



public works,  
roads & transport

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# POLICY & *Budget Speech* 2022/23





**Ms Mohita Latchminarain (MPL)**  
MEC: Public Works, Roads and Transport



# POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH

## 2022/23

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Hon. Speaker - Ms. Makhosazana Masilela
- Hon. Deputy Speaker - Ms. Jeanette Thabethe
- Hon. Premier - Ms Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane
- My Colleagues in the Executive Council
- Chair of Chairs - Hon. Nompumelelo Hlophe
- Hon. Members of this esteemed August House
- Chief Whip of the ruling party - Hon. Fidel Mlombo
- Hon. Chief Whips of Opposition Parties
- Chairperson of House of Traditional Leaders iNkosi Ngomane “Mshika”
- Members of the House of Traditional Leaders present
- Executive Mayors and Members of Mayoral Committees present
- Director General - Mr. Makhukhu Mampuru
- Head of the Department - Mr Charles Morake Morolo, Management Team and all employees of the Department
- Heads of Departments and Chief Executive Officers of Entities
- Chairperson NEHAWU Mpumalanga - Mr. Fanie Ngwenyama
- Chairperson of SANTACO Mpumalanga - Mr. Fanyana Sibanyoni who was recently Elected Second Deputy President of SANTACO
- Other Stakeholders (SANRAL, SA TAXI, TRAC) including Guests in attendance and participants on digital platforms
- Ladies and Gentlemen



## Good Afternoon

1. Madam Speaker, allow me to express my profound sense of humility and gratitude for the opportunity to present the 2022/23 Policy & Budget Speech Vote 08 for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport.
2. The Department reaffirms its commitment towards the realisation of an integrated transport system and infrastructure that promotes socio-economic development in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030.
3. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate Youth Month we remember one of our African gallant fighters, Kwame Nkrumah, who was a Nationalist leader and president of Ghana. Nkrumah advanced a policy of Africanization by building new roads, schools, and health facilities and strongly believed that Africans were capable of developing their own countries without reliance on the western world.
4. During his address to the masses after realising the lack of development Ghana was facing, he said that:  
*“It is clear that we must find an African solution to our problems, and that this can only be found in African Unity. Divided we are weak, united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world.”*
5. It is, for this reason, we say that our generation highly appreciates and are indebted to the youth of 1976 for their contribution that brought us the freedom we enjoy today. Our political responsibility is to jealously guard the revolutionary agenda bestowed upon us through bloodshed and sacrifices.
6. Amidst all the challenges facing our country and the province, we continue to soldier on and present our Policy and Budget speech driven by an era of hope and renewal that is reverberating across all corners of our province under the Leadership of Honourable Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane.
7. Coming out of the recent 2021 Local Government Elections, our councillors have signed social contracts with voters to increase our commitment to delivering services to communities, and this will only be possible through inter-governmental relations.
8. Using the adopted District Development Model (DDM) we can deliver services speedily (si Khawuleza) in order to respond to the enormous challenges confronting our people.
9. Madam Speaker, we have engaged with our communities on various service delivery challenges, and their message is clear. We took guidance from their messages to prioritise areas mostly affected by service delivery, and to protect state resources from malfeasance and corruption.



## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

10. Madam Speaker, the National Development Plan (NDP) notes that to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth by 2030, South Africa needs to invest in a strong network of economic and social infrastructure.
11. However, the coronavirus pandemic puts at risk the achievement of the socio-economic outcomes envisaged in the NDP. That said, the need for infrastructure investment and development has not gone away. In fact, it is more pertinent than ever.
12. The construction and built environment are central to the revival of the economy and opening up of opportunities that will transform and benefit the province. To continue driving investments into each of these sectors, increased engagement and collaboration between public and private sectors has become a priority.
13. It is only when government, private sector and labour work in unison towards common objectives that we'll be able to reduce the impact of the pandemic and years of major fiscal cuts. Together we can build better communities!
14. Through the District Development Model (DDM), we are integrating our plans, budgets and competencies to respond to a multitude of developmental needs of communities. This approach will go a long way in assisting the government to reverse the unacceptable levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty.
15. Ladies and Gentlemen, this citizen-centric government promotes the involvement of all stakeholders in their governance and development. All citizens have a right to interrogate, question and continuously hold political representatives to account through legitimate, non-violent and democratic means.
16. This right is linked to other Constitutional rights. Everyone has the right, peacefully and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions. The exercise of such rights shall take place peacefully and with regard to the rights of others. However service delivery protests, have on occasion degenerated into destructive and obstructive conduct, which has undermined the rights of others.
17. More worrisome is that violent and destructive service delivery protests undermine future capabilities by destroying the public infrastructure that is essential for improving individual and community capabilities.
18. Therefore, collective effort is needed by both government and civil society to protect public infrastructure against destruction by rogue elements.
19. In response, we are enhancing our public participation programmes in line with the recent policy from the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure. These programmes will assist government and civil society to protect public infrastructure against destruction.



20. Honourable Members, corruption in both the public and private sectors is one of the greatest impediments that can derail our ambitions to create a better life for all.
21. As a Department, we remain vigilant against emerging risks and are regularly enhancing our internal controls to this regard. Citizens and organisations are also invited to play their part in preventing and fighting corruption.

## ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY PLAN

22. Honourable Members, the termination of the National State of Disaster was a timely relief for many of us. Mpumalanga is now focused on economic recovery - to forge a new economy in a new global reality. However, the virus is still with us, and vaccination remains our best weapon against it!
23. Strategically, the province has adopted the Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to address the negative impact of Covid-19.
24. This plan is aligned to the national Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. Both plans identify infrastructure spending as a key pathway to economic growth and job creation.
25. Government has introduced a new methodology known as the Sustainable Infrastructure Development System (SIDS) as a new way of packaging and preparing projects.
26. What makes the SIDS methodology different is that it ensures that infrastructure development is not merely undertaken in a transactional manner, which is where we have fallen short for so many years.
27. At a provincial level, we are working on ensuring that there is strong and effective project management within the Department to oversee the massive infrastructure rollout. If not addressed, this can slow the envisaged economic growth and job creation.
28. Ladies and Gentlemen, the pandemic has brought us closer to e-Government. Digital adoption has taken a quantum leap at both departmental and public sector levels. We have seen how technology can be used to achieve better service delivery outcomes.
29. In the past two years, the demand for cloud solutions has significantly increased. For example, top management and myself require information to enable effective infrastructure management. This is why we have commissioned the development of a web-based system (Project Information Management System - PIMS) to enhance project monitoring and oversight.
30. At a press of a button (maybe buttons), we should be able to obtain critical project information such as actual physical progress against the planned target, expenditure vs budget, challenges and emerging risks. This information will enable seamless reporting and assist management to take corrective measures timeously.



31. Technology has evolved so much now that drones can be used for inspections of infrastructure – whether for progress updates during construction, maintenance checks or damage evaluation after a weather event. In the past, this would have required significant manpower, time and finances.
32. It is no longer a secret that technology leads to better outcomes – a realisation acknowledged way before the coronavirus. We have been using drones to take quality pictures and videos that are used to generate content for our online show: The Daily Grind.
33. Madam Speaker, we intend to use this robotics technology in conjunction with workers - not instead of them. Our appetite to embrace technology can also unlock opportunities for young people. South Africa and Mpumalanga need as many drone pilots as they can train!

## ADMINISTRATION

34. Madam Speaker, our workforce is the backbone of the Department. Not only is this group collectively responsible for the execution of our mandate but are also vital for Building a Capable State/Department.
35. In the past couple of years, we have not been able to achieve adequate staffing levels due to the provincial moratorium on filling of posts. At the same time, our mandate has increased and we now have more projects and responsibilities.
36. It is against this recognition that a total of 193 posts against 217 advertised posts were filled since 2021 as of part of our phased-in approach. On the flip side, a total of 153 employees left the Department during the previous financial year. Overall, the new appointments had a minimal impact on the departmental vacancy rate which is at 36%.
37. We do recognise that we also need to contain expenditure growth especially during this period of fiscal constraints. Therefore, this calls for transforming our workforce structure, prioritisation of critical posts and changing budget practices and procedures on compensation of employees where possible. In the meantime, we will continue with phase two of our endeavour to fill critical posts.
38. Ladies and Gentlemen, building capacity of the State is a long-term venture and involves a number of fundamental programmes. Aligned to this Department, is the development of technical skills through internships, learnerships, apprenticeships, young professionals programme and bursary graduate training schemes.



39. Currently, there are 165 young people enrolled on training programmes (internship + young professional programme) funded by the Department. We have also partnered with SETAs to train about 1483 young people on various skills development programmes that includes artisans' development. Funding from these authorities can be broken down as follows:
- Construction Education & Training Authority (CETA) = 1118
  - Transport Education Training Authority (TETA) = 199
  - Banking Sector Education & Training Authority (BANKSETA) = 110
  - Public Service Sector Education & Training Authority (PSSETA) = 56
40. These programmes have a positive effect on the skills profile of the province and our ambitions to tackle unemployment and poverty. Although we cannot absorb them all, we are benefitting from the enthusiasm and fresh ideas from those that are hosted by the Department. Implementation of effective exit strategies will require collaboration between all social partners.
41. Madam Speaker, yesterday I officially opened a training academy in KwaMhlanga (Thembisile Hani Local Municipality) where the Department has partnered with Strait Agri Solutions to tackle the unprecedented youth unemployment.
42. At inception, learners are targeted to receive short-term training on the following trades: welding, plumbing and electrical. Several local stakeholders (e.g. Afrox and African Skills) have partnered with the academy and are sponsoring material and other supplies.
43. The long-term objectives of this initiative will be to grow and diversify the operations of the academy and offer complete one stop training services. The advert for recruitment will be issued before the end of the second quarter.
44. We are excited about this initiative and are looking forward to forge more strategic partnerships with local municipalities, government departments, state agencies, TVETs, SETAs and private companies amongst others. In doing so, we will be able to expand the programme to more trades and young people across the province.
45. Last year, I conducted a roadshow to assess the state of cost centres in the Department in pursued to establish internal capacity.
46. The assessment indicated high shortage of personnel as well as plant and equipment for both building and road maintenance. I will continue my roadshows to other districts to establish the financial implications to address these internal shortages.
47. The Department has appointed two qualified mechanical artisans in December 2021 as part of its measures to resuscitate mechanical workshops in the Province. These artisans have since managed to assist with the repair and service of the Department's yellow and white fleet.



48. The Department has further identified 3 artisan trainees (1 in Thembisile Hani and 2 in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality) within our teams who will be trained by these recently appointed artisans to enhance their capacity.
49. This strategy is both economical for the Province and the turn-around repair time is reduced significantly, making sure that we promptly deliver services to our community and clients. The vision is to see these trainees qualified as mechanical artisans at the end of the training period.
50. The Department will set aside additional budget to procure the necessary equipment and tools for these mechanical workshops. This initiative has already yielded positive results and the aim is to spread it across the province using Nkangala District as a benchmark.
51. Honourable Members, employee training and development can enable continuous improvements in service delivery. As such, a total of 142 employees were trained on plumbing, electrical engineering and supply chain management.
52. Parallel to this Programme, 139 unemployed youth were trained on Diesel Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Auto Electrical Engineering and Earth Moving Equipment. Accredited training providers and SETA conducted the training for the two groups. The graduation ceremony for the 281 successful learners will be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2022.

## PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE

53. Madam Speaker, the rollout of social and economic infrastructure has had a significant impact on the lives of the people of Mpumalanga. From development opportunities, to improving access to services, associated projects had a powerful impact on the quality of life for those who were previously neglected by the apartheid regime.
54. Last year, the Department administered a collective budget of R2,8 billion for the Public Works and Infrastructure Programme. This budget allocation was apportioned for planning, design, construction and maintenance of 711 building infrastructure projects.
55. At year-end a total of 628 projects were completed on behalf of client departments. These projects include 380 designs plus 248 projects with varying scope and complexities.
56. The breakdown of the completed projects is as follows: 211 projects for Department of Education, 3 projects for Department of Health, 25 projects for Department of Social Development and 9 projects for the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation.
57. Although our spending in the first half of the financial year was below the projected expenditure, there was significant improvement in the latter half of the year.
58. Mpumalanga was third for infrastructure implementation in the country during the fourth quarter of the 2021/22 financial year. This performance was acknowledged by Minister Patricia De Lille during the MINMEC held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2022.



59. This capital investment on public infrastructure did not only support local participation but also assisted Mpumalanga to address the inherited spatial injustices. Now, there are more schools, grade R facilities, clinics, libraries and other public buildings, than prior to 1994.
60. Notwithstanding these achievements, the working environment has continued to present various challenges in addition to the pandemic. In-year submission of infrastructure plans from client departments undermines planning, prudent asset management and the production of credible and transparent project pipelines.
61. Apart from the national intervention, several structural reforms are being undertaken to ensure long term policy stability within the province. In the main, these seek to ensure that strategic planning issues, cost estimates, risks and related matters are given adequate considerations before allocating funding to a project.
62. Going forward, all infrastructure priorities will be informed by the Mpumalanga Infrastructure Master Plan (MIMP) - a thirty year long term plan comprising of five year implementation plans. The work to review and align this plan has commenced in conjunction with CSIR and is scheduled for completion by December 2022.
63. In the 2022/23 financial year, the Department plans to complete a total of **198 capital and refurbishment infrastructure** projects on behalf of client departments. These include:
- 153 for Department of Education;
  - 12 for Department of Health;
  - 04 for Department of Social Development;
  - 21 for Culture, Sport and Recreation,
  - 01 for Economic Development and Tourism and,
  - 07 projects for DPWRT.
64. More importantly, these projects include the resumption of works at Mkhondo Boarding School and Parliamentary Village as well as refurbishment of KwaMhlanga Government Complex which were disrupted by budget related challenges last year.
65. Consistent with SOPA pronouncements, we shall accelerate the construction of Parliamentary Village, Bethal, Mapulaneng and Mammethlake Hospitals and the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market, which were interrupted by illicit forums extorting money and blocking the delivery of services.
66. In addition, the planning and design of the following strategic projects is on track: Linah Malatjie Tertiary Hospital and School for the Deaf in Emalahleni Local Municipality, Hoerskool Bergvlam, Nelspruit Primary School, Laerskool Laeveld, Laerskool Nelspruit, HTS Middelburg and Pine Ridge High School.



67. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport is also responsible for providing and managing accommodation, housing, land and infrastructure needs for all provincial departments. Most importantly, user departments are responsible to budget for maintenance works while the custodian advises and provide the necessary technical expertise.
68. During the previous financial year, a total of R9, 7 million was spent on maintenance activities at KwaMhlanga Government Complex. The following projects have been prioritised for implementation in the current financial year at an estimated cost of R40 million: Installation of generators, upgrading of the existing water reticulation, maintenance of electrical works, amongst others.
69. The current budget shortfalls for building maintenance compels us to reconsider the size of our housing portfolio. This necessitates that we conduct an audit of all state houses to determine the legitimacy of the current tenants. This will have a dual benefit in terms of identifying free riders as well as identifying housing stock that can be recommended for disposal.

## TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

70. Madam Speaker, the Department plays a major role in developing, maintaining and managing the provincial road network. We have a responsibility to ensure that these roads are managed to maximise their role in enabling economic activities and access to social amenities.
71. This is dependent on sufficient and stable funding models and adequate financing. However, government has consistently reduced infrastructure conditional grants to provinces as the national budget deficit and debt have risen. This has reinforced the need for innovative approaches to bridge the funding gap.
72. In response, the Department continues to strengthen collaboration and partnership opportunities to respond to the demand for better roads. We are engaging strategic partners such as SASOL, mining houses and farmers in pursuance of alternative funding solutions to supplement government's resources.
73. The aim is to ensure that private sector that is benefiting from the Mpumalanga roads network contributes towards its construction and maintenance. More so because, the coal haulage grant funding has since been discontinued.
74. The Department of Transport through SANRAL is implementing major and minor works on the national road network that traverse through the province.
75. The road agency recently shared with the Department the list of projects that are under implementation and due for implementation in the short term. These projects include upgrading the N2 from around Ermelo to Piet Retief and the KZN border, and the R40 between Hazyview and Bushbuckridge.



76. We are also at an advanced stage to formalise our relationship with the Department of National Public Works and Infrastructure and the Department of Defence (DOD). Last year, we indicated our appetite to participate in the rural bridges Welisizwe programme and to date, 12 projects were submitted to DOD for assessment and implementation from the current financial year.
77. This programme is part of government's response to improve access to social facilities, especially in rural communities. The Programme also complements the provision of infrastructure for non-motorised transportation in rural areas.
78. Also, through the District Development Model, the Department is working together with municipalities, to integrate the province's road infrastructure maintenance plans, budgets and competencies to coordinate and implement an integrated response to the pressing need for maintenance and preservation of the provincial and municipal road infrastructure.
79. To date, planning sessions have been held with all municipalities through the three districts, resources audit (personnel, plant and equipment) has been carried out and prioritisation of infrastructure for maintenance is currently underway with the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2022 as the targeted completion date for the final One-Plan.
80. Honourable Members, amidst the pandemic, Mpumalanga was battered by heavy summer rains for two successive seasons which has left most public infrastructure in dire condition.
81. This also contributed to the formation of potholes and further accelerated the ageing of the provincial road network. To address this, internal road maintenance teams and contractors were deployed to do urgent remedial work on specific access roads.
82. Additionally, extra muscles and machines have been procured in support of our intensified war against potholes. This was achieved through the acquisition of 4 mechanical pothole patching vehicles that are deployed primarily on vital road networks in the province; particularly on tourism and coal haulage roads.
83. The procurement of these vehicles is not only a major boost on our plant and equipment but also gives effect on our intention to use a hybrid model that integrates manual labour and technology to achieve better road management.
84. The Department is in a process of completing the pothole reporting APP which will be linked to our Maintenance Management System. This application relies on a GPS location, with users given the option of uploading their pinned location on a map, and a picture showing where the pothole is located.
85. Madam Speaker, the Youth Month will be one of the busiest months for me as I engage on a programme to patch potholes across the province. The objective of the programme is to aggressively attend to potholes across the provincial road network, working together with all municipalities and government agencies.



86. Beyond the month of June, I intend to maintain the momentum on this critical part of road network management.
87. In the past year, we managed to complete 7 paving projects, 3 integrated rural mobility and access projects and closed a sinkhole near the new Mapulaneng Hospital in Bushbuckridge.
88. Madam Speaker, the Provincial Tourism Sector Recovery Plan forms part of Mpumalanga's broader Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. This plan highlights the role that domestic tourism can play in reigniting tourism in Mpumalanga.
89. Key strategic interventions from the plan include maintenance and upgrading of specific tourism infrastructure (including roads). We are working with the Mpumalanga Tourism Parks Agency to identify roads related quick wins that can boost tourism in the short term.
90. The following tourism roads projects are currently in progress:
- Design: Rehabilitation of Road P216/1 **eMbalenhle to Secunda** (km 0.0 to km 9.67)
  - Rehabilitation of Road D3930 from **Acornhoek** to D3932 at **Hluvukani** (km11.80) in Bohlabela (Phase 1) (11.80 km)
  - Rehabilitation of Road P170/1 from km 56.0 to km 72.5 between **Matibidi and Graskop** (16.5km)
  - Upgrading of Road D4407, D4409 and a section of D4416 between **Hluvukani** and Road P194/1 **near Werverdiend** (15.6km)
  - Rehabilitation of Sections of Road P8/1 (R36) between **Mashishing and Bambi** (Phase 3) Part A (11 km)
  - Upgrading of Road D481 Embhuleni to Manhar between **Mooiplaas and Ekulindeni** (7.2 km)
  - Repair of dolomite sinkhole at km 20.5 on Road P9/1 between **Sabie and Pilgrim Rest**
  - Slip failure repairs and general maintenance of sections of the road on D1043 (R535) between **Graskop and Hazyview**
  - Repair and maintenance of **Kowyn** Pass rock surface, pavement and drainage facilities on Road P57/2 (7.8km)
91. Overall, the Department has set aside R649 million for road maintenance to reduce the current backlogs. In addition, approximately, R677 million has been set aside for construction of various strategic roads across the province.
92. One of these projects is the Tekwane Bridge which was washed away during the heavy rains in February 2021. In March 2022, a delegation led by President Cyril Ramaphosa and Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane visited the bridge and promised that it would be repaired.



93. I am happy to announce that the major works on the project is complete and from the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, the contractor will focus on ancillary works which includes road markings and road signs, guardrails, erosion protection, landscaping, etc.
94. Madam Speaker, the communities from Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, Dr JS Moroka, Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme, and other areas have, through various channels (Petitions, Presidential Imbizo, Taking Legislature to the People and Meetings with the Department) raised serious concerns about the state of roads in their areas. I have heard all your pleas and I am working tirelessly with the regional teams to attend to your genuine concerns.
95. In the short to medium term, maintenance interventions will be carried out to ensure the roads remain usable and safe. It must be noted that some of the roads have already been designed and are ready for implementation, pending budget availability.
96. Notwithstanding the current budget shortfalls, we plan to complete the following ongoing projects during the 2022/23 financial year:
- Light rehabilitation of Road D2486 from **N2 to Klipwal** (to KZN Boundary - part of Provincial joint plans) Phase 1
  - Upgrade of Road D3960 (9.2 km) and D4442 (3.6 km) **Ga-Motibidi to Rainbow** Phase 1 (12.7 km)
  - Upgrade of Road D2952 from **Masibekela** (D2950) to **Thambokhulu** (km 9.5 - km 11.0) Phase 2 (1.5 km)
  - Rehabilitation of Road P95/1 between **Verena and Gauteng boundary** (Phase 2) (13.5 km)
  - Upgrade of Road D281 between **Volksrust and Daggakraal** (12.5km)
  - Rehabilitation of Coal Haul Road P182/1 (R542) from km 26.25 to R38 between **Van Dyksdrift and Hendrina** - Phase 3 (12.1km)
  - Rehabilitation of Coal Haul Road P29/1 (R555) between **Delmas and Kendal** from km 50 at D2669 to km 62.55 at D2821 (near D686) (12.55km)
97. This year, we also plan to start the following projects in response to the demand for better roads:
- Upgrade of Bridge on **Road D4400 over Sand River near Rolle Village** (widening)
  - Construction of **Kumani Bridge** on D4422 near **Thulamahashe** (including upgrading of 5 km of road D4422)
  - Upgrade of Road D4382 between **Justicia and Belfast** (12km)
  - Rehabilitation of Road D2950 from R571 (km 0.0) past **Mananga** (13.5 km) - Phase 1 (6 km)



98. Also noteworthy, is that the Department has started plans for the upgrading of the culvert to Sobhuza Primary School in Carolina as per the commitment made during the Presidential Imbizo. The works will also include the regraveling of the 1.5km access road to the school. This will ensure that the learners and teachers can access the school especially after heavy rains.
99. Currently, there are ongoing discussions at national level which emanates from the Roads Indaba that was held in February 2022. Mpumalanga has proposed more flexibility on the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant (PRMG) to enable spending above the capped 25% on rehabilitation of roads, especially after the withdrawal of the coal haulage network grant.
100. Madam Speaker, let me summarise the strategic importance of the provincial road network and why our drive to explore how best to expend scarce taxpayers' funds to address the steady decline on the quality of our roads:
- (i) Mpumalanga generates almost 75% of the country's electricity hence the strategic importance of the coal haulage network to ensure energy security.
  - (ii) Transport infrastructure plays a critical role in promoting tourism growth by enabling tourists to access and enjoy Mpumalanga's vast tourist attractions and
  - (iii) Mpumalanga is one of South Africa's important agricultural regions and plays a key role in its export profile and is also an important lifeline for food security.

## TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

101. Honourable Speaker, safety and rights of all road users remain one of the government's main priorities. Together with the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, we are tasked with overseeing the Arrive Alive campaign.
102. The objective of this campaign can only be achieved through partnership between government, public transport operators and the public. In most instances, regulatory framework, guidelines and plans are available to enhance road safety. These are focused on education, training and testing, human behaviour, roads design and enforcement amongst others.
103. We have a responsibility as the Department to ensure that road users particularly in the public transport are afforded a safe and reliable transport system. This have led to a special law enforcement operation, which was conducted in the early hours yesterday around 3am at Moloto R573.
104. Honourable Members, we had a similar operation last year together with the Honourable Premier whereby 45 PUTCO buses were impounded for operating without operating licenses and un-roadworthiness. However yesterday we impounded only 8 buses which shows a slight improvement from last year.
105. We will continue with such law enforcement operations until things are in order in the public transport systems.



106. While we are overseers of this objective, we are also road users ourselves. As such, we are constantly exposed to the same dangers just like any member of society.
107. Last week we received with deep shock the news that one of our employees was involved in a horrific accident near the Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport. Sadly, Mr Evening Ntuli, who was an Assistant Director for Expenditure at Head Office lost his life. May his soul and the souls of those that have perished on our roads rest in eternal peace.
108. Honourable Members, student transportation is an enabler for equitable access to quality education. It is against this understanding that this year, a budget of R451 million has been set aside for management of the transportation of learners.
109. Apart from learners, approximately 117,000 daily commuters benefit from the bus subsidy scheme allocated through the Public Transport Operations Grant. The budget for this year has increased to R711 million.
110. This increased budget covers the annual price adjustments and also makes it possible for many disadvantaged Mpumalanga residents to counter apartheid spatial planning and to access their places of work, hospitals and schools.
111. Bus companies have a critical role in not only improving access and mobility but also in the fight against unemployment, poverty and inequality.
112. To this regard, we have started engagements with our contracted bus operators to explore potential partnerships for skills development and reducing youth unemployment.
113. Madam Speaker, we cannot deny that the taxi industry plays an important role in Mpumalanga's economy. Other than being used by most commuters, the industry employs many people as drivers, marshals, washers and vendors. Given the high unemployment level, the importance of the industry cannot be underestimated.
114. It is therefore essential that the relationship between the Department and the Taxi Industry is formally supported. Annually, an average budget of R11 million is provided to the Taxi Council for enhancement of administration and governance within their structures.
115. In spite of our well documented challenges, the two parties, have previously collaborated to address a number of social issues such as Taxi Violence, Gender-Based Violence, HIV & Aids, Covid-19 and the July Social Unrests.
116. We must further commend the leadership of SANTACO for its decision not to participate on last Friday's so called national shutdown. Your understanding that any mass action to disrupt the economy will further harm our recovery efforts is applauded.



## COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES

117. Madam Speaker, during the Presidential Imbizo in Carolina, His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa indicated national government's commitment to work with the provincial government to support job creation. He emphasised the importance of using existing public employment programmes like EPWP to create more work opportunities, especially for the youth, women and people with disabilities.
118. Indeed, the Expanded Public Works Programme continued to create the much needed work and training opportunities despite challenges posed by Covid-19. EPWP plays a vital role in government's comprehensive Covid-19 response and mitigation strategy. This programme is complemented by the Presidential Employment Stimulus targeted to address youth unemployment.
119. Last year, the programme benefitted a number of people by creating 39,128 work opportunities through the use of labour intensive methods. The main beneficiaries were 24 214 women, 16 922 youth and 190 people with disabilities. Through the programme, these individuals were provided not only with source of income but also some training that may facilitate their absorption into the job market.
120. Noteworthy is that this programme involves participation of 30 public bodies who are collectively tasked with the creation of 45 056 in the current financial year. We trust that all stakeholders will continue to find value in the reporting about their interventions which is critical to enhance the performance and impact of EPWP.
121. EPWP also provided local small-medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs) with opportunities to participate in the mainstream economy. We relied on empowerment legislation to facilitate inclusive growth.
122. It is therefore unfortunate that one of government's empowerment prescript (i.e. Preferential Procurement Regulations) on this regard was found to be invalid by the courts. Subsequently, appropriate action has been taken to waive pre-requisites until the Minister has promulgated new regulations.
123. Long before this uncertainty, we were bold enough to include empowerment targets on our APPs. Our targets covers all designated groups including military veterans. Our performance for last year reads as follows:
- 91.3% of the value of all contracts awarded, were awarded to black people;
  - 66.3% were awarded to black people who are women;
  - 9% awarded to black people who are youth;
  - 0.3% to black people with disabilities; and
  - 3.6% to military veterans.



124. Ladies and Gentlemen, last year December we appointed 59 women-owned contractors on one of our contractor development programmes called Sakh'abakhi. Since its inception in 2006, the programme has benefitted 241 participants but this time around it targeted females in line with the 2019 SOPA announcement.
125. This programme is aimed at empowering women owned enterprises through exposing them to social **infrastructure projects**. Come end of their training, these contractors will be able to compete effectively and independently in the open market beyond the State intervention.
126. This year, we will also see a structured approach to contractor development during the rollout of **transport infrastructure projects**. To date, we have finalised the policy framework and are currently developing detailed specifications and bid documentation. This programme will provide 32 emerging contractors with training and mentorship over a specified period of time.

## CONCLUSION OF THE BUDGET VOTE

127. Madam Speaker, we are working around the clock to ensure that our communities receive services. Their outcry and issues raised did not fall on deaf ears, they are receiving urgent attention and we will respond speedily and transparently for the purpose of claiming no easy victories.
128. We will work together with all our stakeholders and communities to create better living conditions. We will close whatever gap that might exist between the Department and our people and remind them that we are their humble servants and the ANC-led government is the only hope that they have to live a better life.
129. We will never undermine the overwhelming mandate entrusted to us by our people, instead we are committed to accelerate our work and deliver quality services to all our communities.
130. I want to take this opportunity and thank my Political Organisation, the African National Congress for entrusting me with such huge responsibilities and I will ensure that the policy objectives of the ANC-led government are realised to its full extent.
131. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to our Honourable Premier of the Province, Mme Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane for her leadership and guidance since occupation of office.
132. I further thank the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee of Public Works Roads and Transport, Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Hon. Norah Mahlangu and all Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee for their good work on matters of oversight and accountability. We pledge to respect the Committee and we will always subject ourselves before them when called to process all matters of our Vote.



133. I also want to appreciate the support we received from the Head of Department, Mr Charles Morolo together with Senior Management Staff of the Department who have been working with us hand in gloves and we assure them that we will correctly lead them and take the Department to new heights.

## THE BUDGET

134. Madam Speaker, the Department's overall budget allocation for 2022/23 has increased by R40 million or 0,8% when compared to the main appropriation budget in the 2021/22 financial year. This increase is below the inflation rate, hence in essence, this means that there is less money to spend on Government programmes, projects and personnel.
135. We must therefore ensure value for money on all public spending. I now request this House to consider and approve the budget of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, Vote 8, which is as follows:

136. <b>Administration</b>	<b>R359, 479, 000</b>
<b>Public Works Infrastructure</b>	<b>R1, 268, 843, 000</b>
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	<b>R1, 964, 667, 000</b>
<b>Transport Operations</b>	<b>R1, 317, 433, 000</b>
<b>Community Based Programmes</b>	<b>R82, 879, 000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>R4, 993, 301, 000</b>

I Thank You!





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*“Together Let’s Grow Mpumalanga”*