

# Elections over: now let's all get to work

**T**HIS has been one of the most exciting years in our political history. Seldom have elections been so fiercely contested.



**Obed Mlaba**  
eThekweni Mayor

It is good to differ on some points. But these differences should not be detrimental to the well-being of the country. Over the past several years we have maintained a steady

growth of our economy. Let us keep up the good work and improve where there is room for improvement.

It is only when we revisit the vision of our country and all work towards realising that vision that we can truly build one united South Africa.

To repeat an old cliché, let us not ask what our country can do for us, but rather what is it that we can do for our country. If we can put the needs of the country ahead of our own, maybe it can become a better place to live in.

Let us set ourselves some targets and then work within those parameters. We should all make a concerted effort to make a difference in our workplace. It is only if we all take individual responsibility to make a difference that our efforts can have a positive impact on service delivery.

All political parties, large and small, made sure that they secured a share of the votes.

Now that the elections have come and gone, we need to put the euphoria behind us and focus on the task at hand. Let us also put those things that divided us behind us and start concentrating on those things that can unite us.

For starters, I would love to believe that we are all united in our fight against poverty. If we approach our challenges with a united front, I see no reason why we should not come up tops.

The notion of nation building, which started in 1994, has not been fully realised. We still have pockets of South Africa where certain people see themselves as a nation within a nation. It, therefore, becomes the responsibility of all South Africans to make sure that we destroy sectarianism together with its attendant attitudes.

# Township CBDs start to take shape

**O**NE of the big challenges of the past 15 years has been to help develop the economies of formerly African townships.



**Michael Sutcliffe**  
eThekweni Manager

(R207-million), KwaDabeka/ Clermont (R105-million) and Mpumalanga (R31-million).

At Bridge City, the funding will be used in the construction of an intermodal

Apartheid was writ large in the concrete and mortar of these areas, where no tertiary opportunities and few private sector economic development initiatives were found.

Banks redline such areas, finding new ways to argue that it is not racial stereotyping, but simply that investments there are not financially viable.

However, things are starting to change.

The Municipality has invested a great deal in places like the KwaMashu Town Centre and it is wonderful driving through that CBD and having a sense that economic order is starting to emerge.

Driving to shop at Umlazi Mega City gives me the same feeling; and last week, as I saw the beautification projects in Clermont, I felt these small steps were taking us in the right direction.

Private investments are starting to flow into each area and, slowly but surely, even the banks have to agree to invest in such areas.

Although the City has sponsored all of these initiatives to date, last year the national Treasury decided to assist us with neighbourhood development partnership grants.

These grants are for programmes which regenerate formerly underdeveloped areas and encourage private sector development.

Included to date are the redevelopment of the KwaMashu Town Centre (R62 million), Bridge City (R81m), Inanda/ Ntuzuma/ KwaMashu (Ink) nodes (R224-million), Umlazi and Malukazi

transport facility, the extension of Bhejane Road to the boundary of Bridge City, the construction of Bhejane Road through Bridge City, linking into Aberdare Drive, the construction of a half diamond interchange on MR 93 and various public transport routes within Bridge City.

KwaMashu town centre involves planning work for many precincts, as well as business growth and support, and the upgrading of the loop road.

The Ink nodes and corridors project will provide technical assistance and service infrastructure for the six nodes and three corridors.

The Clermont and KwaDabeka programme will create integrated, functional and attractive township areas by focusing on development nodes.

Mpumalanga New Town Centre has as its focus a concept plan for the area to guide development.

A regeneration initiative is under way in Umlazi and Malukazi.

A conceptual framework and precinct plans for five key nodes identified within Umlazi: Glebe/Ezimbuzini/Umlazi, KwaMnyandu, W-Node/Umlazi Town Centre, Umlazi Station and Mangosuthu Tech.

The next few years will lay the foundations for these former townships. If the private sector then plays its part, these places will become more integrated into the lifeblood of the economy, allowing them to take their rightful place alongside CBDs in more advantaged areas.

# LITTLE GREAT SOULS



**MAHATMA Gandhi lookalikes, twin brothers Vedant and Vivek Kahar, joined the fifth annual Salt March on Sunday. The boys are just three years old, so were only able to complete the final stretch of the march, from Suncoast to Battery Beach. The march covered 22km, from Gandhi's settlement in Inanda to the beach. The march is held to commemorate the 1930 'Dandi March' which Gandhi did to protest against a colonial salt tax. Send your Durban photos to eZasegagasini Metro, PO Box 5588, Durban, 4001, or e-mail [naidoothrusha@durban.gov.za](mailto:naidoothrusha@durban.gov.za) and we will publish the best high-resolution photos**

Picture: THEMBA KHUMALO

## LETTERS

# Who should we contact about potholes and claims?

I WOULD like to know if any of our City fathers have seen the overgrown verges, filth in the gutters and large potholes everywhere you go?

I travel the Bluff, Pinetown and Warner Beach areas, and believe me when I say that all are in a state of total disrepair. Is anyone doing anything about these potholes?

**GAIL COETZEE**  
Durban

I OFTEN get complaints from people whose cars have hit potholes, causing damage that they have to repair without the benefit of an insurance policy.

I am aware that the Council's insurance policy will only entertain such claims if negligence can be established.

I understand that a claim of negligence can be made if it can be proven that the municipality was aware of the pothole, due to it being reported by a member of the public, yet it was not repaired within a reasonable amount of time.

What, in the Council's view, is a reasonable period of time?

And how many claims has the Metro paid out in respect of pothole damage in the past year?

Interestingly, in 2006 I handled a case of a woman who tripped on a paving stone, which had been uplifted by the roots of a tree in front of a beachfront hotel. Her claim for related medial expenses was initially repudiated. However, subsequent to my enquiry it was established that because a

beachfront maintenance team was tasked with inspecting the area every month, the Council was indeed liable in this case and the complainant's claim was paid.

Is there no team tasked with checking the roads for potholes, which could potentially cause not just extensive damage to cars but accidents as well?

Which e-mail address and telephone number should motorists use to report potholes?

**WENDY KNOWLER**  
Consumer journalist

EVERY attempt is made to repair reported potholes within a period of 48 hours of receipt of a complaint, but you will appreciate that this is not always possible, particularly in inclement weather.

While the term pothole is used extensively when reporting failures in the roadway, a significant number of the complaints received relate to trenches and other excavated areas for new services and for repairs to existing services.

A lot of work in this regard is being done throughout the City at present, particularly with the replacement of asbestos cement water mains and the installation of new fixed line telecommunication cables.

Maintenance of these excavations while work is in progress is the responsibility of the contractor concerned and consultants have been appointed to manage these processes.

The municipal road network is about 8 300km in extent and a comprehensive condition assessment is carried out every two

years on the surfaced network.

The gravel road network is bladed twice a year and there is a continual presence on this part of the network (which is about 1 500km) through the involvement of community-based contractors for maintenance purposes.

Regular inspections are done in high profile/high density areas and the Municipality has recently awarded full maintenance contracts on the three freeways in the city and most of the main arterial roads. More of the same is in the pipeline.

In addition to the Municipal network, within eThekweni there is also a provincial road network of 1 411km (which includes the M13, M19, M7, Inanda Road, Old Main Road in Hillcrest as well as the Ruth First Highway going north, past Ann Arbor) and a national network of 367km.

Enquiries regarding the lodging of insurance claims related to damages incurred on provincial roads may be directed to the office of the Regional Director at the Department of Transport at 031 700 2222.

Claims for damages related to the Municipal network can be directed to the Municipality's Insurance Section at 031 311 1551/2

Concerns related to the maintenance of roads and stormwater systems can be directed to

[Eservices@dmws.durban.gov.za](mailto:Eservices@dmws.durban.gov.za).

**KEN HOBSON**  
Deputy Head: Roads and Stormwater Maintenance  
eThekweni Municipality

Send your letters to: The Editor, Letters, PO Box 5588, Durban, 4000; or e-mail: [naidoothrusha@durban.gov.za](mailto:naidoothrusha@durban.gov.za). We reserve the right to edit all letters published. The eZasegagasini Metro is an official eThekweni Municipality publication through which ratepayers and residents are informed of news, entertainment and perspectives in greater Durban. It is also a forum for readers' views. It hits the streets fortnightly on a Friday, with 400 000 copies distributed throughout the region. The newsroom can be contacted at 031 311 2290. The Editor is Ntsiki Magwaza.