



Press Release
24 May 2017

NEW BUDGET TO DELIVER INTEGRATED HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

The demand by our communities for adequate and accessible settlements continues especially middle-income earners. This was indicated by Human Settlements MEC, Mr Speed Mashilo who highlighted that so was the issue of land acquisition for human settlements still remained a huge challenge in the Province. Mashilo spoke on these issues when he tabled the Department's Budget Vote at the Provincial Legislature this week, 23 May 2017 as he tabled a staggering **R1.646 billion** for the 2017/18 financial year.

In his assertions, he explained that as a department they are mandated to service stands and also provide for those who want to buy land for their own development. Providing a substantial submission to some of the challenges the Department has had during the past financial year, MEC Mashilo gave reference of inconducive areas in Graskop where, due to their topography there is no suitable land for human settlements, hence a need to urgently get land for the people of Graskop. The Department is consolidating delivery of existing major infrastructure projects in various municipalities and will this financial year start rolling-out new BNG projects throughout the province.

Mashilo noted with concern the unrelenting trend the Department is faced with of illegal occupation of RDP houses by non-beneficiaries. He however, spoke with conviction that the Department is investigating the matter with the intention to getting to the bottom of who is behind the illegal allocation of these units. Meanwhile, Portfolio Committee Chairperson, Mr Thulare Madileng welcomed the budget presentation and commended the department for good governance and that it is apparent in the department: "The budget responds to the poor of the poorest including the working class and middle income earners," He however implored the department to improve on beneficiary management.

Of among the many priorities the Department has committed to roll out this financial year, Mashilo told the gathering that since the mandate compels the department to play a central role in development, they are continuing to engage municipalities to prioritize bulk services through their Municipal Infrastructure Grand (MIG) and other avenues to ensure effective project implementation. "The lack of bulk infrastructure in municipalities presents a huge challenge for overall development. Over and above this call, we will be in continuous consultation with the municipalities and the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport to ensure that our settlements have proper and gravelled roads going forward," he said.

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