

By **Tshwarelo eseng Mogakane**
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The ambitious R30-billion smart city that billionaire businessman Robert Gumede envisions for state-owned land south of Mbombela has encountered an early obstacle: contractual obligations, current residents, and the future of lucrative citrus land all still up for negotiation.

The enormous development could eventually spawn at least 8000 homes and apartments, creating an estimated 30000 construction jobs and 4000 permanent jobs, with the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (Mega) projecting a R45-billion impact on GDP.

Gumede's Guma appears to have been quietly working on its proposal, with its plans only surfacing through a brief entry in Mega's First Quarter Report for 2026/27, which revealed that the group had approached the agency to jointly develop a smart city on the Tekwane farmland.

The report also hinted at potential hurdles to the project.

"Issues requiring resolution before a formal agreement (that) can be finalised with Guma include dealing with existing contractual commitments and land encumbrances," it stated.

In an exclusive interview with *Sunday World*, Mega CEO Isaac Mahlangu confirmed that the agency had agreed in principle to pursue the project after Guma approached them earlier this year. According to Mahlangu, about 378.64 hectares of the 845-hectare Tekwane property are being considered for the mega project.

"As proposed, the Smart City will include residential, industrial, retail, and social facilities, as well as government and corporate offices," Mahlangu said.

So far, no feasibility study has begun, nor has any formal agree-

Billionaire Gumede's R30bn smart city dream hits snag

Project could have a R45bn impact on Mpumalanga's GDP

ment been signed. Among the issues that need to be urgently resolved is the future of the 118 hectares of citrus farms on Tekwane. More than 40000 trees provide dozens of permanent jobs and hundreds of seasonal employment opportunities.

Asked whether any of that cultivated land would be swallowed by the proposed city, Mahlangu said: "This forms part of the ongoing negotiations. Mega does not alienate the land. There will be no retrenchment."

Another complication involves properties already belonging to individuals within the proposed development footprint. Mahlangu revealed that houses and residential stands currently occupy roughly 16 hectares. "The

16-hectare residential area may or may not want to be part of the proposed development, depending on the outcome of the negotiations amongst the parties involved," he said.

There is another consideration that would have to be factored into the equation. Mega had previously appointed a strategic development partner for a proposed shopping centre in Tekwane. That project predates Guma's approach and would have to be integrated into the wider smart city if the plan proceeds.



The citrus farms on the Tekwane farmlands must be considered as land is identified for the proposed mega city. The citrus farms provide dozens of permanent jobs and hundreds of seasonal employment opportunities. / Supplied

That shopping centre is one of 10 projects in the pipeline which the Public Investment Corporation (PIC) has expressed interest in. Mahlangu, however, clarified the PIC has not expressed interest in Gumede's wider R30-billion smart city.

How Guma ultimately acquires development rights over valuable state-owned land is also likely to attract scrutiny. The DA has expressed con-

cerns that the project has already suffered from insufficient transparency. The party's finance, economic development and tourism spokesperson in Mpumalanga, Trudie Grové-Morgan, demanded public consultation and disclosure around the proposed development.

"The DA is not opposed to investment and economic development. However, development involving state-owned land must be transparent, lawful, and in the public interest."

Mahlangu told *Sunday World* that public participation would occur during the feasibility

phase. He added that negotiations could result in a long-term lease and maintained this would not conflict with the Mega Act or PIC Act.

"Guma has persistently insisted that the transaction be conducted in strict adherence to all applicable legislation."

Asked whether Guma had been formally selected or whether a competitive procurement process would still be required, Mahlangu described the discussions as "investment attraction negotiations as part of Mega's pursuit of bigger socio-economic impact".



Isaac Mahlangu



Robert Gumede

THEMBISILE HANI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



BIDS ARE HEREBY INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Tender No	Description	Price Per Bid Document	Compulsory Briefing	Technical Enquiries	Availability of Tender Documents	Closing Date
THLM/SCM09/2026-2027/FS01	Appointment of a Service Provider for Provision of Banking Services to ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality for a Period of 60 Months.	R 1 596.17	02 September 2026 @ 10.00 Municipal Shelter	Itumeleng Lekawa T: 013 986 9240 E: Lekawal@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za	26 August 2026 @ 08H00	27 October 2026 @ 12H00
THLM/SCM24/2025-2026/F02	Appointment of a Service Provider for the Supply and Delivery of Operational Full Maintenance Lease of ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality Vehicles for a Period of 36 Months (Re-Advert).	R 1 596.17	N / A	Richard Makhubele T: 013 986 9198 E: MakhubeleR@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za	26 August 2026 @ 08H00	28 September 2026 @ 12H00
THLM/SCM10/2026-2027/MM01	Appointment of Service Providers for Provision of Security Services to ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality for a Period of 36 Months.	R 1 596.17	02 September 2026 @ 11.00 Municipal Shelter	Tumelo Baloyi T: 013 986 9106 E: BaloyiT@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za	26 August 2026 @ 08H00	28 September 2026 @ 12H00

Prospective Service Providers are encouraged to download the tender documents from the E-Tenders Portal according to the dates indicated above at www.etenders.co.za. The only time hard copies will be made available is if there are technical challenges from the E-Tenders portal.

Cash and EFT payments will be accepted and must be made payable to ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality only for hard copy tender documents, any tender documents which are downloaded from the E-Tender portal are free of charge, the price per document is not applicable to them. Sealed envelopes marked with the tender number as indicated above, must be placed in the bid box at the Municipality's Offices, Stand Number 24, Mthombomuhle (Kwaggafontein C), no later than 12h00 on the above-mentioned dates.

Please take note that no bid documents will be given to couriers unless the courier company is in the possession of a letter on an official letterhead, confirming on behalf of the company the full details of the specific bid(s) to be collected and the payment of the full amount payable for bids is required.

The Council reserves the rights to either accept the whole or part of any bid, or not to appoint. Facsimiles or e-mailed documents will not be accepted. No awards will be made to a person who;

- Is in the service of the state,
- If that person is not a natural person, of which any director, manager, principal shareholder or stakeholder is a person in the service of state, and/ or

- Who is an advisor or consultant contracted with the municipality or municipal entity.

A Preferential Point system shall apply whereby a contract will be allocated to a bidder in accordance with the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, Act No 5 of 2000 and as defined in the Conditions of Tender in the tender document, read in conjunction with the Supply Chain Management Policy of ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality.

The Preferential Procurement Regulations of 2022 where **80/ 20 points system** will be applied wherein 80 points are for price and 20 for Specific Goals for project description: **Appointment of a Service Provider for Provision of Banking Services to ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality for a period of 60 months.** The Preferential Procurement Regulations of 2022 where 90/ 10 points system will be applied wherein 90 points are for price and 10 for Specific Goals for project description: **Appointment of a Service Provider for the Supply and Delivery of Operational Full Maintenance Lease of ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality Vehicles for a period of 36 months (Re-Advert) and Appointment of a Panel of Service Providers for Provision of Security Services to ThembeSile Hani Local Municipality for a period of 36 months.**

SCM Enquiries: Mr. I. Lekawa, through Tel: (013) 986 9240, Email: Lekawal@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za; Ms. P. Sibiya, through Tel: (013) 986 9153, Email: SibiyaP@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za.

Municipal Manager – Mr. D.J.D. Mahlangu

SW_01636



THEMBISILE HANI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

THEMBISILE HANI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY TENDER ERRATUM AND/ OR ADDENDUM

Notice of an Erratum and/ or Addendum is issued on bids advertised in the *Sunday World* dated, 2 August 2026.

Contract No.	Description	Technical Enquiries	Closing Date
THLM/SCM06/2026-2027/RS04	Appointment of a Panel of Audit Firms for Co-Sourcing of Internal Audit Projects for a period of 36 months.	Abey Malope T: 013 986 9167 E: MalopeA@thembeSilehanilm.gov.za	04 September 2026 @ 12H00

FORM A: EVALUATION SCHEDULE: TENDER COMPLIANCE Compliance as per the current bid:

Company Professional registration (Note 09)	Proof of registration with South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) or Independent Regulatory Board of Auditors (IRBA)	Yes	5
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Amended compliance:

Professional registration (Note 09)	Proof of registration of minimum one (1) Director with South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) or Independent Regulatory Board of Auditors (IRBA) or Institute of Internal Auditors South Africa	Yes	5
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Addendums can be accessed on E-Tender portal and on the Municipal website. All other conditions stipulated in the original tender advert of the 2 August 2026 remain applicable.

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Mr. D.J.D. Mahlangu
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