



## **Mpumalanga identifies corridors as key factors for economic growth**

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Mpumalanga has detailed plans for the Maputo Development Corridor and Moloto Rail Development Corridor - two of the 'big five' flagship projects with the potential to grow the province's economy.

The initiatives were announced by Premier Thabang Makwetla during the State of the Province address.

The Big Five projects are the Maputo development corridor, the Moloto rail development corridor, an initiative to revitalise tourism and greening the province through conservation management, rolling out water infrastructure and capacity building of managers.

Addressing the media on the priorities for the economic cluster in Nelspruit, Finance MEC Mathulare Coleman said all these projects would have a positive impact on the socio-economic development of the province.

She then detailed initiatives that would be rolled-out on three of the Big Five projects that fall under the economic cluster, which are the Maputo development corridor and the Moloto rail development corridor.

As part of the Maputo development corridor, she said industrial infrastructure projects would be implemented to create an environment for business operations along the corridor.

Such projects would include the establishment of freight logistics.

The corridor would also promote manufacturing among small, medium and large enterprises in the province.

Coleman said this project would also encourage primary production of goods and services as part of rural development.

The Maputo development corridor, which links the province with Gauteng and the port of Maputo in Mozambique, was conceptualised in 1994 when the new South African government entered into bilateral agreement with the Mozambican government.

It had since been described as true transportation, comprising road, rail, border posts, port and terminal facilities.

The corridor, which passes through vast industrial and primary production areas, was designed to upgrade South Africa's links to Maputo port, and to persuade more South African companies to import and export through Maputo.

Moloto Rail Development Corridor, MEC Coleman said, would be high on government's agenda to implement an integrated public transport system comprising rail line which is fed by the road transport system.

This, she said, would lessen travelling time for the people and reduce the number of accidents on the Moloto corridor.

"It will also provide affordable and safe travel solutions for both government and passengers by means of a cost effective system.

"The corridor will also have positive impact on the social lives of commuters by means of spin-offs of improved public transport system and other economic benefits that flow from this initiative," said the MEC.

Other initiatives that would be prioritised by the cluster this year included the Masibuyel' emasimini programme, which supports subsistence farming and encourages peasant farmers to aggressively till land.

Coleman said the Expanded Public Works Programme would also be instrumental in job creation and infrastructure development. - BuaNews

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