REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR CYRIL XABA, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE INSIMBI RIDGE CATALYTIC PROJECT, 10 NOVEMBER 2025

- Programme Director
- KwaZulu-Natal Premier: Hon. Thamsanqa Ntuli
- Inkosi yamaXimba: Inkosi Mlaba
- MEC for Transport and Human Settlements: Hon. Siboniso Duma
- MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs: Rev. Musa Zondi
- EThekwini Municipality Chairperson for Economic Development and Planning Committee: Cllr Thembo Ntuli
- Insimbi Ridge Representatives: Mr. Tiaan van Aswegen and Ms. Sibusisiwe Nodada
- Mr. Anton Potgieter
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

It gives me great pleasure to join you on this important occasion — the launch of the Insimbi Ridge Catalytic Project. For us, as eThekwini Municipality, this is indeed a historic moment. This intermodal logistics precinct is poised to transform logistics, investment, and job creation in both eThekwini and the broader KwaZulu-Natal province.

I am particularly excited that, since the beginning of this year, we have been unveiling multibillion-rand investments across our city. 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.

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.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we are to overcome the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty, and inequality, we must continue to work together as social partners. 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. Each financial year, we allocate substantial budgets to improve water and sanitation, electricity, and road infrastructure. For example, the eThekwini Municipality has increased its budget for catalytic projects' bulk infrastructure to over R600 million. It is through this kind of investment that our city has truly become a construction site of progress.

This work is visible in the partnerships we are fostering in this corridor with private investors. It also highlights the success of the Local Area Plan (LAP) developed for the Cato Ridge region — a strategic document guiding development here over the next 20 to 30 years. The plan envisions the integration of the eThekwini, Mkhambathini, and Msunduzi economies, anticipating increased demand for industrial land, particularly as Transnet embarks on plans to expand the harbour within the next five years.

We are confident that developments such as Insimbi Ridge and the Dry Port will catalyse seamless growth between Durban and Pietermaritzburg, much like Midrand has done between Johannesburg and Tshwane. Over the next decade, we expect this entire corridor to be lined with thriving businesses leveraging the strategic advantage of the Port of Durban — as already demonstrated by developments like the Shongweni Urban Development and the Keystone Logistics Park.

The Cato Ridge Logistics Park, which includes the Insimbi Ridge and Dry Port developments, holds the potential to significantly boost our economy and tackle unemployment. This project alone will create approximately 5,000 jobs during construction and 10,000 permanent jobs post-construction, while contributing an estimated R500 million annually to the city's rates base.

Given the scale and importance of the Cato Ridge development, we are working closely with key government entities such as SANRAL and Transnet to fully leverage the opportunities that the Port of Durban offers to KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and the broader SADC region.

To this end, eThekwini Municipality is engaging with Transnet to strengthen our existing partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), clearly outlining each entity's contribution toward the decongestion of the harbour. Similarly, we have completed a draft MOU with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport and SANRAL for the Cato Ridge Logistics Park. Once signed, this agreement will assign specific responsibilities to each stakeholder in facilitating the area's development.

In addition, we are conducting a strategic transport study to address network challenges in the greater Cato Ridge area. This study will also determine the precise location of the proposed KwaXimba Interchange, which is crucial for unlocking further development opportunities in this region.

In conclusion, I wish to congratulate the developers of the Insimbi Ridge Development for reaching this significant milestone. We commend your commitment and vision, and we look forward to the success and impact this project will bring to our city and province.

I thank you.