



MEDIA RELEASE

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DEVELOPERS AND CITY OF CAPE TOWN TO ENGAGE ON INCLUSIONARY HOUSING POLICY

Earlier this month, the City of Cape Town officially agreed to the drafting of an inclusionary housing policy that would in some way legislate private developers to contribute to the provision of affordable housing.

To ensure that the development and construction industry is part of the policy-making process from the beginning of the draft process, the Western Cape Property Development Forum (WCPDF) has organised for an exploratory workshop to be held on Thursday 20 September with key role players both from within the industry and involved in around policy formation from the City of Cape Town.

According to WCPDF Chairperson, Deon van Zyl: “Our Forum has been engaging with the topic of affordable housing for well over a year. We have been acclimatising our own members that some form of inclusionary and affordable housing policy will need to be developed and that private developers will be expected to play a role in it in some way and take up the challenge where they can. However, if this is to be the case, it is critical that the industry be brought into the policy-making process to enable the City to draw on our expertise and insight into finding solutions that will work for all parties.

“Ours is a very complex industry, currently facing huge economic pressures that have already resulted in a number of large companies closing and thousands of jobs being lost. Inclusionary housing is just one of the challenges that we are grappling with, and any discussion around this topic will need to be addressed in a positive and constructive manner.

Nothing that the workshop, hosted by the WCPDF, is being held in joint agreement between the Forum and the City’s Mayor Committee Member for Transport and Urban Development, Councillor Brett Herron, Van Zyl adds: “It is critical that we all – City and industry alike - approach the inclusionary housing with a practical understanding of development processes and funding models.

“We also need to work together to find ways of directing public funding to the private sector or create the right type of incentives that will encourage the private sector to get involved in the first place. If the legislation is too onerous, or the industry finds itself being too heavily taxed in addition to the legislations and policies with which it already deals, investment will simply go elsewhere.”

Van Zyl contends that current delays already experienced by the industry in statutory processes and an overall lack of bureaucratic efficiency are among the largest factors delaying or even preventing investment into Cape Town at the moment.

“Industry is currently reeling under an increasing growth in the bureaucratic process, and if we are to convince members of our industry to embrace any inclusionary housing policy that may come our way, we need to instil confidence in our members that the economic environment that accompanies such policy is viable for the industry, and that party political infighting at all tiers of government do not undermine confidence in the process. “

With the workshop to be facilitated by Bafikile Simelane, presentations on the morning will include an overview from Cllr Herron on “The policy drafting process and the input required from the industry”. Bill Rawson, chairperson of the Rawson Property Group, will present on “Statutory delays and practical experiences in dealing with the inclusionary housing process”. Thabo Mashologu, general manager of property development and investment with Communicare will present on “Straddling the worlds of commercial development and social housing.”

According to Van Zyl, the workshop is very much about agreeing to the level of technical input that the industry will give in the drafting of this policy: “We are therefore extremely grateful that Cllr Herron and the City have agreed to the joint workshop, as it opens the door to building a foundation of good faith that the industry will indeed be consulted and have input into the policy process.”

Issued on behalf of the Western Cape Property Development Forum (WCPDF) by:

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