

Infrastructure Commission to fast-track projects valued at R340bn

Government will in the coming months expedite the implementation of at least 50 infrastructure projects with a total investment value of more than R340bn.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

The fast-tracking of the projects forms part of the reconstruction and recovery of the South African economy. This was the key outcome of the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted Council of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission on Thursday, 30 July.

President Cyril Ramaphosa chaired the meeting, which brought together ministers, premiers, mayors and the South African Local Government Association to ensure the effective integration of the country's substantial infrastructure programme.

In terms of the Infrastructure Development Act of 2014, the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC) acts through its council.

The council coordinates the development, maintenance, implementation and monitoring of the National Infrastructure Plan;

coordinates the determination of priorities for infrastructure development; designates strategic integrated projects (SIPS) and ensures that infrastructure development, in respect of any SIP, is given priority in planning, approval and implementation.

The council also coordinates the identification of strategic partners with which to conclude agreements that seek to promote the objects of infrastructure development. The council must ensure that infrastructure projects promote economic equality, social cohesion, decent employment opportunities and skills development.

In keeping with this mandate, the council agreed to expedite the implementation of projects in prioritised sectors such as human settlements, transport, energy, water and sanitation, agriculture and agro-processing, and digital infrastructure.

The council confirmed a new approach to infrastructure build including:

- Preventing corruption through transparent tender processes and stronger due diligence;
- Greater involvement of communities in design and implementation;
- Emphasis on local employment and procurement, and targeted involvement of SMEs; and
- Blended financing through the Infrastructure Fund to mobilise more resources from the private sector, multilateral development banks and development finance institutions.

Ramaphosa emphasised the vital importance of infrastructure development in responding to the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, restoring growth and creating jobs.

“Extraordinary measures are required to return us to a path of sustainable growth. Central to this effort is infrastructure construction and maintenance, which is the flywheel for economic growth and large-scale job creation,” he said.

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