

FESTIVE SEASON SAFETY PLANS ANNOUNCED

ETHEKWINI Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba unpacked the festive season management plan on 27 November to demonstrate that eThekweni Municipality is ready to host thousands of visitors descending on the City over the coming weeks.

“We are ready to receive the anticipated 1.3 million visitors and will continue to update the public about our integrated safety plans and reporting on the status of our beaches as well as signature events that will be taking place in the City,” he said.

He said it was important to showcase to the world that Durban is open for business.

The economic impact of the festive season is significant. Projections indicate occupancy rates of 75%, a direct spend of R2.5 billion, and a GDP contribution of R6.3 billion.

Mayor Xaba said as part of efforts to deliver a safe and memorable festive season, the Metro Police is working with all law enforcement agencies including the SAPS, Road Traffic Inspectorate, and private security companies to maintain high visibility at tourism sites and areas that have been identified as crime hotspots.

“We are confident that this collaboration will improve the safety of visitors and residents,” he said.

In response to the challenge of homelessness, Mayor Xaba said every effort was being made to direct people to the three City-operated shelters.

To control traffic on the



EThekweni Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba officially launched the festive season safety campaign where he announced the deployment of 500 new Metro Police officers. He was accompanied by eThekweni Deputy Mayor Councillor Zandile Myeni and other senior leadership as they visited key sites including the recently revamped Children's Swimming Pool and the upgraded playground at People's Park.

beach, certain roads leading to the beachfront will be access controlled. The park and ride facility will be available at no cost every 30 minutes throughout the festive season.

“Our law enforcement officers will clamp down on drinking and driving as well as reckless behaviour on the road. Law enforcement operations, including multidisciplinary roadblocks will be conducted throughout the City to combat all forms of criminality,” added Mayor Xaba.

He said the City will deploying 500 new Metro Police officers, fresh from training, who will assist in heightened police visibility both on the road and in communities. This

is in addition to the 170 high performance vehicles procured for the Metro Police to patrol. Other specialised units will be on horsebacks and bicycles at various tourism sites, assisted by the CCTV camera monitoring and surveillance.

Mayor Xaba said: “We are currently finalising the recruitment of 540 seasonal workers who will be deployed to various tourist destinations. These include 135 litter pickers, 104 beach guides who will be stationed across the various City beaches to help visitors. An additional 105 pool attendants will be deployed in various swimming pools to ensure the safety of bathers.”

For easy identification of

children, the City has procured 200 000 armbands and seven tents will be erected along the beachfront to accommodate children who get separated from parents. An overnight facility has also been secured to assist the separated children.

Regarding beach water quality, Mayor Xaba said the City continues to monitor and conduct weekly assessment of beach water quality to ensure the public is kept abreast of test results. “We are confident of a bumper festive season this December and visitors must be assured that apart from beaches, there are many other attractions and hidden germs throughout the City,” he concluded.

DEVELOPER FOR ICONIC BEACHFRONT PROPERTY APPOINTED

ETHEKWINI Municipality has appointed a developer for the long-term leasing and redevelopment of Erf 12281 Durban, commonly known as “Joe Cool’s,” located at 137 Marine Parade.

This milestone follows the Municipality’s Proactive Land Release Strategy which invited industry proposals through a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in November last year. The successful proposal secured a 45-year lease for the redevelopment of this iconic property.

The redevelopment aligns with the Municipality’s Inner-City Local Area Plan, which emphasises protecting and enhancing the beachfront as a key tourism asset.

This project will transform the property into a modern facility while retaining its charm and appeal.

The project will retain current national tenants under the Famous Brands umbrella, including Wimpy, Steers, Fishaways, and Milky Lane. A new Mugg and Bean restaurant will be introduced, with additional tenants to be confirmed as construction



An artist impression of Durban's iconic beachfront property, once it has been developed.

progresses.

Details of the construction timeline and programme will be announced, but the property will remain operational for the upcoming holiday season. Construction is anticipated to commence after the Easter holidays in 2025, subject to necessary statutory approvals. The redevelopment is expected to create approximately 80 jobs during the construction phase.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor

Cyril Xaba said the Municipality is committed to ensuring that all existing jobs are retained and anticipates additional employment opportunities will be created as the new building will be 68% larger than the current structure.

“This expansion will attract new tenants, further boosting local businesses and job creation. The Municipality remains committed to driving economic growth and urban revitalisation through strategic property

initiatives. This redevelopment is a significant step toward realising the Municipality’s vision of creating a vibrant and thriving beachfront for both residents and visitors,” said Mayor Xaba.

The Municipality has also finalised supply chain management processes for the redevelopment of the old “Funworld Site.”

A formal announcement regarding this site will be made in due course.

CITY WRITES OFF OVER R80 MILLION IN DEBTS OF DECEASED ESTATES

ETHEKWINI Municipality has written off over R80.3 million owed by deceased and insolvent estates with a property value of up to a maximum of R1 million and that are over 24 months.

This follows an unprecedented decision adopted by Council on 29 August to provide relief to beneficiaries of deceased and insolvent estates.

This move is in line with the Municipal Financial Management Act and the eThekwini Municipality Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy.

The debt owed by the deceased estates, where the executors were not appointed, was estimated at over R944 million, impacting households located in various parts of the Municipality.

During a meeting of the Executive Committee on 26 November, it was noted that 2800 applications for deceased estate write offs have been received since September.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said the City has written off approximately 977 applications to the value of

R80 322 733. 70 million in debt for deceased estates, while 335 applications worth R33 852 886.20 million are still pending. Eighty-eight applications worth just over R8.7 million were rejected for various reasons, leaving 561 applications still to be processed.

The public is reminded that applications to write off deceased estates debts are still open, and applications can be made at the various Sizakala Customer Centres and revenue offices.

The write off will take place

under the following conditions:

- The deceased and insolvent estate must be for a residential household, not business;
- Debt involved to be older than 24 months;
- Availability of surviving beneficiary with a legal title to represent the estate to avoid re-emergence of debt.

In instances where the next of kin is a minor or indigent, the Indigent Policy will be applied.

Mayor Xaba has again urged beneficiaries of deceased estates to take advantage of this opportunity by approaching



ETHEKWINI MOBILE APP RECEIVES RECOGNITION AT CPSI AWARDS

THE eThekwini Mobile App was announced as the 3rd runner-up in the prestigious Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) Awards. This government initiative honours innovative solutions that significantly enhance service delivery in South Africa's public sector.

Competing against 89 entries, the app achieved 3rd place in the Citizen-Focused Innovation category. Accepting the award on behalf of the Municipality was Deputy Head of the Information and Management Unit Mduduzi Mdletshe who acknowledged the collaborative efforts behind the app's success.

"This recognition reflects the dedication and teamwork



Deputy Head of the Information and Management Unit Mduduzi Mdletshe accepted the prestigious Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) Award on behalf of the City.

across various units that made the app a reality. The effort invested in creating a smart and user-friendly tool for residents is commendable. We are proud of every staff member who contributed to this achievement. As a City, we are very committed

to continue the journey of innovation and driving digitisation and making eThekwini a smart City. We are striving to make a meaningful difference in the lives of residents and we believe that by embracing creativity and collaboration, we can

overcome any challenge and create a brighter future for communities," said Mdletshe. Mavuso Tshabalala, Head of the Sizakala Customer Service Unit, echoed this sentiment, highlighting the team's hard work. "Developing this app required significant effort, and the hard work continues. Recognition at this level validates our commitment to improving citizen engagement. We are proud of the team that developed, managed, and promoted the app," said Tshabalala. In addition to this accolade, the app has been nominated in the FNB App of the Year Awards, reinforcing its status as an essential tool for enhancing service delivery and citizen interaction.

EXTENSION OF LEASES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS ACCOMODATION



The extension of lease contracts for flood victims accomodation has been approved by the Executive Committe.

THE Executive Committee approved a report recommending the extension of the current lease agreement for five property owners providing temporary emergency accomodation for the April 2022 flood victims on a month-to-month basis for a period of 12 months.

The extension of the contract is crucial to maintaining the sustainability of the temporary emergency accomodation programme until houses are completed for relocation purposes.

Currently, planning processes are underway for the identified land parcels for a permanent housing solution; however,

since houses have not yet been built, an amendment in terms of Section 116 (3) of the Municipal Finance Management Act is required in order to allow the remaining milestones to be completed.

Additional funding to the value of R63.3 million will be sourced from the Informal Settlement Upgrade Grant.

This will allow the reprioritising as directed by the National Minister of Human Settlements in order to cover all the relevant cost implications for the additional 12-month period allowed for the construction of permanent houses for flood victims.

CITY WORKS TO REPLACE PIT TOILETS

THE City is set to spend R37 million into a project to design, supply, and install alternative onsite sanitation technology to replace pit toilets within the eThekwini Municipal area. A report outlining the project was tabled during a special Executive Committee sitting on 29 November. The project involves the construction of on-site sanitation solutions across eThekwini over a 36-month period. The work will entail a six-month pilot phase which will include an assessment of the performance of the installed solutions.

The assessment will include technical, environmental, social and economic considerations. The second phase will include the full implementation of the project.

The project will be applied to formal houses built by Human Settlements with no sanitation facilities due to lack of bulk sewer infrastructure, existing households with dilapidated

toilet infrastructure or no toilet facilities. Where deemed necessary, the conversion of the Urine Diversion and VIP toilet structures will be implemented to approved alternative solutions. According to the report, it is estimated that over 50 000 households require on-site sanitation throughout the Municipal area, which continues to increase due to rapid urbanisation. With 67% of the Municipal area being rural in nature, this leads to pressure on the City for improved services of an urban nature, hence the need for a better sanitation technology.

eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said: "The City, through the Water and Sanitation Policy, has established a framework for minimum standards for sanitation in a quest to provide acceptable access to sanitation services that are safe, reliable, environmentally sound and provides dignity to communities."



FURNITURE MAKING PROGRAMME PRAISED FOR CREATING JOBS

DR. MIMMY Gondwe, Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training led a delegation to the Umkhumbane Entrepreneurship Support Centre in Cato Manor to assess the Furniture Manufacturing and Upholstery Skills Development Training Programme. She was accompanied by Ward 29 Councillor Bhekisisa Mngadi and the Fibre Processing and Manufacturing Sector Education and Training Authority (FP&MSETA) CEO Dr. Felleng Yende on the visit on 29 November.

The oversight visit aimed to evaluate the impact of the ongoing programme, which has been providing essential skills in furniture production. After a walkabout through the centre, Deputy Minister Gondwe was left highly impressed with the high-quality and beautiful furniture pieces created by the 60 trainees currently enrolled in the programme.

“What I saw today is phenomenal and inspiring. From the stories told by beneficiaries, I can confidently state that skills development is the key to stimulate job creation and end hunger in communities,” she remarked.

The Deputy Minister also emphasised the importance of partnerships, calling on the private sector to support the



Dr. Mimmy Gondwe, Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training with Ward 29 Councillor Bhekisisa Mngadi were impressed with the high standard of work produced by participants of the Furniture Making Skills Development Programme at the Umkhumbane Entrepreneurship Support Centre.

initiative. “I have a passion to see women empowered, especially young women. What excites me most about this programme is that most of the beneficiaries are women, they are leading in what used to be a male-dominated sector,” she added.

The programme, now in its sixth year, has trained over 150 beneficiaries, many of whom are youth and women. Of these, about 70 percent have gone on to start their own businesses and employed at least three people. One

notable success story is Matho Mathenjwa, who founded Feel in Heaven Design after receiving funding through the provincial government Operation Vula Programme. She secured the funding after she completed her training. Mathenjwa grew her business and now employs over 10 people. She expressed her gratitude for the assistance which helped grow her business.

“I received R200 000 which was a breakthrough and helped me kickstart my business and grow it to where

it is today,” she said.

Councillor Mngadi praised the programme, noting that it aligns with the City’s goal to empower communities through entrepreneurship.

This year, the programme is training 60 new participants, with 30 completing a three-month course and 30 enrolled in a one-year learnership. The initiative, a collaboration between eThekweni Municipality’s Business Support Unit, FP&MSETA, and My Space Academy, is helping foster job creation.

ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY RECORDS SUCCESSFUL TID ROLLOVER

ETHEKWINI Municipality is pleased to confirm the successful completion of the Token Identifier (TID) rollover for all active prepaid electricity meters, which was achieved ahead of the 24 November deadline.

Although the City had indicated its completion well in

advance, this country-wide critical initiative was finalised on 24 November.

While there were moments of concern among customers as the deadline approached, the City’s dedicated team provided extensive support to address enquiries and facilitate a smooth transition. Further-

more, this process has allowed the Municipality to identify a significant number of inactive prepaid electricity meters.

To address this issue, eThekweni Municipality has developed a comprehensive plan to investigate the identified inactive meters and normalise their connections.

The City commends staff and other stakeholders that were involved in the execution of this roll out that was officially launched in August last year. A special thanks is extended to the residents of eThekweni for their cooperation throughout the process.

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