ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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By 2030 eThekwini will be Africa's most caring and liveable City

3 February 2026 [Issue 446]

IMPROVED AUDIT OUTCOME FOR CITY

ETHEKWINI Municipality has achieved an improved audit outcome for the 2024/25 financial year, reflecting solid progress in strengthening financial management, performance reporting, and overall governance. The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) has issued the Municipality an unqualified audit opinion, confirming that the annual financial statements present eThekwini's financial position in accordance with all applicable accounting standards. Importantly, the Auditor-General once again confirmed that there were no material findings on the financial statements, an important milestone in improving financial controls and reporting integrity.

Key highlights from the audit report include:

- Unqualified audit opinion with no material findings on the financial statements
- Improved quality of performance reporting, with stronger alignment between reported results and supporting evidence
- Resolution of prior year non-compliance, relating to strategic planning and performance management.

The AGSA noted a year-on-year improvement in the quality of the annual performance report, with a greater proportion of indicators assessed as reliable and useful, following audit adjustments.

Areas requiring focused attention include:

- Procurement and contract management
- Asset and infrastructure management
- Consequence management for irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure
- ICT modernisation and systems integration
- Project management
- Material Irregularities.

Leadership commitment

Municipal leadership has reiterated its commitment to:

- Implementing audit action plans within set timeframes
- Strengthening internal controls and governance systems
- Improving service delivery outcomes
- Addressing material irregularities decisively
- Enforcing effective consequence management
- Restoring public confidence

COMMENT ON CITY'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

ETHEKWINI residents are invited to engage in public consultations on the Municipality's draft Annual Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The Annual Report is a critical reflection of how the City is performing, delivering services, and managing public resources.

The consultation process provides communities and stakeholders with an opportunity to assess progress, share lived experiences, and influence the future direction of the Municipality.

For the business sector, this is a direct line into planning that underpins growth, competitiveness and investor confidence.

Following Council approval, the draft Annual Report is open for comment until Friday, 6 March 2026.

Engagements begin on 5 February at the Pinetown Civic Centre, followed by sessions on 14 February at the Amanzimtoti Community Hall, 21 February at the Durban City Hall, and on 24 February at the Pinetown Civic Centre. An engagement with the business sector will be confirmed. The Annual Report is a legislated accountability tool detailing operations, financial health, achievements and challenges. Highlights include overall performance of 86.7% for 2024/25, continued stabilisation despite fiscal pressures, and progress in essential services.

Access the draft Annual Report at www.durban.gov.za; Sizakala Centres and libraries. Copies may be requested via email: Noky.Nyasulu@durban.gov.za or call 031 311 4208.

ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

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INVESTOR FRIDAY'S SITE VISITS ACCELERATE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

TO ACCELERATE investment, unlock job opportunities, and remove development bottlenecks, eThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele, together with the City's executive management team, led the recent eThekwini Investor Friday's site visits on 30 January.

The initiative forms part of the City's commitment to direct engagement with investors and developers to unblock catalytic projects and restore investor confidence. The delegation was supported by the Operations Management and Technical Services Departments together with the Catalytic Projects Directorate. They visited three sites namely the Oceans uMhlanga Precinct Development, the DEVMCO Sibaya Precinct Development, and the Link Hills Lifestyle Centre. Key discussions focused on resolving operational and regulatory challenges to fast-track implementation timelines.

At Oceans uMhlanga, attention centred on resolving issues relating to a temporary taxi rank required for the development. An alternative temporary solution along the C9 Corridor has been proposed, with value engineering and stakeholder engagement, including consultations with the South African National Taxi Council, prioritised. The visit also addressed deviation planning and parking reduction challenges in the uMhlanga precinct. In response to electricity supply challenges in the City's western region, Mbhele announced a proposed solar-powered back-up energy solution to safeguard key investors.

EThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele continues to lead the eThekwini Investor Friday's site visits which sees City leadership meet with businesses to remove any bottlenecks in order to fast-track investment across eThekwini.

MAYOR XABA UPBEAT AS BUSINESS CONFIDENCE RISES IN DURBAN

ETHEKWINI Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba has welcomed the release of the Durban Business Confidence Index for the fourth quarter of 2025, published on 29 January.

The report shows a notable improvement in business sentiment, with the index rising from 52.12 points in the third quarter to 63.38 points in the fourth quarter of 2025. According to the report, this upward shift reflects growing optimism among business leaders about Durban's current economic environment and future prospects.

The index ranges from 0 to 100. A score below 50 indicates low confidence, a score of 50 reflects a neutral economic outlook, and a score above 50 signals positive confidence in the economy.

Mayor Xaba said he was encouraged by the findings, noting that the results underscore the City's continued efforts to foster an investor friendly environment.

"EThekwini Municipality is rising. Importantly, businesspeople have commended the improvements in service delivery. We remain committed to keeping our foot firmly on the pedal," said Mayor Xaba.

Positive sentiment regarding service delivery is supported by several key developments. For the first time in five years, all water storage facilities operated optimally, ensuring a stable water supply across many parts of the City during the festive season. Additionally, for the first time since the 2022 floods, all bathing beaches were open for swimming during the festive period. Durban also attracted nearly R50 billion in new investment last year, further demonstrating its upward trajectory. Mayor Xaba attributed the overall improvement in confidence to the growing stability within the City's political and administrative environments. He said this stability has enhanced performance and accountability among officials.

EMPOWERING YOUTH-OWNED BUSINESSES

TO EMPOWER youth-owned businesses and improve access to funding in township communities, 59 young entrepreneurs gathered at the Hammarsdale Junction Mall from 28 to 30 January to participate in a Business and Skills Development Expo.

The Expo was hosted through a partnership between eThekwini Municipality's Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprise (SMME) Development Division, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Islamic Relief South Africa, Hammarsdale Junction, and Imini Yempumelelo. The collaboration aimed to unlock the entrepreneurial potential of youth-owned businesses aged 18 to 35.

The three-day programme began with a capacity-building training session focused on improving pitching, presentation skills and financial management. Over the two days, all 59 businesses pitched their ideas before a panel of judges. The pitching sessions ran alongside an exhibition where entrepreneurs showcased their products and services to the public and potential partners.

Programme Manager within the City's SMME Development Division Khungeka Gojo said the initiative demonstrated the value of collaboration between government, non-profit organisations, and community partners.

An awards ceremony will be held this month where approximately 40 businesses will receive funding of up to R35 000, as well as nine months of business mentorship to support growth and sustainability.

CITY HOSTS PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

EThekwin Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba (inset) led a delegation from the Portfolio Committee on Transport, the Department of Transport, and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport on a site visit of the GO!Durban C3 route (Pinetown to Bridge City).

THE PORTFOLIO Committee on Transport is satisfied with the progress eThekwini Municipality has made in the implementation of the Integrated Public Transport Network (GO!Durban). This follows a two-day oversight visit to the City to assess various infrastructure projects.

The committee also acknowledged the challenges which include, among others, the winding down of the Public Transport Network Grant and the impact it will have on the long-term sustainability of the project.

The delegation started at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre before heading out to the Pinecrest Mall to inspect the GO!Durban C3 route (Pinetown to Bridge City).

Committee Chairperson, Donald Selamolela, welcomed the engagement, saying the visit provided valuable insights into the City's progress and challenges in delivering a safe, reliable, and integrated public transport system.

Speaking at the debriefing, eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said the site visit allowed a better understanding of the C3 route and the infrastructure on the ground.

The City is working closely with the Department of Transport and its entities, as well as the private sector, to upgrade transport infrastructure and position eThekwini as a vibrant transport and logistics hub.

The City is also collaborating with Transnet to enhance the efficiency of the Port of Durban. "In collaboration with the private sector and the Transnet Freight Rail Infrastructure Manager, we are moving swiftly to implement initiatives aimed at shifting freight from road to rail. A few months ago, we unveiled the R10 billion Insimbi Ridge Development, which forms part of our broader programme to establish an inland port. In addition, the South African National Roads Agency is undertaking major projects to upgrade the N2 and N3 transport corridors," said Mayor Xaba.

TOWNSHIP AUTOMOTIVE HUB A BOOST TO LOCAL ECONOMY

A PLANNED R44 million automotive hub in KwaMashu in Ward 104 will help boost small, medium, and micro-sized enterprises in the community. It will also create jobs while promoting skills development.

Ward 104 Councillor Nkululeko Ndlovu said the planned automotive hub will help train mechanics. "We have a lot of informal mechanics in the ward as well as neighbouring wards who are operating on the streets and in backyards. By building this automotive hub, we want to empower them with skills through training so they are certified for the work they are doing which will be beneficial to them in the long run."

He said the communities of Inanda and Ntuzuma will benefit from the state-of-the-art auto-hub. "The hub will have about 20 workshops, offices, ablution facilities and a dedicated space to provide training," said Councillor Ndlovu.

He added: "We also welcome the creation of short-term jobs. Thus far, three local sub-contractors and local labour have been employed as part of the project. We also expect that local people will benefit once the hub has been completed."

The automotive hub, situated in KwaMashu's G-Section next to KwaMashu shopping centre, is expected to be completed later this year.

An artist impression of the proposed automotive hub in KwaMashu.

CUNARD'S QUEEN ANNE RETURNS TO DURBAN

CUNARD'S newest ship, Queen Anne, is expected to arrive in Durban on 4 February. Cunard is one of the world's oldest cruise lines and this arrival marks the vessel's return to South African waters less than a year after her inaugural visit to the City's Nelson Mandela Cruise Terminal. This underscores the Cunard's commitment to include South Africa in its prestigious global itineraries.

The Queen Anne is currently sailing on a grand voyage from Cape Town to Singapore, with Durban serving as a key port of call. The arrival of Queen Anne in Durban underscores the City's growing role as a premier destination in international cruising and brings significant economic benefits to local tourism and hospitality sector.

CLAIRWOOD MARKET DRIVES ECONOMIC GROWTH

THE CITY'S Economic Development and Planning Committee (ECOD), led by Chairperson Councillor Thembo Ntuli, conducted a site visit to the Durban Fresh Produce Market in Clairwood on 30 January. The committee assessed the market's functionality and economic contribution. The market is owned and managed by the Municipality.

The committee was pleased to observe a fully functional facility that continues to drive economic growth, create business opportunities and support inclusion across the value chain. The market was established in 1876 and operates from its current 21-hectare Clairwood site since 1975.

ECOD Councillors received a detailed briefing on the market's operations, features and financial performance from Senior Manager for Operations, Andre Young, and Senior Manager for Business Services, Jason Moonsamy. The market comprises two sales halls covering 33 000 square metres, eight bulk cold rooms, 22 cold rooms and 30 ripening rooms, supporting bulk trading, tenants and farmer participation.

Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli led a site visit to the Durban Fresh Produce Market in Clairwood on 30 January, where the committee assessed the facility's operations and economic impact.

During the briefing, it was revealed that in the 2024/25 financial year the market achieved an annual turnover of R2.3 billion and handled 263 225 tons of fresh produce. The market currently serves 3 350 registered buyers and 1 442 suppliers, holds a nine percent national market share, and is ranked as the fourth largest fresh produce market in South Africa. Over the past five years, it has generated a cumulative profit of R171.8 million, demonstrating strong financial sustainability.

Councillor Ntuli said it was satisfying to learn about the market's healthy financial status. He further highlighted that the market continues to support suppliers, with 160 stalls currently utilised by emerging farmers.

ETHEKWINI FURNITURE CLUSTER AGM TO DRIVE SMME GROWTH

THE ETHEKWINI Furniture Cluster, supported by eThekwini Municipality, successfully convened its first Annual General Meeting on 29 January at the Toyota Wessels Institute for Manufacturing Studies. The gathering brought together industry stakeholders, partners, and small, medium, and micro-sized enterprises to reflect on progress made during the 2025/26 period and to chart a forward-looking agenda for the sector.

The meeting provided an opportunity to assess key achievements and challenges faced by furniture manufacturers, while reinforcing the importance of collaboration in strengthening and scaling local businesses.

A highlight of the session was the sharing of critical market insights, including evolving buyer expectations and the strategic application of artificial intelligence to enhance competitiveness across retail, manufacturing, and government procurement markets.

In recognition of its ongoing commitment to enterprise development, eThekwini Municipality was honoured with the Funder Appreciation Award, celebrating its continued support and partnership in advancing the growth of the local furniture manufacturing industry.

If you would like to submit feedback or contribute to eThekwini Weekly Bulletin

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