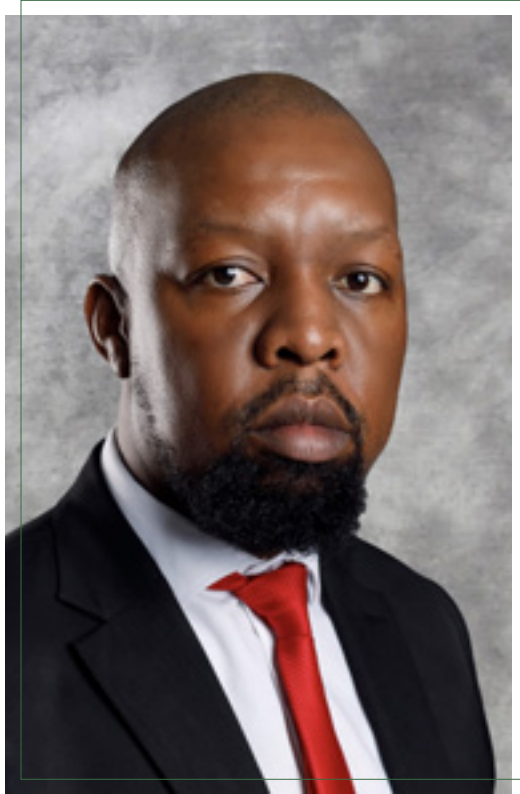




POLICY & BUDGET

Speech 2026/27



Mr Thulasizwe Thomo (MPL)
MEC: Public Works, Roads and Transport

POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH 2026/27

VOTE 08

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- **Madam Speaker, Honourable M Masilela**
- **Deputy Speaker, Honourable S Masango**
- **Honourable Premier, Mr Mandla Padney Ndlovu**
- **Honourable Members of the Executive Council**
- **Honourable Members of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature**
- **Honourable Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport, Ms Malapeng, as well as Members of the Committee.**
- **Chairperson of House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, Kgoshi Mokoena and Members of the House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders**
- **Executive Mayors and Councillors present**
- **Director General – Ms. Margaret Skosana**
- **Acting Head of the Department - Mr Mikateko Ronny Rikhotso, Senior Managers and all employees of the Department**
- **Heads of Departments and Chief Executive Officers of Entities**
- **Leadership of the African National Congress led here by the Provincial Secretary Cde Muzi Chirwa and the Alliance Partners**
- **Different Political Parties**
- **SANRAL Provincial Head - Ms Mabuyi Mhlanga**
- **Representatives of Business and Labour Formations**
- **Leadership of the Taxi and Bus Industries**
- **Esteemed Guests**
- **Representatives of the Media & Ladies and Gentlemen**

OVERVIEW

1. Madam Speaker, a year ago, standing before this House, we made a commitment to the people of Mpumalanga, a commitment that Kubhunya Lutfuli eMpumalanga would not remain a slogan, but would become a visible doctrine of action, for our roads, bridges, and public infrastructure.
2. Through Kubhunya Lutfuli eMpumalanga, we committed to mobilise and activate the full developmental capacity and productive capabilities of the Department. We committed that our graders will be actively deployed across our road network, our TLBs would break new ground, our tipper trucks would haul the materials of development, our mechanised patchers would restore damaged surfaces, and our excavators and bulldozers would lay the foundations of a province in motion.
3. Today, Madam Speaker, we return to this House again, not in aspiration alone, but in measured progress as the Department achieved 80% of its planned targets during the 2025/26 financial year, improving on the 79% achieved in the preceding year.
4. Madam Speaker, I rise before this House today wearing the working attire of our Department, not as a fashion statement but representing the organised human capability of the Department. It is also a sign of our readiness to toil in the mud and dust that characterise the construction industry, where the foundations of development are laid and the future of our province is built.
5. This is a declaration of work in motion, our yellow machinery across the province, our artisans in overalls, our engineers, the technicians in mechanical workshops, quantity surveyors and built-environment professionals, and all our employees working very hard translating policy into tangible physical reality. Indeed, Madam Speaker, as the handyman of government, we are acutely aware that government works when Public Works, works!
6. The question before us is therefore no longer whether Kubhunya Lutfuli has begun. The question that now confronts us is more profound; how far are we prepared to go, and what must we do next to sustain this trajectory?
7. Madam Speaker, as we reflect on this journey, we draw on the insights of Professor Busani Ngcaweni in his reflections on his seminal writings “Frontiers of National and International Development”. He cautions against despair as a final response to the ambiguities of history, and instead calls for the disciplined construction of capable institutions that translate intent into tangible outcomes.
8. In a similar vein, former President Thabo Mbeki reminds us that development is fundamentally rooted in the expansion of productive capacity, and that infrastructure constitutes the material foundation upon which economic transformation and inclusive growth must be built.
9. Taken together, these reflections affirm a foundational proposition as we table our Policy and Budget Vote 8 for the 2026/27 financial year.
10. Madam Speaker, the recent tragic events on our roads bring into sharp focus the urgency and human dimension of our mandate. It is with a heavy heart that I must reflect on a devastating accident that occurred three weeks ago on Thursday morning, the 21st of May 2026.
11. Our province continues to carry the emotional weight of this incident following a horrific head-on collision between a minibus taxi and a bus on the R39 road between Standerton and Morgenzon.
12. This horrific crash claimed 10 innocent lives, all of whom were occupants of the minibus taxi, including its driver. Eight passengers perished instantly at the scene, while two more succumbed to their injuries in hospital.

13. These were breadwinners and colleagues, primarily workers heading out to build our economic sectors, whose journeys were cut short under the dark, heavy morning mist.
14. On behalf of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, I stand here to convey our deepest, most heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, friends, and coworkers affected by this painful loss. We also pray for the swift and full recovery of those who sustained serious injuries.
15. We acknowledge that severe misty conditions heavily reduced visibility that morning; however, no schedule, no deadline, and no rush to work is ever worth the priceless value of human life.
16. Therefore, I am issuing a clarion call to all public transport operators, corporate transit providers, and private motorists across the province: please adjust your speed to changing weather conditions, keep your headlights illuminated, and exercise absolute patience on our roads!
17. As a province, we stand fully prepared for the upcoming rollout of the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO) Act. Let it be clear: AARTO is not a revenue-generating tool, but another life-saving intervention.
18. Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, today we gather in this sacred month of June - a month etched into the soul of our nation. This year carries a profound weight, for we mark exactly half a century since the heroic youth of 1976 rose up against the machinery of oppression.
19. Fifty years ago, the streets of Soweto became the theatre of a defining moment in our liberation struggle, as a generation of young people stood firm in the face of a repressive system. They did not flinch. They confronted apartheid with courage and conviction, demanding a future in which dignity, freedom, and justice would prevail.
20. It was this unyielding courage in the face of oppression that helped dismantle the pillars of tyranny. Our youth of 1976 fought for the political and social rights we now enjoy. Yet, we must acknowledge a hard truth: that political freedom, on its own, remains incomplete without economic emancipation.
21. It is therefore the young people of today who must carry forward this unfinished task of transformation. They remain central to our developmental agenda, both as participants in the labour force and as emerging professionals whose skills, innovation, and expertise are essential to building a capable and growing economy.

DRIVE INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION

22. Honourable Speaker, the Department continues to navigate a highly constrained operating environment. While Mpumalanga's Medium-Term Development Plan aims for 3%–5% annual growth, the short-term outlook is revised downward to 1.3%–2% due to national and global pressures.
23. This economic slowdown is primarily driven by the following critical factors:
 - international trade instability affecting mining and agriculture,
 - geopolitical tensions in the Middle East driving fuel volatility and global supply chain disruptions,
 - and recent floods that damaged infrastructure and disrupted tourism, mining, and agriculture.
24. Flood damage repair costs are estimated at R2 billion. However, the spending on emergency repair diverts resources away from long-term growth investments. The plan is not simply to restore damaged infrastructure but “build back better”, with a strategic shift toward climate-resilient infrastructure.

25. This resilience agenda extends to energy. South Africa recently celebrated a year of uninterrupted national power supply, but this is not enough to secure future demand. The Department is therefore pushing to diversify energy sources in public buildings.
26. A key example is that the solar panel installation at Riverside Government Complex is back on track. This initiative is intended to reduce reliance on Eskom.
27. In addition, I recently had the distinct privilege of transferring advanced solar power systems, diesel generators and energy storage inventories to my esteemed counterpart, the MEC for Health, Sasekani Manzini.
28. This equipment, donated by the People's Republic of China, represents a massive leap forward in securing our social infrastructure and protecting our healthcare facilities from future disruptions.

Economic Infrastructure

29. Madam Speaker, 06 of the 07 key road projects promised in the previous year were completed. The one exception is the Road D481 upgrade between Mooiplaas and Ekulindeni, which has been delayed by business forum disruptions, difficult underground geology, and poor contractor performance.
30. Despite these setbacks, portions of the 7.2 kilometres have already been tarred with a revised completion date of June 2026.
31. In sharp contrast to these challenges stands the impressive completion of Road D2274, north of Hendrina, which was officially opened in April 2026. The project further included the construction of a washed-away culvert on Road D383 in Arnot.
32. This 13 kilometre stretch is more than just asphalt, it is a vital economic artery for the Nkangala region. It diverts coal trucks away from central Hendrina thus reducing congestion and improving safety.
33. Phase 2 of Road P33/4 between Hazyview and Sabie (7.7 km) was completed in February 2026, strengthening a key tourism corridor linked to the Panorama Route and the Kruger National Park region. The project also incorporated nano-modified pavement stabilisation technology as a cost-effective and durable innovation.
34. Honourable Speaker, a number of road safety audits were undertaken across the province, leading to the replacement of 06 corrugated culverts through the ARMCO Culvert Replacement Programme.
35. In the 2026/27 financial year, we will continue with this programme and a budget of R30 million has been allocated to replace the following 02 corrugated culverts:
 - Culvert on Road P2/10 N4 to Sudwala Caves
 - Culvert on Road P5/5 Amsterdam to Swaziland Border
36. Beyond capital projects, we implemented several road maintenance works through the Kubhunya Lutfuli initiative. This included patching, blading, re-gravelling, grass cutting, drain clearing and road marking. Despite fiscal constraints, the Department exceeded its road maintenance targets by March 2026.
37. For the new financial year, the Department is allocating R2.3 billion to transport infrastructure, focusing on routes important for rural growth, tourism and coal transportation.

38. New projects due to commence this year include:
- Road D2950 from Steenbok to D797
 - Road D2940 from D797 toward Phiva (Phase 1)
 - Road P216/1 eMbalenhle to Secunda (Phase 1)
 - Road D2571 from R37 to P171/1 Lydenburg Bypass
 - Gedlembane Ring Road, Pienaar
39. Road D2953 - Ka Hoyi Village is currently at an advanced design stage and is planned for completion in the second quarter. The project will go out on tender in the third quarter, with project commencement planned for the fourth quarter of this financial year.
40. Projects scheduled for completion include:
- Road D4407 between Hluvukani and Timbavati
 - Road D3960 and D4442 Ga-Motibidi to Rainbow
 - Road D2950 from D797 to Dhludluma including Ring Road
 - Road D1723 (Luphisi Road) between D636 and P258/1
41. Madam Speaker, I am glad to share that we have overcome the profound structural and logistical challenges we faced since the announcement of the eMalahleni Bridge and Driekoppies Bridge in the 2023 State of the Province Address.
42. The eMalahleni Bridge is technically complex because it requires relocation of underground fibre, gas, water, and sewer services. Various service providers have been appointed and enabling works will commence on an accelerated trajectory the moment these underground networks are secured.
43. In an equally thrilling milestone, the procurement process for the Driekoppies Bridge has been successfully finalised. As we speak, the project has entered its dynamic mobilisation phase, setting a powerful stage for actual construction to commence in August 2026.
44. Honourable Speaker, the province is home to the second-largest portion of SANRAL's national network. The national agency's takeover of key provincial routes is already producing visible improvements.
45. The flagship example is the R540, which restored the link between Belfast, Dullstroom and Lydenburg. This intervention has also safeguarded Dullstroom's status as a premier destination for fly-fishing and nature enthusiasts, ensuring this scenic route remains a safe and accessible engine for our regional economy.
46. Madam Speaker, we are building on the momentum achieved on the R540. Through this collaborative approach, the Panorama Reimagined initiative is set to become another powerful economic and tourism catalyst in Mpumalanga. Its positive ripple effects will stimulate and strengthen the province's entire tourism value chain.
47. The Department, together with SANRAL, is fully committed to this initiative, paving the road (physically and figuratively) to prosperity. Our shared focus on pioneering resilient road infrastructure ensures Mpumalanga remains safe, radiant and deeply attractive to both domestic and international visitors.

Social Infrastructure

48. Madam Speaker, Mpumalanga has built projects unmatched by any other province in our post-apartheid democracy. These projects stand as enduring monuments to our shared vision, collective resilience and unwavering commitment to the dignity of our people.
49. In my first address to this House, I made a solemn pledge to complete four critical projects that are essential for provincial prosperity. Today, I stand before you to report on our progress.

50. Since that commitment, we have successfully completed the Mpumalanga International Food Market and the Mkhondo Boarding School.
51. Furthermore, major construction at the Mpumalanga Parliamentary Village is now substantially complete, including the delivery of 28 of the 31 houses. The 03 outstanding houses and ancillary works are planned to be completed by 31 August 2026.
52. The most significant challenge is the New Mapulaneng Hospital. This project has faced disruptions, bad weather, and performance related challenges.
53. After terminating the service provider for Phase 3A, the Department issued a new tender in May 2026 to appoint a replacement contractor. An acceleration plan will be developed and closely monitored to complete this world class facility.
54. For 2026/27, client departments have allocated R2.76 billion for 95 social infrastructure developments, including:
 - 77 schools to empower our youth
 - 7 healthcare facilities to heal our people
 - 6 cultural and sports hubs to unite our youth
 - 5 social development centres to support the vulnerable
55. Madam Speaker, the Department is also reclaiming its construction sites. We commit to continue with this aggressive response under the Durban Declarations of Crime-Free Construction Sites adopted in 2024.
56. To our valued partners at the SAPS, the CIDB, National Treasury, and across the wider industry: thank you for standing shoulder-to-shoulder with us in this critical mission. Together, we will win the fight against construction mafias!

Job Creation

57. Madam Speaker, South Africa's official unemployment rate rose to 32.7% in Q1 2026, while Mpumalanga's rose to 49.6%, the highest quarterly increase in the country.
58. The Department sits at the absolute nexus of this crisis and acts as the primary link between government policy and real-world job creation. To this regard, it has positioned the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a core anti-poverty and job creation mechanism.
59. In the past year, Mpumalanga created 35,788 work opportunities with the Department contributing 8,621. For the current year, the provincial administration plans to create 38,258 additional EPWP opportunities, targeted especially at 22,955 women, 21,042 youth, and 765 persons with disabilities.
60. The Department separately aims to create over 8,000 jobs through Artisan Development, Real Estate Training, Siyatentela, internships, and learnerships programmes.
61. To support this, the Department has signed MoUs with TVET colleges and the Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust (MRTT), with the intention of linking projects to work-integrated learning and broader workforce upskilling.
62. Fundamentally, we are altering how we utilise our infrastructure budgets. We are restructuring these budgets to get people into formal apprenticeship programmes and marketable trades such as plumbing, bricklaying and electrical work.
63. This commitment is backed by a strengthened policy environment. A new national framework aimed at increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in EPWP was officially launched on 20 November 2025.

64. The National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is also developing a new operational model as part of the EPWP reforms. This model allows EPWP participants to create digital CVs and link them directly to job opportunities.

TACKLING HIGH COSTS OF LIVING AND REDUCING POVERTY

65. Madam Speaker, previous pro-poor transport policies have helped relieve household financial pressure. The clearest example is the continuous allocation of the Public Transport Operations Grant (PTOG).
66. This grant increases by 3.5% from R810.6 million in 2025/26 to R840.3 million in 2026/27. The increment of R29.7 million is meant to keep pace with inflation and fuel costs. The subsidy supports approximately 140,000 commuters daily, helping connect people to jobs and services.
67. Looking ahead, our interim bus contracts are successfully transitioning into a transformative new era. Government is actively paving the way for a fully unified network that will soon integrate diverse public transport operators into a single, seamless system of mobility for all.

Scholar Transport

68. Scholar transport and rural mobility forms part of government's anti-poverty interventions. The Department commits R533 million to transport more than 67,220 learners in this financial year.
69. An investment of this scale demands the highest level of accountability. We insist on absolute integrity within our procurement systems as we finalise the scholar transport tender.
70. To guarantee total fairness and transparency, the Department will implement rigorous oversight mechanisms, strict compliance checks and an independent evaluation process.
71. Sabotaging the safe transportation of our children is a direct attack on their future and the State. We will not tolerate corruption, collusion or disruption. Any attempt to interfere with or corrupt the process will be met with the full might of the law!

Rural Mobility

72. In rural transport, the Department completed 06 Integrated Rural Mobility and Access (IRMA) projects, including: new culvert bridges in Kwaggafontein and Nkomazi, bridge replacements in Wonderfontein, Sabie, and Katjibane Nokaneng (Phase 1A) and three bus shelters in Daggakraal.
73. Our IRMA priorities for the upcoming year include:
- Culvert in Komati Village, near Komati Power station
 - Footbridge in Mashishing
74. Alongside the IRMA projects, is the Welisizwe Rural Bridge Programme designed to dismantle the high cost of living while breaking the cycle of rural poverty.
75. By the end of 2025/26, 07 modular steel bridges had been completed in Nkomazi Local Municipality, servicing Skoonplaas, Buffelspruit Gap 1 and 2, Jeppes Reef, Mjejane, Schuzendal and Magogeni.
76. Historically, this programme has been constrained by intergovernmental coordination problems, procurement and material supply issues, limited contractor capacity, difficult terrain and persistent rainfall.

77. Mpumalanga has requested a strategic revision of the delivery blueprint to strengthen implementation capacity and accelerate the delivery of this critical national infrastructure programme.
78. Also noteworthy, is that there was no new grant funding received for 2026/27. Consequently, the Department has requested a R53 million rollover to complete the ongoing projects in Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, and Chief Albert Luthuli municipalities.

Rail

79. Honourable Speaker, passenger rail has a potential to tackle high cost of living and become a major poverty-reduction intervention. However, Mpumalanga currently has no commuter rail network.
80. The province's 2,233 km rail infrastructure is currently controlled by Transnet Freight Rail and used solely for freight such as coal, chrome, and iron ore.
81. The appointment of 11 private train operating companies (TOCs) to access Transnet's freight rail network is a monumental shift that directly impacts Mpumalanga's economy, roads and mining sectors. The province stands to be one of the biggest beneficiaries of this open-access rail reform.
82. Transforming this massive existing infrastructure from a freight-only network into a shared commuter asset requires bold action. Through PRASA's Draft National Rail Master Plan, a major turnaround is underway.
83. The public is encouraged to provide inputs on this Plan that will position passenger and freight rail as the backbone of the country's transport ecosystem. Submissions are open until 22 July 2026.
84. Mpumalanga's transportation landscape is set for a major transformation with the proposal of three high-impact rail infrastructure projects: *Gauteng to Mbombela*, *Mbombela Metrorail Development* and *The Maputo Corridor*.
85. These initiatives will boost regional connectivity, elevate commuter travel, and accelerate economic growth across vital trade corridors.

BUILDING A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

Human Capital Management

86. Madam Speaker, we have now successfully finalised and approved our new organisational structure designed specifically to streamline our operations and enhance service delivery.
87. Crucially, every structural change we have made seeks to make our services faster, more accessible and profoundly impactful for the communities we serve.
88. To fund this revised structure, we have adopted a phased-in recruitment strategy that will fill critical posts across the short, medium and long term.
89. To further strengthen our capacity and better serve our communities, we have successfully filled 149 key positions since last year. While we celebrate these vital additions to our team, 136 employees left through natural attrition during the same period. To address this, we have adopted a replacement principle.
90. Furthermore, as part of our broader commitment to building internal State capacity, we are systematically insourcing core functions, beginning with cleaning services.
91. By transitioning these cleaning staff into permanent roles, this administration is actively creating decent work and providing greater long-term job security.

92. Madam Speaker, we remain dedicated to building a truly inclusive and equitable workplace where every individual can thrive. We recognise that our strength lies in our diversity and we are actively working to close the representation gaps within our organisation.
93. Women currently occupy 40% of our Senior Management Service positions and we are focused on implementing targeted advancement initiatives to reach the 50% equity goal.
94. The main challenge remains at the SMS level, where the representation of persons with disabilities currently stands at 0%, while our department-wide figure of 2.13% also remains below the 4% national target.
95. To build a stronger and more representative institution, we have advertised 192 positions during this financial year. This strategic wave of positions includes crucial replacements, interim acting vacancies and targeted re-advertisements.
96. To sustain this workforce, the Department maintains a strong developmental focus, committing at least 1% of the annual wage bill to training and development initiatives.
97. It is against this understanding that we have strengthened our collaboration with the National School of Government to implement targeted training programmes. These joint initiatives are going to enhance the skills and knowledge of our public servants.

Fraud and Corruption

98. Honourable Speaker, a capable State demands more than skilled public servants. It requires robust internal controls that respond directly to our operating environment and remain insulated from abuse.
99. This is more important in procurement which serves as the lifeblood of the Department. When procurement functions with absolute integrity and a clear vision, it becomes a powerful engine for progress, equity and provincial development.
100. We are intensifying our fight against systemic mismanagement through absolute accountability. We are holding our officials accountable for material irregularities and non-compliance with laws or regulations.
101. Crucially, we are vetting officials in high-risk zones like Senior Management and Supply Chain Management to stop corruption before it starts.
102. Last year, we dismissed an employee found guilty of fraud and corruption and subjected several officials to disciplinary hearings as part of consequence management. These decisive actions signal to both our staff and the public that misconduct will not be tolerated.
103. At this very moment, the Auditor-General is auditing our Department for the 2025/26 financial year. We do not fear this scrutiny, we welcome this collaborative oversight.

Fleet Management

104. Honourable Speaker, a functional fleet is also crucial for the Department to operate efficiently and cost-effectively. Without operational vehicles, the Department cannot physically reach communities to implement its projects and programmes.
105. To drive this strategic focus forward, we successfully procured 20 additional graders during the previous financial year. This critical acquisition has accelerated rural road maintenance and infrastructure development across all districts.
106. Beneath the surface of these heavy-duty machines lies a deeper victory for our workforce. Every machine demands a skilled hand and through our special allocation of R19,4 million, we are creating new employment and upskilling opportunities.

107. Madam Speaker, we will not allow criminal syndicates to compromise our vision or disrupt the essential services our communities rightfully deserve. The recent escalation in grader theft has not weakened our resolve, rather, it has fortified it.
108. A new asset protection strategy is being implemented, combining revised protocols, real-time tracking, SAPS support, and links to rural camera networks built by farming communities.
109. Fuel theft is also identified as a major problem, with new audit controls, refuelling technology, and disciplinary measures being introduced. Let the message ring out clearly and without ambiguity: **collusion between dishonest officials and corrupt service stations will be ruthlessly dismantled!**

Property Management

110. Madam Speaker, when we speak of building a truly capable State, we speak of a State that does not merely possess property but masterfully optimizes it.
111. We no longer view our public assets through the restrictive lens of what they are, but through the visionary horizon of what they are destined to become.
112. Our mission is to convert underutilized liabilities into powerful socio-economic catalysts. By doing so, we will unlock vital revenue, uplift communities, drive economic prosperity and ensure world-class service delivery.
113. We are proactively pursuing this agenda through the disposal of redundant State houses. The first phase consists of the disposal of 171 houses and to date, 100 tenants have indicated their intention to proceed with the discount terms approved by EXCO.

Digital Transformation

114. Madam Speaker, our march towards a modern, capable State hinges on accelerating our transition to an eGovernment ecosystem. This digital evolution is not merely about technological convenience, it is the primary engine driving our developmental mandate.
115. However, we must ensure that this transformation remain inclusive, transparent, and structurally equipped to lift our people out of poverty and drive sustainable economic transformation across the province.
116. In the context of Public Works, Roads, and Transport, this digital shift fundamentally alters how we build, connect, and move. We are permanently leaving behind the era of slow, paper-driven bureaucracy.
117. We are advancing our efforts to introduce a multi-layered oversight and performance framework to guarantee substantial improvements in project management.
118. Following our benchmarking exercise, we have decided to acquire and implement these proven infrastructure management systems. This decision is based on technological benefits rather than costs.
119. At the provincial level, the Provincial Treasury is championing the Business Automation Programme (BAP) to modernise government operations, drive superior operational efficiency, ensure transparent public governance, and guarantee efficient service delivery.
120. Crucial to the success of this digital evolution is a dual focus on robust cybersecurity and sustainable investment. We are collaborating with the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) to ensure that our systems are secured and can be restored in the event of a failure.

THE BUDGET

121. Madam Speaker, the 2026/27 budget represents a R179,8 million or 3% increase compared to the 2025/2026 financial year.

122. I now request this House to consider and approve the budget for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, Vote 8, which is as follows:

1. Administration	: R414 753 000 (Four hundred and fourteen million, seven hundred and fifty-three thousand rands)
2. Public Works Infrastructure	: R1 062 759 000 (One billion, sixty-two million, seven hundred and fifty-nine thousand rands)
3. Transport Infrastructure	: R2 870 771 000 (Two billion, eight hundred and seventy million, seven hundred and seventy one thousand rands)
4. Transport Management	: R1 613 225 000 (One billion, six hundred and thirteen million, two hundred and twenty-five thousand rands)
5. Community Based Programme	: R95 247 000 (Ninety-five million, two hundred and forty-seven thousand rands)
TOTAL	: R6 056 755 000 (Six billion, fifty-six million, seven hundred and fifty-five thousand rands)

123. Madam Speaker, this R6 billion budget is not merely numbers, but a blueprint for economic renewal and a solemn promise to our people. Every rand allocated here represents a road to be paved, a job to be created and a community to be connected to greater opportunities.

124. Let us look beyond our differences and unite behind this investment and transforming these figures into tangible progress that our citizens can see, touch, and feel.

125. Today's pronouncements cannot be achieved by government alone, which is why I call upon all stakeholders including community leaders, private sector partners, civil society and our dedicated staff members to unite in executing these policy directives.

CONCLUSION

126. Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our former Head of Department, Mr Morake Charles Morolo, who has joined us today. On 31 May 2026, Mr Morolo completed a career spanning approximately 16 years within the Department.
127. Under his stewardship, this Department did not merely build infrastructure, we delivered state of the art public infrastructure. Today, this Department stands as a formidable force, with records confirming its status as the leading department in the sector.
128. We express our deepest gratitude for his years of tireless service and visionary guidance and wish him well in his forthcoming future assignments.
129. Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the Honourable Premier, Mr Mandla Ndlovu, for entrusting me with the responsibility of leading this portfolio. It is a privilege afforded to few, and one that carries profound responsibility, expectation and accountability.
130. I also extend my appreciation to the ANC for the confidence it has placed in me through this deployment.
131. Furthermore, I want to acknowledge the dedicated leadership and staff of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. And lastly, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family for their unwavering support throughout this journey.

I thank you.



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