



Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mxolisi Siyonzana called a meeting to forge a working relationship with developers in the Metro



Acting City Manager Sello More



Mmuso Tsoametsi



Yusuf Bardot



Wilco du Toit and Motsamai Mofokeng



Charl Gray

DEVELOPERS PLEDGE TO PARTNER WITH THE CITY

Developers in Mangaung Metro have made a commitment to join hands with the City as part of continued efforts to contribute towards the growth of the metro. This comes following a call made by Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mxolisi Siyonzana, in a meeting held on Thursday, 26 August 2021, where he invited players in the industry to partner with the City to advance Mangaung.

Addressing the industry, the EM said: "The main purpose of this meeting is to discuss how we can best work together to ensure development in the City; I am requesting you to make a pledge to assist us. We must find a way of turning the city around."

Cllr. Siyonzana further acknowledged that a vacuum in leadership and poor engagement with stakeholders also led to many challenges that are being faced. He said the City has not been engaging broadly with developers, which led to different realities on the ground.

"There's a decision that was taken that we're going to stop development in the north and that it would go to the N8 corridor; but each time you look at development, developers have an appetite to invest towards the north. It tells you that some of the decisions we have taken were not properly researched. We will need those people who can advise the Executive Mayor so that the EM can take proper decisions," he said to an applause.

The meeting also gave the stakeholders an opportunity to raise their concerns and challenges they have experienced with the city, from lack of engagement on the part of management to delays in approval of plans. Amongst others was for the City to be responsive to services delivery reports – from sewer blockages to potholes and leaking pipes; to approving plans that have the potential of creating hundreds of jobs and grow the economy of Mangaung.

Charl Gray, who represented the PHG Group, reiterated that the only way to attract investors and grow the city is to have vested interest in long term development. "There are a lot of developers that have left Bloemfontein and we say to them, good luck wherever you're going. We are going to stay here and think about the long term and how we are going to fix Bloemfontein properly," Gray said.

In a similar vein, Mmuso Tsoametsi said the private sector is always willing to partner with government. Tsoametsi remarked: "It is very clear that the private sector wants to participate, and we have already been doing so individually, but let us reorganize it and formulate in an organised format. Let us have a short term-, medium- and long-term plan on how we are formulating the city; how are we going to make it conducive for both staying and investment."

The City has nonetheless been called to walk the talk and keep

its end of the bargain. Whilst congratulating the efforts, Yusuf Bardot chastised management for not doing more to ensure service delivery and meeting investors halfway. "I commend you for having the audacity to call us into such a meeting, now I expect you to deliver. We appreciate every little bit that you are doing, and if there is anything we do can from our side, we will join hands," he said.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Kobimpe Moqeqwa exclaimed that this is a "great initiative which requires the support of all stakeholders and is long overdue. The Mayor has it at the right button – economic opportunities are key to turning the city around and creating jobs," he said.

Following inputs from the floor, Cllr. Siyonzana made an undertaking to put in place a forum of developers that will play an advisory role on matters regarding development to the Executive Mayor. He further committed to ensuring that stakeholder engagement meetings are held regularly to prevent a gap in discussions.

In heeding the EM's call for pledges towards, various developers committed their trucks to assist with refuse removal within their areas of operation and surrounding areas, whilst others made an undertaking to adopt parks that they will maintain – from the suburbs to the townships of Mangaung.

MANGAUNG NEWS UPDATE

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