the City. The need to ensure greater efforts at addressing urban management and turning dormitory townships like Soweto and Alexandra into viable sustainable settlements. The urban management component of the portfolio will especially ensure the continuation of the inner city regeneration in the Johannesburg, Randburg, Roodepoort, Sandton, Eldorado Park, Soweto and other similar central business districts.

We want to actively intervene in the spatial form of the City in order to create a single City that is efficient, sustainable and accessible especially for those who are poor in order to offer them an opportunity to help themselves out of poverty. This will be done by establishing a clear structure of urban nodes well integrated with movement systems in the City, with an emphasis on new economic nodes in disadvantaged areas and by promoting densification in strategic locations as per the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) and Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDFs).

Sustainable Human Settlement

Madam Speaker, Housing is the second most important concern of our people after jobs.

We remain committed to providing decent housing and related services to our communities.

There are many informal settlements in Johannesburg. At the last count we had about 110 000 households living in about 120 different settlements. We are now engaged in a systematic process of formalising these settlements.

The most important settlement delivered in the Mayoral term has been Cosmo City. A huge new housing development, integrated with sustainable economic development initiatives catering for residents of varied income-brackets.

In this term of office, Madam Speaker, the City will complete the following:

- Formalise the remaining 50 informal settlements.
- Convert hostels through the delivery of 5000 individual units.
- Deliver 15 000 rental housing through Joshco and other role players.
- Deliver 30 000 houses on existing service stands through the Community Builder Programme.

- Deliver 50 000 mixed income housing in partnership with other players in the housing sector; this will include financial institutions and the private developers.
- Embark on an education campaign to ensure that beneficiaries appreciate the economic value inherent in their subsidised houses.

Sustainable Development

Some residents in our City live in dusty townships yet the experience of others is much greener - they live under the cover of one of the largest urban forests in the world, and have world-class developed parks just around the corner. This disparity and shortfall is being addressed. In the last five years we have spent R35 million on the development of new parks in areas traditionally deprived of open green space.

Soweto residents can now enjoy green spaces like the Dorothy Nyembe Regional Park, the Thokoza Park Moroka Dam as well as Protea North Mapetla Regional Park. In this term we will explore initiatives aimed at leveraging resources from the private sector to extend the creation of similar parks to other parts of Johannesburg.

The City is examining the possibility of a massive tree planting project that will extend and cover all areas in the Southern parts of Johannesburg.

Transport

Madam Speaker, transport is an issue that needs a huge amount of work in the next few years to reduce congestion and bring affordable and accessible public transport to all.

In 2003, the City produced an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP); please allow me to say, Madam Speaker, this was the first in the country. This maps out a Strategic Public Transport Network (SPTN), which is a clear framework of corridors where our energy and resources must be concentrated if we want to connect all parts of the City. We have been working on key Strategic Public Transport Network flagship projects, in particular on upgrading a route from Soweto through Parktown to Sunninghill.

Johannesburg Road Agency (JRA) has done a lot to improve the conditions of roads in Johannesburg. R60 million was invested to improve roads in the greater Sandton area in the period leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In our planning, we have made provision for the needs of the taxi industry, which transports over 70% of all our City's public transport commuters, but unlike bus or rail does not receive any subsidy. Very important developments include, amongst others, the opening of Metro Mall and the upgrading of the Bara Taxi Rank facility.

Our own Metrobus has also undergone many changes. The challenge, however, is the need for Metrobus to gain access to the many routes that were historically allocated to Putco as well as the integration of the whole transport system - bus, minibus and rail - to maximise impact and improve the mobility in and outside of Johannesburg. The establishment of a Transport Authority across the three Metropolitan Councils of Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Joburg has become more urgent than ever before.

In this term of office Madam Speaker, the City will embark on the development of a user culture of care and pride in the transport system, the establishment of a Transport museum, which will exhibit the role of transport in the struggle of liberation and COSMO City Taxi Ranks. We will also ensure the upgrading and refurbishment of the entire traffic signal system, surfacing of all remaining gravel roads in the City and to support the implementation of Gautrain (at the five stations in the City).

Poverty and Advancement of Human Development

Alleviation of poverty, if not its eradication, remains the central goal of local government and underlies the work that we do in Council.

A number of key measures were instituted in 2005-2006 to build a sustainable foundation for the future social development. Programme development and management in the areas of poverty alleviation, economic support, HIV/AIDS, youth development, skills development, reading development and literacy promotion constitutes cornerstones of departmental efforts. Some specific achievements are:

- * The launch of the Food Bank in June 2005 to assist poverty stricken families focusing on child headed households.
- * Learnerships in Project Management to improve the opportunities for incumbents for mainstream employment in a partnership with the Service Seta.
- * The winning of a coveted Carnegie Corporation Grant to the value of R12 million towards developing the Johannesburg Public Library into a model library, and to preserve and Africanise its unique special collections.
- * 30 Libraries are offering computer-based literacy classes and 5 others offer traditional literacy classes.
- * Embracing youth and spearheading a month-long programme for Youth Dialogues in August 2005.
- * Growth in the Annual Joburg New Years Carnival to include more participants and to increase skills development through the establishment of a carnival camp.
- * Growth of the Annual Arts Alive International Festival to Tri-ennial Arts Festival status.
- * Launch of the Soweto Flagship Institutions incorporating Hector Pieterse Museum and Memorial, Mandela House Museum and Kliptown Museum in order to play a leading role in promoting tourism in Soweto.
- * Launch of a theatre in Soweto.

These many initiatives, Madam Speaker, have now been consolidated and refocused by a Human Development Strategy, released in early 2005. This has already made a huge impact. For example, it has spurred the redesign of the City's social package of assistance to residents who cannot pay for even basic levels of service. The package is now better targeted and reaches more people. Access to components of the package has been tied to a debt write-off of registration. As of the end of 2005, over 85 000 eligible households had registered for the write-off and access to special cases component of the social package.

Health and the Challenge of HIV and AIDS

Madam Speaker, the HIV and AIDS remain one of the challenges facing the citizens of Johannesburg. Our Buckets of Love and Care Programme is but one of our special initiatives. This initiative involves the distribution of a package of essential foodstuffs and

household necessities to households that are desperately in need.

In this term we intend consolidating the work that is being done under Jozi Ihlomile Project. We will also extend the work that we are doing in an ongoing way with various civil society organisations. Our focus will also be on changing behaviour and paying special attention to strengthening our relationship with faith-based organisations.

The City has trained 377 informal food handlers in food safety in the inner city. This year, we have been able to visit 684 public schools, 3141 Child Care Centres and 885 public sector clinics to ensure that environmental health and safety standards are adhered to and also as part of our work regarding Environmental Health.

The City dedicated R10.5 million to the extension and upgrading of 5 clinics in the city and the Langlaagte medical depot/pharmacy. In order to strengthen the Primary Health Care services, an additional R6.5 million is being used to appoint 20 professional nurses, 2 fulltime doctors, 3 part-time doctors, 5 health promoters and other support staff like clerks and data capturers.

Community Safety and By-law Enforcement

The City of Johannesburg has established and completely transformed the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD). The force works closely with the SAPS everyday and we have also added a number of specialised new units that focuses on crime prevention in a dedicated way.

A City Safety Strategy was developed earlier in the last term of office. Its interventions target specific geographic areas that seem to be more affected by the scourge of crime.

In recent months the steps we have taken together with other law enforcement agencies have yielded encouraging results. The incidence of violent crime is on a steady decline murder has dropped by 5.6%; attempted murder by 18.8%, residential burglary by 8.1% and car hijacking by 9.9%. It is important to state, however, that we still do have some way to go, but we are on course to being a much safer City.

Urban Management

The City's Emergency Management Services (EMS) provides rescue, fire and ambulance services to all neighbourhoods. I am sure that many of you have heard that 12 people were killed and 33 injured during a fire, which gutted a two-storey building in the inner city a few days ago.

Madam Speaker, the City's Emergency Management Services worked tirelessly in the early hours of Wednesday 29 March 2006, to save the victims from the fire. They were able to provide temporary shelter, blankets and food.

There is an urgent need for all the role players in this City - the judiciary, the civil society organisations, business, the religious groupings, the affected communities and government to hold a special conference and answer the question: what is it that needs to be done to consolidate on achievements gained to date on urban renewal and regeneration in the inner

city?

The City now has a comprehensive disaster management plan, and disaster readiness that has been systematically improved over the last five years.

2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup

The 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup is a major opportunity for Johannesburg. We have been working closely with other stakeholders and to this end, we have finalised a number of plans.

The City, however, needs to answer the question: how should Joburg utilise the pressure of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup to deepen our programmes and ensure a greater legacy that will benefit all its citizens when the soccer spectacle is gone?

In the months ahead, we will be continuing to engage the various role players with the view of ensuring that this opportunity is fully seized to benefit all citizens.

Other Special Development Projects: Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA)

As elected representatives of our people we continue to be deeply touched by the instances of poverty that we encounter on a daily basis. As a responsible government we have introduced a broad range of social development programmes aimed at poverty alleviation and addressing the related issues of social exclusion, gender inequality and the plight of the most vulnerable sections in our society, our young children, our elderly and our disabled communities.

Madam Speaker, during the lifetime of this Council, local government will play a critical role in the implementation of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA). This strategy will not only help to make South Africa more competitive on a global level through new initiatives in critical economic sectors but it will also have strong impact on poverty reduction and the creation of new employment opportunities.

Local government structures and especially in the major metropolitan areas such as Johannesburg will be key to the successful implementation of ASGISA. New economic and industrial developments are primarily dependent on local government for the provision of much needed services and infrastructure such as electricity, logistics, telecommunications, water, road, rail and transport.

Should ASGISA meet its objectives of accelerated economic growth it will in turn lead to increasing demands for our services.

Let me assure you that Johannesburg is ready to fully lend its support to ASGISA and to reap the benefits of a higher economic growth rate. Our infrastructure development is in place and will be accelerated to meet the demands of an expanding economy. Joburg as an

important South African financial and business centre will not drop the ball of shared growth and prosperity.

Growth and Development Strategy (GDS)

In 2005 we launched a process to revisit the overall strategy for development in our City called the Growth and Development Strategy (GDS). This is in line with our election manifesto, which calls for the formulation of a Growth and Development Strategy in each metropolitan and district municipality.

This Growth and Development Strategy will look at the long-term future of the City and some of the major strategic decisions that need to be made to accelerate development in the coming decades. Side-by-side with this, we are working on a 5-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP). This Integrated Development Plan will look at precisely where we want to be at the end of the next five years, spelling out details of what we are going to do to get there. We already have a large amount of preliminary forward planning work done.

We will be talking to other stakeholders, including the private sector, national and provincial governments, about some of the resources that are needed for our bold new programmes. Most importantly, we will be consulting closely with communities, civil society and business across our City.

This process will culminate in a major citywide event on 12 May. We are calling this event the Growth and Development Summit. On Friday 17 March 2006, President Thabo Mbeki said that the Summits must be held by the beginning of June 2006. "Our Mayors must ensure that these Summits truly involve the people in their areas, so that from the very beginning of their terms, our councils get used to the critical interaction between themselves and the masses of the people in the implementation of the People's Contract."

At this Growth and Development Summit, we will put the finishing touches to our Growth and Development Strategy and five-year Integrated Development Plan before approving both of them on the Budget Day at the end of May. It is critical that all of this work must take place this year. We are looking forward to both the provincial and national government contributions to enrich this initiative.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by quoting the following words: "No pessimists ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to the human spirits". (Hellen Keller).

In Johannesburg we have a dream. We seek to build a better quality of life for all our people. A better tomorrow is beckoning. We urge all of you, as optimists, to join us.

Thank you