



2026 Local Government Elections: Campaign Manifesto

The Palm Ridge Community Forum enters the local government elections as an organisation born from the struggles of our community.

We have organised around electricity, service delivery and the everyday conditions confronting working-class people in Palm Ridge. Our participation in the elections must be an extension of that work.

We do not believe that the problems facing our community can be solved simply by electing better individuals to council. The power to change our conditions must be built through the organisation, unity and collective action of ordinary people themselves.

For this reason, our election campaign will be a campaign to build the Palm Ridge Community Forum and strengthen the independent organisation of the community.

Whether we win or lose a council seat, we intend to emerge from this election with more organised residents, more trained activists, stronger street and neighbourhood structures, greater political understanding and a greater capacity to fight for dignity and justice.

Our Programme:

We fight for a municipality organised around human need rather than profit.

1. Electricity, water, sanitation, housing and other basic services must be treated as social necessities to which every person is entitled. No household should be condemned to darkness, hunger or indignity because it is poor.

2. We oppose the commercialisation and privatisation of basic municipal services. Public resources should be used to meet the needs of communities and to create decent work rather than enrich private contractors and politically connected interests.
3. We fight for decent employment and for the expansion of socially useful work. Municipal work should provide secure employment with decent wages and conditions. Workers providing public services are not the enemies of communities. Workers and communities have a common interest in properly funded and democratically controlled public services.
4. We fight for democratic control over the decisions affecting our community. Budgets, development priorities and major decisions affecting Palm Ridge should not be matters discussed only by politicians and officials. Residents must be organised so that they can collectively determine their priorities and hold representatives accountable.
5. These demands form part of a broader socialist struggle for a society in which the enormous wealth and productive capacity that already exist are democratically controlled and used to guarantee a dignified life for all.

Riverside, Madakeni and Aerial: Forgotten by the Municipality

The residents of Riverside, Madakeni and Aerial are in pain and anger at being ignored and forgotten by the municipality. They are living in a wet area, in dangerous and inhumane conditions, without any basic services.

During the rainy season, houses flood and children get sick. Our elders suffer without dignity.

We have knocked on the doors of the municipality many times. We have submitted memorandums. We have attended IDP meetings. But nothing happens. Only empty promises.

We cannot continue living like animals in a democratic South Africa. We are human beings and we deserve dignity.

We Demand:

- Decent jobs for all, including municipal job creation, insourcing of outsourced work and an end to the casualisation of municipal workers.
- A major programme of decent public housing, alongside the upgrading of informal settlements and an end to evictions without suitable alternative accommodation.
- Immediate provision of basic services to Riverside, Madakeni and Aerial, as required by Section 152 of the Constitution.

- An urgent site visit to Riverside, Madakeni and Aerial by the Mayor and the MMC for Human Settlements and Infrastructure.
- A clear plan for the formalisation and de-densification of Riverside, Madakeni and Aerial and, where the area is not suitable for housing, relocation with proper alternative land.
- Public land for public need, with unused municipal land released for housing, community facilities, food production and other socially useful purposes rather than private speculation.
- Reliable and affordable electricity, water, sanitation and refuse removal for every household, with an end to unjust disconnections and unaffordable service charges.
- Accessible public healthcare in every community, including properly staffed and resourced clinics and expanded mental health, reproductive health and emergency services.
- Quality public education and properly maintained schools, together with expanded early childhood development facilities, libraries and study centres.
- Safe and accessible recreational facilities, including sports grounds, parks, community halls, youth centres and cultural spaces.
- Concrete municipal action against gender-based violence, including properly funded shelters, survivor support services, safe public spaces and prevention programmes developed with women and community organisations.
- Food support for working-class households, including food subsidies, community feeding programmes, expanded school nutrition and support for community gardens and local food production.
- Safe, affordable and reliable public transport connecting working-class communities to places of work, education, healthcare and other essential services.
- Proper maintenance and expansion of community infrastructure, including roads, stormwater systems, street lighting and other neglected public facilities.
- Municipal budgets that prioritise the needs of working-class communities, with full transparency over spending, tenders and development plans.

Our Role in the Council Chamber:

Any representative elected through the Palm Ridge Community Forum must understand that the position does not belong to the individual. It belongs politically to the movement that created it.

Our representative must therefore remain accountable to the Forum and the community.

Important questions before council should be discussed with the Forum wherever possible. Regular community meetings must be held so that residents can give mandates, hear reports and decide collectively how their representative should act.

Our representative must report openly on council proceedings and make municipal information accessible to the community.

Our representative must refuse secret agreements, personal deals and arrangements that contradict the mandate of the community.

The position must never become a route to personal enrichment or political careerism. Any material benefits arising from holding office should be dealt with according to principles collectively determined by the Forum so that elected representatives continue to live and struggle alongside the people they represent.

If an elected representative fundamentally abandons the programme or democratic decisions of the Forum, they should be expected to resign their position following a democratic decision of recall by the Forum.

Beyond the Council Chamber:

We will use every position available to us to expose injustice, advance community demands and win improvements in people's lives. But we will not mislead residents into thinking that liberation will come from the council chamber.

Every demand raised inside council must be connected to organisation outside it. When petitions are ignored, we organise. When officials refuse to listen, we mobilise. When communities face injustice, we build solidarity across streets, wards, workplaces and communities.

Our elected representative will therefore remain an organiser first.

Beyond the Election:

We intend to use the election campaign as a means of strengthening the Palm Ridge Community Forum as an organisation. Door-to-door work, public meetings and campaign activity should help us draw more residents into the Forum, develop new activists, deepen political understanding and build stronger democratic structures through which the community can organise beyond election day.

It should also help strengthen links between community struggles, workers, trade unions, young people and other working-class formations. The success of the campaign should therefore be measured not only by the electoral result, but by whether it leaves the Forum larger, stronger, more politically developed and better able to organise and wage a socialist struggle in Palm Ridge and beyond.

The candidate is accountable to the Forum.

The Forum is accountable to the community.

The election is a means of building the struggle.

The struggle continues before, during and after election day.