

**WELCOME AND PURPOSE BY THE MAYOR OF TLM,
HERWORSHIP, MAYOR MIDAH MOSELANE DURING THE
THABAZIMBI TOURISM INDABA HELD AT MARAKELE
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE AT 08:00.**

18 May 2018

Programme Director;

**MMC F Hlungwani on behalf of the Executive Mayor of
WDM;**

Our Speaker, EXCO, Chief Whip and fellow Councillors;

Cllrs from Mopani District Municipality;

The CEO of Limpopo Tourism, Ms Nomasonto Ndlovu

Chairperson of the Waterberg District Development Agency;

Chairperson of the Limpopo Tourism Agency;

Delegates from the National Department of Tourism;

**Delegates from the Limpopo Economic Development
Environment and Tourism;**

**Delegates from the South African Local Government
Association;**

The Management of Thabazimbi Local Municipality;

The Management of Marakele National Park,

Delegates from the Limpopo Tourism Association;

The Waterberg District, all Stakeholders present here,

Organised Community Structures;

Very important, Tourism Product Owners;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning; Dumelang; Goeiemore; Abuxeni

A warm welcome to all our stakeholders present here this morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you to this very important session. This is a necessary session with potential to redefine the face of Thabazimbi.

Programme Director, The Thabazimbi Local Municipal Economy faces unacceptably high levels of unemployment. The primary objective of this session is to rebuild and review the economy of Thabazimbi as a whole through private sector and government investment, and subsequently explore sustainable opportunities for job creation.

Tourism is one of the pillars identified by national, provincial and as well as the Thabazimbi Local Municipality as a pillar for inclusive economic growth amongst others such as mining and agriculture. Of course each of these sectors present their own unique opportunities; therefore diversification of these pillars is necessary.

However what sets Tourism apart from the other two sectors is **sustainability** which a strong tourism sector can be able to offer even in the long term.

The closure of Kumba Iron Ore mine not only served as a wake-up call for all of us, but emphasised the need to develop tourism as a sustainable alternative.

Programme Director, not all hope is lost, because Thabazimbi has a lot of opportunities to offer Not all hope is lost though, because Thabazimbi has a myriad of jewels Marakele National Park as an anchor to built our tourism economy around, with

infrastructure such as the Tourism Information Centre already built and with a well-established wildlife and hunting market boasting world-class facilities, there is no reason why Thabazimbi cannot grow into a destination of choice for domestic and international tourists!

Through meaningful collaborations tourism as an industry has transformed a large segment of society and it is now in our hands to secure the same benefits for Thabazimbi. If we do this right, we will create a better life for all people and redefine the legacy we leave behind for future generations.

I wish you well as you strategize here today and provide us with a baseline of:

- The current state of tourism
- The future state of tourism as an ideal for the benefit of all, and a clear route map of how we journey from good to great.

The Municipality intends to implement the following projects and programmes in order to create an economic value-chain around our area, some of which are also relevant for the promotion of the tourism and hospitality industries. These include:

- Thabazimbi Wildfees or Game Festival
- Ketapele Jazz Festival;
- We intent to support others such as Oppikoppi and
- Thabazimbi Agricultural Show

In this regard, the Municipality will continue to identify mega or signature events, with a tourism impact for hosting or partnerships especially in mining tourism. The aim is to further position the municipality as a business tourism destination.

We do acknowledge that the state of our tourism industry and Thabazimbi's brand recognition is not where we would like it to be.

Programme Director; In closing, I would like to pledge my commitment towards ensuring that the tourism industry continue to grow and thrive. I am looking forward to the implementation of a robust local tourism strategy once it has been approved by the Council.

I thank you