ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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

4 March 2026 [Issue 450]

PRESIDENT UNVEILS STATUES OF STRUGGLE ICONS

THE excitement was palpable when President Cyril Ramaphosa presided over the unveiling of landmark statues of two struggle icons, Nelson Mandela and former ANC President Oliver Tambo, in eThekwini on 3 March.

Marked with traditional dancing and vibrant displays of culture, the unveiling was described by President Ramaphosa as "historic".

The historical value the statues will bring as well as the positive impact they will have on tourism were highlighted during the engagement.

"EThekwini Municipality has bestowed this honour on two icons in recognition of their contribution towards our struggle for freedom, social justice, and the empowerment of people. Monuments of this nature are important for preserving our history and heritage," said President Ramaphosa.

He said the statues stand as a reminder to future generations of the road the nation has travelled and the aspirations the country's leadership has for the future.

"It is significant that these statues are unveiled in the year that we celebrate 30 years of the adoption of our democratic Constitution."

He also touched on the impact the statues will have on tourism in the City saying: "We can anticipate that these statues will contribute to exceptional growth in tourism in eThekwini."

Cementing the City's status as an events and sporting capital, he said eThekwini will be the venue for the 46th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community taking place in August.

"This is a worthy recognition of the progress that has been made together with all social partners in restoring confidence in the City."

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Xaba said the statues will inspire present and future generations to learn more about the contributions these struggle icons made in building a democratic South Africa.

Speaking on other monuments in the City, Mayor Xaba said the Indentured Workers Monument, commissioned in partnership with the provincial government, was unveiled in November last year at South Beach. It commemorated 165 years since the arrival of the first indentured Indian workers in KwaZulu-Natal in 1860.

"We are also engaging the Embassy of Portugal regarding the relocation of the statue of Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa, from the city centre to the Durban Botanic Gardens. These monuments form part of our broader strategy to expand tourism infrastructure and enhance tourism offerings, encouraging visitors to stay longer in Durban," concluded Mayor Xaba.

President Cyril Ramaphosa was joined by eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba, as well as national and provincial Members of Parliament, councillors and other government officials at the official unveiling of landmark statues honouring struggle stalwarts Nelson Mandela and former ANC President Oliver Tambo.

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PRESIDENT COMMENDS CITY'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY AT PEWG

PRESIDENT Cyril Ramaphosa led the Presidential eThekwini Working Group (PeWG) engagement at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre on 3 March where he commended the City for measurable progress in restoring service delivery, rebuilding business confidence, and stabilising governance systems.

The President established the PeWG in 2024 in response to concerns raised by the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry regarding service delivery challenges and its impact on the local economy.

President Ramaphosa said there are tangible signs that the challenges have been addressed. He said the latest findings of the Durban Business Confidence Index reflect significant improvement, with business confidence now at its highest level since the index was established.

In recognition of the progress made, President Ramaphosa confirmed that the PeWG will be extended. To reinforce the next phase of recovery, the President announced that the National Business Initiative will support the establishment of an Independent Public-Private Partnership Office within the City Manager's Office.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba welcomed the announcement, thanking the President for his continued support.

President Cyril Ramaphosa led the Presidential eThekwini Working Group engagement at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre on 3 March where he praised the recovery of the City across many sectors.

SOUTHERN AQUEDUCT NEARS COMPLETION

THE City's major bulk water infrastructure project, the Southern Aqueduct, is nearing completion, with key sections scheduled for commissioning.

The project will significantly strengthen water security, reduce system losses, and enhance long-term supply reliability for communities in the southern and central regions. Construction continues to progress steadily, with major pipeline installations largely complete in portions of work packages one to three. This progress update was presented to the media during an oversight visit on 27 February. The Southern Aqueduct is being implemented in phases, with each section referred to as a "work package."

Work package one, which runs from Shallcross Road to the Chatsworth Reservoir, is more than 90 percent complete and is scheduled for commissioning in April.

Municipal officials conducted an oversight visit to the Southern Aqueduct project site on 27 February where progress updates were shared with members of the media. The bulk water infrastructure upgrade is nearing completion.

COMMENT ON DRAFT SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

THE Municipality calls on residents, businesses, civil society organisations, and all interested stakeholders to submit comments on the Draft 2026/27 Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF), which has been prepared for public consultation.

As the City's primary spatial planning instrument, the MSDF guides how land is used, how development is managed, and where infrastructure investment is prioritised across the Municipal area.

The 2026/27 Draft MSDF places strong emphasis on spatial transformation, integrated human settlements, improved access to services, sustainable land management, and the alignment of Municipal investment with economic opportunity. It also incorporates precinct level planning, recent land use adjustments, climate resilience considerations, and catalytic development priorities that position Durban.

Public participation is central to the MSDF review, and community input will directly shape the final document that goes before Council for adoption in May. The draft is available at Sizakala Centres, Municipal libraries, and the City's website.

Comments remain open from 2 March to 30 April.

R27 MILLION WORTH OF ILLICIT COUNTERFEIT GOODS SEIZED

AN INTELLIGENCE-DRIVEN operation in Sydenham led to the arrest of 14 suspects and the confiscation of counterfeit merchandise worth R27 million.

The joint multi-disciplinary operation was conducted along Felix Dlamini Road by the Durban Metro Police together with partnering law enforcement stakeholders.

The operation forms part of ongoing efforts to eradicate the mushrooming of illegal business operations, unlawful housing and trading activities, illicit trade, counterfeit goods, contraband, and immigration-related offences.

During the operation, law enforcement officers recovered and seized approximately 14 million cellphone accessories with an estimated street value of R27 million.

Metro Police Spokesperson Colonel Boysie Zungu confirmed the seizure of the illegal items stating that 14 individuals were found to be in contravention of the Immigration Act.

The Durban Metro Police arrested 14 foreign nationals and seized 14 million counterfeit goods worth R27 million during an intelligence-driven operation in Sydenham.

These foreign nationals will be assessed by the Department of Home Affairs to determine the validity of their documentation.

Frequent joint operations will be conducted in partnership with various spheres of government to eradicate criminal activities, curb unauthorised business trading, and ensure overall economic growth.

DONATION TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY ALONG COASTLINE

THE Metro Police Commissioner was granted authority by Council to accept a donation of vehicles, quad bikes, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) valued at R4.3 million to strengthen safety and security along the City's coastline.

This approval was granted during a Full Council meeting on 26 February.

The donation, made by Tourism Marketing South Africa, Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa, and Tourism Business Council of South Africa, will support the Metro Police Coastal and Tourism Policing Unit in enhancing coastal tourism safety, increasing policing visibility, and strengthening emergency response capacity.

Council noted that there are no tangible financial implications for the Municipality in accepting the donation.

The contribution arises from the Revitalisation of Tourism in the eThekwini Region under Presidential Workstream 4, dated 7 March 2025.

During this workstream, resolutions were adopted to assist the Metro Police Coastal and Tourism Policing Division in bolstering safety measures and ensuring a secure environment for residents and visitors along the City's coastline.

The approval underscores the City's commitment to collaborative partnerships that enhance public safety, promote tourism growth, and stimulate the local economy.

2025/26 ADJUSTMENT BUDGET APPROVED

IN A proactive move to respond to emerging priorities and urgent service delivery needs, Council approved the adjustments budget for the 2025/26 financial year, increasing to R72.8 billion from the original approved budget of R70.9 billion.

The revised budget provides for additional expenditure, the reprioritisation of funds, and the management of unforeseen and unavoidable costs, including critical storm damage. A key component of the reprioritisation is to address urgent and critical storm damage affecting sanitation infrastructure to address sewer spillages and accelerate maintenance.

The sanitation capital budget has been increased from R604 million to R1.2 billion.

The increased funding will support the rehabilitation, upgrading, and refurbishment of several sanitation infrastructure.

The adjusted budget also makes provision for an increased allocation towards water infrastructure from R1.1 billion to R1.2 billion, with a strong focus on addressing non-revenue water.

The housing budget has increased from R748.124 million to R995.791 million. The additional allocation for human settlements includes a rollover of R69 million from the unspent Human Settlements Development Grant and R50 million from income received in advance. This funding will support the acceleration of housing delivery programmes and related infrastructure to improve living conditions for residents. The adjustments budget incorporates revised grant allocations in line with the amended division of revenue.

WELLNESS CENTRE TO BOOST SERVICE EXCELLENCE

ETHEKWINI Municipality has taken a bold step in its mission to deliver faster, smarter and more people-centred services to communities with the official opening of the SINAWE Wellness Centre.

The modern facility is designed to strengthen the wellbeing, resilience, and productivity of eThekwini employees.

The initiative reflects the Municipality's firm belief that empowered employees drive exceptional service delivery, and that investing in employee health is an investment in a more efficient, responsive and capable City.

The state-of-the-art centre, located at 350 Montpelier Road in Morningside, opposite Mitchell Park Zoo, was officially unveiled on 27 February.

It is designed to empower employees to thrive, grow and deliver outstanding results in their respective roles.

EThekwini Municipality has reaffirmed its commitment to employee health and wellness with the launch of the SINAWE Wellness Centre, a hub designed to build a healthy, resilient and high-performing workforce in support of service delivery excellence to communities.

Speaking on behalf of eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba, Chairperson of the Governance and Human Resources Committee, Councillor Nkosenhle Madlala, described the launch as a transformative milestone in building a stronger workforce.

"This significant milestone demonstrates the Municipality's commitment to building a healthy, resilient, and high-performing workforce," he said.

He emphasised that the wellness centre represents more than the opening of a facility, it signals the Municipality's dedication to a people-centred administration.

Director of the Human Resources Directorate, Sihle Mkhize, reiterated that employee wellness is central to the Municipality's ability to deliver quality services.

"By prioritising employee wellbeing, we are not only changing lives but also strengthening our ability to serve communities with excellence which benefits residents," he said.

DURBAN ICC SECURES ELEVENTH CONSECUTIVE CLEAN AUDIT

THE Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (Durban ICC) has reaffirmed its reputation for excellence in governance and financial stewardship after securing its eleventh consecutive clean audit from the Auditor-General of South Africa for the 2024/25 financial year.

The latest audit confirms that the Durban ICC's financial statements are free from material misstatements and that no irregular, fruitless, wasteful or unauthorised expenditure occurred during the period under review.

As a wholly owned Municipal entity of eThekwini Municipality, the Durban ICC remains committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance while driving inclusive economic growth, job creation, and destination competitiveness.

Durban ICC Chief Executive Officer Lindiwe Rakharebe said the achievement reflects the Centre's longstanding commitment to responsible governance.

ETHEKWINI MOVES FROM ENERGY AWARENESS TO ACTION

AS THE world marks World Energy Efficiency Day on 6 March, eThekwini Municipality is signaling a firm shift from awareness to implementation, positioning energy efficiency as a core driver of its long term response to climate change.

The Municipality has integrated energy efficiency measures into its strategic planning frameworks, recognising their role in reducing demand while supporting a just transition to cleaner energy sources.

According to Dr Luyanda Mafumbu, Deputy Director for Environmental and Sustainability Management Directorate, energy efficiency remains one of the most cost effective tools available to municipalities under energy pressure. "Energy efficiency allows us to address climate change while strengthening energy security and supporting economic growth.

Through the eThekwini Integrated Resource Plan, the City is shifting towards cleaner, more efficient energy systems that reduce emissions and protect the environment," he said.

This approach supports eThekwini's renewable energy targets of sourcing 40 percent of electricity from renewables by 2030 and achieving 100 percent by 2050.

EThekwini continues to lead, having been the first municipality to receive ministerial approval to procure power from Independent Power Producers.

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

Email: news.desk@durban.gov.za

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR: Mandla Nsele, Director of Marketing and Communications **CONTENT EDITOR:** Nondumiso Mathomane **SUB-EDITOR:** Charmel Payet • **CONTRIBUTORS:** Sohana Singh, Siphelele Buthelezi, Sane Shandu, and Jessie Singh • **PHOTOGRAPHERS:** Thuli Dlamini and Saneli Mthalane • **DESIGN & LAYOUT:** Nosipho Mbuthuma