



THE GLOBAL GOALS



DRAKENSTEIN
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VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW

2026

Drakenstein Municipality





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Foreword by the Executive Mayor



Drakenstein Municipality: Driving Sustainable Change

The 17 Sustainable Goals are ambitious targets that as an Executive Mayor one cannot ignore. Local governments bear brunt to give effect to realise these goals because we are at the coal face of service delivery. In South Africa, our lived reality is about how we narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, being the most unequal country in the world. Thus, we cannot shy away from being the custodians of the global SDGS at local level because we are the first point of contact for citizens when they deal with bread-and-butter issues.

In Drakenstein Municipality we understand the importance of mainstreaming the SDGS into our daily work when we serve our citizens. Sustainability is part of Drakenstein's DNA and this is why we have been institutionalising sustainable development practices that balance environmental integrity, economic resilience, and social wellbeing, in line with local, national, and global sustainability frameworks and SDGs.

Since 2021, we have made good progress to promote the work that we do as Fair Trade City. We want to ensure that we leave no one behind whilst we strive for inclusive socio-economic growth. As a City of Excellence, we continue to strive towards improving the quality of services we deliver to our citizens. This VLR provides a good opportunity for us to self-assess, improve our efforts and alignment to the SDGS so that our communities enjoy a more balanced, healthy and economically equitable environment.

Councillor S Korabie
EXECUTIVE MAYOR



Message by the City Manager



An important commitment to achieve the successful implementation of sustainable, inclusive socio-economic development for all. This Local Voluntary Review (VLR) confirms our core planning, implementation and performance management systems.

As the best run secondary City in South Africa respect of Good Governance (Ratings Africa, 2022) we pride ourselves on continuously striving towards improving our strong institutional foundations. The past 11 consecutive clean audits we achieved is testimony of Drakenstein's organisational capacity to deliver quality services, invest in infrastructure to further unlock economic growth and support development.

The institutionalisation of the Voluntary Local Review Report reflects our commitment to provide a structured approach to give effect to the implementation of the SDGs where service delivery impacts directly on the lives of our citizens, at local government level. It allows us to constantly self-reflect, innovate and improve on delivering services to our citizens. As we move forward we will strengthen partnerships with our stakeholders to enhance our capacity to deliver on this important mandate across sectors to achieve greater impact, scale successful initiatives, and build a more inclusive, resilient *City of Excellence*.

Dr JH Leibbrandt
CITY MANAGER



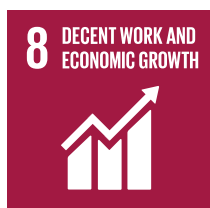
Chapter 1: Executive Summary

Drakenstein Municipality presents its first Voluntary Local Review (VLR) as a strategic milestone in its journey toward sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development. This report reflects the municipality's pledge to localising the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and demonstrating how global development priorities are translated into community-level impact.

The five -year Integrated Development Plan between 2024-2029 articulates Drakenstein's s long-term vision of become a "City of Excellence," as a municipality where economic growth, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and ethical governance are pursued in a balance and integrated manner. This vision is implemented through evidence-based planning, strong institutional systems, and a culture of accountability.

The development of the project based VLR is a confirmation that the SDGs are not treated as a parallel or external framework, but are fully embedded within the Municipality's core governance and performance planning. This includes alignment with key instruments such as the IDP, the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), and the 2024/2025 Annual Report, ensuring that sustainable development is integrated into planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting cycles.

Drakenstein has demonstrated strong institutional capability and governance performance. This is evidenced by the 11 consistent clean audits, expanding access to basic services, and sustained investment in infrastructure and economic development. Good Governance Africa (2024), an independent research institute, rated the Municipality as the best-run secondary city in terms of its Governance Performance Index in respect of its sound financial management and high-quality service delivery. These achievements position the Municipality as a leading example of local governance excellence within South Africa and in Africa. Drakenstein Municipality continues to navigate complex challenges, including high levels of unemployment, persistent inequality, rapid urbanisation, and increasing climate-related risks (Annual Report, 2024/2025).



The VLR focuses on six priority SDGs that reflect both the Municipality's strategic priorities and development needs:

1.1 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Drakenstein is advancing access to reliable, sustainable, and modern energy through innovative initiatives that promote renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency, and inclusive energy solutions. These efforts contribute to a just energy transition while supporting local economic resilience and reducing environmental impact.

1.2 SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Economic development remains central to Drakenstein's mandate, with targeted interventions to stimulate local economic activity, support SMMEs, promote entrepreneurship, and facilitate a suitable environment to create employment opportunities. Programmes focused on business development, informal sector support, and investment attraction are key drivers of inclusive sustainable growth.

1.3 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

The Municipality is committed to building inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable human settlements. Through spatial planning, infrastructure investment, and community development initiatives, Drakenstein continues to address urbanisation pressures while enhancing the quality of life across both urban and rural areas.

1.4 SDG 13: Climate Action

Recognising the urgency of climate change, Drakenstein is integrating climate resilience and mitigation strategies into its planning processes. Initiatives focused on renewable energy, sustainable resource management, and environmental stewardship are strengthening the Municipality's capacity to respond to climate risks.

1.5 SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Good governance, transparency, and accountability are key pillars to Drakenstein's approach to build strong institutions that foster peace and justice. The Municipality continues to strengthen institutional systems, promote inclusive governance, and build trust with communities through responsive and ethical leadership.

1.6 SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Drakenstein recognises that sustainable development requires collaboration. Strategic partnerships with government entities, the private sector, civil society, and international organisations are central to unlocking resources, innovation, and shared value.

Key Messaging Of the Drakenstein Municipality VLR

Drakenstein is already localising the SDGs through practical implementation, not only theory.

The Drakenstein Municipality VLR demonstrates that sustainable development is embedded into the Municipality's existing planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting systems through the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), and Annual Report. The report consistently shows real projects, measurable indicators, and institutional systems rather than initiatives the municipality is aspiring to achieve.

Drakenstein is a high-performing municipality that is using innovation and partnerships to drive inclusive and sustainable development.

The VLR highlights strong governance, clean audits, service delivery performance, renewable energy innovation, SMME support, and strategic partnerships as key enablers of development. The message is that Drakenstein is not waiting for change; it is actively piloting and scaling solutions.

The Municipality recognises that long-term sustainability requires continued collaboration, scaling, and targeted action to address inequality, unemployment, urbanisation, and climate change.

The VLR acknowledges ongoing challenges such as youth unemployment, inequality, infrastructure pressure, and climate vulnerability, while positioning partnerships and implementation at scale as a solution.



Chapter 2: Introduction and Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The Voluntary Local Review (VLR) is an internationally recognised reporting mechanism that enables cities and municipalities to assess, track, and communicate their contributions towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It serves not only as a reporting tool, but also as a strategic instrument to strengthen policy coherence, improve governance, and enhance accountability in local development.

For Drakenstein Municipality, the VLR represents a significant milestone in its move towards sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development. It reflects the Municipality's practical approach to align local planning frameworks with global development agendas, while ensuring that service delivery and economic development initiatives respond directly to the needs of its communities.

The VLR is firmly anchored in the Municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2024–2029, which remains the principal strategic document guiding development planning, budgeting, and implementation. The IDP articulates Drakenstein's long-term vision of becoming a "City of Excellence", underpinned by economic growth, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and good governance.

Through this VLR, Drakenstein Municipality demonstrates how its policies, programmes, and flagship projects contribute to selected priority SDGs and indicators, namely:

2.1.2 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

7.3.1 : % reduction in municipal energy consumption; and

7.2.1 : Number of clean energy projects implemented.

2.1.3 SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

8.3.1 : Number of SMMEs supported;

8.5.2 : Jobs supported/created through municipal programmes; and

8.9.1 : Number of LED initiatives implemented.

2.1.4 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

11.1.1 : % households with access to basic services.

11.7.1: Proportion of population with access to public green spaces;

11.6.1: % waste collected and diverted from landfill; and

11.3.1 : Number of spatial planning approvals processed.



2.1.5 SDG 13: Climate Action

13.1.2 : Number of climate adaptation projects implemented; and

13.2.1 : Integration of climate actions into planning instruments.

2.1.6 SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

16.6.1: % of SDBIP targets achieved in the 2024/2025 financial year;

16.6.1 : Audit outcome (clean / unqualified);

16.7.2: Number of public participation engagements held; and

16.6.2 : % of complaints resolved within prescribed timeframes.

2.1.7 SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

17.16.1: Number of active partnerships;

17.17.1 (proxy): Value of joint programmes implemented; and

17.17.1: Value of leveraged external support (financial / technical).

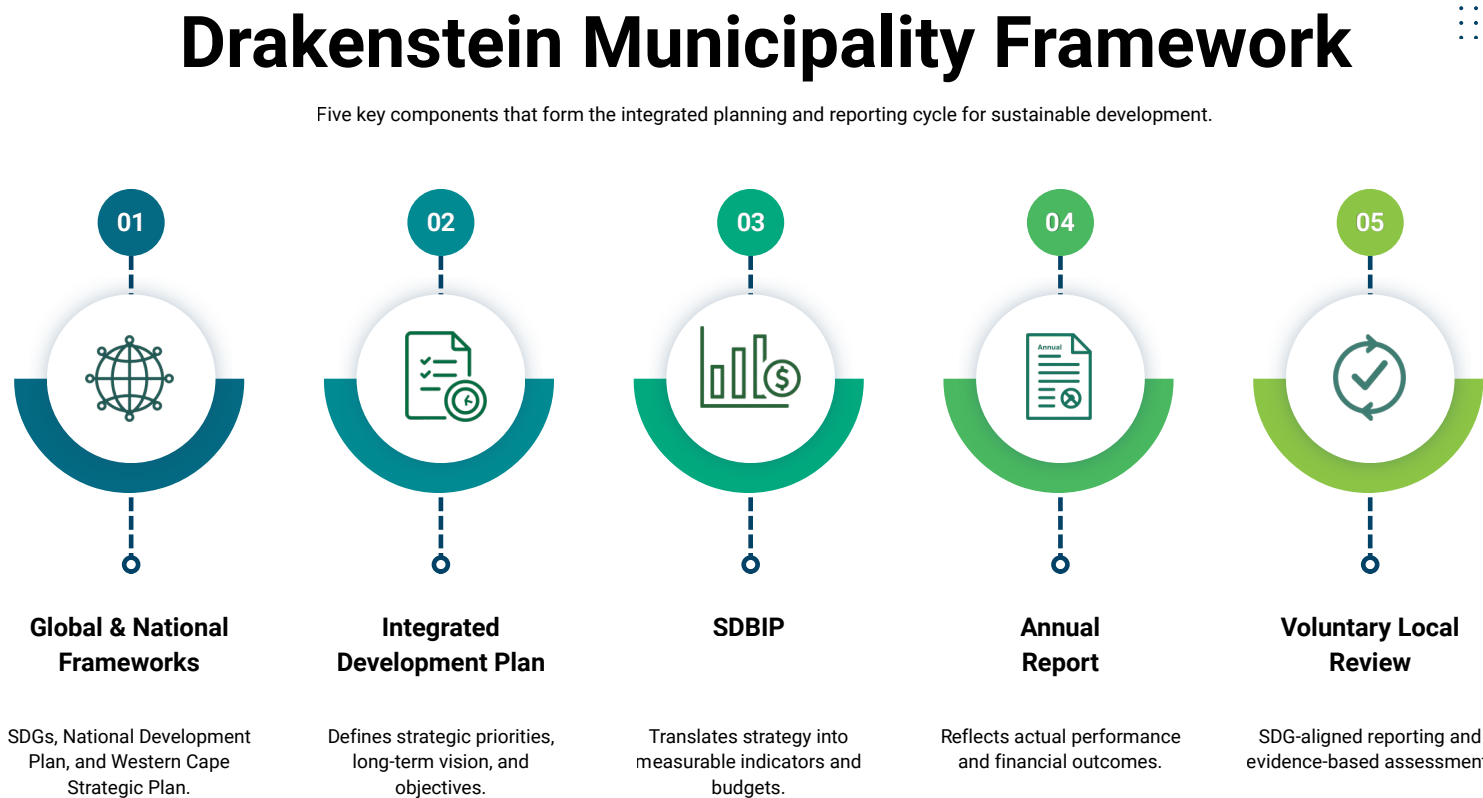


The report does not report on the theoretical alignment, but rather focuses on practical implementation, highlighting tangible projects, measurable outcomes, and institutional learning. The VLR provides a transparent account of progress while it identifies opportunities for strengthening local action towards the 2030 Agenda.

2.2 Methodology

The preparation of the Drakenstein VLR is grounded in the Municipality’s integrated planning, implementation, and performance management system. This is to ensure that the report reflects credible, evidence-based performance rather than aspirations. These municipal systems are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the National Development Plan (NDP), and the Western Cape Strategic Development Plan, ensuring vertical integration across all the spheres of government.

Figure 1: Drakenstein Municipality Integrated Planning and Performance Framework.



The VLR draws on three core municipal instruments:

2.2.1 Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

The IDP provides the strategic direction and development priorities of the Municipality over a five-year period. It identifies key focus areas, development objectives, and catalytic projects aligned with community needs and long-term sustainability goals.

2.2.2 Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP)

The SDBIP translates the IDP into implementable actions, linking strategic objectives to measurable performance indicators, targets, and budgets. It ensures that municipal programmes are operationalised and tracked on a continuous basis.

2.2.3 Annual Report

The Annual Report serves as the Municipality's primary performance accountability mechanism, providing verified information on the achievement of targets, financial performance, and service delivery outcomes.



The Municipality's planning and reporting system operates as an integrated cycle aligned to global and national frameworks:

- a) The SDGs, National Development Plan, and Western Cape Provincial Strategic Plan provide the overarching development framework;
- b) The IDP defines what the Municipality aims to achieve during a five-year cycle;
- c) The SDBIP defines how these objectives will be implemented and measured; and
- d) The Annual Report reflects what has been achieved, including challenges and corrective actions.

This integrated approach ensures that the VLR is grounded in actual performance data, enhancing its credibility as both a reporting and strategic planning tool.

2.3 SDG Alignment Approach

A targeted approach was adopted to align municipal programmes with the SDGs:

- 2.3.1 Identification of priority SDGs relevant to Drakenstein's development context;
- 2.3.2 Mapping of IDP stakeholders, strategic objectives and projects against SDG targets;
- 2.3.3 Extraction of relevant indicators from the SDBIP and performance reports;
- 2.3.4 Selection of flagship projects and case studies that demonstrate impact; and
- 2.3.5 Integration of qualitative narratives and quantitative data to support storytelling.

This approach ensures that the VLR not only reports on compliance but also tells the story of local development impact.

2.4 Stakeholder Engagement

The VLR process incorporated extensive stakeholder engagement to ensure inclusivity, transparency, and shared ownership as it recognises that sustainable development requires a whole of society approach.

2.4.1 Internal Departmental Inputs

All relevant municipal departments (Environmental Management, Supply Chain Management, Economic Development and Tourism, Integrated Development Plan Office and Communications) were engaged to provide input on programmes, projects, initiatives and performance data linked to the selected SDGs. This process ensured:

- a) Cross-departmental alignment;
- b) Accurate reflection of service delivery initiatives and development of indicators; and
- c) Integration of sector-specific insights into the VLR.

Departments contributed both quantitative performance data and qualitative narratives, to enable a comprehensive representation of municipal efforts.

2.4.2 Internal Stakeholder Engagement Session

An internal stakeholder engagement session was convened with Members of the Mayoral Committee to:

- a) Introduce the VLR framework and objectives;
- b) Validate SDG alignment across departments;
- c) Identify key projects and success stories; and
- d) Strengthen institutional understanding of SDG localisation.

This session played a critical role in fostering a shared institutional vision and ensuring that the VLR is embedded within municipal systems rather than treated as a standalone exercise.

2.4.3 External Stakeholder Engagement Session

An external stakeholder engagement session was held with representatives from:

- a) Business and SMME sectors;
- b) Civil society organisations; and
- c) Provincial Department.

The purpose of this engagement was to:

- d) Gather diverse perspectives on local development challenges and opportunities;
- e) Validate the relevance of selected SDGs;
- f) Identify existing partnerships and potential areas for collaboration; and
- g) Ensure that the VLR reflects the lived realities of communities and stakeholders.

2.4.4 Community Participation Platforms

The VLR process was further informed by community participation mechanisms aligned with the IDP process, including:

- a) Public IDP consultation meetings;
- b) Ward committee engagements;
- c) Sector-specific forums; and
- d) Community outreach initiatives.

These platforms ensured that the voices of residents are reflected in the Municipality's development priorities, reinforcing the principle that localisation of the SDGs must be community-driven.

Chapter 3: Local Context

Drakenstein Municipality is strategically located within the Cape Winelands District of the Western Cape and represents a dynamic blend of urban centres and rural settlements, including Paarl, Wellington, Saron, Gouda, Simondium and Hermon. This spatial diversity positions the Municipality as both an economic hub and an agricultural heartland, contributing significantly to regional and provincial growth.

With a population of approximately 311,742 residents, Drakenstein is experiencing steady demographic growth, placing increasing demand for infrastructure, services, and economic opportunities. The Municipality spans an area of 1,538 km² and is administratively structured into 33 wards, governed by 65 councillors, ensuring broad-based political representation and local accountability.

Drakenstein holds a prominent position within the South African local government landscape. It is the second-largest municipality in the Western Cape, ranked among the top 20 municipalities nationally, and recognised as a leading secondary city, particularly in terms of budget size and service delivery capacity. The Municipality manages a total revenue base of approximately R3.997 billion, with strong operational performance reflected in a 95.7% operational budget spend and 98.5% capital budget expenditure.

The Municipality is characterised by its scenic natural environment, rich cultural and historical assets, and a well-established agricultural economy, particularly in viticulture and agri-processing. Its strategic location along key transport corridors enhances access to national and international markets, while its educational institutions and sporting infrastructure contribute to human capital development and social cohesion.

Drakenstein demonstrates strong service delivery performance, with near-universal access to basic services (Section 71, 2024/2025):

- a) 99.65% access to water;
- b) 96.12% access to sanitation;
- c) 90.8% access to electricity; and
- d) 100% access to refuse removal.

These indicators reflect a municipality that has made significant progress in advancing inclusive service delivery, forming a solid foundation for sustainable development.

However, like many rapidly growing municipalities, Drakenstein faces a complex set of developmental challenges that require targeted and integrated interventions.

3.1 Key Challenges

Despite its many strengths, Drakenstein Municipality continues to navigate a range of structural and socio-economic challenges that shape its development. High levels of youth unemployment remain a critical concern, limiting economic inclusion and increasing vulnerability among young people. Despite the presence of key economic sectors within the Municipality, unemployment continues to constrain inclusive growth and socio-economic participation. As highlighted in the Municipal Economic Review and Outlook (MERO), the prevalence of dominant sectors such as agriculture, while contributing significantly to economic output, has been characterised by patterns of jobless growth. This has limited the sector's capacity to absorb labour, particularly among low-skilled and young job seekers, thereby aggravating unemployment challenges within the local economy.

Inequality remains a defining challenge within the Municipality, with a Gini coefficient of 0.638 reflecting significant income gaps. These inequalities are spatially and socially evident between urban and rural areas as well as across different communities, and continue to impact equitable access to opportunities and resources.

Rapid population growth and ongoing urbanisation have intensified pressure on the housing sector, contributing to a growing housing backlog. This has placed increasing strain on land availability and requires careful spatial planning to ensure sustainable and inclusive human settlements.

Furthermore, expanding residential areas and economic activities are placing considerable pressure on existing infrastructure systems. Water, sanitation, electricity, and transport networks must be continuously maintained, upgraded, and expanded to keep pace with growth, requiring sustained capital investment and forward-looking planning, this is event in the innovative solutions implemented by Drakenstein.

Drakenstein faces rising climate-related risks, including drought, flooding, and increasing temperatures. These environmental pressures pose a threat to water security, agricultural productivity, and the overall resilience of communities, particularly those most vulnerable. Addressing these challenges has required integrated and climate-responsive approaches to development.



Drakenstein in Numbers



Size:
1,538 km²



Population:
311,742



Gini Coefficient:
0.638



Unemployment:
17.4%

33 Wards



Households:
72,855
2025 Quantec

65 Councillors



Access to
electricity:
90.8%



Access
to water:
99.65%



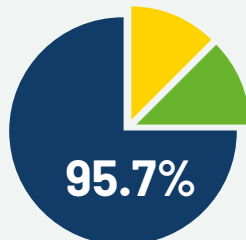
Access to
sewerage:
96.12%



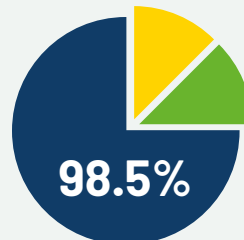
Access to refuse
removal:
100%



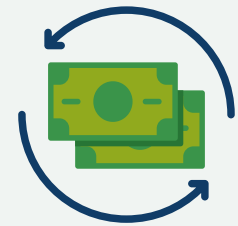
Total revenue :
R3.997 billion



% operational
budget spend



% capital
budget spend



Cash and
investments:
R1.029 billion

18

Unqualified
audits



1655
Employees



Value of indigent
subsidies:
R192.3 million



New building plan
applications:
2,120



Repairs and
maintenance as a %
of opex:
10.3%



Employee cost
as a % of opex:
26.7%



Electricity losses:
7.77%



Water losses
(technical):
20.86%

Chapter 4: SDG Localisation

Localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a critical process through which global development actions are translated into actions at the municipal level. For Drakenstein Municipality, SDG localisation is not approached as a parallel reporting system or additional framework, but as an integrated component of existing planning, budgeting, and implementation systems.

The Municipality has embedded the SDGs within its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2024–2029, ensuring alignment with national priorities as articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, as well as the Western Cape Strategic Development Plan. This alignment strengthens policy coherence across spheres of government and enables the Municipality to contribute meaningfully to South Africa's broader sustainable development agenda.



Chapter 5: SDG 7 - Clean Energy

5.1 Advancing Energy Resilience

Energy security remains a critical issue for Drakenstein Municipality, with increasing pressure on the electricity network driven by rising demand, infrastructure constraints, and the broader impacts of national energy instability. As highlighted in municipal planning instruments, including the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2024–2029 and supporting infrastructure strategies, the need to strengthen energy resilience has become central to ensuring sustainable service delivery, economic continuity, and community well-being.

In response to increasing energy instability, Drakenstein Municipality has adopted an action based approach to advancing energy resilience by promoting diversification of energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and supporting the transition towards cleaner and more sustainable energy solutions. This includes interventions such as the integration of renewable energy technologies, the exploration of alternative energy supply models, and the implementation of energy-saving measures across municipal operations.

Energy resilience is also closely linked to local economic development. Reliable and affordable energy is essential for business confidence, particularly for small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), informal traders, and agri-processing activities that are key drivers of the local economy. Municipal initiatives, such as the development of solar-powered infrastructure for SMMEs and support for clean energy solutions in informal trading spaces, demonstrate a commitment to enabling inclusive and resilient economic participation.

Furthermore, the Municipality notes the importance of aligning its energy interventions with climate action objectives, contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and supporting a just energy transition. Through partnerships with provincial, national and international stakeholders, Drakenstein continues to explore innovative financing and implementation models to scale up clean energy access and infrastructure.

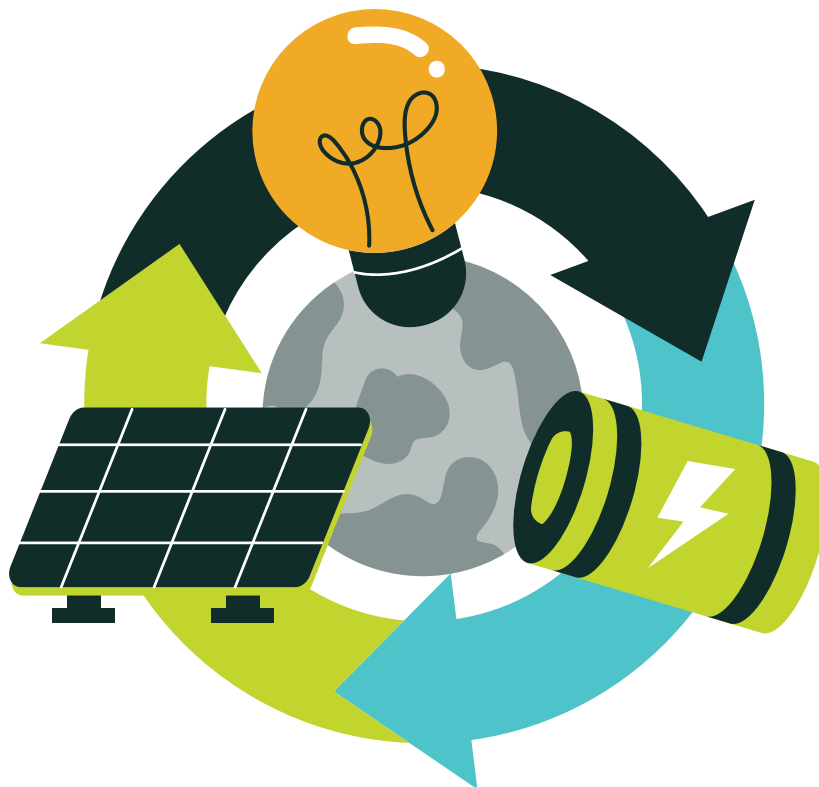
This section highlights the Municipality's key interventions, partnerships, and outcomes in advancing SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, with a focus on building a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable local energy system within the 2024/2025 financial year.

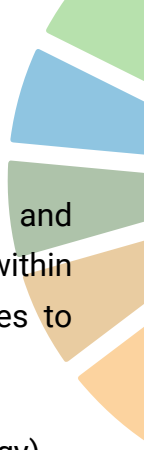
5.2 Indicator: 7.2.1 : Number of clean energy projects implemented

Drakenstein Municipality has made measurable progress in improving energy efficiency across its operations, driven by a strong institutional drive towards sustainability and decarbonisation. Through the implementation of energy-efficient technologies and infrastructure upgrades, the Municipality has reduced its overall energy consumption footprint while simultaneously improving service reliability.

5.2.1 Pioneering Clean Energy Generation through Water Infrastructure (Leliefontein Pump-As-Turbine Station)

Drakenstein Municipality has demonstrated innovation in clean energy generation through the implementation of the Leliefontein Pump-As-Turbine (PAT) Station, an initiative that converts existing water infrastructure into a source of renewable energy. By reversing the flow of water through standard pump systems, the Municipality can generate electricity using existing assets, significantly reducing the need for additional capital-intensive infrastructure.





This project reflects a practical and cost-effective approach to clean energy generation and contributes to reducing reliance on the national grid while improving operational efficiency within water services. The initiative has received national recognition for innovation and continues to position Drakenstein as a leader in municipal energy solutions. (Drakenstein, June 2025)

5.2.2 Transitioning to Green Electricity Infrastructure (SF₆-Free Electricity Distribution Technology)

Drakenstein Municipality has modernised its electricity distribution network through the introduction of SF₆-free green technology as part of its decarbonisation journey. The adoption of Schneider Electric's RM AirSeT air-powered ring main units replaces conventional systems that rely on sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆), a highly potent greenhouse gas.

This transition reduces the Municipality's carbon footprint while improving grid reliability, enhancing safety, and reducing maintenance downtime. The Municipality became the first in Africa to implement this technology, positioning itself as a global leader in municipal energy innovation. Drakenstein Municipality received a Sustainability Impact Award for the Anglophone Africa region for its outstanding efforts in turning sustainability ambition into action and achieving its decarbonisation goals in 2024.

5.2.3 Turning Waste into Energy; Sludge-to-Energy Initiative (Paarl Wastewater Treatment Works)

Drakenstein Municipality is advancing circular economy principles through its planned sludge-to-energy facility at the Paarl Wastewater Treatment Works. The initiative aims to convert sewerage sludge into energy, reducing methane emissions and lowering electricity demand at the facility. The municipality demonstrates a holistic approach to sustainability and infrastructure planning, while unlocking long-term operational cost savings by integrating waste management with energy production.

5.2.4 Enabling Renewable Energy at Scale - Gouda Wind Farm

The Gouda Wind Farm, located within the Drakenstein municipal area, contributes significantly to renewable energy generation, producing enough electricity to power approximately 200,000 households annually. The facility generates 138 MW of clean energy and avoids substantial carbon emissions each year, making it a key contributor to regional decarbonisation.

While not municipally owned, the wind farm forms part of the broader local energy ecosystem and highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in advancing clean energy transitions (Drakenstein, June 2025).

5.2.5 Building Energy Efficiency into Municipal Infrastructure (Green Building Initiatives)

Drakenstein Municipality continues to integrate energy efficiency into its infrastructure, with the Solid Waste Management administrative building in Paarl serving as a leading example. The building incorporates energy-efficient lighting, solar water heating, and water-saving technologies, reducing operational energy demand while promoting sustainable design principles.

These initiatives contribute directly to reducing municipal energy consumption and demonstrate the Municipality's commitment to environmentally responsible infrastructure development.

The Municipality also published a green building manual in 2010 as an effort to encourage the construction sector to implement greener building approaches.

Chapter 6: SDG 8 - Decent Work & Economic Growth

6.1 Enabling Inclusive Economic Participation

Drakenstein Municipality's Voluntary Local Review (VLR) positions economic development as a critical lever for advancing inclusive growth, reducing inequality, and improving livelihoods. Within this framework, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth is central to unlocking opportunities for residents and strengthening the resilience of the local economy.

Drakenstein's approach to SDG 8 is informed by a combination of strategic planning instruments and evidence-based analysis, including the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2024–2029, the Drakenstein Integrated Economic Growth Strategy (IEGS), the Annual Report 2024/2025, and the Cape Winelands District MERO 2024/2025. Together, these documents highlight both the Municipality's strong economic foundation and the structural challenges that continue to shape its development trajectory.

The local economy is anchored by key sectors which are mainly agriculture, tourism, logistics, and services. These sectors work at positioning Drakenstein as a significant contributor to the regional economy. The economy of Drakenstein has challenges, including high unemployment, particularly among youth, uneven job creation across sectors, jobless growth and barriers to entry for SMMEs and informal businesses.

The Integrated Economic Growth Strategy further emphasises that, while Drakenstein has competitive advantages such as its strategic location and sectoral strengths, the economy remains insufficiently diversified, and the pace of job creation is not adequate to absorb the growing labour force. This reinforces the need for targeted, inclusive interventions that actively enable participation in the economy.



Drakenstein Municipality has adopted a facilitative and enabling approach to Local Economic Development (LED). This approach focuses on:

- a) Supporting the growth and sustainability of SMMEs and informal enterprises;
- b) Creating pathways for job creation through municipal programmes and partnerships;
- c) Implementing place-based LED initiatives that unlock opportunities across urban and rural areas;
- d) Strengthening linkages between sectors to promote a more diversified and resilient local economy; and
- e) Focusing on targeted investment promotion interventions.

This chapter builds on these strategic and analytical foundations by focusing on three key indicators that reflect the Municipality's progress in enabling inclusive economic participation:

Indicator 8.3.1: The number of SMMEs supported, demonstrating efforts to expand entrepreneurship and improve business sustainability.

Indicator 8.5.2: The number of jobs supported or created through municipal programmes, reflecting targeted interventions to address unemployment.

Indicator 8.9.1: The number of Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives implemented, highlighting catalytic projects and partnerships that drive economic activity.

6.2 Indicator 8.3.1: Number of SMMEs supported

Drakenstein Municipality works closely with small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs). The Municipality is aware that SMMEs are a critical driver of inclusive economic growth, innovation, and job creation. In line with its Integrated Economic Growth Strategy, the Municipality has prioritised creating an enabling environment that reduces barriers to entry, strengthens business capabilities, and improves access to markets for emerging enterprises.

The Municipality's programmes demonstrate a multi-layered approach to SMME support, targeting both formal and informal businesses. This includes business development support, training, access to trading infrastructure, and integration into local value chains and eco-systems. The informal economy, in particular, is acknowledged as a key contributor to livelihoods, with targeted interventions aimed at improving dignity, compliance, and economic participation.

A notable example is the Municipality's initiative to integrate informal recyclers ("wastepreneurs") into the formal waste economy, providing training, protective equipment, and improved income opportunities for 21 wastepreneurs at the municipal landfill site in Wellington. This initiative not only supports enterprise development but also contributes to environmental sustainability and circular economy practices.

In addition, the Municipality's Fair Trade City campaign has created an enabling platform for small producers and social enterprises by promoting ethical sourcing, sustainable production, and local market access. This initiative supports SMMEs to participate in triple bottom-line enterprises (economic, social, and environmental impact), strengthening their long-term sustainability. This is achieved through projects such as Library Business Corners, Business Outreaches with partners and the implementation of Fair Fridays.

These interventions are further reinforced through Local Economic Development (LED) programmes reported in the Annual Report 2024/2025, which include support to informal traders, enterprise development initiatives, and partnerships that expand market access.

Collectively, these efforts demonstrate that Drakenstein Municipality is not only increasing the number of SMMEs supported, but also improving the quality, sustainability, and resilience of small enterprises, ensuring that they can meaningfully contribute to the local economy.

6.3 Indicator 8.5.2: The number of jobs supported or created through municipal programmes

Job creation remains a central priority for Drakenstein Municipality, particularly in the context of persistent unemployment and the need to expand access to decent and sustainable work opportunities.

The Municipality adopts a programme-based and partnership-driven approach to employment creation, recognising that local government plays a facilitative role in unlocking opportunities across sectors. This includes direct 763 job creation through the Public Works and Municipal programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). This includes indirect job support through investment facilitation, infrastructure development, and sector-specific initiatives.

Evidence from the MERO 2024/2025 indicates that employment in the region is largely driven by labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and trade, while higher-value sectors contribute less to job creation. This reinforces the importance of targeted municipal interventions to bridge the gap between economic growth and employment outcomes.

Drakenstein's initiatives demonstrate this approach in practice:

The Gouda Wind Farm, located within the municipal area, contributes to local employment through operations and maintenance, while supporting the broader green economy transition.

The Winelands Sustainable Tourism Route, launched in 2024, creates opportunities for local employment and enterprise participation across tourism value chains, including hospitality, guiding, and local product development.

Infrastructure and environmental programmes, such as water management, waste integration, and green energy initiatives, also support job creation both directly and indirectly.

Furthermore, the Municipality’s alignment with provincial programmes such as the Growth for Jobs Strategy strengthens its ability to leverage partnerships and scale employment opportunities. Through these combined efforts, Drakenstein Municipality contributes to both job creation and job support, ensuring that employment opportunities are not only generated but are also linked to sustainable economic activities.

6.4 Indicator 8.9.1: The number of Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives implemented

Drakenstein Municipality has adopted a strategic and catalytic approach to Local Economic Development (LED), focusing on initiatives that unlock economic potential, attract investment, and stimulate inclusive growth across sectors.

The Municipality’s LED initiatives are informed by its Integrated Economic Growth Strategy, which emphasises sector development, investment facilitation, and the creation of an enabling environment. These initiatives are implemented across both urban and rural areas, ensuring spatially inclusive economic development.

Key LED initiatives implemented by the Municipality include:

6.4.1 The Winelands Sustainable Tourism Route, which positions Drakenstein as a leader in sustainable tourism while supporting 10 local businesses and creating new economic opportunities for 3 SMMEs; and

6.4.2 The Climate Partnership with Neumarkt (Germany), which facilitates knowledge exchange, environmental innovation (with the building of a Green Classroom at the Paarl Arboretum), and local economic opportunities linked to sustainability (hosting of the Buy Local Build Africa walkathon, where 616 walkers registered) and green growth.

These initiatives reflect a shift from traditional LED approaches to more innovative, partnership-driven, and sustainability-focused interventions, aligned with global trends and local needs.

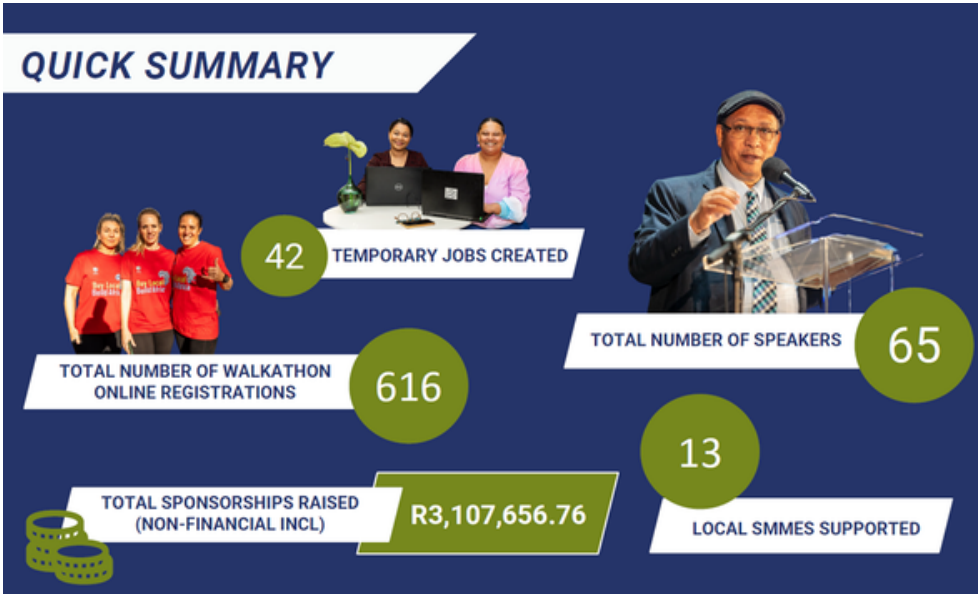


Figure 2: Fair Trade Towns International Conference hosted for the first time in Africa b Drakenstein Municipality smmary.

Chapter 7: SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities

7.1 Building Inclusive Communities

Sustainable development is rooted in the creation of inclusive, safe, resilient, and well-integrated communities. In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 11, the Municipality is committed to ensuring that all residents, regardless of socio-economic status, geographic location, or background, have equitable access to opportunities, services, and infrastructure that enables a dignified quality of life.

The Municipality continues to address the legacy of spatial inequality by promoting integrated human settlements, improving connectivity between communities and economic centres, prioritising investment corridors and underserved areas.

Building inclusive communities in Drakenstein extends beyond physical infrastructure. It integrates human settlements development, access to basic services, public safety, environmental sustainability, and community participation. Through targeted programmes and partnerships, the Municipality seeks to ensure that vulnerable groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and informal settlement residents, are included in the development processes and benefit from municipal interventions.

Key initiatives supporting inclusive communities include:

- a) The upgrading of informal settlements to improve living conditions and access to basic services, all 44 informal settlements have basic services (water and electricity);
- b) Investment in public spaces and community facilities that promote social cohesion and active communities;
- c) Integrated transport and mobility planning to improve access to economic opportunities; and
- d) Strengthening participation in governance through ward committees and community engagement platforms.

Urban development is responsive to future challenges, including rapid urbanisation, climate change, and socio-economic pressures. The Municipality is advancing a people-centric and resilience-driven approach to urban planning, ensuring that no community is left behind.

7.2 Indicator 11.1.1 : % households with access to basic services.

Drakenstein Municipality has achieved universal access to basic services in key areas, with 100% of households receiving at least a minimum level of service delivery.

The Municipality reported a 100% of households receive at least a basic level of service (solid waste removal). All 72,855 households service points receive waste collection services, it further reports 0 households below minimum service level (0%). Electricity access for formal households is also reported at 90.8%. The Municipality has 44 informal settlements and these sites have services (Electricity, Water and Refuse removal).

7.3 Indicator 11.7.1: Proportion of population with access to public green spaces.

Parks and Open Spaces have 291 playparks and open spaces that are maintained regularly. The proportion of population with access to public to green spaces has not been quantified as a percentage, but there is strong/high access demonstrated through extensive provision of parks and open spaces.

7.4 Indicator 11.6.1: % waste collected and diverted from landfill

100% waste collection coverage achieved by the Municipality. There is an opportunity for an improvement in the percentage (%) of waste diverted from landfills, which was reported as 32% average for 2024/2025. The Municipality further reported an average of 115.74 tons/month were diverted through recycling initiatives in the financial year.

7.5 Indicator 11.3.1 : Number of spatial planning approvals processed.

A total of 5,140 spatial/development approvals were processed within the 2024/2025 financial year. The developments were valued at R3,744,000,000.00.



Chapter 8: SDG 13 – Climate Action

8.1 Responding to Climate Risks

The Environmental Planning and Sustainability Sub-Section plays a significant role in planning for sustainable development through several initiatives, including the implementation of the Climate Change Response Plan, providing environmental input on development applications and coordinating the Climate Partnership with Stadt Neumarkt, a municipality located in Germany (Annal Report, 2024/2025).

8.2 Indicator 13.1.2 : Number of climate adaptation projects implemented

1 climate adaptation project was partly implemented during the 2024/2025 financial year; this is the upgrading of the Paarl Arboretum. Six (6) priority climate adaptation projects were identified and prepared for implementation through the Hybrid Flood Alleviation Programme.

8.3 Indicator 13.2.1 : Integration of climate actions into planning instruments

Climate change considerations are integrated into Drakenstein Municipality's planning instruments, including the Climate Change Response Plan, Spatial Development Framework, and Integrated Development Plan. These frameworks guide sustainable development and ensure that climate resilience is embedded in land use planning and decision-making processes. Twenty-seven (27) environmental education interventions were implemented within the calendar year.



Chapter 9: SDG 16 - Strong Institutions

9.1 Story: Building Trust through Governance

Drakenstein is one of 257 Municipalities in South Africa, and 205 Category B-Municipalities, the municipality has had 11 consecutive clean audits. Drakenstein Municipality is among a small select group of high-performing local municipalities in South Africa that have sustained clean audit outcomes over more than a decade, the latter reflects strong governance, financial management, and institutional stability.

The Municipality relies on tools to maintain good governance, one of which is the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP). The SDBIP is a tool that converts the IDP and budget into measurable criteria of how, where and when the strategies, objectives and normal business processes of the Municipality are implemented (Annual Report, 2024/2025).

Ward Committees in Drakenstein Municipality held approximately 134 meetings during the 2024/2025 financial year, reflecting strong adherence to participatory governance processes and consistent community engagement across all the 33 wards. A total of approximately 67 public ward meetings were held across all 33 wards during the 2024/2025 financial year, demonstrating active community engagement and participatory governance at a local level.

Table 1: SDG 16 indicator report

Series no.	Indicator number and description	Report
1.	16.6.1: Audit outcome (clean/unqualified).	1 (11th consecutive year).
2.	16.7.2: Number of public participation engagements held.	134 Ward Committee meetings held, and 67 public ward meetings.

Chapter 10: SDG 17 - Partnerships

10.1 Collaboration for Impact

Drakenstein Municipality maintains an extensive network of more than 10 active partnerships across international, national, and local levels, supporting climate action, economic development, governance, and knowledge exchange.

10.2 Indicator 17.16.1: Number of active partnerships

The Municipality participates in a wide range of formal partnerships and intergovernmental forums, including:

10.2.1 International partnerships

Climate partnership with Stadt Neumarkt (Germany);
Engagement Global
Fair Trade Towns International;
World Fair Trade Organization; and
Walvis Bay Municipality partnership (Namibia)

10.2.2 Programme partnerships

C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF) (climate adaptation support); and
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

10.2.3 Academic partnerships

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) & Nuremberg Technical University.

10.2.4 Intergovernmental & sector platforms

Western Cape Climate Change Forum;
Disaster Management Forum;
Municipal Planning Heads Forum;
Waste Management Forums;
Cape Winelands District Municipality;
IDP Representative Forum; and
District & Provincial coordination structures.

Figure 3: Partners in the implementation of the Fair Trade International Conference.



Chapter 11: Performance Monitoring

Drakenstein Municipality implements a structured performance management system that ensures alignment between planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting. This system is anchored in three key instruments: i) the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), ii) the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), and iii) the Annual Report.

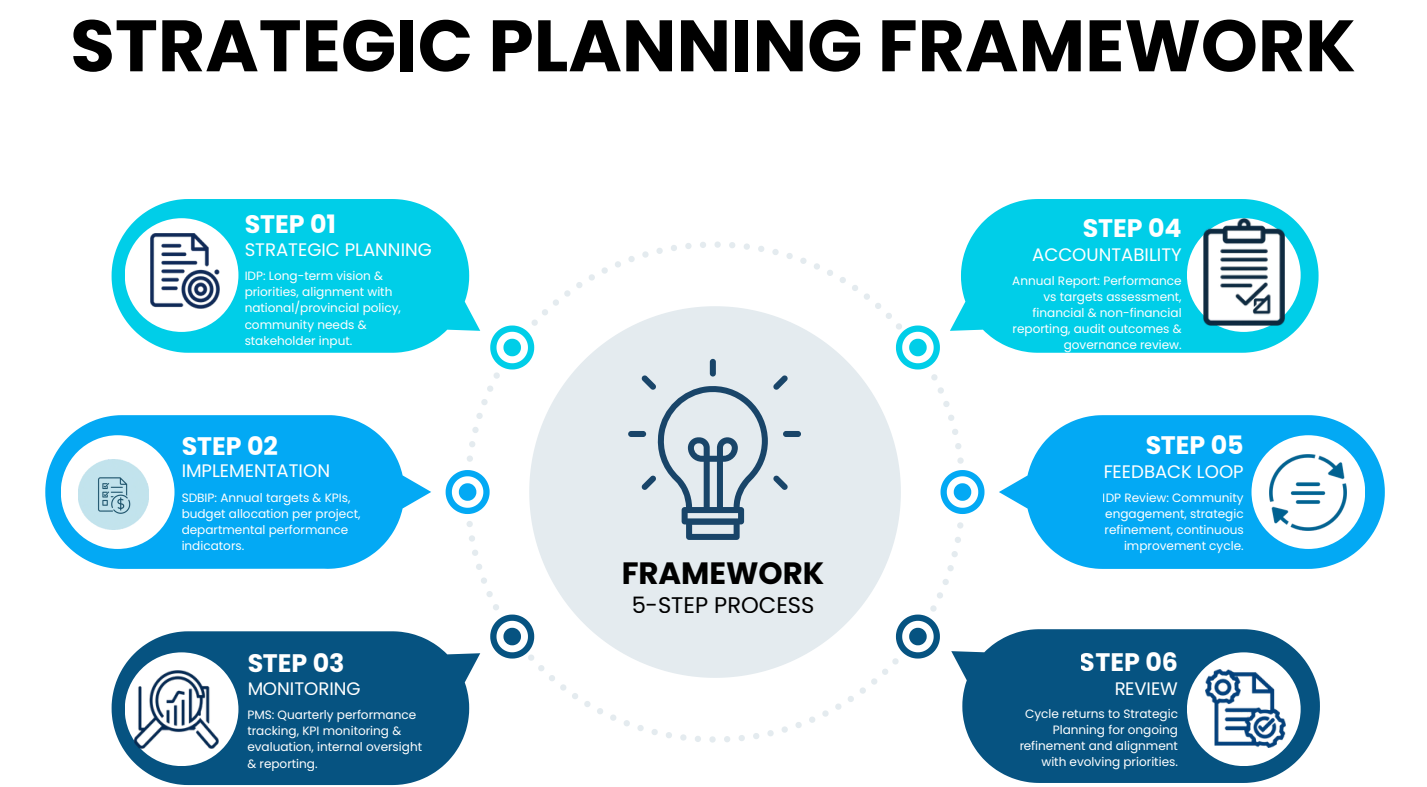
The IDP provides the Municipality’s overall strategic direction, setting out long-term development priorities informed by community needs and aligned with national and provincial policy frameworks. The SDBIP then translates these priorities into practical, measurable actions, linking projects, budgets, and performance targets to ensure that planned interventions are implemented effectively.

The Annual Report completes the performance assessment cycle by assessing performance against these targets, providing a transparent account of what has been achieved and identifying areas for improvement.

This integrated approach ensures that planning is not done in isolation, but is continuously tracked, evaluated, and refined. It is further strengthened by:

- 11.1 A formal Performance Management System (PMS) that tracks progress on a quarterly basis;
- 11.2 Oversight by Council and governance structures, including audit processes; and
- 11.3 Ongoing community participation through IDP engagements and ward committee structures.

Figure 4: Strategic Planning Framework.



Chapter 12: Way Forward

Drakenstein Municipality will continue to build on the progress made through its SDG localisation journey, with a clear focus on categorising key performance areas, strengthening impact, deepening partnerships, and moving towards a systematic implementation at scale.

Going forward, the Municipality will prioritise catalytic projects that unlock economic opportunities, improve service delivery, and support inclusive growth. These projects will remain central to driving sustainable development and delivering tangible outcomes for communities.

A key focus area will also be the expansion of partnerships across local, provincial, national, and international stakeholders. Strengthening these relationships will enable access to funding, technical expertise, and innovative approaches that support implementation and long-term sustainability.

The Municipality will further prioritise the scaling of sustainable initiatives, particularly those that have demonstrated impact. This includes expanding pilot projects, embedding sustainability into core municipal programmes, and ensuring that interventions reach communities most in need.

Through this approach, Drakenstein Municipality will move beyond planning and pilot phases towards implementation, scale, and measurable impact, while continuing to build a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable municipal area.



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Chapter 13: Conclusion

This Voluntary Local Review reflects Drakenstein Municipality's pledge to aligning its development priorities with the Sustainable Development Goals, while responding to the realities and needs of its communities.

The review demonstrates that meaningful progress has been made across key areas, particularly in strengthening governance, improving service delivery, and advancing inclusive economic development. At the same time, it highlights the importance of continued focus on implementation, partnerships, and scaling initiatives that deliver measurable impact.

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