



MEDIA RELEASE

17 November 2020

PROPERTY FORUM'S CONCERN OVER MAYOR'S POTHOLE REPAIR CAMPAIGN

The Western Cape Property Development Forum (WCPDF) has reacted with concern to a press release issued last week by the City of Cape Town.

The [11 November 2020 release](#), entitled "Mayor Dan Plato's pothole repair campaign switches to second gear" outlines how the City of Cape Town has "ramped up efforts to repair potholes created during the rainy season."

Says Deon van Zyl, chairperson of the WCPDF: "Although we appreciate the City showcasing its politicians trying to lead by example, we would have preferred Mayor Plato focusing on addressing the City's infrastructure planning and procurement crisis which is the real reason for the plethora of potholes in the first place."

The release has angered a number of the Forum's member organisations particularly those representing civil engineers and contractors, notes Van Zyl: "Potholes occur predominantly when a municipality fails to undertake regular maintenance. Maintenance starts by knowing, quite literally, the real conditions on the ground – the facts. However, the City's own Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan 2018-2023 states that its most recent maintenance data stems from 2013 – the data is therefore seven years old. "

Van Zyl continues: "And even if the facts were available, you still need a tender process system focused on delivery. Otherwise the situation is just exacerbated. Both for the taxpayer who expects to see their rates and taxes used effectively, but also for the contractors being kept on hold, waiting to hear the outcomes of tenders."

Van Zyl cites numerous recent examples of unacceptable delays in processing tenders received from members just since the release was issued and dealing only with road works.

The first was a Term Tender for Road Rehabilitation, Resurfacing and Ancillary Works (Tender number 363Q2018/19) originally advertising on 17 May 2019. With a closing date at the time of just over one month (24 June 2019), it then took the City 16 months to assess the applications and finally appoint six contractors

for the work on 25 October 2020, with a commencement date of only one month later, being 1 November 2020.

Explains Van Zyl: “This means that all contractors who tendered had to wait with baited breath for over a year, to find out if they were successful, while keeping all their resources on standby so that they could immediately mobilise once an award was announced. This is hopelessly unsustainable for most companies these days, and demonstrates how far removed from the economics of everyday business practice our City is.”

The second example involved a R4-million contract (363-Q) advertised as a tender in June 2019 and only awarded in November 2020. Another tender (contract number 165Q) also for R4m closed 11 months ago had still not been awarded. It appears the City now depends on an old contract stemming from 2015 to undertake some of the work now required (206Q originally valued at R2m).

“It is very simply our conclusion that the City has lost touch with the true condition of its infrastructure and is experiencing an enormous procurement crisis.

“The feedback that we are receiving from members is that investment and job creation is directly being impacted by the lack of proactive bulk infrastructure provision and maintenance throughout the metro. The business sector is calling on the City to address the lack of infrastructure planning and the current procurement crisis.”

The issue around procurement is so dire that the WCPDF will be holding a webinar on it this week as the last in its online [“In Conversation” series](#) against the topic: “Procurement – Impeder or Enabler in Infrastructure Delivery,” to be held on Thursday 19 November from 14h00 to 16h00.

MORE ABOUT THIS WCPDF “IN CONVERSATION” WEBINAR

To be held on Thursday 19 November, from 14h00 to 16h00, Dr Ron Watermeyer (Visiting Adjunct Professor, School of Construction Economics and Management, University of the Witwatersrand) will set the background for the discussion. Watermeyer is also the author (together with Sean Philips) of the March 2020 [Draft Background Paper on Public Infrastructure Delivery and Construction Dynamism in the South African Economy](#). This was part of the National Planning Commission’s Economy Series contributing towards the understanding of progress towards the [National Development Plan Vision 2030](#).

Dr Watermeyer will be in conversation on the 15th with Alwyn Laubscher (COO of [AL&A](#)) and Prof Geo Quinot (Department of Public Law, [Stellenbosch University](#).) The Gold Sponsor of this particular webinar is [Civils 2000](#). To register to attend this event, please click [here](#).

To arrange an interview with Deon van Zyl of the Western Cape Property Development Forum, please contact: Carola Koblitz, Media & Communications for the WCPDF (Cell: +27 82 568 1621 or email media@wcpdf.org.za). For more information on the WCPDF, please visit: www.wcpdf.org.za