



CITY OF
UMHLATHUZE
VISION INTO ACTION

MUCH HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. MUCH IS STILL TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

SMME ONE STOP SHOP



CITY OF UMHLATHUZE SERVICE DELIVERY ACHIEVEMENTS 2016-2021

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Mayor's Forward

The 2016 to 2021 term of office in the City of uMhlathuze will go down in the annals of history as one of the most challenging periods for elected representatives. The term has been characterised by a number of successes driven by the City under our leadership and on the flip coin, a plethora of challenges threatening the lives and livelihoods of humankind.

Let me firstly thank our organisation, African National Congress, the people's movement, for affording us an opportunity to change the people's lives for the better after it was given an overwhelming majority confidence in the 2016 Local Government Elections.

I extend warm appreciations to all my Comrades whom we were leading with as Councillors and the entire Council from all political parties for ensuring that we channel all municipal resources towards changing the landscape of our City, contributing positively to communities who elected us and leading a government institution credible and diligently.

I will forever be indebted to the support I relished as the political head of the City of uMhlathuze from the beginning of the term until now that I have to pass the baton to the incoming leadership as the 2021 Local Government Elections draws to a close.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and Full Council, I would like to pass sincere gratitude

to the Administration teams led by the current Municipal Manager Mr LH Mapholoba and also the then Municipal Manager who started the term, Dr NJ Sibeko for steering the ship towards the direction of hope and better life for all citizens of the City.

We inherited a City that enjoyed a good national and international reputation for clean governance with Five Clean Audits consecutively between the 2014 to 2018 financial years with a slight technical digress in the 2019 financial year, but bounced back in the 2020 financial year. This record has earned our City several accolades and what we appreciate most is the continuous hard work of delivering services against all odds.

We have had a fair share of challenges in the course of our leadership and we would like to believe that we have done our best to resolve them within the legally allowed period. With firm advices from the Deputy Mayor Cllr Dudu Sibiya, Speaker Cllr Slondile Mkhize, Chief Whip Cllr Mannie Lourens and Councillors as well as the Administration, we managed to

swim through rough tides. This term of office, we endured the unbearable pain of losing great leaders, comrades, employees, eminent persons, and a number of community members. Our condolences go out to the Mfundo Mthenjana family, our departed Speaker and Councillors who lost their lives during Covid-19 period, which was worse because we could not even commemorate them and mourn befittingly.

We also lost the District Mayor Cllr Nonhle Mkhulisi and the uMlalazi Mayor Cllr Thelumoya Jeke Zulu. We are hoping that their souls are resting in peace.

We were serving a diverse community with different racial backgrounds living side by side. We served the poorest of the poor in deep rural areas and served the middle class and the elite in the plush suburbs. This poses a number of challenges where each pocket of the community requires a very different approach to service delivery to serve a particular interest. We had to strike a balance in order to satisfy all sectors and ensure that we coin an inclusive

approach towards the services we offer as the City.

In all that juggling, our communities stood by us and supported us with an understanding that we are a local government relying on rates collection in order to service the people. We thank our communities for this; and we have learned a lot during this term and hope that the next term of office will accelerate service delivery where we have left off.

Lastly I would also like to thank our families, on behalf of both Councillors and employees who have had to put up without us at times because we are serving the people. We are hoping that they will find it in their hearts to comprehend that ours is about serving and serving better at all times.

I wish the new council and leadership all the best as they assume public duties.

Thank you!

**City of uMhlathuze Mayor
Cllr MG Mhlongo**



Municipal Manager's Forward

It is very humbling to present to the City of uMhlathuze community, stakeholders and different constituencies and amaKhosi ezizwe under our jurisdiction. This is a report card, tracking service delivery since the inception of this Council handing down the guard after the Local Government Elections of 2021.

Since the 2016 Local Government Elections, tremendous work has been done, life changing decisions have been taken to guide the development of this city and its people; and equally so, many challenges emerged along the way. It is gratifying that I took over the reins toward the end of the term of office and my appreciations goes to the previous administration that was holding the fort. I took over an intact administration and a cohesive Council that was welcoming and willing to take me through previous work done and objectives lying ahead.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The City of uMhlathuze has been exemplary in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and the country at large in terms of clean governance backed by sound political oversight structures, financially healthy systems and experienced Senior Management and Administration team. The City has managed to acquire consecutive clean audits for five years and was mysteriously stripped off its glory on one year under dubious circumstances. This has been a learning curve and the following year, the clean audit status was retained.

FILLING OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

One of the enabling factor to effective and efficient service delivery is having fully-fledged section 56 Managers with relevant

qualifications and equally sound experience. The City of uMhlathuze has been attracting one of the best in the market and along the way; they were being poached by other sectors. Any institution that is doing well is bound to have such challenges and ours is to continuously sharpen our skill retention strategies while grooming new talents and organisational succession plans. This may take time but it is necessary for the benefit of the communities we serve.

STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

Fundamental to service delivery is the ability to form strategic partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders, traditional authorities and strategic organisations and formations within the City as prescribed in the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Structures Act. The City of uMhlathuze enjoys support in a number of key service delivery programmes through formal agreements and partnerships with all industries, public entities and stakeholders. Periodic engagements with different sectors ranging from amaKhosi, business, forums, NGOs, government departments at all levels and community based structures strengthens communications and creates a two-way engagement vehicle. We continued to engage with our big customers in order to hear their concerns and improve our services to them and our working relationship.

SERVICE DELIVERY SCORECARD

Communities we serve will bare testimony that the City of uMhlathuze Council and its committees and oversight structures has done tremendous difference in their lives in this ending term of office under severe economic decline, socio-

economic challenges and the advent of the global Coronavirus pandemic. The provision of electricity to our licenced areas remains at hundred percent with infills on new customers. Refuse removal remains at almost eighty percent and we have expanded to Ntambanana communities and even created employment and business opportunities in this regard through recycling; the provision of water and sanitation improved in a number of areas with huge challenges in the eSikhaleni Cluster of which interventions are being implemented. We worked hard to create opportunities for women, young and disabled person through our amended Supply Chain Management Policies and created conducive environment for business and investors to establish their businesses in our City.

HOUSING PROJECTS

The City of uMhlathuze has been excelling in the human settlement projects and has been recognised through various accolades in this aspect over the term of office. The extension of Dumisani Makhaye Village Phase 6 and 8 will see more than a thousand units being constructed.

- More than two thousands Operation Sukuma Sakhe units has been built since 2016.
- More than two thousands OSS units has been approved for the City of uMhlathuze this financial year.
- More than two thousand houses will begin to be erected in Ntambanana, Luwamba and Bukhanana areas.
- More than Four thousand mixed typology houses will commence in

Aquadene Housing Project.

- More than Ten Thousand mixed typology houses will be built in eMpangeni Mega Housing, including social amenities such as health and sport facilities, shopping centres, schools, etc.

ECONOMIC INVESTMENTS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Our core mandate is to supply basic service delivery to the citizens such as water, sanitation, electricity, refuse removal, municipal road maintenance, etc. Secondary to this mandate is to stimulate all-inclusive economic growth initiatives and programmes. Ours is to level the playground to be fertile to investors, nationally and foreign direct investors to come and establish their operations in our shores thus facilitating related value-chain local business beneficiation and employment opportunity creation for the people we serve. This also translate to the skill sharing mostly in fields that are regarded as scarce in our City.

CITY OF UMHLATHUZE FUTURE

The outgoing leadership laid a solid foundation for the future of our people through solid policy changes driven towards being people-centred. Decisions taken by the outgoing Council paved a way to the incoming Council to flourish and achieve their objectives with less challenges. The 2016-2021 term of office will go down in history as one of the most challenging terms in all local government structure and our Council has proven to be resilient. The City has done more in this ending term and more still lies ahead of the future Council.

Municipal Manager
Mr LH Maphaloba

SERVICE DELIVERY 5 YEARS

AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT (ABM) APPROACH

Council adopted a new, effective and integrated model of addressing basis service failures and breakdowns approach & system called Area Based Management.

The model had been working well in other cities within the country and internationally. It has been put to the test with multi-disciplinary team leaders to achieve an innovative and integrated approach to service delivery and daily accountability by team leaders.

Some of the objectives of the ABM are to:

- Improve coordination between sectoral departments of the Municipality and also, generally between government and other agencies, possibly by simplifying bureaucracy and integrating funding streams;
- Enhance opportunities for participation in decision making by local stakeholders;
- Enable local government to identify local needs and priorities and develop appropriate responses, where necessary adapting service delivery to suit local conditions;
- Improve day-to-day management and maintenance of the urban environment, including addressing service delivery failures;
- Improve by law enforcement as part of creating a clean, safe and functional urban environment; and
- Integrated implementation of nodal

projects for greater impact.

Four pillars guide the ABM approach:

- Urban management & maintenance of services (grass cutting, road markings, street lights, potholes, bylaw enforcement etc.);
- Public Environment Upgrade (Aesthetic Guidelines);
- Integrated Infrastructure Development (Area/Nodal Development – Waterfront);
- Civic Education (Consumer education, save water, anti-littering, illegal connections).

SELF-SUSTAINABLE BUDGET

The City of uMhlathuze continues to realise a steadily increasing sustainable budget characterised by self-sustainability over the years. 2019/2020 has grown to R3,6 Billion and is supported by a revenue collection rate averaging at 96%. Recent efforts to where we embarked on an aggressive Consumer Awareness Drive assisted greatly in revenue collection and drastically increased the collection rate.

We want to assure the people who elected us to service them that we are a caring government, and all we do is towards their emancipation. We are aware of the challenges they are facing and are tackling them head-on. It may take time, but in working together with them, we shall conquer.



City of uMhlathuze Deputy Mayor, Her Worship Cllr KD Sibiya.



CITY OF UMHLATHUZE LOCATION IS KEY TO INDUSTRY ATTRACTION



HOW AND WHY WE ATTRACTED INDUSTRY & INVESTMENTS

As any estate agency would testify, 'position' is the single-most attractive feature when it comes to desirable property.

That is one of the reasons the City of uMhlathuze attracts the attention of national and global investors.

Growing around the deep water Port of Richards Bay, it has everything the industrial venture capitalist desires, including rail and road access, plus bulk electricity and water infrastructure security.

The City, working in partnership with the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone, made large parcels of land for development in the last term of office, which resulted in land being worked for the benefit of several locals through SMME beneficiation and employment of uMhlathuze people from the construction phase to the operation phase.

The Council is also developing additional water resources through wastewater treatment, which will become available for industries in 2022. This is a strategic decision that the Council took very early in office upon realising that water supply security is under threat.

It is further anticipated that the relocation of the Richards Bay Airport will be completed to help improve and reduce the cost of travelling for local businesses.

Council also spent R30 million towards constructing a road that links Kruggerand road to Alumina Allee in Alton, Phase 1F of the Richards Bay IDZ, with many companies working on that site.

This has unlocked the development of the Central Industrial Area, which is earmarked for mixed land development.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT PROMOTE INVESTMENT AND GROWTH

In 2018, the City signed a tripartite agreement with RBIDZ and Transnet National Ports Authority to promote integrated planning and management of projects, resulting in regional economic growth.

"We have since been working with RBIDZ to attract investors to the region by visiting international trade and exhibitions, through its partnership with SANEC (Southern African

Netherlands Chamber of Commerce) from the Netherlands. As a member of SANEC, the City was also introduced to the enormous Rotterdam and Amsterdam ports. Rotterdam was visited to investigate the effect of a possible hard BREXIT, which may present the Port of Richards Bay with an opportunity of service to the Greater British Business Community on behalf of the two Dutch ports. The City has since established a strong bond with other SANEC members in the Netherlands, such as NUFFIC – Dutch study opportunities – and Flower Centre," Mayor Mduduzi Mhlongo said.

LOOKING AFTER OUR PEOPLE

The City of uMhlathuze amended the SCM Policy to favour the previously disadvantaged sectors by setting aside 40% of a capital project to women, 40% to youth and 20% to disabled persons dubbed 40-40-20 Set Aside Policy Amendment. Beneficiary figures show moderate growth, especially in

women and youth, with more work to develop the disabled sector.

The City in 2019 launched a Buy Local Charter Campaign to encourage local companies to prioritise local products when procuring services. Though the initiative is relatively new and making inroads to industries, the City plans to continue lobbying local companies to support local businesses, especially young entrepreneurs.

PROVIDING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND CENTRALISING ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The City in 2018 launched its own SMME One-Stop-Shop to bring everything under the same roof. The centre currently houses the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), National Development Agency (NDA) and the Zikhulise Community Development Organisation. This One-Stop-Shop has aided communities of the entire region, including uMkhanyakude and the Zululand Districts of Mtubatuba, Jozini, Phongolo, Ulundi and Vryheid.

To ensure the participation of young people in the construction industry, the City established a partnership with SEDA Construction Incubator that was launched by the then Deputy Minister of Higher Education Hon. Buti Manamela at eSikhaleni Township in September 2019. The recruitment of young entrepreneurs already in possession of CIDB Grade 2 and 3 starts in June 2019.



Deputy Mayor Cllr Dudu Sibiya, MEC for economic development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Hon Ravi Pillay, RBIDZ team and Nyanza Light Metals during the sod turning ceremony.

WE HAVE CHANGED PEOPLE'S LIVES FOR THE BETTER



*City of uMhlathuze Mayor,
His Worship Cllr MG Mhlongo.*



*City of uMhlathuze Deputy Mayor,
Her Worship Cllr KD Sibiya.*



*City of uMhlathuze Speaker, Cllr
SG Mkhize.*

The City of uMhlathuze has been the driving force towards improving the quality of life, delivering better services and bringing about noticeable changes in the landscape of the City since the beginning of the term of office 2016–2021.

The City continues to be a beacon of hope for the people under very strenuous global economic conditions. The City is not immune to the continued demand for services against reversing the damage caused by the previous regime that ravaged the chain of life for black people.

The triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality is still our enemy, but one which we will defeat if we all work together to grow South Africa and the City of uMhlathuze forward.

We have witnessed tangible service delivery achievements that directly impacted the lives of the people in our Municipality. We were also very vigorous in engaging

with the people we serve to solicit their inputs on service delivery as per the local government prescripts. We have done this with diligence until the advent of the global pandemic, which completely changed how we communicate with the people we serve.

We are also cognisant of fundamental service delivery shortfall and all its causes, mainly the migration of people from other areas to seek better opportunities in our City, thus straining our systems. This is continuous, and the next term should implement the plans we have for the future to accommodate this rapid growth,



especially on the infrastructure and human settlement aspects.

Ageing water and electricity infrastructure, illegal connections of water, sanitation and electricity (which constrains our lines of connections), and many other challenges still face our people, not only in the City of uMhlathuze but in the country at large. This also results in substantial water losses, essential service interruptions and often triggers service delivery unrest.

BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY ACHIEVEMENTS

The City continues to consistently provide effective essential services as per its constitutional mandate to its people, with diligence and speed at all times. The City's good track record went astray from March 2020 until the end of the term due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which severely affected how we were doing things and the pace at which we were fixing what was then a challenge.

Before 2016, we were sitting at between 80 and 95% of service connections such as water, refuse

removal, electricity and tarred roads within the urban part of the City. These services were exacerbated by the fact that after the Local Government Elections in August 2016, we inherited three large wards from the former Ntambanana Municipality, which aggravated our figures.

The City rafted the Ntambanana Masterplan mainly for water reticulation and mobilised for its funding. The plan is currently being implemented. To date, Macekane 1 Mega litre reservoir has been completed. Reticulation is on the cuts and will be finished towards the end of the term. KwaHlaza 5 Mega litre reservoir is also planned to be constructed and completed by the end of the term of office.

More than 2000 houses are set for Ntambanana communities,



bringing a fresh look to the Ntambanana area, especially in Ward 33, ushering a taste of freedom to the underdeveloped rural community.

The people we serve as the City can testify to the speed to which we have accelerated basic service delivery in the last few years under severe constraints. These include a non-payment for services culture, illegal connections and ageing infrastructure, all of which we are earnestly overcoming, including pandemic challenges.

WATER & SANITATION

The persistent drought that has ravaged our landscape continued to be a burden to the City of uMhlathuze. As a water service authority, the City is obliged to supply water to all citizens at a reasonable rate, regardless of the hefty costs we endured in sourcing, purifying and piping them to households.



The City of uMhlathuze is proudly one of the very few municipalities in the country to have installed a desalination plant that can supplement the system during crisis periods. The quality of desalinated water is as good as natural water.

This is critical to the City since it also supplies industries with water for their production.

Another ground-breaking resolution taken by the outgoing Council is studying the possibilities of recycling water and sending it to customers such as industries that do not require potable water. This will save loads of clear water for future supply to our communities.



The City changed several old pipes, mainly the eMpangeni Cluster and replaced them with new HDPE and PVC pipes. The augmentation from Cubhu to eSikhaleni Forest was upgraded with a 600mm diameter HDPE pipe from a 450mm ancient steel pipe.

The City of uMhlathuze faced intermittent water supply challenges at the beginning of 2021, experiencing several pipe bursts, water contamination and criminality that led to community unrest, which took weeks due to lockdown rules and several

Covid-19 regulations, which prohibited leadership from attending to communities. This matter was eventually resolved through the implementation of urgent interventions such as the installation of water pumps, placing of the Package Plant in Madlankala, construction

of new reservoirs and the approval of long-term plans such as the extension of Cubhu Lake capacity and the installation of a new pipeline from Nsezi to Forest reservoirs.

The outgoing Council has ensured that all citizens within the boundaries of uMhlathuze are covered with a waterborne sewer with VIP units in areas where there is no water reticulation and completely eradicated the bucket system.

ELECTRICITY & ENERGY SERVICES

The Council approved establishing a stand-alone unit termed Electricity and Energy Services, dismantling it from the Infrastructure and Technical Services. The new Unit was empowered to oversee implementing the City's strategic objectives to ensure the energy supply to residents, industries and general customers. The Unit was also tasked with investigating and

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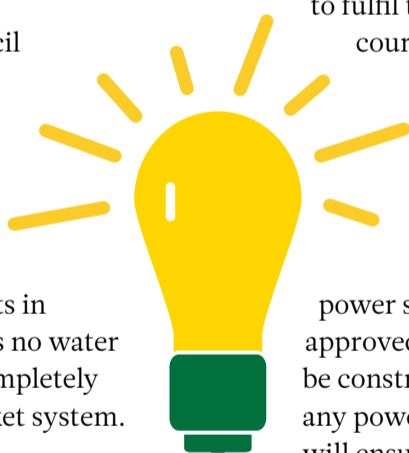
implementing alternatives energy supplies such as gas to power energy, solar and wind generated energies and others.

In all financial years, the bulk of the City's budget is securing electricity from the sole generator Eskom, which we then distribute to our customers. Some areas under the City are supplied directly by Eskom.

Industries are the City's major bulk customers, and it is worth noting that the City, under this outgoing leadership, managed to fulfil that mandate, of course, with some minor hiccups from time to time.

To permanently stabilise the power supply, the Council approved a 132KV grid to be constructed to eliminate any power outages. This grid will ensure that the supply to all old and new customers, including heavy industries, is not interrupted. The City is sitting on 100% power supply in its licenced jurisdiction.

Programmes to supply the new settlement, eMpangeni Mega Housing, Aquadene Housing, and the extension of Dumisani Makhaye Village Phase 5 and 7 are in place and have been budgeted for.



The City of uMhlathuze has also been earmarked for the 2000KW Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The outgoing Council approved the land to accommodate this multi-million rands ground-breaking project. The National Government handles all the processes related to this massive project.

The project will also attract other gas-related value chain companies to establish their businesses on our shores to reduce costs.

With our road and rail infrastructure, accessibility through air transport and the services we supply such as water, electricity, land and incentives through the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone, including the deepest harbour, it would be prudent for such companies to look at our City as their next investment destination.

WASTE REMOVAL

The waste collection coverage is at 80% within the City, including rural areas. The Waste Skips System is utilised in outskirt areas, and EPWP workers are employed to assist on this part. The City has completed a Waste Transfer Station in Ntambanana, where waste is collected, separated, some recycled and the rest transported to the nearest refill site at eMpangeni.



Economic Development



UMhlathuze Municipality has continued to fully establish itself as the economic hub of the northern coast of KwaZulu-Natal and is gradually moving towards being the second largest GDP contributor to the provincial economy.

During this term of office, Council approved several strategic projects and created economic linkages with global investors through the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone (RBIDZ), which saw many investments descend on our shores.

The tripartite partnership between the City, Transnet and RBIDZ resulted in effective synergy and unlocking all bottlenecks that were stifling economic growth.

Under the outgoing term of office, the City successfully created and maintained an environment wherein

business and investors thrive, thus creating further opportunities and employment for the people of the City.

The amended Supply Chain Management Policy, aimed at addressing the past imbalances, was established and benefitted thousands of SMMEs.

The policy sets aside 40% of the capital budget for women, 40% for the youth and 20% for disabled persons. Many local SMMEs have benefited from this programme and are continuing to benefit.

Moreover, as part of supporting the SMMEs, we have established a One-Stop-Shop at eMpangeni CBD with NYDA offices covering the entire King Cetshwayo region, Zululand, and some parts of uMkhanyakude districts.

These offices are proving to be effective in assisting mainly youth in establishing their small businesses and accessing NYDA services on their doorstep.

Working with Transnet, Council has opened another SMME centre to

further assist small businesses with business opportunities and skills. The business park earmarked for eSikhaleni in the near future, as approved by the Council, will be a game-changer towards boosting local businesses and the township economy at large.

Further activating economic activities in the eSikhaleni precinct is expanding the main intersection to ease traffic congestion during peak hours. This project will be completed in the near future.

INVESTMENTS

Despite the global economic decline that affects our City, working with the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, RBIDZ and Transnet, we have managed to convince investors to consider the City of uMhlathuze as their next investment destination. This has and will continue to yield positive and tangible results.

The announcement of approval by Rio Tinto to expand the Zulti South Mine towards Port Dunford at eSikhaleni is still one of many good stories to tell regarding the confidence investors have in our City. Council is still working hard with the provincial government to iron out all bottlenecks and challenges facing this development.

Other companies are already operating in RBIDZ Phase 1A and Phase 1F in Alton with billions that they are investing. Nyanza Lights and Welmar

are also establishing themselves in the IDZ precincts.

Processes are also underway to establish the LNG plant worth billions to our City. We will continue to visit other countries and lure them to invest on our shores, thus benefitting our local businesses and creating employment for our people.

The R1 Billion Rand investment towards the establishment of LPG Gas in our City is another milestone. It bears testimony to the fact that our geographical positioning is excellent for on and offshore investment projects.

CATALYTIC PROJECTS

The establishment of The Ridge Estate, overlooking the ocean and the deepest harbour on the African continent, is on the pipeline, and earthworks will begin later this year. The global pandemic delayed this project.

This high-class estate will consist of an upmarket hotel and residential units. Coupled with the Beach Development Precinct and the plan to revamp the Tuzi Gazi Waterfront, the face and the landscape of the City of uMhlathuze will completely change for the better.

Underground infrastructure has been laid in eMpangeni opposite Qalakabusha Prison. The City and the provincial and national governments are building 10 000 mixed-use houses, including stand-alone flats and subsidised units.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING THIS TERM OF OFFICE

The City of uMhlathuze has done tremendously well in the provision of service delivery in its areas of jurisdiction during this term of office. This has not been without a number of challenges engulfing and tempering these processes.

POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND INEQUALITY



The inherent social-economic challenges common to a number of households, poverty, unemployment and inequality continue to ravage our communities. The gap has been widened since the advent of the global pandemic that has forced some companies to scale down on employees and some completely closed operations, thus resulting in further unemployment.

This on its own continues to take its toll within the City purse as the number of community members applying for indigent support has escalated rapidly.

This has sharply shrunk municipal revenue drastically and forced the City to urgently implement austerity measures in order to be able to continue to provide basic services as mandated by the constitution.

Counter Solution: The City has worked together with conglomerates, companies, public entities, national and provincial departments, to avert socio-economic challenges. International missions where the Mayor Cllr Mduduzi Mhlongo, lured foreign direct investments yielded positive results through a number of global companies committing and eventually fulfilling those commitments by establishing their production businesses in the City. These businesses have employed local people and created business for local SMMEs. The City has also adopted Supply Chain Policies that create set-asides for the previously marginalised groups through allowing certain capital projects and budgets for youth, women, disabled persons and military veterans. Covid-19 relief measures to all residents and the increase of free water to all communities, are well documented. This was in support of the national government measures, which also included the unemployment grant amounting to R350 per month.

WATER CHALLENGES



This term of office also saw a prolonged drought that lasted more than three years, causing massive shortages of source water supplies. The City still feels the impact of the drought even now. Restrictions were imposed by the water and sanitation department and have been recently lifted.

The supply versus demand for water in residential areas, tampering with infrastructure tantamount to illegal connections, and the fast-growing population have contributed immensely to the water woes that the City endured in this ending term of office. Ageing of infrastructure has also taken a fair share of water supply challenges, especially in areas such as Mpembeni, Esikhaleni, Felixton, Port Dunford, Vulindlela, Madlankala, and Gobandlovu.

The massive urbanisation to the City of uMhlathuze areas outside townships such as Ngwelezana, uMhlanga reserve areas, Mevamhlophe, Matshana, Port Dunford and others, where people build massive houses require services such as water, sewerage, electricity, refuse removal, etc; Has strained our limited source of services mainly water.

This has led to identification of more illegal connections and a need to work with traditional authorities on issues of special development and human settlement patterns. Constraints to the water supply infrastructure coupled with its age as well as gradual reduction of water pressure have led to numerous pipe bursts causing water supply interruptions that at times would last for days.

Intermittent power supply, mainly in Eskom supplied areas such as mpembeni, where one of our main water sources, Cubhu Lake is situated, has also caused a catalog of water supply challenges and to date it is still the challenge.

Mitigations: The City has installed two diesel power generators at Cubhu Lake to supplement the Eskom power outages that at times last for more than 20 hours. Unfortunately, the generators cannot last for more than five hours.

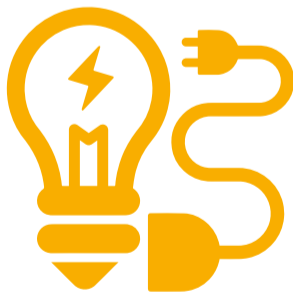
The City is also installing water pumps in a number of reservoirs in order to maintain the same water pressure to mitigate the gravitational pressure previously used, which paused challenges.

The Cubhu Lake expansion will increase capacity so that the City can extract more than 50 million litres per day as opposed to the 36 million litres currently available. This will mitigate the demands of more than 40 million litres per day.

The City has this financial year purchased five additional water tankers to assist during emergencies. This is additional to the water tankers that have been working consistently in areas such as Ntambanana, etc.

A 15 Mega-litre package plant to cater for Gobandlovu is also in the pipeline to avert water supply challenges in Gobandlovu and Madlankala areas.

POWER SUPPLY CHALLENGES



The City has reached a record of 100% coverage of power in its licensed areas. New infills are attended to as and when required. The bulk SMS system to notify all customers on all power interruptions is helpful. Most challenges emanate from Eskom supplied areas. Most customers direct their complaints to the City and blame the City instead of directing complaints to Eskom.

Eskom power supply also pauses challenges to the water treatment works in Cubhu Lake, which supplies

the eSikhaleni Cluster.

Mitigations: The City has engaged and continues to have bilateral relations with Eskom to permanently find a lasting solution on the steady supply in areas of their jurisdiction. Issues cited by Eskom are mainly illegal connections, of which they are rooting it out and installing new meters so as to bill their customers.

ECONOMIC MELTDOWN



The global economy has been dwindling in the past 10 years, with rating companies at some point rating the country to junk status. This has hugely affected all initiatives to attract investors who will in turn create employment opportunities. The City has not been immune to this scourge. Efforts to stabilise the economy were slapped with violent unrest, most recently, a pandemic, and other factors. Richards Bay Mineral issues have also affected the economy and job losses.

Mitigations: Working together with industries to ensure that jobs and businesses are not lost as companies feel the hit. The continuous endeavours to punt for international investors through the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone (RBIDZ) have yielded positive results. The City Mayor has also hosted several stakeholders, amaXhosi and forums to engage on issues of work stoppages that have also halted mainly infrastructure projects roll out for both public and private sector in the City.

The City has, however, managed to work harder to ensure that basic service delivery remains a priority against all odds. Opening multiple lines of communication with community members, stakeholders and customers proved to be effective.

SMART CITY AND THE FREE PUBLIC WIFI HOTSPOTS ROLLOUT

Moving along with technological times



The new normal calls for a society to do things differently and adapt quickly to technological ways.

The advent of the global Covid-19 pandemic is forcing everyone to venture into the fast-moving world of technology in everyday basic life. The pandemic came to the City of uMhlathuze whilst it was already moving to roll out plans and strategies of being a Smart City.

The technological revolution in the City of uMhlathuze began in the middle of the ending term of office when the Council decided to roll out free public WiFi hotspots in a number of public spaces, libraries, community halls, etc.

More than 60 hot spots have been activated in both urban and rural parts of the City, giving mainly young people, learners and business people some relief in the data costs and enabling them to surf the net to empower themselves in their neighbourhood.

As part of moving with the technological trends and keeping up with the needs and requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the City has adopted a move towards being a Smart City through piloting technologically advanced means of operation.

Currently, uMhlathuze is investigating in establishing a City Application

(APP), which will easily connect customers and citizens with services at their fingerprints without carrying any costs of travelling to City offices.

The City is now almost covered with bandwidth, which will aid with internet connectivity and connect security surveillance cameras in the near future.

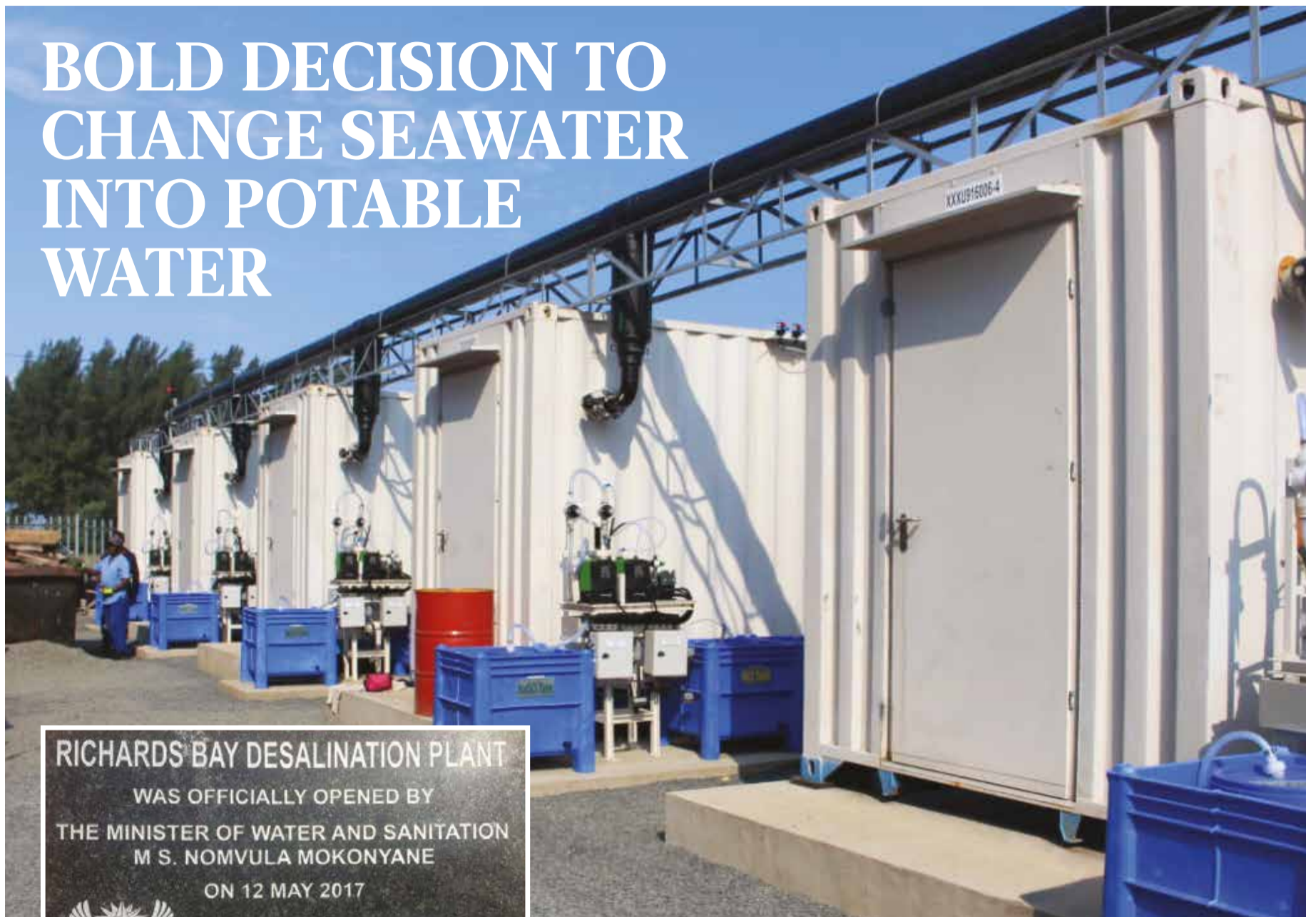
The City Mayor Cllr Mduduzi Mhlongo believes that the City can be a global player through technological initiatives.

“We are affiliated with global networks such as the Port Cities Global Forum, ICLEI, and have signed partnership agreements with many like-minded cities in the world. Our location

and business propositions call for us to be globally connected through technology to facilitate businesses and investments. We have made serious inroads in the IT sector and slowly graduating towards being one of the globally recognised cities easy to trade with. We are responsible for moving along with our citizens in technology because the near future calls for techno-savvy societies that can interact and do things without any physical engagements. The pandemic has taught us that,” Mhlongo said.

The City of uMhlathuze has been identified as an anchor Municipality in King Cetshwayo District Municipality and the entire northern KwaZulu-Natal for a Smart City initiatives pilot projects.

BOLD DECISION TO CHANGE SEAWATER INTO POTABLE WATER



RICHARDS BAY DESALINATION PLANT
 WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED BY
 THE MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION
 M S. NOMVULA MOKONYANE
 ON 12 MAY 2017
water & sanitation
 Department:
 Water and Sanitation
 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The 2016–2021 term of office in the City of uMhlathuze will go down in history as victors in the fight against drought that ravaged most parts of the country since 2016. South Africa is generally a water-scarce country, and Cape Town nearly became the first African City to experience Day-Zero with no water at all.

The City of uMhlathuze partnered with the Department of Water and Sanitation to commission the first of its kind in KwaZulu-Natal, a Sea Water Desalination Plant situated in Alkantstrand Beach in Mereersee. The City of uMhlathuze communities were on Level 3 of water supply restrictions for more than a year by 2017 due to a severe drought persistence, leaving this region with one primary water source in the already strained Goedetrouw Dam. The Richards Bay desalination plant can produce 10 MegaLitres (10 million) per day of purified seawater into drinkable water pumped to nearby reservoirs and industries. This

multimillion rand project is one of the department's first desalination plants to be rolled out as an alternative to water supply amid the never-ending drought season. To date, no other desalination plant has been commissioned.

The plant was officially launched by the then Minister of Water and Sanitation, Hon. Nomvula Mokonyane who said, "Shortage of adequate water supply does not only serve as a threat to life, food security and damage to nature in the City of uMhlathuze and King Cetshwayo but also severely affects industries in the area as most of them have downsized their production. This is now threatening job losses and low agricultural production in some heavy industries that require loads of water for production. The effect of the desalination plant will bring a huge relief to all this and more where there will be minimal water restrictions, water cuts and any other water inconvenience. It is a reality now that we have to opt for seawater for drinking purposes due to drought of



City of uMhlathuze Mayor, His Worship Cllr MG Mhlongo interviewed by Dasen Thathia of ENCA on the functionality of the desalination plant.

which it's a natural and climate change challenge," said Mokonyane during the opening of the plant.

The desalinated water can be pumped to almost 20 reservoirs within the City of uMhlathuze, supplying communities of Mandlanzini, Mereersee, Richards Bay CBD, eNseleni, eSikhaleni, Ngwelezana, KwaDlangezwa, Felixton and many other surrounding areas. The desalination plant is an emergency measure to the drought and is used minimally as the drought situation normalises.

The City Mayor Cllr Mduduzi Mhlongo

said this is one of the projects he and the Council championed successfully with a significant impact on people's lives. "Commissioning the Desalination Plant was an important measure we had to be bold about and decide on to counter the threats of drought in the region. We were and still are conscious of its hefty costs; hence we still use it in case of extraordinary emergencies. This project will always assist in generations to come after the current leadership. In an industrial City like ours, water security is crucial for the economic growth and for the survival of production by companies," Mhlongo said.

KEY FOCUS ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND DISABLED PERSONS



This term of office saw the gigantic leap in the economic emancipation of young people, women and disabled people through various tangible programmes and projects guided by the 40-40-20 Amended Supply Chain Management Policy.

Council was bold in creating an enabling business environment for youth, women and disabled persons to trade and seize all economic opportunities presented at them, including capital projects driven by the City of uMhlathuze.

The 40-40-20 per cent beneficiation policy remains a bold step that the national government commended as one of the best as it sets aside 40% of the capital budget for youth-owned compliant businesses, another 40% set aside for women-owned compliance businesses as well as 20% of companies owned by disabled persons. Hundreds of the historically disadvantaged persons capitalised on this policy and appreciated the City of uMhlathuze for prioritising them. The creation of Black Industrialists, building the local capacity of Civil Engineering Companies, strengthening the young people and women in the building sector is the legacy of office led by Mayor Mduduzi Mhlongo. The programme's highlight was when a 31-year old woman from the City of uMhlathuze won the bid of constructing the Lot 63 state of the art Taxi Rank from planning to completion.

For the first time in Zululand, covering King Cetshwayo, Zululand and uMkhanyakude District Municipalities, the City of uMhlathuze established a Small Macro and Medium Enterprise (SMME) One-Stop-Shop at eMpangeni, central to most of the districts housing the National Youth Development

Agency (NYDA). Thousands of young entrepreneurs and business-minded youth augmented information, solicited business and financial support and advanced their skills through this centre. Mayor Mduduzi Mhlongo and NYDA Chairperson Mr Sifiso Mtweni officially opened the Centre in June 2018 during the celebration of Youth Month.

The opening of the SMME development centre at eMpangeni by the City in partnership with Transnet was also a step ahead in ensuring that young people keep up with the necessary business skills required and demanded by the future.

"We were clear from the onset that this term of office must focus on sharpening young people and women's skills and create opportunities for them to prosper. There is no other way to develop young people and women without giving them a chance, skill them, create platforms for them to try, fail, learn and then try again. Young people are the future leaders of the country in all aspects, be it business or politics. It is upon us, the current generation, to assist young people to realise their potential. We agreed that the best model is to support their business endeavours, noting that the numbers of unemployment are shrinking year in year out," Mayor Mduduzi Mhlongo remarked. "The establishment of the Youth Management Office in the City of uMhlathuze, meant we mean business with our mission to assist youth. It did not only drive young people in the right direction in life but also assisted thousands of academically deserving matriculants from disadvantaged families with tertiary education registration fees from 2016 to the end of our term and in the future," Mhlongo added.

WE HAVE CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CITY FOR THE BETTER

Council decisions in the term of office that began in August 2016 drastically changed the look and feel of the City of uMhlathuze from all four major entrances, Mzingazi, N2 North and South, as well as Qalakabusha Prison side.

The difference is seen and felt around the City. The N2 highway upgrade by Sanral changed how the City looks. The building of the Tangawizi Eco-Junction and Melomed Hospital completely changed the aesthetic of our City and enhanced its natural beauty.

Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone service land and new industries within and many high rising buildings within the City have presented a welcoming feel.

The City is currently establishing two extensive residential areas where the spadework is visible from far.

informal traders in Madlankala, Ngwelezana Centre, Ngwelezana Hospital, eNseleni stalls and the construction of Mzingazi/Mereness Taxi Rank, displayed a City at work changing people's lives for the better.

Ntambanana/Mancence State-of-the-Art Multi-Purpose Hall and Port Dunford Thusong Centre and the new face of the eSikhaleni Rates Offices are testaments that the Council was serious about making a difference where communities are.

Ngwelezana and eNseleni entrances are more beautified, with the new Engen service stations enhancing the look and feel of these historic townships. People of eNseleni do not have to travel long distances to Richards Bay and eMpangeni for shopping since the Council decided to partners with the business sector and KwaBhejane Traditional Authority and build a



More than 10 000 different housing typologies are developed at eMpangeni opposite Qalakabusha Prison. The new settlement will also demand social amenities such as playgrounds, parks, schools, shopping centres, swimming pools, etc.

This term of office is also leaving a legacy of another 2400 houses built at Aquadene in Ward 26, including several social infrastructures.

The Ntambanana community will also benefit from the project to build more than 2000 houses in partnership with the provincial government, another hallmark left behind by the current crop of Councillors.

The construction of the Lot 63 Taxi Rank, Richards Bay, eNseleni Taxi Rank, Macekane Water Reservoir, Richards Bay SMME units at the rank,

shopping mall in the centre of the township.

The signature estate overlooking the harbour and the beach is on the cuts, The Ridge. The Ridge Estate will include modern high-rise buildings for residential purposes, shopping centres, and one of the five-star hotels.

To complete the reshaping of the City, Council approved during its term of office, the construction of an iconic Steel Bridge to lure the tourists in the water front area.

Shortly, the relocation of the Richards Bay Airport will enhance the look of the City between eMpangeni and Richards Bay. The anticipated new airport will take a Regional Airport City shape with a longer landing strip, airport buildings and the shopping centre within the vicinity.