ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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

16 September 2026 [Issue 478]

INVESTMENT DRIVES R3.97 BILLION IN BUILDING PLAN APPROVALS

ETHEKWINI Municipality remains committed to creating an enabling environment that attracts investment into key sectors of the local economy, driving sustainable growth and improving the quality of life of residents. During the first six months of 2026, the City approved building plans to the value of R3.97 billion, representing an 18 percent increase compared to the same period in 2025 and a 24 percent increase in the first half of 2024.

Growth was led by non-residential developments, which increased by 166 percent, rising from R536 million to R1.43 billion.

Approvals for industrial and warehousing developments grew by 167 percent in value, while approved floor space expanded from 24 497m² to 83 708m². Office and banking developments increased by 158 percent, while the northern region almost doubled its approval values to R1.16 billion.

EThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele said the composition of the approvals reflects growing investment in the productive sectors of the economy.

"Investment follows confidence and growth. Investors do not commit capital to industrial and logistics infrastructure in cities where they anticipate stagnation; they invest where they see expanding economic activity, rising demand, and increasing volumes of trade and movement. The significant growth in industrial and warehousing developments is therefore a strong endorsement of eThekwini's economic trajectory and future potential."

Mbhele added that the Municipality remains focused on creating certainty for investment and ensuring that development is supported by adequate infrastructure.

"Every development approval represents not only private-sector confidence in eThekwini, but also our commitment to enabling sustainable growth."

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT ADVANCES PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK

AN engagement on the Presidential eThekwini Working Group Partnerships Framework saw discussions take place between government and stakeholders regarding the implementation of the framework.

The engagement on 14 September brought together representatives from government and the business community to strengthen collaboration regarding the implementation of the partnership framework. Discussions focused on progress made to date, governance arrangements, partnership typologies, and opportunities for increased business participation.

Participants were updated on key milestones achieved in developing the Partnerships Framework, with emphasis placed on creating a structured and transparent approach to collaboration between the public and private sectors. Business representatives welcomed the progress.

A significant portion of the engagement focused on the role of the Integrated Public Private Partnership Office, including business participation opportunities and the value of secondments in supporting implementation capacity. Stakeholders agreed that active involvement from the private sector would be critical in accelerating project delivery and achieving shared development objectives.

The meeting also explored the composition and role of the Partnering Steering Committee, with discussions centred on business representation, nomination criteria, and ensuring broad sector participation. The session concluded with a shared commitment to advancing partnerships that drive inclusive economic growth.

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ROOTING OUT FRAUD AND CORRUPTION AND PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

THE City Integrity and Investigations Directorate (CIID) has an obligation to investigate any allegation of misconduct, fraud and corruption. This is in a bid to cultivate good governance and ensure that eThekwini remains a clean and accountable organisation.

The City's Five-Year Service Delivery Campaign, Asimile Siyaqhuba: Resilience Through Adversity highlights the service delivery gains made by the CIID during the 2021 to 2026 term of office.

The CIID seeks to end the scourge of employees involved in fraudulent and corruption activities to prevent eThekwini losing money due to the theft of Municipal resources.

Their primary function is to investigate fraud, corruption, maladministration, and any other allegation of misconduct involving Municipal staff and entities, including contracted entities.

The directorate has a sub-division, which actively manages three infrastructure theft investigations, including theft of Municipal infrastructure, diesel, equipment and the illegal connection of electricity and water.

The impact of fraud and corruption undermines ethical values and morality and jeopardise sustainable development. It tarnishes the credibility of government and provides a breeding ground for organised crime. Fraud and corruption are among the most serious obstacles to good governance and economic and social development.

The Municipality has oversight structures to combat fraud and corruption. There are standing committees including Full Council, the Executive Committee, Municipal Public Accounts Committee, and the Audit and Risk Committee as well as the Internal Audit Directorate, which all work together to ensure that proper processes are followed in the Municipality. The scourge of fraud and corruption can only be eliminated through the multipronged co-operation of stakeholders.

The following statistics highlight the gains made by the CIID over the past five years:

DESCRIPTION	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/ 2024	2024/2025
Service delivery cases investigated	206	248	226	597
Fraud and corruption cases investigated	250	270	296	287
Infrastructure theft cases investigated	220	279	203	273
Criminal cases registered with law enforcement agencies	9	22	23	25
Anti-fraud and corruption programmes undertaken	104	68	76	97
External communication activities undertaken	114	155	144	90

The public can report fraud and corruption by calling 0800 20 20 20 or send an email to ombuds@durban.gov.za
They can make the report anonymously.

ETHEKWINI STRENGTHENS TIES WITH NETHERLANDS

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba with the Mayor of Arnhem, Ahmed Marcouch, during a visit at the Durban City Hall recently.

THE recent visit by the Mayor of Arnhem, Ahmed Marcouch, from the Netherlands is expected to bring significant benefits to eThekwini. During his visit, Mayor Marcouch commended eThekwini for its well-established fashion and textile training programmes, which have empowered and benefited many aspiring fashion entrepreneurs.

Mayor Marcouch said Arnhem and eThekwini share many similarities and noted that there are opportunities for collaboration in areas such as cultural exchange, the arts, climate change initiatives, and the fashion industry.

"This is my first visit to eThekwini, and I am impressed by the work being done in the fashion and textile sector. I will engage with the Netherlands Ambassador on ways to establish a formal and mutually beneficial relationship with eThekwini Municipality," he said.

As part of his visit, Mayor Marcouch toured several textile businesses supported by the Durban Fashion Fair programme.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said the City already enjoys areas of co-operation with the Netherlands. On 2 October 2024, Netherlands handed over the Dutch Risk Reduction and Surge report to eThekwini Municipality, which highlighted key interventions required to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, particularly flooding.

MUNICIPALITIES PIONEER A SMARTER APPROACH TO LAND INVASIONS

MUNICIPALITIES across KwaZulu-Natal are pioneering a smarter approach to land invasion management.

Municipal officials and government stakeholders gathered at a two-day Land Invasion Masterclass to drive innovative solutions that protect public land, strengthen governance, and unlock sustainable development.

Hosted by the Municipal Institute of Learning and the Provincial Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), the masterclass brought together experts to share strategies and tools that are helping municipalities prevent land invasions.

Delegates emphasised a collaborative approach that brings together municipalities, communities, traditional leadership, law enforcement agencies, and government institutions to build resilient and sustainable solutions.

In his opening address, Director of the eThekwini Municipal Academy Prof Mpilo Ngubane challenged municipalities to rethink their approach to land governance.

"When municipalities, communities, and traditional leaders unite behind innovation, technology, and proactive governance, we can protect public land and unlock sustainable development," said Prof Ngubane.

Discussions highlighted the critical role of communities and traditional leaders as strategic partners in early-warning systems, awareness and the protection of public land.

Delivering the keynote address on the State of Land Governance in KwaZulu-Natal was Chief Director: Municipal Planning at CoGTA, Lisa Del Grande, who stressed that prevention remains the most effective response.

"Success lies in collaboration, early intervention and the intelligent use of technology to identify risks before they become realities," said Del Grande.

CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY OF THE NEW KWANOZAZA ICT HUB

CONSTRUCTION is now in full swing of the highly anticipated KwaNozaza ICT Hub in Ntuzuma in Ward 42. Spearheaded by eThekwini Municipality's Programme Co-ordination Directorate, this state-of-the-art facility is set to serve as a powerful economic engine for the area. By bridging the digital divide and sparking local innovation, the hub represents a major milestone in unlocking the future potential of the neighborhood.

The project is being brought to life through the Operation Sukuma Sakhe initiative. It forms a critical component of the broader KwaNozaza Node Development, a strategic Municipal framework aimed at transforming traditional residential townships into vibrant, self-sustaining economic hubs.

The modern facility is designed to broaden digital inclusion, foster community-led innovation, and directly support grassroots skills development. Once complete, Ntuzuma residents will gain access to a dedicated centre offering targeted training in ICT-related skills.

Lindo Hlatshwayo, Programme Manager from the Programme Co-ordination Directorate, said: "The construction of the KwaNozaza ICT Hub is a major step forward in our mission to revitalise the township economy and bridge the digital divide. This facility represents a major step forward in the City's digital transformation agenda."

Construction of the KwaNozaza ICT Hub is currently underway.

25 BUSINESSES PITCH IN LIONS' DEN COMPETITION

TWENTY-FIVE entrepreneurs put their business ideas to the test on 9 September, pitching to a panel of judges at GovLab in Windermere as part of the Lions' Den Business Plan Competition. Each finalist had five minutes to present their business and demonstrate its potential to convince the judges that their venture deserves to rise to the top. The judging panel comprised of Thami Zondi, Director of Youth Economic Empowerment at the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs; Fanele Mdlalose from the National Youth Development Agency; and Fundiswa Rhula from Enterprise Banking at Standard Bank. Six Lions' Den entrepreneurs will be recognised across three categories namely Emerging Business, Established Business, and Entrepreneurial Flair. The 2026 journey began with approximately 121 applications, followed by the selection of 25 finalists and two weeks of intensive mentorship, coaching, and pitch preparation.

Emerging entrepreneurs unpacked their innovative businesses during the final stage of the Lions' Den Business Plan Competition.

Meanwhile, on 10 September, a panel of experienced business leaders and entrepreneurial development practitioners spent the day assessing entries and adjudicating the 2026 Durban Business Fair (DBF) Excellence Awards.

Micro, Small, and Medium Development Deputy Head Nonku Mthembu, said winners will be announced under the DBF Excellence Awards banner taking place on 19 September. The Lions' Den competition winners and excelling fashion businesses will also be recognised.

SOUTH REGIONAL BUSINESS FAIR TO UNLOCK OPPORTUNITIES

ETHEKWINI Municipality is taking its flagship Durban Business Fair (DBF) closer to communities when it hosts the South Regional DBF from 2 to 4 October at the KwaMnyandu Shopping Centre.

The fair forms part of the Municipality's efforts to strengthen township economies and create opportunities for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to grow, access markets, and participate meaningfully in the local economy.

The 28th edition of the Main Fair, held earlier this year at the Durban Exhibition Centre, attracted 18 743 visitors, highlighting the platform's continued reach and relevance.

The South Regional edition will focus on businesses operating in townships and rural areas.

HOW TO REGISTER:

Businesses interested in exhibiting are encouraged to register before 24 September 2026. Registration forms are available at https://gqr.sh/ukZU or can be collected from 199 Anton Lembede Street, 7th Floor, or from any Sizakala Centre.

FOCUS ON REGULATING STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

ETHEKWINI Municipality has reaffirmed that student accommodation is a regulated land use governed by a comprehensive planning framework designed to balance the growing demand for student housing with the protection of established residential communities.

The Municipality is aware of residents' calls for a moratorium on student accommodation developments in certain neighbourhoods. While officials acknowledge concerns relating to parking, noise, safety, infrastructure pressures and neighbourhood character, they emphasise that student accommodation is not permitted through unrestricted conversions of residential properties. Central to the Municipality's approach is the Student Accommodation Management Layer, a planning tool incorporated into the Municipal Land Use Scheme. The framework identifies suitable locations for student accommodation and requires property owners to obtain the necessary approvals, comply with Municipal by-laws, provide adequate parking, implement management plans, and ensure that operations do not negatively affect surrounding communities. The City also distinguishes between different scales of student accommodation. Smaller establishments may operate within defined limits, while larger developments are subject to more extensive planning assessments that consider traffic impacts, infrastructure capacity, public transport access, safety, and noise mitigation. While the Municipality remains open to reviewing the effectiveness of its controls and residents concerns, it maintains that any decision regarding a moratorium must be evidence-based and legally sound.

CITY UNLOCKS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH DRIVING SKILLS PROGRAMME

EThekwini is equipping unemployed youth with advanced driving skills to improve road safety and unlock employment opportunities in the transport and logistics industry.

ETHEKWINI Municipality has placed 16 unemployed youth in the driver's seat of success through an Advanced Professional Code 14 Driving Learnership Programme.

Implemented through a partnership between the eThekwini Municipal Academy (EMA) and the eThekwini Transport Authority, the year-long programme equips licensed Code 14 drivers with advanced skills to safely operate buses, trucks and other heavy-duty vehicles.

EMA Project Co-ordinator Nokwazi Zulu said the initiative reflects the Municipality's commitment to safer roads and youth empowerment. "The Municipality is developing professionals who will protect lives, contribute to the economy, and create a safer city." She said better driver competence reduces accidents and increases employment opportunities. The programme responds to growing demand for skilled heavy-duty drivers in the freight, logistics and transport sectors. Participants will gain practical experience and valuable industry exposure, giving them a competitive edge when opportunities arise.

ETHEKWINI'S BUILD BACK BETTER JOURNEY DRAWS GLOBAL ATTENTION

ETHEKWINI'S Build Back Better efforts following the April 2022 floods have drawn international attention, with a Swedish Embassy delegation visiting the City to witness firsthand how recovery is being transformed into resilience.

The visit provided a platform for dialogue, learning, and collaboration on disaster management, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

It also showcased how the Municipality is using its Build Back Better approach to strengthen communities, protect livelihoods, and improve service delivery.

Senior Municipal officials shared lessons from the City's disaster response and outlined recovery interventions focused on rebuilding infrastructure, restoring essential services, and reducing future disaster risks. Discussions also explored opportunities for knowledge exchange, institutional learning, and potential partnerships to address the growing impact of climate change on communities.

Director of Disaster Management Vincent Ngubane said partnerships are critical to building resilient communities and preparing the City for future climate-related disasters.

The delegation visited flood-affected communities, gaining firsthand insight into recovery efforts and progress made.

Her Excellency Swedish Ambassador Anna Karin Eneström said the engagement underscored the importance of people-centred recovery and global co-operation.

"We have seen a City committed not only to rebuilding infrastructure, but to restoring lives and opportunities."

DIGITAL SERVICES AIM TO MAKE CUSTOMERS' LIVES SIMPLE

ALL customers are reminded to use SmartRev, a basket of innovations implemented by the City's Revenue Management Directorate, which aims to make life simple for customers and to ensure that eThekwini is on the path to increasing smart services to communities.

- **USSD : Dial *134*031#**
Customers can view their bill and submit meter readings. No smartphone or data is required. It is an instant, low-cost platform for customers to access services on the go.

- **WhatsApp - 064 761 7930**
Customers can request their bill and submit meter readings. This platform is multi-lingual, boasts instant delivery with read-receipts and is on a verified secure profile.

- E-Services Portal – visit https://eservices.durban.gov.za/v2/
Customers can update account information, capture and submit meter readings, view and download their bill, and pay their bill via Masterpass, QR Code or Direct Debit.

- Revenue Correspondence Portal – visit https://correspondence.durban.gov.za/
Customers can now apply for new water and electricity services at the touch of a button and make refund applications. This saves customers from travelling to Revenue Customer Centres. Their request will be attended to and they will be given a reference number. The City will communicate with the customer via email.

- **Mobile App – Download the eThekwini Municipality App**
Customers can request and download their bill, make payment, log a query and capture meter readings.

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

Email: news.desk@durban.gov.za

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