

# Toyota to open R40m facility in Soweto

Toyota South Africa Motors said it is currently constructing a R40 million facility in Soweto.

The new facility, a joint venture between Barloworld Motor Retail and the well-known Maponya-family was scheduled for completion in November and would have the capacity to retail in excess of 30 new vehicles and 25 approved used Automark vehicles every month.

"The development of Soweto Toyota, as the new facility will be known, has both emotional and economic underpinnings," said Dr Johan van Zyl, President and CEO of TSAM and a managing officer of Toyota Motor Corporation.

"Emotionally we have had a long relationship with Dr Richard Maponya and his family, stretching back more than 20 years, and we share his passion for the vibrant city of Soweto.

"Economically the new dealership is situated in a city that is the physical and spiritual home to more than five million people with a healthy economy estimated to be in excess of R16 billion annually. With this in mind it was no challenge to find board approval for the new dealership."

Speaking at the official sod turning event held on site on July 6 Dr Maponya shared the excitement of the Soweto community at the opening of the new facility.

"The people of Soweto are very excited indeed about the news of these world class products that will be coming to Soweto. I also believe that this new investment will succeed in providing employment and addressing the poverty concerns in our city," Dr Maponya said.

Martin Laubscher, CEO of Barloworld Automotive, said that the new Toyota facility and that of another vehicle brand to be developed by the joint venture in Soweto was a serious statement of commitment.

"The new operations emphasise four key goals that we have set. Firstly it is a major commitment to the people and economy of Soweto. Secondly it will offer employment in the area, with an estimated 100 people to be employed by the third year of operation.

"Thirdly it will introduce two automotive global super brands to Soweto and finally it will offer the people of Soweto a complete vehicle ownership experience on their doorstep."

Soweto Toyota was being developed as a full service operation, which implied that it would be able to sell and service all Toyota vehicles, while also offering a full complement of parts and maintenance equipment.

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