



SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

2026 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION MANIFESTO



BUILD PEOPLE'S POWER WHERE WE LIVE

**FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK, WATER, ELECTRICITY, ROADS,
LAND AND SAFETY FOR ALL**

A municipality that works. A councillor who answers to you. A community with the power to shape its future.

16 AUGUST 2026

Every day, millions of South Africans do everything asked of them and still cannot live with dignity. Workers spend much of their wages travelling to and from work. Women carry the heaviest load when there is no water. Young people search for work where factories have closed. People wait for water tankers, sit in the dark, and watch sewage run through the streets. Tenders are awarded; the work is not done. Councillors vanish between elections.

This is not the democracy our people fought for.

The SACP is contesting the 2026 local government elections independently because the working class needs its own political voice, its own candidates and its own programme. We are not here to add politicians to councils. We are here to build people's power and turn municipalities into instruments that serve workers and the poor.

This short manifesto is our contract with you. A vote can elect a councillor. Only an organised people can change the balance of power.

OUR SIX PRIORITIES

1. Reliable public services, preventative maintenance and prompt repairs

Water that flows. Lights that work. Streets that are cared for. Reliable water is the first condition of dignity, health and productive life. We will fight for ward-by-ward audits of water and sanitation, public maintenance plans, rapid response teams for leaks and sewer spills, and properly staffed municipal technical units. We will prioritise prevention over permanent crisis management and end the daily reality of water tankers and dry taps. We will fight for the proper maintenance and repair of roads in townships and villages. Potholes, washed-away access roads and neglected streets cut people off from work, clinics, schools and markets. Municipal roads must be treated as essential public infrastructure, not an afterthought.

Electricity has become six times more expensive in real terms since 2007. We will fight for fair, pro-poor tariffs for both water and electricity, protect lifeline services, and end punitive disconnections of the poor. Access to water and affordable electricity for households and for productive activity is a basic condition of dignity and work.



Municipal workers are not the enemy. We will defend their rights, equip them properly, and campaign for insourcing of essential work. Temporary work that continues must become permanent work.

2. Decent work and sustainable livelihoods where people live

Mass unemployment is produced by economic choices that protect concentrated wealth. Municipalities cannot solve it alone, but they must stop deepening it through outsourcing and idle land.

We will fight for Municipal Decent Work Plans linked to real community needs: infrastructure maintenance, food production, recycling, care work, community safety and local production. Public employment must create useful work and pathways into skills, co-operatives and permanent jobs. Youth-led co-operatives will be prioritised.

We will support worker co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, Village Agricultural Co-operatives and community-owned stores. Informal traders and platform workers must be recognised, protected and free to organise. Procurement must build local capacity, not drain it.

Working-class households still spend a large share of their income on transport. We will fight for integrated, affordable, safe and reliable public transport under public and community control, and support co-operative transport initiatives that serve workers and the poor.



3. Land, homes and food for social need, not private profit

Land in South Africa is largely the product of dispossession. The struggle for land is a struggle to restore to the people what was taken from them. Municipalities must treat public land as a collective resource held in trust for the people: audit it, protect it from capture, and put it to work for homes, food production, co-operatives and community facilities.

We will fight for well-located social and affordable housing, including for the missing middle of working people who earn too much for subsidies and too little for a bond. Informal settlements must be upgraded with the people, not against them. The bucket system is a humiliation and must be eradicated.

Local food systems, household gardens, Village Agricultural Co-operatives and consumer co-operatives will be supported so that food becomes more accessible and wealth stays in communities.

4. Safe, caring and healthy communities

The right to come home safely belongs to everyone. We will fight for democratic community safety forums, street and section committees, repaired streetlights, safe routes, and survivor-centred services against gender-based violence. Stock theft, cable theft and extortion networks must be confronted as attacks on working-class livelihoods and infrastructure.

Municipalities must strengthen primary health care, protect water quality and food safety, and help build National Health Insurance from the ground up. Public facilities, sport, arts and culture are essential social infrastructure, not luxuries.

Disaster plans, public spaces, clinics and transport must make specific provision for persons with disabilities. Organisations of persons with disabilities must be part of planning and oversight.

5. Municipalities free from tender corruption and capture

Tender capture converts public power into private wealth. Privatisation and outsourcing weaken public capacity and raise costs for the poor. The SACP rejects tenderisation as a system. We will not accommodate a system that turns public services into private profit.

Our starting point is public provision and insourcing. Before any major work goes to tender, we will demand a transparent assessment of whether it can be done by municipal workers. The first option must always be to build and use public capacity.

Budgets, contracts and progress must be published. Community monitoring and social audits will complement the Auditor-General. Whistleblowers will be protected. Public money must meet public need.

6. Councillors who answer to the people; and people who have a real say

Democracy is more than voting every five years. SACP councillors will convene regular open ward assemblies, support street and section committees, and campaign for participatory budgeting. They will give monthly feedback to the ward, six-monthly and annual report-backs to the Party, and work actively with the Know and Act in Your Neighbourhood campaign.

Every SACP councillor will sign a public pledge: report regularly, disclose interests, reject tender influence, defend workers and insourcing, explain their votes, and accept recall if they betray the manifesto. A seat in council is a post of struggle and service, not a career or a business opportunity.

Trade unions, co-operatives, women's and youth organisations, organisations of persons with disabilities, traditional leaders and religious formations will have transparent platforms to shape local development, while remaining

independent.

THE PEOPLE'S RED CARAVAN

This is not a promise for after the elections. Since the 15th National Congress in 2022, the People's Red Caravan has already gone into villages and townships, confronting food insecurity, water failures and idle land, and building community self-reliance with active public support. Self-reliance here does not mean people left to fend for themselves. It means organised communities developing collective capacity, backed by municipal land, water, skills and infrastructure.



What the Caravan proves is the standard we set for how municipalities must govern: solutions built with the people who need them, properly funded, and accountable to every resident.

WHAT YOUR VOTE FOR THE SACP MEANS

A vote for the SACP is a vote:

- ♦ to put workers and poor communities before private profit;
- ♦ to repair public services and rebuild municipal capacity;
- ♦ to create decent work and sustainable livelihoods where people live;
- ♦ to restore land to social purpose and eradicate the bucket system;
- ♦ to build community safety and support primary health care;
- ♦ to end tender capture and prioritise insourcing;
- ♦ to elect councillors who report, disclose and can be recalled; and
- ♦ to build a powerful socialist movement that continues beyond election day.

We do not ask you to become spectators. Join a ward assembly. Build a street or section committee. Join the People's Red Caravan when it reaches your community. Organise at work. Form a co-operative. Defend public services. Monitor the budget. Hold every councillor to account.

These are not gifts delivered from above. They are gains won through organisation, struggle and democratic people's power.

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VOTE SACP ON 4 NOVEMBER 2026

16 August 2026

