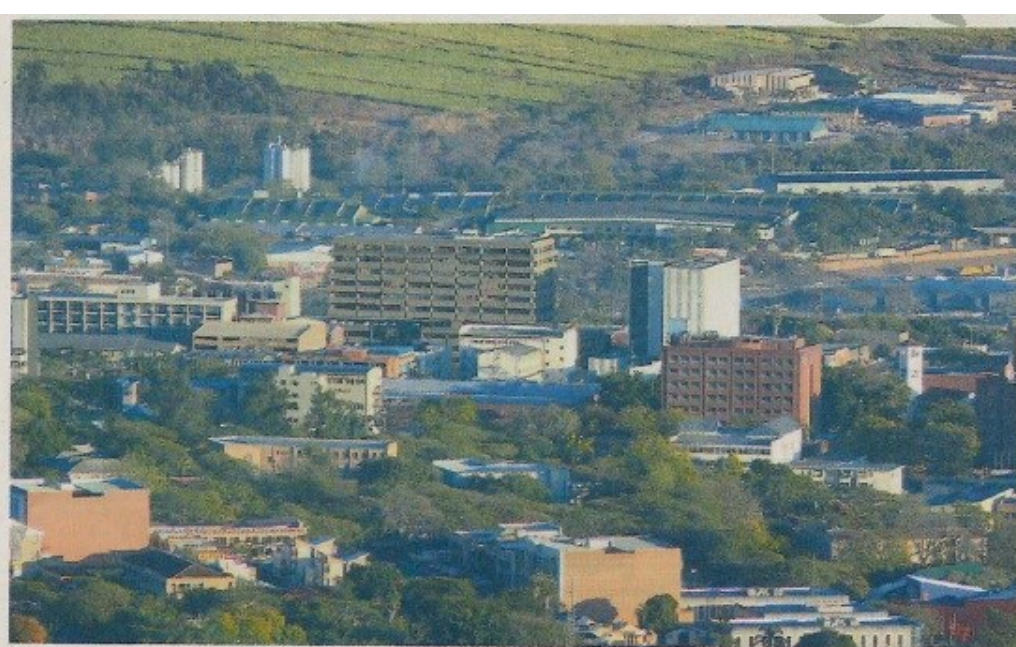




Mbombela CBD.

The private sector is ready to help informal business

Philippa Francis

MBOMBELA - Service delivery and local economic development (LED) go hand in hand, said local business stakeholders. But without access to basic services in developing areas, it is difficult for progress to be made.

Lowvelder investigated the status quo of LED in the area and asked the expert opinions of various business role players.

"Economy is not driven by government, it is driven by the people. We should respect that," said businesswoman and DA councillor, Kleinste Janse van Rensburg.

"Small is beautiful. We need to develop people, the smallest active unit, by developing and training minds and listening to them. Government is there to facilitate the process and see to it that there is uninterrupted water and power, so that these minds can do their jobs and roads for deliveries to happen."

Stabilis accountant, Henri Pieters has long been involved with major chamber organisation, the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) and agreed that LED has to start with the basics.

"If you go into the rural areas where there is an obvious lack of basic services such as water and electricity, it is difficult to see how the upcoming businessman, who is simply trying to survive, will be able to begin and maintain a start-up of his own," Pieters said.

"In South Africa, the legal restrictions and rules which people



Fundi Khoza and Jabu Dlamini with some of the products from Lowvelder Recycle Project, which had its own stall at Innibos 2016.

have to follow to start a business are difficult to navigate. The informal sector can make a much bigger contribution to the economy, but businesspeople need to get involved in order for there to be skill transfer."

He said he knew of no initiative happening which involved formal business.

Chief operating officer of the Kruger Lowveld Chamber of Business and Tourism (KLCBT), Linda Grimbeek stressed there can never be enough appetite or effort for LED.

"The recent establishment of the Mpumalanga Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) shows that there is appetite for more LED to happen. Its sole mandate will be to create projects funded by the City of Mbombela, the private sector, and probably government in future. The emphasis is on the partnership and the non-profit aspect of the initiative. It gives us at the KLCBT a

lot of hope."

She gave the example of another large annual event similar to Innibos which would benefit the entire region.

Grimbeek agreed that the municipality should focus on service delivery, while the MEDP must work on LED. When it comes to informal trade, Grimbeek admits although it is not formal business, these entrepreneurs are not supported enough.

"It is entirely possible that with the right support and access to basic services, they will be able to grow their businesses and enter the formal sector," she said.

She also urged small formal businesses to get involved with a business chamber of their choice for advice and guidance, as most services are provided for free.

Janse van Rensburg believed that if small business development is supported on the one hand, parastatals should be dismantled and deregulated on the other.

"Currently we are growing the parastatals and increasing legislation as well as regulation. Red tape is killing everything."

"We are not unshackling the people to take charge of their lives and actions within the principles set out in the Constitution, but enslaving them to the state," she explained.

The City of Mbombela failed to respond to *Lowvelder's* questions about its approach to LED, radical economic transformation. The media enquiry was sent three weeks ago.



City of Mbombela
ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Home | About Us | City Council | City Management | City Services | Support | Contact Us

Mayor: Mphahlele
Deputy Mayor: Mphahlele
City Manager: Mphahlele
City Engineer: Mphahlele
City Clerk: Mphahlele
City Treasurer: Mphahlele
City Auditor: Mphahlele
City Health Officer: Mphahlele
City Social Worker: Mphahlele
City Police Officer: Mphahlele
City Fire Officer: Mphahlele
City Traffic Officer: Mphahlele
City Security Officer: Mphahlele
City Environmental Officer: Mphahlele
City Planning Officer: Mphahlele
City Development Officer: Mphahlele
City Economic Development Officer: Mphahlele
City Housing Officer: Mphahlele
City Water Officer: Mphahlele
City Electricity Officer: Mphahlele
City Transport Officer: Mphahlele
City Information Officer: Mphahlele
City Legal Officer: Mphahlele
City Human Resources Officer: Mphahlele
City Training Officer: Mphahlele
City Research Officer: Mphahlele
City Statistics Officer: Mphahlele
City Planning and Development Officer: Mphahlele
City Sub-Directorate: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
City Sub-Directorate: Strategic Planning and IP
City Sub-Directorate: Spatial Development Planning
City Sub-Directorate: Land Use Management
City Sub-Directorate: Human Settlements
City Sub-Directorate: Local Economic Development
City Sub-Directorate: Properties

CONTACT DETAILS
TELEPHONE
FAX
E-MAIL
ADMIN OFFICES

Website: www.mbombela.gov.za
Search for more information about local economic development on the City of Mbombela website arrived at this page.