Using Technology in Real Property Practices and Sustainable Cities. The Cape Town Case Study

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SUMMARY

Property Tax is increasingly been viewed by governments across the African continent as a viable potential revenue stream. This, despite the fact, that land ownership –as a concept- is a different concept in Africa as it is understood in the developed world. Most of Africa, until recently, had a land tenure system that was dominated by traditional land ownership. Private Land Ownership is still a foreign concept to many African societies. Notwithstanding, governments across the continent are issuing title deeds to those who live on the land, specifically to facilitate the notion of a property tax. In order for Property tax to be levied fairly and transparently, it is essential that the parcels must be valued according to acceptable and measurable criteria. Whatever this criteria is, governments will require assistance with this valuation process. This paper will outline the steps within Land Administration that must be undertaken before the delivery of an acceptable General Valuation Roll. It is our contention that any municipal valuation will require the use of technology. Specifically GIS underpinned technology. Now that it has been established that there is a need for technology, we will look at how CAMA, or computer aided mass appraisal can be deployed to help with the valuations process. We will then look at the developments within oblique imagery and how this has enabled valuers to value parcels more accurately and efficiently, and more importantly, more cost-effectively. To underpin this lecture, and to relate the theory to reality, we will look at how the City of Cape Town municipality, in South Africa, deployed both the CAMA technology as well as oblique imagery. Cape Town has recently been awarded as the Jurisdiction of the Year 2014 honours based on the innovative way they deployed their CAMA Valuation system. This case study will look to extrapolate the lessons from the City of Cape Town experience.

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