ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

# ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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

20 May 2025 (Issue 414)

# SUCCESSFUL INDABA REINFORCES TOURISM SECTOR'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

THE 2025 edition of Africa's Tourism Indaba was a resounding success. It ended on a high note on 15 May with many exhibitors showing gratitude to the organisers for the opportunities created and the connections achieved over the three days that the continental trade show took place.

The City was once again hailed for hosting a seamless trade show, arguably the largest in Africa. The Indaba was held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre and presented a platform for the City to showcase its hospitality, heritage, and commitment to promoting tourism on the continent.

The projected economic benefits spurred by Africa's Travel Indaba 2025, from event infrastructure and logistics to accommodation, restaurants, and local transport services, has been significant. The direct economic impact of the Indaba on Durban's GDP is estimated at R574 million, with direct spending totalling more than R232 million, highlighting the substantial economic benefits. Additionally, the event created over 2 000 jobs, particularly for the youth and local communities, with an anticipated household income contribution exceeding R140 million.

Africa's Travel Indaba 2025 was officially opened by Deputy President Paul Mashatile on 13 May and in his opening address he championed the 'Unlimited Africa' theme as a bold declaration of Africa's promise. He highlighted that travel and tourism contributed 6.8 percent to Africa's GDP in 2023, with projections indicating a rise to 10.4% by 2030. In South Africa, tourism currently contributes 8.9 percent to the GDP, supporting 1.68 million jobs, with an ambitious target to grow this to 2.2 million jobs by 2030.

During the three-day trade show, buyers had the opportunity to engage directly with exhibitors, to explore new business opportunities, and foster connections for future business.

**Deputy President Paul Mashatile and Minister of Tourism Patricia De Lille attended Africa's Travel Indaba which took place in Durban over four days. Hosting the Indaba had far reaching economic benefits for the City.**

Figures, while still to be audited, indicate that Africa's Travel Indaba 2025 hosted more than 9 990 attendees, marking an impressive 7.7 percent increase compared to the 9 280 delegates that attended in 2024. Impressively, over 24 500 meetings were held with the event attracting 1 348 exhibitors and 1 037 buyers, with both exhibitor and international buyer numbers being the highest recorded in the past four years. A total of 27 African countries participated including new entrants from Chad, St Helena, and Burkina Faso.

The City's Deputy Director for Durban Tourism Winile Mntungwa said: "The economic ripple effect was felt far beyond the city centre, benefitting township and rural tourism enterprises- both formal and informal. This includes hospitality businesses in areas that hosted or serviced delegates through pre- and post-tours and local services. This highlights how large events can stimulate broader economic activity, empowering communities and promoting sustainable development across diverse regions."

# TRAINING TO RESPOND TO SERVICE DELIVERY

**The City's Water and Sanitation Unit recently trained ward committee members to empower them with key information to deal with service delivery concerns.**

TO INCULCATE a culture of active community participation, the City's Water and Sanitation Unit on 19 May hosted training aimed at capacitating Chairpersons of ward committees who are responsible for the Water and Sanitation portfolios.

The training titled 'Raising Citizens Voices' was attended by elected members representing all the wards in the City.

During the training, they were empowered with key information and policies relevant to water and sanitation.

Project Executive Mandla Malakoana explained that the information would enable elected representatives to serve their communities more effectively. He also emphasised the need for two-way communication in order for the Water and Sanitation Unit to also understand and address issues on the ground.

The training covered the Water Policy, water conservation and quality, and pollution abatement among others. All attendees received certificates at the end of the training.

Acting Director for the Water and Sanitation Unit Sibusiso Vilane spoke on the Water Turnaround Strategy and Trading Reforms which the City is currently implementing.

"The strategy has short and long-term plans aimed at improving service delivery. A cornerstone of the strategy is financial sustainability, operational inefficiencies, and customer service. National Treasury is supporting the transformation of trading services across eight metros and eThekwini is one of them. Through trading reforms, there's financial incentive that the Water and Sanitation Unit will receive, which will be used to deal with service delivery," said Vilane.

As part of trading services reforms – water and sanitation as a business unit is to remove multi points of accountability and become a ringfenced unit with a single point of accountability. By ring-fencing all revenue realised from the sale of water, revenue will be utilised only for the needs of the water provision.

# FROM VISION TO REALITY FOR INNOVATE DURBAN

INNOVATE Durban is proud to announce a major milestone in its organisational journey: the acquisition of its first ever owned office space located at 20 Hurst Grove. This momentous step signals a new era of growth and permanence for the organisation, which has become a cornerstone in the development of innovation and inclusive entrepreneurship in KwaZulu-Natal. The new office space marks the first time since its inception that Innovate Durban has owned its own premises, a move that represents not only financial sustainability but also a long-term investment in the innovation ecosystem of the region. The building

**There were smiles all round as Innovate Durban acquired its first ever owned office space located at 20 Hurst Grove in Musgrave.**

will serve as a dynamic base of operations, boasting premium co-working facilities allowing Innovate Durban to expand its programmes, increase collaboration opportunities, and continue delivering impactful support to innovators, entrepreneurs, and youth. This is more than just a new address; it's a symbol of how far they have come as an organisation and the strength of their commitment to Durban's innovation ecosystem.

Owning their own space allows them to deepen their roots in the community and build a legacy of innovation.

Strategically situated in the heart of Musgrave, the new location is easily accessible and designed to accommodate a wide range of collaborative initiatives. It will also serve as a central hub for innovation activities, workshops, and strategic engagements with stakeholders across the public and private sectors. This new chapter builds on Innovate Durban's continued mission to drive inclusive innovation and support the next generation of change makers.

# GAS INSTALLATION TRAINING CONTRIBUTES TO JOB CREATION

**An aspiring gas installer completed an assessment during a five-day gas installation programme hosted by the City and Sasol.**

IN A proactive move to uplift small businesses and contribute to job creation, eThekwini Municipality, in partnership with Sasol, successfully hosted a five-day Basic Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) Installer Training for Domestic Gas Installers. This ongoing programme took place from 12 to 16 May at the Municipality's UMkhumbane Entrepreneurial Support Centre. The training was facilitated by LPG South Africa.

Sixteen aspiring installers were selected from the Municipality's small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMME) database, which is managed by the Business Support, Tourism, Markets and AgriBusiness Unit.

The training aims to equip participants with foundational skills enabling them to install domestic LPG systems using up to five 48kg cylinders.

Key modules included gas safety, site safety, LPG legislation, combustion, cylinder handling, piping, ventilation, and leak testing. After four days of theory, participants underwent an assessment which allows successful candidates to proceed to a five-day practical phase before they get a temporary gas installer license.

Ntokozo Chiliza, KwaZulu-Natal Stakeholder Relations Manager at Sasol said: "Supporting this initiative showcases our commitment to opening doors to employment, and enterprise."

Nonhlanhla Khumalo, Programme Manager from the Municipality's Business Support, Tourism, Markets and AgriBusiness Unit, applauded the collaboration. "We are always seeking partnerships to combine resources and expertise for business development. This kind of collaboration benefits businesses and helps tackle unemployment."

## ADVANCING SKILLS OF FURNITURE SMMES

TO BOOST small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the furniture industry, a four-day Auto-CAD training programme was hosted by the eThekwini Furniture Custer. The training was supported by the City's Economic Development Programmes and Planning Unit.

SMMEs were supported to create, edit, and manage comprehensive 2D and 3D drawings with AutoCAD, providing benefits such as precision, accuracy, efficiency, adaptability, enhanced collaboration, and a highly adaptable design.

The training supported both 2D sketching and 3D modelling and is compatible with a variety of file types. The training was accredited by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations and the Chemical Industries Education and Training Sector Authority.

**The training of SMMEs in the furniture industry took place at the Durban South Training Centre recently.**

Sitholithemba Msomi from Illovu said attending the session improved his design and measurement accuracy.

"I will now spend less time designing and measuring the custom-made product, which means I will increase the productivity. I will use my accredited certificate as part of my business portfolio," said Msomi.

## MITCHELL PARK REVAMP UPDATE

THE upgrades to improve the Mitchell Park Zoo are well underway to create a safe, engaging and sustainable space for the community.

Some of the work done thus far includes the renewal of flower beds, removal of hazardous playground equipment and the construction of new paving.

Mitchell Park Zoo was temporarily closed in April to allow refurbishment work. The park, which is more than 100 years old, was among the City's facilities affected by the recurrent adverse weather conditions over the years.

A date confirming the reopening of the park will be communicated to the public.

# SHESHISA ACCELERATOR RETURNS TO EMPOWER WOMEN

FOLLOWING the success of its inaugural cohort, Innovate Durban is proud to announce the launch of the second cohort of the SHEshisa Accelerator Programme.

This is a dynamic six-month initiative aimed at empowering female entrepreneurs across Durban and KwaZulu-Natal region.

Meaning "Accelerate" in isiZulu, SHEshisa is a movement designed to equip women founders with the tools, skills, and confidence needed to grow and sustain successful businesses. The 2025 cohort continues this mission with a robust offering of learning, mentorship, and community building opportunities.

The programme is supported by eThekwini Municipality and Software AG and is implemented in partnership with Regenesys and iKhokha as well as industry mentors.

SHEshisa offers combined self-paced online learning with high impact in person sessions in Durban. The programme follows a learn by doing model, allowing participants to immediately apply new knowledge to their businesses while engaging with facilitators, mentors, and industry experts.

**Female business owners from KwaZulu-Natal are invited to apply to be part of the second cohort of the SHEshisa Accelerator Programme.**

To qualify, businesses must:

- Be a South African business owned by a woman and operating for between one and five years
- Have an annual turnover of less than R 1 million
- Be technology-enabled or willing to adopt technology
- Be innovative in their model or open to introducing innovation
- Be based and actively operating in KwaZulu-Natal
- Be available to attend in-person sessions in Durban.

This impactful programme is at no cost. Applications are now open for the second cohort. Apply today and become part of a growing community of women leading innovation before the deadline of 13 June 2025.

# EXPANSION OF TRANSFORMATIVE RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

**Stakeholders attended an engagement to discuss the extension of the Transformative River Management Programme to the Palmiet River.**

THE City has a long history of promoting nature-based solutions in response to climate change challenges. Recently the City has been advocating for the Transformative River Management Programme (TRMP) model to restore and protect eThekwini's rivers.

EThekwini Municipality will be piloting the TRMP approach in the Palmiet catchment.

The City hosted a stakeholder engagement at the Paradise Valley Nature Reserve on 16 May to provide a platform to share their active projects within the Palmiet catchment. This was to introduce the Palmiet TRMP to stakeholders and discuss possible collaborations.

Dr. Sean O' Donoghue, Senior Manager of Climate Change Adaptation said the City is looking forward to community-based river management to reduce risk to settlements living downstream.

The City aims to improve the training and outcomes for the community participation so that they can form their own co-operatives. The approach is to make communities more independent.

The programme was been well received by stakeholders. Luyanda Xolo from the Quarry Road Informal Settlement said he worked as an Environmental Champion and is pleased that the project is being revived. "I saw a difference in the cleanliness of the area. We cleared litter and conducted education campaigns."

Linda Smith, Chairperson of the Friends of the Palmiet Nature Reserve said they are looking forward to partnering with the City and other stakeholders in the TRMP while Sue Smith, Chairperson of the Westville Conservancy said: "We look forward to the partnership, working together we can achieve more."

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

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