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The programme looks to provide developmental and economic empowerment programmes, link persons accommodated at the space to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that support street people, provide access to Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) opportunities for persons accommodated in the space as well as provide an exit strategy through personal development plans and links to economic opportunities.

Smith encourages homeless people to utilise the transitional facility once it is operational.

Richard Bolland, a board member at New Hope, an organisation that helps homeless people without discriminating against them, says there has always been a lack of facilities available for people seeking to leave the streets as “there are only a few first-phase shelters in the CBD area, which are consistently full. Shelters further out of the CBD area such as Retreat, Paarl and Malmesbury often have space but are not close enough to work opportunities or services. It is extremely difficult to open new shelters in Cape Town because of land space and objections from ratepayers and businesses,” he explains.

He says homeless people are as much a part of the community of Cape Town as any other homeowners or ratepayers and through this facility businesses and residences around the CBD and Culemborg area will also benefit as fewer people will be sleeping on the street. This will in turn reduce the bylaw infringements that result from living on the streets.

Bolland says New Hope SA is not actively involved in any of the planning or operations of the safe space under the Culemborg Bridge.

“However, we are hoping that the safe space itself will allow for people to sleep in safety without fear of crime or Law Enforcement.

“Homeowners and ratepayers should stand in solidarity with the less fortunate who find themselves on the streets. All we can do is to support this initiative and hope that it serves the homeless in our city and can make a positive impact in their lives. We have to believe that it is possible to journey from the streets to independence. As the organisation we are thankful to the City of Cape Town for being proactive and we really hope this is the start of something that makes a great impact in our city.”