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Renewal of Small Town Economies: The Case of Alice, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the role of small towns in local development, using the example of Alice in South Africa. Emphasis is placed upon the relationship between a small town and its rural hinterland with specific reference to agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The perceived conditions and the role of the town itself as observed by both rural and urban residents are highlighted by survey findings. The surveys involved eighty interviews with urban dwellers, eighty with rural dwellers and thirsty with local businesses. It is shown that there are unfulfilled community needs in terms of local business development and municipal efforts aimed at ensuring that the small town offers the economic services required to grow community incomes and the local economy.