



**RAYMOND
MHLABA**
MUNICIPALITY
.....
UMANYANO KUPHUHLISO

UMHLALI

Newsletter

Sizisa iindaba eluntwini.

JULY - SEPTEMBER

2025

See more: page 9

“The smart metering system offers a variety of advantages, including precise electricity billing, the elimination of estimated readings, and real-time monitoring of electricity consumption, which empowers residents to make informed choices regarding their electricity usage”

See more: page 12

“As a municipality, we are committed to ensuring that people in our communities feel the presence of government in their daily lives. Housing is a fundamental service, and this handover is another stride forward in improving the quality of life for our people,” she said.



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Mayor's MESSAGE



HON. MAYOR,
Cllr Nomhle Sango

Dear Residents, Stakeholders, and Friends of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you to this quarterly newsletter, which captures the essence of our collective journey through the months of July to September 2025. As I reflect on this dynamic period in our municipality's calendar, I am filled with gratitude for the resilience, cooperation, and unwavering spirit that characterize our communities across all our wards.

This quarter has been particularly significant in demonstrating our commitment to transparent governance, innovative service delivery, and honoring the legacy of leadership that continues to inspire our work. We have witnessed remarkable milestones that speak directly to our vision of building a municipality that responds to the needs of its people while laying a foundation for sustainable development and inclusive growth.

The highlight of this period was undoubtedly our State of the Municipality Address, marked with the official opening of the Alice Skills Centre, a state-of-the-art facility that represents our unwavering investment in human capital development. The opening of this centre is not merely about constructing a building; it is about creating pathways to economic empowerment and ensuring that our youth and unemployed residents have access to quality training that will equip them with marketable skills for the modern economy. The fact that we could combine this celebration of tangible achievement with our annual accountability address to you, our people, speaks to the progress we are making in translating promises into reality.

As you read through the pages of this newsletter, you will encounter detailed accounts of these and other important developments that have shaped our municipality during this quarter. You will read about the hard work of our municipal officials, the dedication of our councillors, the partnerships we are building with other spheres of government, and most importantly, the stories of our communities as they engage with the democratic processes that affect their daily lives.

I want to take this opportunity to thank every resident, every ratepayer, every community organization, and every stakeholder who continues to work with us in building a better municipality. Your participation in municipal processes, your patience as we work through service delivery challenges, and your constructive criticism when things fall short of expectations are all essential ingredients in our journey toward excellence. Governance is a partnership, and we can only succeed when we walk this path together with transparency, mutual respect, and a shared vision for our collective future.

Thank you for your continued support and active citizenship.

Yours in service delivery,

Cllr Nomhle Sango



RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY HOSTS STATE OF THE MUNICIPALITY ADDRESS

11 September 2025, eDikeni.

On 11 September 2025, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality held its annual State of the Municipality Address in eDikeni. This event marked a significant milestone in the municipality's commitment to skills development and community empowerment, together with its values such as transparency, accountability, and service excellence. The highly successful SOMA25, combined with a celebration and reflection, as municipal leadership took stock of achievements and outlined the vision for the municipality's future.

The day's proceedings began with a momentous occasion that set an inspiring tone for the entire event. The Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, officially opened the Alice Skills Centre, a state-of-the-art facility that represents a substantial investment in the community's future. The opening of this modern training facility underlined the municipality's dedication to creating opportunities for residents to develop marketable skills and improve their prospects for meaningful employment. Skills centres play a crucial role in addressing unemployment and economic challenges by equipping community members with practical competencies that align with market demands, and the Alice Skills Centre stands as a tangible demonstration of the municipality's commitment to human capital development.

Following the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new skills centre, the official delegation and attendees proceeded to the municipal council chamber, where the formal State of the Municipality Address took place. The transition from the skills centre to the council chamber symbolically connected the municipality's concrete achievements with its broader strategic vision and accountability to residents.

Before Mayor Sango took to the podium to deliver her comprehensive address, the audience was treated to a stirring artistic performance that captured the spirit of the occasion. Asemahle Moshani (16), a talented poet from Dikeni, delivered a powerful poem that resonated with those in attendance. This inclusion of local artistic talent served multiple purposes: it celebrated homegrown creativity, gave voice to the community's aspirations and experiences, and reminded everyone present that governance is ultimately about serving the people and honouring their stories. The decision to open with poetry rather than immediately launching into the formal address demonstrated a sensitivity to the importance of connecting with residents on an emotional and cultural level, not merely through administrative reports and statistics.



Continues...

Mayor Sango then delivered her State of the Municipality Address, providing residents, stakeholders, and government partners with an account of the municipality's performance, challenges, and plans for the future. These annual addresses serve as critical accountability mechanisms in local government, offering municipal leadership the opportunity to transparently communicate with constituents about service delivery achievements, financial health, infrastructure development, and strategic priorities for the coming year.

The combination of the skills centre opening with the State of the Municipality Address created a powerful narrative about progress and possibility. Rather than simply speaking about plans and promises, the municipality demonstrated tangible results that residents could see and experience. The Alice Skills Centre stands as physical proof that the commitments made in previous addresses can translate into real infrastructure that will benefit the community for years to come.

SOMA25 represented more than just an annual governmental obligation. It symbolised the municipality's understanding that true development requires both infrastructure investment and human capacity building, both formal accountability and cultural celebration, both leadership vision and community participation. By opening a skills centre on the same day as delivering the State of the Municipality Address, the municipality sent a clear message that its vision for the future is grounded in creating practical opportunities for residents to build better lives while maintaining transparent communication about the municipality's overall direction and performance.

Arbor Week Celebration THE RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY CELEBRATED ARBOR WEEK WITH SHALOM PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY IN MIDDLEDRIFT

04 September 2025, Middledrift.

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality celebrated Arbor Week in Middledrift, and the celebrations were marked by the participation of learners from Shalom Pre-School and Primary School. The session highlighted the importance of environmental preservation and the role that every citizen, young and old, plays in caring for nature.

According to the South African government, Arbor Week is celebrated in the first week of September annually. The Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment is the custodian of forestry in South Africa and is responsible for the campaign.



September MONTH



Continues...

National Arbor Week is an opportune time to call on all South Africans to plant indigenous trees as a practical and symbolic gesture of sustainable environmental management. It affords the government, the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organisations, and the public to be involved in "greening" their communities.



As Raymond Mhlaba was celebrating, the highlight of the programme was the presentations by the school learners, who captivated the audience with their reflections on why preserving nature and maintaining a clean environment are essential for the future. Speaking under the theme, "My environment, my right and my responsibility," the learners reminded all in attendance that the environment is not just a resource, but also a right that comes with the responsibility to protect it.



At the end of the session, the children were introduced to various types of trees, their uses, and their importance in balancing ecosystems.

A practical session followed, where the learners were taught how to plant and nurture a tree, giving them hands-on experience and a sense of ownership in protecting the environment.



The celebration emphasized the municipality's commitment to environmental awareness and sustainability while instilling lifelong lessons in the next generation. By empowering children at such a young age, the municipality continues to build a community that understands the value of nature and is prepared to preserve it for years to come.

Independent Electoral Commission

RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY PARTNERED WITH ELECTORAL COMMISSION FOR HERITAGE MONTH YOUTH DIALOGUE

23 September 2025, eDikeni.

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality joined with the Independent Electoral Commission's Amathole Region hosted a Heritage Month Community Youth Dialogue, focusing on the critical theme of national common identity and its role in fostering patriotism and civic engagement among young South Africans. The dialogue, which took place on 23 September 2025 at the University of Fort Hare, brought together community leaders, students from diverse institutions, youth representatives, and electoral officials to address pressing concerns about civic participation and the democratic process. The event emphasised the importance of heritage in building a unified national identity that motivates citizens to actively participate in the country's democratic institutions.

Dr. Siyabulela Fobosi was one of the key speakers during the session, presenting a comprehensive analysis of the factors contributing to youth disengagement from the electoral process.



. His presentation highlighted the multifaceted nature of voter apathy among young people, examining both systemic and individual factors that contribute to declining participation rates in democratic processes. The presentation revealed concerning trends regarding youth motivation and civic responsibility, with particular emphasis on understanding the disconnect between young people's expressed concerns about national issues and their actual participation in formal democratic processes through voting.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, Mrs. Aviwe Mbambo delivered a detailed presentation on the Electoral Commission's ongoing e-Voting initiative, providing insights into the technological advancement of South Africa's electoral system. Her presentation explored both the promising opportunities that electronic voting systems present for increasing accessibility and efficiency, as well as the significant challenges that must be addressed during implementation. The e-Voting discussion covered technical considerations, security protocols, and the potential impact on voter turnout, particularly among younger demographics who are more comfortable with digital technologies. Mrs. Mbambo emphasized that while the initiative remains in development, it represents a forward-thinking approach to modernizing electoral participation.

Ward 11 Councillor Luxolo Nqala attended the session, demonstrated local government commitment to youth engagement initiatives. His presence reinforced the municipality's dedication to bridging the gap between local governance structures and community members, particularly younger residents who will shape the future of democratic participation in the region.

The Heritage Month timing of the dialogue proved particularly significant, as speakers emphasized how shared cultural heritage and national identity serve as foundations for civic responsibility. The session explored how understanding and Celebrating South Africa's diverse heritage can translate into increased patriotism and active citizenship. The dialogue concluded with a strong emphasis on the fundamental importance of youth voter registration and active citizenship.

Speakers reinforced that democracy's strength depends directly on the participation of all eligible citizens, with particular focus on encouraging young people to view voting not merely as a right, but as a civic responsibility essential to national development.

The session highlighted that voter registration represents the first crucial step toward meaningful civic engagement, enabling young people to influence policy decisions that will affect their futures. Participants were urged to consider voting as one component of broader civic participation that includes community involvement, advocacy for important issues, and constructive engagement with democratic institutions.



Local AIDS Council

RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY HELD THE LOCAL AIDS COUNCIL MEETING IN ALICE

30 September 2025, eDikeni



On 30 September 2025, in eDikeni, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with governmental departments and relevant stakeholders, held a Local AIDS Council meeting at the Council Chambers, eDikeni. The meeting was chaired by RMM Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, under the theme "Strengthening Partnerships for a Coordinated HIV, TB & STI Response."



The purpose of the Local AIDS Council was to coordinate HIV, TB & STI response at the local level, monitor and evaluate progress, mobilize multi-stakeholder partnerships, and support National Strategic Plan (NSP) implementation.



During this important meeting, the objectives were clearly outlined, which included strengthening leadership and accountability, facilitating resource mobilization and stakeholder participation, promoting community-driven interventions, reducing new infections while improving treatment and support, and addressing stigma, discrimination, and gender-based violence and femicide.

Mayor Sango emphasized the significance of the meeting, stating that coordination and implementation, as well as community engagement even on a ward level basis, was crucial on this subject.

All the stakeholders who were in attendance agreed on strengthening advocacy and resource mobilization, aligning with District and Provincial AIDS Council strategies, drafting and adopting the Raymond Mhlaba LAC Action Plan, and establishing regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

The RMM pledged support to all the strategic plans in fighting for zero new HIV infections, zero stigma and discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths, and called for collective responsibility.

Ward Delimitations

RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY CONVENES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETINGS ON WARD DELIMITATIONS

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB), successfully concluded a comprehensive two-day series of public participation meetings on ward delimitations. The consultation process began on 29 September 2025 in Middledrift and concluded the following day in KwaMaqoma, bringing together residents, traditional leaders, civic organizations, and other stakeholders from across the municipality to discuss proposed changes to ward boundaries that would reshape the municipality's electoral structure and local governance within the municipal council structure.



According to the presentation, the proposed elimination of Ward 7 and Ward 13 was directly linked to persistently low voter turnout in these two wards. Low voter participation had raised concerns about the efficient allocation of electoral resources and the viability of maintaining separate ward structures in areas with declining electoral engagement. The decision to pursue these changes originated from the Eastern Cape Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), which oversees local government matters in the province and works in conjunction with the Municipal Demarcation Board to ensure that ward structures reflect current population distributions and electoral participation patterns.

Throughout both days of consultation, the municipality emphasized that these proposals did not yet have legal status and that the changes could only be implemented after a comprehensive public consultation process had been completed. Community input was presented as essential to the democratic process, with officials stressing that these meetings formed a critical part of ensuring that the voices of ordinary citizens were heard in decisions that directly affected their representation and access to municipal services. Ward delimitations were explained as being essential for ensuring fair and equitable representation in local government, and the restructuring was intended to create more viable ward structures where councillor resources could be more effectively utilized.

For residents currently in Ward 7 and Ward 13, the proposed changes meant they would be represented by councillors from adjacent wards. While this would alter the dynamics of community representation, officials explained that the intention was to strengthen the overall governance structure of the municipality.

All attendees were informed that community members had until 15 October 2025 to make formal submissions regarding the proposed delimitation, and the Municipal Demarcation Board was legally required to consider all submissions before finalizing any boundary changes. Residents were strongly encouraged to fill out submission forms, clearly stating their reasons for either accepting or rejecting the proposed changes, as these submissions would carry significant weight in the final determination.

While the face-to-face consultation meetings concluded on 30 September 2025, the emphasis throughout both sessions was that the public participation process remained open. Community members who were unable to attend the meetings or who wished to provide additional input were strongly encouraged to submit written comments and objections regarding the proposed ward delimitations.



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All submissions would be carefully considered by the Municipal Demarcation Board before final decisions were made, ensuring that the delimitation process reflected the genuine needs and concerns of the communities it served. Whether in support or opposition, officials stressed that community voices were essential to ensuring that the final delimitation served the best interests of the municipality and its communities. Submission forms and additional information could be obtained through the municipality's offices and via the municipal website.



Official Commencement

OF OPERATIONS FOR VEHICLE TESTING STATION

29th August 2025- KwaMaqoma

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality is proud to announce the official commencement of operations at the KwaMaqoma Vehicle Testing Station! This new facility marks a major milestone in bringing essential services closer to our communities, improving road safety, and ensuring compliance with vehicle roadworthiness standards.

The Municipality remains committed to service delivery and local development, and we encourage all motorists in and around Raymond Mhlaba to make use of this conveniently located testing station.

The newly operational KwaMaqoma Vehicle Testing Station offers the following services:

1. Roadworthiness Testing – for private and commercial vehicles to ensure they meet safety standards.
2. Vehicle Roadworthy Certificates (RWC) – issued for vehicles that pass the roadworthiness test, required for registration or change of ownership.
3. Heavy and Light Motor Vehicle Testing – testing services are available for a wide range of vehicle types and sizes.
4. Trailer and Caravan Testing – roadworthiness assessments for towed vehicles.
5. Re-testing Services – for vehicles that previously failed inspection and require re-evaluation.

For more information or to book a test, please visit the station or contact 046-645-7403.



*Women's Month Celebration***MAYOR SANGO JOINED PREMIER MABUYANE
DURING HAND OVER OF HOUSES TO WOMEN
BENEFICIARIES IN BEDFORD****28 August 2025, Bedford.**

During the Women's Month, Hon Mayor of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Cllr Nomhle Sango, together with the Eastern Cape Premier, Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane, the MEC for Human Settlements, Siphokazi Lusithi, officially handed over two newly built houses in Phola Park, Bedford. The handover formed part of the Bedford Nyarha 161 Project, a government initiative aimed at improving the living conditions of communities through sustainable housing development.

Although construction on other houses within the project is still ongoing, the two completed units were handed over as a symbol of the government's commitment to changing lives, prioritizing the destitute, and celebrating women's month. The beneficiaries were 100-year-old No-Wandit Elizabeth Nontshinga and Amanda Mentoor. Elizabeth, visibly moved during the handover, said she was overwhelmed with joy at finally owning a dignified and safe home after a lifetime of hardship. "Enkosini kakhulu ngalendlu, ndiyabulela. Ndiyaqala ukuba nendlu enje oko ndazalwa," she said with tears of appreciation.

Premier Mabuyane highlighted the significance of prioritizing housing as a matter of urgency, especially for designated groups such as the elderly and women-headed households. "We cannot speak of dignity and equality when our people do not have proper shelter. Projects like this are not just about bricks and mortar, but about restoring hope and dignity to families," he stated. "When women fought during the time of Apartheid, they did not fight just to not carry identity documents (Ipasi), but they fought for freedom in many aspects", he said.

MEC Lusithi emphasized the government's commitment to rolling out housing opportunities across the province, while acknowledging the challenges that persist in the housing sector. "Raymond Mhlaba Municipality is one of the few municipalities within the province that are implementing agents for the Department of Human Settlement," said MEC Lusithi while appreciating the role of the municipality in spending its grant fund on housing.





Mayor Sango, in her remarks, expressed her appreciation for the collaboration between the different spheres of government and repeated Raymond Mhlaba Municipality’s dedication to service delivery. “As a municipality, we are committed to ensuring that people in our communities feel the presence of government in their daily lives. Housing is a fundamental service, and this handover is another stride forward in improving the quality of life for our people,” she said.

The handover not only brought joy to Mama Elizabeth and Sis Amanda and their families but also stood as a testament to the government’s ongoing efforts to address housing backlogs and ensure that development reaches those who need it most.

IDP Rep Forum Process Plan
**THE RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY CONVENED
IDP/BUDGET/PMS PROCESS PLAN AND ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE REPORT SESSION**



21 August 2025, eDikeni.

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality convened a crucial session on the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Budget and Performance Management System (PMS) Process Plan for the 2025/2026 financial year, alongside the 2024/2025 Annual Performance Report. The session, held at the Municipal Council Chamber, is a key governance and transparent performance reporting in strengthening municipal governance.



In her presentation, Cllr Rasmeni highlighted that the municipality remains committed to ensuring that the IDP and budget processes are people-driven, participatory, and responsive to community needs. She further stressed the importance of accountability in municipal operations, noting that the Annual Performance Report will provide a transparent account of how the municipality performed against set targets.



These sessions form part of the municipality’s legal and governance obligations, as mandated by the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Finance Management Act. They also provide councillors, officials, and stakeholders with the opportunity to collectively reflect on past performance while laying a solid foundation for future service delivery.

THE RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY AND DEDEAT LAUNCHED WOMEN IN ENVIRONMENT STRUCTURE

20 August 2025, eDikeni.

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), officially launched the Women in Environment Structure, in Alice. The initiative marks a noteworthy step in promoting women’s participation in environmental and business-related opportunities within the municipality.

The session was chaired by the Portfolio Head of Community Services, Cllr Elton Bantam. And the Portfolio Head of Corporate Services, Cllr Bukelwa Tyhali, was the delegated Mayor for the session. In her address, Cllr Tyhali stressed the importance of women stepping confidently into business spaces and actively participating in the economic landscape. “Women have the ability and resilience to thrive in the business world. What is needed is for them to take up space, be proactive, and seize the opportunities available in sectors such as environment, energy, and enterprise development,” she said.

The launch served as a platform to unpack the purpose and vision of the Women in Environment Structure, which will focus on equipping women with tools, information, and access to networks that can help them succeed.

The establishment of this structure carries several benefits. It creates a collective voice for women in business, fosters networking opportunities, and provides a channel for women entrepreneurs to access government and private sector support. Ultimately, it will help strengthen women’s role in sustainable development, economic growth, and community upliftment within Raymond Mhlaba and beyond.



District-Wide Infrastructure Forum

THE RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY WAS HONOURED TO HOST (DWIF)

20th August 2025

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality had the privilege of hosting the District-Wide Infrastructure Forum (DWIF) at the Council Chambers in eDikeni. This important forum was organized by the Amathole District Municipality in collaboration with CoGTA Eastern Cape, featuring significant contributions from various sector departments, municipalities, and organizations such as the Department of Cooperative Governance, Department of Water & Sanitation, Department of Electricity & Energy, EC Department of Transport, EC Department of Human Settlements, EC Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs & Tourism, EC Department of Sports,



Recreation, Arts & Culture, Provincial Treasury, as well as the Mbhashe, Great Kei, Mnquma, and Ngqushwa Local Municipalities, Eskom, MISA, and SALGA.

This forum serves as a crucial platform for aligning infrastructure strategies, monitoring service delivery advancements, and enhancing cooperation throughout the Amathole District. Together, we are committed to fostering stronger and more resilient communities!



Stakeholder Engagement **AMAKHUZE TRADITIONAL COUNCIL**

20th August 2025



The Hon Mayor Nomhle Sango convened an imperative engagement meeting with the AmaKhuze Traditional Council, under the leadership of Chief Khayaalethu Mqalo, to discuss the service delivery issues in Ward 10. Mayor Sango was accompanied by the Hon Speaker, Cllr Thozama Ngaye and the Ward 10 Councillor, Cllr Simon Xego.



The service delivery issues included enhancing collaborative efforts between the municipality and the Traditional Council, maintaining the road network, and restoring heritage while preserving cultural development.

This meeting represented a significant step towards enhancing municipal services and fostering stronger partnerships between the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality and the Traditional Leadership.

Municipal Matters

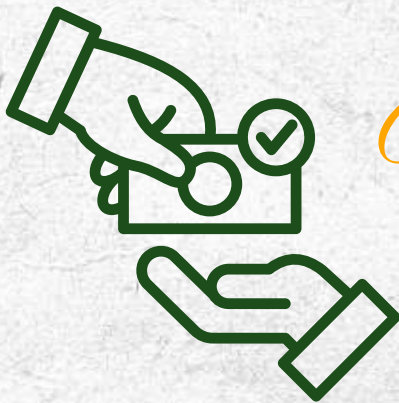
ILLEGAL DUMPING SITES

The municipality continues to grapple with the persistent challenge of illegal dumping sites, which pose significant environmental, health, and aesthetic concerns for our community. Despite efforts to provide adequate waste management services and educate residents about proper disposal practices, illegal dumping remains a pervasive issue, with unauthorized waste disposal sites proliferating in various parts of the municipality. This not only results in environmental degradation and pollution, but also attracts pests and vermin, compromising public health and safety. Furthermore, illegal dumping also undermines the municipality's efforts to maintain a clean and beautiful environment, negatively impacting our quality of life and economic development.

RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY AND AMATHOLE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY EMPOWER LOCAL HOMESTAY

19th August 2025

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with Amathole District Municipality (ADM), has provided Amanda Homestay with two beds and linen. Amanda Homestay was nominated as one of the finalists during the prestigious Provincial Homestays Awards, held on September 16, 2024. In recognition of this achievement, ADM set aside a budget to provide support to all Homestay finalists from the district. To ensure that the support was tailored to the specific needs of each homestay, ADM conducted a thorough needs analysis. This assessment revealed that Amanda Homestay required additional bedding and linen to enhance the comfort and quality of their facilities. The donation of two beds and linen to Amanda Homestay is a significant investment in the local tourism industry. By providing this support, the aim is to contribute to the growth and development of local businesses, ultimately benefiting the community as a whole. The RMM has also supported Kwa Thembisa Homestay, Amanda Homestay, Ntibane Homestay, and Dudu Homestay with signage.



Municipal Matters

PAY YOUR MUNICIPAL RATES

As we continue to work together to build a thriving and sustainable community, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality urges all residents to fulfill their civic duty by paying their rates and taxes on time. Your contributions play a vital role in enabling us to deliver essential services, maintain infrastructure, and drive development in our municipality. However, we also recognize that some members of our community may be facing financial difficulties and are eligible for free basic services. We encourage those who are deserving to apply for these services, which include water, electricity, sanitation, and refuse removal. By working together and taking advantage of the support available, we can build a brighter future for all residents of the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality.



Municipal Matters

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT



The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality commenced a 1.3 km paving project from Somerset Street to Fraser Street in KwaMaqoma! This vital development is part of our mission to enhance road quality and improve daily accessibility for residents and businesses in the area.



The Director for Engineering Services, Mr Daluxolo Mlenzane, briefed Municipal Manager Ms Unathi Malinzi on the project’s scope, timelines, and community impact during a visit made.

This 1.3 km paving project forms part of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Project for the 2025/2026 financial year, dedicated to delivering sustainable infrastructure improvements across the municipality.

Stay tuned for progress updates as we continue building a better Raymond Mhlaba, one road at a time!



Site Verification

DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY CONDUCTED SITE VERIFICATION VISITS FOR INEP PROJECTS

19 August 2025, KwaMaqoma.



The Department of Electricity and Energy has embarked on a series of site verification visits in Raymond Mhlaba Municipality to assess the projects submitted under the Integrated National Electrification Programme (INEP) funding application for the 2026/27 financial year. The verification process forms part of the department’s due diligence to ensure that proposed projects are feasible, technically sound, and aligned with the electrification priorities of the government.



As part of the municipality’s funding application, several projects were submitted for consideration. These include Jackson Link Line, Bhofolo Switching Station, Jackson Street, Bhofolo Tyoks, Daweti, Mpolweni Phase 2, Upper Blinkwater, Somerset Link Line, Various infills, and Goodwin Park Pre-End. These projects represent strategic interventions aimed at accelerating electrification within rural and peri-urban communities of Raymond Mhlaba. They are expected to extend access to reliable electricity supply, reduce energy backlogs, and contribute to improved social and economic development within the municipality.



The Integrated National Electrification Programme remains one of the government's key instruments for achieving universal access to electricity. Ms Yonela Casa, Manager Electricity, expressed optimism these projects, once approved and implemented, will bring tangible change to households, schools, businesses, and community facilities, thereby laying a stronger foundation for inclusive development. "The proposed projects will transform the livelihoods, particularly in areas that have long been disadvantaged by limited or no access to electricity," she said.

Spotted MS MALINZI ENGAGES WITH UNCEDO TAXI RANK MANAGEMENT IN KWAMAQOMA ON INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

15 August 2025, KwaMaqoma.

The Municipal Manager of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Ms Unathi Malinzi, accompanied by the Director for Strategic Planning and Local Economic Development (LED), Dr Lulamile Hanabe, and the Director for Engineering Services, Mr Daluxolo Mlenzana, conducted an engagement visit to the Uncedo Taxi Rank in KwaMaqoma.

The purpose of the visit was to meet with the rank's management to discuss pressing infrastructure issues, particularly the provision of functional lighting, the installation of gates, and the improvement of toilet facilities for commuters and taxi operators.

During the engagement, the Chairperson of the rank, Mr Fezile Kobese, provided valuable insights into the day-to-day operations of the facility and highlighted some of the persistent challenges faced by both operators and commuters. These include security concerns due to insufficient lighting, limited access control, and the need for proper sanitation facilities to ensure a clean and safe environment.

Ms Malinzi emphasised the municipality's commitment to working closely with transport stakeholders to address these challenges and create a more enabling environment for the taxi industry, which plays a critical role in the local economy. "Our aim is to ensure that public transport facilities are safe, well-maintained, and conducive for both operators and the travelling public," she said. And further made a commitment to work on the mentioned challenges: lighting, toilets, and gates. As it stands, the gates had been fixed procurement process has started for fixing the lights.



Intergovernmental Relations MEETING

12 August 2025, Dikeni.

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality convened its Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) meeting at the Municipal Council Chambers, eDikeni. The meeting was chaired by the Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, brought together key stakeholders from various spheres of government to deliberate on collaborative service delivery and development priorities within the municipality.

The IGR platform is a structured mechanism that facilitates cooperation, coordination, and communication between spheres of government. It is grounded in the principles of cooperative governance as outlined in the Constitution of South Africa, which calls for the three spheres (National, Provincial, and Local) of government to work together in a manner that ensures effective governance and service delivery.

In her welcoming remarks, Mayor Sango emphasized the importance of IGR as a tool to address development challenges, align programmes, and eliminate duplication of efforts. "Through IGR, we are able to bring different government departments, entities, and partners to the same table, ensuring that our plans are integrated and that resources are maximized to benefit our communities," she said. "We gather here today, still in a spirit of celebrating women, as we are still in the women's month," she said.

Several immediate priorities were discussed at the meeting. The municipality needs to write urgently to SANRAL regarding the maintenance of three critical roads: Hogsback Road, the Debe to Breakfast Vlei Road, and the Great Fish Reserve Road, immediate engagement is required with the Department of Public Works on two fronts: the disposal of certain properties and their non-attendance at IGR meetings, related to Public Works, there's also an urgent need to confirm permission for the construction of Newtown High School, public safety and law enforcement matters require immediate attention, the municipality must facilitate a meeting with SAPS to address staff shortages at Healdtown SAPS, environmental and social service issues need prompt action, the municipality must write to the Department of Forestry and Fisheries about river drenching activities, and the indigent register requires immediate alignment with the Amathole District Municipality, ESKOM, and SASSA for data cleansing purposes.





The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), has provided an opportunity for 10 young individuals from the area to join the municipal law enforcement unit as peace officers. The successful candidates from the EPWP recruitment learnership programme underwent a week-long training session, led by Mr. Andile Sontshi from PE Traffic College. During this training, participants delved into various subjects related to Law Enforcement, such as the Criminal Procedure Act, Criminal Law, Law of Evidence, and Notices.

Following the training, the participants were sworn in at the council chambers in eDikeni. During the swearing-in ceremony, Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, remarked, "You are now members of the Municipal Law Enforcement Unit; be respectful, uphold the law, bring about change in the municipality, act in accordance with municipal values, and serve the municipality diligently." Community Services Portfolio Head, Cllr Elton Bantam, congratulated all 10 candidates and wished them success in their new roles.

Since their appointment, the newly designated peace officers have been actively involved in various activities, including shop inspections, monitoring public drinking, ensuring compliance among street traders, addressing illegal vehicle parking, prohibiting unauthorized vehicle washing in public areas, enforcing bylaws concerning dilapidated buildings, and making significant contributions to the Law Enforcement Unit.

Municipal Matters **THEFT AND VANDALISM OF ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

The municipality continues to grapple with the persistent challenges of vandalism of electricity infrastructure and theft of cables, which pose significant threats to the reliability and sustainability of our power supply. These malicious activities not only result in substantial financial losses, but also compromise the safety of our residents and disrupt essential services. The municipality has implemented various measures to combat these crimes, including increasing surveillance and patrols, collaborating with law enforcement agencies, and engaging with communities to raise awareness about the consequences of vandalism and theft. Nevertheless, the municipality remains vigilant and is exploring additional strategies to address these ongoing challenges and ensure a stable and secure electricity supply for all residents.

MONTH CELEBRATION



In honor of Mandela Month, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality systematized a series of activities. To begin with, the municipality held the Provincial commemoration at Healdtown Comprehensive School. This official program was preceded by 67 Minutes dedicated to painting the Madiba Hostel and a ribbon-cutting ceremony, where the Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, collaborated with Eastern Cape Acting Premier Hon MEC Mlungisi Mvoko and other esteemed guests. Additionally, the municipality initiated a week-long clean-up campaign in Bedford, Adelaide, KwaMaqoma, and Alice. This cleaning initiative was an extension of ongoing efforts to maintain the town's cleanliness. The campaign was spearheaded by the Municipal Manager, Ms Unathi Malinzi.

Furthermore, the municipality partnered with Music in the Snow, the Eastern Cape Jazz Festival, and various collaborators for the Career Expo and Services on Wheels initiative. This innovative program delivered vital government services directly to the community, ensuring easy access to numerous departments and agencies. The Services on Wheels program, which took place at Tony Yengeni Square in KwaMaqoma, featured participation from the Department of Home Affairs, Eastern Cape Gambling Board, Eastern Cape Liquor Board, South African Revenue Service (SARS), Eastern Cape Development Corporation, Eastern Cape Department of Social Development, Department of Labour and Employment, Nelson Mandela University, and Lovedale College.

Fourthly, the municipality collaborated with the Eastern Cape Liquor Board to initiate a charitable outreach programme aimed at spreading hope and kindness to the vulnerable members of the community. Under the leadership of Cllr Elton Bantam, the designated Mayor for that day. The handover commenced at Inyibiba High School, where 50 pairs of shoes and socks, along with 200 sanitary towels, were distributed to the school learners.

This initiative was designed to meet some of the basic needs of the learners, allowing them to concentrate on their education without unnecessary distractions. After the school visit, the activities proceeded to Sivenathi Special Care Centre, where essential supplies were donated to enhance the Centre's operations. The donated items comprised cleaning supplies, painting materials, hot water urns, and blankets. These contributions significantly improved the living conditions and care provided to the children at the centre.

Continues...

Lastly, Ward 14 organized a memorable Mandela Day Celebration. The event united community members from various villages within the ward and neighbouring areas, promoting a sense of unity and solidarity. A key highlight of the celebrations was the official inauguration of the Saki Community Hall, an essential resource for the community. In honour of Mandela's legacy, the event also included the distribution of blankets and food parcels to vulnerable community members. This act of kindness and generosity reflects the principles of compassion and empathy that Mandela exemplified.

Smart Metering **WITH CONLOG**

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality is currently engaged in the installation of smart metering systems in KwaMaqoma Town, Location, Newtown, and Golf Course. This forward-thinking initiative is designed to enhance electricity management within the municipality, fostering efficiency, transparency, and convenience for communities. The ongoing installation follows a series of Public Consultation Meetings aimed at informing and encouraging support from the affected communities. These consultations provided residents with an opportunity to voice their concerns and interact with the project team. Conlog, the service provider appointed by the National Treasury, along with the municipal delegation, was present to address any issues and clarify the project's implementation details.

The smart metering system offers a variety of advantages, including precise electricity billing, the elimination of estimated readings, and real-time monitoring of electricity consumption, which empowers residents to make informed choices regarding their electricity usage. Community members have embraced this initiative, acknowledging its potential to enhance electricity management and generate cost savings.

The installation of smart metering is currently in progress. For residents seeking additional information or wishing to inquire about electricity-related issues, the municipality encourages them to reach out to the municipal electricity department directly at: Telephone: 046 645 7441/7439.

The Smart Electricity Metering Project represents a crucial advancement in modernizing the municipality's infrastructure and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. As the project moves forward, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality remains committed to keeping the community informed and engaged. Nothing about the people, without the people.



thank you.

WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THE OUR NEWSLETTER.



CUSTOMER CARE:

For your customer care inquiries, please contact the following:



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