ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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By 2030 eThekwini will be Africa's most caring and liveable City

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R10BN INSIMBI RIDGE CATALYTIC PROJECT EXPECTED TO DRIVE INVESTMENT

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba (left) launched the Insimbi Ridge catalytic project, a major initiative set to create jobs and drive transformation in logistics and investment.

THE Insimbi Ridge catalytic project was launched recently amid much fanfare given that the project is expected to create jobs and drive transformation and investment.

The project was launched by eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba on 10 November.

He said it was a historic moment for the City as the intermodal logistics precinct is poised to transform logistics, investment, and job creation in both eThekwini and the broader KwaZulu-Natal.

Mayor Xaba said the Insimbi Ridge is one of several multi-billion rand investments unveiled across the City recently.

"These investments form part of eThekwini's R217 billion Catalytic Projects Portfolio. Today's launch of the R10 billion Insimbi Ridge Development represents another major milestone — one that will unlock the growth potential of the Durban–Free State–Gauteng logistics corridor," said Mayor Xaba adding: "Moreover, it marks a significant step forward in our collective effort to decongest the Durban Harbour through the creation of an inland port at Cato Ridge, aimed at improving efficiency at the Port of Durban."

He said it was important to come together as social partners to overcome challenges.

"The investment we celebrate today is a clear demonstration of what can be achieved when government and the private sector collaborate toward a shared vision. The confidence that investors continue to show in eThekwini is a testament to the deliberate work government has undertaken to create an investor-friendly environment."

He said each financial year, the City allocates substantial budgets to improve water and sanitation, electricity, and road infrastructure. "For example, eThekwini Municipality has increased its budget for catalytic projects' bulk infrastructure to over R600 million. It is through this kind of investment that the City has truly become a construction site of progress."

He said developments such as Insimbi Ridge and the Dry Port will catalyse seamless growth between Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

CITY WELCOMES ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

ETHEKWINI Municipality welcomes National Treasury's decision - announced by the Minister of Finance Enoch Godongwana - to grant additional funding to the City for the implementation of the Integrated Transport Network Plan (Go!Durban) and the Trading Services reforms.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said the grants will significantly enhance infrastructure and improve service delivery across the Municipality.

The allocation of over R400 million for Trading Services will accelerate the implementation of the turnaround strategies for Water and Sanitation, Energy Management, and Waste Management. These three turnaround strategies have been formally adopted by Council and approved by National Treasury. This grant demonstrates that the City's efforts to improve the performance of these critical services are being recognised and supported by national government.

The R303 million rollover in the Public Transport Network Grant will enable the City to continue the vital work of operationalising Corridor 3 of the Integrated Public Transport Network (Go!Durban).

DURBAN AND CHINA CEMENT GROWING ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

ETHEKWINI Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba met with local Chinese businesses as part of the City's ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with Chinese investors in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly in Durban.
An engagement took place on 12 November at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre.
Held under the theme; "Creating a conducive environment for business growth through a robust transport and logistics sector," the session aimed to build on existing relations, identify new investment opportunities, and develop tangible solutions to challenges that may hinder progress.
Mayor Xaba said the Municipality has in recent months hosted several delegations from cities across the People's Republic of China, all seeking to deepen economic relations with eThekwini.
"Last month I led a delegation to various cities in China to position Durban as an indispensable strategic partner for Chinese businesses in South Africa. Beyond being a port city, Durban serves as an economic gateway linking Asia, Africa, and the Global South. Our strong and multi-layered relationships with key Chinese cities provide a unique framework for partnership across logistics, manufacturing, digital trade, and green technology."
Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Durban, Li Zhigong, described Durban as "a city of energy and opportunity."
He said Chinese-invested companies have been an active force in South Africa's development, contributing to local employment, infrastructure improvement, and community welfare.
Chairperson of the City's Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli reaffirmed that eThekwini is open for business and remains committed to partnering with the private sector to position Durban as a destination of choice for investment.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba, eThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele, and Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli met with Chinese businesses.

MAYORAL CUSTOMER SERVICE LECTURE

The 4th annual Mayoral Customer Service Lecture, delivered by eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba, brought together industry partners, frontline staff, and key stakeholders.

ETHEKWINi Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba has reaffirmed the City's commitment to building a caring, responsive, and customer-centric Municipality that listens, cares, and delivers.
Mayor Xaba emphasised this renewed dedication during the 4th Annual Mayoral Customer Service Lecture, one of the City's flagship platforms for strengthening service excellence, innovation, and people-centred governance.
The lecture brought together Municipal leadership, industry partners, frontline staff, and other key stakeholders united in the mission to enhance the quality, accessibility, and reliability of services across eThekwini.

Accelerating inner city regeneration

ETHEKWINi Municipality is exploring plans to establish an institutional model aimed at accelerating inner city regeneration which will include an Inner City Development Company and an Inner City Partnership. These structures are designed to strengthen service delivery, improve urban management, and foster inclusive economic growth within Durban's Central Business District (CBD).
This strategic shift underscores the Municipality's commitment to agile governance, innovative funding, and stakeholder engagement to transform the inner city into a vibrant economic hub.
The City recently convened key stakeholders to present the two possible strategic institutional arrangements for Durban's inner city renewal. The Inner City Development Company will be majority municipally owned and aligned with legislative frameworks while the Inner City Partnership will be a voluntary association incorporating Urban Improvement Precincts, business property owners, and civil society. These mechanisms form part of the broader Inner City Regeneration Programme, designed to enhance service delivery, strengthen urban management, and catalyse economic revitalisation within the CBD. The proposed development company will operate as a specialised entity with competencies in property management and development agency functions, applying a precinct-based approach to unlock latent potential. Its mandate includes fostering agility and enabling collaboration between the City, private sector, and other stakeholders to deliver targeted projects efficiently.

INNOVATE DURBAN DEBUTS WOMEN-FOCUSED CREATIVE INCUBATOR

INNOVATE Durban officially launched IndlELLa, a pioneering entrepreneurship incubator dedicated to supporting women in the creative sector. The launch of the incubator took place on 14 November at the Coastlands Hotel and marks a significant investment in advancing female-led innovation in Durban. The programme is supported by the Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho and Malawi, and delivered in partnership with Alliance Française de Durban.

IndlELLa offers a six-month intensive business development journey designed to equip emerging creative entrepreneurs with essential skills and meaningful support. Participants will receive practical training in financial management, marketing, operations, human resources, and innovation. Beyond technical skills, the programme emphasises personal development, confidence-building, and leadership, ensuring that each entrepreneur is empowered both professionally and individually.

Innovate Durban is taking a women empowerment initiative to the next level through an incubator to offer skills training and support.

The incubator also provides access to mentorship from established creative entrepreneurs, international masterclasses, and flexible programming tailored to women balancing business and family responsibilities.

With support from Kindling International and Zoë Life, the programme includes a structured playgroup environment, creating a supportive space for both mothers and children.

Training will run until the end of May next year.

GAS TRAINING CREATES PATHWAYS TO JOBS AND BUSINESS GROWTH

FOURTEEN emerging gas installers are now proud certified professionals, ready to take on South Africa's growing domestic gas installation market thanks to the skills gained through the Basic Liquefied Petroleum Gas Installer Training. This is a partnership between eThekwini Municipality and Sasol which offered 30 small business owners from across the City training to become qualified gas installers.

The intensive two-week course combined both theoretical and practical components to ensure trainees were industry ready.

The theory phase was conducted earlier this year at the City's Umkhumbane Entrepreneurial Support Centre, while the practical training took place in August at Liquefied Petroleum Gas South Africa's facilities in Johannesburg.

For Zamokuhle Mbatha, founder of Zami Gas, the training has been a turning point in his entrepreneurship journey. "After receiving my operating certificate, I have already completed five installations. This license allows me to work on domestic installations, but my long-term goal is to advance to commercial and industrial certifications," he said.

A beneficiary of the gas installation training, Zamokuhle Mbatha is already putting his newly acquired skills to good use and securing business opportunities.

Another graduate, Mbongeni Nduli, co-founder of Nkanyiso Gas Solutions in Lamontville, said: "Before this training, we only sold and refilled gas. Now we can install gas. We are already planning to build a gas storage facility to supply crèches and schools. This opportunity has truly expanded our vision."

Ntokozo Chiliza, KwaZulu-Natal Stakeholder Relations Manager at Sasol, applauded the collaboration's impact. "This programme helps create employment and promotes sustainable enterprise growth."

The Municipality's SMME Development Deputy Director, Nonku Mthembu, said: "Our goal is to see these entrepreneurs thriving. We are facilitating the procurement of essential gas installation starter toolkits to ensure the newly certified installers have the resources needed for their operations."

Regional based funding to fast-track service delivery

THE City has intensified its commitment to fast-tracking service delivery through a new region-based funding approach. EThekwini Municipality's Community Infrastructure Projects (CIP) Programme has been allocated R333 million for the 2025/26 financial year to support development across all 111 wards. This translates to R3 million per ward for projects. To ensure transparent and effective use of funds, the budget is carefully unbundled and distributed to relevant departments and service providers. This planning phase, which spans two to three months, involves detailed scoping by a multidisciplinary team of technical experts, departmental representatives, social facilitators, and ward councillors. Once completed, regional budget allocations are submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

The CIP budget is now centrally coordinated under the Programme Management Directorate in the Operations Management Department to strengthen accountability and streamline implementation.

Professional consultants appointed in July 2025 are supporting project packaging, documentation, and rollout.

Implementation will primarily be driven by Regional Managing Contractors, with procurement processes currently underway. Contract awards are expected in November for major projects, with the following allocations: Central (R57 million), South (R75 million), North (R75 million), Western Region 1 (R63 million), Western Region 2 (R63 million), and Human Settlements, Engineering and Transport (R52.9 million).

To avoid delays, the City has activated contingency measures, including temporary six-month contractor appointments and month-to-month departmental implementation if necessary.

YOUTH INNOVATION CHALLENGE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

EXCITEMENT and youthful energy filled the venue as Innovate Durban successfully hosted its 9th annual Youth Innovation Challenge, a flagship programme designed to celebrate and elevate youth-driven creativity. Prizes totalled R75 000.

The challenge, supported by the City's Economic Development Directorate, brought together 11 dynamic youth teams, each presenting forward-thinking solutions to some of the City's most pressing social and environmental challenges.

This year's challenge placed the spotlight on sustainability, with many teams focusing on innovative responses to water scarcity, non-revenue water, and broader climate-related issues.

Participants proposed a range of practical and impactful ideas, from systems to purify harvested rainwater to technologies for assessing the safety of river water for drinking. Following an inspiring round of pitches, Team Innohance emerged as the winner, taking first place and a prize of R35 000. Team A secured second place winning R25 000, while Team Pace claimed the third position and received R15 000.

Future youth leaders competed against each other at the 9th annual Youth Innovation Challenge. Pictured is Team Innohance who emerged as the overall winner.

Zukiswa Mchunu, of Team Innohance, said her design thinking seeks to address water management and water scarcity challenges. "My design aims to assist communities covert rain harvested water and river water to purified and safe drinking water," said Mchunu.

DURBAN DESIGNERS SHINE AT NAMIBIA FASHION WEEK

TWO Durban-based designers, Zwandi Mathonsi of Zwandyy and Thami Ngobeni of Monarch Detailer, proudly represented eThekwini at the 10th edition of the MTC Windhoek Fashion Week, held from 5 to 8 November in Namibia.

This landmark event celebrated a decade of fashion excellence as Namibia's premier fashion showcase, bringing together leading designers from across Africa.

Mathonsi, an established name in the industry and the recently crowned Designer of the Year at the Durban Fashion Fair (DFF) Recognition Awards, described his participation as an inspiring opportunity to celebrate African creativity on a global platform.

He said the experience provided valuable exposure to new markets and strengthened his brand's continental footprint.

Ngobeni, a winner of the Best Menswear Designer Award at the DFF Recognition Awards, echoed Mathonsi's sentiments.

"Participating in the show reminded me that fashion is not just about clothing, it's about building bridges between cultures," he said.

Chairperson of the City's Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli congratulated the designers.

"Our vision is to position Durban as Africa's leading fashion hub, which is why we continue to create international opportunities for local designers."

Two Durban designers showcased at the MTC Windhoek Fashion Week to much acclaim.

TAKING DURBAN TO THE WORLD

TO continue to attract international visitors, a Durban Tourism team joined this year's edition of Africa Showcase North America to connect directly with premier tourism buyers in the North American market.

The roadshow takes place from 11 to 19 November and aims to connect top travel buyers and trade partners across the United States and Canada.

Through its participation, Durban Tourism aims to build strong partnerships with international buyers and agents.

They are showcasing the diverse offerings of Durban, known for its golden beaches, buzzing urban energy, Zulu heritage, rainforest adventures, and world-class surfing.

The Durban Tourism exhibition intends to attract more visitors from the North American market to the region and position Durban as "Africa's warmest place to be" and a must-visit destination.

Durban Tourism is attending alongside the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism and Film Authority, highlighting a united provincial effort to drive tourism growth.

North America remains Africa's most sought-after source market.

The U.S and Canada present a powerful opportunity for African tourism businesses ready to scale with its strong economic resilience, growing appetite for long-haul travel, and rising interest in immersive and meaningful experiences.

If you would like to submit feedback or contribute to eThekwini Weekly Bulletin

Email: news.desk@durban.gov.za

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR: Mandla Nsele, Director of Marketing and Communications

CONTENT EDITOR: Nondumiso Mathomane • **SUB-EDITOR:** Charmel Payet

WRITERS: Sohana Singh, Nonduduzo Ngcongo, Lethiwe Ngcobo, Jessie Singh, and Gugu Mdlalose • **PHOTOGRAPHERS:** Thuli Dlamini and Londiwe Cele

• **DESIGN & LAYOUT:** Velani Ngcobo