

CITY ABUZZ AS THE HOLLYWOODBETS DURBAN JULY ROLLS INTO TOWN



Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli (inset) as well as partners from Hollywoodbets and Gold Circle unveiled the City's plans to ensure a successful 2024 Durban July Grand Experience.

ETHEKWINI Municipality is ready to host Africa's largest horseracing event, with the City's tourism and hospitality industry prepared for the scores of visitors descending on Durban. The Hollywoodbets Durban July takes place on 6 July at the Greyville Racecourse.

Themed 'Ride the Wave', the prestigious horseracing event and fashion extravaganza is expected to attract approximately 45 000 visitors to Durban with 78 percent accommodation occupancy rates expected.

The City's state of readiness was unpacked during the Durban July Grand Experience media launch on 3 July, where the City's plans and activities for the Durban July were unveiled. The launch took

place at Florida Road's Gordon Park. Partner representatives from Hollywoodbets and Gold Circle said they are excited for the event, with all plans in motion to ensure a successful day.

Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli said safety measures have been implemented to ensure the event and related activities occur seamlessly.

"Metro Police officers will be deployed around the Greyville area working with other law enforcement agencies. All intersections will be managed for traffic control with some road closures."

Councillor Ntuli said the projections for the economic impact on eThekweni from the Durban July weekend are

far reaching. This is due to several events taking place. "The direct spend is estimated at R271 million, with a total of R670 million contribution to the eThekweni GDP and a total number of 5 000 jobs to be created," he said.

He also highlighted the City's successful Durban Fashion Fair (DFF) programme which continues to produce rising fashion stars.

"This year, nine of our DFF rising stars will take centre stage and give spectators a taste of what is currently trending in the fashion space. Furthermore, six models groomed from our Municipal model scout programme will be showcasing designers' collections during the race day fashion showcase."

During the launch, the DFF

designers briefly gave a teaser of what can be expected fashion-wise on race day.

As Africa's leading festival and events destination, there is a series of events, township experiences, and activations lined-up over the July weekend. These include Council approved destination promotion leveraging partnerships with various event organisers such as Fact Durban Rocks, Any Given Sunday, Anywhere in the City, eKasi Durban July, Mojo's July Weekend, eThekweni Jazz Jam, Artizen Durban July, White Party Lifestyle Excursion and many more.

For more information go to www.visitdurban.travel or follow @DBNTourism on social media.

CITY DELEGATION MEETS DEPUTY MAYOR OF LOS ANGELES TO STRENGTHEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

A DELEGATION from eThekweni Municipality held a successful high-level strategic engagement with the Deputy Mayor of International Affairs for the City of Los Angeles Erin Bromaghim. The engagement aimed to strengthen diplomatic relations to enhance trade, investment and cooperation in various social and economic development areas.

Durban has an existing Sister-City Memorandum of Understanding with Los Angeles in the United States of America (USA). Discussions during the engagement centred around opportunities for collaboration between the two cities in various sectors including the environment, health, sports, human settlement, maritime, education, innovation and technology.

During the meeting, which took place at the Los Angeles City Hall, the Deputy Mayor said they have been focusing on deepening ties with key markets and South Africa is the USA's largest trading partner. She further expressed commitment to strengthening

diplomatic relations between Los Angeles and the City of Durban. She added that there was a lot of cooperation that could be harnessed focusing on the model of AltaSea at the Port of Los Angeles which is something that can be cloned or reproduced in the Port of Durban.

Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli said the City has over the years maintained good relations with the USA's diplomatic office both through the Consul-General in Durban, and directly with the office of the Ambassador in Pretoria.

EThekweni City Manager Musa Mbhele extended an invitation for the Office of the Mayor of Los Angeles to attend the reSURGEncE Conference taking place at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre from 17 to 21 July 2024. "We appreciate your commitment to share about the reSURGEncE Conference with some Los Angeles based enterprises as we are considering having a hybrid conference. Since it's the inaugural conference, we



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want to make it even bigger going forward," said Mbhele.

The engagements with the Office of the Mayor in the City of Los Angeles and destination promotion activations in the USA form part of the City's

aggressive drive to attract international investors to the reSURGEncE Conference.

Exhibition stands at the conference are sold out, but the public can still attend the event.

CITY SOLE BENEFICIARY OF CHINA LEARNING EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITY

THE CITY is thrilled to announce its selection as the sole beneficiary among 54 municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal for an exciting learning exchange programme. This initiative, in partnership with the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority and the Chinese Culture and International Education Centre, will provide invaluable training and upskilling opportunities

for Municipal employees, small business owners, and unemployed youth.

Through a newly established Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by the eThekweni City Manager Musa Mbhele, this almost fully funded programme reflects the Municipality's commitment to fostering community growth and development.

From June to December

2024, eThekweni will send 30 representatives to China as part of the South African Municipal Development Learning Exchange.

Council unanimously welcomed this initiative at its meeting on 25 June, recognising it as a unique chance to build strong relationships and networks with the BRICS country.

The exchange programme

will focus on targeted learning streams tailored to the specific needs of Municipal officials, unemployed youth, and small business owners.

This initiative signifies a major step forward for the Municipality, demonstrating a proactive approach to addressing economic challenges through strategic international collaborations.



PRIORITISING CLEAN GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

ETHEKWINI Municipality remains steadfast in its commitment to clean governance, transparent financial management, and efficient service delivery. This dedication is evident in the recent Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC) reports tabled at a virtual Council meeting on 28 June. Both reports highlighted the necessity for stringent oversight and corrective measures to prevent future irregularities and ensure responsible fiscal management.

To address unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful (UIFW) expenditure, the City has developed and adopted a comprehensive UIFW Reduction Strategy aligned with National Treasury MFMA Circular No. 111. This strategy focuses on reducing irregular expenditure through a series of key interventions:

- Automating the contract management cycle
- Enhancing procurement planning
- Implementing compliance checklists
- Conducting thorough demand analysis and
- Strengthening key budget and internal controls.



These measures are being diligently implemented by various Municipal structures, including Council, MPAC, the Financial Misconduct Board, the Audit Committee, and the Executive Committee. These bodies ensure that goods and services have been delivered as specified before processing any related expenditure.

The first report tabled by the MPAC Deputy Chairperson Councillor Conrad Dlamini focused on an analysis of UIFW expenditure over multiple financial years. The findings

recommended that a total of R24.8 million be written off as irrecoverable. Another recommendation was that R733 000 be recovered from relevant or former officials and service providers. The focus of the second report was on the UIFW expenditure from July 2023 to March 2024 with findings of non-compliance, identified by the Auditor-General with Regulation 8(1) and (2) of the Preferential Procurement Regulations (PPR) 2017. It also found that 85 contracts were awarded in

contravention of local content provisions, totalling R931.3 million. The committee recommended that R931.3 million be a write-off and submitted for consequence management processes according to the Council Policy on financial misconduct.

Chairperson of the Governance Committee Councillor Nkosenhle Madlala welcomed the report and explained that the Municipality takes consequence management seriously. He said the City is making substantial progress in this area. "The Independent Financial Misconduct Board is fully functional and actively processing matters. Priority is given to current issues to ensure timely and effective resolution. The City's zero-tolerance approach towards fraud and corruption ensures that any detected instances are promptly addressed in line with applicable laws and policies," he added.

The Municipality's efforts to strengthen governance and financial management practices demonstrate a commitment to promoting transparency and accountability.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR INFORMAL TRADERS ON THE CARDS

INFORMAL trade in the Durban inner city will be given an overhaul as the City is considering innovative ways to accommodate and grow traders into small, medium, and micro enterprises. This was revealed during the Inner City Regeneration Town Talk held at Warwick Junction on 27 June.

Informal traders who filled the hall, supported the ideas presented while raising pertinent issues that impact them.

The Business Support, Tourism, Markets and Agri Business Unit is responsible

for implementation of various small business programmes designed to develop and upgrade emerging entrepreneurs, informal traders and cooperatives with priority given to previously disadvantaged people. The unit aims to modernise Council-owned business hives by providing facilities that adhere with Council requirements such as safety, security, and hygiene. The West End building, 126 Johannes Nkosi Building, Centrum Site Flea Market and the Dalton Art and Craft Market are being considered as vibrant

trade bazaars and destination markets which will provide a variety of services.

Informal Trade Manager Michael Hlangu said they are replacing dilapidated makeshift structures with a formalised state-of-the-art buildings, creating a revitalised and centralised business hive. "These facilities will provide affordable rental for local informal trading."

He added: "We have partnered with SEDA to establish a manufacturing business incubator focusing on clothing and textiles utilising

the building at 126 Johannes Nkosi Street. The Durban University of Technology was appointed to be the operator of this incubation centre. They will provide a variety of support services under controlled conditions, to create an environment favourable for developing and nurturing new technology businesses and accelerating growth of existing businesses."

Councillor Busi Ndlovu, Chairperson of the Informal Economy Forum, said the proposals put forward will yield positive results.



TRANSFORMING THE PROPERTY SECTOR TO BE INTENTIONALLY INCLUSIVE

THE CITY partnered with the South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) to host their annual convention themed 'Levelling the Playing Fields'. The convention took place at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre on 26 and 27 June and saw delegates participate in bold and honest discussions on meaningfully transforming the property sector.

In his opening address, Acting Deputy City Manager of Economic Development Russell Curtis acknowledged SAIBPP's commitment to nurturing the next generation of property leaders through initiatives like the Bursary Fund, Young Professionals Forum, and extensive educational programmes. "These efforts are dedicated to boosting skills development and enterprise support, which is crucial for enhancing the participation of black professionals in the property sector."

Curtis also recognised



Russell Curtis, Acting Deputy City Manager of Economic Development, with Gugu Dlamini and Philani Sidinile from Sizovuna Investments at the South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners annual convention.

SAIBPP's leadership role in driving transformation through policy advocacy and forming strong partnerships with the public sector and business communities, aiming to create a more inclusive industry.

He mentioned initiatives like the Durban Property Empowerment Programme which offers training and support for black property developers and professionals.

SAIBPP Chief Executive Officer Khululwa Muthwa said the intention of the annual convention is to use their voice to shape the transformation agenda in the property sector.

Muthwa said access to land is a critical factor in supporting the property sector and called on cities and government to provide opportunities and to be intentionally inclusive.

FLEET UPGRADES TO ENHANCE SERVICE DELIVERY

COUNCIL has approved two significant fleet upgrade initiatives to enhance the operational efficiency of various Municipal departments. This underscores eThekweni Municipality's commitment to effective service delivery. The first initiative allocates R200 million to the Vehicle Replacement Programme. The Municipality's fleet, comprising of approximately 9 300 vehicles, includes various categories such as 10-ton tipper trucks with a 12-year replacement cycle and higher usage vehicles such as those used by Metro Police.

The second initiative, valued at an estimated R25 million, focuses on enhancing security and protection services by replacing outdated vehicles and adding new ones to meet growing operational demands. This investment is crucial for uninterrupted service delivery, mitigating risks associated with vehicle shortages and unreliability.

DURBAN FILM OFFICE COINS JULY AS FILM MONTH

THE DURBAN Film Office (DFO) has declared July as Film Month in Durban, as a plethora of film festivals and events are scheduled throughout the month. This month-long celebration promises to showcase artistic excellence, fostering a dynamic environment for filmmakers, actors, and cinema enthusiasts alike.

Taking place this month is the 15th edition of the Durban FilmMart (DFM), titled 'African Visions Unleashed: From Disruption to Accountability'. It takes place from 19 to 22 July.

Running from 18 to 28 July is the 45th Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) edition which promises a creative journey with a premier programme highlighting the best in local and international cinema. DIFF 2024 expands its footprint to include venues like Ster-Kinekor, Gateway, and Nu Metro Pavilion, while returning to Suncoast CineCentre and other locations. The month ends with the prestigious Simon "Mabhunu" Sabela KZN Film and Television Awards taking place on 27 July. It celebrates

outstanding achievements in the KwaZulu-Natal film and television industry. Named after the legendary actor, director, and producer, the awards recognise excellence in various categories.

The DFO plays a crucial role in nurturing and promoting the film industry in Durban. It is dedicated to developing a sustainable film industry in the region by offering services such as location scouting, facilitating permits, and providing funding and training opportunities for local filmmakers.

DFO Senior Manager Sharon

Gumede encouraged the public to participate in the key events happening around the City this month. "These events provide platforms for networking and learning. Aspiring filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals should participate, learn from industry experts, and explore the numerous opportunities available," she said.

For more information go to <https://film.durban.gov.za/>



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