

Gauteng to roll out infrastructure development

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In line with its vision 2055, Gauteng MEC for Finance **Mandla Nkomfe**, says the province plans to roll out massive infrastructure programmes – such as building roads, refurbishing schools and hospitals and connecting the people of the province through the broadband initiative.

Delivering the Gauteng Budget Speech on Tuesday, Nkomfe said infrastructure development which has been identified as a catalyst for economic growth and job creation – is to receive R25-billion over the next three years.

The MEC said the province has formally adopted the Gauteng infrastructure delivery management system which is structured in terms of portfolio management, programme management and operations and maintenance.

Through the implementation of the Youth Employment Strategy, the province will create employment opportunities through the provision of training, capacity building, working space and access to start up grants.

The three hubs to be established will be at Winterveldt which will focus on the automotive industry and link the production of vehicles in greater Tshwane; while the hubs in Mohlakeng and Kagiso will focus on youth enterprises through the maintenance of vehicles.

The budget allocation for the entire programme is R60-million over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

Among the many refurbishments to take place in the province in the reporting period will be the Garankuwa Hotel School which aims to equip young people with the requisite skills associated with the hotel industry. An amount of R60-million for the next three years will be allocated for this.

The province will also focus on specific tourism projects, including tourism infrastructure, with a budget allocation of R5-million, which will be for the feasibility studies and giving expression to the provincial Tourism Strategy as well as growing the visitor economy in the province.

Infrastructure development at the Cradle of Human Kind World Heritage site has a budget allocation of R12-million. The Provincial Treasury will also work with the Department of Economic Development towards enhancing the financial model for the construction of the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory. To kick start this programme, R10.1-million has been set aside for the 2013/14 financial year.

“We are also working on the establishment of the Gauteng Investment Centre. It is envisaged that the Centre will bring in investment to the province by providing visitor services which will increase their likelihood investment and therefore job creation and contribute towards reducing the cost of doing business in the province,” Nkomfe told the Legislature.

With regards to the design, construction and maintenance of the roads in Gauteng – the total allocation amounts to R1.4-billion in 2013/14 and R5.4-billion over the MTEF.

“This allocation includes both the construction of roads as well as walk ways, cycle lanes, bus lanes and stations as well as the interface between these various forms of transport,” said Nkomfe, adding that additional money has been allocated to secure and subsidise the provision of these services amounting to R303-million over the MTEF.

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