



Malkerns Town Board

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ANNUAL REPORT



2020/2021 FINANCIAL YEAR

SEPTEMBER 2021

MALKERNS TOWN BOARD (2018-2022)



CLLR. VILAKATI, P.
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



CLLR. DLAMINI, B.



CLLR. LORENTZ, P.



CLLR. FITZPATRICK, B.



CLLR. MABUZA, B



CLLR. MNGOMEZULU, S.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020/2021 FINANCIAL YEAR

VISION

“To be an innovative high-tech agro-tourist Town which is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa”

MISSION

“Malkerns will provide quality urban and agro-business services through the use of cutting edge processes and technology, ensuring decent living conditions, development and sustained growth in partnership with stakeholders”

OUR VALUES

- ***Impartiality***—*Treating all residents fairly and with equality*
- ***Integrity***—*Upright and straight in all our dealing and execution of duties*
- ***Accountability and Transparency***—*Open and giving feedback to our community at all times*
- ***Professionalism***—*Using best practices and embracing appropriate business attitude and disposition in our relations and dealings with clients, business partners and the community.*
- ***Innovation***—*Always looking for better and more efficient ways to do our business and serving our community*

MALKERNS TOWN BOARD

OPERATIONAL PORTFOLIO HEADS



APPOLO MAPHALALA
TOWN CLERK
BA, Msc



MDUDUZI DLAMINI
TOWN TREASURER (Actg)
Dip Com, B.Com



ZIYANDA MASEKO
A/TOWN PLANNER
B. T&R Planning



NOMATHEMBA MASIKA
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER
BSc (EH)



NKOSINGIPHILE HLATSHWAYO
INSPECTOR OF WORKS
Diploma (Civil Eng.)



THANDEKA MAZIYA
AIDS RESPONSE MANAGER
BSc Agric (Food)

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

It is with pleasure that the Malkerns Town Board presents this report for operations and financial standing of the Local Authority over the 2020/2021 financial year. The year under saw the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, with first cases detected in February 2020 and first lockdown announced in March 2020. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, in an attempt to protect lives, issued directives to curtail routine meetings of Councils in all urban local authorities. As a result, the Board could not follow the statutory schedule for oversight meetings. The Administration was also compelled to scale down human capital numbers to curb infections. The ravaging effects of the pandemic throughout the country did not leave Malkerns unscathed. We lost the substantive Chairman of the Board in the early months of the new civic year. The loss compromised the depth and expertise within the Board, as all Councillors have significant contributions to make in the governance of the municipality.



Despite these challenges, the Board continued with its oversight role using innovative means, including meetings on technological platforms. We are happy to note that external auditors have unreservedly approved our financial operations and a clean audit has been achieved. This is an indication that our oversight role was effective, despite the challenging environment. The Board has continued to engage relevant offices, mainly the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, with the view to resolve outstanding foundational matters. These include town boundaries, harmonization of policies governing agricultural towns, election mechanisms, rating of agricultural land, and other fundamental matters. These matters require extensive engagements, and all stakeholders need to exercise care and patience.

As shall be seen in our audited financial reports, we have been able to grow our revenues and assets over the reporting period. We have also been able to pursue several infrastructure development initiatives, including road improvement and public lighting. We have also covered much ground in the preparation of the Town Planning Scheme, a tool to be used to regulate the use of land parcels within the urban area. The Scheme will soon be tabled to the relevant authorities for consideration and possible approval. We have also continued with initiatives for management of waste, developing the capacity of local entrepreneurs, and general development control.

In the current fiscal year, we will continue with all these programmes and projects, as duly outlined in our Integrated Development Plan. We also intend to improve our stakeholder engagement initiatives. We need the collective energies of all the people of Malkerns to be the *“innovative high-tech agro-tourist town which is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa.”*

CLLR. P. VILAKATI—DEPUTY BOARD CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FROM THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK



The core mandate of the Malkerns Local Authority is to spearhead controlled development within the urban area, provide and manage public services and amenities, as well as general administration of the town, with the view to ensure order, health, safety, economic growth and progress for all within the urban area. The mandate derives chiefly from the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969 and other ancillary legislations operational in the urban local government space.

Over the 2020/2021 fiscal year, the municipality had a total budget of anticipated revenues amounting to E17 071 042, and E15 589 949 of the anticipated revenues were collected. This translates to 91% performance in terms of revenue collection. This performance has greatly been influenced by the payment of rates arrears by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini. The central government has set the pace, and we will continue to

appeal to all property owners within Malkerns to honour the obligation for property tax. The local authority uses these taxes to provide the much-needed infrastructure for business development and general improvement in the quality of life for all. Over the year under review, about E8.6 million has been employed to install and maintain infrastructure and render general municipal services. The expenditure is slightly over 50% of the total anticipated expenditure for the year. A significant proportion of the projects and programmes planned for the year have not been executed effectively because of the limited business activities and meetings duly imposed by the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The local authority has continued with infrastructure upgrades over the year under review. The re-gravelling Mphetseni / Eagles Nest Road commenced over the reporting period. The processes for procurement of a skip loader truck was also commenced over the year under review. These projects will be completed in the 2021/2022 fiscal year. We also have several projects in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that hinge on land negotiations and acquisition. These include the construction of civic offices, public transport terminus, public market, public ablution facilities, and waste management facilities. The land discussions have not gained much traction over the year under review, but the Board was able to engage the Hon. Minister for Housing and Urban Development for advancement of this course. We will continue to provide the technical back-stopping as the negotiations are pursued over the current fiscal year.

Over the year reporting period, the town generated 623 tonnes of waste, which is 25% increase from the previous fiscal year. At this rate, it is clear that waste generation will double every four years in town! The disposal cost of the said waste for the year stood at about 0.2 million, excluding transportation costs. The Administration will continue to engage stakeholders to adopt the reuse-recycle-reduce model for waste management.

We have also continued with food safety programs amongst food outlets within the urban area, including routine inspections as required by statutes. The local authority also noted the challenges imposed by lack of sewer reticulation within the central business district (CBD) of the town. The municipality resuscitated washing throughs in one of the informal settlements nestled between major routes in town, viz MR 18 and MR 27. This was aimed at managing waste water generated in the informal settlements, which end up contaminating stormwater drains. This initiative was complemented with the planting of trees to improve the aesthetics of the town. These programmes will be elaborated upon in the relevant sections of this report.

The municipality had extensive engagements with stakeholders over the year under review in preparation of the Town Planning Scheme. The purpose of this strategic document is to regulate use of all parcels of land within the jurisdiction of the local authority. The Scheme has been refined according to contributions from stakeholders and will be tabled to the Hon. Minister for Housing and Urban Development as required by the Town Planning Act of 1961. We have also continued with local economic development initiatives, including establishment of working relationships with Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, SEDCO, and other entities. Local entrepreneurs have been identified, registered and capacitated over the year under review. We will continue to monitor their progress.

In the year under review, the local authority continued with the Urban Response to HIV/AIDS through the AMICAALL Program. These include Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, awareness campaigns mounted on various months to commemorate various social adversaries, COVID-19 tests, HIV/AIDS testing and counselling services, Anti Retro-Viral (ART) services, Home-Based Care Services, Adolescent Health and many other services. These were offered at the Clinic, whose infrastructure the local authority improved over the reporting year.

As noted in the statement from the Deputy Chairman of the Board, the 2020/2021 fiscal year has not been easy. The COVID-19 pandemic, its ravaging effects and business restrictions, negatively affected our operations and performance. Despite these challenges, we have continued with operations. The plans for the year under review will be executed with a better speed as all sectors of the economy begin to adopt move forward under the new normal. The commitment of the Administration is total in realizing the vision of the town and the ideals of the Integrated Development Plan. The challenges we continue to face, from whichever angle, are all less than the collective energies of the people of Malkerns. Together we will move the municipality to another developmental level, to the benefit of all.

APPOLO MAPHALALA

TOWN CLERK / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1.0 BACKGROUND AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Historical background

Malkerns lies at the heart of Eswatini's middleveld, midway between Ezulwini and Manzini. This large, fertile expanse of farmland, bristling with the spiky grey-green leaves of the pineapple estates, is Eswatini's breadbasket. From the strategic documents of the local authority, little data is available to trace the history of human settlements around Malkerns. But it



can be confirmed that the town was inaugurated in 2012 and provisionally covers over 9 036 hectares. A leadership structure was also established in terms of founding legislations of urban local government.

1.2 Governance



The town is governed by a Board of seven Councillors, four elected through a one-ward system from among registered voters, and the other three are appointed by the Minister for Housing and Urban Development from relevant stakeholder institutions and constituencies. Councillors are non-

executive, and ordinarily meet once a month for oversight on execution of agreed development strategies and regulatory plans, under the leadership of an annually elected Chairperson. They are responsible for policy enactment, strategic planning, community liaison and oversight on operations of the Administration in relation to implementation of municipal strategies. As noted in the opening passages of the report, the meetings of the Board were curtailed over the months of May and September 2020 in a bid to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Ministerial oversight and visits

All urban local authorities principally report to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. The Ministry provides technical guidance, operational oversight, and approves all strategic documents, policies, property tax tariffs and bye-laws of the local authority.



Municipalities also have an obligation in terms of the law to submit copies of Minutes of all meetings held by Councils. Occasionally and out of courtesy, the Minister for Housing and Urban Development visits urban local authorities. Over the year under review, the Minister visited the local authority once, wherein he was shown various sites where the local authority had interest. The local authority has also been able to pay courtesy visits to the Minister on two occasions. These meetings help to strengthen inter-governmental relations and lead to faster resolution of some strategic matters.

1.4 Administration and Human Capital Welfare

The Administration is the executive wing of the local authority, and is composed of managers, officers and staff, with such skills mix and numbers as required by the functions of the town.



Malkerns Town Board Staff in a training session

The Town Clerk presides over Administration and assisted by professional managers leading various specialized

portfolios. The local authority has been using seconded officers from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in the position of Town Clerk. But over the year under review, the local authority commenced and completed recruitment processes for a substantive Town Clerk, who joined the municipality in the early months of the new civic year. The local authority also secured the services of a seconded Treasurer. Processes towards recruitment of a Human Resources Officer hit a snag when the remuneration offer by the local authority could not match expectations from the job market. The Administration is currently working on other modalities to re-distribute human capital management functions to line managers.

The local authority has one recognized union representing almost all the non-managerial staff. Industrial relations have been smooth between the parties over the year under review and not many incidences of clashes were recorded.

The municipality has continued with staff capacitation programmes through periodic training of managerial and ground staff. Over the period under review, the local authority has exposed staff to such trainings as pot-hole patching conducted by Inyatsi Construction, fire awareness and management, occupational health and safety, improving operations to attain ISO certification, and many other topical areas.



Staff in a welfare walk through town

Below is a pie chart showing total staff complement and gender distribution over the period under review. Of the total 34 staff members, 53% are males and 47% are females. The local authority is working with Gender Links Eswatini and the Jo Cox project under the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) to improve the participation of women in all spheres of local government. The local authority subscribes to all the



Figure 1

ideals of a gender equitable institution.

1.5 Business Processes

Stakeholders will appreciate that the municipality is relatively young, having been inaugurated in 2014. And given the challenges that ensued at inception of the institution, it has not been easy to roll-out the business processes and service charter for the local authority. In the year under review, and in light of the approval of the IDP, the local authority attempted to streamline portfolio responsibilities and refine the service charter adopted a couple of years ago. This is still work in progress, and we hope to conclude these initiatives in the 2021/2022 fiscal year, particularly now that a substantive head of the executive arm of the local authority has been appointed.



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1.6 Accountability and stakeholder engagement



The principal legislation that establishes urban local authorities prescribes engagement mechanisms between local authorities and property owners. This is mainly through publication of the annual income and expenditure estimates, audited financial statements, as well as public reporting through the annual general meeting. Over the reporting period, all these statutory engagements were done. The local authority has also gone an extra mile to engage different stakeholders over the year, particularly to help stakeholders appreciate the regulatory environment within which urban local governments operate. These include entrepreneurs, vendors, prospective developers, and many others. We will continue to uphold this practice, and increase the frequency and coverage of the stakeholder engagement activities.

2.0 PUBLIC WORKS AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

2.1 PREAMBLE

The engineering and technical services department is responsible for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure within the Malkerns Urban Area. We are also responsible for building control to ensure compliance of all structures to statutes. Infrastructure that is presently managed by the department includes roads, public lighting systems, buildings, small bridges and sports grounds.



2.2 Specific Duties and Functions

Deriving from section 55 of the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969, there are specific duties and functions that our department is expected to discharge. These include:

- a. Maintaining and cleansing all public streets and open spaces vested in the local authority or commuted to its management;
- b. Establishment or take over and maintain any public utility service which it is authorised or required to maintain under any law and which is required for the welfare, comfort or convenience of the public, all subject to availability of resources; and
- c. Development, control and management of any land vested in, owned or leased by the local authority.

2.3 Activities for 2020/2021 Financial Year

The department remained without an incumbent head for a couple of months in the year under review. As a result, implementation of programmes and projects was not as vibrant as anticipated at the beginning of the year. However, since the recruitment of the incumbent Inspector of Works in the second half of the year under review, the pace of implementation of projects under this department has significantly improved.

2.3.1 Maintenance of roads

The town has five gazetted roads, three of which are Major Roads being MR18 (from Sundowner's junction to Luyengo), MR27 (from Mahlanya Junction to St Andrews junction) and MR103 From Sundowners junction to Mahlanya Junction). All the said roads, totaling 9.3 km are paved.



Another partly surfaced road is the D9 road from St. Andrews junction to St. Clemens whilst the D52 to Mhlambanyatsi is a purely gravel road. All these roads are properties of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. We can confirm that they are all in conditions that require major repair and outright upgrading.

Road maintenance works undertaken include the following:

Road carriageway sweeping

The town maintained the road network carriageway through street sweeping whereby the paved carriageway of 19.3 km was kept debris free. Road sweeping of carriageway is a routine maintenance done almost weekly in mainly in the commercial district of the town commencing from Rhodes Food Group to St. Andrews junction.



Unblocking and cleaning of road side drains



Unblocking of culverts and open channel drains along major routes was done. About 15km of open channel road side drains were cleared. Cleaning of concrete kerbs inlets was also done on a regular basis especially in the commercial district of the town where it was done daily. We also removed debris found on drainages.

Signage installation/replacement

The department installed new road signs within the MR27 and MR18 routes which was to improve road user safety, in particular road pedestrian safety within the business/commercial district of the town.

Road surface failures maintenance

The local authority had intended to patch pot holes in MR18/MR27 junction roads. During the operations, it transpired that the extent and degree of the potholes in those roads were beyond our capacity to repair. By end of the year in March 2021, we were in procurement phase for a contractor to repair the potholes.



Road reserve maintenance

Cleaning of road reserve was done whereby the tractor cleared vegetation overgrowth along the three main Roads in the urban area, covering an area of 285 hectares of road reserve within the three Main Roads. This function is done in concurrence with the Health and Environment department who have a mandate to ensure vegetation overgrowth is under control whereby they use brush cutters to complement the tractor mower in awkward places.

Reshaping of gravel/earth roads profiles

Reshaping of gravel roads started from 04 March 2021 and was completed by 23 March 2021. The town reshaped almost 36.7 kilometres of earth and gravel roads within the urban area as summarised on **table 1** hereunder: The town has no plant for the activity, we hired a commercial motor propelled grader from Dalcrue who is one of our strategic partners.

Table 1: Gravel & earth roads maintenance

	DATE	SPAN (KM'S)	ROAD IDENTIFICATION
1	04-Mar-21	2,6	Road to Mbetseni Primary School & Umbane Offices Road
2	05-Mar-21	5,1	Road to Eagles Nest & Road to Research compound
3	06-Mar-21	8,5	D9 Road
4	08-Mar-21	3,8	Road to Rainbird Chalets & Opposite
5	09-Mar-21	5,6	Roads from MR18 to Phakama Farms
6	24-Mar-21	6,1	Road from Vickery to Mlilwane
7	25-Mar-21	5	Road from D9 to Packard Wright farms

Regravelling,

Regravelling of earth and gravel roads has been done as a Capital Project as shown in **item 2.4** hereunder. At the period of reporting, procurement had just begun.

A summary of the serviced gravel/earth

roads to unpaved roads ratio is as depicted in Figure 2 herein.

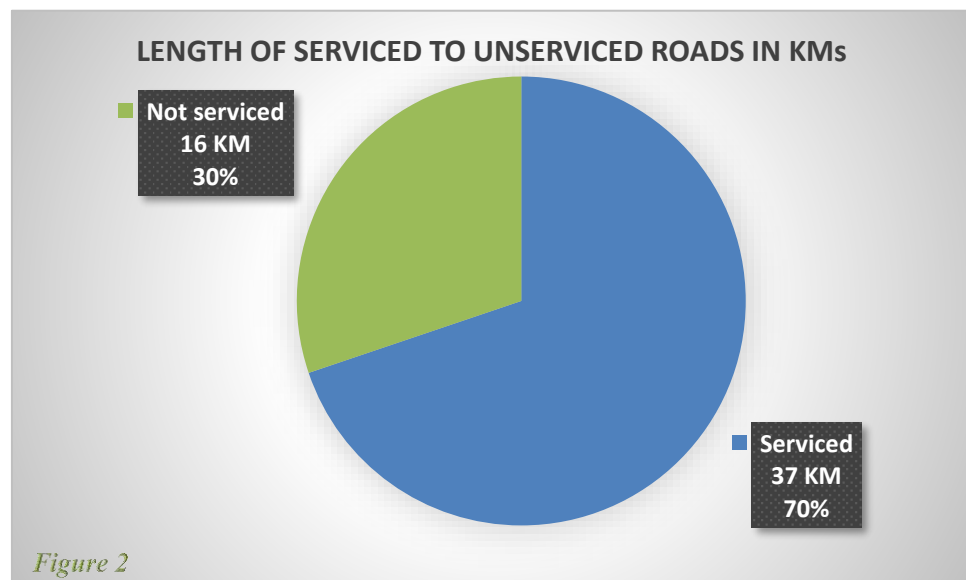


Figure 2

2.3.2 Building control



Housing estate at Malkerns Square

Building Applications

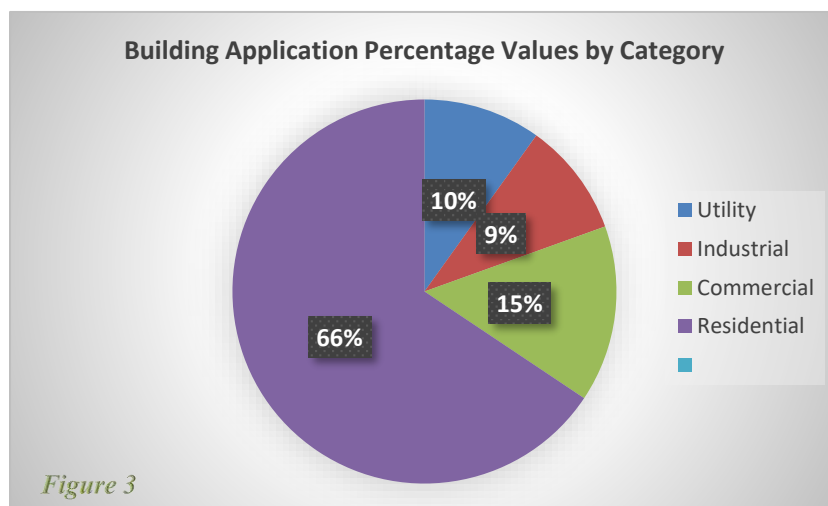
Twelve building applications were received and processed in the year under review in terms of the Building Act, 1968 (10, 11) and Standard Building Regulations (5 – 12). We have noted steady improvement in terms of compliance amongst building applicants. It must be noted however that there are still challenges in some areas in as far as compliance is concerned. Some of the challenges emanate from foundational legislative premises, particularly given that Malkerns is an agricultural town and has plenty of structures that do not fit the perspective of the Buildings Act of 1968.

The building applications received over the reporting period are summarized as follows:

Table 2: Building applications

Item #	Plot No	Description	Est Value	Category	Date in	Date Out	Decision
1	046/65	Extension	SZL 170,000.00	Residential	15-May-20	06-Jul-20	Approved
2	009/988	Extension	SZL 600,000.00	Utility	29-May-20	17-Aug-20	Approved
3	010/76	New building	SZL 258,210.00	Residential	07-Jul-20	10-Sep	Approved
4	053/1270	New building	SZL 562,500.00	Residential	19-Aug-20	10-Sep-20	Approved
5	053/1270	New building	SZL 454,500.00	Residential	19-Aug-20	10-Sep-20	Approved
6	081/65	New building	SZL 1,800,000.00	residential	21-Aug-20	01-Dec-20	Approved
7	078/65	New building	SZL 2,090,848.50	Residential	16-Sep-20	20-Aug-20	Approved
8	R/A/65	New building	SZL 800,000.00	Industrial	25-Sep-20		Approved
9	3/1203	Wall fence	SZL 110,000.00	Residential	23-Nov-20	01-Mar-21	Approved
10	R/2/286	Wall fence	SZL 225,000.00	Utility	01-Mar-21	09-Apr-21	Approved
11	030/1270	New building	SZL 1,239,075.00	Commercial	04-Mar-21	09-Apr-21	Approved
12	046/65	As Built	SZL 22,000.00	Residential	13-Mar-21	05-May-21	Approved
			SZL 8,332,133.50				

In percentile, the value of the applications is summarized as per pie chart below:



Building Approvals,
All 12 building applications that were received in the year under review were approved. A 100% approval was achieved with only one application being a re – submission from the previous financial year’s applications.

2.3.3 Capital Projects

Road Re-gravelling,

The municipal IDP has a target of 3km road upgrade per year over the lifespan the document. Over the year under review, the local authority targeted re-gravelling of two road strips on the western side of the town, connecting schools and businesses to the main transportation artery of the town. In this period of reporting, we were in procurement phase for Regravelling of Mbetseni Road (1,743km), Umbane Road (3,67km) and rip and recompact of Eagles Road (2,84km). At the time of compiling the report, the procurement processes had not been fully completed. But we are optimistic that the project will be completed before start of the summer rains in October 2021.

Public Lighting and street illumination



In the period under review, in the strategic goal to make Malkerns a safe

and secure town day and night by 2025, we completed the installation of three off grid high mast lights in Mangozeni (x2) and Mafini (x1) as shown in the foregoing pictures. The three high mast lights are operated by solar energy to save on electricity costs. The project was implemented at a project cost price of **E 2,209,382.14**. The project was carried out by **AJ Electrical and Mast Consulting Engineers** was the project managers.

The department also commenced procurement processes for off-grid street lights (50 street lights) along the MR27 (Mahlanya Road), Tender No. 22 of 2020/2021. The project was in Tender award Phase by the time of compiling the annual report and a public intention to Award to Mormond Electrical had already been publicized in accordance with the Procurement Act of 2011. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in the first few months of the 2021/2022 financial year.

Outstanding Capital Projects

The local authority had planned to undertake several other capital projects over the year under review. These include preliminary designs on the civic offices, the public service terminus, the central public market, the public ablution block, amongst others. All these capital projects require land parcels. The local authority is still working with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and all other authorities to secure land for these necessary public amenities. In the year under review, we take courage in that the Hon. Minister for Housing and Urban Development instituted a commission of inquiry into matters of boundaries in Malkerns. It is hoped that the outcome of the inquiry will help in informing all parties in the way forward regarding availability of land for these public infrastructure projects. The Board continues to keep the Ministry engaged on these matters.

Table 3 below is a brief synopsis of the planned capital projects and challenges thereof.

ITEM #	CAPITAL PROJECT	PROJECT SUM (SZL)	PROCUREMENT OR EXECUTION PHASE	COMMENTS
1	Construction of Civic Centre (design)	750,000	Not commenced	The Council is still searching for suitable land to implement the project. Designs will have to be specific to land especially in terms of orientation.
2	Road upgrading, signage, Pavements, Shoulders Alignment and Storm Water drainage	3,600,000	Procurement phase	Procurement started in fourth quarter after recruitment of the Inspector of Works
3	Installation of streets illumination and security	2,200,000	Procurement phase	Procurement started in fourth quarter after recruitment of the Inspector of Works
4	Construction of Public Transport Terminals (Designs)	1,500,000	Not commenced	The Council is still searching for suitable land to implement the project.
5	Construction of Public Market Hall & Ablutions	1,300,000	Not commenced	The Council is still searching for suitable land to implement the project.
	TOTAL VALUE	9,350,000		

The projects that were budgeted for amounted to E 9,350,000.00 of which projects amounting to E 5,800,000.00 were at procurement phase at the end of the financial year and E 3, 550,000.00 had not been utilized. About 62% of our budget was committed at year end, and the projects will be completed in the early months of the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

3.0 PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The mandate of the public health and environment department derives from many legislations, including the Urban Government Act of 1969, the Public Health Act of 1968, the Environment Management Act of 2002, *inter alia*. The principal purpose of the department is to ensure safety of all food offered and consumed within the urban area, safety of all trade practices, and environmental health and sustainability in all operations and development programs within the jurisdiction of the local authority.



3.1 Specific duties and functions

- i. Ensuring the promotion of a consistent high standard of public health and aesthetics within the town.
- ii. Inspection of premises for nuisance abatement
- iii. Providing and promoting safe and liveable conditions in business premises and practices
- iv. Ensures that the public is protected from physical, chemical and biological hazards.
- v. Collection, management and appropriate disposal of all forms of waste within town.
- vi. Protection of the natural environment.

During the 2020/2021 financial year, the department successfully provided the following services.

3.2 Waste Management

Litter Collection

On daily bases, the local authority collects litter along road reserves, especially within the central business district and main transportation arteries of the town. We have observed over the year under review that the consciousness amongst town users of littering is improving. The various educational and sensitization programs by the central government ministries and the municipality are slowly gaining traction amongst town users. But we still have much to do in terms of transforming people's minds around littering. We have been able to provide refuse receptacles in most public places and streets to ensure proper disposal of litter by town users.

Refuse collection

This is organised refuse which is managed by designating particular days in which that particular type of refuse shall be collected. Every Tuesday, household waste is picked up in access routes of property owners locations by a compactor truck and the use of mini truck, in awkward locations. Then at least once a week, there is emptying of skips, using the skip loader. The town has ten (10) skips which are strategically allocated in the town. The final destination of these waste is Matsapha Landfill. Over the year under review, 623 tonnes of waste was generated and collected within town, and disposed in Matsapha at a cost of E0.2 million.

For the past three years, the generation of waste has been observed to increase. This could be an indication that people are adapting to safe practices of waste management, or maybe since we are stationed between two busy places, Luyengo and Mahlanya, maybe their waste is sneaked in to the formal municipal waste receptacles. However, either way, from an environmental health perspective, despite jurisdiction, when one sees refuse filled up at pick up zones, it is an indication of good practices of hygiene from household level.

Below its an illustration of waste generation from the past three years;

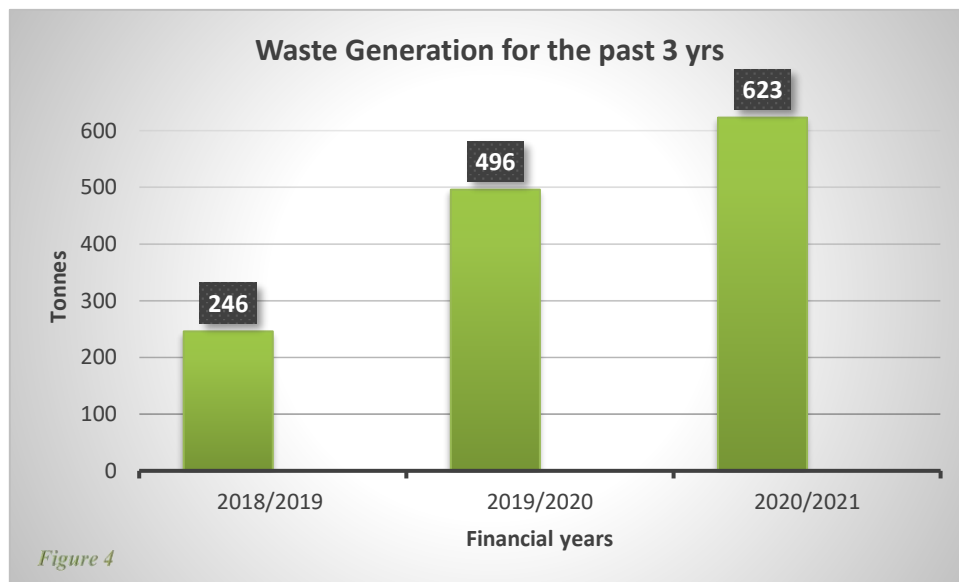


Table 4 shows generated waste (Tonnes) and paid amount to Matsapha Landfill.

Financial Year	Waste (Tonnes)	Paid amount (E)
2018/2019 Financial year	246	90 623
2019/2020 Financial year	496	169 097
2020/2021 Financial year	623	198 010

Waste recycling

In response to the sharp increase of waste generation in the last financial year, the town then started to find means of adding value to waste so that not all waste reaches the disposal site but some recycled. A recycling program was established and is gradually adopted by the residents. High traffic residential places were identified and recycling bins were provided. Each site has four (4) types of bins where segregated waste is kept then collected on Mondays.

Wastewater management

The town has informal settlements, and the major amongst them is within the central business district of the town. Such settlements are typically known for lack of such amenities as clean water, waste water management, roads, power supply, etc. The informal settlement in question had waste water discharged openly to the nearby road drainages. The local authority refurbished six washing troughs at Mangozeni location.

It is hoped that the community will keep the infrastructure in good shape and achieve the purpose for which it has been established.



Sewage emptying

The town has partnered with Ndlebankomo Investment (PTY) LTD for the emptying of septic tanks for the community. The municipality is only contracting the septic services provider to facilitate ease of access and price regulation. But this does not prohibit property owners to source their own septic services from the open service markets. The contracted vendor charges clients E2 000/6m³. The vendor has been contracted for 3 years.

Disposal of dead bodies

Dead animal bodies are mostly found along the MR18 and MR27 where mainly dogs and cats are hit by motorists. Such bodies are then buried locally or disposed in Matsapha. Matsapha are local. Matsapha Town Council agreed for the safe disposal of dead animals. On average, about 10 dogs are disposed in a year.

3.3 Environmental Protection

Tree planting

Since the declaration of Hloba Campaign by the Cabinet in 2018 Central Government, the town has been endlessly engaging itself in the various activities to achieve the ideals of the said campaign. These activities have included afforestation over the year under review. Despite the disruptions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the town continued to add a total number of 47 indigenous trees along the MR 18 stretch, after St Andrews School. However, of the 47, 12 was uprooted and stolen. The municipality appeals to all stakeholders to protect these trees, they are an asset now and in the future.



Left: Local Authority staff planting trees on road reserves

Right: The Public Health and Environment Officer with her Colleagues showing off the indigenous trees.



Overgrowth Control in private property

The town normally faces challenges regarding vacant plots, whereby the property owners neglect their plots. Such properties pose several risks and problems in the neighbourhood. We continue to engage owners of such properties to remedy the situation.

Removal of invasive species

Casual employees were engaged over the year under review for removal of invasive species, dominant along the MR 19/27, predominantly the ‘yellow flower’.

3.4 Food hygiene & safety

Food and Liquor outlets assessments and condemnation

For a long time, food inspections have been rendered by the adjacent Government Health Inspectors. When the local authority engaged a trained officer in this field, the functions are now performed internally. Over the period under review, 48 businesses were inspected to determine their health standards compliance. These outlets includes restaurants, bottle stores/bars, groceries, general dealers, supermarkets, canteens, and butcheries. Over the reporting period, a recorded number of sixteen (16) formal businesses had their foodstuffs, of various volumes and types, were condemned and seized for disposal because they did not meet the required health conditions. We continue to engage with business owners to sensitize them on the expectations and importance of health standards and compliance thereof.

3.5 COVID-19 Response

The town adopted an ambitious strategy to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy included fumigation of premises where cases were detected, adoption of all the prevention measures, procurement of supplies, and many such other initiatives. The extent of the strategy covered public institutions, businesses, residences, and private offices. As the cases increased, particularly during the second and third waves of the pandemic, it became clear that the strategy can hardly hold. We will continue to adopt survival mechanisms under the ‘new normal’ agenda.



Distribution of Covid materials to all local schools.

Disaster Preparedness

The town has created a relationship with National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to safeguard occurrence of disasters. We are commenced compilation of a local strategy for disaster preparedness and management. The NDMA is assisting the local authority in this regard.

3.6 Occupational Safety & Health

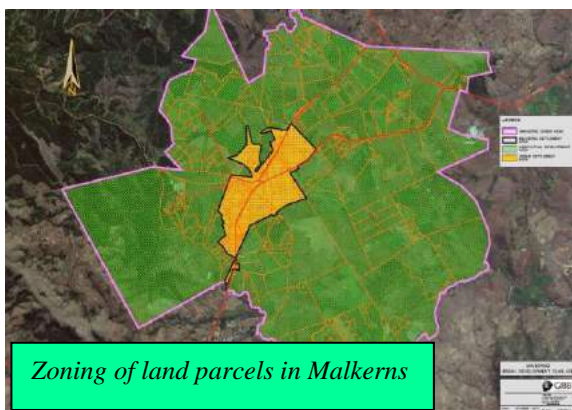
The town conducts toolbox talks to staff as and when necessary. In the era of the coronavirus, staff members are continuously sensitised in new updates of the virus. Also, two training were conducted for the staff, one for ISO Standard and the other on Firefighting. One officer was trained on the ISO (Quality Management Systems Requirements) and five staff members trained on firefighting.

4.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The mandate of the department derives principally from the Town Planning Act of 1961. It aims at achieving a planned, coordinated and harmonious development of the town, promoting health, safety, good order. These ideals are achieved mainly through a universal planning tool known as the Town Planning Scheme. The tool prefers land uses for particular land parcels to achieve synergy and coordinated development of the urban area. The department is also responsible for coordination of local economic development activities. This is a programme that aims to harness the contribution of all stakeholders to grow the local economy.



4.1 The Town Planning Scheme



Over the reporting period, the department coordinated compilation of the Town Planning Scheme. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, several stratified stakeholder consultation engagements were held. At the time of compiling the report, the Scheme was due for final review by the Board before being tabled for ministerial consideration and possible approval. We must highlight the unique context within which the Scheme was compiled. These

include indistinct town boundaries, disparity in control instruments for an normative urban local authority and an agricultural town, lack of crown land upon which public service amenities can be erected, as well as proportion of land parcels that remain in the concessions type of land tenure.

4.2 Local Economic Development

Over the year under review, the local authority identified small-scale informal entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector, who were organized and assisted to form a proper cooperative. This has been achieved and the cooperative has been registered. We have also been able to establish partnerships with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade and SEDCO for capacity development of the entrepreneurs in question.



The intention is to elevate most of the informal entrepreneurs to a formal trade platform, where their contribution could improve the local economy. We will also continue to scout for avenues for possibilities of developing storage facilities, packhouses, processing plants and other facilities to add value in the agricultural activities for all levels of farmers within town. The intention is to enhance and leverage on agricultural value chains, in the process growing the local economy, and retain the town as the breadbasket of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

4.3 Capital projects

The town had three capital projects under the planning and community development department over the 2020/2021 financial year. These include establishment of organic manufacturing facilities, mapping of servitudes, and designs for informal settlements. All the projects could not take off on account of indistinct boundaries and protracted land acquisition discussions. The local authority, as noted in earlier sections of the report, will continue to engage all relevant parties for eventual liquidation of the hurdles.

5.0 SOCIAL SERVICES AND HIV/AIDS RESPONSE

The urban local government delivers social welfare services through community socio-health services department. The department can be in most urban local authorities can be traced back to the advent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the eventual establishment of a politically-led programme known as the Alliance of Mayors Initiative to Combat AIDS At Local level (AMICAALL). The mandate of the department is to build the capacity of urban communities and assist the local government to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other communicable and non-communicable diseases through facilitating prevention and impact mitigation (treatment, care and support) programs, and by making continuous improvements in response management.



As the years went by, HIV/AIDS programming has been evolving. The focus is now on consolidating the gains that the country has made in containing the virus. The emphasis is now on mitigating the impacts of the pandemic and remaining vigilant to avoid resurgence of infections.

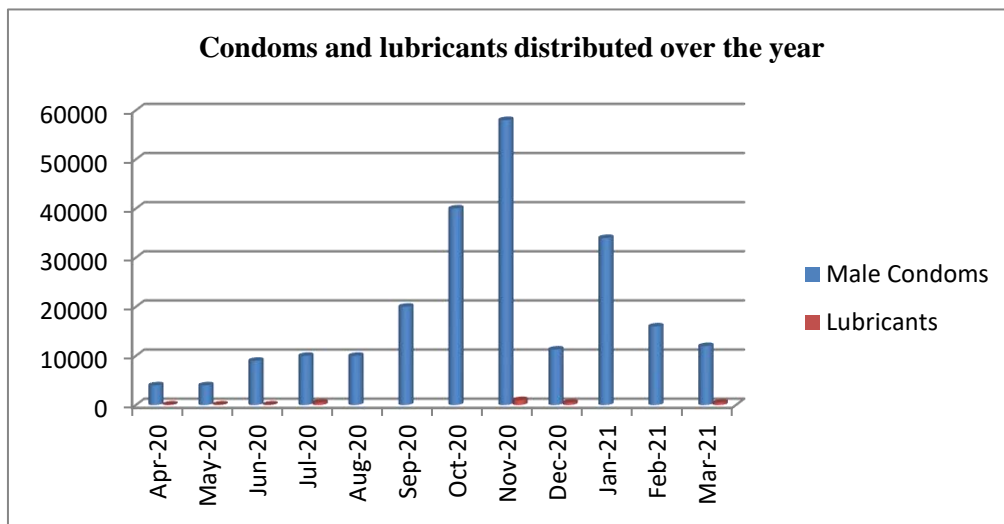
5.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANNED SOCIAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES

5.1.1 Voluntary Counselling and Testing

The local authority continued to play a fundamental role in the fight against HIV/AIDS through the Voluntary Counselling and Testing function, a total of 113 people were tested for HIV, 13 counselled, 26 screened for cervical cancer and 34 screened for breast cancer.

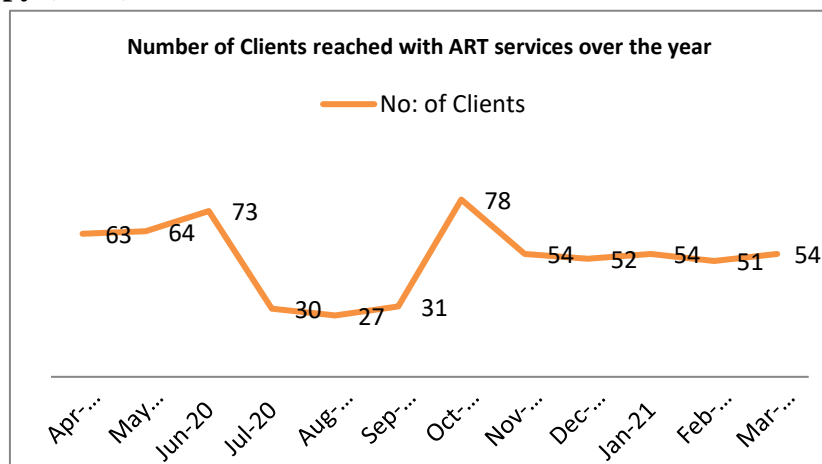
5.1.2 Condom Distribution

A total of twenty two thousand eight thousand three hundred (22 8300) male condoms were distributed in strategic locations around the town throughout the period under review .This is one of the measures engaged by the municipality to reduce the HIV/AIDS incidences rate within the town. There were two thousand seven hundred and seventy (2 770) lubricants also distributed. Below is a graph showing the distribution of the foregoing consumables per month over the year under review.



5.1.3 Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) Services

The Clinic through a partnership with the neighboring Clinics (Luyengo and Lobamba Clinics) was able to dispense ART to an average of 52 of people through an exercise that is done twice a week. On the right is a graph showing the uptake of ART services at the Clinic run by the Local Authority at St.



John Bosco complex. The Ministry of Health and other Partners continue to use the Clinic to offer other integrated health services.

5.1.4 Educational awareness and outreach campaigns

Two Campaigns aimed at sensitizing the community on HIV/AIDS and Breast and Cervical Cancer were held and attracted 81 and 79 people respectively. In the campaigns, participants did not only receive information, education and communication (IEC) materials, but also got the opportunity for testing on each of the target ailments.



Left and Right: Municipal Staff and Community Members in Commemoration Walks for the Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the World AIDS Day, respectively.



5.1.5 Youth Programmes

The local authority successfully partnered with Kwakha Indvodza (Male Mentoring project) and has trained 28 young men. This program was set to mentor “Out of School” youth on; entrepreneurship including vocational skills, business mentoring, business competition, marketing linkages. The department continues to monitor the progress of the trained young men to ascertain if there is any change of behaviour and perspective after the trainings. Below are pictures from the training sessions.



5.1.6 Days for Girls

A total of 196 young girls benefitted from reusable sanitary towels donated Girls for Days, a global movement that prepares and distributes sustainable menstrual health solutions to girls who would otherwise miss school during their monthly periods. It has been found through various surveys that the girl child faces many challenges during the monthly periods. The challenges often lead to early drop out from school as well as early and unplanned pregnancies. The municipality will continue to collaborate with other partners to expand the sexual reproductive health and adolescent education programs. The initiative dovetails well the Jo Cox project under the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. Overleaf are pictures of the engagements and support rendered by the local authority to vulnerable adolescent girls within the municipal jurisdiction.



Left: The Former Board Chairperson, Cllr FitzPatrick addressing young girls and handing over sanitary packs to the girls.



Right: Young Girls posing with their packs

5.1.7 Social Centres

Over the reporting period, the local authority provided the following social services to its populace:

- Provided food support to underprivileged people including orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in 5 social Centres. A total of 831 hampers were distributed to these marginalized groups.
- Distributed back to school hampers to 90 children in social centers.
- A total of 6 433 face masks were distributed to underprivileged children and elderly in the informal settlements.
- Facilitated the vaccination of 534 children for measles.



Deputy Chair and Former AMICAALL Director presenting food hampers

On this note, the local authority appreciates the initiatives of Cllrs B. FitzPatrick and P. Lorentz



MAPM, Cllr Lorentz and Cllr FitzPatrick with the some beneficiaries of food hampers

in mobilizing food hampers for vulnerable communities throughout the year under review. The mobilized foodstuffs greatly assisted vulnerable households during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Over 800 food hampers were mobilized, and we want to applaud Shoprite, Pick'n Pay, Kitale Eggs, Rhodes Fruits Group, Malkerns Rotary and all the Farmers that generously supported the food mobilization initiatives. The local

authority mainly participated in the distribution of the hampers.

5.1.8 Economic Empowerment Programmes

In its mandate to supporting self-employment and small-scale entrepreneurship to improve livelihoods for vulnerable people in the town. The Board trained a total of 32 women in the program including the elderly and youth. It is also worth noting that all women are unemployed but have small scale businesses to sustain themselves.



*Left and right:
Pictures of training of
women on livelihood
skills*



6.0 THE TREASURY

The primary mandate of the Treasury Department derives from the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969, the Urban Financial Regulations, the Rating Act of 1995, and of late, the Public Finance Management Act of 2017. The department is responsible for planning, collecting, keeping, employing and accounting for revenues of the town in accordance the foregoing statutes.



The Town Treasurer, who is Head of the Department, is required to ensure that there are vibrant financial management systems and controls, proper policies and practices, and proper accounting mechanisms and standards. The treasury is one of the key departments of the local authority, and its performance is of interest to all stakeholders. The department is currently led

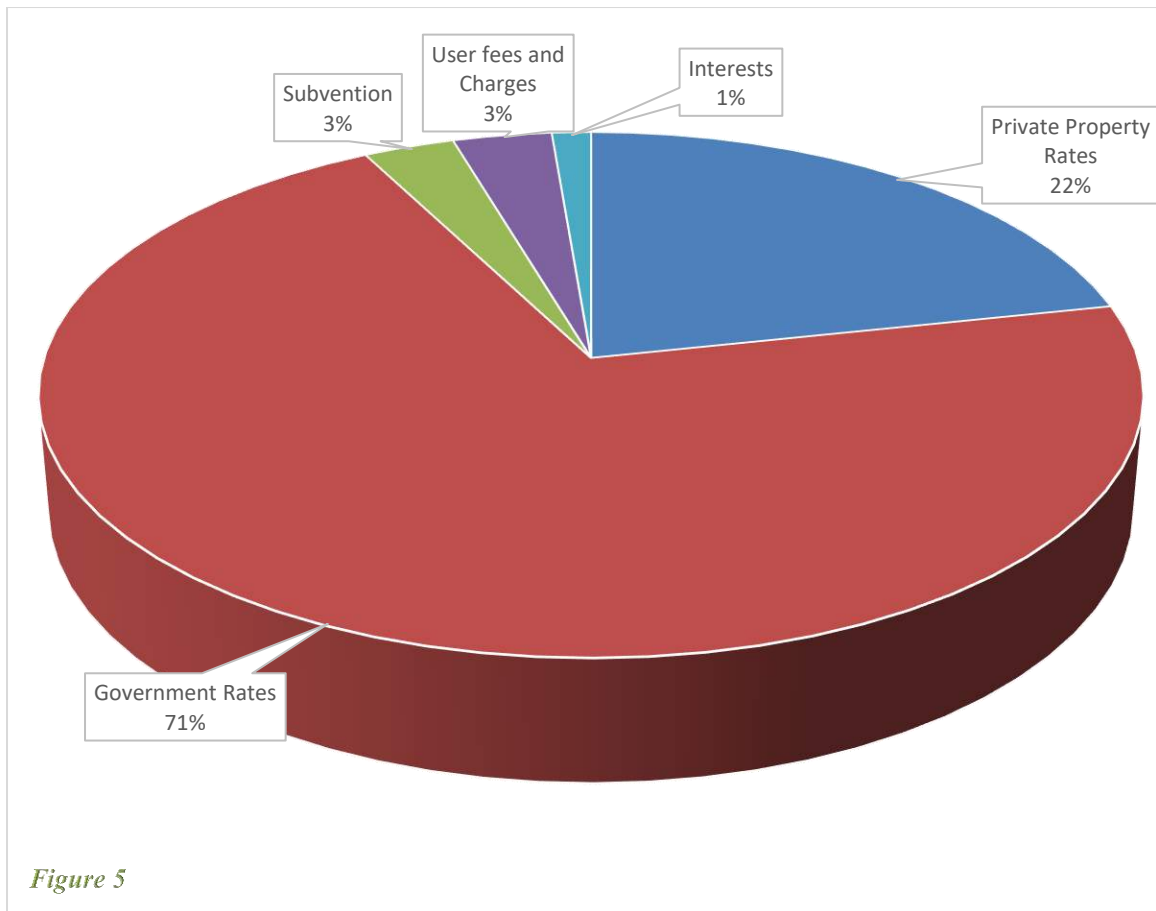


*The Finance and Administration
Officer, Mr Enock Silenge.*

by a seconded officer from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, but for the longest time in the history of the local authority, the Finance and Administration Officer has held the position of Treasurer on an acting basis.

6.1 Revenues

Section 86 of the Urban Government Act of 1969 gives sources from which urban local authorities can derive revenues. Over the year under review, the local authority had a total revenue budget of E17 million. The revenue sources are as depicted in the pie chart below.



As shall be seen from the audited financial statements, about E15.6 million was realized. This is about 91% performance in revenue collection compared to the budget, and about 5% increase compared to 2019/2020. But we may mention here that the performance was enhanced by the settlement of rates arrears by central government. The local authority continues to explore other revenue sources to reduce the heavy reliance on rates.

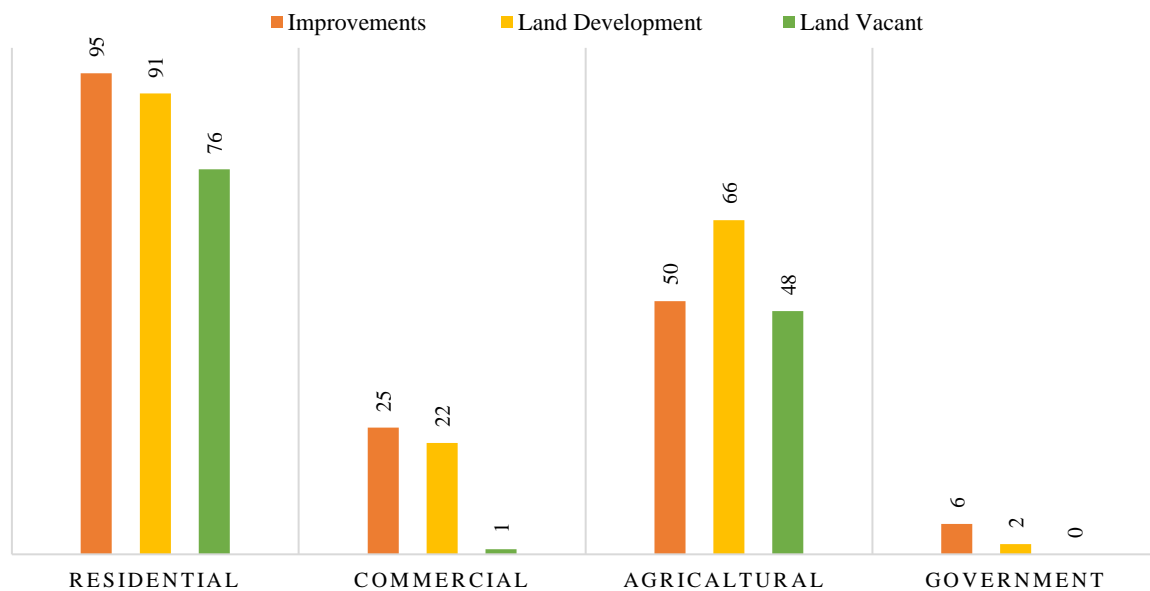
6.2 Expenditure

The total expenditure in the approved estimates was pegged at about E17 million as well, inclusive of recurrent and capital items. The income was only about E3 000 more than the expenditure. As at the close of the 2020/2021 fiscal year, only E8.6 million had been employed. This means 55% of the anticipated expenditure was actually incurred. The protracted procurement formalities in the COVID-19 context cause delays in commencement of many of the projects.

6.3 General Property Valuation

Over the year under review, the local authority undertook a general property valuation in terms of section 10 of the Rating Act of 1995. The quoted provision requires that local authorities conduct general valuation of all properties within urban jurisdiction not less than once in five years. The resultant general valuation roll was certified by the Valuation Court in February 2021, and became operational at the start of the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTIES IN MALKERNS URBAN AREA



6.4 Tariffs

The Board did not adjust the property tax tariffs over the year under review. We must mention that discussions have still not been concluded regarding the rating of agricultural land.

6.5 Digitization of payment modalities

The treasury has established several digital / electronic payment platforms over the reporting year. These include mobile money platform, speed point facilities, electronic funds transfer, *inter alia*. These platforms were of great service during the several lockdowns imposed by the government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also continue with the bulk sms communication platform. The channel keeps property owners informed and engaged on developments within the local authority.

6.6 Grants and subventions

In response to cashflow challenges often experienced at national treasury, central government often reduces the grants and subventions disbursed to urban local authorities. Over the year under review, central government reduced grants and subventions by 10%. But the local authority did receive additional funding for COVID-19 response as well as capacity building activities under the LED initiatives. All these resources have been appropriately employed, as duly reported under respective departments.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Malkerns Town Board appreciates the cooperation of all stakeholders in the execution of programmes and projects in the 2020/2021 financial year. Much ground was covered. And much remains to be done. The COVID-19 pandemic thwarted the pace and extent of implementation of some of the programmes as envisaged in the strategic documents. Some of the outstanding matters require extensive and determined engagements at levels above the local authority, particularly on matters of land availability for public infrastructure projects. In the 2021/2022 fiscal year, the local authority will continue to prioritize investment in infrastructure, explore diversified revenue sources, reduce expenditure and improve service efficiencies. We believe in the collective energies and cooperation of the stakeholders of the town to take Malkerns to the envisaged *high-tech agro-tourist town that is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa!*