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Minister signs deal to fast-track uMngeni infrastructure projects

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Long-overdue infrastructure projects in uMngeni are set to receive urgent attention following the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the municipality and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure.

Key infrastructure projects included in the MOU include the upgrade of the main road from Merrivale to Tweedie, construction of a new cell at the Curry's Post Land-fill, the Hilton energy infrastructure project, and the development of the Merrivale Industrial Zone.

The MOU, signed on Friday morning by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Dean Macpherson and uMngeni Municipality Speaker Janis Holmes, forms part of the pilot phase of the "Adopt-a-Municipality" initiative to improve infrastructure delivery at local government level.

The other two municipalities included in the pilot are Metsimaholo Municipality in the Free State and Govan Mbeki Municipality in Mpumalanga. Each MOU will remain in effect for a period of 24 months.

This is the first time such an initiative has been undertaken by the department. It was adopted by the Presidential Infra-



Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Dean Macpherson (left) and uMngeni Municipality Speaker Janis Holmes at the signing of the memorandum of understanding to fast-track long-overdue infrastructure projects in the municipality.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

structure Co-ordinating Council, chaired by President Cyril Ramaphosa, last year.

The initiative will see Infrastructure South Africa (ISA) work with municipalities and the private sector to introduce rapid infrastructure interventions aimed at improving the implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects.

The objective is to address cost over-

runs, poor workmanship and inadequate planning — challenges that have frequently plagued municipal infrastructure initiatives.

Minister Macpherson said the initiative will help address the often chequered track record of infrastructure delivery at local government level across South Africa.

"It will also ensure that infrastructure budgets are properly spent, that projects are properly prepared, that project cost overruns are avoided, and poor workmanship addressed."

"With this initiative, we are trying to change the narrative surrounding local government infrastructure projects and bring an end to the era of failing municipal infrastructure, as we see in many places across the country," said Macpherson.

While the project was launched in three municipalities, the department intends to replicate the model countrywide in the months and years ahead.

Macpherson said this initiative will play an important role in achieving the department's goal of turning the country into a construction site — with more infrastructure projects successfully executed to stimulate economic investment, grow the economy and, most importantly, cre-

ate jobs.

"With the launch of the 'Adopt-a-Municipality' project, we are seeking to deliver tangible results from the policy interventions we have introduced since taking office, in order to meaningfully improve infrastructure delivery."

"It is one of the key initiatives being implemented in the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to expedite infrastructure development as we work to build a better South Africa for all our people," said Macpherson.

The speaker of uMngeni Municipality council, Janis Holmes, signed the MOU on behalf of the municipality.

"These long-overdue initiatives are essential not only for maintaining and improving service delivery in uMngeni but also for preparing the municipality to accommodate future growth."

"uMngeni's selection for the programme is a direct result of our municipality's sound governance."

"We remain debt-free with Eskom, have achieved consistently improved audit outcomes, and maintain stable and capable leadership structures with no critical vacancies," said Holmes.

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