



OPERATION CLEAN TOWNS

Cederberg Municipality, private sector and civil society join hands

*Speech delivered onsite in Khayalitscha Informal Settlement, Clanwilliam,
delivered by Executive Mayor, Dr Ruben Richards, on 3 May 2023
at the launch of Operation CLEAN TOWNS.*

Embargoed till 10h00 on 3 May 2023

A well-known ancient proverb attributed to the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu says that *the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*. Today we are taking that first step towards consciously and deliberately ensuring that the towns of the Cederberg municipality are clean – and for want of an action title let's call it **Operation Clean Towns – Skoon Dorpe**.

It is my pleasure, as Executive Mayor of the Cederberg Municipality, to announce that we have received a donation of skip bins from the private sector to make Operation Clean Towns a reality. Early last year (2022) we received a brand new skip bin truck as a donation from the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). Due to budgetary constraints, the municipality could not afford to purchase the skip bins needed for that truck. The Mayor's office consulted with the private sector of Clanwilliam who then raised funds and sponsored the manufacture of skip bins which today are officially been handed over to the municipality as a donation. A special thanks to Mr Bernie van der Heever and his business partner Melissa Visser who are the energetic angels behind this donation together with others whom I will thank in just a moment.

Unfortunately, municipal red tape and political immaturity delayed the hand-over of the skip bins which were available many months ago already. However, I am very pleased that today, 3 May 2023, we are able to formally join hands with the private sector and civil society as we launch Operation Clean Towns starting right here in our own backyard, Khayalitscha, Clanwilliam.

I wish to thank our acting Municipal Manager, Mr Gerrit Matthyse and his administration, for their support and energy to ensure that this project happens today. I wish to thank the sponsors of the skip bins, among others Cape Mango, Rooibos Limited, Clanwilliam Waterfront, Patrysvlei and others who have put their money where their mouth is and made a practical contribution to the improvement of Clanwilliam and the broader Cederberg region. I wish to thank the Khayalitscha Residents Committee for their cooperation and patience. They reminded me last week that I am one year behind schedule because while I was still Mayor last year, I promised them skip bins. Well, all I can say to the Khayalitscha Committee is that I have been reappointed Mayor recently and here I am with the skip bins. I apologise that it has taken longer than expected to launch this project, but here we are today.

It is significant to pause and observe that the municipality with our partners in the private sector and civil society have shown what is possible when we join hands and put the needs of our people first. The needs of the residents of Cederberg must come first. Today is evidence of what is possible when we all firmly join hands to find solutions to our challenges. Today's challenge is to reclaim our towns from the devouring beast of dirt, filth and an environmentally unstable and unhealthy environment.



It is said that cleanliness is next to godliness. I hope that today represents that first step towards not only the bigger journey of a thousand miles but indeed a step toward godliness. Let us clean up our towns. Let us regain a sense of pride of place. Let us actively work towards feeling proud of being a resident of a clean Cederberg and more particularly here today of this informal settlement called Khayalitscha.

I wish to take this opportunity to announce that the collection of un-compacted garbage here today opens the door and possibility for recycling entrepreneurship. So I invite the entrepreneurs to be on the lookout for tender opportunities related to the recycling of the garbage we will be collecting from today onwards.

I also wish to announce that, as Executive Mayor, I have decided that no resident will have to pay to dump their garbage at our landfill / waste collection sites. I will be encouraging council to immediately scrap the tariff for dumping / offloading garbage. I want to incentive you and encourage you to take and offload your garbage, free of charge, at any of our authorised waste collection sites in the municipality namely those in Clanwilliam, Citrusdal, and Lamberts Bay. Away with illegal dumping away. Viva clean towns viva.

There is an expression which says: “die een se brood is die ander se dood” roughly translated to mean, “the death of one, is the bread of another”. I want to amend that expression slightly to say: “*The rubbish/garbage of one is the gold of another*” What you may consider rubbish and worthless is pure gold for someone else who sees the potential and value of recycling your garbage. Did you know that up to 80 percent of all household garbage can be recycled.

So, residents of the Cederberg, I am thrilled today that we can join hands and work towards achieving our objective of CLEAN TOWNS – SKOON DORPE. Today is an opportunity for a new start. Let’s make use of this opportunity. After all, our new vision statement describes the Cederberg Municipality as:

The home of good governance, service excellence and opportunities for all.

Let us embrace this opportunity – let us become known as the municipality with the cleanest towns in South Africa.

Welcome to Operation Clean Towns – Skoon Dorpe.

Thank you

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