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MEDIA RELEASE

26 September 2023

SALGA to host 7th Annual Karoo Small Town Regeneration (STR) Conference: 27-28 September 2023

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) will host its annual Karoo Small Town Regeneration (STR) conference on 27-28 September 2023 in Springbok, Northern Cape.

The SALGA STR initiative was launched in 2013 and is led by SALGA's Economic Development and Planning Directorate (EDP) in four provinces namely: the Eastern Cape, Free State, Northern Cape, and Western Cape.

Its primary aim includes ensuring coordination, integration, and harmonization of socio-economic infrastructure investments. It is also aimed at ensuring economic growth and job creation initiatives and discussing spatial transformation strategies in accordance with a shared vision and set of development objectives for the Karoo region.

The conference will be presented with the resolutions and the progress made on the outcomes of the annual conference held in Oudtshoorn in the Western Cape, 2022. Representatives from over 40 Karoo municipalities spanning the four provinces as well as selected relevant national and provincial departments will attend the event.

SALGA Northern Cape's Provincial Executive Committee Chairperson, Councillor Michael Segede said the STR was initiated with the rationale for a regional inter-municipal cooperation as an appropriate scale to achieve sustainable development. "The Karoo Small Town Regeneration initiative aims to strengthen the municipal sector by increasing capacities of the municipalities across the Eastern Cape, Free State, Northern Cape and the Western Cape," said Segede.

The delegates will be introduced to members of the newly established Karoo IGR Forum, under the leadership of Councillor Rhooode Itumeleng. The forum will provide formal conduit for political and technical intergovernmental collaboration, cooperation, integration and harmonization in the initiation, strengthening and support of spatial social and economic development in the region and sub-regions.

The Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) also embarked on the process of preparing a Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) for the Karoo Region in terms of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, Act 16 of 2013 (SPLUMA) within a period of 18 months, commencing in mid-June 2020 and concluding in December 2021. The DALRRD also appointed a multi-disciplinary service provider team to assist with this process. This was also launched at the 2022 Karoo STR Conference.

The one-and-a-half-day programme will include discussions on innovation mapping in the Karoo Region with an update on technology innovations in line with the regional, provincial, and national Spatial Development Frameworks to enhance development of small towns in the Karoo. Day 1 will be closed by a site visit to the Goegap Nature Reserve, which is found in the Springbok area as a local place of interest in the town.

Members of the media are invited to the conference which will be held as follows:

Date: 27-28 September 2023

Time: 08:00 both days.

Venue: Springbok Guest Farm, Springbok, Northern Cape

End

Issued by: South African Local Government Association

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