

FOCUS IS ON PUBLIC WORKS

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The princely amount of R1.2bn will be allocated to the provincial department of public works as the government focuses on a full-scale overhaul of the infrastructure in the province, the MEC for Public Works, Sisi Mabe, said on Monday.

She was delivering the much anticipated budget speech in Heilbron. The government said it had prioritised spending on infrastructure that would improve the quality of life of the people and ensure a better life for all.

The MEC stressed the significance of the New Growth Path which was launched by the minister of economic development last year.

“The New Growth Path expects ‘the public investment’ to create 250000 jobs a year in energy, transport, water and communications infrastructure as well as in housing, through to 2015,” said Mabe.

“These jobs are found in the following key activities: construction of new infrastructure, operation of the new facilities, expanded maintenance and the manufacture of the components for the infrastructure programme.”

Mabe also underlined the importance of competent professional and technical personnel.

“The human capital needs are addressed through the recruitment and absorption of bursary holders and professional registration with relevant councils such the Engineering Council of South Africa.”

Job creation was described as the fulcrum of development.

“Public works therefore remains the key strategic function.

“Our preoccupation will be the acceleration of integrated infrastructure delivery, economic and social development,” she said.

Referring to many key capital projects implemented in the previous financial year, Mabe pledged to continue the good work.

“In this financial year we will include maintenance, upgrading the design and the construction of new buildings for provincial department, the legislature, and our own capital projects.

“Public works will, as the champion of job creation, ensure that these projects are implemented using labour intensive measures.”

She also lauded the assets disposal initiatives of the administration.

“These programmes ensure that utilised properties are disposed of or donated or transferred to current occupants.”



The MEC also explained that the Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP) remained pivotal in helping countless numbers of under-privileged people.

She said, “EPWP constitutes the backbone of our efforts towards alleviating poverty and creating job opportunities.”

“The target for the current financial year is 2018 and we will create 108 work opportunities and 12161 full-time equivalent jobs.”

[Source: www.thenewage.co.za]