ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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

07 July 2026 [Issue 468]

HOLLYWOODBETS DURBAN JULY DELIVERS MAJOR ECONOMIC BOOST

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba (inset) has praised the success of the Hollywoodbets Durban July, saying the event continues to drive tourism, stimulate economic growth and create jobs in eThekwini.

DURBAN has once again demonstrated its status as Africa's leading tourism, events and lifestyle destination following the successful hosting of the 130th running of the Hollywoodbets Durban July.

The event attracted an estimated 45 000 attendees, including local residents, domestic visitors and international guests, generating substantial business activity across the hospitality, accommodation, transport, retail, fashion, entertainment, tourism and informal trading sectors.

Direct visitor spending is projected at approximately R254 million, while the event's preliminary total economic impact is estimated at approximately R880 million.

The event also supported approximately 1 270 full-time equivalent jobs across the tourism, hospitality and events value chain.

Accommodation establishments across Durban experienced strong demand throughout the weekend, with hotel occupancy projected to reach approximately 80 percent, providing a welcome boost to the local hospitality industry.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said: "The successful hosting of the 130th Hollywoodbets Durban July once again demonstrates Durban's ability to deliver world-class events that drive tourism, stimulate economic growth and create meaningful opportunities for our people. We are proud to have welcomed thousands of visitors to our City, showcasing not only an exceptional horse racing spectacle but also Durban's renowned hospitality, vibrant cultural scene and thriving creative industries."

Mayor Xaba said events of this magnitude generate significant benefits for local businesses, sustain jobs across the tourism and hospitality value chain, and reinforce Durban's position as Africa's leading events and lifestyle destination.

Celebrating the "Country Allure" theme, the Hollywoodbets Durban July reaffirmed its status as South Africa's premier lifestyle and horse racing event. Note To Self, trained by Justin Snaith and ridden by Richard Fourie, won the prestigious Grade 1 race, followed by Wish List and King Pelles respectively. This marked a historic sixth title for Snaith and a fourth for Fourie.

"On behalf of the Municipality, I congratulate the winning of Note To Self, all participants, organisers, sponsors, our law enforcement agencies, Municipal teams, and every resident and visitor who contributed to another safe and successful Hollywoodbets Durban July," said Mayor Xaba.

The Municipality also welcomed the support of the Hollywood Foundation and its partners, whose investment in participating designers continues to strengthen Durban's creative economy.

The successful delivery of the event was underpinned by the Municipality's integrated operational plan, implemented through the coordinated efforts of Metro Police, the South African Police Service, emergency services, private security, traffic management teams and various Municipal directorates.

The extensive national and international media coverage generated by the event further enhances Durban's global profile and supports future tourism growth, investment and business confidence.

The Municipality extends its sincere appreciation to all stakeholders, event organisers, sponsors, law enforcement agencies, Municipal teams, residents, businesses and visitors whose collective efforts contributed to another successful edition of this iconic event.

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CATALYTIC PROJECTS DRIVE INVESTMENT, JOB CREATION AND SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION

ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ASIMILE SIYAQHUBA

2021-2026

05 YEARS RESILIENCE THROUGH ADVERSITY

CATALYTIC projects in the City have a long-lasting economic impact, stimulating large-scale private investment and job creation. Highlighting the gains of the Catalytic Projects Directorate is the City's Five-Year Service Delivery Milestones campaign being rolled out under the theme: Asimile Siyaqhuba: Resilience Through Adversity.

The campaign highlights the gains made in service delivery during the 2021 to 2026 term of office.

This week the campaign highlights the vital role of catalytic projects in eThekwini.

Over the past five years, the Catalytic Projects Directorate has played a central role in driving economic recovery, stimulating large-scale private investment, and reshaping the City's long-term spatial and economic landscape.

Designed to unlock high-impact developments, the directorate focuses on projects exceeding R500 million in investment value, each selected for its potential to create jobs, expand the Municipal rates base, and support sustained economic growth.

The City's investment pipeline has expanded significantly through major catalytic nodes including Cornubia, Dube Trade Port Aerotropolis, Sibaya, Oceans uMhlanga, Avoca Nodal Development, Cato Ridge Logistics Hub, Midway Crossing, and the Point Waterfront redevelopment.

These large-scale developments form only a part of more than R217 billion in long-term investment value, positioning eThekwini as a national leader in urban transformation. The projects also support a competitive investment environment that leverages public–private partnerships to accelerate construction, unlock land parcels, and stimulate growth across strategic corridors such as the N3, N2, and the inner-city precincts.

A key achievement has been the directorate's contribution to job creation. Catalytic projects have supported thousands of construction and permanent jobs across multiple sectors. Developments such as the Keystone Logistics Park, Brickworks, Sibaya Precinct Development, and Shongweni mixed use precinct have opened significant employment opportunities during planning, construction, and operational phases. This growth aligns with city-wide labour trends that saw eThekwini record the highest metropolitan job gains in 2024, with 102 000 new jobs added year on year.

The Catalytic Projects Directorate has also strengthened business confidence and investor relations. Investor engagement mechanisms, such as the eThekwini Investor Fridays site visits, have played a crucial role in removing development bottlenecks and fast-tracking approvals. These interventions contributed to the sharp rise in business confidence from 38.42 percent to 63.01 percent between early and late 2024.

Beyond economic outputs, the projects have expanded the Municipal rates base and contributed to long-term revenue security. By unlocking high-value mixed use precincts, the City is ensuring future fiscal resilience while advancing spatial equity.

DURBAN JULY SHOWCASES TALENT AND INVESTS IN THE FUTURE OF FASHION

THE vibrant spirit of South African style was on full display as fashion designers showcased collections inspired by this year's Hollywoodbets Durban July theme, "Country Allure", during the Raceday Fashion Showcase and Awards presented by the Durban Fashion Fair (DFF) and the Hollywood Foundation.

Nine DFF Rising Stars received a R300 000 business support package to strengthen their brands. The funding includes R250 000 from the Hollywood Foundation and R5 000 in cash for each designer from Race Coast and Schweppes. The initiative reinforces the DFF's commitment to nurturing talent and creating business growth opportunities. All nine beneficiaries are graduates of the 10-month DFF Mentorship Programme.

Representatives from eThekwini Municipality and the Hollywood Foundation hand over a symbolic R300 000 cheque to nine Durban Fashion Fair Rising Stars during the Hollywoodbets Durban July at Greyville Racecourse.

One beneficiary, Karla Lortan, said the DFF continues to create life-changing opportunities for emerging designers. "In 2024, I won the Best Womenswear Collection at the DFF Recognition Awards and bought new machinery for my business. I will use this funding to further upgrade my equipment. We also received television, radio and print media exposure."

The event also celebrated South Africa's next generation of designers. Durban University of Technology (DUT) student Mlungisi Ndlovu won the Hollywoodbets Young Designer Award and a R70 000 bursary from the Hollywood Foundation. IGoda Incubator student Dalisu Vumase placed second, receiving R50 000, while Thato Selekane, also from DUT, finished third, earning a R30 000 bursary.

Meanwhile, 150 fashion enthusiasts competed in the Raceday Fashion Experience, with striking interpretations of the theme, building excitement for the 15th Durban Fashion Fair, taking place from 16 to 18 September at the Durban Exhibition Centre under the theme "Where Legacy Lives."

APPLICATIONS UNDERWAY FOR THE LANDMARK 15TH DURBAN FASHION FAIR SHOWCASE

FROM sketchbooks and mentorship to national and international runways, the Durban Fashion Fair (DFF) has spent 15 years transforming emerging local designers into successful fashion entrepreneurs. As the programme celebrates its landmark 15th edition under the theme "Where Legacy Lives" this year, eThekwini Municipality is inviting fashion designers to be part of this milestone showcase, which promises to be bigger and better than ever. Applications are currently open and close on 31 July.

Designers interested in showcasing their collections can apply by completing the online application form at https://forms.gle/9yHiqibirFNaxtLq9.

The 15th DFF will take place from 16 to 18 September at the Durban Exhibition Centre, culminating in the Recognition Awards on 19 September.

The 14th Durban Fashion Fair (DFF) brought together emerging and established designers to showcase their latest collections before buyers, retailers and fashion enthusiasts. This year promises to be even bigger as the DFF celebrates its milestone 15th edition.

This year's showcase will celebrate the remarkable journey of designers who joined the programme 14 years ago and have since built successful fashion businesses, created employment and showcased their work on national and international platforms. It will also introduce the next generation of fashion household names currently participating in the intensive 10-month DFF Mentorship Programme.

The City's Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee, Councillor Thembo Ntuli, said: "For the past 15 years, the DFF has demonstrated that fashion is a powerful driver of economic development. Through structured mentorship, skills development and market access, the programme has trained and supported hundreds of designers to establish sustainable businesses, access local and international markets, and create employment opportunities."

For more information, contact nondumiso.mthembu@durban.gov.za. Follow @DurbanFashionFair across all social media platforms for updates.

15 WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES SELECTED FOR SHESHISA ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME

FROM a highly competitive pool of 244 applicants, 15 exceptional women-led businesses have secured a place in the prestigious Sheshisa Women Accelerator Programme, an initiative aimed at fast-tracking the growth of high-potential female entrepreneurs.

EThekwini Municipality's Economic Development Directorate, in partnership with Innovate Durban, Software AG, American Spaces and iKhokha, recently announced the successful cohort for the programme.

Over the next six months, the entrepreneurs will participate in an intensive business acceleration programme offering tailored mentorship, strategic business development support, industry expertise and exclusive networking opportunities.

From 244 applications, 15 outstanding women-led businesses have been selected for the Sheshisa Women Accelerator Programme.

The programme has been designed to equip participants with the tools and capabilities needed to scale their businesses, unlock new markets and strengthen their competitiveness.

Thato Bopape, Programme Manager for Innovation, Research and Strategy in the Municipality congratulated the intake.

"The future of business is increasingly being shaped by women, and we are proud to support their growth. The exceptional quality and diversity of applications received reflect the remarkable entrepreneurial talent within our City. While selecting just 15 businesses was no easy task, we are confident these entrepreneurs have the vision, resilience and ambition to become industry leaders."

ETHEKWINI SHOWCASES YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXCELLENCE ON GLOBAL STAGE

Representatives from around the world, including eThekwini Municipality, attended the Connective Cities Dialogue held in Bremen, Germany, recently.

ETHEKWINI Municipality has reaffirmed its commitment to youth entrepreneurship and local economic development by participating in the Connective Cities Dialogue under the theme "Startups and Innovation Labour Market Opportunities and Prospects for Young People", held in Bremen, Germany, from 30 June to 2 July.

The international dialogue brought together local government leaders from around the world, policymakers and entrepreneurship experts from Germany, Africa and Europe to exchange best practices on supporting startups, innovation and job creation for young people.

The City's representation was led by the Deputy Head for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development in eThekwini Municipality, Nonku Mthembu, who led the eThekwini delegation in discussions focused on strengthening Municipal support for entrepreneurs through innovation hubs, business incubators and collaborative local economic development initiatives.

The three-day programme explored practical solutions to challenges facing young entrepreneurs, while showcasing successful Municipal interventions that create enabling environments for startup businesses. Delegates also participated in peer-to-peer learning sessions, action planning workshops and networking opportunities designed to develop implementable projects that will continue through a one-year international learning process.

Speaking on the value of the engagement, Mthembu said the dialogue provided an invaluable opportunity for municipalities to learn from one another and strengthen initiatives that empower young entrepreneurs. "Startups and entrepreneurship are powerful drivers of local economic development and youth employment. As eThekwini Municipality, we were proud to share our experiences while learning from international best practices to strengthen programmes that create sustainable opportunities for young people and contribute to inclusive economic growth."

The dialogue featured municipalities from South Africa, Germany, Namibia, North Macedonia, Rwanda and Serbia.

UUW PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ON WATER SECURITY INTERVENTIONS

THE Executive Committee (EXCO) has received preliminary findings from uMngeni-uThukela Water (UUW), which recommend that the Municipality prioritise water demand management interventions over the construction of new package water treatment plants to address water supply challenges.

The Municipality had requested UUW to investigate the feasibility of establishing package water treatment plants in communities experiencing prolonged water shortages, including uMzinyathi, Umbumbulu, Craigieburn, and Mfume.

Presenting the preliminary feasibility study to EXCO, Acting Operations Executive at uMngeni-uThukela Water, Mulalo Muriwathoho, advised that reducing water losses and improving the efficiency of the existing water distribution system would deliver faster, more sustainable and cost-effective benefits than investing in new water treatment infrastructure.

UMngeni-uThukela Water has reported that its interventions have successfully reduced 2-MIB in the water supplied through the Wiggins Water I Treatment Works.

EXCO noted the preliminary findings and agreed that the feasibility study should be finalised before any decisions are taken on the available options.

The management of UUW also briefed EXCO on the status of water quality, reporting significant progress in reducing levels of 2-Methylisoborneol (2-MIB), the naturally occurring compound responsible for the earthy and musty taste and odour that have affected portions of the water supplied to eThekwini Municipality in recent months.

UUW reported that its interventions have successfully reduced 2-MIB in the water supplied through the Wiggins Water Treatment Works.

DRIVING INFRASTRUCTURE EXCELLENCE THROUGH ENGINEERING COMPLIANCE

THE Municipality's commitment to delivering safe, sustainable, and reliable infrastructure took centre stage at a recent Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) Identification of Engineering Work (IDoEW) Compliance Workshop.

Hosted by the Human Resources Transformation Division, the workshop brought together engineering professionals, candidates, and Municipal stakeholders to strengthen understanding of statutory requirements and promote compliance with engineering best practices.

The initiative forms part of the Municipality's ongoing efforts to strengthen engineering governance, enhance service delivery, and ensure that infrastructure projects are led, supervised, and managed by appropriately qualified professionals.

In a drive to strengthen engineering governance and enhance service delivery, the Municipality hosted the ECSA IDoEW Compliance Workshop, bringing together engineering professionals to champion compliance, professional, and infrastructure excellence.

Director of Engineering Services Gugu Ngubane said: "Hosting this workshop was imperative to ensure compliance according to the required standard."

She added that the engagement was necessary as the City is experiencing infrastructure compliance challenges as a result of professionals performing duties outside their disciplines.

Through interactive discussions and knowledge-sharing sessions, participants explored the importance of professional registration, ethical engineering practices, and compliance with the Engineering Profession Act.

The workshop also provided practical guidance on the IDoEW regulations, which ensure that engineering work is performed or supervised by registered professionals.

Acting Deputy Head of Human Resources Transformation Division Dr Sindy Mbele emphasised the importance of investing in people to meet the City's future infrastructure demands.

"Talent management drives service excellence. Through mentorship, workplace exposure, awareness campaigns, and professional development, we support engineering professionals to achieve and maintain IDoEW compliance," she said.

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

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