

Lusanda Menze

*Executive Manager: Integrated Planning & Economic Development
Garden Route District Municipality*



My name is Lusanda Menze, Executive Manager: Integrated Planning and Economic Development for the Garden Route District Municipality, one of 44 district municipalities in South Africa. As the Executive Manager Integrated Planning and Economic Development of a district municipality in South Africa, I play a critical role as the head official of driving Economic Development, Tourism, Intergovernmental Relations and implementation of catalytic programmes in the district. I ensure sound financial management in accordance with the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and other relevant legislation. It is my duty to implement the decisions, policies, and strategic plans adopted by the Municipal Council, translating these into operational activities and aligning Units in the department in the implementation thereof linked with the municipality's goals and objectives.

In overseeing the administration, I manage four other sub-directorates, including

- Economic Development, Tourism and Job Creation;
- Integrated Development Planning, Intergovernmental Relations and Public Participation.
- Integrated Human Settlements;
- Projects, Properties, Facilities and Resort Management; and
- Project Management Unit.

As a strategic leader, I provide support to the Municipal Manager in respect of the aforementioned areas, as well as, to Executive Mayor and the Members of the Mayoral Committee overseeing the above-mentioned areas. We utilize a Joint District Metro Approach to foster collaboration and integration among different spheres of government, particularly at the district and metro levels, to improve service delivery and governance. I, along with my support staff, ensure that the municipality complies with all applicable legislation, including the Municipal Systems Act and MFMA, and I am responsible for regular reporting to the council and other Council committees.

Additionally, I am responsible for implementing risk management strategies to identify, assess, and manage risks that could affect our ability to achieve our objectives. Central to my role is ensuring that the municipality delivers essential emergency services, such

as disaster management and fire services in an efficient and equitable manner, thereby protecting the lives of our residents.

I have also previously held the position of Director for Strategic Planning and Development and Interim Municipal Manager at Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality, where I lead establishment of that Municipality after erstwhile Nxuba and Nkonkobe Local Municipalities were disestablished by Government notice to form Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality.

I hold a Bachelor of Social Science in Industrial Psychology, Public Management and Development Economics (University of Fort Hare), Bachelor of Administration honours in Public Management and Master of Town and Regional Planning (University of Pretoria).

Organization Overview: The Garden Route District Municipality is one of 5 district municipalities in the Western Cape, South Africa and one of 44 in the country. The institution has three consecutive clean audits under its cap.

Key statistics for the energy sector relating to the region include the following:

- The GRDM region has a peak demand of approximately 250 MVA, with an annual electricity consumption of about 1.3 TWh, representing less than 1% of national demand.
- The installable capacity for rooftop solar PV across the region is estimated at 1,750 MW, which is seven times the maximum demand of the region. Only 36% of this capacity is required to meet the annual energy consumption of all customers.
- New solar PV installations are recommended, with a minimum of 230 MW required in the medium term, increasing to 285 MW if the grid is not constrained. Wind energy installations of at least 150 MW are also recommended by 2027.
- Following a Least Cost plan could reduce overall system costs by 24% compared to a business-as-usual approach, with additional benefits in CO2 emissions reduction and water conservation. Disconnecting from Eskom and going for 100% autonomy is not economically optimal for the GRDM until after 2040.

Interests:

- Solar Power Generation
- Hydropower Generation
- Other Renewable Energy Generation Sources
- Energy Forecasting Tools
- Economic Modeling Tools
- Innovative Energy Storage Solutions