

## **Minister Nxesi launches a massive facelift project for Umbumbulu Magistrates' Court**

Public Works Minister T W Nxesi has laid a foundation brick at Umbumbulu Magistrates' Court construction site on 23 September 2014 - symbolising the start of the construction of a new structure at the precinct and the renovation of the old court.

Addressing the media during the launch, Minister Nxesi said the project was aimed at bringing justice closer to the people. He said this initiative was part of the rollout of his department's mandate - that of providing accommodation to client departments to enable them to provide services to the public.

The project including both the extension and the renovation which will cost just below R30m, is scheduled to be completed in July 2015.

The court house in Umbumbulu dates back to 1895, when cases were conducted under a tree which still exists in the property today.

The current court structure has a Court Room, 12 Magistrates' and Administrative Offices, Cash Office Facilities and two Holding Cells.

The new building being constructed will have Prisoners' Offloading Yard, SAPS and Finger Printing Office, Correctional Services Office Consulting Room, Legal Aid Room, Prisoners' Friend Room, 2 Female and 2 Male Cells. On the upper level, it will have an Entrance Lobby and Security Office, Inquest Office, a Criminal Court Room, a Holding Cell, Witness Room, Adult Witness Room, Court Prep Room, 2 Sexual Offences Court Rooms, Intermediary Room, Child Testifying Room, Child Play Room, 2 Holding Cells, 3 Criminal Court Rooms, Social Workers' Room and Archives.

The existing building will be altered and renovated to provide a Family Court, Magistrates' Office and Meeting Room, Child Clerk Office, Child Play, Domestic Violence Office, Maintenance Offices, Registry Office, Court Managers' Office and 5 Administrative Offices. Data and IT systems will also be fully upgraded.

During the construction phase, 34 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) beneficiaries from Umbumbulu community will be trained in different trades including bricklaying and plastering, plumbing, carpentry, electrical skills, painting and tiling. The practical six (6) months on site training follows a six (6) months theoretical training which forms part of the National Youth Service training.

The construction and the restoration of the Umbumbulu Magistrates' Court was described by many during the launch as a ground-breaking initiative, which will help fight crime in Umbumbulu and surrounding areas.