



Publication: Rekord Pretoria North - Main
Title: Rates increases are reasonable-metro
Publish date: 07 Jun 2024
Page: 3

Reach: 39929
AVE: R 63303.96
Author: Elize Parker



Attending the meeting on behalf of the EFF: Benjamin Mathibula and Godwin Ratikwane

Rates increases are reasonable - metro

Elize Parker

Tshwane's proposed rates and tariffs are the most reasonable when compared to other metros according to the MMC for Finance, Jacqui Uys.

Uys on June 4 tabled a total budget of R50.6-billion, comprising an operating budget of R48.3-billion and a capital infrastructure investment budget of R2.3-billion for the 2024/25 financial year.

Uys emphasised that 49% of the capital budget will be for the prioritisation of the electrical grid and water infrastructure in Tshwane.

She stressed that proposed increases in rates and tariffs when compared to those instituted by other metros, are the most reasonable in the country.

The MMC pointed out that tariff increases are in line with inflation and are as follows: 5.9% for water and sanitation, 5% for refuse removal, and 5% for property rates.

She emphasised that the 12% increase in costs imposed on the city by bulk electricity supplier Eskom is outside the metro's control.

Uys pointed out that the budget also makes provision for salary increments of 5.1% for employees and 5% for councillors.

"We have had difficult years of no increments and this will offer a little bit of relief to all. The city values its workforce. We have hardworking officials in this city who are worth every cent they earn," said Uys, but said all employees should continue working to help with the financial rescue of the city.

The budget has a few core priorities to

help residents and taxpayers in difficult economic times.

The fight against unemployment has an allocation of R18.5-million towards Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) initiatives and other support services, including R2.5-million for early childhood development centres.

The metro will further allocate a total of R57-million for the provision of rudimentary sanitation services to informal settlements.

To restore dignity to residents, about R248.5-million will be allocated to the Human Settlements Department for the provision of water and sanitation and construction of roads and stormwater drainage. This will be prioritised in the old townships of Mamelodi, Soshanguve, Olievenhoutbosch, Zithobeni, Refilwe, Mabopane, Ga-Rankuwa and Winterveldt.

The budget is also prioritised to fully capacitate revenue-collection operations and provides for R75-million for prepaid electricity meter roll-out to address under-metering, R91.9-million for credit control operations and R3-million for tendering bills on WhatsApp.

To Uys, an important feature is that steps are being taken to make good on the promise of the mayor that provision should be made to curb substation fires.

This budget allocates R20-million to battery surge protection at substations and R177-million towards electricity network maintenance materials.

"When streetlights are on at night it represents a city that is alive and working. For these reasons, we have allocated R24.5-million for the Tshwane Public Lighting Programme to install new streetlights. We also made a commitment to use 30% of this to replace current infrastructure with solar solutions to overcome vandalism and reduce costs on electricity purchases," said Uys.

The Water and Sanitation Department is allocated approximately R536-million for the 2024/25 financial year.

Key projects include refurbishing and upgrading the Bronkhorstspuit Water Treatment Plant to the sum of R11-million.

"We also want to keep our promise to Hammanskraal residents through the Rooiwal Waste Water Treatment Works Phase 1 upgrade and budgeted R150-million to this end," said Uys.

She explained a great deal of work is being done to improve the lifespan and quality of roads in different areas and a total of R218-million will be allocated to the Bus Rapid Transit transport infrastructure.

Uys said R111.2 million will go towards clearing of illegal dumping and R30.8-million to renting specialised equipment to assist in the endeavour.

A total of R3.4-billion will go towards the Tshwane Metro Police Department to empower law enforcement officers to fulfil their mandate.



MMC of Finance Jacqui Uys