17/07/2019

Attention: Knysna Municipality Town Planning and Building Control

To whom it may concern

GARDEN ROUTE REBUILD INITIATIVE ("GRRI")
FUND FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF KNYSNA AND THE EDEN DISTRICT ("FUND")

Immediately following the disastrous fires of 7 to 10 June 2017, the innovative idea to form a Province-mandated independent project structure was mooted. This became the GRRI and the Fund originates from various engagements between concerned citizens, Knysna Councillors, the Executive Mayors and key Western Cape MEC’s. The “Build Back Better” strategy for fire affected areas would operate through the formality of local authorities.

A foundation principle for establishment of the Fund was governance oversight of corporate sector donations towards the relief and future rebuild of Knysna and Eden District, in association with local authorities.

The Fund for the Reconstruction of Knysna and the Eden District has been established as a Non-Profit and Public Benefit Organization specifically to work within the auspices of the Garden Route Rebuild Initiative established by Western Cape Government. Its objective is to “Build Back Better” in partnership with Garden Route District Municipality ("Eden") and the Knysna and Bitou Local Municipalities.

A Project Management Office ("PMO") was established by the GRRI early in the process, with resourcing support from the Fund and Eden. A set of Strategic Objectives were developed for approval by each of the Municipal Councils, in a process managed on a pro bono basis by McKinsey.

The 7 Workstreams identified through the research conducted by McKinsey were identified as:

- Tourism
- Environmental Resilience
- Business Chamber
- Human Settlements
- Skills Development
• Water Security
• Waste Minimisation

On 16 April 2018, Western Province MEC Alan Winde wrote to the Executive Mayors and Municipal Managers of Eden, Knysna and Bitou. In his letter he signalled dissolution of the PMO, with GRRI projects “mainstreamed into and driven by Municipalities”.

The Directors of the Fund have stepped in to share much of the engagement work, regularly meeting with stakeholders both in and outside of the local authorities. Where an initiative or potential project might require more detailed involvement of the Fund, the solution would be to outsource that involvement to one or more of the many locally available expert resources.

The Fund has partnered with Africa Skills to assist with the establishment of a much-needed Skills Center in Knysna. The Fund is also working closely with the Garden Route District Municipality on their Skills Mecca Initiative.

This is a very exciting venture and is much needed for the socio-economic development of Knysna.

We look forward to making a great success of this project, with the assistance of Knysna Municipality.

The Fund for the Reconstruction of Knysna and the Eden District