



EVENT: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES - MINISTERIAL BRIEFING SESSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

TOPIC: PROGRESS IN CREATING INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

VENUE: VIRTUAL NCOP CHAMBER

DATE: 8 MARCH 2022

ADDRESS BY: WESTERN CAPE MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, TERTUIS SIMMERS

Honourable Chairperson
Honourable National Minister Kubayi
Honourable Deputy Minister Tshwete
Honourable MEC's
Honourable Members
and Honoured Guests

I welcome the topic of today's engagement, as it mirrors our vision in the Western Cape.

Chairperson it is important that the House understands that in this province, we remain committed to accelerating human settlements delivery, while promoting social inclusion through the development of integrated, resilient, safe and sustainable human settlements in an open opportunity society.

It was in July 2019 when I addressed this House and stated that we will become radical in our approach to human settlements. This radical approach is not militant, but rather the adoption of four key drivers that will assist us in the creation of integrated and sustainable human settlements.

These are:

1. Radical Acceleration of Housing Opportunities.
2. Radical Implementation of Innovative Solutions.
3. A radical Integrated Approach to Human Settlements, and

4. Radical Empowerment and Job Creation.

These drivers are being implemented by various means:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Western Cape has an employment rate of approximately 70% if you consider the expanded unemployment rate. This is the highest in the country, and I'm certain you would agree with me that it is a feat that should be applauded. This also poses a challenge for us in the province, as it means there are many residents on the Housing Demand Database that would not qualify for a full state subsidy, as their household income exceeds the R 3 500 threshold. A need for State assistance still remains, as many fall within the R 3 501 – R 22 000 category.

Therefore, we are continuing to prioritise our land release programme to facilitate the provision of serviced sites, providing security of tenure to all qualifying beneficiaries and increasing our efforts in the Affordable Housing market.

Affordable housing delivery is a vital component in addressing historic spatial segregation and planning. It enables the introduction of a mixed-use approach to development that offers a wider range of housing opportunities and provides access to a broader range of income categories. The two main affordable housing programmes we're prioritising is the use of the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) and the Social Housing Programme.

In die Kaapse Metro het ons verskeie voorbeelde van suksesvolle sosiale behuisingsprojekte. Hierdie sluit onder meer in Anchorage in Glenhaven, Bellville; Regent Villas in Mitchells Plain; Bothasig, en die Maitland Mews waar konstruksie onlangs afgeskop het. Duisende inwoners het of sal eersdags toegang hê tot bekostigbare behuising.

Might I add that the first non-metro Social Housing project, called Mountain Ridge in Dal Josafat, Paarl has been approved by the Drakenstein Municipality and will provide 362 new Social Housing units. Construction is planned to commence at the start of the 2022/2023 financial year. Furthermore, there are a significant number of new projects in the pipeline in other non-metro Leader Towns such as Stellenbosch, George, and Mossel Bay.



Pertaining to FLISP, we have been pioneering the development of these units within our IRDP projects. This, to provide a diverse option of affordable housing opportunities. This initiative has been rolled out within the Cape Metro, George, and Mossel Bay.

En nou met die ontkoppeling van FLISP as net 'n verbandopsie, verwag ons dat baie meer mense toegang sal hê tot bekostigbare behuisingsgeleenthede.

'n Projek wat ware integrasie ten toon stel, is ons Conradie Park ontwikkeling in Pinelands. This is a R3 billion project on 22 hectares of land at the former Conradie Hospital site. It was identified as a suitable location for the pilot of the Better Living Model which was designed to create 3 500 residentially-led, mixed-use, mixed-income housing opportunities close to the Cape Town CBD where people can live, work, play, and learn. Just last month we officially launched this exemplar project, where the first 66 social housing beneficiaries took occupancy of their units. Upon completion it will consist of 432 units located in four blocks. The first vertical FLISP units are currently being developed and occupation is expected in the new financial year. The site will also have a variety of amenities, such as an ECD, a school, a sports field, retail and commercial space, and a recreational park.

We're not a province that works alone, and we are committed to partnerships with not only other spheres of government, but also with the private sector, and therefore this redress has been achieved through enabling and making available well-located state-owned land for affordable, integrated residentially-led development by the private sector.

Beyond this and moving to one of our non-Metro municipalities, further innovation has continued with the planned launch of the first deferred ownership project within the province. This project is being implemented in the Cape Agulhas municipal area. With the civil engineering services completed, construction is planned to commence before the end of the current financial year. This project seeks to provide not only FLISP units to qualifying beneficiaries but will also provide an opportunity for those beneficiaries who have fallen short of end user finance approval.

In addition to this and with the view of continued improvement and efficiencies, the credit readiness programme is being reformulated along with the mechanisms for the proposed housing voucher scheme. The use of data and technology forms an important aspect of this process along with the development of partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders, such as the NHFC.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Mahatma Ghandi once said: “The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.”

Chairperson, the upgrading of our informal settlements continues to be a priority for us. This is anchored in a transversal and Provincial-wide informal settlement upgrading strategy to enhance, simplify, and accelerate informal settlement upgrading interventions through an innovative, people-centred, and partnership-based approach.

Since 2016, Western Cape households have enjoyed the highest rate of access to services compared to the national average. The province currently has 928 informal settlements with 497 of those falling within the City of Cape Town region. All of the remaining 431 settlements across the province have been assessed, categorised, ranked, and prioritised per municipality via the Department’s Informal Settlements Database.

Constraints such as funding, bulk services, land availability, and anti-land invasion efforts are being countered through a total of 33 projects funded via the Department’s Informal Settlements Upgrade Partnership Grant (ISUP-G) Business Plan, amounting to R484 638 000 for 2022-23. The Department also developed visual communication materials to support these communities and other stakeholders with informal settlement upgrading initiatives.

RESERVE FUND

In 2020, we launched the Western Cape Asset Finance Reserve for Human Settlements. This reserve is self-funded, and income is generated through various sources such as rental income, the sale of FLISP units, and all interest accrued through investments of cash on hand, and others. It is important to note that the primary objective of this reserve is to fund bulk infrastructure and other human settlement related expenditure for new projects in the same financial year it was received.

WCGAPP and ICT

In this province we’ve embraced technology. In March 2020, we launched our mobile WCGApp. This App ensures that our citizens can easily access information on



government housing assistance, and register for the first time, or update their details on the Housing Demand Database (HDD). Registering for a housing opportunity is now in the palms of our people's hands.

We are in the process of developing a mobile reporting app to enhance the reporting process that enables officials to report in real-time from the field; digitise contract management documents on the MyContent system to allow for easy retrieval of documents such as agreements; improve the Western Cape Housing Demand Database to enable municipalities to effectively manage the registration of housing demand by citizens and enhance the executive dashboard that reports on projects.

In the 2022/23 financial year, the focus will be on enhancing the interaction with citizens through digitising our Subsidy Application process with the focus on FLISP subsidies and the transfer of title deeds, as well as developing a Citizen Complaints System.

CONCLUSION

Voorsitter, die Wes-Kaap se doelwit is doeltreffende behuisingsoplossings vir al ons mense, en volhoubare oplossings wat integrasie tot gevolg het.

Chair, it should be abundantly clear that the Western Cape does not pay lip service to creating integrated and sustainable human settlements. We deliver tangible solutions for current needs, and solutions that shows the way forward.

Thank you

