

Plans to expand CT Convention Centre

NADINE FORD-KRITZINGER

A TOTAL of R800m has been set aside for the expansion of the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), it was announced yesterday.

Western Cape Premier Helen Zille was at the sod-turning ceremony, which was also attended by top government officials.

The expansion of the convention centre is expected to create jobs. The decision to expand followed the board's agreement shortly after they had opened their doors in June 2003.

The board resolved that the expansion was pivotal to maintain the centre's global competitiveness among other international convention centres.

The expansion is part of a broader plan, which is set to include a 40 000m² commercial and hotel development.

The ceremony was also attended by the deputy mayor of Cape Town Ian Neilson, MEC for economic opportunities Alan Winde, MEC for roads and transport Donald Grant and board chairperson Gary Fisher.

Construction is set to start in February next year and the centre's east doors scheduled to open in early 2017.

Zille said: "The convention centre has created many jobs directly and indirectly. The centre has been a good investment in the past 10 years than any other investment for the poor.

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DEVELOPMENT: Provincial government officials at the sod-turning ceremony for the expansion of the Cape Town ICC.

"It is a valued asset to this province and its expansion will further increase the contribution to the province and the country's economy and spur job creation.

"More people will become involved directly and indirectly in the staging of events at the CTICC and this brings with it very valuable economic growth. We are projecting R22bn in the next five years.

"We shape our buildings,

thereafter they shape us," Zille said.

The past 11 years have seen the centre play an instrumental role in driving economic growth and job creation in the country by hosting international events.

The centre has cumulatively contributed billions of rands to South Africa's and the Western Cape's GDPs.

Fisher said: "The provincial GDP will also stand to benefit

from the expansion and it is expected that the centre's contribution to the Western Cape GDP by 2020 will be in excess of R500m.

"The past financial year also saw the Western Cape securing 19 conference bids worth R347m for our economy, with the centre driving the Western Cape's lucrative meetings industry."

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