

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY GAUTENG PREMIER DAVID MAKHURA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE WILLIAM NICOL DRIVE PHASE 1.

25 August 2015

Programme Director, MMC Christine Walters from the City of Joburg;

Dr Ismail Vadi, MEC for Roads and Transport;

Mr Giuseppe Plumari, the Chief Executive Officer of Steyn City Properties;

Councillors;

Businesspeople;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Earlier this year, on the 10th of March, I had the distinct honour to join Mrs Graca Machel in officially launching the Steyn City Lifestyle Development.

By launching this major development we were bringing to life a dream that the founding father of our democracy Tata Nelson Mandela held dearly for many years, who literally and personally planted the seeds of the trees that now green Steyn City.

On that important occasion we also made the point that the Steyn City Development is one of the major interventions we are undertaking,

together with the private sector, to change the economy and space of this part of our province, which we refer to as the Central Development Corridor.

Our vision is to build new economic nodes and new post-apartheid cities in all five development corridors of the Gauteng City Region.

In this area, the north-western part of the City of Joburg, we want to build a new economic node through infrastructure development in the Fourways and Lanseria area, as part of advancing radical economic and decisive spatial transformation.

Programme Director, today we have gathered, once again, to officially open another major infrastructure project that will further breathe life into this area; an area that up until recently was largely barren land.

We are here to bear witness to yet another intervention that will go a long way in ensuring that the economy and geography of this area never becomes the same again!

The official opening of phase one of the William Nicol Drive is a major intervention, we are making together with the private sector, to further catalyse the development of a new city and a new economy in this part of our province.

In particular the upgrade to the William Nicol Drive will improve mobility, pedestrian safety as well as increase the capacity of this road to carry more traffic. The total cost of the work we have done to upgrade the road network and to install related infrastructure, as part of phase one, is more than R 422 million.

Consistent with our approach of working as a seamless government towards our shared goal of building Gauteng as a socially cohesive, economically integrated and globally competitive City Region.

The City has invested more than R54 million towards the rehabilitation and widening of Witkopen road.

Only last month, on 15 July, we launched a R300 million project to rehabilitate the N14 Highway between Diepsloot to the Hendrik Potgieter intersection in Mogale City.

In May this year, we launched a more than R 103 million project to rehabilitate and upgrade Cedar road North and South. This project is expected to be completed in March next year.

Furthermore, we are also pleased that work is at an advanced stage to commence with phase two of the upgrade of the William Nicol Drive which will link it to the N14 in the North of Diepsloot. The estimated cost of this project is R 340 million.

All these road infrastructure development projects are part of the plan to turn the north-western part of the City of Joburg into a new economic node. We are investing in major public transport, water and sanitation infrastructure and human settlements as a catalyst to economic development.

In this part of our province we are also intervening to transform the socio-economic landscape by building the Riversands Incubation Hub whose purpose is to nurture small and medium enterprises until they become fully fledged, formal businesses.

Programme Director, as the Gauteng City Region, working together with private sector partners, we have indeed descended on this part of our province bringing with us major investments to unlock the area's economic potential.

A new economic node is on the rise in this part of our province!

Once comprised mainly of barren land, this part of our province is now destined to become a new, vibrant and sustainable post-apartheid economic node, with industries as well as residential and recreational spaces built at the back of an efficient and world class roads network,

We are intervening in this way because we know too well that an efficient, integrated and well maintained roads network is a necessary

pre-requisite for the successful implementation of our programme for radical Transformation, Modernisation and Re-industrialisation.

Equally, we are fully cognisant of the reality that roads play a critical role in unlocking economic growth and development; in connecting people and in promoting spatial integration.

Roads take people out of isolation; they bring them closer to work and other economic opportunities; they open up opportunities for people to access knowledge, to empower themselves and to build for themselves sustainable livelihoods.

We are also intervening to improve accessibility and mobility. We are indeed promoting integrated development as well as social and economic inclusion.

In this regard, we are particularly delighted that part of our interventions, in this area, will make it possible for the people of Diepsloot to connect easily to employment and other economic opportunities in areas such as Fourways, Dainfern, Randburg, Sunninghill and the Sandton CBD.

We are also pleased that our interventions will improve connectivity among our various development corridors.

Specifically our interventions in this area will link more easily, key economic nodes such as the Sandton CBD, Randburg, Fourways and Centurion to the Western Development Corridor.

The Western Development Corridor is one of the areas we have prioritised for accelerated development as part of our overall commitment to promoting even and balanced development throughout Gauteng.

As you know the economy of the West Rand has, in recent years, experienced significant decline as a result of the mines in that area having reached the end of their life span.

It is our view that linking the Western Development Corridor to important economic centres in our province will contribute significantly in changing the economic fortunes of the West Rand.

Programme Director, we are intervening in the West Rand to build a new economy anchored around tourism (leveraging on the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site), agro processing as well as green and blue economy initiatives.

The economy of the West Rand will also receive a major boost from the work we are doing, again with the private sector, to build a new economic node around the Lanseria Airport.

As I conclude I wish to urge the contractors in these projects to continue to deliberately empower local communities through the sourcing of local labour, skills development and the use of local subcontractors.

Let us continue to work together as we change the face of our province for the better. Let us indeed make sure that our province never becomes the same again!

Thank you.