REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR. CYRIL XABA, AT THE NEW HORTICULTURAL EQUIPMENT AND DISPLAY HOUSE, 7 NOVEMBER

- Programme director
- Chairperson of the Community Services Committee: Cllr. Zama Sokhabase
- Whip of Community Services: Cllr. Cheryl Sisoka
- Acting Executive Director Community Services: Mr. Vincent Ngubane
- Distinguished guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good day. Sanibonani.

We are pleased to be here today to unveil the new horticultural plant and maintenance equipment for eThekwini Municipality. This is significant because it is in line with our efforts to keep public spaces green, clean, and environmentally friendly.

Valued at approximately R25 million, the 800 new horticultural plant and maintenance equipment includes 750 brush-cutters, 110 chainsaws, 110 pole pruners, 85 hedge trimmers, 20 tractors, and 2 skid steers.

We are confident that this investment the Municipality has made is going to improve working conditions for employees tasked with looking after the city's parks and other open spaces. This new equipment will enable faster and more efficient grass-cutting and landscaping services in parks, cemeteries, and along roadways to enhance the City's appearance.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we are also launching the newly built tropical display house, which houses a special orchid collection. Installed in partnership between the city and the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust, the tropical display house is among the largest in KwaZulu-Natal. We are confident that it is going to serve as another public attraction for tourists and locals alike.

We want to encourage residents of eThekwini to visit this stunning garden so that they can experience the beauty of a tropical paradise right at the heart of our beautiful city. This also provides an opportunity for both young

and old to come and explore a collection of tropical plants in a safe and relaxed environment.

Let us use today's launch to highlight the key role plants play in giving life to all living species, especially human beings. Plants not only provide us with oxygen, but they also provide essential nutrients for our health – giving us all the energy we need to survive. Furthermore, plants beautify our public spaces, homes and improve the quality of life.

As the leadership of eThekwini Municipality, we want to assure our residents that we are committed to ensuring the city remains an urban green space, though our parks, natural forests and encouraging businesses to contribute towards building a green city.

Therefore, we must work together as government and the private sector to educate communities about the importance of developing their own gardens and beautifying their open spaces. This will not only expand our greening initiatives, but will albo assist communities to generale much-needed income.

In closing, we wish to reiterate our strong resolve to transform eThekwini to be become a safe and progressive city that works for all its residents. We have no doubt that working together, we will make eThekwini the most caring and liveable city.

I thank you