



**Address by Cllr S Maphumulo on the Occasion of the  
National Funeral Parlours Association of South Africa  
Prayer Meeting**

**27 September 2016 – 10h00  
Umlazi V Section Community Hall**

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- Programme Director,
- President of the National Funeral Parlours Association of South Africa, Mr Muzi Hlengwa,
- Board members and member of the Association,
- Businesspeople,
- Captains of industry,
- Stakeholders and partners,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

## **Sanibonani!**

It is with great pleasure that I join the National Funeral Parlours Association of South Africa Prayer Meeting of behalf of eThekweni Mayor Cllr Zandile Gumede.

Today I would like to address this gathering on Municipal burial programmes and plans in the pipeline to ensure that our City has burial spaces in the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot deny that we are faced with a dire situation as we face a shortage of burial spaces. EThekweni has 65 cemeteries but only 16 are operating well but have limited burial spaces.

The scarcity of land is a huge concern in all spheres of government as competing needs have to be taken into consideration. Growing pressure to secure land for housing, and other developments related to service delivery have left government struggling to find space for burial sites.

As local government closest to the communities we need to understand the challenges of urbanisation, growing populations, a limited amount of land and the certainty of death whilst having to meet the needs of the living.

The fast shrinking lifespan of burial ground, environmental obligations and sensitivity to traditions, beliefs and customs of our people needs to be examined extensively to ensure the sustainability for generations to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, our Municipality is currently exploring ways to ensure adequate burial spaces in all our cemeteries. At present, we are meeting with relevant stakeholders to discuss the matter at hand.

The Municipality's Parks, Recreation and Culture Unit has proposed that all our cemeteries undergo re-landscaping. This will entail looking at existing burial sites and if a person has been laid to rest for 10 years, they be removed and placed in a certain section catered for burials that are 10 years and older.

This will save space because the remains will be accommodated in smaller individual boxes. This means that there will be a reuse of burial sites. If this is approved by Council, we will have over 500 thousand burial sites available. Re-landscaping of each cemetery will cost about R4 million.

Programme Director, also important to the community, is the indigent policy where a Municipality assists a poor family gives their loved one a proper burial. We provide this service through a company that is contracted to the Municipality.

This company also plays a role in fetching the body at the place of death and transports it to a morgue. Our Municipality together with the family then work together in identifying a burial site in one of the cemeteries.

The deceased is then laid to rest during the week and the logistics of the burial are handled by the Municipality.

We are a caring Municipality and we want to ensure that every person, no matter the affordability, is buried with dignity.

Ladies and gentlemen, while our Municipality is still exploring ways to increase burial spaces, we encourage cremation.

In closing, we would like to promote compliance from funeral directors and they must ensure that their facilities must be of high standard.

**Thank you!**