**Media Release**

**eThekwini Municipality’s GO!Durban integrates**

**Pinetown trees into station design**

GO!Durban the Ethekwini Municipality’s new Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network (IRPTN) is currently under construction in Pinetown. As part of developing a station and a dedicated bus median on Josiah Gumede Road, thirteen beautiful trees were originally earmared to be removed. The Ethekwini Transport Authority, however, through its consulting teams engaged with the National Heritage Council, AMAFA and several other role players and stakeholders to find a solution to save these trees.

The IRPTN layout and location of the station was duly revised and the end result is that eleven trees will be saved. Two Natal Fig trees in front of the Library on Josiah Gumede will unfortunately have to be removed in the weeks to come to create space for these dedicated bus lanes and station.

“We would like to assure the public that all measures have been taken to keep the number of trees being removed to a minimum, and the route was redesigned to maintain the remaining trees in front of the library” explains Deputy Head of Road System Management, Carlos Esteves. “A comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment was conducted and all the correct procedures and protocols have been followed, with final consent given to remove these two trees. We take the removal of trees very seriously and we are currently looking at ways in which something meaningful can be done with the wood.”

“Furthermore, in line with our off-set policy, new indigenous trees will be planted in close proximity where possible, to replace these two trees. Every effort will be made to ensure that future “greening” endeavours of various nodes along the new IRPTN route will be made using indigenous flora.” explains Esteves.

For any further information on the construction of the IRPTN in this area, call 073 038 8000