

CLOSING SUMMARY

As quickly as we approach the dawn of the next decade, it seems that discussions of what the past tells us and what the future holds are both inevitable and constant. Buffalo City Municipality is certainly not immune to such self-evaluation. The Annual Report 2003 -2004 demonstrates the municipality's ability to report on all aspects of performance, providing a true, honest and accurate account of the goals set by Council and also highlights the successes or challenges in achieving our goals.

Today's municipality's are adopting seemingly contradictory strategies to meet the challenges of the next decade and Buffalo City is not any different. It is known to be strongly competitive yet still open to cooperation. It has strived to deliver quality services at the lowest cost and is constantly creating new ways for citizens to access services, information, and engage in decision-making forums which allows for active participation. The following key milestones have been achieved by the municipality:

- Adoption and implementation of the Revitalisation Plan and Sector Plans.
- Approval and implementation of a three year medium term budget for 2003/2004 to 2005/2006.
- An integrated Annual Plan and Budget process which will give citizens a better opportunity to take part in deciding where the municipality should focus its resources.
- An activity-based costing system which will give us better information about the real costs of the Municipality's internal and external services.
- A campaign to identify 'easier, quicker, and cheaper' ways of doing business in the Municipality – in order for us to provide a better service at a lower cost.
- Continuing the reform in our overall financial management.
- Working with all partners in an overall City Development Strategy.
- Working towards a Service Delivery Charter and Customer Care Strategy for Council to ensure that citizens know the levels of service to expect as well as to ensure that citizens are treated with care and respect.
- A first for the municipality is the unqualified report for the 2003-2004 Financial year which is a real achievement for Buffalo City Municipality and demonstrates that after amalgamation it is operating as one body.

The preceding summary highlights the key areas that each chapter covers. Buffalo City Municipality's Annual Report chapter one, provides an overview of the municipality's geographic and demographic profile, as well as key information pertaining to the quality of life and social living within Buffalo City.

In chapter two the municipality's performance for the year is highlighted focusing on the service delivery departments such as water, electricity, sanitation, refuse removal, roads etc. This chapter looks at the service delivery approach adopted by Buffalo City Municipality, identifies the performance measures and key successes and realistically acknowledges the challenges and opportunities of service delivery.

Chapter three of the report provides an insight into the human resources and organizational management areas. It focuses on the organizational structure and how the municipality utilizes its resources to fulfill its developmental local government objectives, whilst still maintaining legislative compliance, through the programmes designed to improve employment equity, skills development and capacity building.

The audited financial statements and the Auditor-General's report which forms part of chapter five, reflects the municipality's financial position, statement of financial performance, cashflow, statement of changes in net assets, and supporting notes to the statement. This chapter also looks at the intergovernmental grants received by the municipality.

Chapter five provides comprehensive information on the functional areas of the municipality, including an overview, description and detailed analysis of each function. It also focuses on the municipality's IDP, performance management system and the institutional scorecard.

The Annual Report 2003 -2004 serves as a key record revealing the progress, growth, development of municipal services and performance of Buffalo City Municipality.

