



**Keynote address by Mayor ZRT Gumede at the ONE NUMBER
LAUNCH**

19 FEBRUARY 2018

Deputy Mayor,

EXCO members,

Fellow councillors,

City Manager,

Municipal officials,

Amakhosi,

Abefundisi,

Business representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sanibonani,

Siyabonga ukunibona niphumile ngaloluhlobo ukwezothamela umcimbi wokwethula inombolo yamakhasimende. We are grateful that we are launching this ONE NUMBER today after the state of a nation address that was delivered by our new President, his excellency Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa.

We would like to thank President Zuma for his contribution as the president and also as a struggle veteran. 60 years of service is appreciated.

We will forever be grateful to him and all those who fought for our liberation. His role in peace negotiations in KwaZulu-Natal which ensured stability in this province in the early 1990s. His role as the president, his legacy on infrastructure roll out, HIV massive ARV roll-out which save lots of lives, the building of schools in rural areas replacing the mud schools. Zuma brought Free Higher education for the poor and skills revolution through FETs and TVETs colleges.

Even though he had no formal education, Msholuzi built two universities one in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape including the Sefako Makgatho University for Health Sciences. Amongst many of the achievements is the adoption of the National Development Plan (NDP) that is South Africa's a long-term plan for socio-economic transformation of the country.

As the ANC led government, we must continue with our socio-economic transformation agenda of the country to redress the injustices of the past which perpetuates inequalities and poverty in South Africa. This decision by President Zuma is consistent with his character of being a discipline member of the ANC. Siyabonga Nxamalala, Imisebenzi yakhe emihle iyokumlandela. We also wish President Ramaphosa well in his role as the head of state, we will rally behind him and the collective.

In fact, President Zuma is the first one to launch a Presidential Hotline to interact with citizens and unblock bottlenecks.

Programme Director,

Our vision as this Municipality is that by 2030, in 12 years away from now, we should enjoy the reputation of being Africa's most liveable city, caring city, where all citizens live in harmony. This vision will be achieved by growing our economy and meeting people's needs so that all citizens enjoy a high quality of life with equal opportunities, in a city that they are truly proud of.

In line with this vision and in trying to meet the people's needs this Municipality is currently reviewing its Customer Relations Management Strategy with the aim of being more responsive, efficient and consistent in the services we deliver to the eThekweni community.

You will agree with me that at times our customer service offering is not up to the level that our customers expect. One of the measures that we are rolling out is the exercise of integrating customer services. We are investigating where can we integrate our customer services processes and systems. This will ensure that we deliver a robust, efficient and effective customer service.

Further to integrating our processes, we are looking at a convenient, technologically appropriate and cost effective intervention that will move the City a little closer to being a Smart City. This is one of the reason we launched the WhatsApp number in the past. The number is assisting in dealing with most of our water and sanitation related matters. Already, our WhatsApp number won an Award from the office of the Premier.

It is important that we find smart and simple ways of dealing with our problems.

One Number Service

Fellow citizens, we are a Municipality that listens umangabe abantu bekhala. During our door to door campaigns and public hearings, our people have been complaining about our call centres. We have heard the cries of our citizens that its not easy to engage us through our contact centers. We have different numbers for different services requirements. Indeed, as a result of our amalgamation from different municipalities into one we have this problem.

In response to this cry it gives me pleasure today to launch a single number for the bulk of our services and our four biggest contact centres (Water, Electricity, Switchboard and Revenue) which account for over 70% of our citizen calls, dealing with citizen requests and queries.

Through integrating the contact centres, the City is introducing one single number that citizens can use to be able to access these contact centres as well as other services in the City. This new platform of accessing the contact centres is Toll-Free to both landlines and cell phones. This actually means that instead of remembering 5 different numbers, our citizens will need to know one number that will link them to municipal services.

Mayoral Hotline

Additional to the launching the one number to the public, today we also launch the Mayors Hotline which will be open to the public. The aim of the Hotline is for the escalation of all issues experienced by citizens. The office is already operational; we have a staff compliment of 10 trained people.

The Mayoral Hotline is equipped with 12 lines. We are experiencing high call volumes and we have a technical team that is dedicated in sorting out all glitches.

The Mayoral line is for the citizen who has exhausted all other processes of logging a complaint, requesting a service, etc. Let me be clear, this is not the first number you will call but a last number when all else have failed. Ultimately I am responsible for what happens in the Municipality I therefore want to assist in times of need.

The Mayoral Hotline is an extension of our operational Sukuma Sakhe. We have systems in place to deal with escalated issues from the ground. We need to be accessible to the public and through Mayoral Hotline - we remain accessible. Siyatholakala kulenombolo futhi siyatholakala nakwizinkundla zokuxhumana.

Programme Director,

We will also have continuous training programmes for all our call centre agencies. Our customers need to be treated with love and care. As a caring municipality, we need to take care of customers. We cannot afford to have people who are not friendly to customers. We also need to be patient with difficult and frustrated customers. I urge customers to be patient with us. If there are issues, we will review and improve our customer service and our contact lines. There will always be challenges but we are committed in fixing them.

Soon the Municipality will also have its own Mobile App. This App will allow a live interaction between the Municipality and citizens to do various things such as to log Water and Electricity faults, check statements, events, weather and traffic.

We will also have eThekwini Municipality TV which will be at the walk-in centres, displaying information such as services offered and any notices.

In some areas we do not have permanent structures, so we will be having Pop-Up Offices. We have already piloted at Galleria Mall and Mpumalanga Mall. We envisage to have more of these Pop-Up offices to enable rural areas, community based libraries and local schools to be in a position to use

As this city led by ANC, we are committed in changing and responding to our citizens at all time. We remain in contact with our people through OSS, Izimbizo, Masakhane, Sizakala Centers, EzaseGagasini and now through Mayoral line. I will also be having radio programs to speak with citizens to maintain our daily contact. Our people must know that, we are with them at all times using all communication platforms.