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CHDM puts focus on small town revitalisation

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The Chris Hani District Municipality (CHDM) hosted a symposium on small town revitalisation and urban growth at its council chamber yesterday (Thursday).

The aim of the symposium was to ensure sustainable inclusive economic growth and spatial transformation through integrated and sustainable urban development and management.

It also focused on unlocking economic opportunities for small towns and sought to unleash development potential, attract investment, ensure the upliftment of the town as an attractive place to live or work, and further remove related blockages in this regard.

CHDM spokesperson Bulelwa Ganyaza said the symposium targeted representatives from all six local municipalities and discussed topics which included other infrastructure and spatial challenges to drive growth and development within the area.

"Key participants included executive mayors, mayors, speakers, chief whips and councillors from infrastructure, community services and integrated planning and economic development (IPEDE), human settlements, municipal managers, directors from affected directorates, town planners or spatial planners, the office of the premier and the SA Local Government Association (SALGA).

"It also included sector departments for corporative governance & traditional affairs, public works, transport, land reform and the department of economic development, environmental affairs & tourism," she said.

Ganyaza said the symposium identified catalytic interventions aimed at promoting economic, social and spatial development in various towns in the region.

"Small town development strategies had been developed and adopted by councils such as the Cofimvaba, Tarkastad and Engcobo small town development strategies.

"For the 2023-2024 financial year, the CHDM council has set aside about R5m to address the decaying towns within the district.

"This will focus on paving, beautification, greening, township formalisation and spatial integration," she said.

On paving and beautification, Ganyaza said, the focus is on Inxuba Yethemba (Middleburg), which will receive R1 m, Intsika Yethu (Cofimvaba, R1 m) and Enoch Mgijima (Komani & Hofmeyer, R2 m).

"The township formalisation focus is at Emalahleni R500,000 (Mivuyo Township), Gwatyu Farms R250,000 (local spatial development framework) and Dr AB Xuma R250,000 (Msawawa township formalisation).

"To address the conditions at Komani town (CBD), CHDM, working with Enoch Mgijima is busy developing a precinct plan for the Komani town (N6).

"The paving project has also been identified as the way to create employment through EPWP where in on every project implemented some EPWP work opportunities are utilised and local SMMEs are also utilised for the material to be used," she said.



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