



MEDIA RELEASE

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Knysna Municipality in partnership with National Departments for development purpose

On Friday 19 February 2016, Knysna Municipality hosted National Ministers Lindiwe Sisulu and Dipou Peters, Deputy Minister Zou Kota-Fredericks, the Head of SANRAL Nazir Alli and the Head of the National Housing Agency Pacal Moloï. They were in Knysna to begin the process of developing the land within the national road reserve. SANRAL handed over 72 hectares of land for the purpose of integrated social, economic and recreational development.

Knysna Speaker Eleanore Bouw-Spies commended the ministers on this bold and visionary initiative, she said “Over the past years we have experienced constraints, when it comes to the issue of land, and our demand for housing has increased significantly. We welcome the partnership with the national departments, and Council commits itself to give full effect to what has been given to Knysna.”

In his presentation of the additional infrastructure needs, and interventions needed for the necessary consequences of such a project; Director of Planning and Development, Mr. Mike Maughan-Brown said, “As our residents are aware, we have a challenge when it comes to our water resources. Our town is in a very vulnerable position because our water sources are very short rivers running between the mountains and the sea and they are very susceptible to local variations in weather patterns. I am pleased that Minister Sisulu has committed to bringing the Department of Water and Sanitation on board to assist.”

Knysna Municipal Manager, Grant Easton explained how the development plan fits into the municipality’s strategic plan, “With regard to the way forward, Minister Sisulu made it very clear as to what she expects from the national departments and agencies, and what she expects is delivery.” According to Mr. Easton, the Minister also made it very clear, the importance of the role of Knysna in regards to tourism in South Africa, and the ultimate benefits that this project will have. “National government describes this as a “catalytic” development project with positive social and economic benefits for all sectors and communities. That fits exactly within our overall long term strategic planning.”

“SANRAL inherited the land in 1994 for roads development, but it is no longer viable for that purpose. The land will be for integrated social, economic and recreational purpose and not just housing. The Knysna Municipality has strongly engaged over the past few years to transform the environment in the northern areas into one that is safe and conducive to social and

economic interaction and offers the residents the real amenities of an urban area. This marks an enormous step forward to achieve that transformation further”, said Mr. Easton.

The Speaker concluded by praising the partnership, “We are here to find the balance between housing, security and landownership, the demands of transport, and the expanded economy we need. We must find the solutions to the health of our lagoon and forest, and the health and prosperity of the people that surround it. This event today, is the affirmation that so many in this country yearn for; that I am worthy of a decent home, My piece of Knysna, My piece of Africa.”

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