

Police services must be easily accessible to those in need

WITH reference to Minister Pravin Gordhan's Budget speech.

One of the police stations earmarked for upgrading, at an estimated cost of R100 million, is the one presently located in Muizenberg.

The fact is, this police station is incorrectly located, with almost impossible rapid access to trouble spots which are primarily in the Capricorn area and its surrounds.

Those familiar with the station will agree that for police to gain access to the main road in peak times and during holiday periods is a nightmare. Ambulance and other emergency services are

hopelessly compromised in providing their services due to the logistics of reaching the station.

An added advantage to people living in this area is that they own motor vehicles, other modes of travel and employ the services of private security on a 24-hour basis.

In contrast, people living in the Capricorn area are largely impoverished and have to contend with high unemployment presently at 70 percent, vicious crime, shootings, killings, drug abuse, child molestation and rape. Neither do they enjoy the luxury of private transport nor private security. For

them to access law enforcement in Muizenberg is a logistical nightmare – leave alone identifying the locality.

The Cape Town City Council has earmarked an area for the relocation of the police station, to be built adjacent to a prestigious school by a German company in Capricorn Park.

The locality borders the M5 and has immediate access to the freeway, for purposes of rapid response in times of emergencies, and is highly visible from the M5.

It is well positioned in terms of servicing communities where it is most needed.

Other services, such as magistrate's courts, ambulance services, counselling facilities and allied services could be incorporated into this project. This would allow for a holistic approach to service adjacent communities in bringing policing closer to the people.

The cost of building a police station in Capricorn will come at a fraction of the cost compared to an upgrade in Muizenberg.

At a recent meeting, community organisations in the Capricorn area, together with the ward 67 councillor, unanimously endorsed the relocation of the police station. Likewise, adjacent

community policing forums and civic organisations, together with the councillor for ward 64, have also expressed the futility of having the police station in its present location, and fully support that it be relocated to Capricorn Park.

The overwhelming call for relocation is unanimous and therefore an urgent appeal to the Public Works Department or commissioner of police in engaging with stakeholders in revisiting an arena of immense concern to our communities.

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Retreat