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A District Reimagined

Harry Gwala District Municipality

Investment Prospectus



A District Reimagined

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Foreword

By the Mayor of the Harry Gwala District Municipality.

With great pride and optimism, I present this Investment Prospectus for the Harry Gwala District Municipality. Our district, named after the revered struggle stalwart Harry Themba Gwala “The Lion of the Midlands”, embodies a spirit of resilience, progress, and opportunity. Our strategic location, abundant natural resources, and industrious population position us as an attractive destination for investors seeking to unlock the full potential of their investments.



The Harry Gwala District Municipality is focused on creating a diversified economy that harnesses the strengths of our key sectors, including agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and renewable energy. We are dedicated to improving infrastructure, enhancing service delivery, and ensuring a business-friendly climate that encourages both local and international investment.

As the Mayor of this vibrant district, I am committed to fostering an environment that is conducive to sustainable growth and development. This includes the provision of the necessary basic infrastructure such as water, energy, and roads to support investment and foster economic growth. Key infrastructure projects in the district, such as the upgrade of the N2 interchange in Greater Kokstad, and major water provision projects like the New Biggen Dam, the raising of the Kempsdale Dam Wall, and the Stephen Dlamini Dam, are testament to this commitment. The Municipality has significantly increased capital expenditure on infrastructure development, reflecting our dedication to enhancing service delivery and creating a business-friendly climate that attracts both local and international investors.

As a district, we are confident that continuous improvements in telecommunications, energy, quality roads, and access

to basic services will drive economic growth and social development in the Harry Gwala District. We recognize that achieving our mandate to improve the lives of all residents requires collaboration, and thus, multi-agency partnerships are essential. Investors play a vital role in this process, and we pledge to provide all the necessary support to ensure their success.

This prospectus outlines a range of opportunities that align with our vision for a prosperous and inclusive future. We have identified strategic projects and initiatives that not only promise substantial returns on investment but also contribute to the socio-economic upliftment of our communities. By partnering with us, investors will not only benefit from the tangible rewards of their investments but also play a pivotal role in transforming the lives of our people.

Sincerely,

Councillor Z.D Nxumalo
Mayor,
Harry Gwala District Municipality



Foreword

By the **Board Chairperson** of the **Harry Gwala Development Agency**

As Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Harry Gwala Development Agency, it is with profound excitement and unwavering confidence that I introduce to you the investment prospectus of the Harry Gwala Development district municipality. As the Board of Directors, we have the privilege of overseeing an organization that is dedicated to fostering economic growth and social development within the Harry Gwala region.



Our agency is strategically positioned to harness the unique opportunities that our region offers, and we are committed to ensuring that your investment is not only secure but also poised for significant returns.

The Harry Gwala Development Agency enjoys strong support from local and national government bodies, as well as key private sector partners. This collaboration provides a stable and supportive environment for your investments, facilitating smooth project execution and enhancing overall project viability. The security of your investment is our top priority.

In this prospectus, you will find detailed information on the various investment opportunities available, each carefully selected and developed to align with our strategic goals and to meet the needs of our investors. We are confident that with your partnership, the Harry Gwala Development Agency will be a catalyst for positive change and sustainable development.

In closing, I extend a warm invitation to you to explore the opportunities presented in this prospectus and to join us in shaping the future of Harry Gwala District, as we work together to drive economic growth, create jobs, and improve the quality of life in our region.

Thank you for considering the Harry Gwala Development Agency as your investment partner. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and to achieve great success together.

Sincerely,

Ms Siphumelele. B Dlungwane

***Board Chairperson,
Harry Gwala Development Agency***

Foreword

By the **CEO** of the of the **Harry Gwala Development Agency**

It is with great enthusiasm that I present this Investment Prospectus for the Harry Gwala District Municipality, on behalf of the Harry Gwala Development Agency. Our district, renowned for its rich history and untapped potential, is on the cusp of a transformative era of growth and innovation. As the CEO of the Harry Gwala Development Agency, I am privileged to lead efforts in fostering economic development and creating a vibrant, sustainable future for our region.



The Harry Gwala District is blessed with a wealth of natural resources, strategic geographic advantages, and a resilient, industrious population. These attributes form the cornerstone of our vision to establish the district as a premier investment destination in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. Our agency is committed to driving initiatives that spur economic activity, enhance infrastructure, and improve the quality of life for all our residents. Our inclusion in the Eastern Seaboard Development Initiative further enhances our strategic significance, offering expanded opportunities for growth and connectivity. The Eastern Seaboard Development Initiative serves as a starting point to unlock the economic potential of the region within the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

This prospectus is a comprehensive guide to the diverse investment opportunities available within our district. We have identified key sectors with significant growth potential, including agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and renewable energy. Each sector presents unique opportunities for investors to achieve substantial returns while contributing to the district's overarching goals of smart cities through nodal development, sustainable development and socio-economic advancement.

The Harry Gwala Development Agency provides a supportive and conducive environment for investors. We offer robust incentives, streamlined processes, and a collaborative approach to ensure that investments are not only profitable but also impactful. Our commitment to transparency, efficiency, and partnership forms the bedrock of our engagement with potential investors.

I invite you to delve into the opportunities detailed in this prospectus and to consider partnering with us in shaping the future of the Harry Gwala District. Together, we can harness the full potential of our district, driving economic growth and fostering a legacy of prosperity for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Ms Antionette C.R. Whyte

***CEO
Harry Gwala Development Agency***





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The Harry Gwala District is a region brimming with potential and ripe for investment opportunities. Nestled in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, Harry Gwala District stands as a beacon of economic growth and development.

With its diverse landscape, rich cultural heritage, and strategic location, the district offers a myriad of investment prospects across various sectors. From agriculture to tourism, manufacturing to renewable energy, Harry Gwala District presents investors with fertile ground to sow the seeds of prosperity.




In this prospectus, we invite you to explore the Harry Gwala District, delve into its economic landscape, and discover the lucrative opportunities awaiting savvy investors. Join us on a journey as we unveil the unique advantages, vibrant communities, and promising ventures that define Harry Gwala District as a prime destination for investment.

Come, and be a part of our vision for growth, development, and prosperity in the Harry Gwala District. Together, let's unlock the boundless opportunities that await in this dynamic and thriving region.

A District Reimagined

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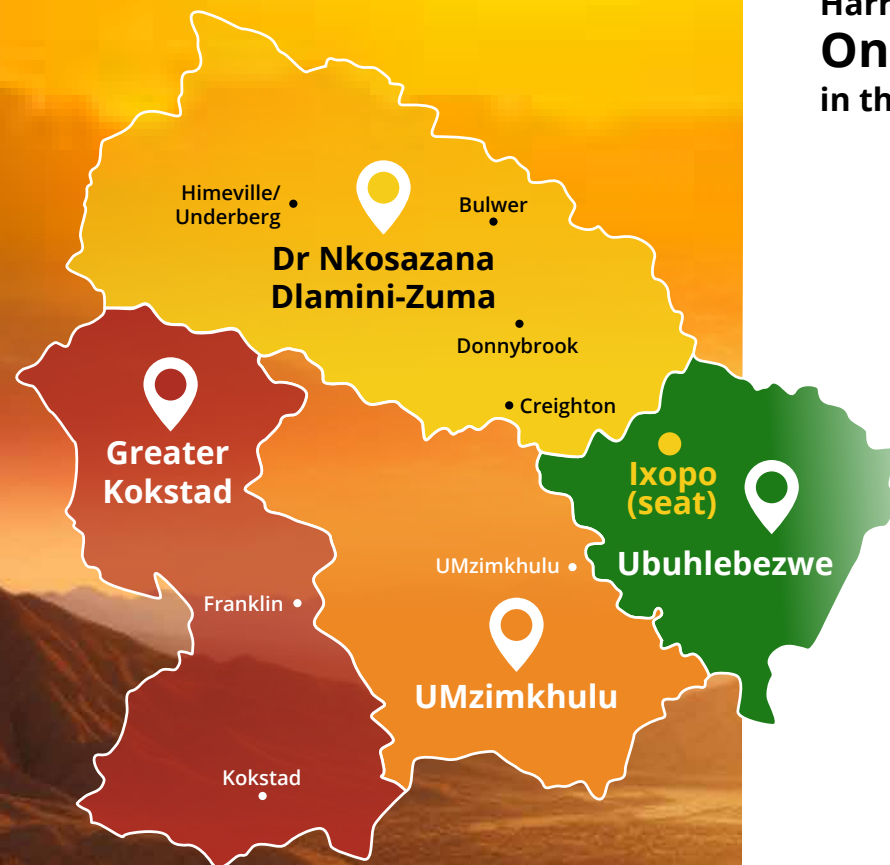
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Harry Gwala District

1. Introduction



The seat:
Ixopo
in Ubuhlebezwe

Area:
11 127.8 km²

Province:
KwaZulu-Natal

Language:
isiZulu

Harry Gwala is
One of ten districts
in the province of KwaZulu Natal.



4 x Local
Municipalities



Dr Nkosazana
Dlamini-Zuma



Greater Kokstad

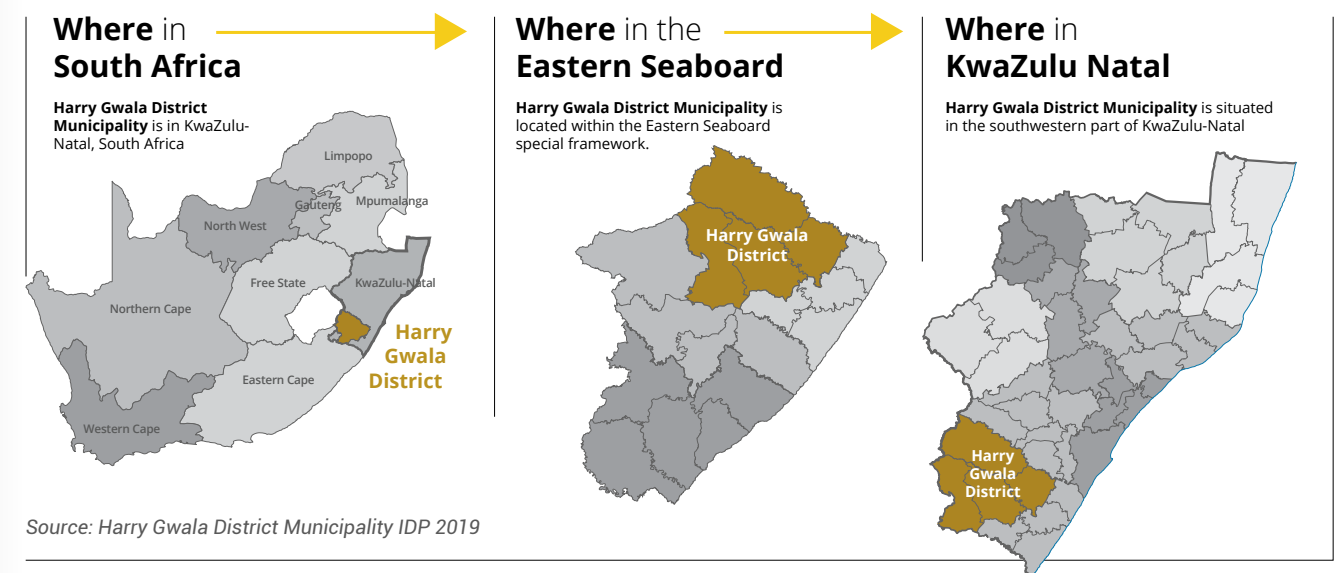


Ubuhlebezwe



UMzimkhulu

Figure 1
LOCATION OF HARRY GWALA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



The Harry Gwala District in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, is a prime investment destination with diverse landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and strategic location. Nestled in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa, Harry Gwala District stands as a beacon of economic growth and development.

It is renowned for its diverse landscapes, including the southern Drakensberg Mountains and the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, known for its biodiversity and rock art. With its diverse landscape, rich cultural heritage, and strategic location, the district offers a myriad of investment prospects across various sectors. Agriculture, including commercial farming and plantations, thrives due to favorable soils and climate, supporting crops, livestock, and sugarcane. Key rivers like UMzimkhulu and Umkomaas flow through the district, enhancing its agricultural potential.

The Harry Gwala District Municipality, spanning 11,127.8 km², is located in southwestern KwaZulu-Natal, approximately

250 kilometers south of eThekweni. It is one of the ten districts in the province and includes the local municipalities of Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, UMzimkhulu, Greater Kokstad, and Ubuhlebezwe.

The Harry Gwala district is one of the four districts which fall under the Eastern Seaboard a national initiative to develop the eastern corridor. The National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) through the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) has embarked on a process to develop the Eastern Seaboard, which will ultimately culminate in one or more African coastal smart cities in the region.



Harry Gwala is well known for high agro-ecological potential due to an **abundance of high-quality soils, high altitude, and abundant water.**

Most of the land in the HGDM comprises commercial agricultural land, including grazing, crop farming, sugar cane plantations, natural vegetation, and traditional human settlement areas. Known for its high agro-ecological potential, Harry Gwala benefits from fertile soils, high altitudes, and ample water resources. Commercial farms and plantations play a vital role in the local economy, supported by climatic diversity that favors a variety of crops, vegetables, livestock, and sugarcane, particularly in the Ixopo/Highflats area. Key rivers such as the UMzimkhulu, Umkomaas, Ibisi, and Umzimvubu flow from the Drakensberg mountains to the coastal regions of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.

HGDM is primarily rural with small urban centers serving as economic and administrative hubs. Key nodes like Kokstad, Umzimkulu, Ixopo, and Underberg/Himeville are identified for significant economic development and offer essential

services including agri-industrial development, tourism, housing, retail, education from primary to tertiary levels, healthcare, and government offices. Secondary nodes like Franklin, Creighton, Donnybrooke, Bulwer, and Highflats show growth potential with strong existing economic development. Bulwer, initially categorized as a secondary node, is being considered for primary node status due to its strategic location and potential once properly planned.

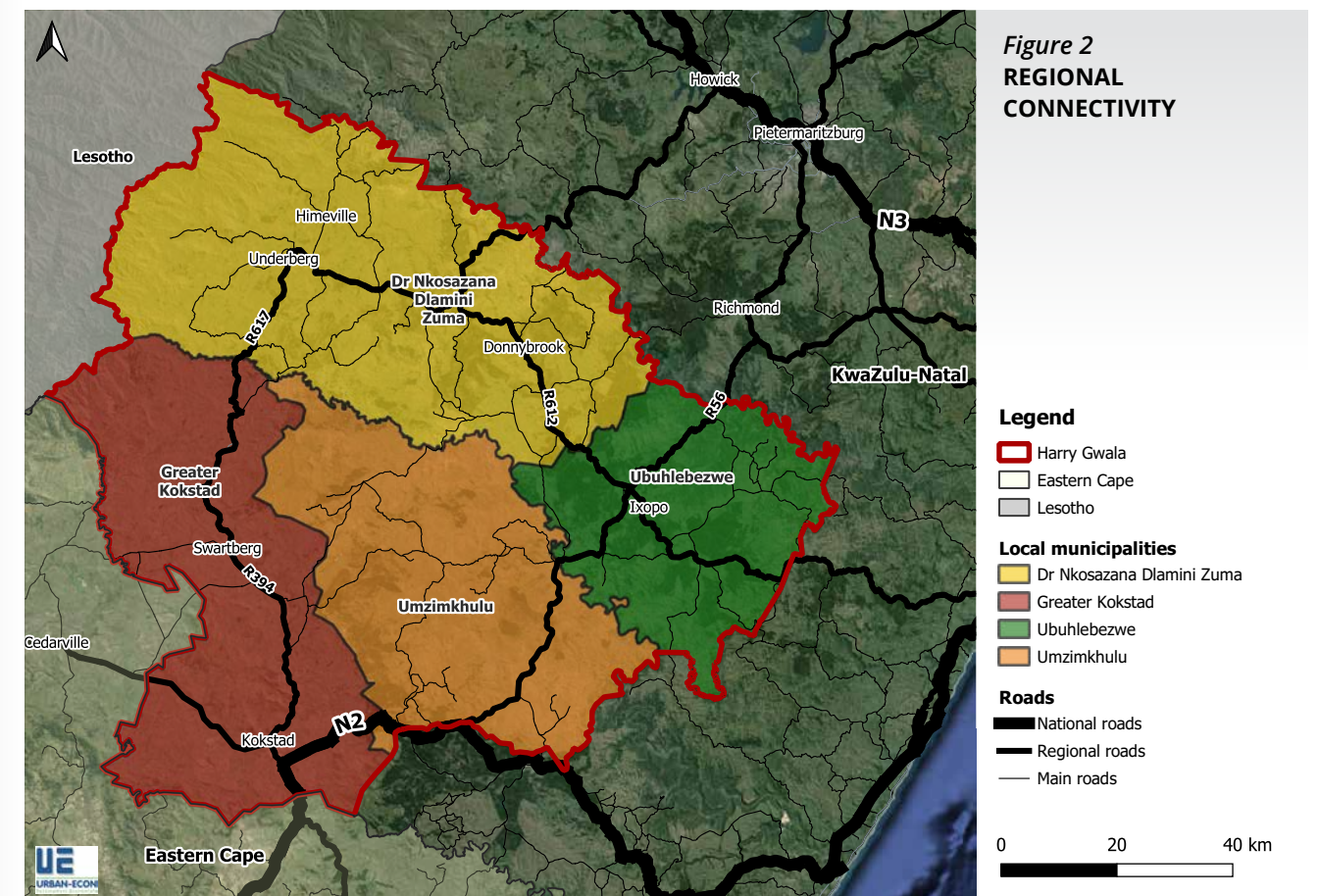
Tourism nodes like Garden Castle, Sani Pass, and Bushman's Nek offer scenic views and mountainous experiences ideal for recreational activities. These areas provide access to wilderness and natural landscapes through controlled points on private land adjacent to the UDP, with public entry points leading to the park. In Kokstad's urban fringe along the N2, sites like Ntsikeni Nature Reserve, Nazareth, Ophepheni (P68), Indlovu Clan (Ubuhlebezwe west of R46), Qunu Falls, Umzimkulu, and Creighton show potential for tourism development. Opportunities for tourism investment include expansion of facilities and attractions, including historical and cultural events, and eco-tourism adventures like birdwatching, river rafting (on Umzimkulu, Ngwagwane, Pholela, and Ndawane Rivers), 4x4 trails, and mountain biking (from mountains to coast).



The HGDM is predominantly rural characterized by small urban centers that serve as economic hubs for these sub-regions and as administrative areas. **Primary nodes** are Kokstad, Umzimkulu, Ixopo and Underberg /Himeville; **Secondary Nodes** are the urban centres of Franklin, Creighton, Donnybrooke, Bulwer and Highflats and **Tourism and Recreation Nodes include Garden Castle, Sani Pass and Bushman's Nek.**

Regional Connectivity

The road network forms critical corridors and routes that facilitates intra and inter trade, and as tourism routes. Transportation routes within the district encompass the primary road (R56), which extends from Msunduzi to the Eastern Cape via Ixopo and Kokstad. The N2 cuts through the district in the south, across Greater Kokstad municipality. Another significant route is the (R617), connecting Msunduzi to Bulwer, Underberg, and Kokstad. Additionally, there exists a connecting route from the coastal area of Park Rynie to Ixopo and Bulwer.



Source: HGDM Environmental Framework 2018

The R617, N2, and R56 serve as vital corridors linking local municipalities and facilitating robust cross-border economic opportunities within the district. Agricultural activities and businesses along the R56 from Richmond to Ixopo connect Ubuhlebezwe with Pietermaritzburg and Kokstad, while also providing access to Creighton and the South Coast, linking the N2 with the Eastern Cape Province. Facilitating agro tourism along these routes can enhance trade between Ixopo, Creighton, Bulwer, Underberg, and Umzinto.

In the peripheral areas of Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Local Municipality, cross-border linkages include P27-2 to

Impendle Municipality in the north and P318-2 providing access to Lesotho in the southwest. The Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park, along the Lesotho border with the formal border gate at Sani Pass, offers opportunities for cross-border planning and economic integration. This includes enhancing connectivity in the tourism sector with neighbouring municipalities, supporting retail sectors with commuters from the Mokhotlong area, promoting cross-border trade in Mohair/wool from Mokhotlong, and developing cross-border tourism (Trans-Maloti integration



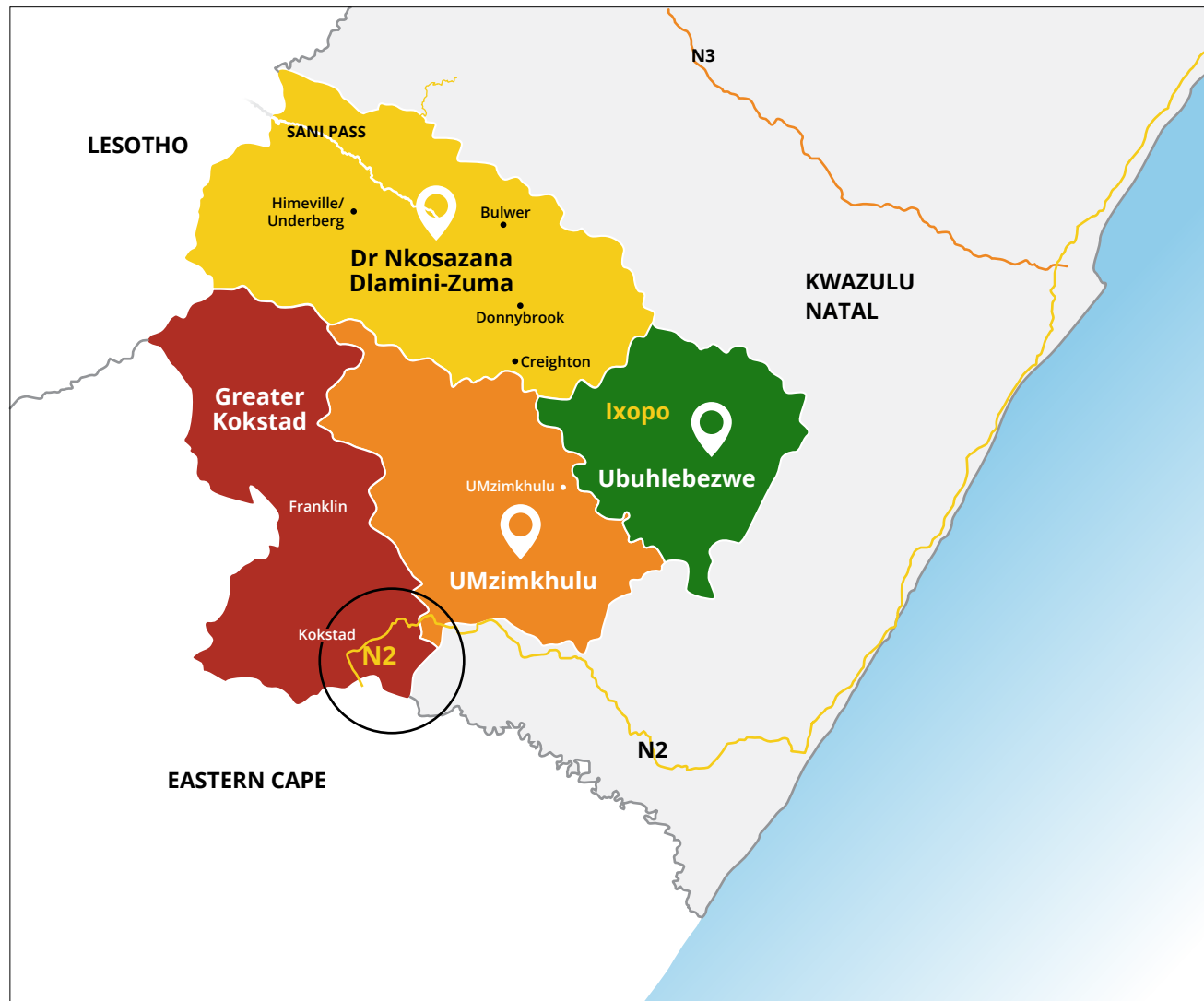
The construction of the N2 road interchange in Greater Kokstad is poised to bring several significant benefits to the Harry Gwala District. It is evidence of the government's commitment to building, maintaining, and upgrading infrastructure in the region.

The district's proximity to major urban centres like Pietermaritzburg and Durban provides businesses access to larger markets, commercial hubs, and trade zones. This proximity supports businesses in the Harry Gwala District by connecting them to consumer markets, distribution networks, and supply chains, thereby boosting their competitiveness and growth potential.

The N2 Interchange – Driving regional connectedness and access

The N2 road interchange in Greater Kokstad promises significant benefits for the Harry Gwala District, showcasing government commitment to regional infrastructure development. It will improve connectivity within the district and with major cities, enhancing transportation efficiency for goods and people.

Figure 3
MAP OF THE EASTERN SEABOARD



This infrastructure upgrade is expected to attract businesses and investors, stimulating economic growth and creating local employment opportunities. Improved accessibility may boost tourism, benefiting hospitality industries. Enhanced road infrastructure will facilitate faster, safer transport of agricultural products, reducing costs and enhancing competitiveness. Additionally, better roads can improve road safety, reduce travel times, and enhance access to essential services like healthcare and education, ultimately improving residents' quality of life. The interchange will also foster regional integration, particularly with neighbouring regions like the Eastern Cape, and potentially increase property values, encouraging further investment in residential and commercial properties.





The Eastern Seaboard Development Region

The Harry Gwala district is one of the four districts which fall under the Eastern Seaboard a national initiative to develop the eastern corridor. The National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) through the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) has embarked on a process to develop the Eastern Seaboard, which will ultimately culminate in one or more African coastal smart cities in the region.

The District Development Model, under the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) of 2013, includes the KZN districts of Ugu and Harry Gwala, and the Eastern Cape districts of Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo. Recently proclaimed by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), this region is known as the Eastern Seaboard Development. **Stretching approximately 250 km along the coast from Coffee Bay in King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality to Scottburgh in UMdoni Local Municipality, its vision is to become “a region known for its innovative learning culture, thriving economy, green energy production and sustainable environment”**

Figure 3
MAP OF THE EASTERN SEABOARD



Rich in natural resources across multiple administrative boundaries, the Eastern Seaboard Development initiative aims to unlock economic potential in both the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal regions. The strategic location within the Eastern Seaboard provides Harry Gwala District with significant advantages, enhancing its appeal as an investment destination and fostering socio-economic development:

The Eastern Seaboard Development cross-border region is considered transformative, as it secures additional funding crucial for unlocking the implementation of catalytic projects.

Figure 4
STRATEGIC BENEFITS DUE TO HGDM LOCATION WITHIN THE EASTERN SEABOARD



Source: Eastern Seaboard Master Plan and Infrastructure Investment Framework 2024



Leveraging the Strategic Location of Sani Pass – A Gateway Opportunity

Figure 5

Sani Pass – A Gateway Opportunity

Sani Pass is a renowned mountain pass located in Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Harry Gwala district, in the western region of KwaZulu-Natal, connecting the town of Himeville with Mokhotlong in Lesotho. The Harry Gwala District offers a unique investment opportunity through the strategic location of Sani Pass. As a renowned adventure and eco-tourism destination, Sani Pass attracts numerous tourists annually, presenting vast potential for sustainable economic development and investment.

This iconic route traverses the Great Escarpment of southern Africa at its highest region, the majestic Drakensberg Mountains, which soar to elevations exceeding 3,000 meters. Known for its breathtaking views and challenging terrain, Sani Pass is a destination for adventurers and nature enthusiasts alike.

highest region:
+3,000 meters

Situated in:
Drakensberg Mountains

Opportunity:
Tourism infrastructure



Sani Pass is more than just a route between South Africa and Lesotho; it is a journey through some of the most stunning landscapes in Southern Africa unique to Harry Gwala.

Opportunity

Sani Pass is a gateway to numerous business opportunities that cater to a diverse range of tourists and adventurers. By leveraging the natural beauty and cultural significance of the area, entrepreneurs can create sustainable and profitable ventures that contribute to the local economy and promote the unique charm of this iconic mountain pass. The continuous influx of adventure tourists to Sani Pass necessitates the development of high-quality tourism infrastructure.

Investment Areas: -

Accommodation:

Develop eco-lodges, boutique hotels, and camping sites.

Restaurants and Cafés:

Establish dining facilities that cater to international and local tourists.

Tourism Services:

Invest in tour operators, guiding services, and adventure such as 4x4 vehicle rentals and hiking tours.

Cultural Centres:

Establish museums or cultural centres showcasing local and Lesotho traditions. Leverage the proximity to Lesotho for cross-cultural tourism initiatives.

Events and Festivals:

Organize cultural festivals, craft fairs, and heritage events.

Craft Markets:

Develop markets and retail outlets for local artisans to sell crafts and products.

Investing in the Harry Gwala District, with a focus on the strategic location of Sani Pass, offers significant returns through the development of tourism infrastructure, economic growth, cultural enrichment, and environmental conservation. By capitalizing on these opportunities, investors can contribute to sustainable regional development while benefiting from the growing global tourism market.

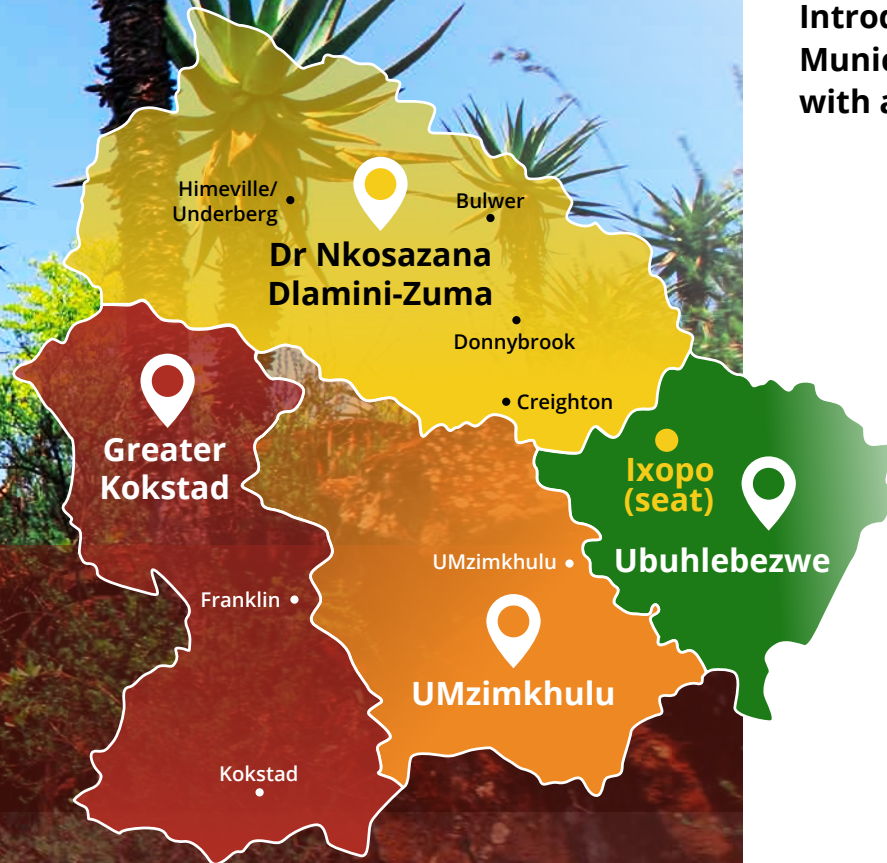
2. The Local Municipalities



Introducing the Local Municipalities of the HGDM with a high-level outlook



4 x Local Municipalities



The Harry Gwala District, with its diverse municipalities, offers a range of investment opportunities that promises substantial economic and social returns. From the adventure tourism of Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality to the commercial vibrancy of Greater Kokstad, the serene landscapes of Ubuhebezwe, and the rich heritage of UMzimkhulu, investors can find lucrative prospects in various sectors. Each municipality presents unique advantages, contributing to a comprehensive and attractive investment environment in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal.



DR NKOSAZANA DLAMINI-ZUMA

The municipality shares its borders with Lesotho and the Eastern Cape.

- It serves as the district's administrative and commercial hub.
- The municipal area consists predominantly of tribal lands.
- Notably, the municipality is home to the World Heritage Site of Ukhahlamba.
- Key towns within the municipality include Creighton, Himeville, Bulwer, and Underberg.
- The main economic drivers are agriculture and tourism.



GREATER KOKSTAD

The municipality shares its western boundary with Matatiele Local Municipality and Lesotho.

- Kokstad functions as the service and commercial hub for much of the nearby parts of the Eastern Cape.
- Kokstad is located on the main transport arterial linking KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape and is the point at which the rail transport link stops.
- This has tremendous potential for the town to strengthen its commercial sector, build small and micro enterprises and promote local economic development.
- The area has three potential economic growth pillars: tourism, agriculture, industrial and manufacturing.



UBUHEBEZWE

Meaning "The Beauty of the Land" it serves as a significant centre for education and healthcare and is the main operational base for numerous departments and service providers.

- Strategically positioned at the crossroads of four major provincial routes leading to Pietermaritzburg, the, the Eastern Cape, and the South Coast, Ixopo town serves as the primary development hub.
- The key economic sectors driving growth in the area are agriculture, tourism, and business.
- It is well endowed with natural and physical resources and has immense potential for the development of agricultural industries, tourism and other commercial enterprises.

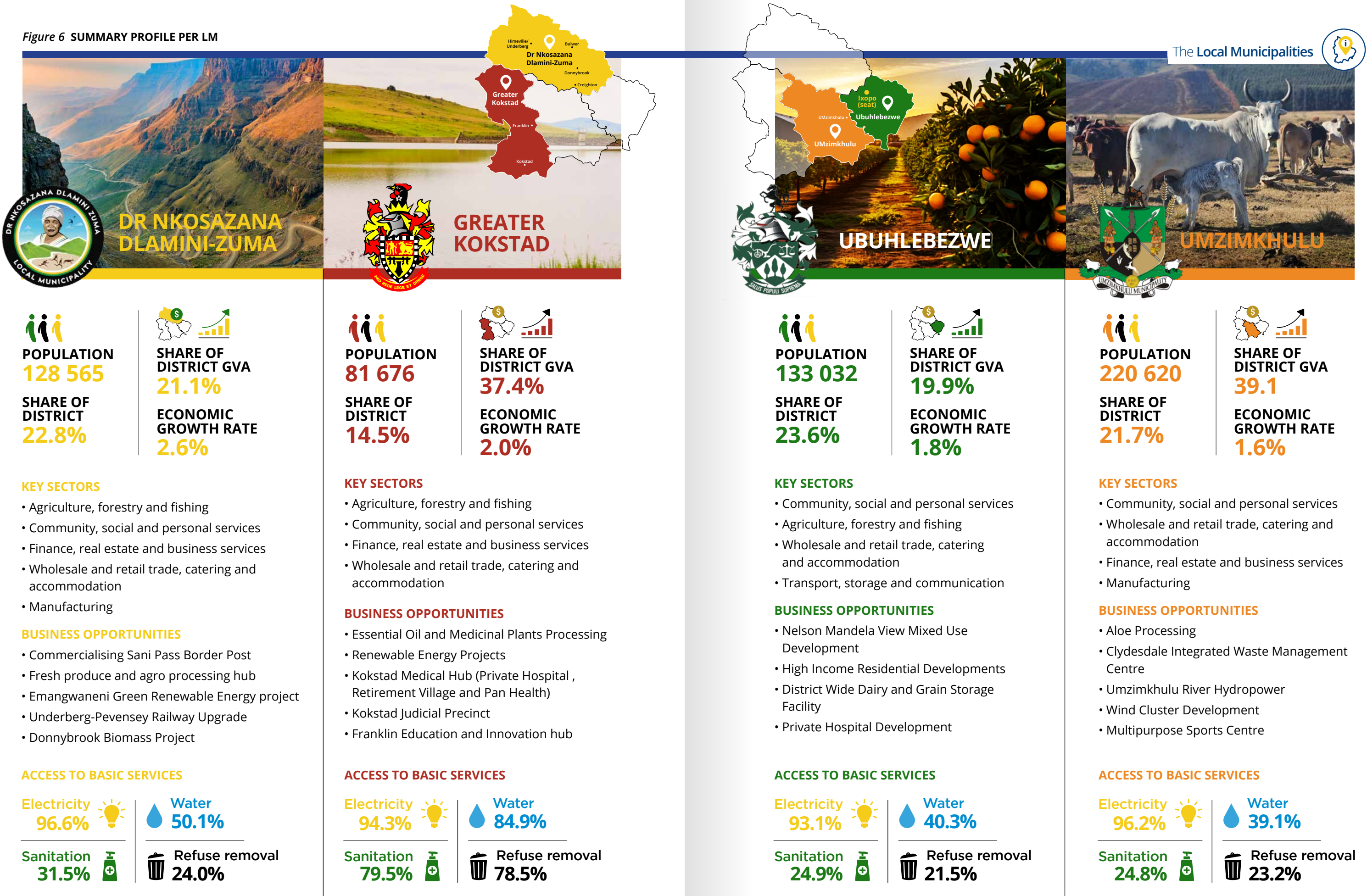


UMZIMKHULU

The municipality has the largest population and is the largest municipality geographically accounting for a quarter of the districts geographical area.

- UMzimkhulu Town is regarded as the primary node, both administratively and economically.
- Main economic activities are agriculture; forestry; community, social and personal services; trade and tourism.
- High rainfall, good climate and rich soil give the area a high propensity for agricultural development.
- Most farming operations are at subsistence level, in spite of the potential for commercial-scale ventures.

Figure 6 SUMMARY PROFILE PER LM



Source: StatsSA Census, 2022, Quantec Standardised Regional Data, 2024



Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality

Largest area:
3 602 km²

Main Towns
Creighton
Himeville
Underberg

**Key gateway between
South Africa and the
Kingdom of Lesotho**



POPULATION
128 565

**SHARE OF
DISTRICT**
22.8%



**SHARE OF
DISTRICT GVA**
21.1%

**ECONOMIC
GROWTH RATE**
2.6%

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

Electricity
96.6%



Water
50.1%

Refuse removal
24.0%



Sanitation
31.5%



The Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality, situated in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal's Harry Gwala District, honors the first female chairperson of the African Union Commission. Established in August 2016 through the amalgamation of Ingwe and Kwa Sani Local Municipalities, it spans 3,602 km², making it the largest municipality in the district.

The municipality is strategically located near the renowned Sani Pass, which serves as a key gateway between South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho. This municipality is characterized by its rich cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, and vibrant communities.

The area is strategically located near the Sani Pass, a crucial route between South Africa and Lesotho, fostering tourism, cross-border trade, and cultural exchange. Known for its rich cultural heritage and scenic landscapes, the municipality features towns like Creighton, Himeville, Bulwer, and Underberg, alongside tribal lands. Its economy thrives on agriculture, particularly dairy farming, which accounts for 56% of its GDP and benefits from favorable bio-climatic conditions and proximity to markets. The tourism sector, focusing on adventure and avi-tourism, leverages the Southern Drakensberg's natural beauty and hosts strategic projects like railway tourism development at Creighton station. Nature-based tourism, including birding, offers additional economic opportunities through activities like tour guiding and accommodations.

The Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality offers a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, and economic potential. As a focal point in the Harry Gwala District, it stands as an inviting destination for investors seeking opportunities in tourism, agribusiness, infrastructure, and sustainable development.



Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality



Investment Opportunities

Tourism and Hospitality

Opportunity: Develop tourism infrastructure to cater to the growing number of visitors to Sani Pass and surrounding attractions.

Investment Areas:

- Hotels, lodges, and guesthouses
- Restaurants, cafés, and entertainment venues
- Adventure and eco-tourism services

Agribusiness and Agro-Processing

Opportunity: Leverage the fertile agricultural land for sustainable farming and value-added processing.

Investment Areas:

- Crop farming and organic agriculture
- Livestock farming and dairy production
- Agro-processing facilities for local produce

Cultural and Heritage Tourism

Opportunity: Promote and develop cultural tourism that highlights the rich heritage of the region.

Investment Areas:

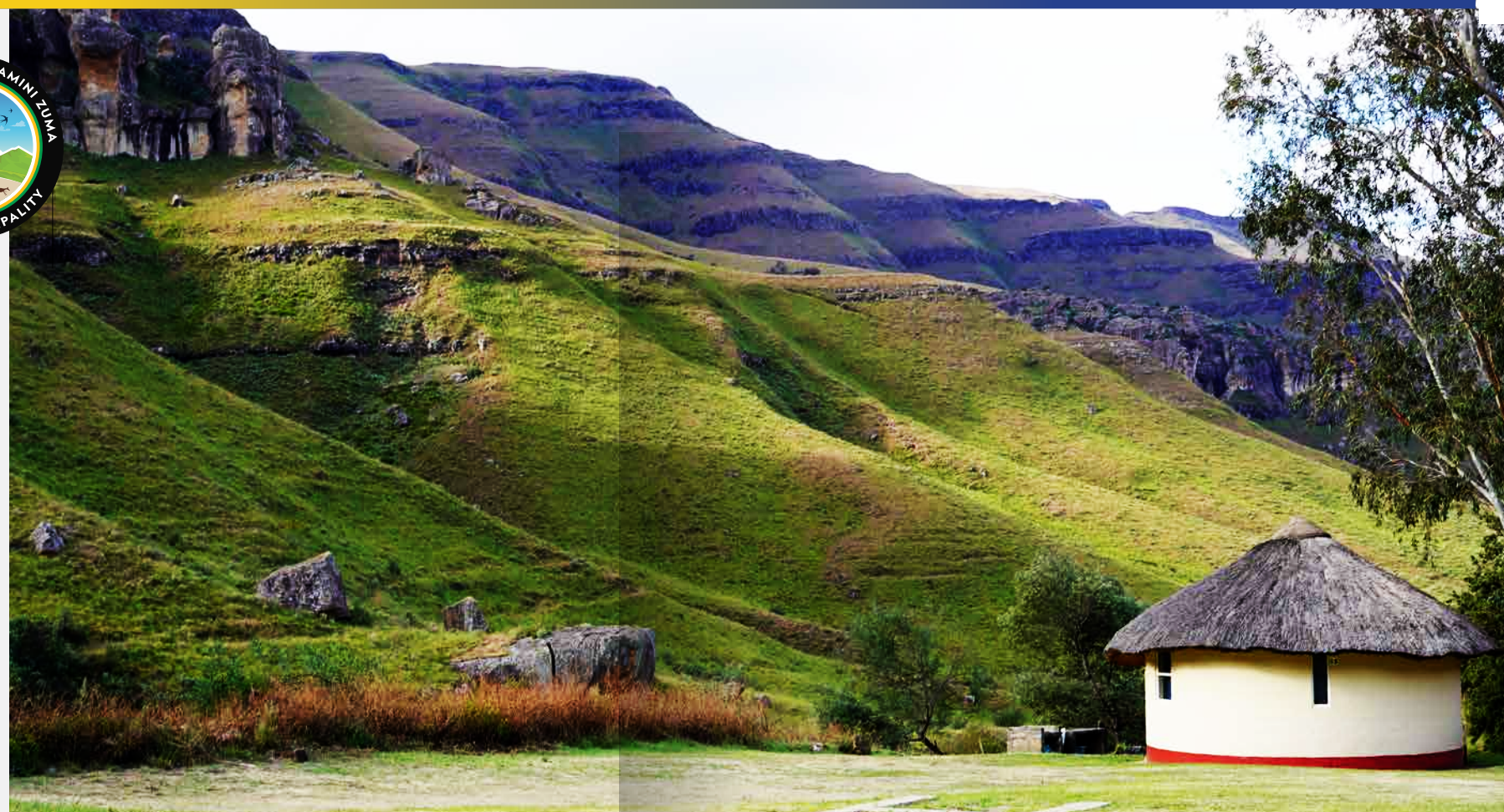
- Cultural centers and museums
- Craft markets and traditional arts venues
- Festivals and cultural events

Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Practices

Opportunity: Invest in projects that promote sustainability and environmental conservation.

Investment Areas:

- Conservation projects and eco-friendly initiatives
- Renewable energy projects
- Sustainable farming practices





Greater Kokstad Municipality

Area size:
2 680 km²

Main Towns
Kokstad
Franklin

The Economic Hub of Harry Gwala District


POPULATION
81 676

SHARE OF DISTRICT
14.5%




SHARE OF DISTRICT GVA
37.4%

ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE
2.0%

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

Electricity
94.3% 

Water
84.9% 

Refuse removal
78.5% 

Sanitation
79.5% 



Kokstad is the commercial center of the region, hosting numerous retail outlets, businesses, and service industries. Its thriving economy is supported by robust infrastructure and connectivity.

The Greater Kokstad Municipality, a key economic hub in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, is known for its strategic location, commercial activity, and agricultural potential. Named after Dutch Adam Kok III, it sits on the N2 national route, linking KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, and Lesotho. Surrounded by Matatiele Local Municipality to the west, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality to the north, and UMzimkhulu Local Municipality to the southeast, its location facilitates seamless transport and logistics, making it ideal for commerce, trade, and tourism.



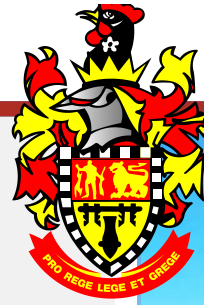
Kokstad serves as a regional commercial center with numerous retail outlets, businesses, and service industries, supported by robust infrastructure and connectivity. Its strategic position on the R56 and N2 junction attracts transit commerce, benefiting the local economy. Agriculture forms a cornerstone of the economy, focusing on high-value crops, livestock, dairy, and forestry. The region's fertile soil and favorable climate support year-round farming activities, with plans for local processing to boost economic growth.

Culturally rich, Kokstad features historical landmarks and picturesque landscapes that appeal to domestic and international tourists. Activities such as eco-tourism, cultural tours, adventure outings, and leisure pursuits are enhanced by attractions like Mount Currie Nature Reserve, the proposed Cultural Centre, and local fly-fishing dams and sports facilities. The Greater Kokstad Municipality, a key economic hub in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, is known for its strategic location, commercial activity, and agricultural potential. Named after Dutch Adam Kok III, it sits on the N2 national route, linking KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, and Lesotho. Surrounded by Matatiele Local Municipality to the west, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality to the north, and UMzimkhulu Local Municipality to the southeast, its location facilitates seamless transport and logistics, making it ideal for commerce, trade, and tourism.

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Greater Kokstad Municipality

Investment Opportunities

Commercial Development

Opportunity: The growing urban center of Kokstad presents numerous opportunities for commercial development.

Investment Areas:

- Retail Centers: Development of shopping malls, retail parks, and local markets.
- Office Spaces: Construction of modern office buildings and business complexes.
- Industrial Parks: Establishment of industrial zones for manufacturing and warehousing

Agribusiness and Agro-Processing

Opportunity: Leveraging the fertile agricultural land for sustainable and profitable farming ventures.

Investment Areas:

- Crop Farming: Investment in high-value crops, organic farming, and horticulture.
- Livestock Farming: Expansion of dairy, poultry, and cattle farming.
- Agro-Processing: Establishment of facilities for processing agricultural produce, adding value and creating jobs

Tourism and Hospitality

Opportunity: Enhance the appeal as a tourist destination.

Investment Areas:

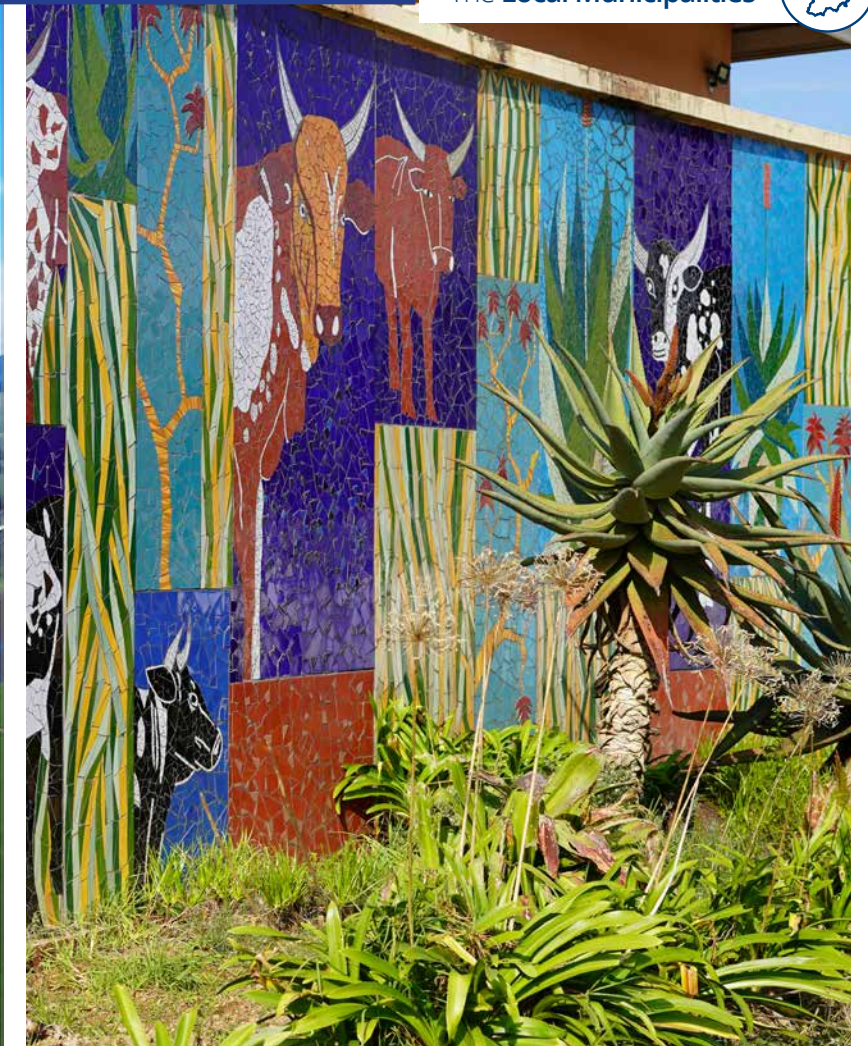
- Accommodation: Development of hotels, lodges, and guesthouses.
- Restaurants and Cafés: Establishment of dining facilities catering to tourists and locals.
- Recreational Facilities: Development of parks, nature reserves, and adventure tourism activities.

Renewable Energy Projects

Opportunity: Invest in projects that promote sustainability and environmental conservation.

Investment Areas:

- Solar Energy: Development of solar farms and residential solar installations.





Ubuhlebezwe Municipality


Area size:
1 604 km²

Main Towns
Ixopo
Highflats

The Serene Heart of
Harry Gwala District
"Cry, the Beloved Country"


POPULATION
133 032

SHARE OF
DISTRICT
23.6%


SHARE OF
DISTRICT GVA
19.9%

ECONOMIC
GROWTH RATE
1.8%

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

Electricity
93.1%

Water
40.3%

Refuse removal
21.5%

Sanitation
24.9%



Ubuhlebezwe Municipality, named for its scenic landscapes and cultural significance, derives its name from Alan Paton's novel, "Cry, the Beloved Country," set in Ixopo, its administrative center. Strategically positioned along major routes connecting Durban, Pietermaritzburg, the Drakensberg, the Eastern Cape, and the South Coast, Ubuhlebezwe is pivotal for regional trade and tourism. Ixopo, located 85km southeast of Pietermaritzburg, serves as the primary development hub and the seat of the Harry Gwala District Council, supporting industries, commerce, education, health services, and governmental operations.

Ubuhlebezwe Municipality derives its name from Alan Paton's novel, "Cry, the Beloved Country," set in Ixopo.

Agriculture, tourism, and business drive the local economy, with fertile lands supporting diverse activities such as crop farming, livestock rearing, and forestry. Major agricultural sectors include cattle, dairy, poultry, citrus, sugarcane, and fruit, with ongoing efforts to expand citrus production and empower local farmers. Nature reserves attract tourists, alongside religious and heritage sites like the Mariathal Mission and Alan Paton's historical landmarks. A tourism association promotes the region, enhancing its appeal and economic potential.

Ubuhlebezwe Municipality offers a serene and promising environment for investment, characterized by its scenic beauty, fertile lands, and rich cultural heritage. With opportunities spanning eco-tourism, agribusiness, infrastructure, cultural tourism, and education, investors can expect significant returns while contributing to the sustainable growth and prosperity of the region.



Ubuhlebezwe Municipality

Investment Opportunities

Infrastructure Development

Opportunity: Enhance infrastructure to support economic activities and improve living standards.

Investment Areas:

- Retail Centers: Development of shopping malls, retail parks, and local markets.
- Road Upgrades: Improve and maintain road networks to enhance connectivity.
- Utilities: Development of water supply systems, sewage systems, and electrification projects.
- Housing: Construction of affordable housing and residential developments.

Agribusiness and Agro-Processing

Opportunity: Utilize fertile agricultural land for sustainable farming and agro-processing.

Investment Areas:

- Crop Farming: Investment in high-value crops, organic farming, and horticulture.
- Livestock Farming: Expansion of dairy, poultry, and cattle farming.
- Agro-Processing: Facilities for processing agricultural produce, adding value and creating jobs.

Eco-Tourism and Hospitality

Opportunity: Develop eco-friendly tourism infrastructure to attract visitors seeking nature and adventure.

Investment Areas:

- Lodges and Resorts: Eco-lodges, boutique resorts, and camping sites.
- Adventure Activities: Hiking trails, bird-watching tours, and adventure sports.
- Cultural Tours: Heritage tours, cultural events, and community-based tourism initiatives.





UMzimkhulu Municipality

Area Size:
2 436 km²

Main Towns
UMzimkhulu Town,
Riverside, Ibisi
and Rietvlei

**The Cultural and
Agricultural Beacon of
Harry Gwala District**

POPULATION
220 620



**SHARE OF
DISTRICT GVA**
39.1

**SHARE OF
DISTRICT**
21.7%

**ECONOMIC
GROWTH RATE**
1.6%

Electricity
96.2%



Water
39.1%

Refuse removal
23.2%



Sanitation
24.8%



Aloe beneficiation and wool production are emerging sectors poised to transform UMzimkhulu's economy, utilizing local resources for medicinal and industrial purposes. Livestock grazing on vast grasslands supports cattle, sheep, and goat production, integrated into the agricultural value chain.

UMzimkhulu Municipality, situated in the southeastern part of the Harry Gwala District, is rich in cultural heritage and agricultural potential. Named "UMzimkhulu," meaning "Big / Great house" in isiXhosa and isiZulu, it symbolizes the municipality's abundance of natural resources and vibrant community life.

Spanning 2,436 km², UMzimkhulu Municipality is the largest in the Harry Gwala District, strategically located near the Eastern Cape border. This positioning makes it pivotal for interprovincial trade and transport, enhancing accessibility for regional commerce, tourism, and cultural exchange.

The main town, UMzimkhulu, anchors the municipality's economy, driven by agriculture, forestry, community services, trade, and tourism. The area features expansive fertile land suitable for diverse farming activities including crop production, livestock rearing, and horticulture, supported by favorable climate and rich soil conditions.

Current agricultural outputs include cattle, poultry, wool, maize, sugar cane, citrus, vegetables, and timber, predominantly at subsistence levels despite commercial potential. Forestry, led by private entities like Singisi Forest, covers a significant portion of the municipality, with plans for expansion.

UMzimkhulu is the most populated of the Harry Gwala municipalities and is strategically positioned near the border of the Eastern Cape, making it a crucial link for interprovincial trade and transport.

The municipality's natural assets, including the UMzimkhulu River and Ntsikeni Nature Reserve, foster sustainable development and eco-tourism. Cultural events and historical sites such as Silahlala Falls, Chief Fodo Monument, and Umdlansimbi indigenous forest celebrate local heritage and attract tourism.

Ntsikeni Nature Reserve, a Ramsar wetland site, offers diverse attractions like birding, game viewing, and rock art, contributing to adventure tourism. Plans for a Provincial Tourism Link Route aim to further integrate UMzimkhulu into regional tourism networks, enhancing its economic prospects and cultural visibility.



UMzimkhulu Municipality

Investment Opportunities

Agribusiness and Agro-Processing

Opportunity: Capitalize on fertile lands and favourable climate for diversified agricultural ventures.

Investment Areas:

- Crop Farming: Investment in high-value crops, organic farming, and horticultural projects.
- Livestock Farming: Expansion of dairy, poultry, and cattle farming operations.
- Agro-Processing: Establishment of processing facilities to add value to agricultural produce and create employment.

Renewable Energy Projects

Opportunity: Invest in sustainable energy solutions to meet the increasing energy demands.

Investment Areas:

- Solar Energy: Development of solar farms and residential solar installations.
- Hydropower: Utilization of the UMzimkhulu River for small-scale hydropower projects.
- Biomass Energy: Conversion of agricultural waste into biomass energy.

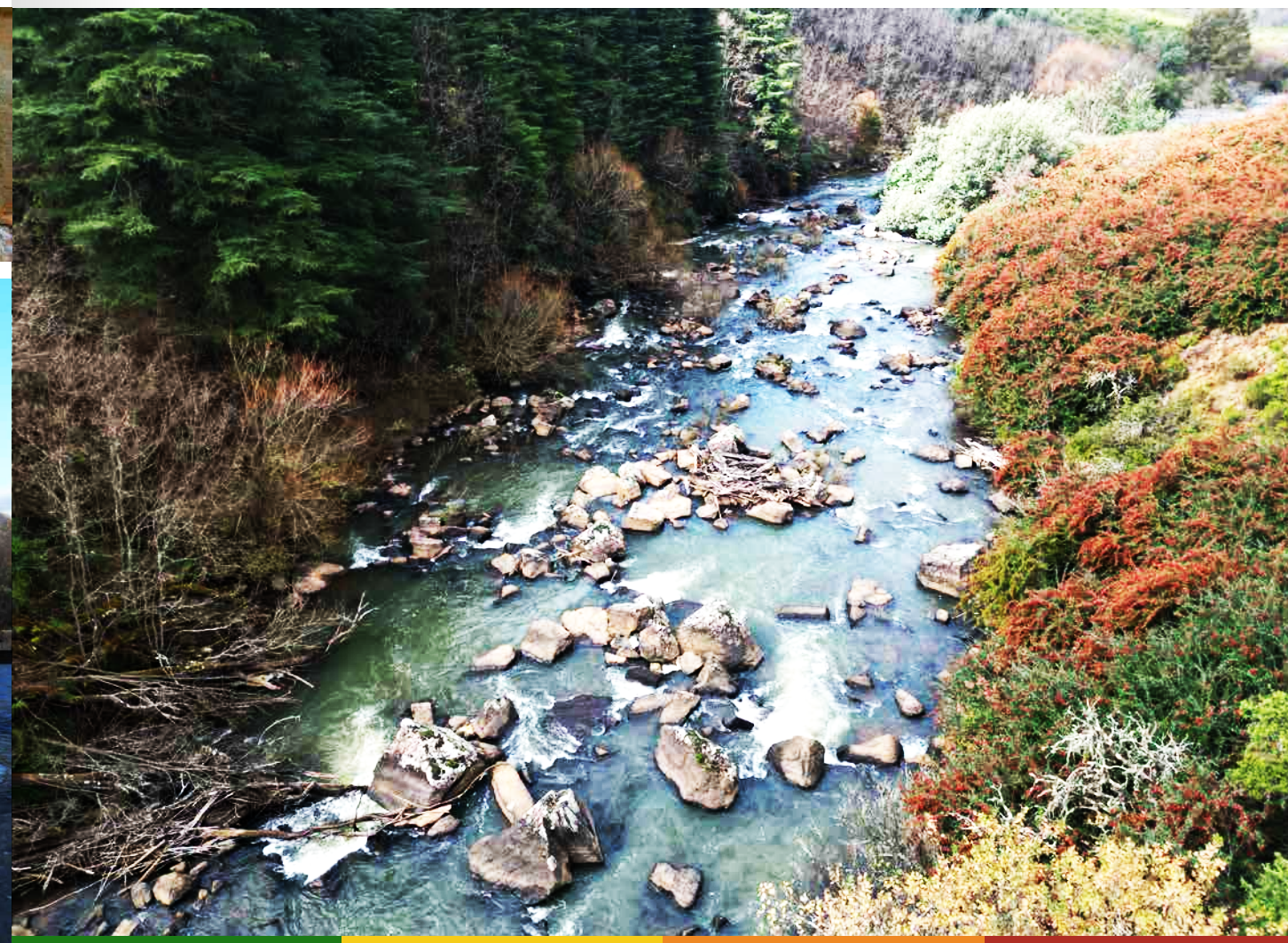
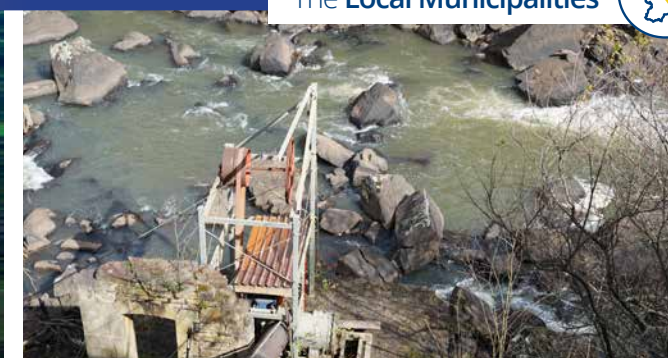
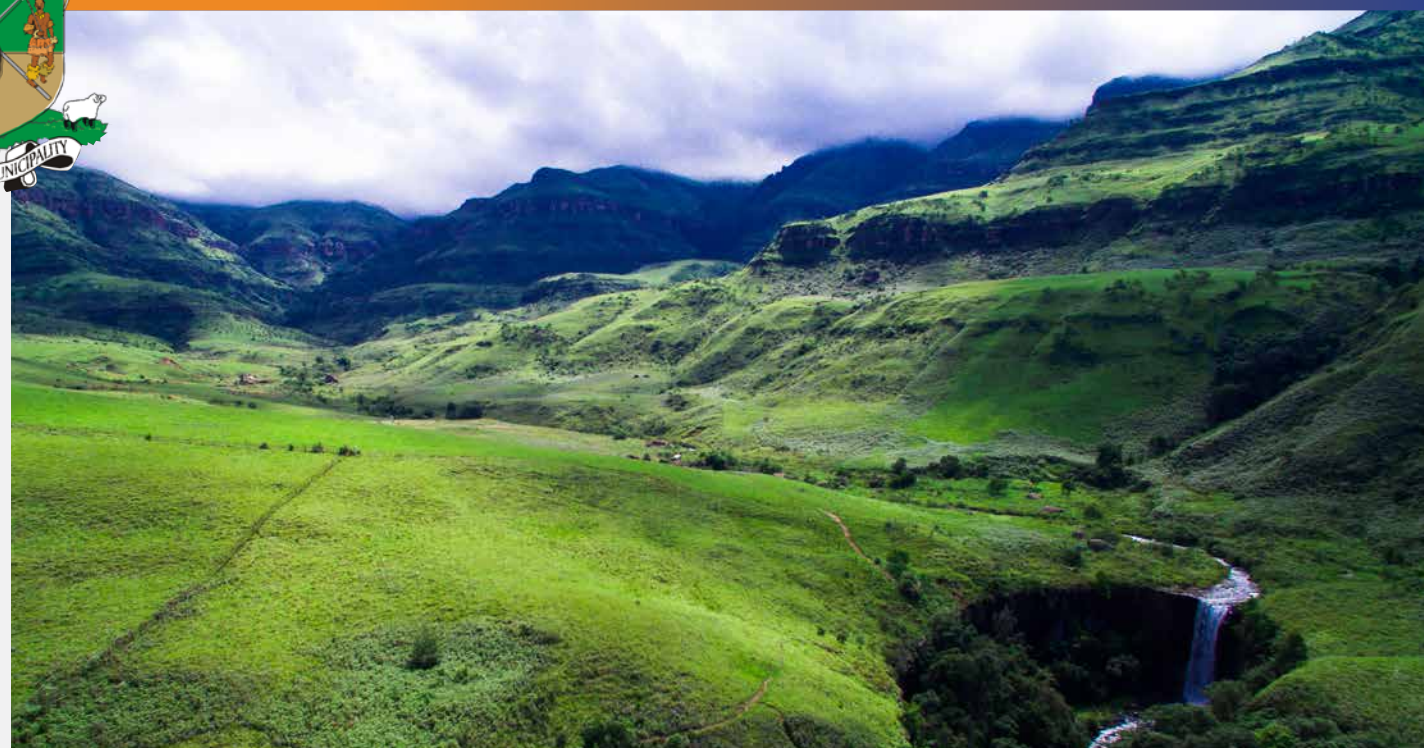
Infrastructure Development

Opportunity: Enhance infrastructure to support economic activities and improve living standards.

Investment Areas:

- Transport Networks: Upgrading of roads, bridges, and public transport systems to improve connectivity.
- Utilities: Development of water supply, sewage systems, and electrification projects. Housing: Construction of affordable and quality housing to meet the needs of a growing population.

UMzimkhulu Municipality offers a unique blend of cultural richness, agricultural potential, and natural beauty, making it an attractive destination for investment. With opportunities spanning agribusiness, cultural tourism, eco-tourism, infrastructure development, and renewable energy, investors can expect substantial returns while contributing to the sustainable growth and prosperity of the region.



3. The People of Harry Gwala



The people of the Harry Gwala District are its greatest asset, embodying resilience, ingenuity, and a strong community spirit at its core. Integral to the region's economic and social fabric, they are the backbone of progress and prosperity. With their diverse talents and entrepreneurial spirit, they foster an environment ripe for investment and growth, playing a crucial role in unlocking the district's full potential.

POPULATION



HOUSEHOLDS



AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



Source: Stats SA 2022 Census.

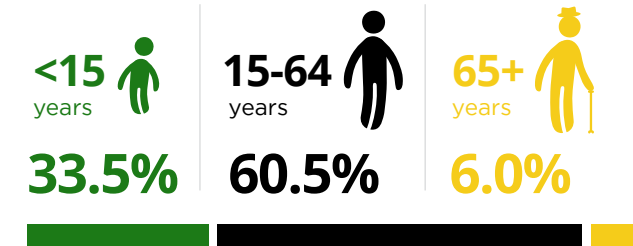
Harry Gwala District Municipality: Demographics at a Glance



GENDER SPLIT



AGE GROUPS



EDUCATION



SKILLS:



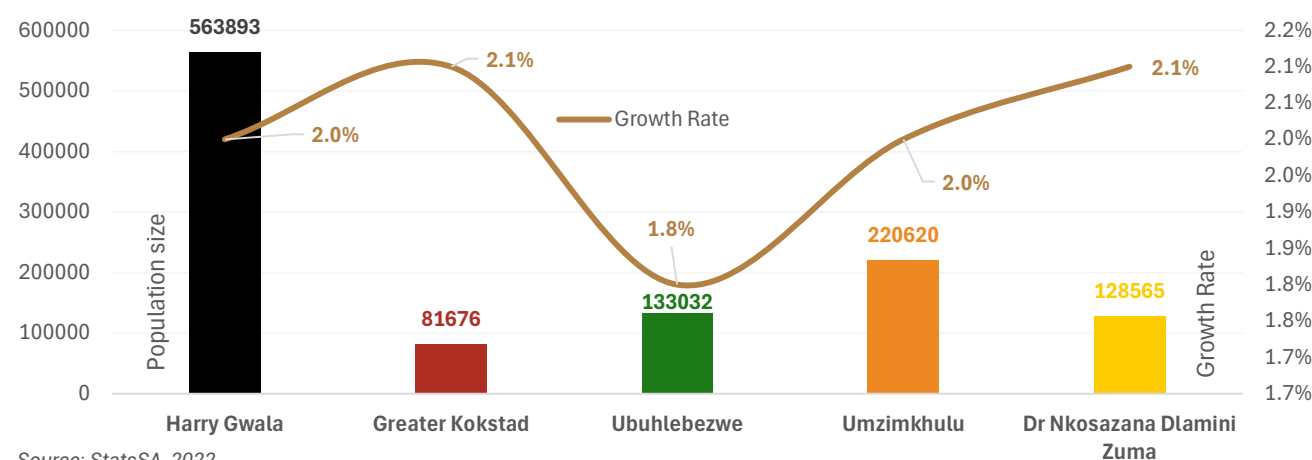
The Harry Gwala District is home to approximately 563,893 residents across 115,080 households. The highest population density is found in UMzimkhulu, comprising 39.1% of the district's residents, while Greater Kokstad has the lowest at 14.5%. Since the 2011 census, the district has experienced a 2% population growth, which has expanded the labor force and market for products, thereby stimulating economic growth. A larger population naturally increases demand for goods and services, presenting ample opportunities for investors.

The average household size in the Harry Gwala District is 4.9 persons per household, which reflects a relatively large household size. Since the 2011 census, the number of households has also increased, highlighting the potential opportunities associated with a large and growing population.

The Harry Gwala District has a youthful demographic profile, with 60.5% of its population in the working-age group, indicating strong potential for labor force participation and educational advancement. Predominantly rural, the district's communities live in close-knit villages and small towns, fostering a robust sense of community and cultural heritage. The majority of residents identify as Black African, with isiZulu as the primary language, followed by isiXhosa and English. Urbanization is gradually increasing, particularly in areas like Greater Kokstad, which serves as a key economic center.



Figure 7
POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH RATE



Source: StatsSA, 2022

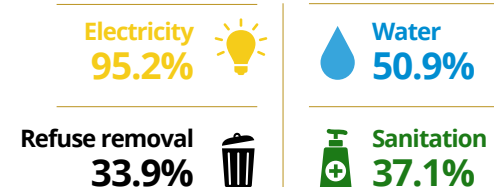
The Harry Gwala District boasts a population of approximately 563 893 residents in 115 080 households with a population growth rate of 2%. The demographic profile is characterized by a youthful population, with a significant proportion (60.5%) within the working age group.

Efforts are focused on improving education, healthcare, and infrastructure to enhance overall quality of life and economic opportunities.



Access to Basic Services

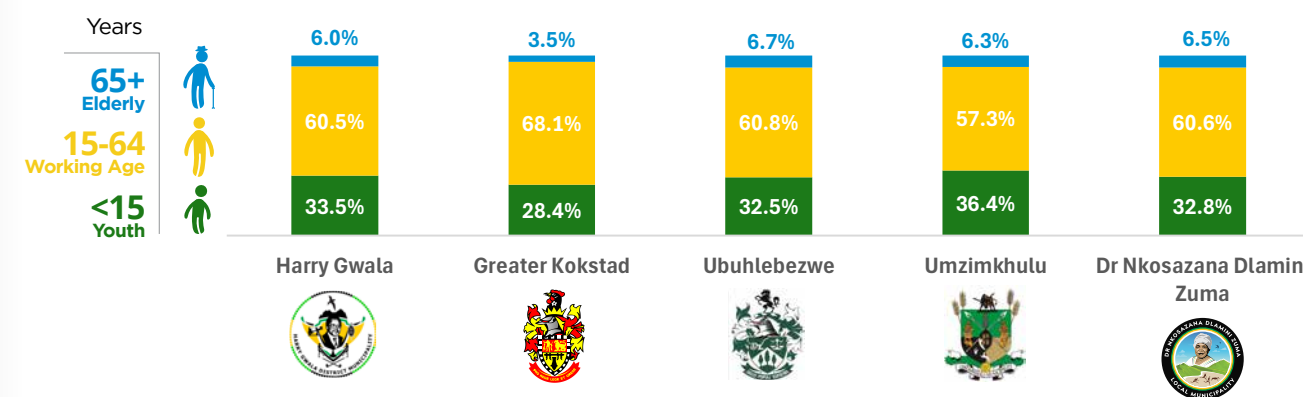
Disparities in access to basic services, such as piped water and sanitation, vary significantly across municipalities, with UMzimkhulu experiencing particularly lower access to sanitation services. The district is actively addressing these challenges through ongoing projects like the New Biggen Dam, raising of the Kempsdale Dam Wall, and implementing water schemes and sewerage systems in various stages of development across the region.



The Labour Force in Harry Gwala

Harry Gwala district has a large pool of people who are available to work as signified by the huge number of the working-age population across all the municipalities in the district (60.5%).

Figure 8
AGE ANALYSIS



Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024

Occupational Profile

Table 1

OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE	Opportunity	Percentage Estimate
Skilled	Legislators; senior officials and managers	5.09%
	Professionals	5.22%
	Technicians and associate professionals	11.02%
Semi-skilled	Clerks	8.19%
	Service workers; shop and market sales workers	17.97%
	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	2.10%
	Craft and related trades workers	9.63%
	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	5.15%
Low Skilled	Elementary occupations	35.02%

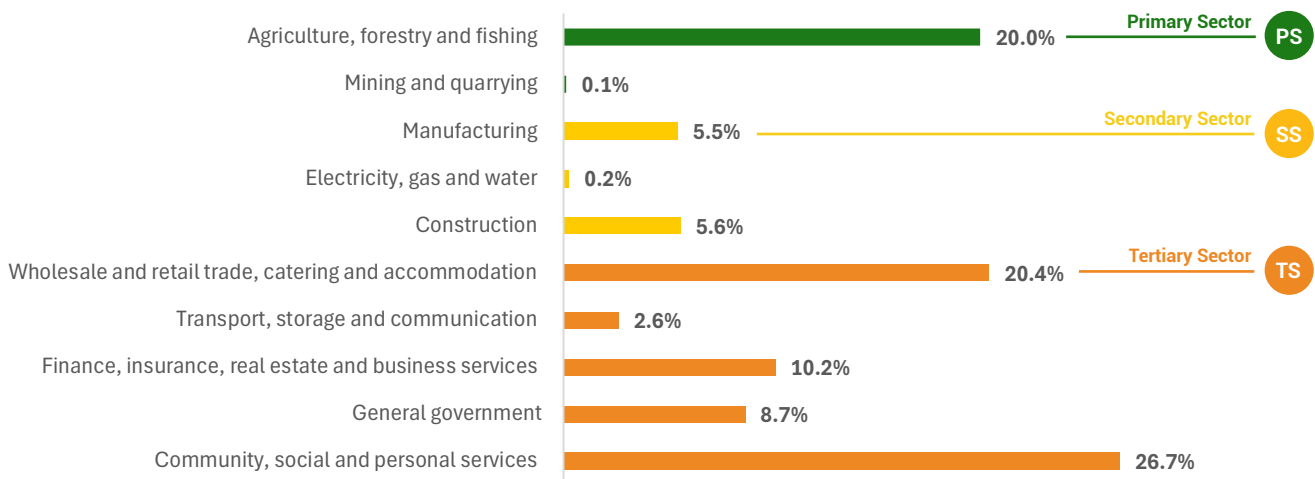
Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024.

Semi-skilled occupations are predominant in the Harry Gwala District, with service workers, shop, and market sales workers making up a significant portion of the workforce. This highlights the crucial role of the service sector in the local economy. The district's employment landscape is primarily composed of low-skilled occupations, with 35.02% in elementary jobs. Skilled occupations represent a smaller share, totaling approximately 21.33%, with technicians and associate professionals being the largest subgroup.



In terms of sectoral employment distribution, community, social, and personal services employ the highest proportion of workers at 26.7%, followed by agriculture at 20%. General government employs about 8.7% of the workforce, while wholesale and retail trade, catering, and accommodation sectors together employ approximately 20%. Finance, insurance, real estate, and business services account for around 10.2% of employment in the district.

Figure 9
EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE IN HGDM 2022

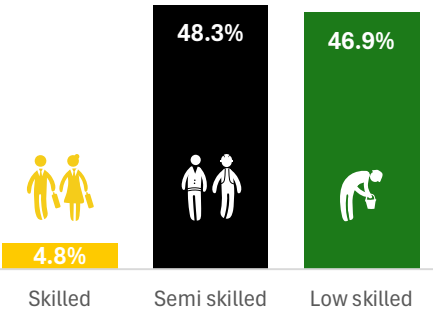


Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024.



Labour Force Skills In Agriculture

Figure 10
LABOUR FORCE SKILLS IN THE AGRICULTURE FORESTRY & FISHING SECTOR

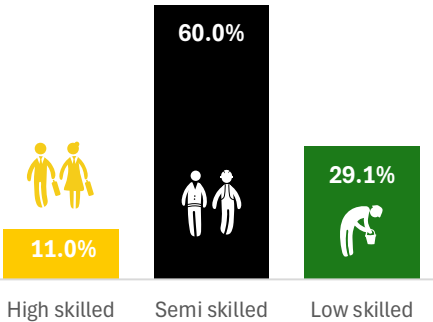


The distribution of labour force skills in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector shows that the majority of workers in this sector are semi-skilled, followed closely by low-skilled workers, with a smaller proportion classified as skilled workers.



Labour Force Skills In Manufacturing

Figure 11
LABOUR FORCE SKILLS IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

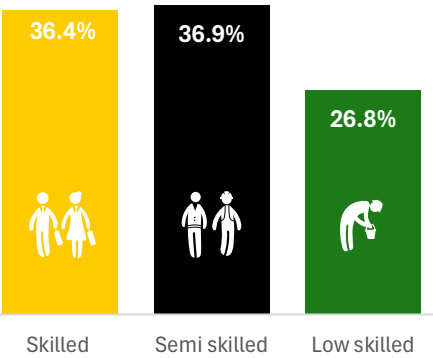


The distribution of labour force skills in the manufacturing sector shows that the majority of workers in this sector are semi-skilled, with low-skilled workers being the next largest group, and skilled workers comprising the smallest portion.



Labour Force Skills In Services

Figure 12
LABOUR FORCE SKILLS IN THE SERVICES SECTOR



The workforce in the services sector is almost evenly split between skilled and semi-skilled workers, with semi-skilled workers being slightly more prevalent, and low-skilled workers forming the smallest group.



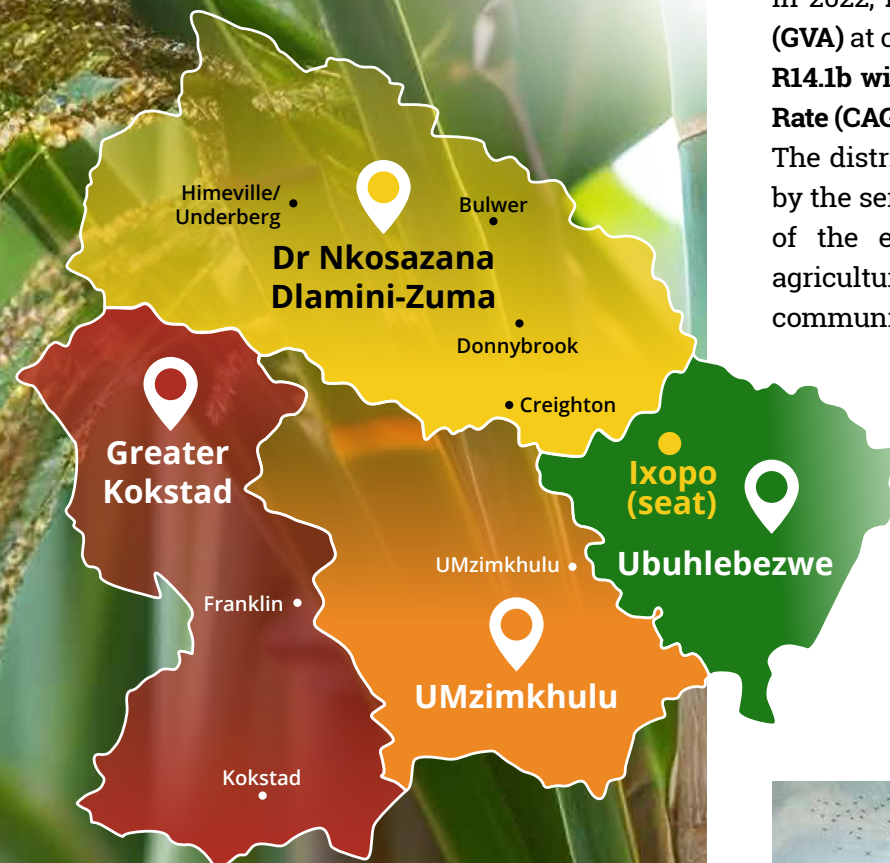
Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024.



Harry Gwala District

4. The Economy

In 2022, Harry Gwala's Gross Value Added (GVA) at constant 2015 prices reached about R14.1b with a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 2% for the period 2011 – 2022. The district economy is mainly dominated by the service sectors and the main drivers of the economy identified in 2022 are agriculture, finance, general government, community, and personal service sectors.



2011 – 2022.



**GROSS VALUE
ADDED (GVA)**

R14.1b

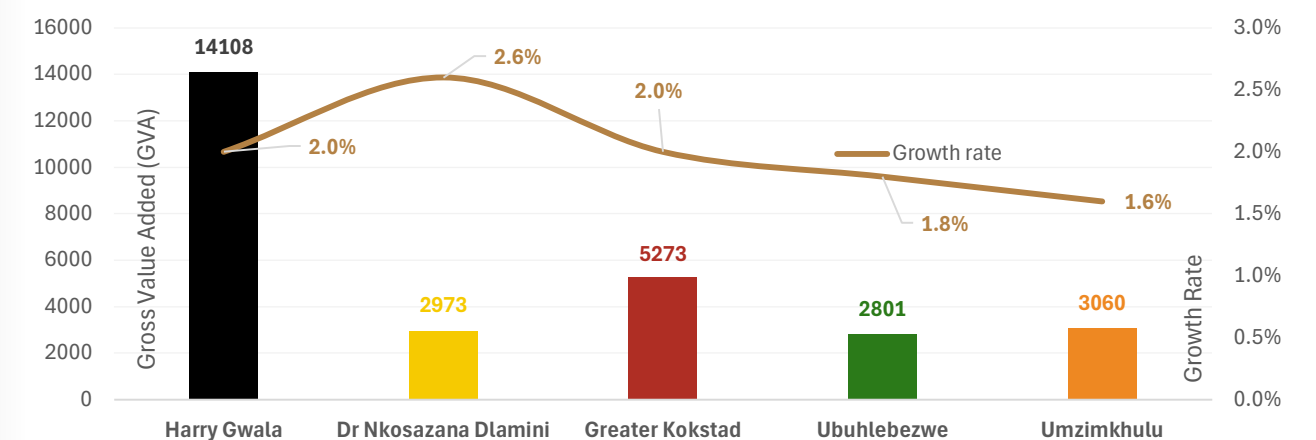
**COMPOUNDED
ANNUAL
GROWTH RATE
(CAGR)**

2%



Figure 13

**ECONOMIC SIZE AND GROWTH OF THE HGDM AND FAMILY OF LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES IN GVA TERMS AT 2015
CONSTANT PRICES, 2022**

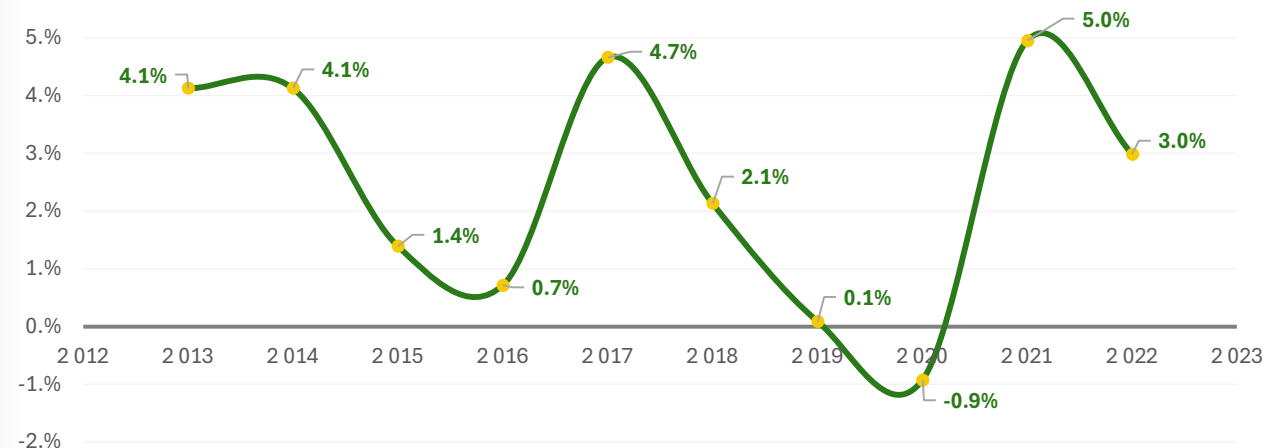


Source: Quantec Standardised Regional Data, 2024

Greater Kokstad leads the district in Gross Value Added (GVA), contributing 37.4%, highlighting its robust economic performance. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma Municipality shows the highest economic growth rate at 2.6%. From 2013 to 2022, the economy of Harry Gwala grew at an average annual rate of 2.1%, driven by a particularly strong period from 2016 to 2018, with growth rates averaging above 3% per year.

Figure 14

HGDM ECONOMY YEAR ON YEAR CHANGE 2013 – 2022

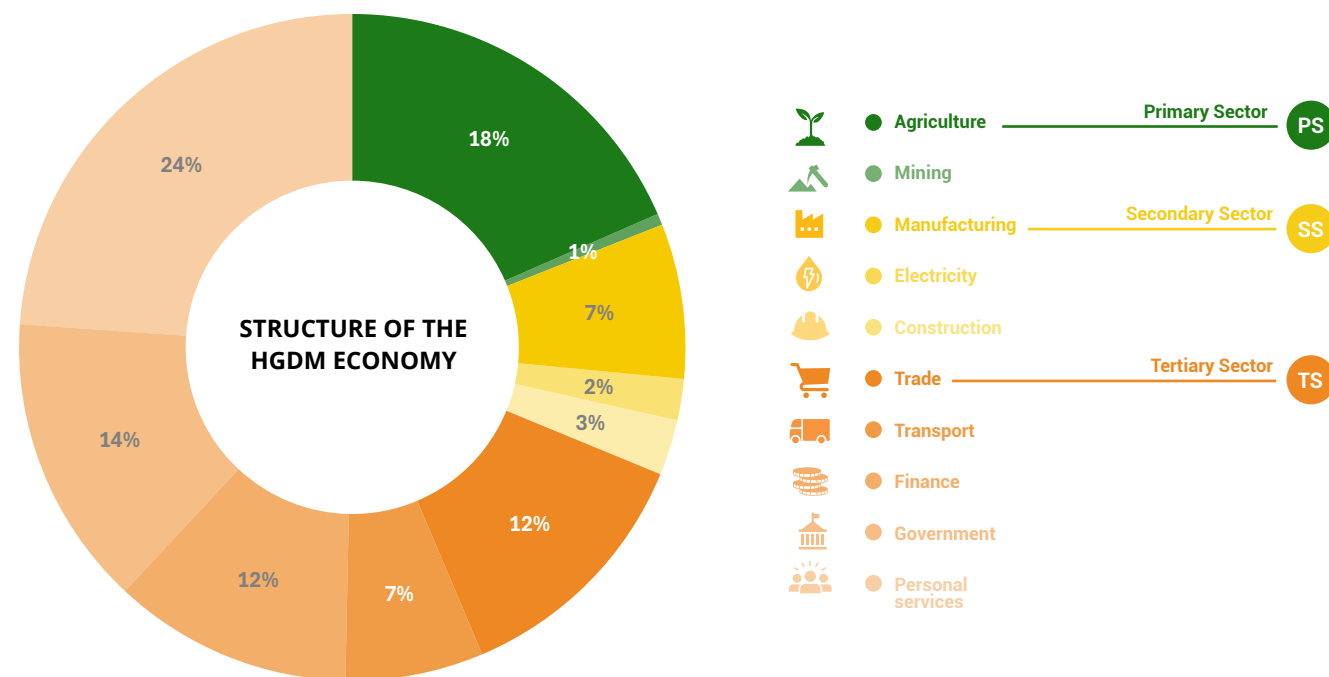


Source: Quantec Regional Data 2024

The Harry Gwala economy experienced a sharp decline during the 2019-2020 period due to the COVID-19 pandemic but rebounded strongly in 2021, led by the services and agriculture sectors.



Figure 15
STRUCTURE OF THE HGDM ECONOMY

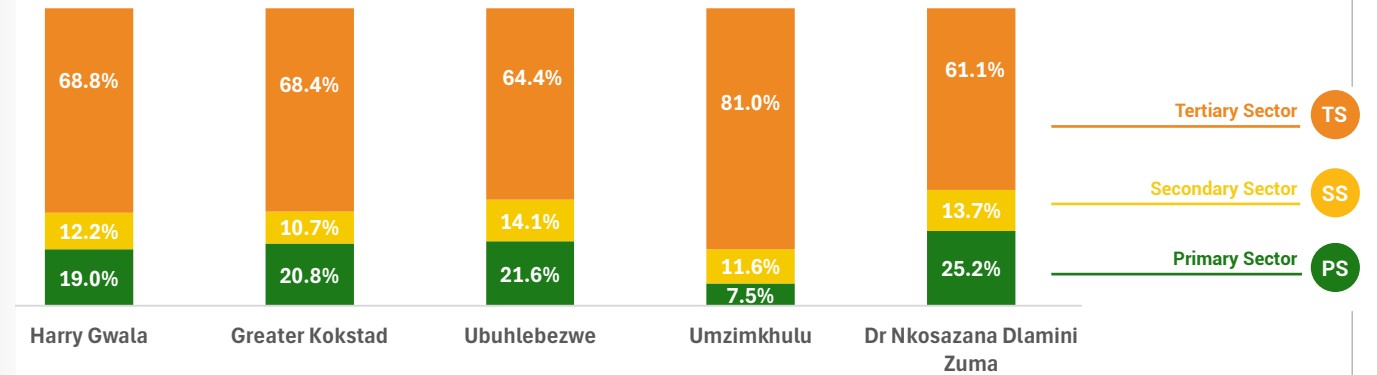


Source: Quantec Regional Data 2024

The services sector holds a dominant position in the Harry Gwala economy, accounting for 68.8% of its total output. This sector includes finance, business services, wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, as well as general government and community, social, and personal services. **Agriculture is another key sector, contributing 18.4% to the district's Gross Value Added (GVA)**, while manufacturing contributes 7.5%. Although electricity and gas currently constitute a smaller share at 2% of the district's economy, substantial investments are underway to develop the green economy, which is anticipated to emerge as a significant industry in the district's pursuit of sustainable development and smart city initiatives.



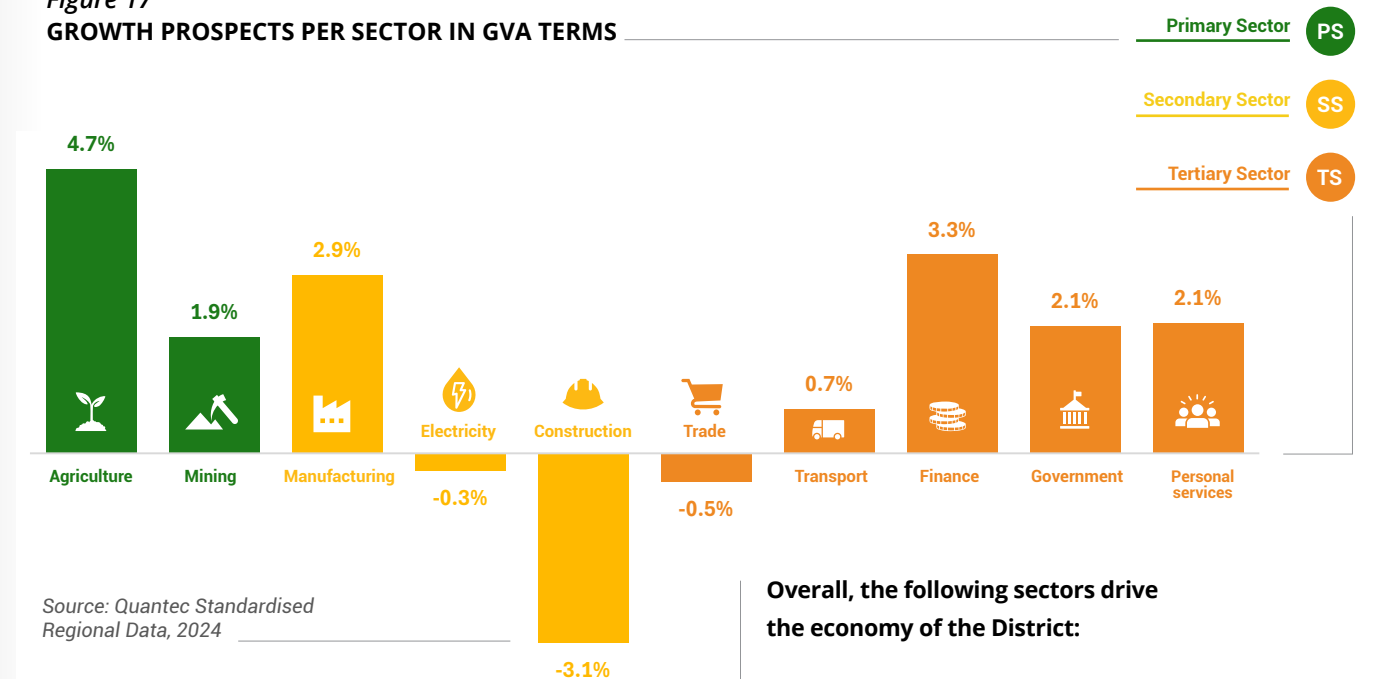
Figure 16
RELATIVE SECTOR SIZE



Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024.

In 2022, agriculture showed the highest GVA growth since 2010, followed by finance, general government, community, and personal services sectors. Conversely, the construction industry experienced the most significant contraction, highlighting its need for substantial investment and support to stabilize.

Figure 17
GROWTH PROSPECTS PER SECTOR IN GVA TERMS



Source: Quantec Standardised Regional Data, 2024

Overall, the following sectors drive the economy of the District:

- Agriculture and agro-industry
- Tourism
- Public Sector
- Strategic Infrastructure Delivery
- Manufacturing
- SMMEs
- Informal economy (hawkers)

Harry Gwala district holds a comparative advantage in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, as well as in community, social, and personal services, and general government at provincial and national levels.



Table 2
HGDM COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES (LOCATION QUOTIENT ANALYSIS AT PROVINCIAL LEVEL)

	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Utilities	Construction	Retail	Transport	Finance	General government	Community services
Greater Kokstad	1.11	0.50	0.98	0.68	0.74	1.27	0.79	1.43	0.95	0.72
Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma	1.35	0.53	1.03	1.25	1.30	1.15	0.80	0.93	0.77	0.91
Ubuhlebezwe	1.15	0.65	1.05	1.58	1.11	0.96	1.20	0.64	0.96	0.98
UMzimkhulu	0.32	2.65	0.95	0.78	1.06	0.77	1.03	0.65	1.34	1.59

Source: Quantec Standardised Regional Data, 2024

The fertile land and farming tradition form a robust foundation for agricultural activities, including crop production (such as cannabis, hemp, maize, potatoes, and fruit), livestock farming, and value-added agribusiness. With supportive district policies and a skilled agricultural workforce, Harry Gwala's strategic location, abundant resources, commitment to sustainability, and community well-being the Harry Gwala District's comparative advantages make it a compelling choice for investment, and business development.



Key Economic Sectors in Harry Gwala.

Agriculture

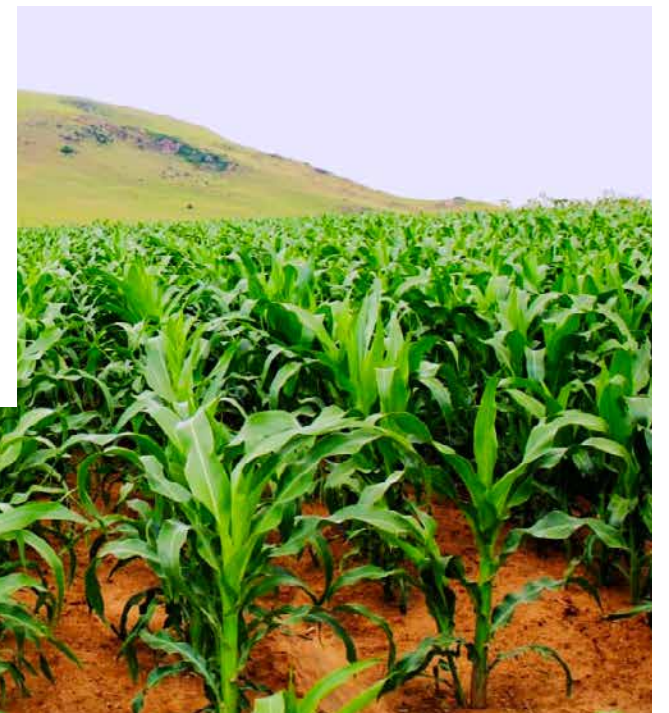
Agriculture has maintained a relative sector share of 18.4% of HGDM's GVA over the past ten years and employs about 20% of the district's workforce. It contributes 6.7% to provincial GVA in agriculture. Furthermore, the sector is an important supporting sector for manufacturing and retail and wholesale trade. Over the decade, the district has seen consistent growth, increasing its influence on GVA and it continues to be a significant employer, with a 4.7% growth in employment in this sector.

Figure 18
PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN HGDM



Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024.

The district features fertile land ideal for cultivating crops, raising livestock, and forestry. Major crops include maize, potatoes, deciduous fruits, and livestock such as dairy cattle. Commercial timber and sugarcane thrive in lower-lying areas. Agriculture in Harry Gwala encompasses both commercial and subsistence farming. Opportunities exist in forestry, sugarcane, dairy farming, and poultry production. Agro-processing initiatives can enhance agricultural products, fostering broader economic impact through supply chain connections.





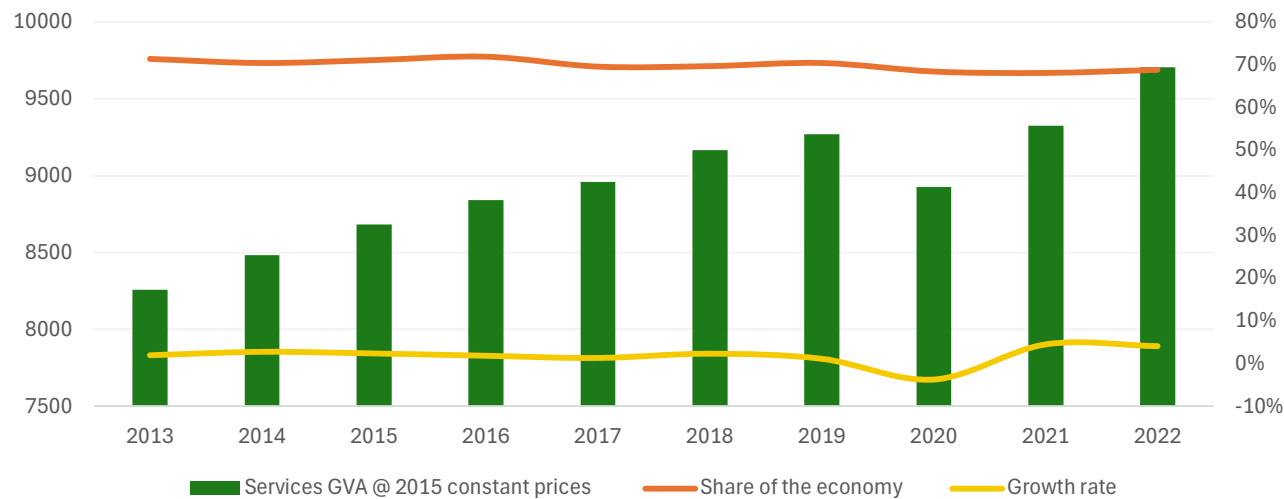
Services

The services sector is prominent in all the urban centres throughout the district, with a high concentration in Greater Kokstad and UMzimkhulu. **The services sector comprises:**

- Wholesale, retail trade
- Transport, storage, and communication,
- Financial, insurance, real estate, business services
- Community, social, and personal services.
- Government services

The services sector dominates Harry Gwala District's GVA, accounting for nearly 70%. Key contributors include community, social, and personal services (23.9%), general government (14.2%), wholesale and retail trade, catering, and accommodation (12.4%), and finance, insurance, real estate, and business services (11.6%).

Figure 19
PERFORMANCE OF THE SERVICES SECTOR IN HGDM



Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024

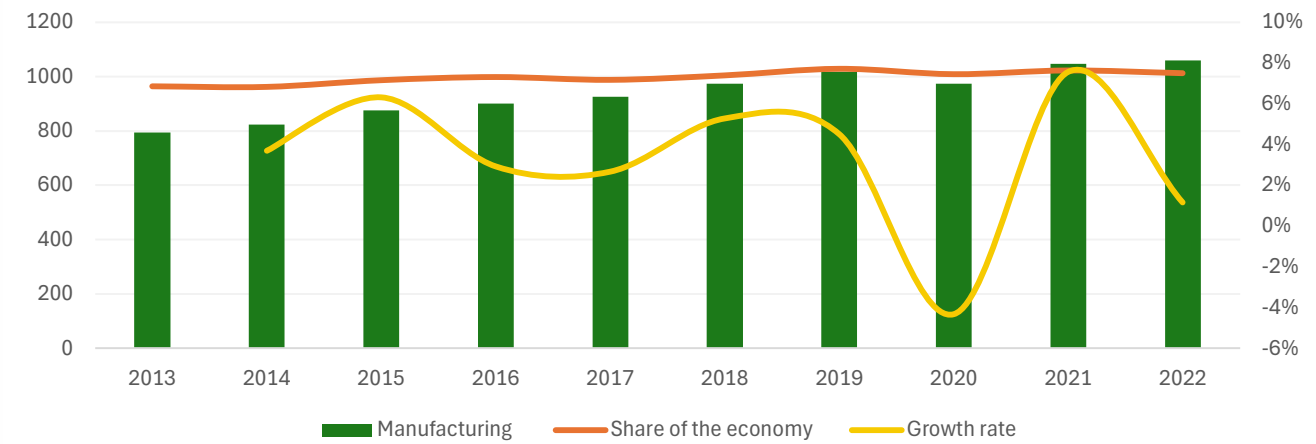
The wholesale and retail, catering, and accommodation services sector thrives on tourism, leveraging the district's stunning rolling mountains and lush vegetation. With ongoing and planned initiatives like the Underberg-Pevensey steam train, provincial tourism routes, and religious tourism routes, the sector's growth prospects are robust. Services such as finance and personal services have stimulated development, particularly in Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality and Greater Kokstad. The district is proactively investing in commercial and service projects like the raising of Kempsdale dam wall and the New Biggen dam to support this developmental momentum.



Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector plays a significant role in HGDM, contributing 7.5% to the district's economy in GVA terms and accounting for 5.5% of total formal employment.

Figure 20
PERFORMANCE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN HGDM

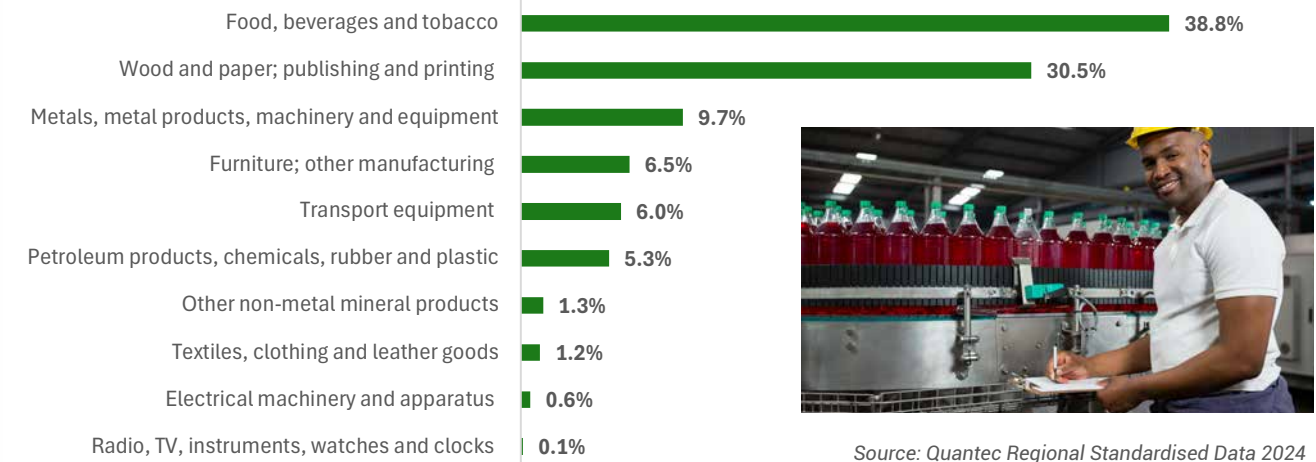


Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024

However, the sector has experienced a decline in growth, largely due to the closure of multiple milling plants in the district. Despite recent setbacks, the Harry Gwala District's strategic location and abundant natural resources present ample opportunities in the manufacturing sector. Positioned as a key driver of economic development, manufacturing in the district is poised for significant expansion, bolstered by supportive policies, a skilled workforce, and strong infrastructure. The district is steadfast in its goal to emerge as a prominent manufacturing hub, providing investors with unique prospects to access emerging markets and cutting-edge manufacturing technologies.

The manufacturing industry in HGDM is predominantly driven by three key sub-sectors, namely food, beverages and tobacco (38.8%), followed by wood and paper; publishing and printing manufacturing which contribute 30.5% to manufacturing GVA in the district.

Figure 21
PERFORMANCE OF MANUFACTURING SUB-INDUSTRIES IN HGDM



Source: Quantec Regional Standardised Data 2024



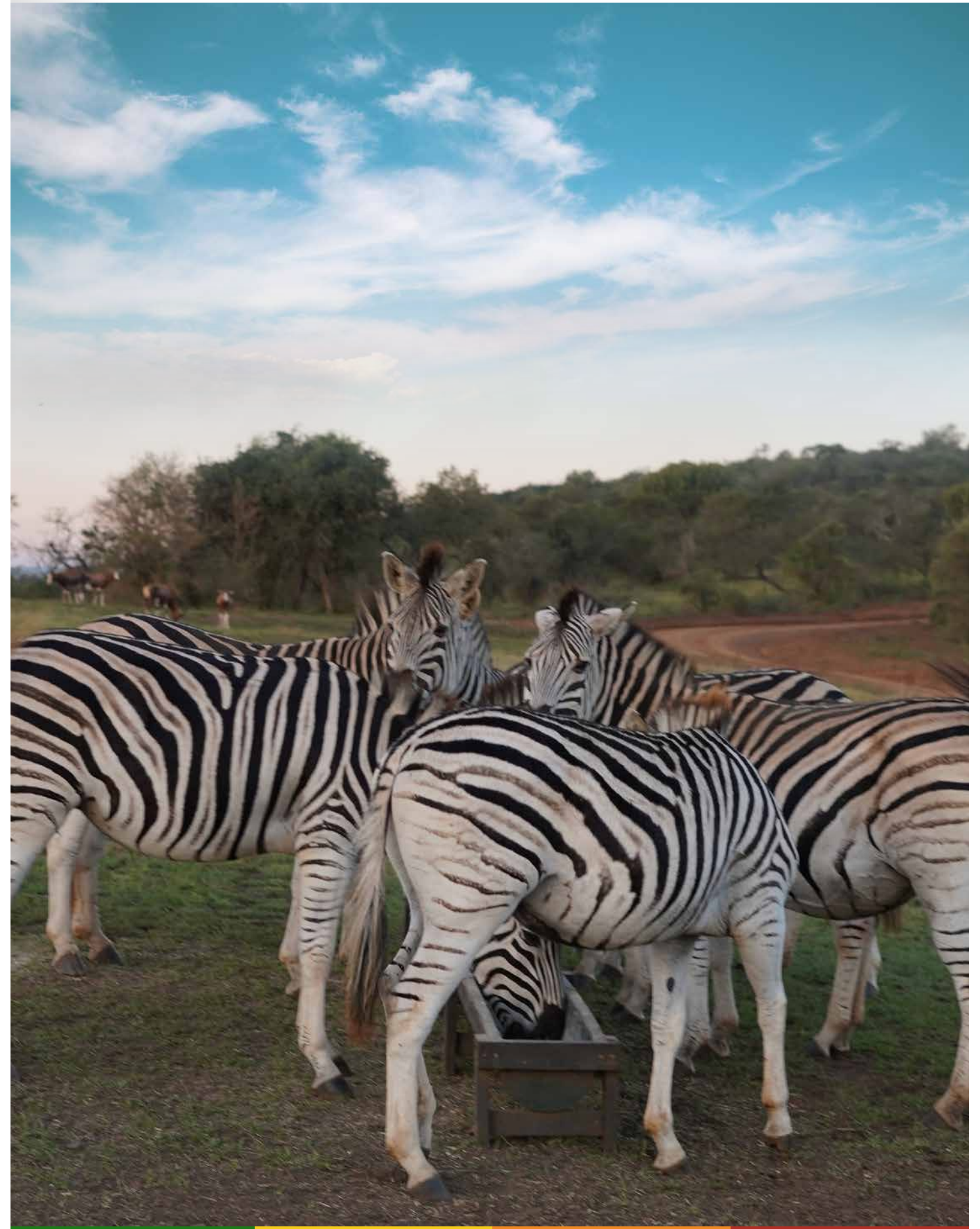
Green Energy: An Emerging Sector in Harry Gwala District

The Harry Gwala District is spearheading a shift towards green energy, positioning itself as a pivotal player in global sustainable development efforts. With rising concerns over climate change and environmental degradation, the district presents lucrative opportunities for investment in renewable energy. It benefits from high solar irradiance, making it ideal for solar power installations, and favourable wind conditions conducive to wind farm development. Abundant agricultural and forestry resources further support biomass energy production.

Key areas of focus include expanding renewable energy infrastructure, enhancing research and innovation, and fostering public-private partnerships to accelerate project deployment.

Committed to leading the green energy revolution, the district offers an attractive environment for investors looking to drive environmental impact alongside economic prosperity. By leveraging natural resources, supportive policies, and technological advancements, stakeholders can contribute to a sustainable future for the region and beyond.

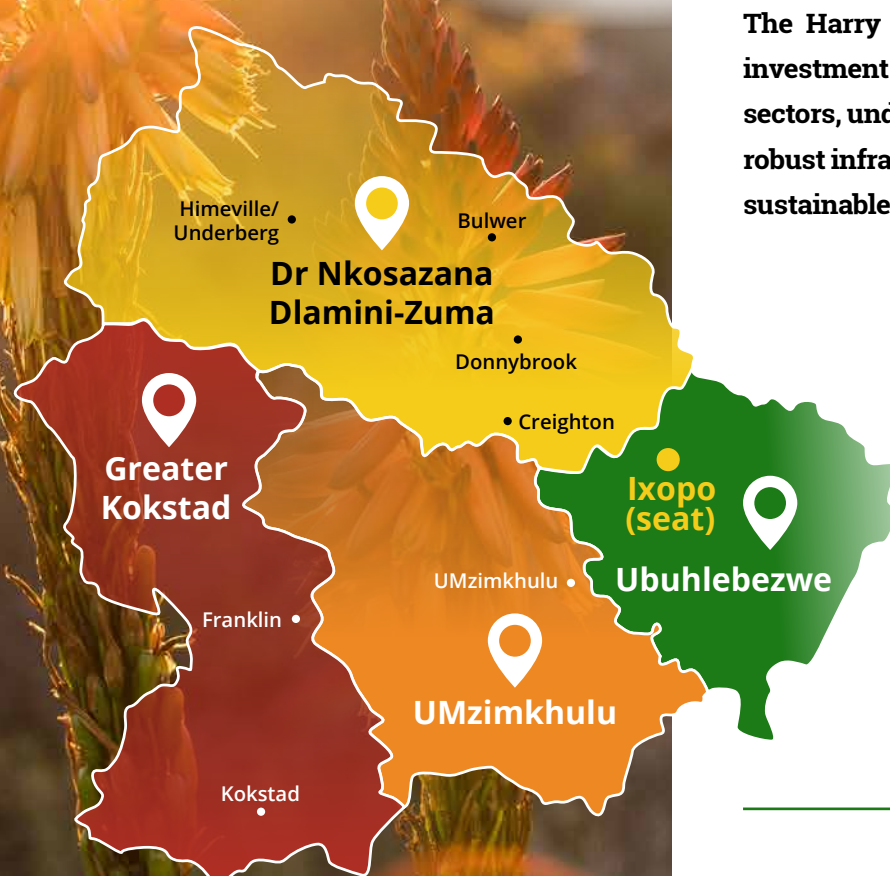
The Harry Gwala District is committed to **leading the way in the green energy revolution, offering a promising landscape for investors seeking to make a positive impact on the environment while achieving substantial economic returns.**





5. Investment Opportunities

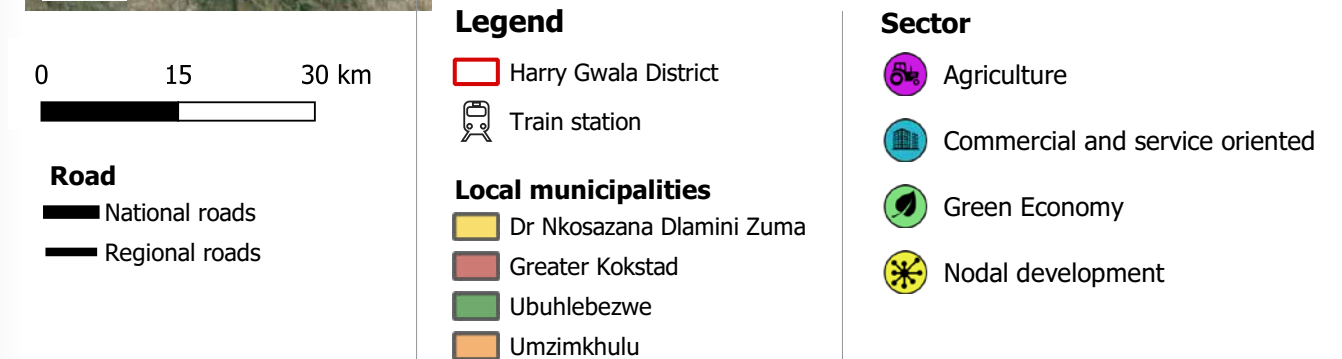
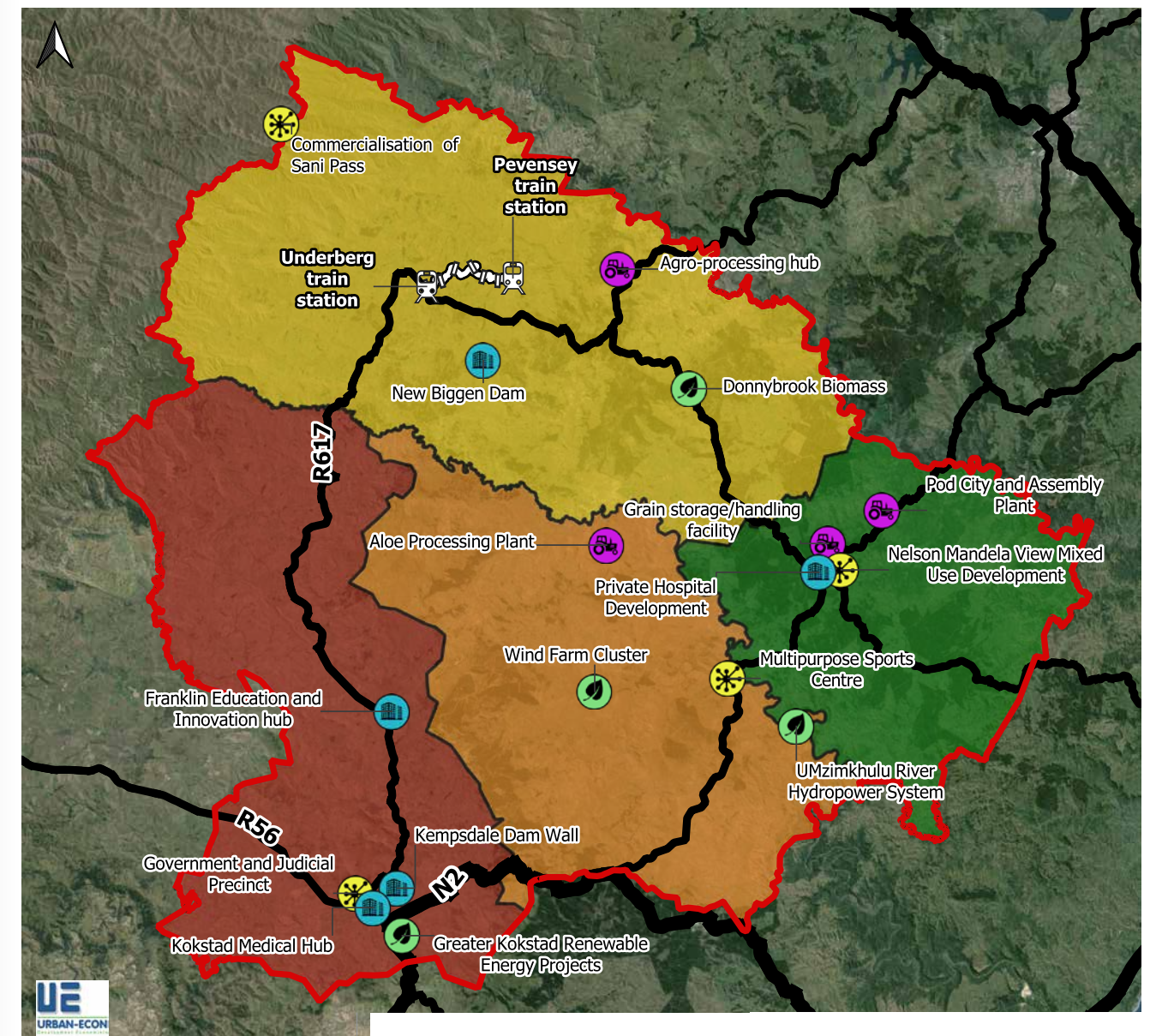
The Harry Gwala District presents many investment opportunities across various sectors, underpinned by strategic planning, robust infrastructure, and a commitment to sustainable development.



Investors are invited to explore these opportunities and participate in the district's growth journey. With strong government support and a conducive business environment, the Harry Gwala District is an ideal destination for forward-looking investments.

This prospectus aims to highlight key investment opportunities across various sectors, including agriculture, tourism and heritage, commercial and service-oriented development, green economy and nodal developments. By investing in these catalytic projects, investors can achieve substantial economic gains and contribute to the district's sustainable development and socio-economic upliftment. The following map showcases a summary of the key investment opportunities and their locations.

Figure 22
INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES





Agriculture Projects

With favourable growing conditions, robust support infrastructure, and a commitment to sustainability, the Harry Gwala District offers attractive opportunities for agricultural investment. Investors will discover a conducive environment primed for profitability and expansion in primary production, value-added processing, and innovative farming practices. The district's strong agricultural heritage and forward-thinking strategies position it as a prime location for agribusiness ventures. There is ample potential for growth in value-added agricultural activities, with increasing demand locally and internationally for processed dairy products, meat, timber, and other agricultural goods.

Agriculture Project 1

Location



Umzimkhulu



Planning Stage

PROJECT NAME		Aloe Processing Plant
Opportunity	This opportunity entails the construction of an aloe processing plant in UMzimkhulu.	
Attractiveness Assessment	South Africa leads Aloe farming in the Southern Hemisphere, contributing over 60% of production, underscoring its pivotal role in the industry. The global market for Aloe products has surged to approximately \$US 13 billion, highlighting robust demand for Aloe-based goods. With increasing global interest in natural and organic products, Aloe Ferox is particularly sought after for its skincare, health, and wellness benefits, positioning it as a valuable commodity with substantial market potential. The region cultivates Aloe ferox, a premium variety of aloe. Aloe ferox can be processed into a range of value-added products including gels, creams, health supplements, and beverages. This diversification can boost profitability and create multiple revenue streams for producers. With its centuries-old use in traditional African medicine, leveraging this cultural heritage can enhance the appeal and authenticity of aloe-derived products. Access to export markets through Durban and Richards Bay ports, alongside the domestic market, ensures promising returns for the aloe processing plant.	
Key Comparative Advantage	The district's natural environment supports the growth of Aloe Ferox, also known as Cape Aloe or Bitter Aloe, distinct from the widely cultivated Aloe Vera. Aloe Ferox thrives wild in UMzimkhulu, without pesticides or artificial fertilizers, and is harvested using traditional methods. It contains nearly double the amino acids compared to Aloe Vera, enhancing its efficacy in deep skin care and promoting healthy skin cell regeneration. Aloe Ferox's bitter sap is rich in Aloin, a potent antioxidant and immune booster, preserved naturally without filtration, retaining all active plant compounds and viscosity. Its juice is denser in solids and richer in iron and calcium compared to Aloe Vera. The district's warm temperatures (12°C - 21°C) and fertile soils provide an ideal environment for Aloe Ferox cultivation and processing, bolstered by a plentiful local labor force.	
Potential Economic Impact	Agro-processing boosts profitability by adding value to raw agricultural products. The Aloe industry has proven beneficial across Africa, creating jobs and fostering rural development. It can stimulate economic growth by boosting trade and investment in the region, potentially enhancing the district's standing as a centre for Aloe products and attracting additional business and tourism opportunities. With global demand for Aloe on the rise, expanding production and value addition present opportunities for further economic growth.	
Investment requirements	Phase 1: R 17 305 393 Phase 2: R 3 313 976	
Location	UMzimkhulu	
Investor Readiness	The project is in the planning stage. A feasibility study and business plan are currently underway.	



Agriculture Project 2

Location



Ubuhlebezwe



Planning Stage

PROJECT NAME		District Wide Grain Storage/Handling Facility
Opportunity	This initiative aims to offer district-wide farmers' storage facilities, alongside essential infrastructure upgrades like widening the R56 and constructing a weighbridge. This project also includes plans for a Petrol Port, housing facilities, and logistics cooperatives, which will enhance farmer activities and stimulate economic growth.	
Attractiveness Assessment	South Africa's grain and cereal industry plays a crucial role in its economy and labour force. As a net exporter of maize, South Africa exported R5.8 billion worth of maize in the third quarter of 2023, marking a 10.6% increase from the previous year. These achievements highlight South Africa's pivotal position in the global grain market and its substantial impact on the agricultural economy. Investing in a grain handling facility in Ubuhlebezwe leverages the region's agricultural potential and market demand. It promises economic benefits through job creation, improved infrastructure, and enhanced food security. With government incentives and strategic planning, this investment can yield significant returns, benefiting both the community and the region.	
Key Comparative Advantage	The district and Ubuhlebezwe in particular are agriculturally focused, with numerous grain-producing farms. Establishing a grain handling site would provide essential infrastructure to support these farmers, offering storage, processing, and distribution facilities aimed at enhancing efficiency and minimizing post-harvest losses. Establishing a grain handling facility in the Harry Gwala district leverages several comparative advantages. Its diverse climate supports both white and yellow maize cultivation, ensuring a reliable grain supply. Abundant water sources and ongoing dam projects enhance agricultural productivity. Experienced local farmers contribute to high-quality grain production. Harry Gwala's strategic location provides access to diverse markets, positioning it as an attractive site for a grain handling facility with ample maize supply, market access, and agricultural expertise.	
Potential Economic Impact	Establishing a grain handling facility in Harry Gwala promises significant benefits. It can spur regional progress and economic growth, tapping into the substantial contribution of the grain industry to South Africa's agriculture. The facility would create jobs, stimulate related industries, and improve market access for local farmers, boosting incomes and economic development. It also encourages agricultural innovation and could increase foreign exchange earnings through expanded processed grain exports. Spinoff benefits could include developing boarding facilities and eateries for haulage drivers and facility workers. Overall, the facility offers diverse advantages, including economic growth, agricultural development, nodal expansion, and broader market opportunities in Harry Gwala.	
Investment requirements	R2 billion	
Location	Ubuhlebezwe	
Investor Readiness	The project is still in the planning stage. A business plan and Aggregation Strategy have been developed and a site is currently being sought potentially at Ellerton Farm, Ixopo. There are discussions with Infrastructure South Africa (ISA) for registration of the Agri-Hub to be recognised as a national catalytic priority infrastructure project.	



Agriculture Project 3

Location



Ubuhebezwe



PROJECT NAME Pod City and Assembly Plant

Opportunity

The project aims to establish a pod city for cultivating hemp and cannabis, targeting both the export market and medicinal purposes. It involves setting up hemp farms and a manufacturing plant for pods. Opportunities include farming hemp and cannabis, manufacturing by-products like eucalyptus oil, and engaging in exports, logistics, and packaging.

Attractiveness Assessment

The global hemp and cannabis market is expanding rapidly due to increasing legalization and acceptance for medical and industrial uses. South Africa's cannabis industry has substantial economic potential, projected to create up to 25,000 jobs and reach a value of approximately R28 billion. This growth is driven by investments in cannabis-related financial commodities, reflecting market trends. These figures highlight the significant economic potential of South Africa's cannabis industry in the coming years. Establishing a processing plant in Harry Gwala can capitalize on this demand, given the district's favourable climate for cannabis cultivation and existing operational farms. Establishing a prominent processing facility in the region early on offers a competitive edge in capturing market share and building brand recognition within the burgeoning hemp and cannabis sectors. With access to international markets, particularly in Europe and North America where demand for these products is robust, the processing plant can seize export opportunities, bolstering foreign exchange earnings for the country.

Key Comparative Advantage

South Africa's progressive legalization of cannabis for medicinal and research purposes has created a supportive regulatory framework. This allows farmers and businesses in Harry Gwala to legally cultivate and process hemp and cannabis, ensuring compliance with national laws. Further the district enjoys favourable climate for cannabis cultivation and already has existing operational farms. Local communities in Harry Gwala increasingly support hemp and cannabis cultivation, recognizing the economic benefits and job opportunities it can bring to the region. These factors collectively create a favourable environment for efficient production and distribution processes, positioning Harry Gwala as a competitive player in the cannabis industry.

Potential Economic Impact

Establishing hemp and cannabis processing facilities in the Harry Gwala District offers substantial economic potential. It will create employment in cultivation, processing, research, and administration, thereby reducing unemployment and improving local livelihoods. Farmers and landowners can diversify income through crop cultivation and sales to processing facilities, enhancing economic stability. Value-added products like CBD oil and textile fibres promise higher profits and stimulate local economic growth. Developing a local supply chain for agricultural inputs and services supports ancillary industries and infrastructure. Exporting high-quality hemp and cannabis products can boost foreign exchange earnings, while research collaborations can drive innovation in cultivation techniques and product development. Overall, this industry's growth has the potential to transform the district's economy by fostering entrepreneurship, improving infrastructure, and boosting regional and international trade.

Investment requirements R150 million

Location Ellerton farm Ixopo

Investor Readiness

The project is in the development stage. HGDA is in discussion with a locally based Medical Cannabis Specialist for the establishment of Pod City at Portion 2 of the Farm Ellerton. HGDA has existing partnerships with international markets through a Joint Venture (JV) Agreement.. Furthermore, a licensing application for cultivation and research of cannabis and hemp production was lodged with the RSA Regulatory Authority.

Agriculture Project 4

Location



Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma



PROJECT NAME Agro-Processing Hub

Opportunity

This project aims to establish an Agro-Processing Hub in Bulwer, focusing on food processing and packaging for fresh produce, poultry, and beef. It aims to unlock agricultural potential, enhance infrastructure, stimulate nodal development, and streamline logistics. Additionally, it will facilitate exports, support research, and drive economic development in the region.

Attractiveness Assessment

Investing in an agro-processing plant in Bulwer offers significant advantages. Bulwer's strategic location amidst fertile agricultural land and favourable climate ensures a steady supply of raw materials, minimizing transportation costs and logistical challenges, thereby enhancing operational efficiency. Moreover, there is a growing global and local demand for processed agricultural products, presenting lucrative market opportunities. In South Africa, the agro-processing sector plays a critical role in promoting food security and contributes substantially to the economy. In 2022, despite a slight growth moderation compared to the previous year, the sector's sales value increased to approximately R956.8 billion. This growth is driven by factors such as the country's expanding population, which necessitates increased food production, and rising incomes contributing to greater demand for processed foods. The proliferation of supermarkets has further stimulated demand and spurred structural transformation within the agri-food industry. Establishing a plant in Bulwer enables meeting these demands and capturing value-added margins by processing crops like fruits, vegetables, and grains into packaged foods, beverages, oils, and other products.

Key Comparative Advantage

The area benefits from a substantial local labor force and direct transport routes, including well-maintained tarred roads, ensuring excellent accessibility. Proximity to major markets in Durban and Pietermaritzburg facilitates efficient distribution. Ongoing infrastructure development further enhances the region's growth potential. Additionally, ample water supply from rivers and dams supports local agriculture, reinforcing the area's suitability for agro-processing development.

Potential Economic Impact

Establishing agro-processing facilities boosts demand for agricultural raw materials, opening new markets and increasing income for farmers. This income growth supports investments in capital equipment, improving sector-wide productivity. Additionally, agro-processing creates jobs, stimulates exports, and generates income in logistics. It fosters rural development by supporting local economies and diversifying markets for stability. Moreover, agro-processing drives innovation and technology transfer, advancing agricultural practices and processing methods. Overall, agro-processing is vital for economic growth, employment, innovation, and sustainability in rural communities.

Investment requirements R40 million

Location Bulwer

Investor Readiness The project is in the conceptualisation phase.



Commercial and Service-Orientated Projects

Commercial and service-oriented development in the Harry Gwala District plays a crucial role in fostering economic growth, enhancing the quality of life, and creating vibrant, inclusive communities. By strategically planning and investing in commercial hubs, diverse retail and entertainment options, service-oriented facilities, innovation hubs, and sustainable development practices, the district offers amazing investment opportunities.

Commercial and Service-Orientated Project 1

Location



Dr Nkosazana
Dlamini-Zuma



PROJECT NAME **New Biggen Dam**

Opportunity	This project involves constructing an earth dam to supply water to Harry Gwala and neighbouring districts. The dam will have a capacity of 77 million cubic meters and yield 348 megaliters per day.
Attractiveness Assessment	The New Biggen Dam will significantly enhance the district's water resources by managing high rainfall effectively. It will support irrigation for farmers and provide essential flood control measures, thereby boosting agricultural productivity and promoting environmental sustainability.
Key Comparative Advantage	The clay-rich soils around the UMzimkhulu River basin dictated the choice of an earth fill dam wall type at the selected site. The high mountain catchment area will ensure sufficient water supply for the dam. Abundant vacant lands further facilitate project development. Moreover, the dam's construction is anticipated to generate additional benefits for other regional projects.
Potential Economic Impact	The dam construction in Harry Gwala promises extensive benefits, securing water supply for the district and neighbouring areas while enhancing long-term water security. It aids in flood prevention, boosting safety and minimizing potential damage. Additionally, recreational opportunities around the reservoir could bolster tourism. Improved water access and flood control measures enhance residents' quality of life. Furthermore, the project may stimulate infrastructure development, fostering economic and social growth. Potential spin-off projects include recreational fishing, canoeing, water sports, sightseeing, and irrigation farming.
Investment requirements	R200 million
Location	Underberg
Investor Readiness	The project is in the planning stage. The project's detailed feasibility study has been completed in October 2023. The project has an anticipated implementation period of 3 years from final approval.

Commercial and Service-Orientated Project 2



Location



Greater
Kokstad



PROJECT NAME **Raising of the Kempisdale Dam Wall**

Opportunity	This project involves upgrading the Kempisdale Dam wall to increase its capacity from 215,055 m³ to 2,140,000 m³, ensuring adequate water supply for Greater Kokstad LM-sub-region until 2040. It also provides potential for hydroelectricity generation and tourism activities like canoeing, fishing, and boat cruising.
Attractiveness Assessment	With all approvals secured and the extension underway, the dam expansion project shows promising potential, especially for hydropower generation—a sustainable energy option with lower operational costs than fossil fuel plants. Additionally, the dam fulfils multiple roles beyond energy, serving water supply, flood control, and recreational purposes, offering a comprehensive solution to regional needs.
Key Comparative Advantage	The three-year project aims to increase the dam's raw water capacity to meet anticipated demands until 2040. It will ensure a safe, reliable, and sustainable drinking water supply to Kokstad town, Kokstad C-Max prison, Shayamoya, and Bhongweni regions. Additionally, surplus electricity could be exported, potentially turning the dam into a regional energy hub, and fostering economic growth.
Potential Economic Impact	The dam extension project offers multiple regional benefits. It will boost agricultural productivity by ensuring a reliable water supply and fostering agro-processing development. Additionally, the dam's presence can attract investments in agriculture and agro-processing sectors, bolstering local businesses and economic growth. Moreover, the project includes a hydropower development, providing sustainable energy to further enhance regional development and prosperity.
Investment requirements	R192 million
Location	Kokstad
Investor Readiness	This project is shovel-ready. The Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) has approved the project packaging of the raising of the Kempisdale Dam Wall.



Commercial and Service-Orientated Project 3



Location



Greater
Kokstad



PROJECT NAME

Kokstad Medical Hub including Private Hospital, Retirement Village and Pan Health facilities

Opportunity

The Kokstad Medical Hub project includes a private hospital, accommodations for medical staff, a retirement village, and promotes Pan Health. It aims to boost private sector investment, health tourism, and urban renewal, featuring an old age home. Facilities will include 10 ICU beds, 4 neonatal beds, 2 theatres (including one for laminar flow surgeries like joint replacements and cardiac procedures), radiology, CT and MRI services, and a pharmacy. Plans also incorporate a ground-floor retail facility and specialized recovery wards on upper levels for medical and cosmetic recovery (pan-health tourism).

Attractiveness Assessment

The project offers comprehensive healthcare services for the community. This integrated approach supports overall health and well-being, particularly for seniors, with onsite medical care and comfortable living arrangements. The hub is expected to drive economic growth by attracting investment, creating jobs, and supporting local businesses. As a regional healthcare destination, it can draw patients from nearby areas, benefiting the local healthcare sector and ancillary services such as hospitality and retail. Overall, the Kokstad Medical Hub represents a significant investment in healthcare infrastructure, promising improved health outcomes and socio-economic development for Kokstad and its surroundings.

Key Comparative Advantage

The Kokstad Medical Hub addresses a critical healthcare gap. With a shortage of retirement centres in the district, the medical hub meets the high demand for such facilities. The district is inhabited by 39,5% of children and the elderly who tend to require more healthcare attention. Moreover, the well-known scenic views of the district and cleanliness of the air in the district, the clean, spacious surroundings and access to land and water enhance its appeal for healthcare and retirement needs. The medical hub is also strategically located close to the N2 and have easy access to the Eastern Cape thereby increasing its market catchment area. Furthermore, because the hospital is located along the religious route patients benefit from a unique healing environment that combines medical excellence with spiritual enrichment.

Potential Economic Impact

The medical hub will have a substantial economic impact, generating jobs in healthcare, tourism, hospitality, construction, and administration. It will spur opportunities for local businesses, drive real estate development, and draw patients from nearby areas, boosting revenue for medical facilities and local enterprises. The hub's establishment will also increase demand for ancillary services like transportation, bolstering local businesses and fostering regional growth and prosperity.

Investment requirements

To be determined

Location

Kokstad

Investor Readiness

This project is shovel-ready. Vacant land for development has been identified in Groom Street Kokstad.

Commercial and Service-Orientated Project 4



Location



Greater
Kokstad



PROJECT NAME

Franklin Education and Innovation Hub

Opportunity

This project entails the construction of a University in Franklin around which an education and innovation hub will be developed.

Attractiveness Assessment

The Potchefstroom campus of NWU has shown significant purchasing power, with expenditures increasing from R659 million in 2006 to R1.75 billion in 2015. This growth coincided with a rise in student enrolment from 16 079 to 21 320 during the same period, highlighting the substantial impact of university developments on districts like Harry Gwala. This economic influence can catalyse local business growth, driven by heightened demand for goods and services from the growing student population and the university.

Key Comparative Advantage

The district lacks a university. One of the earmarked and highly prioritised policies in the district is skills development. The district has a young population which will feed into the university and can even draw students from nearby province of the Eastern Cape and Lesotho.

Potential Economic Impact

Establishing a university in the district promises several benefits including stimulating real estate development and attracting construction firms and developers due to increased demand for housing and commercial spaces. The university's presence would also boost economic activity across sectors like accommodation, food, transportation, and entertainment. Additionally, it would help in talent retention and attraction by drawing skilled professionals and academics to the area, thereby reducing brain drain and strengthening the local workforce.

Investment requirements

To be determined

Location

Franklin, Greater Kokstad however potential to be developed in the Eastern Cape

Investor Readiness

The project is in the planning stage. An application has been made to the Department of Higher Education and Technology Ministry for Prioritization. Land for the development of the project is available to be donated by the municipality.



Commercial and Service-Orientated Project 5

Location



Ubuhlebezwe



PROJECT NAME

Private Hospital Development

Opportunity

This development entails the construction of a 120-bed private hospital in Ubuhlebezwe.

Attractiveness Assessment

Establishing a well-equipped private hospital in Ubuhlebezwe could catalyse health tourism by attracting patients locally and internationally. This influx could significantly increase hospital revenue and stimulate related industries like hospitality, transportation, and tourism. The healthcare market is projected to grow robustly, with anticipated revenue reaching ZAR 9.04 billion by 2029, driven by a 2.42% annual growth rate. South Africa's healthcare sector is evolving to integrate traditional healing practices with modern medicine, supported by increasing healthcare spending, which reached ZAR 392.0 billion (USD 29.5 billion) in 2018. This investment constitutes 8.4% of GDP and USD 519 per capita, highlighting the sector's importance in the national economy.

Key Comparative Advantage

Ubuhlebezwe's tranquil environment and clean air create an ideal setting for patient recovery, enhancing the hospital's appeal and effectiveness in delivering quality care. Located at the juncture of the R612 and R56 and the admin centre of the district the hospital is easily accessible and has the potential to draw patients from other districts.

Potential Economic Impact

Introducing a private hospital in Ubuhlebezwe offers diverse benefits for the local community and economy. It generates income through job creation and business opportunities, stimulating economic growth. The hospital attracts healthcare professionals, enriching the local workforce and contributing to economic vitality. Additionally, it catalyzes real estate development, prompting the construction of homes and businesses to accommodate hospital staff, patients, and visitors, thereby enhancing district infrastructure and economic resilience.

Investment requirements

R330 million

Location

Ubuhlebezwe

Investor Readiness

The development is progressing towards funding approval from DBSA for the R330 million capital requirement. The business plan has been reviewed, and discussions with the Department of Transport are ongoing. HGDM has confirmed a Water Supply License for the project, and the hospital is licensed for 120 beds.

Green Economy Projects

The Harry Gwala District aims to exemplify environmental stewardship, innovation, and prosperity for generations to come. It boasts abundant green resources such as wind corridors, solar energy potential, and rivers, offering lucrative opportunities for sustainable development.

Green Economy Project 1

Location



UMzimkhulu



PROJECT NAME

UMzimkhulu River Hydropower System

Opportunity

The project involves developing a hydropower system on the UMzimkhulu River to harness renewable energy sources. Furthermore, the river's attributes offer a competitive edge for the district, presenting opportunities for water sports such as fishing, white water rafting, and parasailing, which could enhance tourism.

Attractiveness Assessment

Hydropower plays a vital role in South Africa's energy strategy, offering numerous benefits. It reduces reliance on imported energy, thereby enhancing energy security and sovereignty. Additionally, hydropower generates lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to fossil fuels, making a significant contribution to climate change mitigation efforts.

Key Comparative Advantage

The uMzimkhulu River Hydropower System project offers several advantages for the energy sector. These systems are designed with long-term sustainability in mind, featuring a lengthy operational lifespan and low operating costs, ensuring stable and sustainable energy generation over many years. The uMzimkhulu River's consistent flow throughout the year provides a reliable source of water, which is essential for hydropower generation. Unlike solar or wind power, which can be intermittent, hydropower provides a dependable and consistent energy source. Its flow can be controlled to meet demand, making it flexible and capable of swiftly adjusting to changes in electricity demand. This flexibility makes hydropower crucial for grid balancing and integrating other renewable energy sources.

Potential Economic Impact

Hydropower systems in South Africa provide diverse benefits across agriculture, energy, tourism, flood control, and economic development. They support agricultural productivity by irrigating up to 40% of farmlands. As a key component of the energy mix, hydropower currently supplies 5% of electricity and is poised to increase with renewable energy initiatives. These systems attract tourists, boosting local economies through recreational activities. They also help mitigate downstream flood risks during heavy rainfall and create jobs in construction, operation, and maintenance, enhancing local economic growth and livelihoods.

Investment requirements

R 400 million

Location

Krom Hoek

Investor Readiness

This project is currently in the pre-construction phase and progressing towards implementation.



Green Economy Project 2

Location



Greater
Kokstad



PROJECT NAME **Greater Kokstad Renewable Energy Projects including biomass/digesters, solar street lighting and water geysers**

Opportunity

This project aims to implement Green Economy methodologies in the Greater Kokstad LM, including biomass digesters, solar street lighting, and solar water geysers. Additionally, it involves developing an energy-generating plant at the Kraaifontein Landfill Site, utilizing garden waste for energy production. In partnership with UKZN, the Greater Kokstad municipality is conducting feasibility studies for the conversion of waste matter into energy.

Attractiveness Assessment

There is already a well-established and expanding energy market. This initiative aligns seamlessly with the Eastern Seaboard's Smart City development ambitions. Alternative energy sources help lower carbon emissions, in line with the objectives of the Presidential Climate Commission. Renewable energy projects, such as biomass, solar, and geothermal, are pivotal for environmental conservation. These renewable energy sources advocate for a cleaner, more environmentally friendly future while mitigating climate change effects and promoting environmental stewardship.

Key Comparative Advantage

The district boasts abundant land and vegetation, offering prime opportunities for diverse renewable energy projects. With plentiful water sources like the UMzimkhulu River, it has a reliable base for hydroelectric and other water-based energy ventures. Its elevated terrain ensures optimal sunlight exposure, making it ideal for solar energy installations. Moreover, the district benefits from a large labour pool capable of supporting the construction, operation, and maintenance of renewable energy facilities. Its diverse climate further supports a range of renewable energy technologies. These natural advantages position the district as a leading candidate for developing and implementing various renewable energy sources.

Potential Economic Impact

Renewable energy projects offer substantial benefits: they create jobs across sectors, achieve significant cost savings, improve public health by reducing pollution, drive technological innovation, and position nations as global leaders in sustainability and climate action. These initiatives stabilize employment, boost local economies, enhance public safety, and demonstrate a commitment to a sustainable and resilient energy future.

Investment requirements

R10 million

Location

Greater Kokstad

Investor readiness

The municipality has purchased a farm with a plan to develop a Solar Generation Farm for producing electricity for streetlighting and supplementary distribution of electricity to households.

Green Economy Project 3

Location



UMzimkhulu



PROJECT NAME **UMzimkhulu Wind Farm Cluster Development**

Opportunity

This project entails the establishment of a wind farm in UMzimkhulu thereby enhancing green energy production.

Attractiveness Assessment

Wind farms align perfectly with the Presidential Climate Commission's goals to reduce carbon emissions. The increasing demand for renewable energy ensures a stable market. Globally, wind energy has quadrupled its capacity over the past decade, as reported by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), significantly reducing carbon emissions. In 2020 alone, wind power prevented over 1.1 billion metric tons of CO2 emissions, illustrating its crucial role in combating climate change. This initiative also addresses electricity shortages, leveraging an already mature and expanding energy market.

Key Comparative Advantage

The Harry Gwala District is identified as a wind corridor by the Eastern Seaboard and thus holds significant potential for wind energy development. UMzimkhulu particularly benefits from abundant and consistent wind resources, making it ideal for wind farm projects. The region offers economic advantages with lower land costs compared to other areas. Existing or planned grid infrastructure nearby facilitates efficient connection to the electricity grid, potentially minimizing transmission losses. Furthermore, wind energy production in UMzimkhulu promotes water conservation as it does not require water for cooling, unlike traditional thermal power plants. The availability of suitable land for wind turbines ensures minimal environmental disruption, emphasizing sustainability.

Potential Economic Impact

Local employment opportunities arise during and after construction. Developers can achieve economies of scale by building multiple wind farms nearby, lowering costs per unit of energy produced. This consolidation optimizes land use, reduces conflicts, and minimizes environmental impacts, preserving space for alternative uses such as agriculture. Concentrated development also drives technological innovation, facilitating research into improving turbine efficiency, energy storage, and grid integration.

Investment requirements

To be determined

Location

UMzimkhulu

Investor Readiness

The project is currently in the conceptualisation phase.



Green Economy Project 4

Location



Dr Nkosazana
Dlamini-Zuma



PROJECT NAME

Donnybrook Biomass Project

Opportunity

This project is the construction of a biomass factory in Donnybrook

Attractiveness
Assessment

Biomass is a carbon-neutral energy solution, as the CO2 emitted during combustion is balanced by the CO2 absorbed during growth, aiding in combating global warming. Biomass District Heating (BDH) systems improve urban environments by eliminating CO2 emissions compared to fossil fuels and enhancing energy efficiency with lower biofuel costs. Its widespread availability from various industrial and agricultural processes makes biomass a promising renewable energy source with substantial growth potential. Projects like the Donnybrook Biomass initiative promote energy independence by using local biomass resources, reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels. When managed sustainably, biomass energy maintains carbon neutrality, as CO2 emissions from combustion are offset by plant absorption during photosynthesis, ensuring no net increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide level.

Key
Comparative
Advantage

Harry Gwala and Donnybrook in particular benefits from abundant biomass resources, including agricultural and forestry residues, and organic municipal waste, ensuring a sustainable feedstock for biomass energy generation. The project's completion, alongside easy transport access and a sizable local labour force, streamlines operations. Moreover, the area's focus on timber farming further promotes carbon neutrality, enhancing environmental sustainability.

Potential
Economic
Impact

The Donnybrook Biomass project provides numerous benefits to the local economy and environment. It creates jobs across biomass production, harvesting, transportation, and plant operation, fostering economic growth and community support. Additionally, the project serves as a waste management solution by utilizing organic materials, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and environmental pollution. Moreover, it generates supplementary income for local farmers, foresters, and landowners through biomass feedstock purchases, thereby bolstering the agricultural and forestry sectors in the region.

Investment
requirements

R40 million

Location

Donnybrook

Investor
readiness

The construction of the biomass plant is completed, however, there is a need for partners to partner with the district to establish auxiliary businesses such as waste collection and management which feed into the biomass.

Nodal Development Projects

The Harry Gwala District is at the forefront of strategic urban and rural development through its focused nodal development initiatives. Nodal development involves the targeted growth of specific areas or 'nodes' within the district to create hubs of economic activity, enhance infrastructure, and improve service delivery. These initiatives are designed to stimulate balanced regional development, promote investment, and improve the quality of life for residents. By concentrating resources and planning efforts on key nodes, the district has created many lucrative opportunities for investors.

Nelson Mandela View Mixed-Use Development

Figure 23
NELSON MANDELA VIEW



Figure 24
NELSON MANDELA VIEW (1)





Nodal Development Project 1



Location



Ubuhlebezwe



PROJECT NAME Nelson Mandela View Mixed-Use Development

Opportunity	This project is a mixed-use development that consists of residential, commercial light industrial, and private hospital sited in Ixopo at the R612 crossroad to Pietermaritzburg.
Attractiveness Assessment	Mixed-use developments located in the primary development node of the district combine residential, commercial, and sometimes industrial spaces, creating multiple revenue streams. This diversity can provide a stable income flow and reduce the risk associated with reliance on a single type of tenant. As urbanization continues, there is a growing demand for developments that offer a blend of living, working, and recreational spaces. Mixed-use developments meet this demand by providing convenience and enhancing the quality of life for residents and businesses. The Nelson Mandela view project resonates well with the goal of the district to establish a smart city.
Key Comparative Advantage	The Nelson Mandela View Mixed-Use Development, location is highly accessible. It is located around vacant land making future expansion and development easy. The project fills the gap of shortage of upmarket residential housing. With the growth in the urbanisation of spaces, the project has the potential to improve infrastructure, stimulate real estate development, and attract construction firms and developers due to increased demand for housing and commercial spaces.
Potential Economic Impact	The Nelson Mandela View Mixed-Use Development spurs economic growth in Ixopo by attracting investment, creating jobs, and supporting local businesses. It could also prompt infrastructure improvements such as roads and utilities, enhancing the area's overall livability. The development promotes social integration and inclusivity with a diverse range of housing, retail, and recreational amenities, fostering a cohesive community environment.
Investment requirements	R2 056 650.76
Location	The application sites are located approximately 2.3km northeast of Ixopo on the R56 to Pietermaritzburg and are within Wards 2 and 4 in terms of the Ubuhlebezwe municipal wards. Consists of 3 farms Portion 4 of the Farm Court Hill 5126, Portion 1 of the Farm Ogle 3138, and Portion 31 of the Farm Ixopo 3840.
Investor Readiness	The project is shovel-ready. The project was approved, and conveyancing was done Land availability has been confirmed and a service provider was appointed.

Nodal Development Project 2



Location



UMzimkhulu



PROJECT NAME Multipurpose Sports Centre

Opportunity	This project aims to establish a state-of-the-art multipurpose sports center with world-class sporting amenities in UMzimkhulu, intended to introduce professional sports codes to the area and stimulate local economic growth.
Attractiveness Assessment	A Multipurpose Sports Centre provides numerous benefits, including promoting physical activity and healthier lifestyles, thereby potentially reducing healthcare costs. It features indoor facilities for year-round sports activities and outdoor spaces for recreation. Moreover, the centre doubles as a venue for local and international sports competitions, attracting athletes, spectators, and visitors globally.
Key Comparative Advantage	Situated in UMzimkhulu, the Multipurpose Sports Centre holds unique advantages as the area's sole facility of its kind. Its location ensures minimal air pollution, creating ideal training conditions. The region's diverse climate supports training in various weather conditions, enhancing athletes' versatility. Access to the UMzimkhulu River facilitates canoeing training, while nearby mountains offer opportunities for hiking, enriching the centre's offerings and promoting a comprehensive training experience.
Potential Economic Impact	The Multipurpose Sports Centre in UMzimkhulu boosts tourism and economic growth by drawing visitors, participants, and spectators, thereby stimulating local businesses and bolstering the economy. It supports educational programs like coaching clinics and sports camps, fostering skill development and personal growth across all age groups. The centre emphasizes inclusivity and accessibility by providing facilities and programs tailored to individuals with disabilities and marginalized groups, promoting diversity and equal opportunities. Furthermore, it integrates advanced technologies such as digital displays and online booking systems to improve user experience and streamline facility management, ensuring efficient and modern operations.
Investment requirements	R280 million
Location	UMzimkhulu
Investor readiness	The project is in the implementation phase. Due to the magnitude and budget demands, the project is planned for implementation multi-yearly. Phase 1 is practically complete to the value of 37.5M, construction of phase 2 started in November 2022 with the award value of 87M. Construction progress overall is currently 20%



Nodal Development Project 3



Location



Greater Kokstad



PROJECT NAME

Government and Judicial Precinct

Opportunity

The Government Precinct initiative aims to consolidate various departmental offices, facilitating easier access to services and enhancing overall service delivery. This integration seeks to streamline operations, reduce the government's lease portfolio, and address historical inefficiencies stemming from apartheid-era spatial planning. Key departments to be accommodated include SAPS, Labour, Agriculture, Home Affairs, Immigration, and Correctional Services, among others.

Simultaneously, the Judicial Precinct will feature the construction of a High Court and Regional Court in close proximity. This co-location is intended to optimize judicial processes and improve efficiency in legal proceedings. Additionally, the expansion of kitchen facilities at Bhongweni Maximum Security Prison forms part of this broader development, aimed at enhancing the operational capacity of correctional services within the district.

Attractiveness Assessment

The establishment of a High Court in the district enhances confidence in the local justice system and reinforces community social cohesion. It symbolizes a commitment to justice, fairness, and the rule of law, fostering a sense of security and stability among residents. Additionally, the High Court's presence may support legal education and training programs, nurturing aspiring lawyers, judges, and legal professionals. The government and judicial precinct will contribute to capacity building and professional development within the local legal community, thereby strengthening the district's governmental and judicial infrastructure.

Key Comparative Advantage

With a prison already located in the district, transporting prisoners to court would be more efficient and less time-consuming, thereby enhancing safety and security. Moreover, the district's accessibility from major towns such as Pietermaritzburg and Durban improves convenience for legal proceedings, promoting efficiency and accessibility in the judicial process.

Potential Economic Impact

The presence of major institutions can boost property values and spur real estate development. Increased demand for office space, retail, and residential properties can attract new investments. Additionally, the local High Court improves judicial efficiency, speeding up case resolution and reducing backlogs, which enhances public trust. Its presence also creates job opportunities for legal professionals, contributing to community income and development. Overall, establishing a judicial and government precinct serves as a critical driver for economic growth, social development, and legal empowerment within the district.

Investment requirements

To be determined

Location

Greater Kokstad

Investor readiness

The project is in the planning stage. The municipality has donated land to the Department of Public Works for the development of the government precinct.

Source: Left image: photorealistic-environment-lawyer_23-2151152173. Right image: pexels-photo-14766052

Nodal Development Project 4



Location



Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma



PROJECT NAME

Commercialisation of Sani Pass Border Post

Opportunity

This project entails converting the Sani Pass Tourist border post to a commercial border post

Attractiveness Assessment

The project is strategically located as a gateway between South Africa KwaZulu-Natal and Lesotho. Enhancing the Sani Pass border could significantly boost trade between South Africa and Lesotho, driving economic growth. This is further enhanced by the fact that Durban port and Richards Bay the major trade ports are closer to Lesotho using this route. Improved infrastructure would streamline the transport of goods, benefitting local economies.

Key Comparative Advantage

Commercializing this border promises to boost trade significantly. Sani Pass not only boasts breathtaking scenic beauty but also presents growing business opportunities and increasing property values. Ongoing investments in infrastructure, such as roads and accommodation, improve accessibility and drive economic growth. Furthermore, various water sustainability projects in the area are set to ensure continued support for local development efforts.

Potential Economic Impact

This potentially opens up new markets and may create a trade corridor. These initiatives stimulate local economies and contribute to the sustainable growth and prosperity of the region, establishing Sani Pass as a compelling destination for both business and leisure.

Investment requirements

To be determined

Location

Underberg

Investor readiness

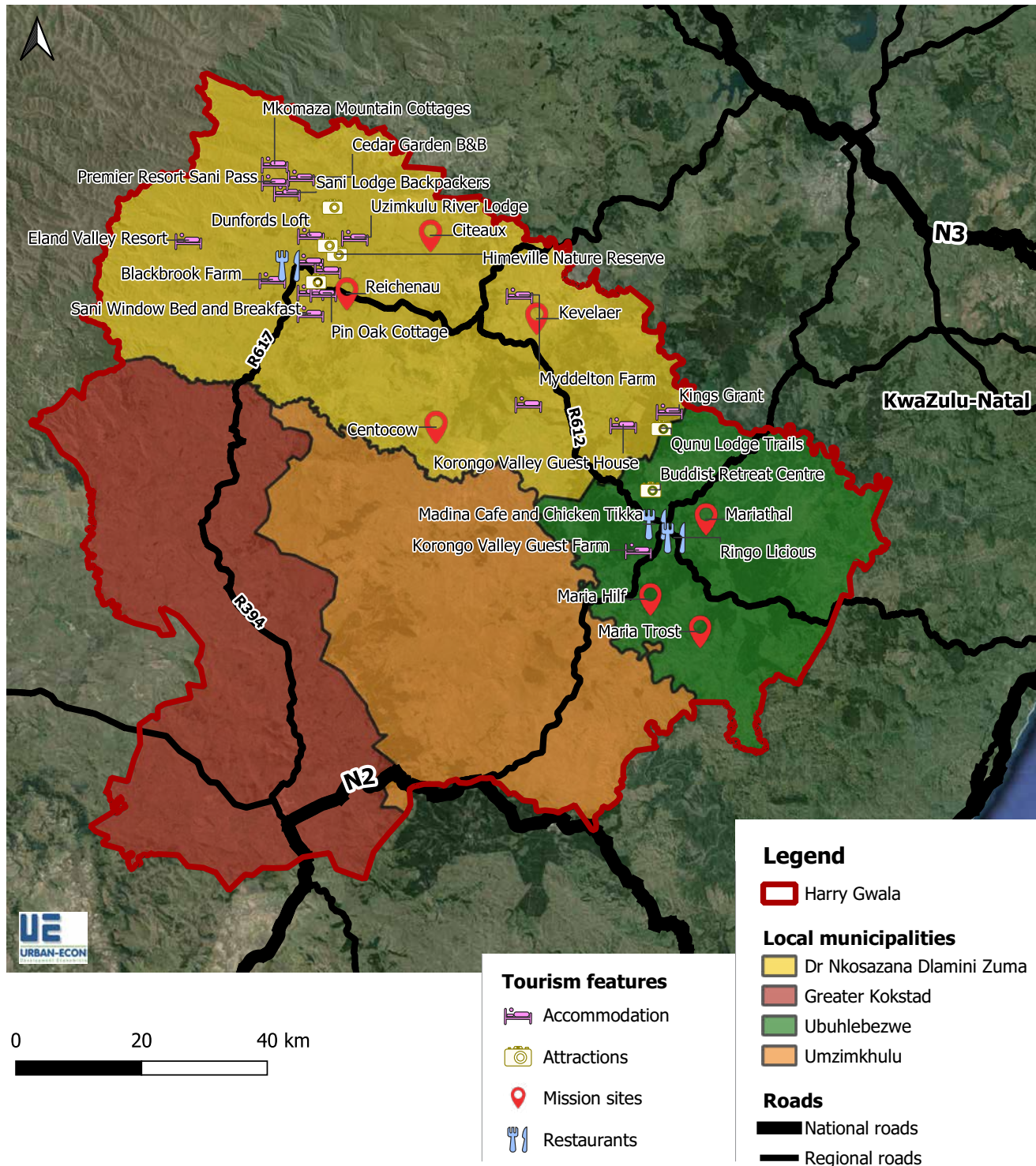
The project is in the concept stage.



Tourism and Heritage Projects

Tourism and heritage preservation in the Harry Gwala District allow visitors to explore, discover, and connect with the region's rich cultural, natural, and historical treasures. By celebrating its diverse heritage, promoting sustainable tourism practices, and fostering community engagement, the district presents several catalytic projects as a catalyst for economic growth, cultural exchange, and environmental conservation for future generations which investors may indulge in.

Figure 25
RELIGIOUS TOURISM ROUTE



Tourism and Heritage Project 1



<div>Location</div> <div><div>Harry Gwala</div></div> <div></div>	
<div>PROJECT NAME</div> <div>Religious Tourism Route</div>	
<div>Opportunity</div>	The religious tourism route within HGDM spans the 186km Abbot Pfanner Trappist Trail in collaboration with the Diocese of Mariannhill and the Abbot Pfanner Trappist Trail Association. This initiative opens opportunities for tourism services, accommodations, tour guides, and marketing along the route.
<div>Attractiveness Assessment</div>	Religious tourism in South Africa is a growing sector, attracting both domestic and international visitors who seek spiritual enrichment, historical insight, and cultural experiences. South Africa's diverse religious landscape and rich history make it an appealing destination for religious tourists. In the 2nd quarter of 2023 KZN received 1 571 674 tourists, a 38% increase from the number of tourists in the 1st quarter of the same year. In the 2nd quarter, KZN accounted for the 4th largest number of international tourists in the country compared to other provinces.
<div>Key Comparative Advantage</div>	The trail holds unique cultural and historical significance, passing landmarks, heritage sites, and Trappist monasteries, drawing visitors for religious pilgrimage, spiritual retreats, and cultural immersion. Associated with Trappist monks and Abbot Francis Pfanner, it adds to its allure. Moreover, the trail showcases diverse landscapes of mountains, forests, rivers, and farmland, ideal for nature appreciation, wildlife viewing, and outdoor recreation. Spanning 186km, it offers varied hiking experiences, from day hikes to multi-day treks, catering to different skill levels and preferences, making it ideal for leisurely exploration and adventure tourism.
<div>Potential Economic Impact</div>	The trail offers substantial tourism potential, drawing domestic and international tourists interested in hiking, nature exploration, and cultural immersion. These visitors boost the local economy by spending on accommodation, meals, transportation, souvenirs, and services. The hospitality sector benefits from increased occupancy rates and revenue, with hotels, guesthouses, lodges, and camping sites along the route experiencing heightened demand. Furthermore, the demand for tourism infrastructure development, including parking lots, rest areas, signage, information centres, and trail maintenance, may lead to investments that enhance visitor experience and create jobs in the construction and maintenance sectors.
<div>Investment requirements</div>	R1.8 million
<div>Location</div>	Cuts across the district into the Eastern Cape province and other districts in KZN
<div>Investor readiness</div>	The project is in the planning stage. A feasibility study and business plan were completed



Tourism and Heritage Project 2

Location



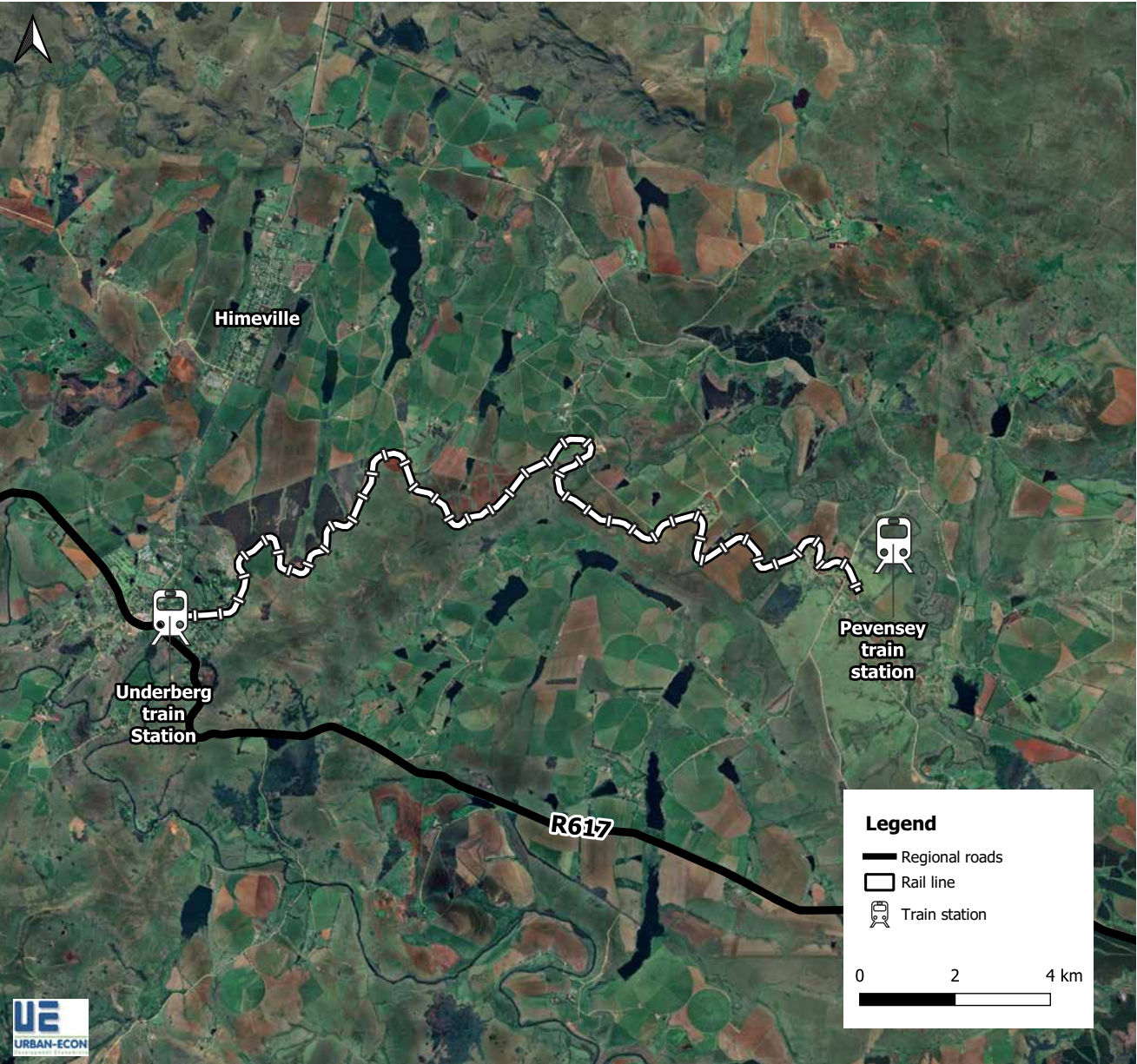
Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma



PROJECT NAME **Refurbishment of the Underberg-Pevensey Rail Line**

Opportunity	<p>This project involves refurbishing existing train stations and exploring trading opportunities at new or existing stations and markets in Underberg–Himeville. Its aim is to support rail line utilization between Underberg and Pevensey in Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and Creighton to Riverside in UMzimkhulu LM. Further opportunities lie in linking rail tourism with adventure tourism, incorporating flagship events and developing rail tourism packages and routes as part of this campaign.</p>
Attractiveness Assessment	<p>Upgrading the railway offers leisure and recreational opportunities like heritage train rides, scenic tours, and themed events, appealing to tourists and locals alike while promoting cultural appreciation. Enhancing train stations and railway infrastructure can spur tourism cluster development. Collaborating with accommodation providers, restaurants, and attractions can create integrated travel experiences, boosting destination competitiveness and tourism appeal and offering a unique visitor experience.</p>
Key Comparative Advantage	<p>Both the Underberg-Pevensey and Alan Paton train stations possess profound historical and cultural significance in South Africa's railway heritage, making them potential attractions for heritage tourism. Visitors keen on exploring the region's railway history would likely find these stations compelling destinations. Moreover, the surrounding mountainous landscapes offer distinctive views and opportunities for various tourism activities, setting the region apart from others.</p>
Potential Economic Impact	<p>Upgrading the railway infrastructure brings several benefits to the region. Firstly, it improves accessibility and connectivity, offering a sustainable transport option for residents and tourists, potentially easing road congestion and promoting environmental sustainability. Secondly, revitalizing the railway system can drive economic growth by facilitating the movement of goods and people, attracting investments, supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and boosting overall economic activity. Lastly, promoting rail transport aligns with sustainability objectives, as it reduces greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and dependence on fossil fuels compared to road transport, thereby contributing to environmental conservation efforts.</p>
Investment requirements	<p>R520 million</p>
Location	<p>Underberg-Pevensey</p>
Investor readiness	<p>This project is in the conceptualization phase.</p>

Figure 26
UNDERBERG-PEVENSEY RAIL LINE





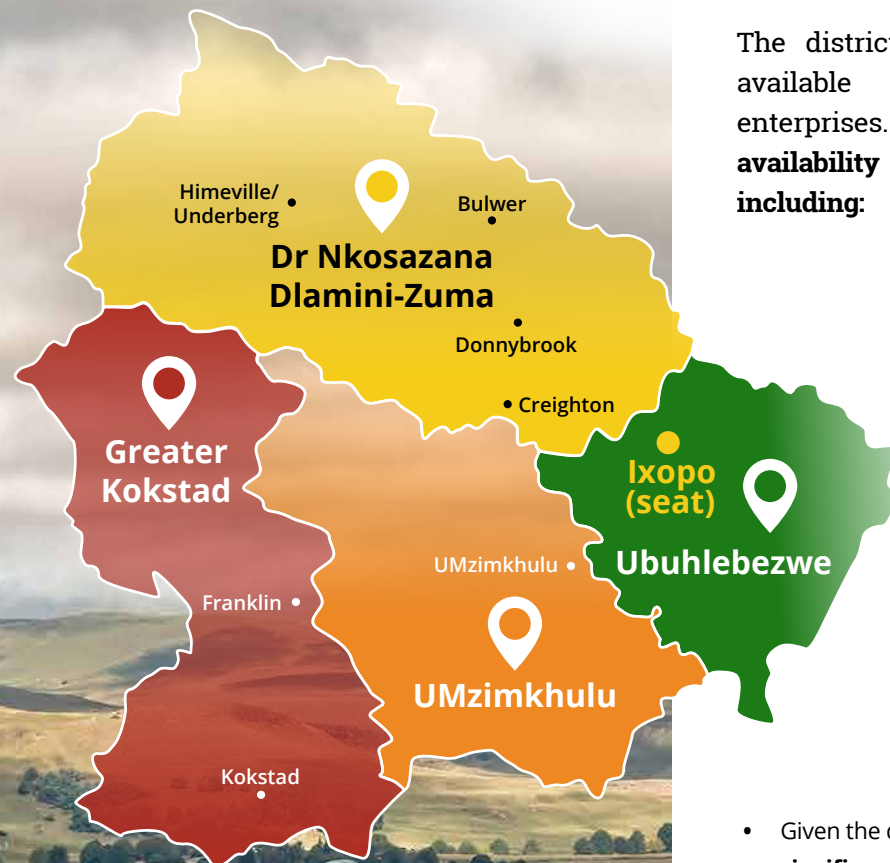
6. Land Availability

The district has abundant land readily available and suitable for various enterprises. **Several factors influence land availability in the Harry Gwala District including:**



- **Local zoning laws play a critical role** in determining land use. These regulations ensure that land is used in a manner that supports sustainable development and aligns with regional planning goals.

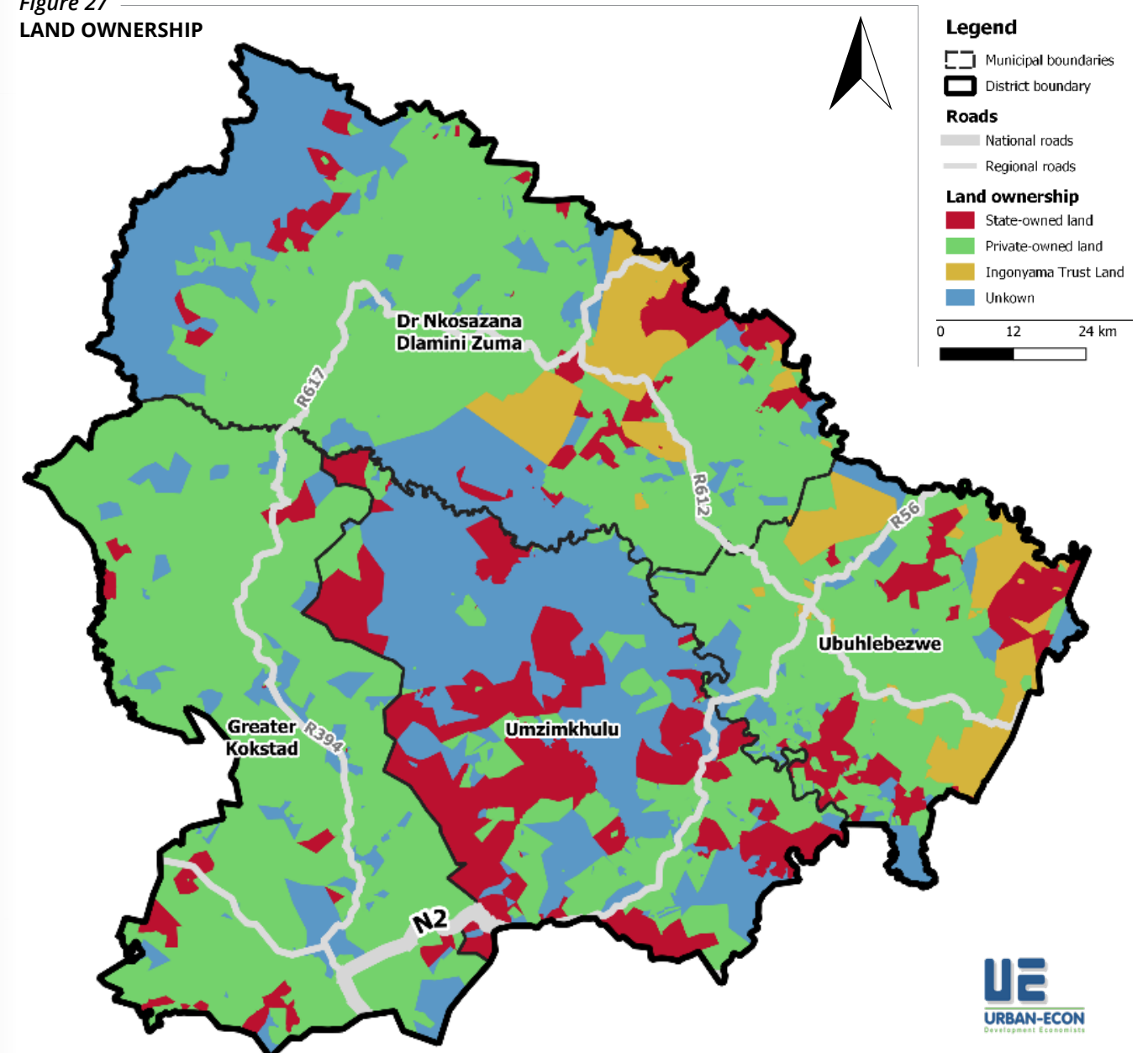
- Given the district's reliance on agriculture, a **significant portion of land is preserved for farming.**
- Ongoing and planned infrastructure projects, including **road improvements and utility expansions, are opening new areas for development.** This enhances accessibility and makes more land available for residential, commercial, and industrial use.
- **Conservation efforts and environmental regulations protect portions of land** to maintain biodiversity and natural habitats. These protected areas are not available for development but offer opportunities for eco-tourism and recreation.
- The mix of private, communal, and public land ownership impacts land availability.



Land Ownership

Much of the land in the Harry Gwala District is under private ownership, notably concentrated in the Greater Kokstad and UMzimkhulu areas. Municipal and state lands are more prevalent in UMzimkhulu and Ubuhlebezwe, while Ingonyama Trust land is predominantly found in the northern parts of the district with Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma having the most land under the Ingonyama Trust Board. Conservation areas, such as portions of the Drakensberg mountains, are crucial for biodiversity and serve as attractions for eco-tourism.

Figure 27
LAND OWNERSHIP

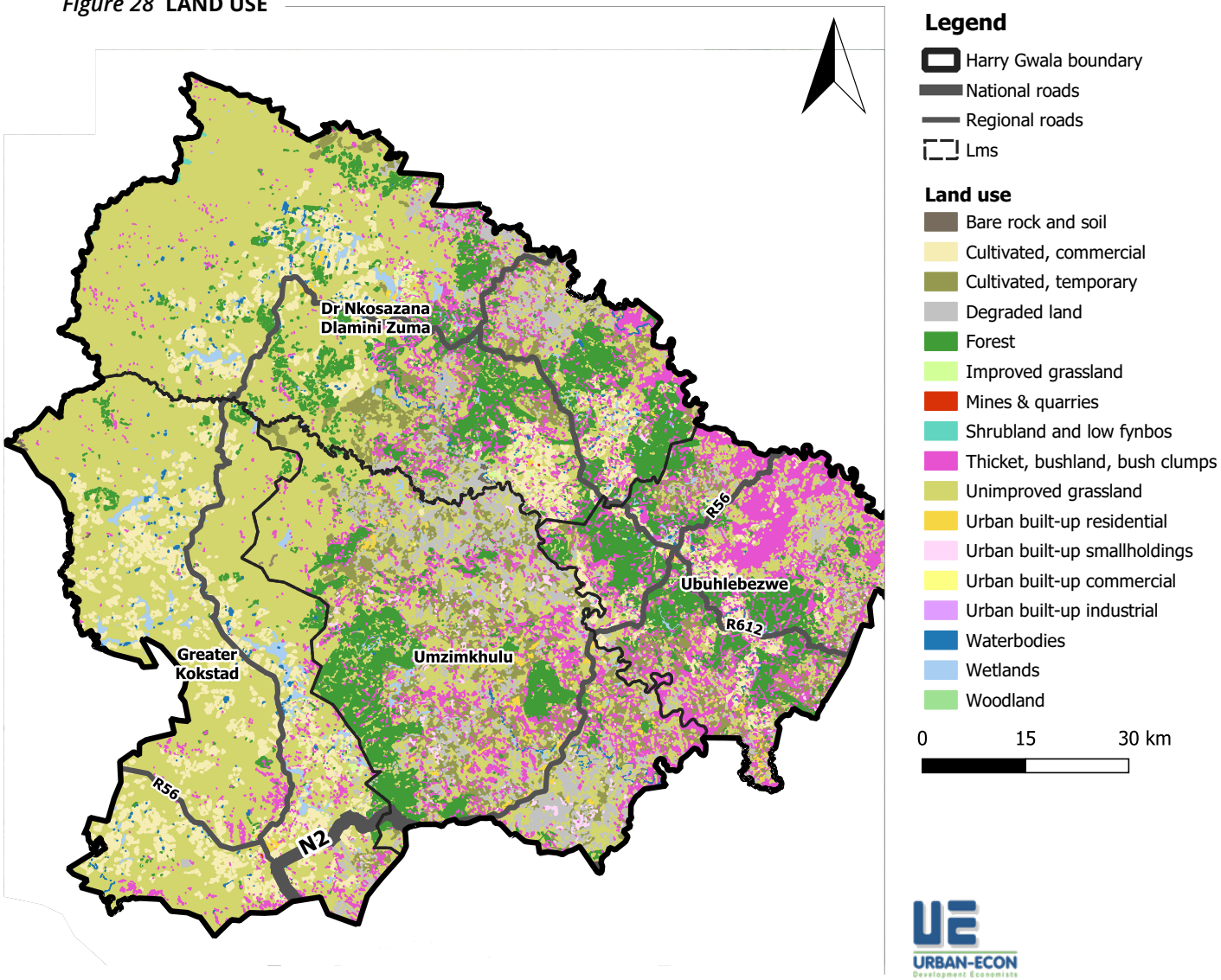




Current Land Uses

Urban residential, smallholdings, commercial, and industrial areas are predominantly clustered around major towns such as Greater Kokstad, UMzimkhulu, and Ubuhlebezwe. These areas feature a blend of private and state-owned land, which supports urban expansion and development. Agricultural activities, encompassing both commercial and subsistence farming, are dispersed across various types of land ownership, reflecting a diverse approach to agricultural land use. Grassland areas also exhibit mixed ownership, with a notable portion managed by state entities or traditional authorities. Overall, the majority of the district remains rural .

Figure 28 LAND USE



7. Investor Support



Key to the Harry Gwala District Municipality's investment strategy is a commitment to fostering a supportive environment for investors. The district recognises investors' pivotal role in driving economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development within the region. Through a range of initiatives and services, the district aims to facilitate and encourage investment opportunities while ensuring a seamless experience for investors.



The Harry Gwala District Development Agency (HGDA) is a strategic entity established to spearhead economic development and investment promotion within the Harry Gwala District.

It aims to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and improve the quality of life for the residents of Harry Gwala District by attracting and facilitating sustainable investments and fostering partnerships between the public and private sectors.

The Harry Gwala Development Agency is dedicated to fostering sustainable development and improving the quality of life for the residents of the Harry Gwala District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The Agency works collaboratively with various stakeholders to implement projects and programs that address the socio-economic challenges faced by the HGDM community.

Harry Gwala Development Agency

HGDA is inspired by the vision of "A polycentric resource abundant investment Gateway, with absolute transformative regional growth and development by 2063."

Core Functions and Services

The HGDA offers a range of services to investors and businesses, including:

Investment Facilitation: Identifying and promoting investment opportunities across various sectors. Providing comprehensive support to investors throughout the investment lifecycle, from initial inquiry to project implementation. Facilitate joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions.

- **Business Development Support:** Assisting local entrepreneurs and businesses with business planning, market access, and capacity building. Offering advisory services on accessing finance, technology, and markets.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Coordinating with local municipalities and other stakeholders to develop and maintain critical infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and business parks.
- **Skills Development and Training:** Implementing programs to enhance the skills and employability of the local workforce. Partnering with educational institutions and training providers to meet the needs of key industries.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Assistance:** Helping businesses navigate regulatory requirements and obtain necessary permits and licenses. Providing information on incentives and tax relief programs available to investors.





Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal (TIKZN)

Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal (TIKZN) is a leading South African trade and investment promotion agency, dedicated to promoting the province of KwaZulu-Natal as a premier investment destination. **TIKZN aims to facilitate sustainable economic growth through targeted investment attraction and trade facilitation initiatives.** The agency provides comprehensive support to local and international investors, ensuring seamless business operations and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships. TIKZN is committed to unlocking the district's potential by attracting investment and promoting sustainable development within the district.

TIKZN provides a comprehensive range of services to facilitate investment in the Harry Gwala District which include to:

- **Promote, brand and market KwaZulu-Natal** as an investment destination.
- **Facilitate trade by assisting local companies** to access international markets.
- **Identify, develop, and package investment opportunities** in KwaZulu-Natal.
- **Provide a professional service** to all clientele.
- **Retain and expand trade and export activities;** and
- **Link opportunities to the developmental needs** of the KwaZulu-Natal community.



Harry Gwala District is a land with potential, ripe for investment and development. With the strategic support of TIKZN, investors can capitalize on the district's unique opportunities and contribute to its dynamic growth. We invite you to explore the abundant possibilities in Harry Gwala and join us in driving economic prosperity in KwaZulu-Natal.

For more information on investment opportunities in the Harry Gwala District, and the services the TIKZN can offer please contact TIKZN and visit the website at <https://www.tikzn.co.za/>



Contacts To Support Your Investment.

Below is a list of organisations, people, and contacts who are available and work hand in hand with the district to offer investment support in HGDM.

Table 3
CONTACTS TO SUPPORT YOUR INVESTMENT

Organisation	Contact Person and Designation	Contact information	Email address
HGDA	ACR Whyte CEO	079 287 9593	ceo@hgda.co.za
TIKZN	Sihle Ngcamu CEO of Investment	031 368 9600	sihle@tikzn.co.za
COGTA	A Zungu	079 091 2508	Amanda.zungu@kzncogta.gov.za
EDTEA	Naledi May LED	071 686 8500	naledi.may@kznedtea.gov.za
MISA Eastern Seaboard	LM Layte	062 124 5329	michelle.layte@misa.gov.za
SALGA	P Mohangi	083 279 8888	pmohangi@salga.ag.za
DARD	Nokubonga Radebe	083 565 2440	nokubonga.radebe@dard.gov.za
Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma	N M Dlamini Municipal Manager	066 412 3624	dlamininm@ndz.gov.za
Greater Kokstad	Mthokozisi Zulu Economic Development	039 797 6748 072 549 6275 079 287 9593	Mthokozisi.Zulu@kokstad.gov.za
Ubuhlebezwe	NH Mkhize Municipal manager	072 939 3953	NHMkhize@ubuhlebezwe.gov.za
UMzimkhulu	Z Mkhize LED Manager	083 646 4164	Mkhizez@UMzimkhululm.gov.za
Harry Gwala District	Lucky Zondi Director-Development Planning	072 646 7568	zondil@harrygwaladm.gov.za