

Speaker, Aldermen, Deputy Mayor, Whip of Council, Councillors, Acting Municipal Manager, Directors, Officials, Members of the public, the media, and to our residents tuned in on our YouTube Channel.

This morning, my address will be shorter than usual. Last night, I attended the State of the Province Address in Beaufort West. In his address, the Honourable Premier Alan Winde mentioned some of the successes of our Western Cape Municipalities, and George was mentioned several times throughout his address. Speaker, this is a clear indication that our leadership is well aware of the excellent work we are undertaking here in George Municipality. Our ongoing successes have caught the attention of this province's first citizen, and I would like to thank everyone for the part they continuously play in ensuring that George Municipality takes its rightful place as one of the best-run cities in this country.

Speaker, I would like to give a quick rundown of our departments so that we are all informed about what is taking place within the halls of this fine municipality.

Financial

Services

I would like to thank our Financial Services department for their effort and diligence as we are in the budget process. We will be starting one-on-one sessions for the draft budget soon, and we look forward to finalizing this process. National Treasury was in George Municipality

this week and we successfully hosted the annual mid-year budget review.

Electrotechnical

Services

I am pleased to announce that we officially switched on several high mast lights this month in George and Uniondale, ensuring that our areas are well-lit and safe for our residents. We have also installed a new robot at the intersection in Beach Road, Pacaltsdorp. Speaker, you will recall that I mentioned this at our council meeting in December last year, and here we are, a mere two months later, having commenced and nearly completed this project. This is a way in which we will be trying to manage traffic through a pilot project for automated traffic management.

I am also pleased to announce that the second transformer at Glenwood has been delivered and cold-commissioned. This means that we are almost at a point where this transformer can be energized, which would mean that two of the three transformers at the Glenwood substation will be energized. I would like to thank our Director for Electrotechnical Services, Mr. Michael Rhode, the officials of that department, and Councillor Donovan Gultig for their work in this space.

Community

Services

In terms of environmental services, just yesterday, we marked the closure of Illegal Dumping Month, an awareness campaign that tackled

illegal dumping across our municipal area head-on. We concluded this great initiative in Blanco, Ward 26, and Ward 1, where we did our part to keep our town clean. Councillors Marelina Gultig and Jean Safers made themselves quite handy with some spades and brooms, so I would like to thank them for their support.

From the start of this initiative to February 21st, a total of 20,050 bags were collected, and a total of 1,315 cubic loads of waste were offloaded on tipper trucks for the same time period. This is a massive achievement, and I would like to thank Mr. Sivuyile Mtila and his unit for their hard and innovative work.

We are also making headway with our skip placement project, with a total of 29 skips delivered so far. This project will see skips being placed on a rotational basis in our areas to make the removal of waste and bulk waste more accessible for our residents. We are aware that some of our residents are not able to dispose of their waste at our landfill site and that they often resort to illegal dumping. We are actively trying to support our residents in this regard through this project.

Furthermore, the first hooklift trailer for the transportation of waste to PetroSA has been delivered, and the second trailer is currently in production. There is a lot of movement in this space, and we are working to keep George Municipality clean and green.

When we speak about the work within illegal dumping, I also want to mention to residents that we are making headway with our food gardens. Just last week, I was in Ward 27 with Councillor Marchell Kleynhans, where we met with Tannie Elsabie and Tannie Elzaan, who will be the custodians of our garden in Rose Street.

Lastly, the completion of the inspection of Phase 1 of the Rosemoor tartan track is scheduled for this week. I was there yesterday, and the facility is beautiful. With projects like these, we are well on our way to becoming the sports mecca of the Garden Route.

Speaker, George Municipality is moving forward, and today, while I only covered three of our departments, it is clear that we are hard at work to ensure that George operates at its best. I would like to thank our staff for their hard work and dedication under the excellent leadership of our Acting Municipal Manager, Mr. Godfrey Louw, and our directors. To our councillors, the executive, and mayoral committee, we have so much work to do, but I know that we are more than willing and able to take up this task.

Thank you.