MPUMALANGA

# SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# **APRIL 2019**



co-operative governance & traditional affairs MPUMALANGA PROVINCE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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# 1. BACKGROUND

The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act No 16 of 2013) (SPLUMA) seeks to address past spatial and regulatory imbalances such as the existence and operation of multiple laws in national and provincial spheres. The Act promotes a uniform, recognisable and comprehensive system of spatial planning, land use management and land development to maintain economic unity, equal opportunity and equal access to government services

The provincial spatial development framework (PSDF) should provide a clear path for spatial development to give effect to the principles contained in SPLUMA.

The Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) shall serve the purpose of spatial justice, spatial sustainability, efficiency, spatial resilience and good administration; integrating necessary functionalities and linkages within the spheres of government, delivering a multitude of services linked to an integrated development approach in the province. The PSDF should include the new planning paradigm implementation and must integrate and sufficiently provide an economically and socially balanced development between rural and urban areas in the province. The PSDF should also aim to reduce the spatial fragmentation which poses major developmental challenges in-spite of the existence of several initiatives and programmes.

The objectives of the PSDF is to cover the following aspects at the provincial level: integration of development policies, strategies and objectives at various levels; prioritized land use development patterns; translate developmental needs; unpack spatial directives and objectives for implementation; provide investment guidance and the mechanisms for implementation; provide guidance on sectoral development needs, investments, integration and programme implementation.

The PSDF process was conducted in five different phases, comprising of the following:

#### POLICY CONTEXT AND DIRECTIVES

Assessment of the Policy Context influencing the development of the Mpumalanga Spatial **Development Framework** 

#### SPATIAL CHALLENGES AND **OPPORTUNITIES**

Assessment of the Spatial Challenges and Opportunities influencing spatial planning in Mpumalanga

Development of a Spatial Vision and related Spatial Development Concepts and Objectives



PHASE

#### IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Identification of a set of programmes and projects essential for the realising the spatial development strategies and objectives

#### FINAL PROVINCIAL SPATIAL **DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Finalisation of the Mpumalanga Spatial **Development Framework** 



PHASE

# 2. MPUMALANGA

## 2.1. INTRODUCTION TO MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Mpumalanga means "a place where the sun rises". It is the second-smallest province in South Africa and located in the north-eastern part of the country, bordering Swaziland and Mozambique.

Mpumalanga covers an area of 76 495km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 4 335 964, making it one of the most populous provinces in the country.

The province is rich in coal reserves and home to South Africa's major coal-fired power stations (eMalahleni is the biggest coal producer in Africa).

Mpumalanga is known for its mining, manufacturing, and forestry and service sectors. The tourism and agro-processing sectors have shown major growth potential over the years. Agriculture in Mpumalanga is characterised by a combination of commercial and subsistence farming practices.

It is situated on the high plateau grasslands of the Middleveld and characterised by large areas of mountain peaks and ridges in the Lowveld which contributes to the scenic beauty and tourism destinations in the province.

Administratively Mpumalanga is divided into three district municipalities (See Map 1), which are further subdivided into 17 local municipalities. The City of Mbombela is the capital of the province and the administrative and business centre of the Lowveld. Other major cities and towns in Mpumalanga include eMalahleni (previously Witbank), Middelburg Standerton, eMkhondo (previously Piet Retief), Malalane, Ermelo, Barberton and Sabie.

The Maputo Corridor, which links Mpumalanga with Gauteng and Maputo in Mozambique, harbours extensive potential in terms of economic development and growth for the region. The N17 also is an important transport corridor linking Gauteng with Kwa Zulu Natal through the southern part of Mpumalanga

# 2.2. MPUMALANGA IN NUMBERS

The following infograms illustrates a brief snapshot of key status quo activities identified for Mpumalanga Province. It gives a brief synopsis of all the key opportunities and constraints in the province as assessed through the following themes:



# **BIOPHYSICAL THEME**

#### BIOREGIONS \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

The topography of the Mpumalanga comprises of the Highveld and the Lowveld. Situated on the high plateau grassland known as Highveld. Characterised by the escarpments, grasslands, rivers, numerous valleys, mountain passes, waterfalls, wetlands, and forests and the Kruger National Park



# **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Increase in temperatures by as much as 2°C by 2035
- Increase of I-3°C between 2040 and 2060 (or I-4°C in the high-end scenarios)
- LTAS projects decrease rainfall in Mpumalanga in the long term, with the decrease ranging from mild to a very significant pattern of drying
- High level of **vulnerability**, as there is a risk for natural disasters: floods, fire outbreaks and droughts

### Mining contributes **21,8%** to the provincial economy

MINING

Iron

Tin

- Gold
- Platinum Manganese
- Zinc
- Cobalt Coal
- Magnesite Limestone
- Copper

### FORESTRY



0%

**Small scale farming** 

**Commercial farming** 

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Contributed 1,4% to Mpumalanga's Total 2009 GVA

Over **R9.5 billion** is invested in forestry industry

**39** Processing plants out of 148 in SA

# FARMING



**9%** 'very-low to low'

**61%** 'low-moderate to moderate'

**30%** 'high to very high'

Total capacity of dams: 2627 million m<sup>3</sup> levels: 0.3%

LAND COVER ------

**76 495km<sup>2</sup>** 

**22%** Farming

**6%** Forestry

**3%** Urban Built-up





6.7 % of SA

**90%** of SA's

AIR

scheduled emissions

towns in SA

WATER

POOR AIR QUALITY IN HIGHVELD

Surface water: 65% Province transfer: 19%

Groundwater: 6%

Return flows: 10%

**50%** of the most polluted



# **PROTECTED AREAS**







# SOCIO-ECONOMIC THEME

Home to a variety of scenic landscapes and wildlife

areas. Location of the world's oldest rock sequence.

Generate 70% of South Africa's electricity and is the

largest coal producer nationally

### POPULATION



Population Density: **56.7 persons/km**<sup>2</sup>



# EDUCATION -----

No Education: 7.8% Primary: 14.5% Secondary: 28.2% Tertiary: 12.2%

### --- EMPLOYMENT ----

1.24 mil. Employed506 000 Unemployed

**28.9%** Unemployment Rate



# ECONOMY

GDP of 222.2 Billion (2016) at 2010

constant prices

Contributing approximately **7.2%** to the National GDP

Ranked **5<sup>th</sup>** nationally

# - SECTORS



## ---- DISTRICT GVA ----



# **BUILT ENVIRONMENT THEME**

--- HOUSEHOLDS ·



Average Household Size.

### ----- SETTLEMENTS ----



#### **Informal Settlements:**

184 097 households 346 Informal Settlements

- Ehlanzeni: **72**
- Gert Sibande: 73
- Nkangala: 201

### Housing:

- 71,9% formal housing
- Housing backlogs: 225 023
- Housing delivery in 2017: 6 473

# -- BASIC ACCESS



# **SPATIAL STRUCTURE**

The Province comprises of 3 district municipalities and 17 local municipalities. The N4 (Maputo Corridor) is a strong structuring element, as many of the larger cities and towns are situated along. Large parts of the Province comprise of extensive and small scattered rural villages that form part of traditional authroity areas



# **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**50%** of the population reside in former homelands where low socio-economic profiles are common. The purpose of the **RDP's** is to stimulate development in areas of poverty and reduce spatial inequalities through:

- Improving food security and household income
- Developing rural business and community organizations
- Providing flexible training and education
- Providing infrastructure
- Creating jobs, especially youths, women and people with disabilities

# -- TRANSPORT ----

# National Corridors:

- N4/N12
- N17/N2
- NII

### **Mode of Transport:**



75.7% Commute with Taxis



## **Transport Infrastructure:**



Passenger Rail Network



Coal Haulage Roads (14%)



2 Major Airports

# **Conditions of Roads:**

46% Poor 54% Fair 23% Good



**9%** Very Good

# 2.3. MPUMALANGA CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 2.3.1 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



#### Natural Environment

• 5 major rivers systems in the Country flow through Mpumalanga, several wetlands, and several prominent dams are situated in the province.

# Connectivity & Infrastructure

- The province is connected to Maputo and Richards Bay ports by both rail and road.
- The proposed development of the Regional Passenger Rail System along the N4 Corridor will facilitate the movement of people and services. The proposed expansion of railway line on the N17 – Oshoek border post with Swaziland will benefit the large rural population in the north-eastern extents of Chief Albert Luthuli LM.
- The proposed logistics hub at Mashishing and Cargo Airport at Victor Khanye will facilitate cargo movement.
- Investments in the transport and communications network will have spinoffs on local economic development in the region supporting the main and large concentrations of people as well as the smaller dispersed communities.



#### Economy

- Province's rich in biodiversity and scenic beauty can help with the development of tourism industry i.e. wetlands and protected areas.
- An abundance of coal and availability of mineral resources impact positively on the province's economy.

- Availability of high potential soil and diverse climatic condition help grow a range of crops.
- Soil and geological formations are stable and do not pose significant geotechnical constraints for infrastructure development
- The province is rich in natural resources (mineral, high potential land etc.) and tourist-attracting points. Sustainable exploitation of these resources will help to develop the province's economy.
- The Province has immense potential to enhance its agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining and manufacturing sectors.



#### Urban Settlements

- The existing network of towns will allow trickling down of development effort from the higher order towns to lower order towns and settlements.
- The existing urban centres offer the opportunity for densification. New human settlements can be developed in within the existing urban centres.
- The key urban centres are well established economic centres hosting specialised economic activities. These urban centres offer the opportunity for further economic development by leveraging on the towns' economic bases.



### **Rural Settlements**

- Leveraging on the DRDLR's CRDP programme and encouraging emerging and subsistence farmers to adopt commercial farming technique will greatly enhance the condition of the rural communities.
- Rural areas can be benefited from the tourism industry.
- Rural areas offer the opportunity for economic diversification that includes new sectors such as green energy generation, manufacturing and mineral beneficiation.

# 2.3.2 DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES



#### 🦟 Natural Environment

- The protected areas and wetlands are threatened by a number of activities including agriculture, mining, and urbanization.
- Climate change poses a threat to the province's natural environment, biodiversity, water availability and agriculture.
- Mining and industrial activities negatively impact on the province's environment, natural resources (air, water, and land), human health and biodiversity.
- The province is likely to experience water shortage in future. Most of the rivers' health is poor.

# Connectivity and Infrastructure

- The province lack in providing an efficient public transport system. The province also lack in accessing a commuter rail network
- The coal haul roads in Nkangala and Gert Sibande are congested and increasing travel time.
- Increasing population numbers are putting pressure on available municipal recourses and service delivery.
- The limited availability of raw water in many local municipalities call for potential inter catchment transfers which may increase the cost of service delivery and pose environmental challenges.
- The province's green drop score indicates that the Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW's) are overloaded, resulting in poor effluent quality



• High potential agricultural lands are increasingly being converted into mining and other uses.

- Over-reliance on mining will negatively affect the province's economic position as mining is neither a sustainable nor a long term economic solution.
- Conflicting economic activities- A number of economic sectors are competing with each other of natural resources e.g. land and water.
- There is nonexistence of economic activities in many towns and traditional authority areas.



### **Urban Settlements**

- Immigration of people from rural areas and surrounding regions to key urban centres has led to the proliferation of informal settlements and slums.
- The rapid growth of the towns will call for additional urban land and development of additional houses and municipal services.
- The existing pattern of fragmented human settlements increases the cost of service delivery.



#### Rural Settlements

- Many settlements located in the former homeland areas are isolated from main corridors.
- The rural settlements are dispersed and highly fragmented as a result these settlements have limited access to economic opportunities and municipal services.
- Limited connectivity and accessibility to markets pose hamper the rural economy and livelihood.
- Rural livelihood is extensively dependent on agriculture which is under threatened by the expansion of mining activities and urban development.
- Lack of tenure security in traditional areas hinders spatial planning as well as infrastructure development.
- The dispersed and fragmented settlements pose challenges in service delivery.

# 3. MPUMALANGA 2050

### 3.1. SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT FOR MPUMALANGA

#### The NSDF calls for:

A strong and functioning polycentric system of well-connected nodes in more urban and metropolitan regions that offer a wide range of high-order medical, education, government, safety and security services and housing types;

In more rural regions, at least one single core service town or city to act as an anchor, and home to high-order medical, education, government, safety and security services and a choice of housing types, which is functionally integrated to the rest of the region; and

A combination of national, regional and local-focused economic activities that allow for the creation, strengthening and maintenance of wellbeing, inclusive economic growth and the regional economy.

The NSDF proposes to adopt a polycentric system encompassing nodes and corridors and their hinterlands for the development. Recognising the directives of the NSDF, the PSDF proposes to develop a polycentric network of nodes and their hinterlands connected by corridors. A Polycentric development model (on a provincial level) can be defined as a network of distinct (and historically often administratively and politically independent) towns and nodes with strong, complex and unique interrelationships linked to a resource base and that are well connected and supported through infrastructure.

A polycentric development model has two dimensions, namely (i) a morphological dimension which addresses the size and distribution of the urban areas across the province and (ii) a functional dimension which refers to the functional connections between the rural environments. The rural environment in Mpumalanga is characterised by traditional authority settlements and vast rural areas. A key

factor of a successful polycentric region is that of network density, meaning the degree to which different parts of the urban areas and rural areas are functionally linked. Thereby highlighting the principle of well-established corridors and nodes. A Polycentric urban region can only be considered to be 'network' when relational characteristics have developed with a certain minimum extent of functional integration of the sub-region. This is supported by the growth areas approach.

#### Figure 1: Polycentric System for Mpumalanga



As a potential model for spatial structuring of Mpumalanga, a Polycentric Growth Management Model is considered to be one where the spatial structure is based on a hierarchy of growth centres which incorporate (i) integrated business, (ii) employment and (iii) community nodes that are well connected by means of movement infrastructure and systems. Such relate to any linkage and or movement systems. Growth will be directed in accordance with the proximity of a particular location to this network.

The Polycentric Growth Management Model delivers a more balanced approach to development and is about managed growth and intensification at strategic locations and focuses heavily on the principle of proximity. The higher the level of proximity of a location to major employment nodes or functional linkages, the greater the need for concentration and agglomeration which is linked to densification and intensification. Densification and intensification are therefore direct functions of proximity to and accessibility of employment and functional linkage opportunities. Areas that are not close to major centres or functional linkage opportunities are then developed at lower intensities, not disregarding any local opportunity to the benefit of the local population. This allows for greater diversity in terms of development typologies across the province.

The Polycentric Growth Management Model is therefore characterised by a number of well-structured "compact" environments (growth centres), interspersed and surrounded by areas of lower density and intensity. Instead of a blanket compaction approach, compaction is therefore focused around a specific spatial structure.

### **3.2. SPATIAL VISION**

The following Spatial Vision was formulated and adopted for Mpumalanga:

"A sustainable, vibrant and inclusive economy, Mpumalanga"

# 3.3. SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES



#### CONNECTIVITY AND CORRIDOR FUNCTIONALITY

Ensure connectivity between nodes, secondary towns, marginalised areas, the surrounding area, and to green open space systems.



#### SUSTAINABLE CONCENTRATION AND AGGLOMERATION

Promote the creation of an agglomeration economy that will encourage people and economic activities to locate near one another in urban centres and industrial clusters.



#### CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE UTILISATION

Promote the maximisation, protection and maintenance of ecosystems, scarce natural resources, high-potential agricultural land, and integrated open space systems.



#### LIVEABILITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

Create settlements that contribute to people's sense of personal and collective wellbeing and to their sense of satisfaction in being residents of a settlements.



#### RURAL DIVERSITY AND TRANSFORMATION

Create Urban-Rural anchors and choices for residents within the rural economy linked to access to markets, food security and security of land tenure.









### 3.3.1 CONNECTIVITY AND CORRIDOR FUNCTIONALITY

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**

3

5

Leverage the N4 corridor to facilitate regional and provincial connectivity

Development of the existing corridors and building new linkages to increase capacity and economic opportunities and ensure connectivity to the surrounding areas

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# Strategic Objective 1: Leverage the N4 corridor to facilitate regional and provincial connectivity

"The spatial guidance mentioned in the NSDF for development corridors is to focus on consolidating growth and prioritising economic development and trade infrastructure and activities within well connected inter-regional and national development corridors".

The intervention of N4 corridor will strengthen trade and flows of goods and services along the existing corridors and assist in the strengthening of the economic bases of the cities and towns on the corridor. There are many regional service centre and service towns which can leverage from the connectivity of the corridor. The Maputo Development Corridor passes through Nkangala and Ehlanzeni Districts supporting the Maputo railway line. The corridor provides access to 8 local municipalities and connected towns within the direct range. The N4 Corridor, consisting of the N4 freeway and adjacent railway line, it is also the main link between the City of Tshwane and Maputo harbour. The major N4 corridor connectivity provides a great opportunity for the provincial roads and regional service centre to connect Gauteng, Mozambique and Botswana. The N4 not only provides transportation linkages but also caters a freight movement for South Africa.

#### Strategic Objective 2: Development of the existing corridors and building new linkages to increase capacity and economic opportunities and ensure connectivity to the surrounding areas

The identified/ proposed corridor developments are mentioned in Vision 2030, District SDF's and National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF, 2018). The strategic corridors are derived based on importance in terms of provincial and inter-regional linkages. There are three major corridors in Mpumalanga: N4, N11, and N17/N2. The N4 corridor is one of the most important corridors for the Mpumalanga province connecting to Mozambique, Gauteng province and Botswana. The N2/ N17 corridor links Gauteng with Richards Bay and Swaziland, provides an alternative route to Maputo and links up with the tourism initiatives within northern Swaziland and the Lebombo Tourism SDI, providing excellent regional and district accessibility. The N2/N17 corridor is supported by the coal haulage line to Richards Bay which provides mainly for the minerals and metals industry.

The N11 provides interaction between the N1, N4 and N2/N17 corridors and will play a major part in the region as a transportation corridor to Richards Bay. The aim of developing the existing corridors is to strengthen existing transportation networks and streamline freight movement. The supporting Corridors including the R40 (Phalaborwa SDI) providing accessibility from the Maputo Corridor to Bushbuckridge. The R40 (Phalaborwa SDI) will also assist in providing better accessibility between large economic and population nodes. The R573 Moloto road is managed by SANRAL which serves as an important economic route, connecting Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. In Mpumalanga, the Moloto corridor traverses two municipalities viz. Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality and Thembisile Hani Local Municipality in Nkangala District. The Following are spatial linkages identified for development and upgrading:

- 1. Improvement of the Maputo corridor (N4)
- 2. Moloto Corridor or R573,
- 3. Dilokong Platinum Extension Corridor (R36) and New Linkage Possibility Extending the Corridor to join NII
- 4. Upgrade of N17, N17/N2 Corridor
- 5. Upgrade of N12 and N11 corridor
- 6. Upgrade of R40 (Phalaborwa SDI) Corridor
- 7. Proposed New Linkage Possibility of R38 south of R40 corridor, connecting the R40 (Phalaborwa SDI) Corridor with Swaziland
- 8. New Linkage Possibility of N4 at Middelburg to N17 at Bethal and R23 at Standerton.
- 9. Improvement of R23 Gauteng Linkage Corridor
- **10.** New Linkage Possibility in Thaba Chewu LM, which is the R37 and R536 linking Mashishing with Hazyview,
- 11. New Linkage Possibility (East Corridor) along the Swaziland border.
- 12. New Linkage Possibility and Extension of R23 to a new linkage east corridor.
- **13.** New Linkage Corridor in Nkomazi with N4 for better accessibility with Swaziland and Komatipoort SEZ.

# Strategic Objective 3: Upgrade of tourism, and rural economy road networks with linkages to transportation corridors

Mpumalanga has received backlash in tourism activities due to the poor road condition and lack of maintenance of its roads. Issues such as potholes and poorly conditioned gravel roads are impacting negatively on tourism and overall progression of rural development in the Province. The province is also required to connect the rural roads to the existing major corridors. Some of the rural areas including Bushbuckridge, Hazyview, Sabie and Mashishing serves as a great tourism destination, an economic hub and have high population density. These areas require improved linkages and better transportation infrastructure. Some of the areas in Gert Sibande require alternative routes that can be used as tourism route, this is mainly because of the coal haulage and mining activities happening in that area.

Therefore, there is a need to strengthen and upgrade these roads and corridors, in order to help unpack the economic potential, it is required to create better accessibility and connectivity to these areas.

# Strategic Objective 4: Development of the public transportation network and corridor by emphasizing on the passenger rail network

Mpumalanga is predominantly rural in nature, which requires necessary prioritization for public transport infrastructure. Buses and minibus taxis are the main mode of public transportation in Mpumalanga. Majority of the population in the province use taxis to commute. There is no provision of local passenger rail service in the province. However, long-distance inter-city passenger trains are available. The existing public transportation system in the province is as a result of the existing settlement pattern which is a result of pre-democracy planning. This has had an impact on the transport system of the province. Therefore there is a need for the development of a sustainable public transport network within the province. There is a need to emphasis on the development of regional affordable passenger rail network as an alternative source of public transportation apart from buses and taxis. Following are the spatial linkages identified for development:

- 1. Maputo Passenger Rail
- 2. Proposed NI7 Passenger Rail
- 3. Proposed R40 Passenger Rail Connecting Mbombela
- 4. Moloto Passenger Rail

# Strategic Objective 5: Decongestion of the coal haul roads and Improvement of Freight Network

Gert Sibande and Nkangala districts have concentrated mining areas with coal haul roads. There is a flow of heavy vehicles on these roads leading to congestion of these roads. There is a need to upgrade these roads and initiate an alternative transportation mode in order to aid with the decongestion of these routes. Reviving rail freight network for coal haulage is one crucial element that can help in the decongestion these coal haul roads.

# 3.3.2 SUSTAINABLE CONCENTRATION AND AGGLOMERATION

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**



# Strategic Objective 1: Enhance economic competitiveness through economic growth and innovation centres

According to the World Economic Forum, urban centres are engines of the global economy and their competitiveness determines the economic prospects and competitiveness of regions and nations. Mpumalanga has five urban centres viz. Mbombela, Secunda, Emalahleni, Ermelo and Middleburg that can be considered as the regional economic engines. Almost 70% of the provinces GVA is generated in or around these towns. These key economic growth centres can enhance the province's economic competitiveness as these towns can attract investment and create economic opportunities for investors, government and general citizen. The attractiveness of these towns for the location of industries and businesses stems from different locational factors including the presence of economic activity, availability of hard and soft infrastructure.

It is, therefore, proposed that these economic centres should act as the province's economic growth centres. To become growth centres, it is necessary for the towns to continuously and consistently enhance the productivity and competitiveness levels of their economic base by drawing on resources and making strategic investments in sectors, industries, and value chains where there is a competitive

advantage and where there are market opportunities and growth potential. The Mpumalanga Industrial Development Plan, 2015 (MIDP) proposes to take advantage of the concentration of a particular industrial sector in specific regions and accordingly promote industrial sectors to boost economic development in the region. The Mpumalanga Vision 2030 proposes a similar approach for industrial development and advises to channelise industrial investment around the industrial strongholds. While it is recognised that the growth centres will leverage upon their existing economic bases, it is also important to note that these towns will have to be competitive enough to withstand the pressure of global trade arising from the countries and regions producing similar goods and services at a lower cost. To counter the pressure, innovation in economic activities is necessary. Thus the urban centres should also focus on innovation, engage in global supply chains and develop highly skilled workforces to support the rapid changes in industrial activities emanating from innovation. Therefore, these towns will not only act as growth centres but also as innovation centres. Together these centres will enhance the province's economic competitiveness, unlock commercial prospects and foster innovation.

#### Strategic Objective 2: Economic Enabling of Lower Order Growth Centres in the Province and Economic Decentralization

The spatial development concept for Mpumalanga is based on the development of a polycentric network of cities, towns and settlements. The concept advocates for achieving balanced economic growth through maintaining a hierarchic system of towns and settlements at all levels as a tool for disseminating development from higher order towns and settlements to lower towns and rural areas and eventually diminishing economic disparities between the higher order towns and rural settlements. The two critical aspects of the polycentric development concept are strengthening the economic base of the key urban centres and simultaneously improving economic conditions of the lower order urban centres, service towns and rural hinterland. The concept supports the idea of economic decentralisation through a trickle-down approach which can be simply described as the development of large towns will facilitate the development of smaller towns.

Some smaller towns have been identified for economic development. These towns would act as alternative growth centres and provide the province with a second economy. Among the lower order growth points, priorities should be given to

Standerton, Kwamhlanga, Siyabusa, Bushbuckridge, Komatipoort, and Hazyview for development. The priority alternative growth centres can be termed as "Primary Alternative Growth Centres" Apart from Komatipoort, all other PrimaryAlternative Growth Centres are classified as Regional Centre (1-3) by CSIR. Komatipoort, currently ranked as Small Service Towns and Rural Service Settlements by CSIR, is expected to grow very fast as it enjoys excellent connectivity and the presence of an SEZ within it. These growth centres have fairly developed an economic base, though not as developed as of the five key economic centres, and they are well connected with both the key economic centres and surrounding rural areas. These towns are expected to play the following critical roles for rural economic development. (i) They act as urban-rural anchor towns and provide urban-rural connectivity. (ii) These towns offer gateways for exporting of rural produces to urban areas. (iii) They facilitate rural innovations and entrepreneurship.

The next class of alternative growth points are termed as "Secondary Alternative Growth Centres". These growth centres are mainly rural service towns with the agricultural and mining background. These towns act as rural anchors and serve as a small-scale market for agriculture products. The Secondary Alternative Growth Centres include Bethal, eMknondo, Volksrust, Balfour, Leandra, Carolina, Delmas, Ogies, Kriel, Mashishing, Sabie, Barberton, Kamaqhekeza and Acornhoek. Except for Bethal, these towns have been classified as Service Towns by CSIR.

The development of the identified alternative growth centres requires investment and institutional intervention. A thorough analysis of the towns' economic potential is required to determine the sectors that can generate both economic output and employment. The study will also help determine the magnitude of needed institutional intervention. Such intervention may come in many forms such as infrastructure development, human capacity building, provision of financial support to local business, and create linkages between the local producers of goods and services and consumer.

#### Strategic Objective 3: Promote Economic Growth through Incentives

Investment creates new business activities and generates employment. Empirical evidence suggests the expansion of an economy can be achieved by putting in place measures that enhance the ability of the economy to attract new investments. The investment can come from domestic private and public sectors as well as

from overseas organization as foreign direct investment. To enhance Mpumalanga's ability to attract new investments, this objective advocate for providing investors with an array of benefits. These benefits include tax incentives offered by the different spheres of the government and non-tax incentives such as subsidised land and municipal services and reduced development restrictions (higher FAR and lower building restrictions etc.). To maximise the level of attractiveness, benefits can be provided in areas where there is latent economic potential. The province's western part is such an area. This area shares a border with the Gauteng City Region- a key economic concentration area of the continent. The towns in this part of the province have strong economic linkages with Gauteng. The proximity of this region to Gauteng and OR Tambo International Airport creates a competitive advantage for foreign investment and export-oriented manufacturing and knowledge-based industries. Besides, some of these towns have the adequate economic infrastructure; therefore, they can act as magnets for economic activities that are usually destined for the Gauteng region.

#### **Strategic Objective 4: Diversify Economy**

The mining sector contributes 25% to Mpumalanga's GVA; there are other sectors which are directly or indirectly dependent on mining such as manufacturing (specifically metal processing) and utilities (specifically power generation). The combined GVA of these three sectors is more than 40% of the provincial GVA. It is widely accepted that mining is not a sustainable source and it is depleting fast. The negative growth of both the mining and manufacturing sectors during the global recession indicates these sectors' sensitivity towards external circumstances. Abouchakra et al. have identified a clear link between economic diversification and sustainable growth and showed how diversification could reduce a nation's economic volatility and increase its real activity performance. Hence, there is a need for a gradual shift from mining oriented sectors to the sustainable economic sectors to maintain sustained growth of the provincial economy. It is pertinent to mention that the NSDF recognises that Mpumalanga's Coal Mining and Coal Fired Power Plant region (mainly the Highveld area) will be under immense pressure for environmental considerations and as a result, the region will witness a possible decline in demand of coal and large-scale employment. The NSDF proposes to diversify the regional economy and facilitate the gradual transition of economic activities in the region.

Mpumalanga Province ecological infrastructure plays a critical role in the economy, including job creation and the contribution to provincial GDP, agriculture, forestry and mining. However, the ecological infrastructure is at risk from these sectors' growing demands. The challenge is how to grow the provincial economy, sustain production and improve the lives of our people whilst safeguarding our natural ecosystems and maintaining the critical ecosystem services they provide.

Investing in ecological infrastructure supports built infrastructure. It can lengthen the life of existing built infrastructure and reduce the need for additional built infrastructure. Examples include river or filter strips that absorb pollutants and provide habitat for our biodiversity or healthy rivers that can fix themselves by absorbing pollutants. The Olifants River catchment is a prime example of a system where considerable investment is needed to improve water guality and service delivery. It also serves as an example of where investment in a combination of ecological and built infrastructure could support the various improvements that are needed (Kotze, 2013, Cumming 2014). Ecosystem restoration activities are increasingly being implemented and supported by global policy commitments within the UN Rio Conventions. Restoring degraded ecosystems has been an important tool for economic recovery and improving the quality of life. Ecosystem restoration activities can significantly increase job opportunities and improve livelihoods in rural areas and play an essential role in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of anthropogenic climate change. Effective natural resource management and restoration can also contribute to reduced vulnerabilities because healthy and resilient ecosystems are better able to mitigate the impact of natural hazards and they represent important assets for people and communities after a disaster or an extreme event has occurred. Investments in ecosystem restoration can provide multiple co-benefits to society ranging from improved livelihoods and human health, increased food and water security to enhanced carbon stocks and socio-ecological resilience. Mainstreaming ecosystem restoration requires the assimilation of biodiversity and ecosystem services values into decision-making processes governing all economic activities that manage and use natural capital.

### 3.3.3 CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE UTILISATION

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**



#### **Strategic Objective 1: Protection of Biodiversity and Resource Utilisation**

Mpumalanga is a unique province as it has a wide range of biodiversity, mineral resources and good quality soils for agriculture. Mining, Agriculture and tourism are important sectors for the provincial economy. Interestingly, the areas with good quality soils and areas with extensive mineral resources often overlap and as a result the mining and agriculture sectors compete with each other for land and water resources. At times these two sectors encroach areas demarcated for conservation of biodiversity and natural ecosystem.

Conservation plays a crucial role in the economy through job creation and ecotourism. For example, protected areas are an important drawcard for naturebased tourism, supporting a tourism sector that contributes a growing 2.9% to the country's economy. Protected areas are also a basis for jobs within both the tourism and wildlife sectors. Nature-based tourism in the Province hold great potential to provide many more economic opportunities going into the future. The recent statistics places Mpumalanga in fourth position with regards to international tourist arrivals in 2015. Spatial planning should encourage sustainable, balanced growth and development within the carrying capacity of the area. This can be achieved through controlling all kind of man made development and conservation of agricultural and environmentally important land. Such conservation includes the preservation and efficient management of natural resources. To give effect to sustainable and balanced growth, efficient land use management as it could create a degree of sustainability the province.

#### **Strategic Objective 2: Ensure Conservation of all Water Resources and Catchment Areas**

The water resources in Mpumalanga are under pressure as the demand for water exceeds water availability. The sectors requiring a large quantity of water are commercial agriculture, forestry plantations, Eskom's power stations, mining and industrial uses, domestic water consumption and ecological water needs. Water shortage will impact the above-mentioned sectors, which will have a direct impact on the economy of the province.

In Mpumalanga, the situation is completely out of control with over 60% of the province under some sort of mining or prospecting application. Many of these are in areas that should be definitive no-go areas or mining control areas because of their water, food production and biodiversity value.

The concept of ecological infrastructure represents a new way of looking at biodiversity, attaching value to it and relating it to national development agenda. Potential benefits of rehabilitating and maintaining our ecological include the following:

- Ecological Infrastructure enhances built environment.
- Strategic investment in ecological infrastructure lengthens the life of existing built environment and reduce or delay the need for additional built infrastructure often with significant cost savings. Degraded ecological infrastructure increases the vulnerability of built infrastructure to damage during extreme events like floods and increases maintenance costs.

#### Strategic Objective 3: Promote a Sustainable Agriculture

Agriculture plays a significant role in fighting against poverty, supplying employment to unskilled workers, ensuring food security to rural people as well as stimulating

other sectors in the value chain which makes it an important sector towards attainment of growth and development. The agricultural sector is threatened by various internal and external constraints such as poor conditions of rural road infrastructure, ownership of land, land reform failures, mining activities, urbanization, climate change, water availability, lack of agro-processing and markets, human capacity and marginal soils.

The protection of high potential and productive agriculture land is a necessity. The Agriculture has been competing with other land uses, most notably are the mining industry and urban development. The gradual expansion of mining sector may have serious implications on land reform and food security. The level of mining, which is already high, and prospecting applications combine to cover the greater majority of the land area thus putting agriculture and the environment to high risk. Therefore, there is a need to put mechanisms in place that will help with the protection and management of these vital resource.

# Strategic Objective 4: Promote a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Economy

Air quality within the Mpumalanga Province, especially within the Highveld area, has been depleting over the years and today it counts among the poorest in South Africa. Home to 12 of Eskom's 15 coal-fired power stations; petrochemical plants like Sasol's giant refinery in Secunda; metal smelters; hundreds of primarily coal mines; brick and stone works; fertiliser and chemical producers; explosives producers; charcoal producers; and other small additional industrial operations, the Highveld is one of South Africa's industrial heartlands (CER, 2017).

The Highveld area in Mpumalanga is associated with poor Air Quality and high concentration of pollutants. The Highveld region accounts for approximately 90 percent of South Africa's scheduled emissions of industrial dust, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides (Wells et al. 1996, as cited in Josipovic et al. 2009). It is probably the country's most significant contributor of pollutants associated with acid deposition. Acid deposition is a primary contributor to acid rain which changes the standard soil composition and eventually affects biodiversity.

#### Strategic Objective 5: Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change is intricately linked to almost all facets of our society, particularly socio-economic progression as resources such as water, feedstock in the form of food, fibre, biodiversity, amongst others determine the production potential of many sectors of the economy, which in turn affect human development aspirations of the country.

Water underpins economic activity in all sectors. It is also the primary medium through which the effects of climate change will be felt in SouthAfrica. Climate change will alter water runoff and recharge rates, and change the availability, seasonality, timing, volume and quality of water available. New risk and vulnerability studies conducted by the Department of Water and Sanitation show that all the six hydro-climatic zones -the Limpopo, Olifants and Inkomati basins; the Pongola-Umzimkulu region; the Vaal River system; the Orange River system; the MzimvubuTsitsikamma region; and the Breede-Gouritz and Berg-Olifants basins- will be affected by climate change, including surface and groundwater. While climate models display a level of uncertainty, an increase in erosion and sedimentation, water pollutants, flooding and drought, among other impacts, is expected (National Climate change adaptation strategy, 2017)

#### Agriculture

Climate change also poses a major challenge for the agricultural industry, and many farmers now understand the contribution of agriculture or forestry to climate change or the consequences and impact that it will have on their business. The increase in population level will increase the demand for food and productivity per hectare and also place further pressures on the environment. The OECD estimates that by 2050; energy usage will be 80% higher than 2010; global water demand will have increased by 55%, and there will be increased pressure on agricultural and forest land.

Climate already plays a role in limiting agricultural activities, and a changing climate will significantly affect the country's agricultural sector. Expected effects include temperature increases, enhanced evapotranspiration and cold spells, changes in water quality and quantity, and increased flooding. Optimal growing areas are likely to shift by 2050 for field crops (such as barley, maize, sorghum, soybean, sugarcane and wheat), pasture/rangeland grasses, horticultural and viticulture crops, and

major commercial forestry tree species. The distribution of insect, plant and disease vectors are also likely to shift, which could adversely affect crop and livestock production and animal health. The effects on rangeland systems include inadequate water provision, changes in invasive species, increases in wildfire occurrences, heat stress, increases in livestock diseases, and lowered grazing potential for livestock. Increased flooding occurrences will exacerbate the effects of overgrazing, resulting in increased soil erosion, which will affect ecosystems and livelihoods that rely on livestock production, and increase siltation levels of irrigation dams and canals. Climate change will add to the agricultural sector's current pressures, namely land degradation, population increases, growing demand for agricultural resources, and the loss of agricultural land to development.

#### Forestry

Climate change will affect the distribution of the natural forest biome, which only covers 428 000 hectares of South Africa's land surface. Drier conditions and future development could reduce this further. The woodlands, which cover about 40 million hectares, are likely to further expand into savannah and grassland biomes, which could negatively affect the ecology of these systems. Although it is possible that the total area suitable for commercial forestry plantations in Mpumalanga could increase in future under certain climate scenarios, the sector remains vulnerable to climate change effects, including changes in growing conditions, increased occurrences of fires and lightning storms, increased survival and spread of insects and pathogens that directly affect forest ecosystems, and increased spread of invasive species that affect biodiversity.

#### **Biodiversity and Ecosystems**

Biodiversity is crucial to ecosystem health, and healthy ecosystems are central to human wellbeing. Healthy ecosystems provide the foundation for clean air and water, fertile soil and food. But cultivation, overgrazing, coastal development, invasive alien species in terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, mining, and certain fishing activities (such as trawling) are damaging natural habitats. Terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments are being lost in many parts of South Africa, which means species are being lost. Fragmentation of habitats also prevents landscape-scale ecological processes, such as fire, from functioning effectively and it affects livelihoods in that resources may become inaccessible or scarce. Climate change will exacerbate these effects.

# Strategic Objective 6: To optimally utilise the mining potential without compromising the long term sustainability of the natural environment

Mining contributes R 49.6 billion which is approximately 25% to the provincial economy. The key mining sector of the province is coal, which represents 83% of South Africa's coal production. The abundance of coal and other mineral resources creates a positive environment for various sectors including manufacturing and power generation to grow and it also contributes significantly to job creation in the province. However, mining is associated with many issues including water and soil contamination, air pollution and environmental degradation. Mines are being developed on good quality agricultural soil, a practice that threatens the future of all agriculture activity which can ultimately threaten food security. Mpumalanga's most coal-rich belt is located in the areas with high to very high potential land. As a result, good quality agricultural lands are being transformed into mines. Other issues which are as a result of mining are open cast mines. Opencast mining restricts the movement of animals, thereby negatively affecting the ecosystem and they also spread dust and pollutants which threatens the biodiversity of the province.

Therefore, it is important for the province to establish proper environmental management systems which will assist in the management and regulation of mines and mine activity, during and after the operational, to prevent against large scale water and air pollution; ensure that the rehabilitation process is done and carefully monitored to ensure that the agricultural potential of the land is successfully restored and the protection of the environment, once mining activity has been terminated

### 3.3.4 LIVEABILITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**



#### Strategic objective 1: Promote compaction and densification in urban areas through the application of designated nodes, sustainable development and infill areas

The lack of integration, compaction and densification in urban areas in Mpumalanga has serious negative consequences for household livelihoods, the environment, and the economy.

The PSDF liveability and sense of place strategies aim to provide principles to guide municipalities towards a more efficient, compact and sustainable spatial growth patterns. In order to ensure a more sustainable and viable future, it is important that settlement planning and infrastructure investment achieves:

- · higher densities and infill development
- a shift from suburban planning to a polycentric urban development model
- more compact settlements to minimise environmental impacts, reduce the costs and time of travelling and enhance provincial and municipal financial sustainability in order to provide and maintain infrastructure, facilities and services.
- address apartheid spatial legacies by targeting investment in areas of high population concentration and socio-economic exclusion (former homeland areas).
- by prioritising a more compact urban form through investment and development, settlements in the Mpumalanga can become more inclusionary, therefore widening the range of opportunities for all.

# Strategic Objective 2: Sustainable development of Human Settlements

In terms of the NDP, human settlement patterns within urban and rural areas should meet the needs and preferences of the citizens, taking into account broader social, environmental and economic interests. Travel distances need to be shorter which implies ensuring that a larger proportion of workers live closer to their places of work and that public transport is safe, reliable, affordable and energy efficient.

It is, therefore, important for the Province to also focus on redressing development patterns, in order to ensure urban restructuring in various towns and settlements. Most towns still carry the spatial legacy of the previous political dispensation, with various communities being segregated from one another and denied efficient access to economic opportunities and social services. Therefore there is a need to ensure that the spatial imbalances of the past are corrected and that people are located closer to places of work and economic opportunities. Housing and more specifically subsidised housing is a very powerful instrument at the disposal of government that has the means to influence development patterns in and around towns and can give effect to the proposed spatial restructuring objectives. Investment in housing needs to ensure optimal returns on investment, while at the same time promoting settlement restructuring and integration and compaction.

In order to create integrated and sustainable communities with access to social and economic opportunities throughout the Province, the housing focus needs to also be shifted towards diversifying the typologies delivered, increase densities, align housing projects with economic opportunities, increasing the supply and management of affordable rental accommodation, and also addressing the formal and informal sectors in one market. The PSDF should place less emphasis on delivering completed houses, and more emphasis on incrementally developing sustainable human settlements in partnership with other government departments, communities and the private sector. The focus should also be on improving the quality of the existing settlements.

#### Strategic Objective 3: Infrastructure Investment

This objective emphasis that all communities within the province have the right to access to basic services like water, sanitation, refuse removal and electricity whether residing in urban or rural areas. The fragmented settlement structure of the Mpumalanga (especially in the traditional areas) has resulted in both a lack of and vast backlogs of vital social services and engineering infrastructure. The key challenge is to create a balance in terms of improving service provision in the deep rural areas and with maintaining and upgrading the existing infrastructure in urban areas simultaneously.

Hence the aim of this objective is to emphasis on the need to make sufficient provision for infrastructure investment in the Province and to provide a full range of social services and engineering infrastructure within a reasonable distance of all communities, urban and rural. In order to support the notion of compact development and redress spatial fragmentation in the province, these services need to be consolidated for maximum efficiency as there is some benefit to be derived from such a consolidation such as increased economic potential around such centres etc. The Thusong centre concept as per the Vision 2030 can also be utilised as a means of consolidation of these services, this will, therefore, aid in the creation of Rural Economic Nodes as envisioned in the Rural Diversity and Transformation Objective below.

### 3.3.5 RURAL DIVERSITY AND TRANSFORMATION

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**

Create an Integrated Rural Economic Base by Rural Restructuring and Linkage of Rural Economies

#### Strategic Objective 1: Create an Integrated Rural Economic Base by Rural Restructuring and Linkage of Rural Economies.

Rural communities in South Africa are still characterized by poverty, inequality, limited access to basic and social infrastructure, underdevelopment, and lack of economic opportunities, fragmented spatial patterns and environmental degradation. Historically, rural communities relied on agriculture and subsistence farming for food and income, but the pressure is mounting for these communities to diversify their local economies beyond agriculture to other service industries likes tourism, mining, retail, manufacturing etc., which require skills development.

Rural Development is identified as an intervention process aimed at improving the quality of life and the socio-economic well-being of people living in these regions, through:

- the consolidation of settlements and the optimal provision of basic and social services, and
- the agglomeration of industries and increase in trade.

The PSDF proposes that the main focus of achieving rural transformation in the Province should be through the development of Rural Economic Nodes concept which is centred on the proposed urban-rural-anchors and small service centres approach of the NSDF.

Rural Economic Nodes concept is an initiative that focuses on the creation of nodes by consolidating and clustering rural settlements around a rural economic activity or social (Thusong centres) nuclei, linked by established transportation networks which aid in providing opportunities and access to markets and provision of high-quality services. The development of these nodes will therefore ultimately lead to a more compact, thriving, self-sustaining rural regions which will assist in the overall rural transformation of the province.

Rural development should also focus on the diversification and agglomeration of the rural space economy, not only through agricultural development, but also on agrarian transformation, tourism, and government promotion of rural development and land reform projects and the current MIDP projects happening in the province.

The strategic objective and strategies in this section propose development that will assist in the development of the "Rural Economic Node" concept" in the Province, which aims at achieving the objectives of the NSDF, Mpumalanga Vision 2030 and RDP's

# 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## **4.1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

The successful implementation of this PSDF will depend on the enabling environment of the institutional framework. The institutional framework must provide solid structures for decision making on the proposed and on-going implementation of the Mpumalanga PSDF strategies.

Clear roles and responsibilities of sector departments and key stakeholders need to be properly defined across all spheres of government and in the private sector. To achieve the required buy-in of the PSDF, there is a need to establish co-operative spatial governance and put mechanisms in place which can be implemented.

Within the planning sphere of the province, the PSDF aims to give guidance to future development in the province and remedy previous spatial patterns of the apartheid government which alienated certain population groups from areas that were economically viable and socially progressive.

### 4.2. CO-ORDINATING STRUCTURE/ CUSTODIANSHIP

The Mpumalanga PSDF is closely linked to the Mpumalanga Vision 2030, the Mpumalanga Industrial Development Plan and District Rural Development Plans, giving spatial reference to these plans in many aspects.

The key operational role of the PSDF is that it provides a strategic framework for coordinating efforts by government departments (national and provincial), particularly those which have a direct spatial implication. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that there are:

- appropriate institutional arrangements to facilitate planning, budgeting and implementation within provincial government and other spheres of government, and
- monitoring and evaluating provincial and municipal progress in making the required spatial implementation

It is therefore proposed and critical that the Office of the Premier supported by COGTA, Premiers Coordinating Forum and Provincial Management Committee (PMC) act as custodians of PSDF and oversee the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of the PSDF. The tandem approach serves a dual purpose by (i) the coordination will prevent and eliminate duplicate structures and procedures within the same and or other departments, and (ii) ensuring operational integration and alignment between the Mpumalanga PSDF and Mpumalanga Vision 2030.

Although sector departments across all tiers of government, and state-owned enterprises, all have their own planning targets, the PSDF needs to guide the coordination, integration and alignment of all these plans and programmes within the province.

Sector departments, therefore, need to ensure that all their spatial planning and projects are aligned with the PSDF and its strategies. This is in line with Section 17(2) of SPLUMA which stipulates that "All provincial development plans, projects and programmes must be consistent with the provincial spatial development framework"

The intent is that the Mpumalanga PSDF's thematic rationale and development objectives filter into municipal spatial planning frameworks where together with the SDF, IDP and LUS of a municipality and ultimately implement the vision of the PSDF. This will provide elements of spatial intelligence and consistency across Mpumalanga to be consistent with Section 12(4) of SPLUMA where "A provincial spatial development framework must contribute to and express provincial development policy as well as integrate and spatially express policies and plans emanating from the various sectors of the provincial and national spheres of government as they apply at the geographic scale of the province"

## 4.3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation of the PSDF are required to manage implementation. The Office of the Premier, supported by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (in the municipal space), will be responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation of the implementation of the PSDF. The implementation will be based on a coordinating function integrating provincial sector departments, municipalities, state-owned enterprises, the private sector and communities.

### 4.4. REPORTING, AMENDMENT AND REVIEW

After the adoption of the Mpumalanga PSDF, progress with regards to the implementation of the PSDF will be reported to the Provincial Management Committee (PMC).

As per Section 15(5) of SPLUMA, 2013 the Executive Council may amend the provincial spatial development framework when necessary and must review it at least once every five years (by 2025). Therefore, the Mpumalanga PSDF will be reviewed every 5 years. However, the implementation framework of the PSDF will be amended on an annual basis to measure implementation.

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### **Contact Information:**

# MPUMALANGA SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

**Executive Summary** 

2019



co-operative governance & traditional affairs MPUMALANGA PROVINCE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

