



**For immediate release**

**SAIBPP annual convention: The future of empowerment in property development**

Empowerment, transformation, and collaboration: These are some of the themes that emerged at the annual convention of the South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners, which took place on 2 and 3 November.

According to Vuyiswa Mutshekwane, SAIBPP CEO, the convention was very successful. “The way we crafted our programme really reflected our objectives – to facilitate a solution-oriented strategic discussion around the transformation of the property sector,” she said. “In crafting our programme, we sought to draw meaningful input from all key property industry stakeholders. The programme included representatives from the private sector, financial services, civil society and the public sector – namely; the department of public works, provincial and local government as represented by the CEO of Joburg Property Company, Ms Helen Botes.

The Green Building Council spoke about the opportunities available for green building practitioners within the space as a new area for black professionals to work in, while Mashilo Pitjeng, Managing Director of Tsebo Real Asset Management, spoke about the necessity of internal reflection and the need for self-empowerment, Mutshekwane explained.

During a panel discussion on funding, Robin Lockharte Ross of Nedbank discussed the role the financial services sector can play in terms of making it easier for new entrants to access finance.

Boni Muvevi, CEO of the Gauteng Partnership Fund (GPF), explained that Gauteng has a low-income housing backlog of approximately 900 000 units. Government has limited

resources, so the GPF was established with the private sector, with the Gauteng Department of Human Settlements (GDHS) as its executive authority.

The GPF serves as the financing vehicle of the GDHS. Its Empowerment Property Fund assists companies to fund the property acquisition, renovation or conversion of housing projects in Gauteng. "The Fund is necessary because of constraints to entrance to the property market for BEE entities, including lack of equity to contribute towards a project or assets as security of loan", Muvevi said.

According to Helen Botes, CEO of the Joburg Property Company, local government's key strategic projects to drive transformation include a comprehensive land strategy framework. It focuses on job creation and transformation, SMME and youth development in property, women development in property to achieve gender parity, and partnership between private and public sector on public land to contribute to the achievement of the 17 sustainable development goals. "The provision of land for socio-economic purposes is a vital component of a healthy, growing economy," Botes said. "Land provides an intrinsic link to the economic sustainability and strength of a city and on a wider scale, contributes to the overall national and global economy."

This framework holds JPC accountable in terms of the key performance areas, and positions the CoJ to adequately and capably respond and support socio-economic growth.

In a panel discussion on facilities management, David Khasebe explained that international FM standards are quite generic, and that SA has always adopted, never developed, standards.

The new South African-developed PDCA model, which is awaiting approval and publication of draft standards, addresses SA-specific issues: incomplete, confused planning; misapplication of in-house and outsourced models; high levels of under-resourcing; lack of core competencies; and lack of investment in research and benchmarking.

"The new approach will promote 21st century workplace projects, condition assessments, green buildings, and monitoring and control," Khasebe said.

"The new facilities management has the potential to compete with tourism as a strategic economic sector and job creator."

Khasebe's discussion partner, Mohsien Hassim, spoke about the Internet of Things (a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects, animals or people, that connects objects like cars, buildings, machines turning them into 'intelligent' assets than can communicate with people, applications and each other).

In terms of the IoT's application to facilities management, automation improves overall management, enhances the asset life cycle and reduces running costs.

While there are challenges for South Africa, such as data costs and the volatility of the Rand, we are also focusing on science and technology as growth areas.

"Smart phone market penetration is skyrocketing, there is a technology update within government, and Smart City initiatives are happening," Hassim said.

The Gauteng MEC for Health, Qedani Mahlangu, was one of the attendees. Nandi Mayathula-Khoza, MEC for Social Development and Office of the Premier, introduced the Gauteng Tshepo 500 000 project, an expanded public works programme. Its stakeholders include several provincial departments, such as those for Social Development, Economic Development and Infrastructure Development.

The Tshepo 500 000 is an employment creation and entrepreneurship development programme with the goal of training, skilling and mentoring 500 000 young people through a set of projects aimed at empowering youth, women and people with disabilities. The programme is taking place over five years (2014—2019).

"We really took an aerial view of the industry and sought to understand its key levers of change, and to provide a platform for attendees to engage with key decision makers in the industry," Mutshekwane concluded.

"The event was fully subscribed, with 250 people attending from quite diverse areas: property owners, developers, contractors, professionals from the built environment. There was a lot of networking going on and business cards being exchanged, so we're hoping that the business opportunities that emerge will be one of the outcomes."

Ends.

## **ABOUT SAIBPP**

The South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) has the key objective of driving transformation within the South African property sector. This is achieved by facilitating economic participation and skills development for previously disadvantaged individuals, and ensuring more representative participation in the property industry. The

organisation comprises of +/-500 skilled black property practitioners and property owners including professionals, business leaders, suppliers and stakeholders from both private and public sector.

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