

Gauteng recovers illegally occupied buildings

The Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) has launched an initiative to recover government buildings that are illegally occupied. The department intends to use these buildings for student accommodation and for other service delivery needs.



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On Tuesday, 31 October it said it had identified several properties that are illegally occupied, which pose a risk to surrounding communities. Some of these properties are highly valuable assets, while others are non-core assets, which will be disposed through auctions.

MEC Jacob Mamabolo told the Gauteng Provincial Legislature that the initiative was part of the provincial government's objective to maximise the value of all registered and strategic properties owned by government.

In 2016, the department completed the Immovable Asset Register worth just over R31bn and is already implementing a programme to ensure that these properties provide value to Gauteng residents.

The department has already started reclaiming some illegally occupied properties in the City of Tshwane to make them available to meet the student accommodation needs.

"I will be taking this initiative to the other parts of the province to reclaim these properties for the interests of the people of Gauteng," said the MEC.

He said the department has received the go-ahead from the provincial government to ensure that all public properties are managed effectively and efficiently in order to relieve the province of the unnecessary costs such as those related to security and maintenance.

The process of disposing of properties that are non-strategic to the core business of government is already in motion and has seen the official residence of the premier being sold.

The department will enter into medium- and short-term leases with the private sector so that government's property portfolio can be utilised to help boost the economy.

"We will also be going to the market to acquire technical capacity to manage these properties, enter into lease agreements and collect revenue to ensure that these assets can serve the needs of the people of our province," said MEC Mamabolo.

As part of modernising its business processes, the department has built an automated electronic asset register that allows the constant monitoring of the entire property portfolio.

This system is housed in the department's project known as Lutsinga Infrastructure House - a hub to monitor project performance and maintenance.

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