Vote for the South Africa

You Deserve!



ACDP Manifesto
2026 Local Government Elections

ACDP





FOREWORD

The Reality Facing Our Communities

Thirty two years have passed since the dawn of South Africa's democratic dispensation with its promise of a free and brighter future for us all. Our Constitution states, among other things, that the objects of local government are to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, to promote social and economic development, and to promote a safe and healthy environment. Also, a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community.

In breach of this constitutional duty, however, we see high levels of corruption and mismanagement resulting in poor, inefficient service delivery to communities. Despite paying ever-increasing rates, taxes and surcharges, families and whole neighbourhoods are suffering from a deficiency in service delivery, largely attributed to the lack of maintenance of vital infrastructure.

As a result, our households and businesses are under pressure to survive. The current unemployment rate is around 43.7%, if discouraged job seekers are taken into account, and the unemployed, particularly our youth, are struggling and living well below the poverty line. Many South Africans also feel unsafe and are afraid of becoming the target of opportunistic criminals who do not fear the law. Women, children and the elderly are especially vulnerable.

Vote For The South Africa You Deserve

Real change starts with you and me. By electing ACDP councillors to your Metro and local municipality, you are entrusting capable, ethical and responsible public servants to efficiently and effectively deliver affordable services to your community. We have your best interests at heart and will ensure that all resources under our watch are optimally managed, and that local infrastructure is maintained and developed. The ACDP is committed to keeping communities safe and clean, and will encouraged their economic growth by creating enabling, income-generating environments.

Our Commitment

As a party founded on Biblical principles, the African Christian Democratic Party seeks to honour God and put you at the centre of our policy making. We are determined to address critical issues without fear or favour, and to ensure that your Metro and local municipality is properly equipped, staffed, and professionally managed. Vote for the South Africa you deserve; a South Africa ripe with opportunities in which you, your family, and community can flourish and grow.

VOTE ACDP.

REV. KENNETH MESHOE MP
President: African Christian Democratic Party

Integrity. Service. Excellence.

You deserve it!







CONTENTS PAGE

FOREWORD i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

OUR SOLUTIONS 2
Effective Municipal Service Delivery 2
A Reliable And Affordable Energy Supply 3
Boosting Local Business and Economic Growth 4
Roads, Transport And Infrastructure 4
Access To Housing 5
Rural, Agricultural And Environmental Development 6
Access To Clean Water And Sanitation 6
Access To Healthcare 7
Arts, Sports And Recreation 8
Community Safety 8

VOTE ACDP 8







EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Opportunity For Genuine Change

As another local government term comes to an end, there can be no doubt that far too many of our municipalities are failing in their duty to protect, maintain and build our communities.

They are crumbling under chronic service delivery failures, rampant financial mismanagement, increasingly wasteful and irregular expenditure, and are being run by elected councillors who seem to treat their councils like personal feeding troughs.

Leading With Integrity

The ACDP is ready and determined to fix these failures and will start by ensuring that the right person for the job is employed—someone with a strong work ethic, technical proficiency and extensive experience in their field of expertise.

This also falls in line with the Biblical injunction (Jethro principle) the ACDP promotes, which is to see that those elected to serve you as public representatives are capable, trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain. Most importantly, they should desire to honour God in all they do (Exodus 18:21-22).

In the pages that follow, we will consider some of the issues facing local government and our communities today, and offer solutions we believe have the potential to bring about a noticeable improvement of service delivery in your area, underpinned by principled, decisive leadership in our Metros and municipalities.

And yes, ***you do*** deserve that!

OUR SOLUTIONS

Effective Municipal Service Delivery

A dynamic, well-run local government starts with dedicated, responsible, and competent public servants, and when respect, justice and service drives policy and action.

The ACDP will:

- Support, with exceptions, the **Local Government: Municipal Structures Amendment Bill, 2024 (Coalition Bill)**, which seeks to provide statutory rules and guidelines for coalition governments arising from hung councils, this particularly given the instability that exists in many such coalitions, including in certain Metros. (The ACDP does not support the Bill's one percent threshold to qualify for a seat in a municipal council);
- At Metro level, conduct institutional reviews of trading entities (such as Joburg Water and City Power) to flatten organisational structures and reduce excessive management layers. This will help foster faster decision-making and cost reduction, and improve service delivery;
- Ensure Municipal structures and systems are optimised to best serve our districts, municipalities and Metros; and
- Improve billing systems to make the collection of municipal rates and services just and fair.

All these proposals depend on efficient revenue generation and collection systems. The ACDP will optimise these systems while ensuring costs are controlled. In addition, we will review the local government equitable share formula, given population shifts, rapid urbanisation, and increased household growth as revealed by Census reports.

We will also:

- Install principled, accountable and skilled fit-for-purpose municipal managers, heads of departments and staff, solely on merit;
- Give priority in municipal budgets to basic service delivery by prioritising the maintenance and upgrading of water, sewerage, road and electricity infrastructure;
- Where practicable, ring-fence sufficient revenue from water and electricity provision to avoid cross-subsidisation and ensure infrastructure development and maintenance;
- Ensure that those accused of corruption and the mismanagement of municipal finances are held accountable, speedily prosecuted, and where found guilty, held personally liable to refund the state, in addition to other criminal sanctions;
- Ensure that internal audit and Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPAC) become far more effective watchdogs in exercising oversight and improving financial accountability, when reviewing municipal financial and performance reports, to ensure responsible spending and proper service delivery by eradicating corrupt and irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure;
- Ensure that MPACs offer corrective measures for adverse audit findings by the Auditor-General and, where necessary, hold accounting officers and officials accountable, even in their personal capacities (such as for material irregularities);
- Provide effective protection for municipal audit and forensic officials and whistleblowers who are at risk;
- Ensure the municipality is accountable to the public by making council meetings accessible and open to community participation at regular intervals;





- Support needy households and qualifying persons with disabilities with improved free basic services and other initiatives that provide a sustainable safety net;
- Include and strengthen community-based organisations including churches and other faith-based organisations to leverage their capacity for providing greater community and social service;
- Enforce bylaws by training municipal law enforcement officials and capacitating municipal courts and reviewing fine schedules; and
- Crack down on illegal mining in municipal areas by forming dedicated, well-trained municipal task forces in collaboration with national police (SAPS) and other law enforcement agencies to implement intelligence-driven operations focused on arresting illegal miners and syndicates that buy illegally mined minerals.

A Reliable And Affordable Energy Supply

South Africa has been blessed with an abundance of coal, much of which is exported. It is estimated that we currently have approximately 200 years' worth of coal underground.

The ACDP will capitalise on the God-given comparative and competitive advantage South Africa has in coal as a base load for electricity generation, by making use of clean coal technology.

While Eskom's need for national load-shedding has largely been resolved, load reduction and load curtailment (for industrial users) continues unabated. Electricity provision is unreliable with frequent outages linked to ageing municipal networks, illegal connections, and the inadequate maintenance of municipal power systems. In addition, the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) continues to grant Eskom tariff increases that are way above the inflation rate, with municipalities then adding further increases. These increases have a devastating impact on households and businesses; not only increasing the cost of living, but also stunting economic growth and opportunities for job creation.

To fix this, the ACDP will:





- Lobby NERSA to protect consumers by advocating for reasonable electricity price hikes that do not unfairly burden households and businesses, especially during periods of high energy inflation. Processes will be scrutinised to ensure that their decisions are just and transparent;
- Ensure that municipalities use approved benchmarks for tariff increases;
- Ensure that the price of electricity is reduced by finalising the introduction of competition into the energy market and encourage more renewable energy companies to set up power plants;
- Grant greater private access to the national grid for renewable energy companies, and build new transmission infrastructure;
- Ensure that municipalities replace ageing municipal networks, cut illegal connections, and properly maintain municipal power systems;
- Encourage more municipalities with a good financial standing to generate and purchase power from renewable energy companies;
- Encourage mines, farms, factories and other commercial enterprises to invest in their own energy-generating plants as this will help contribute to local economic development and job creation;
- Enter into buy-back agreements with those who choose solar power as an alternative power source;
- Improve waste management by building more waste-to-energy plants using autoclave technology. This will reduce landfill dependence and generate electricity and biofuel from municipal solid waste; and

- Promote greater use of electrical vehicles, particularly municipal buses which will include depot charging and en-route 'opportunity charging' at key terminals, and implement standardised charging technology across Metros to ensure inter-operability between different bus manufacturers.

Boosting Local Business And Economic Growth

Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) are the lifeblood of our economy. They are the engines of economic growth and security. Not only do they allow for honest and rewarding employment, they also encourage entrepreneurs to create job opportunities for others.

By promoting local economic development and empowering small businesses, we will address poverty alleviation and job creation, and ultimately improve the lives of our people, our communities and business potential.

To promote economic development, the ACDP will:

- Expand the primary administrative focus of municipalities to include the creation of enabling environments for small businesses;
- Improve service delivery (including water, electricity and roads) to attract investment;
- Enhance competitiveness, reduce red tape, and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Support township economies with a focus on the youth;
- Build public-private partnerships to create sustainable economic growth;
- Provide fair financial assistance, education and other support to deserving small businesses, enabling them to compete and thrive in the mainstream economy;
- Encourage skills training and mentorship programmes for aspiring local entrepreneurs, with a special emphasis on empowering women and youth;
- Collaborate with funders to establish funding schemes for small businesses and entrepreneurs;
- Encourage businesses to roll out paid internships;
- Promote more capital investment in local economies;
- Ensure fair and equal access to markets for local business owners, and the firm, even-handed enforcement of trading, zoning and licensing bylaws for all businesses alike. Those who obey the law should never be undercut by those who break it;
- Employ more health inspectors to monitor small businesses that trade in food to ensure that they operate in accordance with food safety and hygiene regulations;
- Promote the sustainable utilisation of local natural resources, focusing on the development of eco-tourism, wildlife, fisheries, and forestry sectors; and
- Review bylaws to reduce barriers for small business development. The ACDP will challenge the unintended consequences of the **Business Licensing Bill, 2025**, which seeks to create a uniform national registry for all formal and informal businesses. This will add more municipal red tape and regulatory burdens on struggling small businesses.





Roads, Transport And Infrastructure

Economic growth is enabled through infrastructure development. To achieve renewed state capacity, we need effective, expanded transport and infrastructure systems that are run and maintained by skilled, credible, and accountable professionals.

To this end, the ACDP will:

- Maintain and expand efficient, safe, affordable and reliable public transport such as the integrated public networks, including the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems that connect bus, rail and minibus taxis;
- Work with the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) to speedily complete Metrorail's recovery and modernisation programme;
  This includes the restoration of existing non-functioning rail corridors and dealing with persistent challenges such as cable theft, vandalism, illegal occupation of rail tracks, and corruption;
- Consider moving Metrorail from PRASA where municipal capacity exists to build a locally managed, safe and integrated rail service that fits seamlessly into other public networks through a one-ticket commuting service;
- Ensure that Metros and municipalities properly maintain roads and expeditiously repair potholes, faulty traffic lights and street lights; and
- Improve the maintenance of rural access roads and gravel roads (distinct from provincial transport roads) by using modern applications to level and bind them.

Access To Housing

Our Constitution guarantees everyone the right to access adequate housing. Municipalities should be more involved in the provision of housing, either through low-cost housing or affordable Social Housing.

The ACDP is committed to protecting and extending property rights of ownership to as many citizens as possible. We will ensure that state land is justly and more productively utilised, that people are able to secure title deeds, and have more decision-making power in the acquisition of their homes and in the development of their communities.

The ACDP will:





- Fast-track the proclamation of townships and, in so doing, advance the awarding of title deeds to qualifying residents of municipal-owned housing units;
- Maximise the use of state land that is not being fully utilised by ensuring it is allocated for the residential and agricultural needs of communities;
- Eradicate the housing backlog by promoting the development of affordable and inclusionary housing through the provision of community-owned self-help schemes;
- Implement developmental plans to deal effectively with migratory realities and challenges;
- Urgently review the database of persons on waiting lists for housing and advocate for one accessible and audited national list to remove any duplications and previous beneficiaries;
- Partner with national and provincial departments and the private sector to provide dignified retirement villages for qualifying persons in line with applicable legislation;
- Ensure newly built homes are properly inspected and that contractors are held accountable for poor workmanship. This includes blacklisting repeat offenders;
- Complete a municipal land audit in order to release suitable land for serviced stands to encourage public participation in housing and stimulate economic activity;
- Eradicate informal settlements by prioritising permanent and modern housing solutions over temporary shacks;
- Restore dignity and safety by replacing communal toilets and the bucket system with bulk water and sanitation infrastructure;
- Ensure that infrastructure such as sewage treatment plants and land-fill sites keep pace with housing developments to prevent pollution, unhygienic living conditions and environmental pollution; and

- Encourage Public Private Partnerships to ensure transparency in the awarding of housing development tenders. These processes will undergo rigorous evaluation and approval stages without bureaucratic constraints.

Rural, Agricultural and Environmental Development

The ACDP believes in good stewardship of our resources and will provide an accelerated and just land reform and development programme. By empowering rural and agricultural communities, we empower the fundamental livelihoods and prosperity of all South Africans.

The ACDP will:

- Promote agricultural development by protecting and supporting farmers (including small, subsistence and emerging farmers);
- Oppose the expropriation of land without compensation and advance land reform and development;
- Return ethical leadership to rural municipalities;
- Support traditional leadership structures which provide good governance, services, safety and security in rural areas;
- Foster greater co-operation between municipalities and traditional leaders;
- Empower and develop rural towns through the promotion of small businesses and tourism;
- Actively renew and capacitate dysfunctional rural municipalities by seconding qualified municipal employees and administrative systems;
- Encourage alternative energy and rainwater harvesting initiatives in rural communities and fast-track basic services to these areas, and ensure that private rainwater harvesting initiatives remain free of bureaucratic control and all fees;
- Advance rural development by prioritising agriculture and food security, and assist small and emerging farmers to become commercially viable by improving access to finance and markets;
- Promote rural development by incentivising the relocation of industries to rural areas;
- Strategically utilise our 'blue economy' for greater impact; and
- Embark on extensive education programmes on the importance of recycling, increase the number of waste drop-off sites and create subsidised recycling economic opportunities to reduce municipal reliance on landfills.

Access To Clean Water and Sanitation





Clean, safe drinking water is a basic right for every person in the country. Despite this imperative, many cities and towns go without water for extended periods, with water tankers and tanks having to distribute emergency water supplies. We also face severe challenges with deteriorating water infrastructure and a decline in the quality of drinking water.

The ACDP will:

- Encourage private sector investment through financing options;
- Safeguard the financial viability of our water sector by enabling the Department of Water and Sanitation to implement the revised Raw Water Pricing Strategy and empower the National Water Resources Infrastructure Agency;
- Clean, protect, and develop freshwater bodies, including rivers, dams, and aquifers, and increase testing and the frequency of reporting on water quality;
- Hold underperforming national, provincial and local authorities, as well as water boards and water service authorities, accountable for poor service delivery;
- Ensure that municipal officials are, where applicable, held criminally liable in terms

of the **National Water Act** for sewage pollution;

- Ensure that competent engineers, technicians and plumbers are employed by municipalities, and where necessary, employ private sector expertise to repair leaks, replace faulty meters and remove illegal water connections—to provide a reliable water supply;
- Ensure that law enforcement agencies speedily eradicate the 'water-tanker mafia';
- Hold private companies criminally and civilly liable for pollution such as acid drainage from mines and high levels of E.coli (indicating sewage pollution in water systems) and other water-polluting activities;
- Ensure that schools replace pit-latrines with flushing toilets;
- Support provisions of the **Water Services Amendment Bill, 2025** which aim to professionalise our water services, strengthen compliance and introduce criminal liability for persistent failures; and
- Oppose provisions in the **National Water Amendment Bill, 2026** which seek to introduce race-based quotas as a condition for water use applications.

Access To Healthcare

Your mental, physical and spiritual well-being, and the well-being of your loved ones, is of paramount importance to the ACDP. Our strong stance against the Covid-19 lockdown, which devastated our economy and affected the livelihoods of millions of South Africans, attests to this.

South Africa needs better healthcare structures and support systems, equipped to serve our people with integrity and expertise. We also believe in advancing the dignity and value of each person's well-being and health from conception to death, and will improve access to all forms of health and social care services, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

The ACDP will:





- Improve the quality of service at municipal clinics for everyone, with the elderly, children and babies being prioritised. Clinics will be well stocked, expertly staffed and service-oriented by, for example, extending service hours to better suit patients' needs;
- Facilitate the provision of accessible transport for those who require regular treatment, and negotiate the licensing of Ambulance Services so that clinics have an Ambulance service available at hotspot sites;
- Support community initiatives that aim to prevent teenage pregnancy and provide assistance for young mothers-to-be;
- Ensure pregnant women are fully informed regarding the child they are carrying, the risks of abortion and the options available to them;
- Expand alcohol, drug and anti-smoking treatment programmes that are proven to be successful;
- Raise community awareness around the benefits and importance of personal hygiene and healthy living;
- Extend Primary Health Care by strengthening home-based care focused primarily on the elderly, juveniles at risk, and those affected by Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculous; and
- Partner with churches and faith-based organisations who provide crucial pastoral, emotional, and psychological support to those in need, as well as being active in feeding schemes and distributing food packages.

In recognition of the critical role churches and faith-based organisations play in uplifting the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of people in our communities, we will oppose attempts by the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the

Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities to introduce mechanisms to vet, licence, and regulate churches and other religious organisations under the guise of self-regulation. This is in conflict with the right to freedom of religion (section 15) and the right of freedom of association (section 18) afforded by the Constitution.

Art, Sport and Recreation

Municipalities can support the arts, sports, and recreation by funding programmes, and by building and maintaining public infrastructure such as parks and libraries, and hosting civic events. Local governments also foster community development by partnering with national and provincial departments. We believe that the creative sector and various sporting codes are all viable job-creating industries worth promoting.

The ACDP will urge municipalities to:

- Encourage local school, community, and sports tourism;
- Support creative, sports and digital-content industries (including film, music, design and the fast-growing video-game and e-sports sectors), and develop their potential as viable, profitable career choices, particularly for our youth;
- Develop sector infrastructure by building, upgrading, and maintaining facilities such as public libraries, sports fields, community halls, theatres, art galleries and art studios;
- Increase financial aid or grants-in-aid to creative groups, sports federations, and recreational organisations that are registered and financially compliant, in order to subsidise operations and equipment;
- Organise local festivals, sports leagues, and art and craft fairs that celebrate and promote local talent and foster community participation;
- Collaborate with private businesses, NGOs, and provincial government departments to maximise resources and expand cultural, creative and sporting opportunities; and
- Facilitate workshops, coaching, and mentorship programmes to nurture young talent and create sustainable livelihoods.

Community Safety

The primary role of government is to protect its citizens. The ACDP is committed to ensuring that our communities are safe and secure.





The ACDP will:

- Strengthen law enforcement by increasing the operational budget of the SAPS and Metropolitan Police Departments to ensure effective policing;
- Devolve policing down to the lowest level depending on the capacity of that level;
- Protect communities by increasing police visibility and conducting more roadblocks, stop-and-search operations, and random drug and alcohol tests on drivers;
- Prevent land invasions of public and private property;
- Actively assist communities in their struggle against criminal syndicates, gangsterism and drug and alcohol abuse by successfully arresting and prosecuting criminals, gangsters and drug dealers, increasing the number of sniffer dogs, and shutting down ‘drug dens’ and illegal shebeens;
- Ensure that communities have a greater say in the granting of liquor licences in their communities by licencing authorities;
- Introduce heavier penalties for those who supply alcohol to illegal liquor outlets;
- Ensure that our communities, economic hubs, parks, libraries, playgrounds and

other public facilities are kept safe, accessible and well-maintained;
- Support and strengthen community structures such as police forums, neighbourhood watches, trauma services and safe havens for victims of violence;
- Encourage, equip and train citizens to fully participate in the monitoring of crime in their communities;
- Strengthen the SAPS, the South African National Defence Force and the Border Management Authority to secure our borders and stop criminal networks and illegal immigration entering the country;
- While condemning all forms violence against undocumented foreigners, ensure that authorities strictly enforce existing immigration laws, humanely execute lawful deportations, and dismantle corruption and criminal syndicates operating within the Department of Home Affairs; and
- Oppose the planned national digital ID roll-out. While government frames this policy as a means to mitigate identity fraud and the tracking of undocumented foreigners, it fundamentally compromises an individual's privacy. In its present form, the policy of centralising sensitive biometric data risks enabling unchecked state overreach and mass surveillance, mirroring systems typically found in authoritarian regimes.

VOTE ACDP

We all want a service-driven local government that is accountable and works, and we want to live in communities that are safe and well-maintained—communities that can attract investment, flourish and grow.

At the ballot box on 4 November 2026, vote for the South Africa you deserve! **VOTE ACDP** and elect to your Metro or municipality capable, trustworthy men and women who will serve you and your community with integrity, excellence, and care.





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