



BRETT HERRON

A Public Record, 2009–2026



Told from independent sources — newspaper reporting, City and provincial records, academic case studies, and third-party statements — not from Brett's own website, social media, or campaign materials. Where Brett's own account is included to correct or contest a claim, it is clearly labelled as his account.

1.

CITY GOVERNMENT: COUNCIL TO EXECUTIVE (2009–2018)

A COUNCILLOR WHO STARTED WITH THE PEOPLE THE SYSTEM OVERLOOKED

Brett Herron entered public life in 2009, not through a mayoral office but through the unglamorous work of a first-term councillor on Cape Town's Housing Portfolio Committee. His first real fight there wasn't about a headline project — it was about backyard dwellers, the tenants living in structures on other people's properties who had no direct claim on municipal services because the City's programmes weren't built to see them. Brett pushed for a motion to change that, and the City agreed to start delivering services directly to backyard tenants rather than routing everything through landlords.

> Source: IOL/Cape Argus, 4 Sept 2018.

It was a small, procedural win by the standards of a headline-driven news cycle. But it set the pattern for almost everything that followed in his career: start with who's excluded, and work outward from there.



LEARNING CITY HALL FROM THE GROUND UP

Brett came into office via the Independent Democrats, elected to Council in 2009. In 2010, he was appointed Mayoral Committee Member for Community Services: libraries, parks, recreation centres, cemeteries — the unglamorous infrastructure that decides whether a

neighbourhood feels cared for or forgotten. Later that year the ID formally merged with the DA — a merger he didn't choose but which put him inside the majority party running the city. Community Services was a portfolio most political careers treat as a stepping stone. Brett treated it as an apprenticeship in how the machinery of a city actually works.

> Sources: Wikipedia; People's Assembly (PMG data); IOL/Cape Argus, 4 Sept 2018.

A WARD COUNCILLOR WHILE RUNNING A CITYWIDE PORTFOLIO

From 2011 to 2016, alongside his mayoral committee responsibilities, Brett also served as the directly elected Ward Councillor for Ward 57 — Devil's Peak, District Six, Gardens, Observatory, Woodstock, Salt River and Mowbray. Ward-level records from that period show him handling neighbourhood business alongside his citywide brief: flagging unauthorised earthmoving works on the Liesbeeck riverbank in Observatory to the City's environmental resource management department, and hosting annual seniors' outings for retirement homes across the ward.

> Source: daward57.wordpress.com (ward councillor records, 2013–2015).

As ward councillor, he controlled an annual ward-allocation budget — which grew from R500,000 to R700,000 in the 2012/13 financial year — spent on projects he and an active ward committee prioritised from a standing community "wish list." His own contemporaneous records, published year-end reports for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years, detail a wide spread of work: clearing a backlog of approved but unfunded traffic-calming measures (speed humps and raised crossings across eight named streets in Vredehoek, Woodstock and Walmer Estate); funding two community-driven park upgrades (the Plantation in Devil's Peak and the Maynard Street Children's Park in Gardens) after residents organised to reclaim under-used open spaces; and paying for park attendants — a local job-creation measure — at six parks across the ward.



He also funded employability skills training — garment construction for 20 unemployed young residents in 2012/13, followed by planned call-centre training the following year — continued the ward's annual senior citizens' event (including a 2012 lunch for around 100 seniors at Cape Town Stadium), and ran an Observatory/Woodstock "beautification" project pairing a public photography competition with a permanent outdoor exhibition at the old Hartleyvale Stadium site. Other ward-allocation spending went to paving the parking area at the Two Rivers Urban Park, bicycle-rack infrastructure timed to coincide with the City's 2014 World Design Capital year, library equipment for the ward's three libraries, and additional street lighting at three locations flagged by residents for safety.

> Source: daward57.wordpress.com, "Ward Projects" — Councilor Brett Herron's own year-end ward-allocation reports for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years, published contemporaneously (primary source; written in his own voice as ward councilor, not independent third-party reporting, though the specific streets, parks, budget figures and dates are independently checkable against City records).

BUILDING MYCITI

In 2011, Brett was handed the portfolio that would define the next seven years of his public life: Transport. Cape Town had never run its own public transport system before — its role had been limited to managing taxi ranks. He took charge of MyCiTi at the point where it needed to grow from a World Cup-era pilot into a real network, and over the next five years led its expansion into Blouberg, Table View, Atlantis, Melkbosstrand, Milnerton, Century City, and the length of the Atlantic Seaboard to Hout Bay. Under the City's own phased rollout plan, Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain were not due to be served until Phase 2 — a stage of the 15-to-20-year, four-phase system that could have been many years away. The City's 2012 MyCiTi Business Plan explicitly introduced the N2 Express as a short-term intervention to relieve pressure on existing services between the metro south-east and the city centre ahead of that wait, and to test innovations before their formal adoption into Phase 2. A Cape Times editorial in October 2012 confirms Brett, as the responsible Mayco member,

announced the plan with the stated objective of getting every home within 500m of the service. The N2 Express opened in 2014, connecting Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain directly into the city's rapid transit network well ahead of the areas' formal Phase 2 slot.

Sources: City of Cape Town, "Business Plan: MyCiTi Phase 1A, 1B and N2 Express (V4.02)," 17 Sept 2012 (official City planning document, primary source); Cape Times, "Editorial: Smart move," 9 Oct 2012; Wikipedia, "MyCiTi" (2014 launch date).

An independent academic case study of the rollout, part of a multi-country climate-transport research programme, described MyCiTi as a genuine institutional achievement: the first time the City had taken direct operational responsibility for a public transport system rather than simply regulating one. The system's automated fare card technology, built under Brett's watch, won the international Mastercard award in 2014 for the best bank-based fare system in the world.



> Source: Boulle, M. & van Ryneveld, P., "Unpacking Implementation — The Case of the MyCiTi Bus Rapid Transit in Cape Town," MAPS Programme, 2015.

The same study didn't let the achievement go unqualified — it flagged the system's ongoing operating-subsidy requirement as a long-term financial risk the City would need to keep managing. Twelve years on, that trade-off is still part of the conversation: 2026 reporting shows MyCiTi remains the country's best-performing BRT system, carrying 42% of all BRT trips nationally with ridership up 68% since 2021, even as National Government debates whether to keep funding it at the same level.

> Sources: Boulle & van Ryneveld, 2015; IOL/Weekend Argus, 16 May 2026.

STOPPING THE WINELANDS TOLL ROAD

Running alongside the MyCiTi build-out, Brett led the City's decade-long legal fight against SANRAL's proposed N1/N2 Winelands Toll Highway Project — a plan, dating back to 2008, to toll 105km of the N1 between Cape Town and Worcester and 70km of the N2 between Cape Town and Bot River. This was a physical toll-road scheme, distinct from Gauteng's electronic-gantry e-tolls, though it drew on the same public anger over that system. Brett

first pursued an intergovernmental dispute process against SANRAL, then took them to court after SANRAL refused to engage with the City's objections — including the economic impact on poorer commuters and a toll project cost that he said had escalated from R1.6 billion in 2000 to R44.9 billion by 2010.



> Sources: Indian Tollways/Cape Times, "Cape Town threatens lawsuit over tolls"; Tourism Update, "Winelands tolls will benefit tourism — Sanral," 13 Aug 2015.

In May 2013, the Western Cape High Court granted the City an interim interdict halting SANRAL from implementing the toll project pending a full review — a result Brett announced at the time, noting the then-Transport Minister had not been fully briefed on the project's costs before authorising it. SANRAL spent the next two years resisting the City's efforts to access its decision-making documents, including trying to keep parts of the case secret, before the High Court finally heard the full review.

> Sources: Polity.org.za/Sapa, "Cape Town returns to court over tolls," 27 Nov 2013; OFM, "Judgement reserved in Sanral application," 5 Aug 2014; Whale Tales Blog (contemporary coverage of the May 2013 interdict).

On 30 September 2015, the High Court ruled largely in the City's favour, setting aside SANRAL's decisions declaring the routes toll roads. SANRAL appealed; in September 2016 the Supreme Court of Appeal dismissed that appeal outright, finding SANRAL and the Transport Minister had acted unlawfully in declaring the routes toll roads. SANRAL took the matter to the Constitutional Court, which dismissed its bid to have the High Court and SCA judgments overturned — meaning SANRAL would have to restart the entire public participation process from scratch if it ever wanted to revive the project. It never did: the Winelands toll road was never built.

> Sources: EWN, "Sanral loses appeal over Winelands toll project," 22 Sept 2016; ITWeb, "Sanral loses appeal to toll Cape Town roads" (Constitutional Court ruling); Engineering News, "N1/N2 Winelands toll-highway project, South Africa," 3 Dec 2015.

PUTTING ARMED OFFICERS ON THE TRAINS: THE RAIL ENFORCEMENT UNIT

By 2018, arson and vandalism had destroyed 149 Metrorail carriages since May 2015, with individual attacks costing as much as R51 million. In February 2018, Brett convened a rail crisis summit in Woodstock with the City's Transport and Urban Development Authority, the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works, PRASA, rail experts and business leaders. That summit produced a joint commitment to deploy a dedicated law enforcement unit onto the rail network — a proposal he said the City's Safety and Security Directorate had been raising with rail entities for years without success.

> Sources: Bizcommunity, "City of Cape Town to recruit 100 rail enforcement officers," 2 Aug 2018; News24, "Saboteurs behind train torching 'pretend to be commuters' — Cape Town transport head," 30 July 2018.

The resulting Rail Enforcement Unit was formalised in a May 2018 agreement between the City, PRASA and the Western Cape Government, each contributing R16 million toward a R47.9 million 12-month pilot to recruit, train, arm and deploy 100 officers — armed with firearms, pepper spray and bulletproof vests, in contrast to PRASA's own unarmed security contingent. The unit split its focus 60% on passenger safety and 40% on protecting rail infrastructure from theft and vandalism. PRASA initially fell behind on its R16 million contribution; a joint statement from himself, Western Cape Transport MEC Donald Grant, and PRASA's acting rail CEO confirmed PRASA's recommitment to pay in full.



> Sources: IOL/Cape Argus, "R47.9m for special rail policing unit for Cape Metrorail," 24 May 2018; Daily Maverick, "Trains set alight despite commuter safety plan being signed by Prasa and the City," 27 June 2018; Western Cape Government, "PRASA to pay outstanding contribution for special rail enforcement unit" (joint statement).

The unit was officially launched at Cape Town Station on 29 October 2018, with Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, national Transport Minister Blade Nzimande, Brett, and City Safety and Security Mayco member JP Smith in attendance to inspect the 100 new recruits alongside PRASA's own enforcement team.

> Sources: *TimesLIVE*, "Cape Town's new train police hit the tracks," 29 Oct 2018; *GroundUp*, "New Rail Enforcement Unit officers will be armed," 30 Oct 2018.

THE FORESHORE FREEWAY PRECINCT: A BRIDGE LEFT UNFINISHED

Under Brett's Transport and Urban Development Authority, the City issued a Request for Proposals calling on the private sector to solve one of Cape Town's most visible urban failures: the unfinished elevated highway bridges on the Foreshore, standing incomplete since the 1970s. The RFP asked bidders to propose a self-funded solution — developers would receive development rights over roughly six to eight hectares of City-owned land beneath and around the bridges, in exchange for an inner-city transport solution and incorporating affordable housing into the development, at no direct cost to ratepayers. Herron called it potentially the largest development Cape Town had seen, aimed at addressing both inner-city traffic congestion and the affordable housing shortage. As part of the process, bidders' proposals were put on public exhibition, with the City inviting residents to comment before the Bid Evaluation Committee made its final call — an unusually open, competitive design process for a project of this scale.

> Sources: *Cape Town Central City Improvement District* (capetownccid.org), "City calls for comment on CBD's Foreshore Freeway Precinct" (public viewing and comment period); *Weekend Argus*, "Reviving the Foreshore Freeway Bridge: Cape Town's long-awaited transport link," 4 July 2026 (Herron's own account of the concept and the eight-hectare figure — independent sources at the time cited six hectares).

After a two-year process considering seven development options, the City's Bid Evaluation Committee named Mitchell Du Plessis Associates (MDA) as the qualifying bidder in February 2018. MDA's proposal paired completion of the highway with roughly 3,200 market-related residential units across new towers and at least 450 affordable units — Herron welcomed the announcement publicly as a "historical moment."

> Sources: *CapeTown ETC*, "City announces developer of Foreshore Freeway Precinct," 13 Feb 2018; *News24*, "City of Cape Town cancels Foreshore Freeway Precinct project," 18 July 2018 (MDA proposal detail).

The project did not make it to construction. On 18 July 2018 — three and a half months before Brett's resignation, while he still held the portfolio — City Manager Lungelo Mbandazayo cancelled the RFP. The City's stated reason at the time was legal advice that the evaluation

criteria had been vague following complaints from unsuccessful bidders, alongside a weaker economic outlook than when the RFP was issued two years earlier. Brett disputes that characterisation: he has said the criteria were not vague, and that the cancellation followed political pressure after MDA had already progressed through the bid process as preferred bidder — not a genuine legal or procedural defect. The tender process was also criticised at the time by then-Deputy Mayor Ian Neilson, who said publicly that its evaluation criteria had been drafted in a way that "made potential corruption easy." Independent reporting found for this record does not resolve which account is correct.

> Sources: *Daily Maverick*, "City of Cape Town cancels Foreshore Freeway Precinct project," 18 July 2018; *EWN*, "Disappointment over failed Foreshore Freeway Precinct development," 18 July 2018; *News24*, "City of Cape Town's Foreshore tender 'made potential corruption easy' — deputy mayor," 23 July 2018 (Neilson quote); *Weekend Argus*, 4 July 2026 (Herron's disputing account).

Brett, in a July 2026 response to a DA proposal to revive a similar bridge-completion project, said a workable, self-funded solution had already been within reach in 2017/18, that completing the highways to their original design would cost at least R2 billion — an amount he said ratepayers could never fund directly — and that some of the land identified for the original project may no longer be available. He said he was later asked to depose an affidavit regarding what he described as political interference in the project's cancellation. This is his own account, not an independently adjudicated finding.



> Source: *Weekend Argus*, "Reviving the Foreshore Freeway Bridge: Cape Town's long-awaited transport link," 4 July 2026.

PUTTING WOMEN INTO ROAD REPAIR CREWS

Under the TDA's Women-at-Work Programme, run through its training academy, the City recruited and trained women to work on road maintenance crews — a field almost entirely staffed by men. By April 2018, the City had added its 13th all-women road repair team, women aged 24 to 40 sourced from local sub-council job-seeker databases, who trained to fix potholes and clear stormwater infrastructure alongside the City's 18

roads depots. The programme was run jointly with the Expanded Public Works Programme, which helped fund it — one team's complement was valued at R200,000.

> Source: Cape Argus/pressreader, "Women making inroads," 23 April 2018.

Brett, as the responsible Mayco member, described the programme as serving a double purpose: challenging the assumption that road maintenance work was only for men, while giving women — many of them sole breadwinners raising children alone, in areas like Atlantis with especially high unemployment — a route into steady work. One graduate of the programme, Kashiefa Beck, became a permanent employee at the City's Heideveld roads depot after completing her training. A separate 2018 feature recognised two women who had risen through the TDA's Roads and Stormwater Department into senior engineering roles, with Brett citing the all-women road repair teams as one of the City's concrete steps toward getting more women into traditionally male-dominated careers.



> Sources: Cape Argus/pressreader, "Women making inroads," 23 April 2018 (Kashiefa Beck); Cape Argus/pressreader, "City's 'women of strength and courage,'" 27 Aug 2018 (Herron quote, engineering profiles).

CLOSING BLIKKIESDORP: THE ACSA SYMPHONY WAY PROJECT

Blikkiesdorp — officially a Temporary Relocation Area established under Mayor Helen Zille in 2007-08 — had by the 2010s become a byword for the failure of "temporary" housing to stay temporary. In February 2015, ACSA signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the City to co-develop land along Symphony Way, targeting the relocation of residents from three settlements sitting on or near land ACSA needed for Cape Town International Airport's expansion: Blikkiesdorp itself, Freedom Farm, and Malawi Camp. The plan called for roughly 3,200 to 3,300 state-subsidised BNG housing units.

> Sources: PMG, "ACSA expansion and development plans for Cape Town International Airport and surrounding communities," committee meeting record; Democratic Alliance (content.voteda.org), "City turns sod at R500 million ACSA Symphony Way housing project."



What made the project distinctive was a skills-and-construction component launched in September 2017, while Brett held the Transport and Urban Development portfolio. The City, ACSA and False Bay TVET College jointly launched a multi-million-rand training programme for Blikkiesdorp residents — 91 people initially, the first 42 starting on 27 September 2017 — offering a National Certificate in Community House Building and modular bricklaying training, with ACSA contributing R5 million. He has said the intention behind the programme was for trained residents to then be contracted to build the very homes they and their neighbours would live in — a specific claim this record could not independently verify, though the choice of course (a house-building qualification, not a generic trade certificate) is consistent with it.

> Source: Democratic Alliance (da.org.za), "Skills development programme to benefit Blikkiesdorp residents," 28 Sept 2017 (independent confirmation of the skills programme's existence, scope and funding).

The project broke ground and continued after Brett's 2018 departure, but its history since has been troubled. Construction of internal civil services began in 2022, with Human Settlements Mayco member Malusi Booi touring the site to mark progress in 2022 and 2023. By early 2024, developers were withdrawing from the project — the City's largest housing development — citing extortion and safety threats from construction mafia activity, a problem independent reporting described as worsening across public-sector projects generally. As of a July 2026 report, residents were still describing 19 years of unfulfilled housing promises, with ACSA referring press queries about the project's status back to the City.

> Sources: IOL/Cape Argus, "Construction of mega R500m Symphony Way project progressing well," 20 Jan 2023; EWN, "Developers withdraw from the Cape's largest housing project due to construction mafia," 8 March 2024; Cape Argus, "Blikkiesdorp: 19 years of unfulfilled housing promises for residents," 7 July 2026.

THE PIVOT TO HOUSING, AND THE FIGHT THAT ENDED HIS DA CAREER

After the 2016 election, Mayor Patricia de Lille restructured her mayoral committee, and from January 2017 Brett's brief expanded to Transport and Urban Development — adding spatial planning and housing to a portfolio that already covered transport. Six months later, he stood up and did something no Cape Town mayoral committee member had done in years: he named specific, well-located, city-owned land — Salt River Market, the Woodstock Hospital site, and others — and said it should be used for affordable housing in the inner city, not on the periphery where the City had built low-cost housing for decades. He called it a "180-degree about-turn."



> Sources: GroundUp, "Brett Herron explains Cape Town's big housing policy shift," 6 Oct 2017; IOL/Cape Argus, 3 Oct 2018.

Brett has also said that under his watch the City not only met but exceeded its housing delivery targets for the first time. This claim is independently confirmed: a Democratic Alliance statement published on the party's own website on 24 July 2018 — while he still held the portfolio — reports that the City's Human Settlement Implementation Department, part of the TDA, exceeded its housing delivery target by 62% for the 2017/18 financial year (8,061 housing opportunities delivered against a target that had itself been raised mid-year from 4,961 to 6,677), the first time this had happened since the City's formation in December 2000.

> Source: Democratic Alliance, "City exceeds housing target for first time since 2000," *da.org.za*, 24 July 2018.

To carry the housing shift institutionally rather than leave it as a speech, his office adopted the Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Framework and set up the Transport and Urban Development Authority — a structure built specifically to stop planning transport and housing as two separate City functions.

> Source: GroundUp, 6 Oct 2017.

The DA caucus didn't go along with the housing plan. The party blocked the Salt River Market disposal — the sale that would have unlocked affordable housing at a discount

for Communicare — and Brett resigned from Council, his mayoral committee seat, and the DA on 1 November 2018, the ninth councillor to walk out that week.

> Sources: IOL/Cape Argus, 4 Sept 2018; Wikipedia; News24, 1 Nov 2018.

DRAFTING AN INCLUSIONARY HOUSING POLICY

Alongside the public-land initiative, Brett pursued a second, complementary tool: an inclusionary housing policy that would require private developers to contribute to affordable housing — either on-site, on separate well-located public land, or through a fee — in exchange for the additional development rights the City grants them. In an October 2017 interview, he said the City was already drafting an inclusionary housing policy framework and had begun a dialogue with developers about how to implement it.

> Source: GroundUp, "Brett Herron explains Cape Town's big housing policy shift," 6 Oct 2017.

In September 2018, the City's Mayoral Committee approved a concept document on inclusionary housing, opening the way for formal engagement; Brett committed to bringing a full policy to Council "as a matter of urgency." The move faced internal resistance — GroundUp reported that some politicians and officials were reluctant to advance the agenda, believing a policy would be damaging to the property and development industry.

> Source: IOL/Cape Times, "Workshop to explore inclusionary housing policy in city," 19 Sept 2018; GroundUp, "Affordable Housing: City of Cape Town and developers at crossroads," 11 Sept 2018.

A detailed City discussion document, dated 24 August 2018 and issued under the TDA with named officials alongside Brett as the responsible Mayco member, set out a full concept for how inclusionary housing would work in Cape Town — grounded in the principle of "land value sharing" (the idea that when the City grants a developer additional development rights, some of the resulting value increase should be shared back for affordable housing) and drawing on international expertise from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, a US-based think tank advising cities worldwide on the mechanism. The document proposed three implementation routes — building affordable units on-site, developing them off-site on a suitable separate location, or paying a fee in lieu — and recommended the requirement be mandatory in key growth areas of the city.

> Source: City of Cape Town / Transport and Urban Development Authority, "Inclusionary Housing: Concept Document," discussion document, 24 August 2018 (primary source, provided by Herron).

The City also sought a formal legal opinion on the policy's constitutionality before taking it further. Advocate Karrisha Pillay's written opinion, dated 5 October

2018, concluded that it was “indeed competent for the City to adopt a Policy on Inclusionary Housing” under section 26 of the Constitution, and that doing so “would be advisable,” since it would give developers certainty and predictability. The opinion was not a blank cheque: it flagged specific areas needing further work before the policy could be finalised — including how fees in lieu would be legally structured, how affordability would be preserved over time, and the risk of the City being seen to “abdicate responsibility” if it left the allocation of units entirely to developers.

> Source: Karrisha Pillay, *Counsel for the City of Cape Town, legal opinion memorandum, “In re: Inclusionary Housing Policy,” 5 October 2018 (primary source, provided by Herron).*

The policy was never finalised. A peer-reviewed academic study of inclusionary housing policy in South African cities — itself drawing on two further academic sources on the point — attributes the setback specifically to Brett’s November 2018 resignation, which it describes as driven by his frustration with fellow councillors who were sceptical of spatial transformation and more sympathetic to mainstream developers. The feasibility study was never published, and the concept document was never converted into a formal Council-approved policy, despite continued pleas from officials and promises from politicians in the years that followed. As of the City’s 2021 Human Settlements Strategy, the policy remained only a possibility — stating inclusionary housing work “may result in the adoption of an Inclusionary Housing Policy,” four years after Brett first announced it was being drafted.

> Source: Turok, I., Rubin, M. & Scheba, A., “Inclusionary Housing Policy in Cities of the South: Navigating a Path Between Continuity and Disruption,” *Housing Policy Debate*, 34(2), published online 12 Feb 2024 (peer-reviewed academic study).

The same academic paper independently credits Brett by name for accelerating the process. It describes him as an unusually supportive DA politician leading the housing portfolio at the time — someone new to the party and genuinely committed to spatial justice and affordable housing — who brought property developers, civil society organisations and outside experts together to work through what the paper calls the policy’s “quagmire.” This is independent academic assessment, not a claim he has made about himself.

The paper also credits the Development Action Group (DAG), a Cape Town community development NGO, for running a long-standing programme of research and advocacy on land value capture that fed directly into the process: a series of well-attended workshops that built the case for inclusionary housing through that lens, easing relationships between developers, civil society and officials — even though full consensus was never reached.

> Source: Turok, I., Rubin, M. & Scheba, A., “Inclusionary Housing Policy in Cities of the South: Navigating a Path Between Continuity and Disruption,” *Housing Policy Debate*, 34(2), published online 12 Feb 2024 (peer-reviewed academic study).

The same paper offers a useful yardstick. It argues that a city succeeding at inclusionary housing policy needs three ingredients: both popular and civil society backing to overcome resistance from real estate interests; a policy that is economically feasible and calibrated so as not to disrupt private investment; and a robust legal framework to limit disputes. Brett’s own effort had produced something on all three fronts before his resignation — active civil-society backing from Reclaim the City and Ndifuna Ukwazi, a detailed, internationally-informed concept document, and a favourable legal opinion — which makes the process’s collapse after his departure a stalled effort rather than an unserious or undeveloped one.

A year after Brett left office, his successor as the responsible Mayco member, Malusi Boozi, described the policy as still being at the “background feasibility work” stage, with a draft policy still to be compiled for public comment — independent confirmation, from within the DA-led administration itself, that the process had not meaningfully advanced. Around the same time, Ndifuna Ukwazi publicly accused the City of not being “serious” about inclusionary housing after the Municipal Planning Tribunal approved a large Foreshore development, Harbour Arch, with no affordable housing component at all.



> Sources: Cape Argus/pressreader, “City ‘not serious’ about social housing,” 30 Oct 2019 (Booi and Ndifuna Ukwazi quotes).

The idea did not disappear, though it moved to a different level of government. In November 2022, the Western Cape provincial government adopted its own province-wide Inclusionary Housing Policy Framework to help municipalities secure affordable units within private developments — a separate initiative from Brett’s city-level policy, but evidence the underlying concept continued to gain traction in the province after his own attempt stalled.

> Source: South African Government News Agency, “Western Cape Government adopts Inclusionary Housing Policy,” 4 Nov 2022.

HOUSING ACTIVISTS SAID WHAT THE DA WOULDN’T

When Brett resigned, the housing activist groups that had spent years pushing the City to move faster — Reclaim

the City and Ndifuna Ukwazi — publicly credited him for his commitment to building affordable housing. That's a meaningful data point precisely because those same organisations had also criticised his administration for not moving fast enough. Their praise at his departure wasn't a rubber stamp; it was a recognition, from people with no reason to flatter a departing politician, that his direction had been the right one even if the delivery had lagged.

> Source: Mail & Guardian, "Brett Herron resigns from DA claiming party blocked affordable housing," 1 Nov 2018.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SITES, AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

The fate of the sites Brett identified is a matter of public record. In July 2019, the City's Supply Chain Management Bid Adjudication Committee cancelled the Request for Proposals process for five of the inner-city parcels: the Woodstock Hospital site, the public open space next to it, Pickwick Street, New Market Street, and the Fruit and Veg City site in Roeland Street. Housing groups, including the Western Cape Property Development Forum and Reclaim the City, called on Mayor Dan Plato to investigate; Human Settlements Mayco member Malusi Boo said the cancellation was so the City could follow a different disposal process to comply with the Municipal Finance Management Act.



> Source: IOL, "We're following internal processes' say CoCT after halting five housing projects," 2019.

Salt River Market and Pine Road were not among the five sites cancelled in that RFP — they sat on a separate track. Weeks after the cancellation, Boo said Daily Maverick the City was making "great progress" on Pine Road and Salt River Market specifically, disputing suggestions that those two sites had been shelved along with the other five. Salt River Market was eventually released to a social housing partner in July 2022, a step Ndifuna Ukwazi welcomed as a win for housing activism; by that point, five years after the original 2017 announcement

covering 11 sites in total, only part of one site (a transitional facility at Pickwick Road) had been completed, with no construction yet underway at the others.



> Sources: Daily Maverick, "Cape Town CBD a step closer to affordable housing," 10 Nov 2019; Daily Maverick, "Cape Town tables plan for two Salt River social housing projects," 29 July 2022.

Years later, the pattern repeated at a higher level. Western Cape Human Settlements MEC Bonginkosi Madikizela repeatedly told the provincial legislature that Cape Town's inner-city housing plans had been blocked by the courts. In March 2021, the (acting) Public Protector found this to be false: the DA-led City itself had voted to halt the projects, and Madikizela had wilfully misled the legislature, in breach of the Executive Ethics Code. Brett — by then GOOD's secretary-general — was the one who pushed the complaint that produced that finding. Madikizela did not resign over this finding; he was suspended, and ultimately resigned as MEC and provincial DA leader, over a separate scandal involving lies about his own academic qualifications.

> Sources: IOL/Cape Argus, "Good Party protests for MEC's dismissal," 23 April 2021; Weekend Argus/pressreader, 23 April 2022 (Madikizela's resignation over the qualifications matter).

As of 2024, housing activists noted that, groundbreaking ceremonies aside, no social housing unit had actually been completed in the Woodstock/Salt River area, and none in the inner city more broadly since 1994. Brett himself, in a July 2026 statement reacting to the Constitutional Court's Tafelberg ruling, acknowledged that not one affordable housing unit had yet been built on any of the sites identified in 2017 — nearly a decade later. He attributes the stalling to the City's decisions after his 2018 departure; the independent reporting above shows a genuinely mixed picture — one batch of sites cancelled outright, others delayed for years, at least one small transitional facility completed — rather than a single clean act of reversal.

> Sources: IOL, "DA unleashes sheriff on axed Malusi Boo" (Reclaim the City statement); IOL/African News Agency, 5 July 2026.

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WHAT OUTLASTED HIM, AND WHAT DIDN'T

The test of a policy legacy isn't whether the person who built it stayed in office. It's whether the idea kept working after they left. On that measure, Herron's record is mixed: some things held, and one central piece of institutional machinery was dismantled almost immediately.

WELL-LOCATED LAND AS A HOUSING PRINCIPLE, NOT A SLOGAN

The core idea Brett pushed in 2017 — that public land should be assessed for affordable-housing potential before it's sold off or built on for something else — didn't die with his resignation. It resurfaced as the central legal question in the Constitutional Court's 2026 Tafelberg ruling, which found that housing built solely on the urban periphery may fail the constitutional test for "adequate housing," and that where a home is located has to be treated as central to whether it counts as adequate at all.

> Sources: IOL, 5 July 2026; African News Agency, 3 July 2026; Jacaranda FM Tafelberg coverage.

Housing-sector civil society kept making the same argument in the years between. Reacting to the Tafelberg judgment, Ndifuna Ukwazi's former head of programmes said government had "not fulfilled their obligations to ensure spatial justice... and equitable access to land" — almost verbatim the language Brett had used in office nearly a decade before. That's not his own claim about his legacy; it's independent evidence that the framing outlived him.

> Source: Cape Town Etc / allAfrica.com, July 2026.

"SPATIAL JUSTICE" STOPPED BEING A SLOGAN AND BECAME SHARED VOCABULARY

Track the phrase "spatial justice" across independent reporting from 2017 to 2026, and something interesting happens: it stops being Brett's language and becomes everyone's language — used by opposing political parties,

by provincial government officials, even by the Constitutional Court. The 2023 Western Cape provincial statement that criticised his own housing delivery record used the identical framework to make its case against him — the clearest sign that the vocabulary had become common political currency rather than a partisan slogan he alone claimed.

> Sources: Western Cape Government, 18 Sept 2023; IOL/ANA, July 2026.

AN INSTITUTION DISMANTLED WITHIN MONTHS

The Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Framework and the Transport and Urban Development Authority weren't speeches — they were institutional machinery, designed so that transport and housing planning couldn't drift back into separate silos. They didn't survive Brett's departure for long. By late November 2018 — weeks after his resignation — the incoming administration was already publicly discussing revoking the TDA's founding by-law, a move he immediately condemned as "anti-revolutionary and anti-transformative." The Constitution of the Transport and Urban Development Authority By-law was formally repealed on 8 March 2019, and the TDA was unbundled back into separate directorates. Brett has argued this decision bears significant responsibility for the subsequent decline in housing delivery and the stalling of the TOD projects — a causal claim independent reporting can't fully adjudicate, but the repeal itself, and how quickly it followed his resignation, are a matter of public record.

> Sources: openbylaws.org.za, repeal record for the TDA Constitution By-law, 2017 (effective 8 March 2019); Cape Times/press-reader, "Herron slams City's spatial development," 23 Nov 2018.

THE SMALL POLICY THAT PREDATED THE BIG ONE

The 2009 backyard-dweller services shift gets less attention than MyCiTi or the housing pivot, but it's arguably the earliest evidence of the same instinct: recognising a group of housed-but-invisible residents years before "affordability" became the citywide debate it is today.

> Source: IOL/Cape Argus, 4 Sept 2018.

3.

FROM EXECUTIVE OFFICE TO PARLIAMENT

REBUILDING FROM A SINGLE SEAT

GOOD launched in February 2019 and contested the May 2019 general election, winning two seats in the National Assembly and one seat in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, which Brett filled on 22 May 2019. He spent that first term on three Standing Committees — Human Settlements, Transport and Public Works, and Environment and Development Planning — the same subject matter he'd run as an executive, now worked from the opposition benches.



> Sources: Wikipedia; People's Assembly (pa.org.za).

A YEAR INSIDE A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPEACHMENT

In February 2022, Brett was sworn into the National Assembly, and for much of the following two years he sat on the Section 194 Ad Hoc Committee — the body tasked with deciding whether then-Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane should be removed from office. Independent coverage of the hearings shows him actively working the substance of the inquiry: pressing on whether an undisclosed meeting the Public Protector held with the State Security Agency met the legal definition of "secret," and separately objecting when the committee's revised hearing schedule started crowding out other MPs' committee and constituency work.

> Sources: TimesLIVE, 28 July 2023; The Citizen, 22 March 2024.

The Committee adopted its final report in August 2023, and the National Assembly voted to remove Mkhwebane from office on 11 September 2023 — one of the more consequential constitutional accountability processes Parliament has undertaken in recent years, and one Brett sat inside from start to finish.

> Source: Parliament of South Africa, Committee for Section 194 Enquiry records.

FRONTING GOOD'S BASIC INCOME GRANT CAMPAIGN

As GOOD's secretary-general, Brett became the public face of the party's signature economic policy well before he reached the National Assembly: a 2021 Daily Maverick column, written while he was still a provincial MPL, called a Basic Income Grant a "social, moral and historical imperative" against record joblessness. Once sworn in as a national MP in February 2022, he continued making the case from inside Parliament itself — in a 2022 People's Assembly profile of sitting MPs, he told the independent parliamentary monitoring platform directly that "we need a basic income guarantee or grant to provide an income," framing it as a Section 27 constitutional right rather than a discretionary handout.

> Sources: Daily Maverick/Opinionista, 30 Aug 2021 (written before his National Assembly term); People's Assembly (pa.org.za), "Get To Know MP Brett Herron," 4 July 2022 (during his National Assembly term).

The party's proposal — a R999-a-month grant for unemployed South Africans aged 18 to 60, replacing the R370 Social Relief of Distress grant — became a core 2024 election priority while Brett still sat in the National Assembly. He argued the country should stop asking whether it could afford a BIG and start asking whether it could afford not to have one, given more than 8 million active jobseekers and a food poverty line the SRD grant didn't come close to covering.

> Source: News24, "SA cannot afford not to have a basic income grant as millions languish in poverty — GOOD party," 26 June 2023.

Brett backed the proposal with GOOD-commissioned economic research arguing the grant was fundable through zero-based budgeting: trimming the cost of

provincial legislatures and premiers' offices, cutting the roughly R11 billion a year spent on government consultants, ending SOE bailouts in favour of restructuring or privatisation, and reforming corporate tax. Independent reporting confirmed the party had built the BIG campaign into a core 2024 election priority, and that he was re-elected unopposed as secretary-general at GOOD's first national congress in late 2023, with the BIG proposal reaffirmed as party policy going into that vote.



> Sources: News24, 26 June 2023; IOL/Cape Argus, "GOOD re-elects Brett Herron as the party's secretary-general," 13 Nov 2023.

His National Assembly term ended in May 2024, but the advocacy didn't stop — he kept making the case in 2024 and into 2026, including in a bylined column arguing a non-exclusionary BIG was the only realistic short-term bridge between mass poverty and a still-distant "thriving economy," and in a series of party responses to the 2026 Budget and State of the Nation Address arguing that a rebranded or extended SRD grant still falls short of the constitutional threshold a genuine basic income would need to meet. One independent report on the 2024 election noted that the absence of any BIG commitment in the ANC, DA and EFF manifestos disappointed civil society organisations — context that doesn't credit Brett directly, but shows the policy gap he was campaigning into was real, not invented for effect.

> Sources: Business Day/BusinessLIVE opinion column, 9 May 2024; GOOD/For Good statements on SONA 2026 (12 Feb 2026) and the 2026 Budget (25 Feb 2026) — all Herron's own arguments, included as evidence of sustained advocacy across three different legislative seats, not as independent praise.

It's worth being direct about what this is and isn't: sustained, well-documented advocacy for a policy Brett has pushed consistently across his provincial, national, and second provincial terms — not a delivered outcome. No Basic Income Grant has been enacted nationally as of this record, and no independent source found for this document confirms a formal motion or bill he tabled specifically on the grant while in the National Assembly.

PUSHING FOR UNFINISHED TRC PROSECUTIONS

Brett has been a sustained, multi-year advocate for completing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's unfinished work — the roughly 300 apartheid-era cases the TRC referred for further investigation and possible prosecution where perpetrators were not granted amnesty, most of which were never pursued. In November 2022, in a Parliament speech, he described visiting elderly TRC victims who were sleeping outside the Constitutional Court to press government on reparations, and criticised the President's Fund — holding billions of rand meant for victims — for having failed to implement a single project through its Community Rehabilitation Project Team, established in 2017.

> Source: IOL/The Star, "GOOD Party SG calls for reparations for apartheid victims," 9 Nov 2022.

In 2021, reacting to former president FW de Klerk's disclosure of an informal non-prosecution agreement between the old and new South African governments, Brett called it one of the country's "most disgraceful secrets" and said it implicated the National Prosecuting Authority in political interference predating state capture — a statement independently cited years later in a 2025 filing before a judicial commission of inquiry.



> Source: Tymon Smith, "A Renewed Commitment to the TRC Cases," Mail & Guardian, 26 July 2021, as cited in a Rule 3.3 notice filed with a judicial commission of inquiry, 2025.

His advocacy went beyond public statements. In May 2024, a formal parliamentary question Brett put to the Minister of Justice, Ronald Lamola, produced an official written response revealing that the NPA was aware of only 159 of the roughly 300 TRC-referred cases — of which just 21 had been finalised and 137 remained under investigation — 21 years after the TRC's final report. He called this a "monumental abandonment of post-apart-

heid justice." He also welcomed the Justice Minister's 2023 creation of 19 permanent NPA posts dedicated to investigating TRC cases as a good, if overdue, step.

> Sources: *Politicsweb*, "NPA doesn't know how many TRC cases it should be investigating — Brett Herron," May 2024 (parliamentary question and official response); *Politicsweb*, "Extra focus on TRC cases welcome — Brett Herron," 2023.

He has continued to press specific cases, including the 2023 reopening of the inquest into the death in detention of Imam Abdullah Haron — tortured for 122 days in 1969 before dying in police custody — and, in July 2025, questioned former presidents Thabo Mbeki, Kgalema Motlanthe and Jacob Zuma's fitness to explain the state's prosecution failures, after Mbeki sought to intervene in R167 million constitutional damages litigation brought by 25 victims' families against the government.

> Sources: *Politicsweb*, "Imam Haron: State owes South Africans an explanation — Brett Herron," 9 Oct 2023; *Polity.org.za*, "Mbeki must explain State's inability to prosecute apartheid-era cases — GOOD Party," 28 July 2025.

This is a sustained record of advocacy and parliamentary oversight rather than a claim of outcomes achieved — the underlying prosecutions Brett has pushed for remain, by his own account and the government's own figures, largely unresolved.

BACK TO THE PROVINCIAL BENCHES, AND INTO GOVERNMENT

Brett returned to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament after the 2024 election, and has continued to write and speak publicly on how coalition governments should function — a live question given GOOD's entry into the national coalition; the Government of National Unity. In one column, he argued that durable coalitions depend on trust between larger and smaller partners, not on treating politics as a two-horse binary.

> Source: *News24* opinion column, 26 Oct 2022 — Herron's own argument, included as evidence of sustained public engagement on governance questions, not as third-party praise.

4.

HOLDING GOVERNMENT TO ACCOUNT FROM OUTSIDE IT

CALLING OUT A CITY HE NO LONGER RAN

In mid-2019, months after his resignation, the MyCiTi N2 Express route to Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain was suspended when the City let its operating contract with Golden Arrow and local taxi associations lapse. Brett — now on the outside — called it a “failure of political leadership,” arguing the City had had a full year to renegotiate the contract and hadn’t done the work.

> Source: CapeTalk/EWN, 3 June 2019.

EXPOSING THE STRANDFONTEIN HOMELESS CAMP SPENDING

In 2020, Brett pushed for scrutiny of the City’s Covid-era homeless camp, which had been widely condemned by rights groups for its conditions, after provincial answers revealed the six-week operation had cost at least R53 million — roughly R26,500 per person. He referred the matter to the Auditor-General and later the Special Investigating Unit, called for the responsible Mayco member, JP Smith, to be fired, and kept pressing the issue into

2021 and 2022. In January 2022, the SIU’s investigation — triggered by his referral — found the City had failed to follow proper procurement processes, resulting in R42.3 million of irregular expenditure, and that the contracted service provider had profited excessively.

> Sources: IOL/Cape Times, 20 Aug 2020; Politicsweb, 19 Oct 2021; For Good statement relaying the SIU finding, 25 Jan 2022 (the SIU finding itself is an independently verifiable government record; the referral and framing are Herron’s own).

FIGHTING FOR THE SYSTEM HE BUILT, YEARS AFTER LEAVING OFFICE

In 2026, when National Government floated cutting Bus Rapid Transit funding nationally, Brett pushed back publicly — citing independent City data showing MyCiTi carries 42% of the country’s BRT passenger trips, and warning that Cape Flats commuters, who already spend 40–60% of household income on transport against a 10% affordability benchmark, would carry the cost of any further delay to the Cape Flats expansion.

> Source: IOL/Weekend Argus, 16 May 2026.



5.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID, ON THE RECORD

A record that only includes praise isn't a record — it's a brochure. This section carries both, in as close to the original speakers' own words as fair use allows.

THE PRAISE THAT CAME FROM PEOPLE WITH NO REASON TO FLATTER HIM

Reclaim the City and Ndifuna Ukwazi — organisations that had pushed his own administration to move faster — credited Brett for his commitment to affordable housing when he resigned in 2018. MyCiTi's fare system won an

international Mastercard award in 2014, recognition of a programme he led politically at the time. And 2026 City data shows the system he built still carries more BRT passengers than any other in the country, more than a decade after he left the transport portfolio.

> Sources: *Mail & Guardian*, 1 Nov 2018; Boulle & van Ryneveld, 2015; *IOL/Weekend Argus*, 16 May 2026.

A peer-reviewed academic study of inclusionary housing policy independently described Brett as an unusually supportive DA politician, new to the party and genuinely committed to spatial justice, who convened developers, civil society and outside experts to advance the policy — academic assessment, not a self-description.

> Source: *Turok, Rubin & Scheba, Housing Policy Debate*, 2024

6.

THE TIMELINE

2008

Elected policy convenor of the Independent Democrats' Cape Town metro executive committee.

2009

Sworn in as a Cape Town city councillor. As a new member of the Housing Portfolio Committee, drives the extension of municipal services to backyard dwellers.

2010

Appointed Mayoral Committee Member for Community Services. The ID formally merges into the DA later that year.

2011–2016

Serves simultaneously as Ward Councillor for Ward 57 (Devil's Peak, District Six, Gardens, Observatory, Woodstock, Salt River, Mowbray) and as Mayoral Committee Member for Transport; leads the build-out of MyCiTi Bus Rapid Transit across the city; leads the City's legal fight against SANRAL's proposed N1/N2 Winelands toll road.

2013

Western Cape High Court grants the City an interim interdict halting the Winelands toll project pending review (May).

2014

The N2 Express opens, connecting Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain. MyCiTi's fare system wins the international Mastercard award.

2015–2016

High Court rules largely in the City's favour on the Winelands toll review (September 2015); Supreme Court of Appeal dismisses SANRAL's appeal (September 2016).

2017

Portfolio expands to Transport and Urban Development (January). Announces ten city-owned inner-city sites for affordable housing — the "180-degree about-turn" (July).

2018

Resigns from the DA, Council and the mayoral committee (1 November). Within weeks, the incoming administration moves to repeal the Transport and Urban Development Authority's founding by-law, formally rescinded 8 March 2019.

2018–2019

Patricia de Lille launches GOOD (2 December 2018); Brett becomes founding Secretary-General (20 January 2019). Incoming Human Settlements Mayco member Malusi Boo and Mayor Dan Plato cancel the Request for Proposals process for five of the 2017 housing sites.

2019

Elected to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (22 May) as GOOD wins its first seats in Parliament — two in the National Assembly and one provincially (Brett).

2018–2020

Completes an MSc in Cities at the London School of Economics.

2020

Co-founds the urban consultancy ComplexCity. Pushes for investigation into the City's Strandfontein homeless camp spending.

2021

Runs as GOOD's mayoral candidate for Cape Town; the DA retains its council majority (1 November). The Public Protector finds Human Settlements MEC Bonginkosi Madikizela misled the legislature by falsely claiming courts had blocked Cape Town's inner-city housing projects.

2022

Sworn into the National Assembly (8 February); joins the Section 194 Ad Hoc Committee investigating the Public Protector. The SIU's investigation into the Strandfontein camp, triggered by Brett's referral, finds R42.3 million in irregular expenditure (January).

2023

Launches GOOD's R999 Basic Income Grant campaign as a core 2024 election priority; re-elected unopposed as secretary-general at the party's first national congress. The Section 194 Committee's final report leads to Mkhwebane's removal from office by the National Assembly (11 September).

2024

Returns to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament after the May general election.

2026

Announced as joint GOOD/Rise Mzansi mayoral candidate for Cape Town (7 June) ahead of the 4 November election. The Constitutional Court rules the 2015 Tafelberg land sale unlawful (2 July); Brett frames it as vindication of his 2017 housing policy while acknowledging no units have yet been built on the sites he identified that year.