

Introducing Sedibeng

Tuesday 10 November 2009

VEREENIGING – Sedibeng District Municipality executive mayor Mahole Simon Mofokeng today outlined an extensive R160 million multi-pronged economic and social investment programme aimed at revitalising the region ahead of next year's FIFA World Cup soccer tournament.

Founded in 2000, Sedibeng includes the Emfuleni, Midvaal and Lesedi municipalities, capturing rural, agricultural and large industries within its political and geographic borders. The region comprises 39% of South Africa's gross value-added with metals, energy and construction being the principal sectors.

The predominantly industrial nature of its economy means goods produced include non-metallic minerals, metals, machinery, household appliances, electrical machinery and apparatus. Former president Nelson Mandela signed into law the South African Constitution in Sharpeville, the site that marked a turning point in the fight against apartheid following the 1960 rights.

Mofokeng said public sector investment into three precincts – Sharpeville, Dickenson Park and the Vereeniging central business district – was expected to have a multiplier effect for private sector investment to improve the local economy. Projects in these regards have been identified.

Sedibeng had secured funding from the national government Neighbourhood Development Programme Grant; earmarked significant funds in the current financial year for flagship initiatives in Sharpeville and Vereeniging and would injection additional funding from reserves.

The grant capital would be invested on Constitutional Walk, the Sharpeville exhibition centre and the Phelindaba cemetery where the Sharpeville massacre victims are buried. Mofokeng said beyond 2010, these projects would revitalise Sedibeng, open up new avenues for investment and pave the way for new visitors to the region.

He said the 2010 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament has provided South Africa with an unprecedented opportunity for development. Within Sedibeng, it provided local government with the chance to improve and enhance the region.

Although not a host city, Sedibeng was strategically placed between Johannesburg and Bloemfontein to maximise the tourism and economic benefits. Developments in the pipeline include infrastructure upgrades, urban renewal, local tourism development and sports development.

Mofokeng said as well as working hand-in-hand with the official FIFA accommodation supplier Match to ensure sufficient tourist beds, the municipality had identified three potential arenas for fan parks – Vereeniging civic centre, George Thabe stadium and Dickenson Park – to enable ardent football fans without tickets to experience the games on the large screen.



“This will provide Sedibeng the opportunity to showcase the region and secure some of the tourism spend around the event,” he said.

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