Steam in Action - An Association Incorporated under Section 21 • Registration Number 2007/035119/08
www.steam-in-action.com • Email: joannewest@btinternet.com

Dear Steam in Action Members, 17 September 2009

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST : INGWE MUNICIPALITY: "SISONKE STIMELA"

We received the following correspondence from Dudley Smith, Corporate & Social Development Manager, Ingwe Municipality and felt compelled to pass it on.

Steam in Action Advisory Board

INGWE MUNICIPALITY

Main Street • P.O. Box 62 Creighton 3263
Tel: 039 833 1038 • Fax: 039 833 1179
mailbox@ingwemunicipality.co.za

Dear Steam-in-Action,

Re: New Steam Hauled Tourist Business opportunity.

Thank you for your offer to facilitate publicity for our Sisonke Stimela project.

We would be grateful if our preliminary notification of the above could be circulated to the SIA membership, both local and overseas.

Dudley Smith
Corporate & Social Development Manager
Ingwe Municipality

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smithd@ingwe.gov.za

VISION STATEMENT: "Ingwe will be a financially and economically viable Municipality able to provide services to its community in an efficient, effective, transparent and sustainable manner. It will seek to chieve this by strengthening the unique social, economic and environmental potential of the Local Municipal area while protecting the natural resource base for succeeding generations."

HON. MAYOR N.P.LUZULANE • DEPUTY MAYOR M.W.MTOLO • E.R.S.SIKHAKHANE (SPEAKER) • G.M.SINEXE (MUNICIPAL MANAGER)

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
TO OPERATE SISONKE STIMELA RAILWAY

COMMERCIAL OPERATIONALISATION OF STEAM HAULED LUXURY TOURIST TRAIN

REFERENCE INGWE MUNICIPALITY: "SISONKE STIMELA"

BACKGROUND

An audit undertaken in 2003 of the generic "tourism assets" within the Ingwe Municipality (in Kwa-Zulu Natal) indicated that the region was richly endowed with stunning and interesting scenery, pleasant climatic conditions, interesting cross-cultural diversity, sound infra-structure, safe and hospitable environment etc, however none of these was unique to the region. One needed therefore to identify the comparative advantages which could be developed into niche brands to create a competitive tourism destination.

The three comparative advantages which were identified were the historic network of Catholic Missions, the diversity of bird life, and the existence of the commercially in use Cape/Natal branch railway line. Therefore a tourism policy has been developed to promote Rail, Mission and Avi Tourism

The Ingwe Municipality, has secured grant funding from the European Union supported Gijima KZN Local Competitive Fund, The Department of Economic Development and the Department of Local Government to co-finance a fully furbished steam rail tour train.

The intention of the Sisonke Stimela is to offer a number of different tours including:

- Fully inclusive steam hauled rail tours of the Pietermaritzburg and Southern Midlands Area focussing on Sani Pass & the Missions of Centocow & Reichenau as the core destination. The major target market for this tour would be international tourists (but local tourists will also be targeted) Accommodation will be provided on the train. The accommodation quality will be in four star ranges and the price range upward of R2 000-00 per person per day.

- It needs to be understood that while reasonable permission will not be withheld for the "Sisonke Stimela" train to provide passenger tourist services on lines other than the "Cape Natal" branch line its prime purpose is to develop the Sisonke District and its Local Municipalities, particularly Ingwe Municipality as a tourist destination.

The White Paper on Tourism in KZN states that Tourism must be Government led, Private Sector driven and Community based. The "Government led" portion of this project has reached a stage that it must be balanced by demonstrating the other two dimensions of "private sector driven and community based". The project requires a private sector "driver" who will take up this opportunity of running a steam rail tour train on the Cape-Natal branch line between Pietermaritzburg and the Sisonke District Municipality.

The train consists of

- 7 accommodation coaches with 3 Deluxe Suites per each
- 1 Power car has been built with a 300kva generator
- Lounge coach
- Dining coach
- Club coach
- Locomotive GMAM 4074
- Water car

Any interested party will need to demonstrate competence and experience in the Hospitality Industry. They would need to convince the Ingwe Municipality that they had the ability to take the existing "Sisonke Stimela" and bring it to "state of readiness" to accommodate the level of comfort and luxury anticipated. This would include equipping a Kitchen. Not only will the "Kitchen Coach" need to be equipped but all cutlery and crockery supplied. A Dining Coach with tables seating 48 guests is part of the train set. Loose furniture including chairs will need to be provided. Lounge Coach / Club Coach. Two coaches with toilet facilities at either end will be fitted with carpets air conditioners etc, however all furnishings will be provided by the operator. Accommodation Coaches all are equipped with mattresses, fridges, air conditioners and have on suite showers and toilet facilities. However all soft goods, linen will need to be provided.

The operator will need to demonstrate their ability to conduct both a local and international marketing campaign. Linkage needs to be demonstrated to the "Mission Tourism" brand being developed by Ingwe Municipality in co operation with the Sisonke District Municipality.

It is the intention of the Ingwe Municipality, who are the owners of the train, that the prime objective of this investment is the economic development of the locality as a tourist destination, resulting in the creation of jobs and wealth particularly focused on the previously disadvantaged rural poor of the region. It is therefore imperative that in the expressions of interest quantify both the direct and indirect job opportunities created. With this in mind the Ingwe Municipality intends to advertise an expression of interest shortly to attract interested bidders to operate the Sisonke Stimela.

If you would be interested in participating in the bid process or if you are interested in further information please contact:

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