



**Speaker of Council, Councillor P. Mavaleliso;**  
**Members of the Mayoral Committee**  
**Chief Whip of the ANC and Leaders of all Political Parties;**  
**Honourable Councillors present here today;**  
**Our steadfast Municipal Manager, Me. N. Malatjie, and her management team;**  
**Managers, Unit Coordinators, Supervisors and all staff members;**  
**Organised Labour Representatives (SAMWU and IMATU)**  
**Representatives from the business community, labour, and civil society;**  
**Members of the media;**  
**Distinguished guests; and**  
**The people of Setsoto – our reason for being here.**

Good morning. Dumelang. Goeie more.

Today, I stand before you with a unique blend of emotions: pride, honesty, and deep responsibility. We are not here to simply read wish list and numbers from a paper. We are here to account for the past, manage the present, and secure the future. We are tabling documents. This is not just any Integrated Development Plan and Budget. This is the final Budget and the final Integrated Development Plan of this current administration.

We are laying down the pen. But before we do, we are building a foundation for the next administration—one that is honest, funded, and people-centered. The **Integrated Development Plan 2026/2027 and Budget for 2026/2027 to 2028/2029** is our final declaration of intent. It is the last strategic plan of this current administration, the sixth administration of Setsoto Local Municipality.

As we stand here, we are acutely aware that our term of office is drawing to a close. This will be the last Integrated Development Plan and Budget we table before the next local government elections. Therefore, we have approached this task not with a sense of finality, but with a profound sense of responsibility.

**We have asked ourselves: What do we leave behind? What foundation are we building for the next administration?**

Our answer is simple. We are not leaving behind a list of **promises**. We are handing over a **living blueprint**. A blueprint for a unified, viable, and progressive Setsoto.

**Reflecting on our journey- the state of our Setsoto – honesty first and our commitment to solutions**

Honourable Speaker, We do not pretend these are easy times. We face:

- **Aging infrastructure** leading to water leaks and sewer spills. **Our solution:** The R 331million capital budget is your answer.
- **High debt** and low collection rates. **Our solution:** We are implementing a staff debt deduction policy and stricter credit control and intensifying **Revenue Enhancement and Operation Patala Strategies**. Pay for services so we can serve you.

- **Electricity losses. Our solution:** Reducing illegal connections to curb losses.

Throughout these challenges, we did not look away. We did not hide. We applied sound financial management, we reviewed every non-core expense, and we chose service delivery over symbolism. We made mistakes. We faced obstacles – from the lingering effects of economic downturns to the daily reality of aging water pipes and roads in desperate need of repair. We worked. We implemented strict financial controls.

We intensified the fight against fraud and corruption, and I am proud to say that our latest audit report shows progress – with fewer matters of emphasis. We are not there yet, but we are on the right path. We listened to you, the people. The inputs we received in Meqheleng, Ficksburg and Caledon Park, in Matwabeng and Senekal, in Hlohlolwane and Clocolan, and in Moemaneng and Marquard are not just pages in a report. They are the voices that shaped this plan.

### **The foundation for tomorrow: the 2026/2027 Integrated Development Plan and Budget**

This final Integrated Development Plan and Budget are our **gift** to the next administration – a running start, not a starting block from zero. Let me outline the pillars of this foundation:

#### **Key Performance Area 1: basic services are non-negotiable.**

This budget puts the delivery of water, sanitation, electricity, refuse removal and roads at the centre. We have allocated **R 331 million for capital expenditure** in the coming year.

#### **Water and sanitation**



We are continuing the fight to fix aging bulk water systems in Ficksburg and Senekal and replacing old asbestos pipes in Marquard. We are working towards a day when every tap flows and every sewer line works.

Through the Municipal Infrastructure Grant funding, the municipality embarked on the following projects:

- **The upgrading of the clear water rising main from the Water Treatment Works to Reservoir.** This intervention has improved bulk water supply and reduced water losses within the system.



The replacement of ageing asbestos pipeline has enhanced system efficiency, improving water reliability and ensuring provision of safer and more sustainable water infrastructure to **Meqheleng , Caledon Park and Ficksburg.**

- **Water Infrastructure and Support from the Department of Water Infrastructure Services Grant.**

Setsoto Local Municipality has successfully implemented key water and sanitation infrastructure projects aimed at improving service delivery and promoting environmental sustainability. The following has been completed:

- **Construction of the state-of-the-art Water Treatment Works in Clocolan and Hlohlolwane** designed to enhance the reliability and quality of water provision to residents.
- **Resuscitation of the Wastewater Treatment Works in Senekal and Matwabeng**, ensuring the effective treatment of sewage effluent, reducing the risk of environmental contamination, promoting public health and environmental compliance.
- **Regional Bulk Water Infrastructure Grant.** Setsoto Local Municipality has successfully implemented key water and sanitation infrastructure and currently constructing infrastructure projects aimed at improving service delivery and promoting environmental sustainability in Senekal and Matwabeng. Below are the projects:

- **Construction of Cyferfontein Abstraction of Raw Water Works.** The civil component of the project has been 100% completed. The installation of mechanical and electrical components is ongoing, completion to date is 35%. The impact of the project to the community of Senekal and Matwabeng will be:

- improved water supply,
- reduced operational costs to the municipality,
- improved water infrastructure security
- reduce water losses to below minimum standards



The project is designed for a life span of 30 years.

- **Construction of the 11ML Central Water Treatment Works in Senekal and Matwabeng.** The civil component of the project is 98% to completion. The installation mechanical and electrical is ongoing, completion to date is 66%. The impact to the community of Senekal and Matwabeng is:

- improved water supply for 48 hours
- water storage capacity
- improved water balancing and reduced operational cost to the municipality
- improved water infrastructure security
- reduce water losses below minimum standards



The project is designed for a life span of 30 years.

SSM

- **Construction of the Deput Abstraction Raw Water Works.** The civil, mechanical and electrical components of the project has been 100% completed. The impact of the project to the community of Senekal and Matwabeng will be:

- improved water supply,
- reduced operational costs to the municipality,
- improved water infrastructure security
- reduce water losses to below minimum standards



The project is designed for a life span of 30 years.

### Project under construction

- **The Laaispruit Dam in Marquard and Moemaneng is currently under construction.** Once completed, this project will significantly improve water availability and ensure sufficient supply to support both household consumption and local economic development.

### Waste Management



Today, I stand before you to outline our comprehensive plan to enhance refuse removal, promote a cleaner environment, and improve service delivery across our municipality.

First, we have taken decisive action to strengthen our refuse removal fleet. I am pleased to announce that four new refuse compactor trucks have been procured to serve all four units. In addition, three existing refuse removal compactors have been repaired and will return to service. This will significantly improve our collection capacity, reduce our reliance on costly hired yellow fleet, and ensure regular, reliable refuse removal across every unit.

Second, we are mobilizing community-based manpower. Two hundred Extended Public Works Program workers have been employed to support our greening and cleaning program. They will focus on litter picking in different wards, with a strategic scheduling plan that assigns most Extended Public Works Program staff to weekend shifts – effectively reducing overtime expenditure while keeping our streets clean seven days a week.

Third, we are committed to eliminating neglected dumping sites. We will ensure regular clearing of all corner dumps and roll out ongoing awareness campaigns to educate residents on responsible waste disposal.

Fourth, to tackle littering in our commercial hubs, labelled cement bins will be placed in all four Central Business Districts. Early provision of these bins has already proven successful in reducing littering within the Central Business Districts.

Finally, our municipal landfill sites will no longer be overlooked. They will be maintained on a quarterly basis through the strategic leasing of yellow fleet equipment. These actions together will deliver cleaner neighbourhoods, efficient waste collection, and responsible governance. Let us work hand in hand to build a healthier, greener municipality for all.

**Electricity**

We are investing in upgrading substations and reducing illegal connections to ensure a stable supply.



**Streetlighting**

Through the support of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, Setsoto Local Municipality has successfully completed the installation of eight (8) high mast lights across all units within the municipal area.

These installations were equitably distributed, with two (2) high mast lights installed in each of the following areas:

- Matwabeng
- Hlohlolwane
- Meqheleng
- Moemaneng



This equitable allocation ensures improved public lighting, enhanced community safety, and increased accessibility within all towns under Setsoto Local Municipality.

**Roads and Stormwater**

We have allocated funds for the rehabilitation of key roads in Marquard, Clocolan, Ficksburg, and Senekal. We are patching potholes and gravelling roads because a road is not just tar and stone; it is a mother’s path to the clinic and a job-seeker’s path to opportunity.

Through the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, we have made notable progress in improving road infrastructure and stormwater management across all towns. The following projects have been completed:



SJM

- Resealing and resurfacing of 2km of road in Clocolan and Hlohlotwane
- Resealing and resurfacing of 1.3km of road in Meqheleng
- Construction of 2km road in Moemaneng
- Construction of 2km road in Matwabeng
- In addition, the construction of 1.5km road and associated stormwater infrastructure in Bloem Street in Ficksburg is currently underway, with tangible progress achieved on site.

These interventions contribute to improved road conditions, enhanced stormwater control, and better accessibility for communities across Setsoto.

### **Land use and spatial planning-Bodulo Bathong**

Honourable councillors, this financial year, we marked an important milestone in our commitment to equitable development, economic empowerment, and social transformation through the allocation of land to our people. Land is more than soil beneath our feet.

It represents dignity, opportunity, security, and hope. It is a foundation upon which families build homes, entrepreneurs establish businesses, farmers cultivate livelihoods, and communities shape their futures. We continue taking deliberate steps to create a municipality that serves all its people fairly and inclusively.

Allocation letters have been issued to some beneficiaries; however, the sites have not been occupied due to unavailability of bulk services. The decision to delay occupation is a deliberate measure to prevent the expansion bucket sanitation, which remains a significant challenge within Setsoto.

Speaker, this approach ensures that settlement occurs in a planned and sustainable manner, aligned with the provision of adequate basic services and the municipality's commitment to improving sanitation conditions.

The land allocation programme reflects our administration's dedication to sustainable development and responsive governance. Through transparent processes and community consultation, we are ensuring that land is allocated in a manner that promotes human settlement, economic growth, and investment opportunities.

Additionally, the municipality has, **through our own funding, formalised informal settlements in Meqheleng, benefiting communities in Katlehong 1 and 2, as well as Oudstad.** This intervention improves security of tenure, access to basic services and overall living conditions.

Speaker, in line with the above, the land parcels are as follows:

#### **Katlehong 1 next to Tlotlisong-Total number of residential 44**

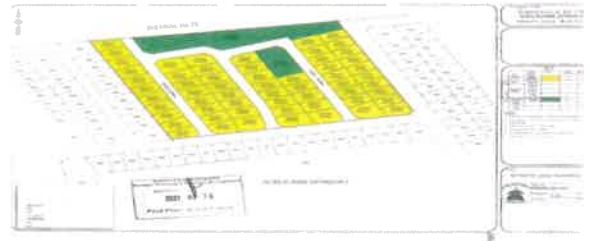
- Allocated is 15
- Disputes are 14
- Already done home affairs verification is 10
- Still to be reallocated are 5
- Didn't comply with home affairs verification is 5

## **Katlehong 2-Mattharangthleng**-Total number of residential sites 132

- Allocated is 70
- Disputes are 11
- Already done home affairs verification is 8
- Still to be reallocated is 5
- Didn't comply with home affairs verification is 24

## **Majuteng**-Total number of residential sites 63

- Allocated 0
- Disputes are 0
- Already done home affairs verification is 88
- To be reallocated is 0



Furthermore, the municipality is currently in the process of establishing **another new township in Ficksburg, Caledon Park and Meqheleng** area, also known as **Stafford Hill**. Town Planners have already been appointed, geo-tech studies unfolding and the development is expected to yield approximately **3 300 erven**, significantly expanding housing opportunities and supporting long-term spatial growth.

Setsoto Local municipality continues to make significant progress in advancing spatial transformation and sustainable human settlements development. Through the support of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

In **Hlohlolwane** the municipality is in the process of proclaiming a new township. The said township will yield a total of **387 erven**. **102 erven** have been prioritized for historically disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities. The remaining **285 sites** still to be allocated to the middle and working classes.

There are a further **37 residential erven** that remain unoccupied in **Clocolan, Tienie Van Rooyen**, despite been allocated in the past few years. The municipality will commence with the process to ensure that all 37 residential erven revert back to the municipality at no cost to the municipality.

A similar process will be followed in **Moemaneng Ext 10**. In **Moemaneng Ext 10** **1 070** residential sites have been allocated and to date only **1 022** are physically occupied. The remaining **48** unoccupied residential erven will follow the same process as outlined above.

**Matwabeng** is also set to benefit from **new township development which will yield a total of 345 erven**. further contributing to the provision of planned and serviced residential land.

We recognize the growing demand for land for housing, small businesses, farming, and community facilities. As a municipality, we are committed to ensuring that our land resources are managed responsibly, fairly, and in the best interests of present and future generations.

The municipality has adopted the 60/40 principle to ensure balanced and inclusive distribution. Sixty percent of the allocated land has been prioritized for women, youth, people living with disabilities,

and deserving families in need of housing and economic opportunities. The remaining forty percent has been allocated to support investment (**selling residential erven to middle/working class**), business development, and strategic community development initiatives.

To the beneficiaries receiving land, I encourage you to utilize this opportunity wisely and productively. Let this allocation become a catalyst for self-reliance, job creation, and community upliftment. With **opportunity** comes **responsibility**. Together, we must protect and develop these assets for the benefit of all.

Together, we can transform land into opportunity, and opportunity into lasting progress. **#Bodulo Bathong**

**Procurement of Fleet**

Speaker, the municipality through its **own funding successfully procured key fleet assets** to strengthen service delivery capacity. These includes:

- Four (4) refuse compactor trucks
- Five (5) TLBs (tractor-loader-backhoes)
- Ten (10) bakies
- One (1) low-bed trailer
- One (1) excavator

This investment enhances the municipality's ability to deliver efficient waste management, infrastructure maintenance, and overall operational services across all units.



**Key Performance Area 2: Local Economic Development**

We cannot end poverty without jobs. This IDP prioritises:

- **Agro-processing:** We will continue to support our cherry and asparagus farmers. The Ficksburg Cherry Festival remains our flagship.
- **SMME Support:** We are cutting red tape. We have set a target to finalise business license applications faster, because a waiting business is a business that is not hiring.
- **Job Creation:** Through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and other initiatives, we will continue to create work opportunities, especially for our youth.



SSM

Setsoto Local Municipality continues to prioritise inclusive economic growth and township economy revitalisation through targeted support programmes and strategic partnerships. The municipality has **funded 20 spaza shops** across all units aimed at strengthening spaza shops within local communities.

Through partnerships with Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority funding has been provided to 26 spaza shops for grocery stock.



Additional funding through partnership with **DESTEA** has benefitted a further **16 spaza shops**, contributing to economic participation at grassroot level. These interventions are intended to revitalise township economy through capital injection and support for informal and small business enterprises.



### **Local events and economic stimulation**

The municipality has also **financially supported and sponsored number of local events** aimed at promoting tourism, community participation and local economic stimulation. These include:

- Ficksburg Cherry Soul Session
- Meqheleng Cherry Cup Tournament
- Moemaneng Soul Session Picnic
- Phaphadi Annual Festival
- Setsoto Soccer Tournament
- Cherry Festival
- Cherry Jazz Festival (Supported in-kind)

These events contribute to increased local spending, business opportunities and tourism promotion within the municipal area.

### **Agricultural and enterprise support**

In support of agricultural development and food security, the municipality has implemented the following initiatives:

- Three planting and agricultural support in partnership with the relevant stakeholders .
- Training of 16 small-scale farmers in Marquard and Moemaneng .
- Donation of planting seeds to 44 small-scale farmers across Setsoto.
- Poultry farming training provided to 30 farmers in Marquard.

Furthermore, the municipality has supported and promoted local small businesses including **Coffee Enterprise** in Marquard and Moemaneng through marketing and visibility initiatives aimed at strengthening local businesses.

### **By law enforcement**

Through partnership with South African Police Service and District Health Inspectors, surprise operations were conducted to ensure compliance with municipal bylaws. These operations are aimed at promoting adherence to regulations, improve public order, and ensure that businesses and community members operated within the legal framework.

### **Key Performance 3: Institutional Capacity**

Honourable Members, Setsoto Local Municipality has maintained a capable and resilience administration which operate through ana approved and funded organisational structure aligned to the Municipal Staff regulation of 2021.

The municipality has successfully filled all funded senior management positions. The following senior management positions have been duly and adequately filled:

- Municipal Manager
- Chief Financial Officer
- Director Technical Services
- Director Community Services
- Director Corporate Services

These critical appointments ensure that the municipality is fully capacitated at a strategic leadership level, enabling improved governance, effective administration , and enhanced service delivery across all departments.

### **Key Performance Area 4: Financial Management**

A municipality without money cannot deliver services. This budget is a **funded budget**. It is realistic. We are improving our **low** collection rate which is still below the norm of 95%. We appeal to all who can pay, to please pay for services. The few rand you owe is a pothole we cannot fix. We are protecting the poor. Over 8,000 indigent households will continue to receive free basic services. If you fell within the two pensionable income brackets, come register. If you can pay, we ask you to do so for the love of your community.

### **Overview of the 2026/2027 Fiscal Framework**

Honourable Speaker, the total operating revenue budgeted for the 2026/2027 financial year is **R 814.1 million**. This represents a 10% increase from the 2025/2026 adjusted budget, driven by inflation-linked tariff adjustments and improved revenue collection strategies.

Total operating expenditure has been appropriated at **R 902.8 million**, which is a decrease of 6% from the previous year. This reduction was necessary to eliminate unfunded commitments from the

adjusted budget and reflects our unwavering commitment to cutting non-essential spending. This leaves an operating deficit of **R 88.6 million**. However, this deficit is fully funded by **R 319 million** in capital transfers from national government, resulting in a net surplus after capital transfers. This is a funded budget.

### Where the money comes from: Anticipated Revenue

Speaker, every rand we spend comes from you, the resident, or from national government. We have a responsibility to use it wisely and with accountability.

### Grants and Subsidies (38.5% - R 313.4 million)

- The largest source is the **National Equitable Share (R 284m)**, which funds free basic services for the poor, followed by the Finance Management Grant.
- **Service Charges (41.3% - R 336.4 million)**: This is your payment for electricity, water, sanitation, and refuse removal. It is the lifeblood of our daily operations.
  - Electricity: R 164.1 million
  - Water: R 80.4 million
  - Refuse: R 54.7 million
  - Sanitation: R 37.0 million
- **Property Rates (10.4% - R 84.6 million)**: Funding for general municipal services and infrastructure.
- **Other Own Revenue (12% - R 98.1 million)**: Including investment revenue, building plan fees, and permits.

### Where the money is going: Anticipated Expenditure

Ladies and gentlemen, let me now detail exactly where every rand of this **R 902.8 million** operating budget is allocated, linked directly to our Integrated Development Plan priorities.

IDP Pillar (KPA)	Allocation (R'000)	What This Money Will Do (Key Priorities)
Basic Services	R 635 million	<p><b>Water and Sanitation (R 189 million)</b>: Respond to leaks, fix sewer blockages, reduce water losses, and upgrade treatment works (Clocolan, Senekal).</p> <p><b>Electricity (R 208 million)</b>: Purchase bulk power (Eskom), maintain substations, restore power after outages, replace faulty high-mast lights, and electrify 2,007 backlog households.</p> <p><b>Roads and Stormwater (R 106 million)</b>: Fix potholes (target 40% response rate), re-gravel gravel roads, maintain stormwater channels, and pave key access roads in Meqheleng.</p> <p><b>Waste Management (R 95 million)</b>: Weekly refuse collection, cleaning illegal dumps, and maintaining landfill sites.</p>
Local Economic Development	R 10.6 million	<p><b>Job Creation</b>: Supporting the EPWP to create 100 work opportunities.</p> <p><b>SMME Support</b>: Capacity building for small businesses and cooperatives.</p> <p><b>Tourism</b>: Revitalising the cherry month and local tourism assets across Setsoto which culminate into the December festivities.</p>

SJA

IDP Pillar (KPA)	Allocation (R'000)	What This Money Will Do (Key Priorities)
<b>Financial Management</b>	<b>R 137 million</b>	<b>Debt Impairment (R 137 million budgeted, but a cost):</b> A significant portion is set aside for bad debt. We are strengthening credit control and the "Operation Patala" campaign to improve our collection rate from 55% to a realistic target. <b>Asset Management:</b> Maintaining the asset register and planning for the replacement of aging fleet and infrastructure.
<b>Good Governance and Administration</b>	<b>R 86 million</b>	<b>Governance:</b> Funding for council operations, the Office of the Speaker, the Municipal Manager, and legal services. <b>Internal Audit and Risk Management:</b> Strengthening our fight against fraud and corruption, including the operation of the Fraud and Ethics Hotline (0860 726 325).
<b>Public Participation</b>	<b>R 51 million</b>	<b>Community Engagement:</b> Supporting ward committees and public participation initiatives and communication. This budget ensures your voice is heard in our planning.
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>		<b>R 902.8 million</b>

- We are not spending money we don't have.
- We are not promising services we cannot deliver.

**That is the difference between politics and leadership.**

#### **Investing in our future: Capital Expenditure (R 331.3 million)**

Honourable Speaker, this is where we build tomorrow. Our capital budget increases by 15% to **R 331.3 million**, focused almost entirely on water and sanitation infrastructure.

#### **Water and Sanitation (R 259.8 million - 78% of Capex)**

- **Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (R 230.5 million):** Construction of the new Cyferfontein pump station, upgrading the Senekal Wastewater Treatment Works, and resuscitating the Ficksburg Wastewater Treatment Works.
- **Water Services Infrastructure Grant (R 25.8 million):** Upgrading the Ficksburg Outfall Sewer and repairing the Laaispruit Dam Wall in Marquard.
- **Roads and Transport (R 39.4 million):**
- **Municipal Infrastructure Grant (R 57.9 million - partially used):** Reconstruction of 3.75km of paved road and stormwater drainage in Meqheleng.
- **Community and Social Services (R 7.0 million):** Upgrading sports and recreational facilities in Clocolan/Hlohlwane (Phase 2).

This means **new water pipes, better roads, and improved sanitation** – not next year, but now.

#### **Free basic services – Protecting the poor**

We remain a caring government.

Our **Indigent Policy** continues to provide free basic services to registered poor households. We are targeting even more registrations this year, because poverty does not take a holiday. The

national government supports us through the **Equitable Share**, and we thank them. But we are also doing our part – reviewing the register every two years to ensure fairness. No family in Setsoto should go without water or basic sanitation because they cannot pay. That is our promise.

A developmental state is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable. We have budgeted **R 50.7 million** to provide a social package to registered indigent households (targeting **9,500** registrations). If you earn less than **R 4,670 per month (two pensionable income)**, please register.

- Electricity: **50 kWh free per month.**
- Water: **6 kilolitres free per month (first 6kl).**
- Sanitation and Refuse removal: **Full subsidy for basic services.**
- Property Rates: **100% rebate for registered indigents**

### **Key Performance Area 5: Good Governance, Transparency And Accountability**

Honourable Councillors, Setsoto Local Municipality has maintained fully functional governance structures that operate in accordance with approved schedules ensuring effective oversight, accountability and decision-making. The following structures are fully operational:

- Council
- Mayoral Committee
- Section 80 Committees
- Municipal Public Accounts Committee
- Audit and Performance Audit Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- IT Steering Committee
- IDP/Budget Steering Committee
- Management Committee
- Local Labour Forum

Ladies and Gentlemen, Setsoto Local Municipality has achieved an **unqualified audit opinion, with the number of emphasis of matters reduced from six (6) to four(4) and zero (0) unauthorised expenditure reported.**

The municipality has also recorded a significant reduction in **irregular expenditure, decreasing from R 9 million to R 2 million and a notable decline in fruitless and wasteful expenditure from R 22 000 to R 4 000.**

These milestones demonstrate the municipality's ongoing commitment to transparent financial management, good governance and accountability.

### **Key Performance Area 6: Public Participation**

Speaker, the municipality continues to promote community involvement in governance and decision-making processes and **15 of the 17 Ward Committees are functional**



**and actively submitting reports.**

Furthermore, council, every year, adopt the IDP Review Process Plan in which it details a program of action on how to engage communities on IDP Review and Budget compilation. This reflects a strong commitment to participatory governance, ensuring that community voices inform municipal planning and service delivery.



### **The Last Integrated Development Plan and Budget – A Foundation For The Next Administration**

This is the most important part of my speech. We are the current administration. But we are also **caretakers of tomorrow**. This Integrated Development Plan and Budget are not our victory lap. They are the **blueprint** for the next leadership.

We are leaving behind:

- A **credible, funded budget** – not a beauty pageant.
- A **revised set of budget-related policies** – ready for adoption.
- A **functional Budget and Treasury Office** – with interns trained and ready.
- Manage to **pay creditors** within thirty days except when there were challenges with the invoices
- We have **reduced** irregular and wasteful expenditure, and the unauthorised expenditure is kept at a zero
- Increase **public participation** in municipal planning and budgeting processes to ensure that communities' voices are heard
- An **Audit and Performance Audit Committee and Risk Management Committees** that are fully operational.
- A **draft Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan** – waiting for final approval.
- **Committed** Municipal Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Directors, Managers, Supervisors and Elementary Staff entrusted with service delivery
- We have provided **regular basic services** to communities except where we have sanitation challenges
- Continued to fill **51** funded critical elementary vacant position of which of which the remaining **13** position will be filled before the end of the financial year. The total being **64** filled positions.
- Municipality that has **managed** to spend all the **grants in the past year** with tangible projects on the ground
- **Created a conducive** environment for local economic development and tourism to thrive in our area.
- Functional **governance structures** to uphold oversight and accountability
- **Building skills capacity** amongst **councillors** and **all municipal employees** with institutions of higher learning.

SSM

- Functional **Local Labour Forum** which has ensured sound labour peace.

We are not handing over a mess.

We are handing over a **foundation**.

To the next administration: ***We have dug the trenches, laid the foundation, started construction, now is upon you to complete the solid house.***

### **A call to our people – pay for what you can**

But let me also speak directly to our people. We cannot deliver services if we do not collect revenue. We have introduced **petrol cards**, reduced wasteful expenditure, and cut non-core spending.

- But we need you to **pay for the services you use** – if you can.
- If you cannot, register as indigent.
- If you can, pay your rates and electricity.
- That is how we build Setsoto together.
- A call for continuity and partnership

### **To our successors – the next Council and the next administration:**

We say this:

**Do not start from scratch.** This Integrated Development Plan is your road map. The community priorities are clearly listed. The budget is aligned. Do not discard the work of the people because of politics. Build on it.

### **To the people of Setsoto:**

I say:

Hold us accountable for the remaining months. But also, hold the next government accountable. Demand that they finish what we have started – namely

- Completion of bucket eradication,
- Road upgrades through the DBSA adopt a district funding
- the finalisation of the new township at Ficksburg Dorpsgronden 75, also known as Stafford Hill.
- Partner with the Border Management Authority in their upgrade and modernisation of the Ficksburg Port of Entry

### **Recommendation to Council**

Speaker, I recommend that this Council:

1. **Approve** the Integrated Development 2026/2027 for Setsoto Local Municipality, as attached to this report.

2. **Note** that the Integrated Development Plan serves as the principal strategic framework for the municipality and the basis for the annual budget.
3. **Authorise** the Municipal Manager to submit the approved Integrated Development Plan to the MEC for CoGTA in the Free State Province within the prescribed timeframe, as required by the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000.
4. **Authorise** the Municipal Manager to take all further necessary administrative and legal steps to publish the approved Integrated Development Plan and commence with the implementation of the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan.
5. **Approve the 2026/2027 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework** and its budget policies, as tabled, for implementation from the 01 July 2026.
6. **Approve the tariffs** for property rates, electricity, water, sanitation, and solid waste.

Note that this is the **final Integrated Development Plan and Budget of this administration**, and that it serves as the **foundation for the incoming leadership**.

### **Closing – with dignity, not tears**

Honourable Speaker, as I table this Integrated Development Plan and Budget for 2026/2027, I do so with my head held high. We may not have fixed everything. The backlogs are still real. The unemployment rate still hurts. But we have stopped the increase in the backlog. We have turned the ship. And we are now sailing towards a clear destination.

This document represents **R 902 million** in planned operating expenditure. It represents hope for a refurbished Wastewater Treatment Works in Ficksburg, a new sports facility in Clocolan, better water management in Senekal and a sustained water supply in Marquard. It is the final will of this administration: **A Setsoto that is unified, viable, and progressive**.

I table the Setsoto Local Municipality's Final Integrated Development Plan and Budget for the 2026/2027 financial year. Let us work together until the very last day. Let us hand over a better Setsoto than we found.

We came, we served, and we built.

We did not fix everything. But we did not break anything either.

We leave behind a municipality that is bruised but not bleeding and still standing, poor but honest, encouraged and determined.

### **To the next administration:**

Respect this foundation.

Build on it.

You are not starting from zero.

### **To our people:**

Thank you for your patience,

Your criticisms have made us stronger in our resolves to meet your aspiration.

Your hopes have kept us going.

Let us walk out of this hall today with a zeal and hope, because Setsoto is not a project, but our home.

## **Conclusion**

Speaker, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to place on record my profound gratitude to the African National Congress, my political home, for the privilege of deploying me to the Setsoto Local Municipality and for the confidence reposed in my leadership.

To the Council of Setsoto, under the distinguished leadership of the Speaker, and to all Councillors, I thank you for entrusting me with the solemn mandate to serve as the political head of this municipality.

To the administration, led by Me Nomvula Malatjie, I extend my appreciation for your steadfast commitment, professionalism, and tireless dedication to the cause of sustainable service delivery. Your resilience, devotion, and unwavering sense of duty to our communities have not gone unnoticed.

Every contribution, whether great or small, moves Setsoto forward. I thank you for your diligence, your collective effort, and your ability to rise to the occasion, even in the face of adversity. Continue to uphold these high standards and take pride in the difference you make.

To my beloved family—my husband, my only son, my five daughters, my granddaughter, and the entire Lebusa clan—your love and steadfast support have been my anchor. Without you, I am nothing.

Let me also acknowledge my friends, Basadi Le Lentswe, and the broader community of Setsoto for the encouragement, trust, and unwavering belief you have shown in me throughout this journey. Your guidance, prayers, and shared commitment to our collective vision continue to inspire me to lead with humility and unwavering resolve.

God bless Setsoto. God bless each of you.

I thank you.

  
**CLLR SEIPATI MBIWE(MRS)**  
**EXECUTIVE MAYOR**

**Setsoto Local Municipality**  
**Integrated Development Plan 2026/2027 and Budget Speech 2026/2027-2028/2029**  
**Published by the Office of the Executive Mayor**  
**27 Voortrekker Street**  
**P O Box 116**  
**Ficksburg**  
**9730**  
**Free State**  
**South Africa**

**The Speech is available on:**

**[www.setsoto.co.za](http://www.setsoto.co.za)**

**Coordination: Acting Chief of Staff**

**Editorial: Municipal Manager**

**Design and Layout: Office of The Executive Mayor**

**Printing and Binding: Office of the Executive Mayor**

**PR No:**

**ISBN No:**

