



MARBLE HALL MUNICIPALITY

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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SECTION A: THE CONTEXT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this LED strategy is to direct and align as many stakeholders as possible towards accelerated economic development, increased job creation and improved standards of living in the Marble Hall Municipal area.

Section A describes the current socio-economic situation in the municipality, as well as spatial, infrastructure, social service and environmental profiles. It provides the context for the identification of appropriate strategies for accelerated local economic development, which are described in section B. Section C is the implementation plan, which considers the resources requirements and institutional implications of the strategies, proposes a schedule of actions and recommends a procedure for monitoring and evaluation.

2. THE LED POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 National Context

2.1.1 National Spatial Development Perspective

One of government's key priorities is to increase economic growth and to promote social inclusion. The National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) is a critical instrument for policy co-ordination, with regard to the spatial implications of infrastructure programmes in national, provincial and local spheres of government.

National spatial guidelines or perspectives are increasingly being recognised as critical tools for bringing about coordinated government action and alignment to meet social, economic and environmental objectives. They provide a comprehensive and incisive analysis of current future trends, of the factors/forces driving these trends and of the strategic implications thereof in spatial terms. The ultimate purpose of the NSDP in the South African setting is to fundamentally reconfigure apartheid spatial relations and to implement spatial priorities that meet the constitutional imperative of providing basic services to all and alleviating poverty and inequality. Given government's objectives of growing the economy, creating jobs, addressing poverty and promoting social cohesion, the NSDP assists government in confronting three fundamental planning questions:

- Where should government direct its investment and development initiatives to ensure sustainable and maximum impact?
- What kinds of spatial forms and arrangements are most conducive to the achievement of the objectives of democratic nation-building and social and economic inclusion?
- How can government as a whole capitalize on complementarities and facilitate consistent decision making and move beyond focusing on integration and coordination procedures to establishing processes and mechanisms that will bring about strategic coordination, interaction and alignment?

In order to contribute to the broader growth and development policy objectives of government, the NSDP puts forward a set of five normative principles:

- Rapid economic growth that is sustained and inclusive is a pre-requisite for the achievement of other policy objectives, among which poverty alleviation is key.
- Government has a constitutional obligation to provide basic services to all citizens (e.g. water, energy, health and educational facilities) wherever they reside.

Beyond the constitutional obligation identified in principle 2 above, government spending on fixed investment should be focused on localities of economic growth and/or economic potential in order to gear up private-sector investment, to stimulate sustainable economic activities and to create long-term employment opportunities.

Efforts to address past and current social inequalities should focus on people, not places. In localities where there are both high levels of poverty and demonstrated economic potential, this could include fixed capital investment beyond basic services to exploit the potential of those localities. In localities with low demonstrated economic potential, government should, beyond the provision of basic services, concentrate primarily on human capital development by providing education and training, social transfers such as grants; and poverty-relief programmes. It should also reduce migration costs by providing labour-market intelligence to give people better information, opportunities and capabilities, to enable them to gravitate – if they choose to – to localities that are more likely to provide sustainable employment and economic opportunities.

In order to overcome the spatial distortions of apartheid, future settlement and economic development opportunities should be channeled into activity corridors and nodes that are adjacent to or that link the main growth centres. Infrastructure investment should primarily support localities that will become major growth nodes in South Africa and the SADC region to create regional gateways to the global economy.

Different regions have different economic potential and the spatial variations in the incidence of poverty are also vastly different. The NSDP argues that these diverse and disparate spatial contexts suggest a policy approach that itself should be differentiated and conducive to the requirements of the different contexts. Hence, in areas of low or no economic potential, the path of development and poverty reduction should be through a focus on investment in human capital development (education, training, social welfare, sound rural development planning, aggressive land and agrarian reform, expansion of agricultural extension services, etc).

2.1.2 ASGISA

The accelerated and shared growth initiative for South Africa is derived from the objective of achieving a 6% growth rate for the national economy, which will create the platform for halving unemployment and meeting social development targets. The initiative requires the following specific actions:

- Strengthening the macro-economy,
- Creating essential infrastructure,

- Formulating and implementing sector and industrial strategies,
- Promoting skills and education,
- Supporting the second economy,
- Improving public administration.

AsgiSA provides a new system of priorities and a new set of mechanisms to enforce decisions, lead by a team in the Office of the Deputy President. It is a national initiative, supported by all spheres of government, business, labour and state-owned enterprises.

The Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) was formulated in response to the call by AsgiSA to fast-track the resolution of the skills shortages challenge in South Africa. Its mandate is to lead the implementation of a joint initiative of government, business and organised labour to accelerate the provision of priority skills to meet AsgiSA's objectives and to give momentum and support to the implementation of AsgiSA. The JIPSA task team is a high level task team composed of senior leaders from government, organised business, organised labour, higher education and civil society.

2.1.3 Millennium Development Goals

The millennium development goals cover a range of life quality indicators and targets that have been set for 2015 and to which South Africa has subscribed. The target that is most relevant to the LED strategy for Marble Hall Municipality is to halve unemployment, meaning that the strict unemployment rate should be reduced from 41.8% in 2000 to 20.9% by 2015. At the current population growth rate and assuming that the labour force participation rate remains constant, the labour force is projected to be 38,300 persons in 2015. An unemployment rate of 20.9 % implies that there should be 30,300 job opportunities in Marble Hall municipality by then, compared to the number of 10,800 in 2006. Marble Hall Municipality will therefore need to create 19,500 new jobs between now and then, which amounts to 1,950 per year. At the current rate of job creation, this target is unlikely to be achieved.

2.1.4 National Framework for Local Economic Development

The National Framework for LED in South Africa aims to support the development of sustainable local economies through integrated government action. This action is developmental and stimulates the heart of the economy which comprises those enterprises that operate in local municipal spaces.

The framework is underpinned by an appreciation of the evolving practice of LED internationally and is based on the unique South African context and challenges. It contextualizes the move towards "new institutionalism" that questions the distinction between economy and society, showing how economic decision-making and action is shaped by the shared values, norms, beliefs, meanings and rules and procedures of the formal and informal institutions of society. The normative agenda of the New Institutionalism is to develop shared meaning and values and to strengthen the networks of social interaction. This has also been variously described as building social capital, or developing social cohesion.

The evolution of LED policy in post-1994 South Africa is closely associated with the transition to developmental local government. As early as 1995, constitutional debates on the future form and shape of local government articulated a far more proactive role for municipalities. The declaration of local government as a sphere (rather than a tier) of government reflects the importance that was attached to local state actors during that early period. The final version of the constitution itself declared that a fundamental objective of local government was to promote social and economic development in localities (RSA 1996).

LED is one of the five key performance areas (KPAs) for Local Government. As a key performance area, LED as an outcome, is strongly interrelated and dependent on the other four KPAs. These include: Municipal Transformation and Organisational Development, Basic Service Delivery, Municipal Financial Viability and Management, and Good Governance and Public Participation.

The framework promotes a strategic approach to the development of local economies and a shift away from narrow municipal interests focused only on government inputs into ad-hoc projects. The application of the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP), Industrial Policy, ASGI-SA and the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (PGDSs) through joint action with municipalities institutionalized in Inter Governmental Relations forums is the driving force for local and hence national economic growth and development. The major policy thrusts of the national framework for LED are:

- Public Sector Leadership and Governance,
- Sustainable Community Investment Programs.

Four key strategies emanate from these policy thrusts with accompanying main actions, implementation and funding approaches, which are:

- Improving good governance, service delivery, public and market confidence in municipalities;
- Spatial development planning and exploiting the comparative advantage and competitiveness of Districts and Metros;
- Enterprise support and business infrastructure development; and
- Sustainable community investment programs, focusing on organizing communities for development and maximizing circulation of public spend in local economies.

2.2 Provincial Context

2.2.1 Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy

The Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy has five objectives, which are to:

- Improve the quality of life of the population,
- Promote sustainable job creation and economic growth through competitive cluster formation,
- Raise the institutional efficiency of government,
- Address cross-cutting priorities, such as Black Economic Empowerment, and
- Facilitate regional economic integration.

Seven competitive clusters are the main instrument through which the Limpopo Provincial Government intends to achieve its economic objectives of sustainable job creation, accelerated economic growth, black economic empowerment and poverty reduction. Horticulture, tourism and meat are the three clusters that are most relevant to Marble Hall.

2.2.2 Limpopo Spatial Rationale

The Limpopo Spatial Rationale has created a hierarchy of settlements from provincial growth points to scattered settlements. Development interventions are proposed in terms of infrastructure provision and government services in such a manner that the natural economic potential of growth points is realised. Proposed interventions at scattered settlements are aimed at providing basic services to ensure that the quality of life objective in the Growth and Development Strategy is achieved, without investing in surplus infrastructure capacity in places that are depopulating.

The Spatial Rationale classifies Marble Hall town as a provincial growth point and Elandskraal, as well as Vandermerwes Kraal, are municipal growth points. The area from Moganyanka (Leeufontein) to Mamphokgo is classified as a population concentration. There is also a large population concentration point (Matlala-Zamenkomst) in the western part of the municipality. Mohlalaotwane, east of centre, is classified as a local service point.

2.3 District and Local Level

The most important policy documents for local economic development at the district and local level are briefly summarised below:

2.3.1 Sekhukhune District LED Strategy

The GSDM LED strategy (January 2007) targets four main areas of impact that are likely to contribute sustainably towards the overarching goal of poverty alleviation, by providing enhanced access to and utilisation of, economic opportunities by residents of GSDM:

- Enhanced rate of enterprise start-ups, survival and expansion,
- Capital / Equity¹ growth,

¹ Value of share in ownership of economic assets - the aim is to broaden the ownership base

- Employment growth, and
- Lower costs of living.

Seven strategic thrusts are designed to catalytically influence change in the Sekhukhune economy to achieve these goals:

1. Maximise economic development from mining growth
2. Support development of agriculture and agro-processing
3. Develop competitive tourism attractions
4. Speed up infrastructure development
5. Remove barriers to land for development
6. Refocus education and skills development
7. Organise LED to work better on a large scale

The specific roles of key district leaders and of other public sector organisations are spelt out explicitly to make the strategy easier for these stakeholders to implement. The establishment of an LED Agency is recommended to ensure sufficient and appropriate capacity to implement this ambitious strategy. Land ownership, water, roads, infrastructure availability, skills and education levels are identified as major constraints to growth that cannot all be resolved by LED alone.

2.3.2 Marble Hall Local Municipality IDP (2007/08)

The objective for economic development as contained in the IDP is to ensure economic growth in all sectors of the economy in order to curb unemployment and related negative issues. The target is to achieve an economic growth rate of 3% per year.

The LED section of the IDP contains 170 projects, some of which are related to the horticulture meat and tourism clusters, as well as to informal economy support. However, the bulk of the projects are more related to community economic development. These projects are often implemented without adequate preparation, have limited capacity to generate economic synergies and often consume more resources than they produce. It is for this reason that the national LED framework no longer recommends community projects as per the former LED Fund (see section 2.1.4 above).

3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

3.1 Demography

According to the Community Survey by Statistics SA, the population of Marble Hall Municipality was 124, 510 during Feb 2007, with an estimated number of 28, 215 households. Average household size was 4.41 persons.

Global Insight estimates population growth from 2002 as indicated in the table below.

Table 1: Population Projections for Marble Hall Municipality

YEAR	POPULATION	ANNUAL GROWTH %
2002	126,312	
2003	130,309	3.16
2004	133,972	2.81
2005	137,345	2.52
2006	140,346	2.19

Source: Global Insight, 2008

Global Insight projections are higher than the projection from the Community Survey of 2007, probably because their projected population growth rate is too high. Actual population growth is likely to be closer to 1% per year, implying that the 2010 population could be 128,000 and the 2020 population could be 142,000. Females represent 52% of the population, which is standard for Limpopo.

3.2 Economic Production

Marble Hall Municipality has a relatively small economy, contributing only 1% to the provincial value of production in 2006. It is more important within the Sekhukhune district context, where it contributed 14% to the value of production in 2006.

Table 2: GGP per Sector for Greater Marble Hall at current prices for 2006 R'000

Sector	Year 2005	Year 2006	Sector % 2006	Growth 05-06
1 Agriculture	59,506	72,107	5.8	21.2
2 Mining	130,618	155,817	12.5	19.3
3 Manufacturing	50,637	56,811	4.6	12.2
4 Electricity	32,955	38,976	3.1	18.3
5 Construction	13,437	16,639	1.3	23.8
6 Trade	139,259	157,007	12.6	12.7
7 Transport	93,223	103,611	8.3	11.1
8 Finance	225,444	272,885	21.9	21.0
9 Community services	336,396	370,560	29.8	10.2
Total Industries	1,081,474	1,244,414	100.0	15.1
Taxes less Subsidies on products	171,372	202,254		
Total (Gross Domestic Product - GDP)	1,252,846	1,446,668		

Source: Global Insight 2008

According to Global Insight², community services, which is mostly government, is the largest sector in the local economy. This will be represented mostly by the salaries of public servants, such as teachers, medical personnel and police officers. Financial and business services is the second largest sector, followed by trade. The contribution from agriculture at 5.8% could be underestimated, but is more than twice the proportional contribution from agriculture to the provincial economy, which was 2.8% in 2006. Growth in the agricultural sector is also significant at 21.2%. The municipality is a major producer of citrus and table grapes. Cotton and vegetable production is also substantial. Cattle ownership among subsistence farmers is significant.

Production areas are scenically attractive and, together with the Flag Boshielo Dam, provide supply side opportunities for tourism development. The Schuinsdraai Nature Reserve, which is adjacent to Flag Boshielo Dam, adds to this opportunity.

Mining activity includes dolomite and dimension stone. Marble Hall town has a very large, but underutilized industrial park. The only manufacturer of note is McCains vegetable processing. Other tenants in the industrial park are mostly distributors and businesses that repair motor vehicles and other equipment.

² Global Insight is an international economic consulting firm that estimates economic statistics on the basis of a wide range of published information.

The local construction industry is very small, but is growing rapidly. Wholesale and retail trade development has always been overshadowed by facilities that are available in the adjacent Groblersdal. A large network of informal traders operates throughout the municipal area.

3.3 Labour Market

According to Global Insight, the labour force in Marble Hall Municipality was approximately 34,700 persons in 2006. The unemployment rate is reflected in the table below:

Table 3: Unemployment Rate in Greater Marble Hall Municipality

YEAR	FORMALLY EMPLOYED	INFORMALLY EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE %
2002	7,165	2,987	13,791	44.0%
2003	7,158	3,003	15,153	45.4%
2004	7,024	3,035	15,061	44.4%
2005	6,985	3,645	14,516	41.8%
2006	7,008	3,786	14,122	40.7%

Source: Global Insight, 2008

The unemployment rate has improved from 44% in 2002 to 40.7% in 2006, but mostly on the back of increases in informal employment. Formal employment has actually declined slightly and the number of unemployed persons has increased. The largest formal sector employers are agriculture (31%), private households (19%), community services – which is mostly government (15%) and the trade sector (11%). A very large proportion of formal employment (52%) is for labourers and other elementary occupations.

The number of informally employed persons has increased considerably and is more than half of the number of formally employed persons. Various surveys on informal economic activity have concluded that most participants would prefer formal employment if such an opportunity was available. The informal sector is mostly a necessity for household survival in the absence of a formal sector livelihood.

3.4 Income Distribution

Almost 47% of all households live on annual income below R18,000 per year, which is broadly defined as the poverty datum line. Another 24% of households live on less than R42,000 per year where affordability is highly constrained.

Global Insight estimates that the number of households living in absolute poverty has increased. However, the living standards of some people in the income category between R6,000 and R18,000 per year have improved as they moved out of these brackets to higher categories.

Table 4: Annual Household Income Distribution for Marble Hall 2005-2006

INCOME GROUP	2005	2006	SHIFT%
R0-R2,400	2,575	2,769	7.5
R2,401-R6000	3,788	3,848	1.6
R6,001-R12,000	3,937	3,806	-3.3
R12,001-R18,000	5,734	5,638	-1.7
R18,001-R30,000	4,773	4,801	0.6
R30,001-R42,000	3,446	3,506	1.7
R42,001-R54,000	2,386	2,500	4.8
R54,001-R72,000	1,956	2,101	7.4
R72,001-R96,000	1,612	1,761	9.3
R96,001-R132,000	1,234	1,364	10.5
R132,001-R192,000	957	1,065	11.4
R192,001-R360,000	659	761	15.4
+R360,000	457	545	19.3
Total	33,514	34,465	2.8

Source: Global Insight, 2008

The upward household income mobility is very significant in the higher income categories, but the base household numbers are very small. Although this upward movement is occurring, the consumption expenditure patterns of more than 70% of the population resemble those of low-income households.

Apart from the relatively small Marble Hall town, the 30% households with medium to higher income levels are scattered throughout the municipality. This discourages the development of trading facilities.

4. SPATIAL PROFILE

Marble Hall municipality comprises almost 1,800 km² of land. It has a typically rural settlement pattern. The relatively small town on Marble Hall is the most important nodal point, but has a population of less than 4,000 people. There are another 58³ settlements throughout the municipality, with an average settlement size of only 2,110 persons.

More than 60% of the land area in the municipality is communally owned under the custodianship of traditional leaders. Technically, this land belongs to the state.

According to the spatial development framework (SDF), almost 80% is used for agricultural purposes. This presumably applies to privately owned land only, but the SDF is not explicit about the matter.

The Limpopo Spatial Rationale classified Matlala-Zamenkomst and Leeufontein-Moganyaka as population concentration points. Matlala-Zamenkomst comprises 12 settlements and clusters of small holdings with a total population of almost 28,000 persons. The SDF recommends that this population concentration point should be promoted (reclassified) to a Municipal Growth Point and infill development between the four settlements of Rathoke, Uitvlucht, Keerom and Zamenkomst, should be facilitated to enable the establishment of one cohesive development area, namely the Rathoke-Uitvlucht Municipal Growth Point.

The Leeufontein-Moganyaka population concentration point comprises six settlements with an estimated total population of 22,000 persons. It is therefore the area with the largest average settlement size in the municipality. The SDF also recommends that the Leeufontein/Moganyaka Area should be upgraded to Municipal Growth Point status. Infill development between Leeufontein, Manapyane, Moganyaka and Mamphokgo should be facilitated to enable the establishment of one cohesive development area, namely the Leeufontein Municipal Growth Point.

A large area in this proposed development node is adjacent to the Olifants River and is regarded as environmentally sensitive and/or prime and unique agricultural land. The SDF thus proposes that this should not be utilised for development other than eco friendly land uses and agriculture.

The primary transport corridor through the municipality is the N11, which traverses the western part from Roedtan in the northwest to Groblersdal in the south. The road is in a very bad condition for most of its course through the municipality, which has become a disincentive for its use. A secondary corridor runs from Vandermerwes Kraal in the north, past the Flag Boshielo Dam and through Marble Hall, to Matlala in the south.

A map depicting the spatial profile of the municipality is attached as annexure one.

³ Marble Hall Spatial Development Framework, 2007

5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE DELIVERY PROFILE

5.1 Water and Sanitation

The IDP for Marble Hall Municipality (2007/08) identifies water as the most pressing need. According to the Stats SA Community Survey for 2007, the number of households who have to rely on springs, pools and streams for their water supply has improved dramatically from almost 21% to 7.4%. More than 46% of households have access to water inside their houses or yards and another 32% of households have access to water outside their yards. However, the bulk supply, purification and reticulation of water are problematic. Water availability is frequently interrupted and water flow and quality are below RDP standards in some parts of the municipality. The IDP document records that the lack of technical data regarding the status of service delivery is one of the weaknesses of the municipality.

As far as Marble Hall town is concerned, the urban renewal strategy compiled in 2004 found that the water quota and the purification works are both at capacity. Any extension for residential and or business must be accompanied by an additional water allocation from Loskop Dam and extension to the purification works. A substantial portion of the residential area has very old infrastructure that needs replacement. Some areas increasingly experience pressure problems that will require a 12m pressure tower or booster pumps.

With regard to sanitation in Marble Hall town, the urban renewal strategy found that the oxidation ponds are also at full capacity, with problems being experienced in terms of silting and reed growth. The IDP document records poor maintenance and frequent blockages at the Leeufontein oxidation ponds and the Elandskraal sewage system as well.

Pit latrines without ventilation in rural areas have been almost completely replaced with ventilated pit latrines. According to the 2007 household survey by Stats SA, this type of facility is being used by the majority (60.3%) of households in the municipal area.

5.2 Roads

The primary transport corridor through the municipality is the N11, which traverses the western part from Roedtan in the northwest to Groblersdal in the south. The road is in a very bad condition for most of its course through the municipality, which has become a disincentive for its use. It contains severe potholes and sections of the surface have been completely destroyed. After several years of applications, it appears that the National Department of Transport will be doing some rehabilitation during the 2008/09 financial year.

A secondary corridor runs from Vandermerwes Kraal in the north, past the Flag Boshielo Dam and through Marble Hall, to Matlala in the south. This road was recently surfaced and is in a good condition. It mostly carries local passenger traffic, with relatively little cargo.

The N11 passes through Marble Hall town alongside the taxi rank. This causes dangerous pedestrian crossings, with traffic flows that are frequently disrupted. Rural roads in and between settlements are generally not surfaced and in a state of disrepair according to the IDP. The

municipality does not have a system for the planning of road construction and maintenance, nor does it have the staff to manage such a system.

5.3 Electricity

The Community Survey by Stats SA indicates that more than 93% of households in the municipal area had electricity connections in 2007. However, more than 56% of households still use firewood for cooking and heating purposes. The bulk of the municipal area is supplied directly by Eskom, with only Marble Hall town and Leeufontein being supplied by the municipality. The age of the reticulation network is such that frequent breakages occur. The IDP points out that the municipality lacks technical information on electricity service levels and that street lighting in settlements is particularly problematic.

5.4 Waste Management

The Community Survey by Stats SA found that only 13% of households in the municipal area have their refuse removed by the municipality. Most of the households have to devise their own means of dealing with refuse. The municipal waste management plan (2004) concludes that permit conditions are not being met at the primary waste disposal site. Two illegal dumping sites are recorded. The waste management plan found that waste volumes are too small to justify commercial recycling. The recommendation is that all the assistance available from the district municipality should be mobilized, that the efficiency of collection and disposal should be improved and the relevant legislation should be complied with.

5.5 Business Development Support and Spatial Management

Apart from the LED and Tourism Manager, Marble Hall municipality has an LED officer with primary responsibility for research and co-ordination of LED and tourism initiatives that are aligned to the IDP. This section is headed by the IDP Manager, which position is vacant. The LED and Tourism Manager is also acting as IDP manager.

The municipality has sponsored a small tourism information agency, Sun Valley Tourism for many years, which facilitated reservations on behalf of local tourism product owners and participated in tourism development processes on behalf of the municipality. Sun Valley Tourism ceased operations in April 2008.

The Maatla ke Batho branch of the Limpopo Business Support Agency (LIBSA) is based in Marble Hall town, with a satellite office in Elandskraal. LIBSA is an agency of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism with a mandate to provide non-financial support to enterprises and co-operatives in the province. This includes feasibility studies, business training, facilitating access to finance and business information. The Marble Hall office has seven staff members, with another two in the Elandskraal satellite office. LIBSA works closely with the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) as the local partner for their voucher programme. UYF provides financial assistance to approved business co-operatives. Also at the provincial level, the development corporation (Limdev) is a development financier.

Business advisory and other support services are technically also available from national government, particularly to emerging entrepreneurs. The Small Enterprise Development Agency is an initiative from the national Department of Trade and Industry with provincial offices. Its mandate is to design and implement a standard national network to promote access to finance and information for sustainable business development. The track record of business development support initiatives provided by government has been disappointing. The current trend is for government to sponsor the mentoring services of people with a successful entrepreneurial track record and for beneficiaries to pay a nominal contribution for this service.

6. SOCIAL SERVICE PROFILE

6.1 Education

Marble Hall Municipality has 67 primary schools and 39 secondary schools, most of which have important deficiencies in their physical structures, such as inadequate toilets, administration blocks, water and electricity connections and fences. The fact that Marble Hall does not have a secondary school has been reflected in several development assessment documents in recent years. Parents drive their children to school in Groblersdal and do shopping while they are there. The 2008/09 budget of the Department of Education in Limpopo contains provision for the construction of a secondary school in Marble Hall town.

The IDP also contains an extensive list of all the improvements required at almost every existing school.

6.2 Health

Matlala Provincial, situated at Tsimanyane, is the only hospital in the municipal area. There are also 2 health centres and 11 clinics. All these facilities, except the Marble Hall clinic, are operated by the Limpopo Department of Health. The IDP states that services at clinics are generally regarded as poor and inaccessible. It uses the National Health Service protocol to quantify the health facility needs of the municipality as being 2 additional hospitals, 6 health centres, 3 clinics and 5 mobile clinics. The current unavailability of any medical facility at night or during weekends is highlighted as a very important priority in the IDP.

6.3 Safety and Security

There are only two police stations in the municipal area, located in Marble Hall town and Elandskraal respectively. A satellite station is located in Matlerekeng (Zamenkomst). The IDP stresses that visible policing and proper safety in the area cannot be provided sufficiently with these few police facilities. It calls for the establishment of a new police station at Matseding⁴ and for the filling of vacant positions at existing police stations as top priorities.

⁴ The intention of the Limpopo Spatial Rationale and of the Marble Hall SDF is that new government facilities should be located in growth points or in population concentration points

The urban renewal plan of 2004 recommended that vacant council land in the large industrial park of Marble Hall town should be offered to the Department of Correctional Services for the construction of a prison. This will create demand for business services, both from salaried staff who will be located in Marble Hall, as well as from the consumption requirements of inmates.

6.4 Housing

The IDP document refers to a survey that was conducted with the help of ward councilors to determine the housing backlog in the municipality. The survey covers the period 2007-2011 and indicates the greatest need (2010 houses) to be in ward 13 and specifically in extension 1. Ward 4 (Matlerekeng and Rathoke), ward 1 (Malebitsa, Spitspunt and Driefontein), as well as ward 5 (Matlala) all have housing backlogs of more than 1000 houses each. Constraints include slow progress and non-performance by the contractor, specifically in Leeufontein. The spatial development framework recommends that housing projects should only be supported if they are located within approved development nodes, so as to avoid a further spreading out of the spatial form and the uneconomic utilisation of services and infrastructure.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE

The SDF points out that areas earmarked for eco-tourism development are closely related to areas that have been identified as conservation areas and/or environmentally sensitive areas. It will thus be prudent to only allow development that will be sympathetic to the natural environment and after Environmental Impact Assessments have been done to establish the influence of the proposed development on the environment, or such other legal procedures as discussed in full in the Greater Marble Hall Integrated Environmental Programme, 2005. Environmentally sensitive areas include:

- Prominent land forms such as mountainous terrain and ridges especially to the eastern and northern parts of the municipal area.
- The Strydpoort Mountains are relatively undisturbed and can be developed as an eco-tourism destination. Ideally these mountains can serve as an attraction in conjunction with other natural features and cultural heritage sites in the study area.
- Flag Boshielo Eco-Tourism project together with the adjacent Schuinsdraai Nature Reserve will contribute towards tourism development potential for overnight accommodation exists at the reserve
- Leswena Nature reserve is located in the east and incorporates the Lola Montes dam.

The Greater Marble Hall Integrated Environmental Programme (2005) stresses the principles of sustainability, optimal utilisation of resources, as well as an integrative and participatory approach.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this LED strategy is to direct and align as many stakeholders as possible towards accelerated economic development, increased job creation and improved standards of living in the Marble Hall Municipal area.

From a national development policy point of view, the Spatial Development Perspective provides important departure points. It directs that future settlement and economic development opportunities should be channeled into activity corridors and nodes that are adjacent to or that link the main growth centres. Infrastructure investment should primarily support localities that will become major growth nodes in South Africa and the SADC region to create regional gateways to the global economy. In areas of low or no economic potential, the path of development and poverty reduction should be through a focus on investment in human capital development (education, training, social welfare, sound rural development planning, aggressive land and agrarian reform, expansion of agricultural extension services, etc).

The accelerated and shared growth initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) is also an important component of the national development policy perspective. It is derived from the objective of achieving a 6% growth rate for the national economy, which will create the platform for halving unemployment and meeting social development targets. It places considerable emphasis on appropriate infrastructure provision, skills promotion, second economy support and improved public administration. The national LED framework promotes a strategic approach to the development of local economies and a shift away from narrow municipal interests focused only on government inputs into ad-hoc projects.

Seven competitive clusters are the main instrument through which the Limpopo Provincial Government intends to achieve its economic objectives of sustainable job creation, accelerated economic growth, black economic empowerment and poverty reduction. Horticulture, tourism and meat are the three clusters that are most relevant to Marble Hall.

The objective for economic development as contained in the Marble Hall IDP is to ensure economic growth in all sectors of the economy in order to curb unemployment and related negative issues. The target is to achieve an economic growth rate of 3% per year. The LED section of the IDP contains 170 projects, some of which are related to the horticulture, meat and tourism clusters, as well as to informal economy support. However, the bulk of the projects are more related to community economic development. The national LED framework no longer recommends community projects as per the former LED Fund.

According to the Community Survey by Statistics SA, the population of Marble Hall Municipality was 124, 510 during Feb 2007, with an estimated number of 28, 215 households. Average household size was 4.41 persons.

Marble Hall Municipality has a relatively small economy (R1.45 billion in 2006), contributing only 1% to the provincial value of production in 2006. It is more important within the Sekhukhune

district context, where it contributed 14% to the value of production in 2006. Community services, which is mostly government, is the largest sector in the local economy. The unemployment rate has improved from 44% in 2002 to 40.7% in 2006, but mostly on the back of increases in informal employment. Formal employment has actually declined slightly and the number of unemployed persons has increased. The largest formal sector employer is agriculture (31%). The consumption expenditure patterns of more than 70% of the population resemble those of low-income households.

Marble Hall municipality comprises almost 1,800 km² of land. It has a typically rural settlement pattern. The relatively small town on Marble Hall is the most important nodal point, but has a population of less than 4,000 people. There are another 58 settlements throughout the municipality, with an average settlement size of only 2,110 persons. More than 60% of the land area in the municipality is communally owned under the custodianship of traditional leaders. Technically, this land belongs to the state.

More than 46% of households have access to water inside their houses or yards and another 32% of households have access to water outside their yards. However, the bulk supply, purification and reticulation of water are problematic. Water availability is frequently interrupted and water flow and quality are below RDP standards in some parts of the municipality.

The primary transport corridor through the municipality is the N11, which traverses the western part from Roedtan in the northwest to Groblersdal in the south. The road is in a very bad condition for most of its course through the municipality. The N11 passes through Marble Hall town alongside the taxi rank. This causes dangerous pedestrian crossings, with traffic flows that are frequently disrupted. Rural roads in and between settlements are generally not surfaced and in a state of disrepair according to the IDP.

More than 56% of households still use firewood for cooking and heating purposes. The Community Survey by Stats SA found that only 13% of households in the municipal area have their refuse removed by the municipality.

Marble Hall Municipality has 67 primary schools and 39 secondary schools, most of which have important deficiencies in their physical structures, such as inadequate toilets, administration blocks, water and electricity connections and fences.

The IDP states that services at clinics are generally regarded as poor and inaccessible. The current unavailability of any medical facility at night or during weekends is highlighted as a very important priority in the IDP. There are only two police stations in the municipal area, located in Marble Hall town and Elandskraal.

In conclusion, Marble Hall is a relatively small economy with a predominantly rural character. The general impression is that physical and social infrastructure, as well as service delivery

standards, are inadequate to provide the platform that is required for accelerated economic growth and job creation.

The section that follows contains strategic proposals to improve the rate of economic development and the quality of life of the citizens of Marble Hall Municipality.