

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND ROADS, GAOAGE OAGENG MOLAPISI  
DELIVERED DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF ROAD P152/1 (R507)  
22 OCTOBER 2020**

Mayor of Ratlou Local Municipality, Cllr

MMC of Infrastructure, Cllr

Councillors,

Kgosi

Department of Public Works and Roads Senior Managers

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

The past two weeks have been busy for us, as I normally say, that it is Transport Month and the two Provincial Departments have been moving from District to District, following the money and implementing critical forums; that will assist in increased participation in developmental plans by all sectors and stakeholders as well as the flow of information and giving accurate, timeous feedback to stakeholders and our communities.

This 2020 October Transport Month, the Department of Public Works and Roads together with the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management have a Joint Transport Month Program. We are focusing our actions on four activities namely:

- Launching of District Roads Forums
- Official Opening of complemented Roads Projects in all 4 Districts
- Sod Turning and Introduction of Newly appointed Contractors and
- Launch of Districts and Provincial Taxi Lekgotla

We cannot as South Africa, and the North West Province ignore the impact that the lockdown in April this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic had in our economy. More so that in the second quarter of the year 2020 more than 2 million South Africans lost their jobs. The

focus for this years' transport month is on transport infrastructure as we resuscitate the economy under the risk adjusted level.

Yesterday, President Ramaphosa was tabling the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to the national assembly; which he presented to South Africans just last week, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October. This Plan is critical to all of us and we as policy makers must ensure that we take cognizance of the role we must play.

I am particularly challenged to take seriously the objective to create jobs, primarily through aggressive infrastructure investment and mass employment programmes. You will recall that in the pronouncements through the Departmental Budget Speech we committed to job creation including the roll our infrastructure projects using alternative building material.

I want to challenge contractors that are here today to start taking this opportunity of the use of alternative building material seriously. In the past presentations have been made to the Department however; whenever we request to be shown places where such building materials have been utilized it has proven futile and to date we have seen nothing. We can only achieve this as we work together as government and the private sector to alleviate the scourge of poverty and economic inequality in the North West Province. We know that roads are a key and critical network infrastructure that can create jobs if we use labour intensive methods.

Now, I must also make you aware if not remind you that in his SONA, President Ramaphosa pronounced the R100 billion Infrastructure Grant and the Department submitted its 10 year plan in order to solicit assistance from this very grant as it is a fact that 70% of our road network is unpaved with only 30% tarred or upgraded. This District and the Dr. RSM are the hardest challenged in this regard. The 10 year plan requires R37 billion to be implemented and our provincial roads will be on par with other provinces that have progressed on this matter.

We will be getting a relief to change the status of our rural roads of R80 million in this financial year. This is part of the announcement of the President last week to focus on rural roads. I have submitted 52 priority roads for consideration from these two Districts that are hardest hit by the road infrastructure back log and in total the Department submitted a list of 120 rural roads to the Department of Transport for consideration. We hope to get more funding to achieve our goal of upgrading our rural roads in the next two years as we know that it is not only North West that has unpaved roads in the country.

In the past, for the Ngaka Modiri Molema District, we have implemented 25 projects and invested in the District and we all agree that more needs to be done. The Department is continuing to do routine maintenance on these roads. I recently launched the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Roads Forum and I had said let the forum as a legitimate representative of all stakeholders and the community in the District look at what has been planned for them and let them participate and give feedback to communities on such planned projects. It is only when we plan in an integrated manner that the goals and objectives of the District Development Model will be successfully realized and we will achieve more.

In this financial year, 2020/21 the Department will be implementing 24 Roads Projects with a total investment of R1.2 billion this includes capital projects as well as operational projects that will be your routine maintenance. We are serious about changing the status of our rural roads. The District Roads Forum must share this information with all communities and stakeholders.

Now this Road that we are opening today was implemented on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and completed over 18 months. The total budget for the project is R85 million four hundred thousand rand and to date R52 million has been spent as the other 7,5 km of Road P152/1 between the villages of Madibogo and Geysdorp will be rehabilitated and surfaced to the

same standard of this road from N18 to Setalgole in this financial year. This project is envisaged to be completed in May 2021 if there are no interruptions and it us up to all of you here today to ensure the smooth running of this projects. This completed phase of the project created work and subcontracting opportunities to the local people within the Ratlou Local Municipality. 105 work opportunities were created to be exact.

I would like to urge all stakeholders here today, to ensure that projects start and get completed within the given time frames and avoid unnecessary delays through consistent communication and feedback to the relevant parties.

Let me take this opportunity once again to remind you to take extra precautionary measures to prevent the spread of corona virus. We are doing well in that at least 90% of all infected people recover from the virus. Let us work together so we can grow our Province as we shape the future of transport.

I thank you.