

Social housing for inner city

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The face of Port Elizabeth's inner city is set to undergo a drastic revamp, with plans to transform some old, rundown buildings into social housing projects.



Nelson Mandela Bay human settlements political head Nqaba Bhanga. Image source: www.mype.co.za

This was revealed by new Nelson Mandela Bay human settlements political head Nqaba Bhanga, as he outlined plans which he said would integrate communities.

"We have already identified parcels of land in the metro, like in Walmer, Parsonslei, Mount Road and John Street in Uitenhage," Bhanga said.

"We have to adapt the by-laws as some buildings are an eyesore.

"We have to regenerate the city so that we can redevelop these buildings."

Some of the planned social housing projects would be situated in Central, which he hoped would beautify the city and bring it back to its glory days.

"Property developers left their dilapidated buildings which are now used by gangs," Bhanga said.

"With by-laws, we will be able to find a way to enforce compliance that property owners should maintain their buildings. They should comply with the health and safety acts."

To achieve this, the metro was already working on a problem buildings by-law.

Bhanga said there was a need to raise the standard of living in Western Road by fixing the buildings and area around them.

Bay mayor Athol Trollip said on Thursday, 1 September: "I think it's a disgrace that within spitting distance of City Hall there are problem buildings.

"We are going to have social housing in the inner city.

"We need to bring this inner city to life. We have seen that we can run social housing in this city and even win awards.

"After 10 years of a DA-led multi-party government, the inner city is going to look completely different.

"I am not naive to say it is going to look completely different in five years, but our objective is to move people closer to opportunities and to create opportunities.

"Why should young people - first-time home owners - not live right here in some of these buildings?

"Or demolish these buildings and build proper suburban social housing and rental stock?"

Source: Herald

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