

## PASCAL Observatory Africa Centre for Economic Development Highlight Report on Learning City Project

### *Theewaterskloof Municipality (TWKM), South Africa*

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### Introduction:

The PASCAL Observatory Centre for Economic Development is building a network of PASCAL Associates with the aim of developing a larger set of connections within Africa. The Centre is also commencing work on two 'learning city' projects. This report highlights background information on one of those, the Theewaterskloof Municipality, located on the edge of the city of Cape Town. The report takes an asset-based approach by describing the features and economic opportunities of a network of towns in the region and outlines the learning challenges that the coalition of stakeholders will address.

#### Note:

1. The [PASCAL Learning Cities Network](#) is interested in the topic of connecting urban and rural learning initiatives and this report adds to that.
2. The [14<sup>th</sup> PASCAL International Conference](#) will be held Skukuza, Kruger National Park from 17-19 October, 2017, where you will be able to hear more about the Centre's work.

Dr Leone Wheeler, PASCAL Content Editor

# 1. Introduction to Theewaterskloof Municipality (TWKM)

**Web:** [www.twk.org.za](http://www.twk.org.za)

Theewaterskloof Municipality (TWKM) is located on the edge of the City of Cape Town and encompasses the towns of Grabouw, Villiersdorp, Botrivier, Greyton, Genadendal, Caledon, and Riviersonderend. The gateway to the Overberg, it is surrounded by unique natural assets such as the Theewaterskloof Dam, Kogelberg Biosphere, illustrious vineyards, crop and fruit fields, fynbos, wild flowers and blue cranes.

With its Local Economic Development Strategy (LED strategy), the municipality is constantly driving local economic development in primary economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, agricultural product processing, and industries.

Despite a relatively poor community and a narrow capacity for tax and income generation, the municipality is constantly improving infrastructures for service and product delivery. The municipality's Integrated Development Programme was developed in partnership with local business, communities and individuals. The municipality was the first to implement Service Level Agreements in all its towns to narrow the gap between community services needs and municipal service delivery abilities. The municipality created capacities for holistic and quality developments, i.e. sewerage removal, quality water, housing, communication, waste removal and infrastructural maintenance.

**Main Economic Sectors:** Finance, insurance, real estate and business services (30.1%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (21.3%), manufacturing (15.4%), wholesale and retail trade, catering and accommodation (8.8%), general government (7.7%), construction (6%), transport, storage and communication (5.8%), community, social and personal services (3.4%).

## Issues to be addressed by a 'learning city' project:

Theewaterskloof is home to 1.8% of the Western Cape's population. The region's educational levels are also below the provincial average with 5% of residents over 20 having no schooling compared to just under 3% across the Province.

Businesses of different sizes require different types of support. The municipality is very supportive of big business, and many initiatives support small survivalist enterprises. However, some small and medium sized businesses, outside of the tourist sector, identified a need for greater support. This includes, facilitating information, tender training, business training, staff training in

selected sectors, networks and local marketing. This segment should be a focus for on-going LED work.

A major priority is the up-skilling of the work force. As agriculture becomes more complex and mechanised, the municipality needs to accelerate the tackling of the educational legacy. Global research shows that the key to good education is laid in the foundational years. Although Early Childhood Development is outside of the municipal function, the municipality has an important role to play in ensuring the quality of institutions and service provision at this vital stage in a child's life.

In addition, the municipality should address the school dropout rates. This is best achieved through on-going education, and particularly at the key stages when most drop outs occur: grades 4-5 and grades 8-9.

Finally, an on-going skills enhancement programme needs to be consistently delivered through institutions such as the Elgin Learning Foundation and through initiatives, like the Biggest Deal Challenge, whereby young people are encouraged and their skills developed so that they can find jobs in the region, and bring the entrepreneurial skills to create more jobs.

## Vision and mission

*Vision 2030 formulated is a "Green Light" vision for 2030 for Theewaterskloof as a desirable place to live, a visitor destination, a centre of learning, innovative entrepreneurship, and carbon neutral.*

## 2. Background to the Towns in the Municipality

### Botrivier

The small village of Botrivier is situated en route to Hermanus and Caledon, at the eastern slopes of the Houw Hoek Mountains.

The Botriver hotel is the landmark in the town. The area is known for its vineyards and wine farms, with the well-known Beaumont Farm situated in the town. There is a growing tourism market linked to agri-tourism and wine tasting.

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study it is classified as an agricultural service centre with medium human needs and low to very low development potential.

The Municipality, in its growth study, has identified the town as an area with possibilities for light industrial development.

## Caledon

Moving along the N2, 110km east of Cape Town is the town of Caledon.

The town owes its situation to the presence of hot water springs which were the catalyst for the initial growth of the town which was later named after its Governor, the Earl of Caledon.

Caledon is a government service centre, as well as a significant agricultural service centre. The Municipal head offices are located in the town along with the regional offices for the Departments of Education, Social Development and Home Affairs.

Caledon is the centre of a broader agricultural region which produces barley, wheat and wool. Overberg-Agri, which provides services and support to the farming sector, has its head office located in Caledon. It is also home to the Southern Associated Maltsters which is the only malt producer for the South African lager beer industry and is the largest in the southern hemisphere.



Canola fields by Michael Hammond

While tourism in the town is limited it does have two large tourism attractions: the hot springs and Caledon Casino. The latter is one of five middle-sized casinos in South Africa. Events include the Caledon Country Fair and various mountain biking events. There is a small tourism association.

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study, Caledon is classified an agricultural service centre known for its casino and hot springs. It is regarded as a town with low human needs and medium development potential.

A key challenge in Caledon is the shortage of middle income housing stock. Consequently many of the managers working in the town reside outside the area.

## Genadendal

Genadendal is located alongside Greyton, 32km off the N2 and 140km from Cape Town with the Riviersonderend Mountains to the north.

Genadendal, or 'Valley of Grace', was established by the Moravian Church in the mid-1700s and is the oldest mission station in South Africa. The economy of the town is dominated by 'development' projects, mostly driven by local development organizations, as well as small-scale agricultural production and subsistence gardening.



Source: Genadendal Museum

Much of the workforce relies on the surrounding fruit farms for employment, which contributes to the seasonality of the local economy. Genadendal is located alongside Greyton, 32km off the N2 and 140km from Cape Town with the Riviersonderend Mountains to the north.

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study Genadendal is described as an historic mission station with residential and tourism opportunities. It is regarded as a town with medium human needs and low development potential.

## Grabouw

The Grabouw/Elgin district is the first town in the Municipal area when driving from Cape Town along the N2. It borders on the Kogelberg Biosphere reserve and the Hottentots Holland reserve. These provide excellent opportunities for adventure-based sports such as cycling. It has various conservation areas around it. The Eikenhof Dam is in the town.



Elgin Valley

The town is well known for its apples, open gardens and is increasingly becoming known as a tourist and wine buying region. It has two popular farm stalls that at-

tract passing visitors, Orchards and Peregrine. There are also several farm-based attractions in the surrounding areas. The Elgin tourism association is established and has a recognised brand. It is complemented by the emerging wine industry and established wine guild.

It is the largest apple growing area and produces about 60% of South Africa export apple crop. It is also the third largest pear growing area. The valley is renowned for cultivating fresh chrysanthemums, roses and proteas. In addition to primary production, the area is also home to several agri-processing firms including Appletiser and Elgin Fruit Juices. It also has an established transport industry, with both Bosman's freight carriers and Gaffleys' Buses located in the town.

The area is also home to two adult training centres: Elgin Learning Foundation, a private FET college, which provides training in agriculture and the social sector and has an SMME support unit; and Overberg Training Centre which focuses on construction training.

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study, conducted by Van der Merwe in 2004, Grabouw is classified as an agricultural service centre and an apple town. It is regarded as a town with high human needs and medium development potential, using a scale of very low to very high. Residents and the DBSA both disagree with the medium potential ranking and believe the town has high growth potential.

The area has recently received a boost, being one of six pilot sustainable community sites initiated by the DBSA. The Sustainable Development Framework (SDF) for Elgin-Grabouw, developed as part of this initiative, provides a sustainable spatial vision and supporting strategies for the town.

## Greyton

On entering Greyton one is immediately reminded of an Old English Village. This beautiful small town is nestled at the foot of the Riviersonderend Mountains with the Riviersonderend River on its boundary and is surrounded by mountains.

It is both a lifestyle and tourism destination while the surrounding areas are farmlands. The hotels, lodges, Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs), are all of an exceptionally high standard. Visitors can choose between a stay in the town or on a working farm. All this, together with Greyton's coffee shops, restaurants, art galleries etc., invites you to stay with a difference.



Greyton

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study Greyton is classified as a retirement and holiday home base known for its village character. It is regarded as a town with low human needs and low development potential.

## Riviersonderend

Riviersonderend is situated on the N2, approximately 160km from Cape Town.

Riviersonderend offers beautiful mountain and river scenery, a nine-hole golf course and sightings of South Africa's national bird, the blue crane.

In the Growth Potential of Small Towns Study Riviersonderend is classified as an agricultural service centre with medium human needs and low to very low development potential.



Riviersonderend

## Villiersdorp

Villiersdorp - Pearl of the Overberg - is the North Western gateway to the Overberg. Villiersdorp is situated just over an hour's drive from Cape Town International Airport, and due to its central location, is ideal as a base from which to explore the whole of the Western Cape.

Graced by oak trees, it nestles in the Elands Valley surrounded by the Stettynsberg and Riviersonderend mountains, lush fruit and wine farmlands, and the magnificent man-made Theewaterskloof Dam. Villiersdorp is known as the Pearl of the Overberg because of its particularly beautiful and tranquil setting.



Villiersdorp. Source: Getaway Magazine

The original village was established by Field-Cornet Pieter de Villiers, owner of the farm Radyn. Some of his descendants became prominent not only locally but in national affairs. One of them, Sir David de Villiers Graaff was Mayor of Cape Town in 1891 and served as a cabinet minister in both the Cape and Union Parliament. He founded the well-known De Villiers Graaff High School in 1907. His son, De Villiers Graaff, became the leader of the Opposition in Parliament in 1957. The town was established in 1843 by Veldkornet P.H. De Villiers and was declared a municipality in 1885. Because many of the residents were French Huguenot descendants, the town was named "De Villiers Dorp".

The Mediterranean climate allows for many outdoor activities and plays an important role in the fruit export. Villiersdorp is a prosperous apple-growing area which also produces pears, apricots, peaches, grapes and onions. The village is in a valley surrounded by the picturesque Waterval-and Baviaans mountains and lies next to the magnificent Theewaterskloof Dam. The Theewaterskloof Dam is the 7th largest in South Africa and covers an area of 5 100ha with a capacity of 483 million cubic meter, when full. A vast area on the Theewaters Sport Club premises is available for public camping. A 9 hole Golf Course is situated next to the dam, while on the water one can enjoy pleasure cruises, fishing and most other water sports. Caravan and tent sites on grass are situated very close to the water's edge, with numerous camp sites under the trees.

There are a number of excellent 4 x 4 trails in the area, as well as a tractor-drawn tour with a congenial farmer as guide. The Stettyn 4 x 4 trail on the historic wine farm is 16 km long (one way) and has a difficulty rating of 2-3.

Villiersdorp is dotted with intriguing buildings: Oude Radyn, situated in Church Street, was built in 1844 and is possibly the only building in the Cape with original Batavian gutter; St Augustine's Church is built of stone and has a burial vault; and the De Villiers Graaff schools that are over 125 years old.

The Overberg Fruit & Wine Expo is held every October. A variety of events take place focusing on the rich agricultural heritage on which the area relies. The Spring Arts Festival was recently introduced and will be a yearly feature in September.

The Villiersdorp Wine Cellar was founded in 1922 and is one of the oldest cellars in the country. It has a wide range of top export wines and its members produce about 11 000 tons of grapes a year. A wide variety of wineries are to be found on the outskirts of the town as well.

Well-known artists and crafts people have made Villiersdorp their home and are always happy to show their works to anyone interested. A must see is the Alpaca farm just outside the town in the Bossieveld area. A unique experience awaits visitors with these admirable animals.



From Villiersdorp the visitor can explore Western Cape Coastal Regions, Winelands and Inland areas like the Overberg. The Caledon Casino and spa is just 25 minutes away from Villiersdorp and so is the picturesque town of Franschhoek. The seaside town of Hermanus, which boasts the annual Whale Festival, is only an hour's drive away. Villiersdorp forms part of the Worcester Wine Route and is ideally placed to explore the Bredekloof, Robertson and Montagu.