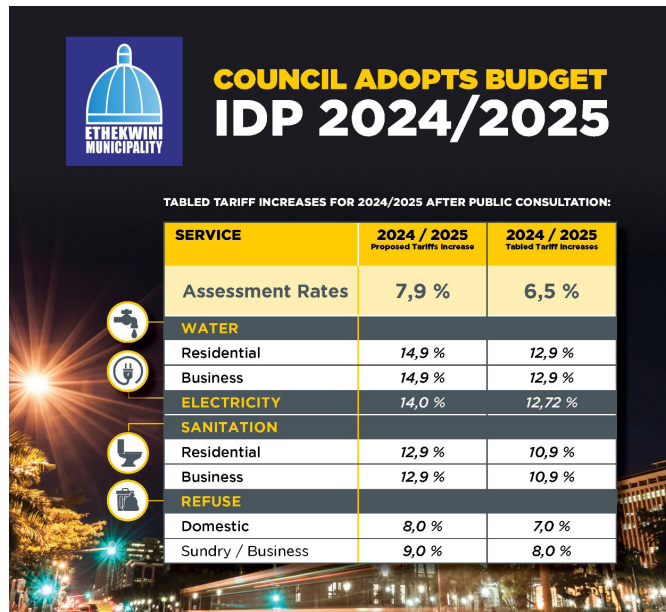


## VISIONARY R67.2 BN BUDGET FOR ETHEKWINI

**E**Thekweni Mayor Councillor Mxolisi Kaunda's final budget speech unveiled a comprehensive strategy that reflects the aspirations and needs of the City's diverse community. It further positioned eThekweni on a trajectory of sustained growth and development. He presented the City's final budget of R67.2 billion earmarked for the 2024/2025 financial year at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre on 3 May. The final budget will chart a course towards a prosperous future, standing as a testament to the City's resilience, innovation, and unwavering commitment to inclusive development.

The culmination of extensive community engagement and stakeholder consultations has resulted in a financial blueprint that heralds a new era of economic vitality and inclusivity. By prioritising community feedback, investing in critical infrastructure, and fostering a conducive business climate, the Municipality lays a solid foundation for economic resilience, innovation, and shared prosperity.

Acknowledging the indispensable role of community feedback, Mayor Kaunda commended the active participation of residents, businesses, and various stakeholders in shaping the budgetary priorities. Tariff adjustments were meticulously tailored in response to public concerns, reflecting the Municipality's dedication to



equitable economic policies. Reduced electricity, property rates, water, sanitation, and refuse tariffs signalled

a proactive move to ease financial burdens while maintaining essential services and infrastructure.

Central to eThekweni's economic resurgence are catalytic investments earmarked for infrastructure development and service delivery enhancement. With a dedicated capital budget of R7.68 billion, the Municipality pledges substantial allocations to critical sectors, including roads and stormwater management, electricity supply, water and sanitation infrastructure, waste management, human settlements, community services, and public transport.

Noteworthy initiatives such as road rehabilitation, electricity network expansion, water infrastructure upgrades, and housing construction exemplify the Municipality's proactive stance towards fostering sustainable urban development and improving quality of life.

Recognising the pivotal role of the private sector in driving economic prosperity, Mayor Kaunda unveiled a comprehensive strategy to cultivate a conducive business environment. With an eye towards job creation and economic resilience, the budget allocates R728 million for the development of bulk infrastructure to catalyse key projects and attract investments.

Moreover, initiatives such as the introduction of rates rebates, support for small businesses, and investment in public transport infrastructure underscore the Municipality's commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship and fostering inclusive growth.

# MAYOR DELIVERS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

ETHEKWINI Mayor Councillor Mxolisi Kaunda delivered the State of the City Address on 30 April which he said was significant as it was delivered against the backdrop of the 30th anniversary of the democratic government. He said eThekweni Municipality continues to be functional and financially sustainable which has been confirmed by the recent unqualified audit opinion report by the Auditor-General.

Speaking on investment, Mayor Kaunda said their efforts to attract investment to the City has resulted in new developments which have transformed the skyline of the City. In the north of Durban, there is the uMhlanga Oceans Development, Sibaya Development, Midway Crossing, and Brickworks where the City recently launched a Takealot warehouse which is going to yield over 20 000 job opportunities.

“In the outer west region we are in the second year of the construction of the Westown Development which

has come hot on the heels of the Keystone and Cato Ridge developments. With all these investments, we are building a vibrant transport and logistics corridor that connects KwaZulu-Natal and other neighbouring provinces such as Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and the Free State. More importantly, these projects, including the recently unveiled R2 billion Giba Business Park will also help ease the burden on our roads leading to the harbour,” he said.

In the south of Durban, planned construction of the Auto Supply Park at the old Durban Airport site is forging ahead. At the same time, the transformation of the old Clairwood Racecourse into a strategic logistics and warehousing park continues.

“All these key projects demonstrate that with strong partnership between business and government, a great deal could be achieved,” he said.

He said the City’s forecast for economic growth is 0.9% for 2024.

“We are indeed on a path to



**A lively street parade celebrated the City’s cultural diversity. This preceded eThekweni Mayor Councillor Mxolisi Kaunda’s State of the City address at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre.**

robust recovery in key sectors such as transport, finance, and construction, driven by our Economic Recovery Plan. Our tourism sector is on a rebound and the visitor numbers have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels,” said Mayor Kaunda. “As the leadership of the City, we remain committed

to addressing the concerns of the business community by streamlining processes to improve the ease of doing business. This will boost business confidence and position eThekweni as a formidable competitor for investment among other metros.”

## NEWLY BUILT DUBE TRADEZONE TO ATTRACT R1.8 BILLION EARLY INVESTMENTS

THE DUBE TradePort Corporation continues to be the epitome that attracts investment in the City. To date, this industrial precinct has attracted a total of R4.6-billion in private sector investment and created more than 5 000 permanent jobs and 51 000 indirect jobs.

The Dube TradePort Corporation officially launched Dube TradeZone 2 on 3 May. This is the second phase of the highly successful industrial precinct and special economic zone. The new R500 million special economic zone has already secured total private sector investment value of R1.8 billion in early investment and is expected to create 600 jobs within the next five years.

MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Siboniso Duma said government is thrilled with this exceptional development and that demand for industrial space within the Dube TradePort has triggered the phase two developments.

“The fact that these companies are expanding and reinvesting in the province is a great indication of the progress made in the economic transformation of the province and creating an enabling environment in which industries can thrive,” said MEC Duma.

Dube TradeZone 2 will target investors in the manufacturing and assembly, logistics and automotive sectors.

## REIMAGINING ETHEKWINI’S BLUE ECONOMY

ETHEKWINI Municipality is excited to host the upcoming Blue Economy Learning Exchange workshop. This strategic initiative aims to redefine the trajectory of eThekweni’s blue economy through the lens of Integrated Coastal Management, unlocking its vast potential while ensuring sustainable development and resilience in coastal regions.

The learning exchange takes place on 15 and 16 May at the Moses Mabhida Stadium. With limited spaces available, prospective participants are urged to secure their spots as RSVPs will close upon reaching capacity.

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/r/dak24U6r6Z>

The workshop serves as a platform for insightful and strategic discussions, paving the way towards realising the full potential of the Blue Economy for coastal regions.

The target audience spans coastal municipalities and authorities, all spheres of government and entities, academia, non-governmental organisations, community organisations, and businesses. Stakeholders from across blue economy sectors are invited to participate in reshaping the future of eThekweni’s Blue Economy.

For more information contact Nomalanga Sokhela on [Nomalanga.Sokhela@durban.gov.za](mailto:Nomalanga.Sokhela@durban.gov.za) or Dr Andrew Mather on [Andrew.Mather@durban.gov.za](mailto:Andrew.Mather@durban.gov.za)



# INNER-CITY REGENERATION PROGRAMME SPURS TRANSFORMATION IN DURBAN

OVER the past two months, the Inner-City Regeneration Programme, spearheaded by eThekweni City Manager Musa Mbhele, has gained remarkable momentum. It has shown tangible progress and clear timelines. This ambitious initiative, structured around 14 distinct workstreams, is dedicated to addressing pressing urban challenges. This includes dilapidated buildings, public space management, and the enforcement of Municipal by-laws.

The Inner-City Regeneration Programme aims to revitalise urban areas by enhancing vibrancy, inclusivity, and economic prosperity. It employs a multifaceted strategy involving infrastructure upgrades, public realm enhancement, and social housing initiatives to improve residents' quality of

life, attract investment, and stimulate economic growth.

The programme strategically deploys building wraps on problem buildings, allowing property owners to use advertising revenue to settle debts and fund renovations.

Recent achievements include refurbishing five properties and the demolition of the China Mall Emporium. Artistic initiatives, like adding murals to buildings, are integral to the programme's rejuvenation efforts. Additionally, a public space management contract for the Durban Beachfront, emphasising heritage preservation, is nearing finalisation.

Since the inception of the bad buildings programme, collaborative efforts with property owners have resulted in the refurbishment of 22 buildings, with an additional 20 slated for renovation



**The deployment of 300 Precinct Ambassadors under the City's Precinct Ambassador Programme aligns with upcoming major events, reinforcing security measures, ensuring cleanliness, and enhancing visitor experiences.**

this year. Furthermore, the programme has attracted over R22 billion in private sector investment, poised to generate upwards of 90 000 jobs through initiatives like the Inner-City Central Corridor project.

In a concerted effort to combat crime, the

Municipality is intensifying its surveillance capabilities by upgrading close to 500 closed-circuit television cameras, with plans to procure an additional 200 by the end of the year.

These will focus on key areas like the beachfront and central business district.

## CITY HOSTS BRICS+SDATI MANUFACTURING GROUP INFORMATION SESSION

AS part of the City's ongoing efforts to foster collaboration and explore new opportunities in the realm of manufacturing, GoDigitalSA in partnership with the Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE) hosted the BRICS+ SDATI Manufacturing Group Information Session. The event was held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre on 30 April.

The BRICS SA Skills Development, Applied Technologies, and Innovation Working Group – Future Skills KZN Information Sessions, in KwaZulu-Natal; specifically in eThekweni Municipality, plays a crucial role in fostering cooperation and collaboration among BRICS Plus member countries. These are Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran,

and the United Arab Emirates.

MILE Chief Learning Officer Professor Mpilo Ngubane said it is envisioned that the collaborations will result in teacher/lecturer skills transfer, learner skills and knowledge transfer programmes and assistance in establishing BRICS training bases.

"The group focuses on enhancing skills development, promoting innovation, and sharing best practices to address the evolving demands of the global job market," he said.

Teboho Semmelink, Chief Operating Officer of Go Digital said the GoDigitalSA Foundation, in partnership with eThekweni Municipality, are playing a vital role in coordinating and facilitating relationships between BRICS countries, learning institutions,



**A meeting of minds. Delegates at the BRICS+SDATI Manufacturing Group Information Session.**

and schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

"There are a series of information sessions planned with an array of stakeholders. The objective of these information sessions is to provide accessible and relevant information on these various working groups. By offering

educational opportunities, we aim to empower individuals, institutions, small businesses, government officers and schools to make informed decisions that positively impact their lives and the community," he added.



# 2024 AFRICA TRAVEL INDABA TO UNLOCK OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

THEMED ‘Unlocking Opportunities’, the upcoming Africa Travel Indaba is expected to connect the tourism industry with unlimited opportunities. The Indaba is anticipated to be attended by 9 000 delegates from over 25 countries. It takes place at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre from 13 to 16 May. The Indaba was launched recently by Deputy Minister of Tourism Fish Mahlalela, KwaZulu-Natal MEC of Economic

Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Siboniso Duma, and Chairperson of the City’s Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli.

Councillor Ntuli said: “The City’s economy will benefit immensely from hosting this four-day event. Hotel occupancy is expected to be between 85 and 95 percent. The total expected spending is estimated at R177 million, contributing R439 million to eThekweni’s GDP with 796 jobs to be created.”



The renowned Africa Travel Indaba takes place in the City from 13 to 16 May. The event was launched recently by Deputy Minister of Tourism Fish Mahlalela, together with the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal Siboniso Duma, and Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli.

## FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ETHEKWINI

THE DEPUTY Director-General of Technology Innovation in the Department of Science and Technology Mmboneni Muofhe visited the Innovate Durban Co-lab in Cato Manor recently. His visit was to discuss how technology can be used to improve the lives of communities. He said investing in more co-labs, such as the Innovate Durban Co-lab, will allow residents with innovative ideas to further explore them.

Muofhe said the culture of innovation will be possible through a village system. This allows every person in society, regardless of age or background, to invest in the expansion of innovation in order to create useful opportunities for the future.”

A success story of the co-labs is Bheka Mbonambi, a Strategic Spatial Planning Data Analyst intern from Development Planning. An innovator through the Innovate Durban Eco-lab, Mbonambi created rowlock blockchain from plant waste materials that can be used to rehabilitate soil in areas



The Deputy Director-General of Technology Mmboneni Muofhe visited the Innovate Durban Co-lab to explore the future of technology in eThekweni.

where mines have closed. The component is bound together with mushroom mycelium and plant waste to revitalise the damaged soil and repair the environment.

Ajiv Maharaj, Deputy Head of Economic Research Strategy and Innovation, said through Innovate Durban, they will establish a centre for public sector innovation

to support the creation of solutions. This will help to improve service delivery across all sectors. He said the centre will open in July in Morningside.

“KwaMnyandu Centre will also open this year to promote small enterprises and learners who have unique ideas to current challenges,” Maharaj added.

### FURNITURE DESIGN COMPETITION CALL FOR ENTRIES 2024

Are you a South African designer or budding designer? Do you believe that furniture should improve our quality of life, be functional, and complement the space in which it is located? Then enter the Furniture Design Competition now. Entries close on 30 September 2024.

For more information click on the following link:

[www.thedtic.gov.za](http://www.thedtic.gov.za)



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