



STAMP OF APPROVAL: ETHEKWINI Mayor James Nxumalo signs a Memorandum of Agreement with Durban minibus taxi operators.

Picture: SLINDILE MALULEKA

Partnership for public transport forged

SLINDILE MALULEKA

THE Municipality and minibus taxi operators in Durban have agreed to work together towards an efficient public transport system. This was announced at the ceremony to sign the memorandum of agreement (MOA).

The MOA was signed by Mayor James Nxumalo and the leadership of the minibus taxi industry from eThekweni Metro Management Taxi Council (EMMTC) and the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Alliance last week.

The MOA is aimed at engaging and negotiating while outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party in the R20 billion GO! Durban Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network (IRPTN).

Nxumalo said since the inception of the IRPTN, the City has been committed

to implementing the new public transport system in partnership with all the affected transport operators, including the minibus taxi industry.

"In terms of the project rollout, all operators whose routes would be affected by the GO! Durban operations in each sub-phase will have the option to be included in the vehicle operating companies with which the City will negotiate and enter into contracts to operate the public transport services," he said.

The City is committed to negotiating with affected operators, contracts to a maximum of 12 years as stipulated in the National Land Transport Act, Act No. 5 of 2009.

The IRPTN entails the creation of nine transport corridors linked by various modes of transport across eThekweni by the year 2027.

Phase 1 is expected to be completed by 2018. It will comprise of three bus routes and one rail corridor. The three bus routes are: C1 Bridge City to Durban CBD, C3 Bridge City to Pinetown, C9 Bridge City to Umhlanga Corridor and the rail corridor C2 Bridge City and KwaMashu via Berea Road to Umlazi and Isiphingo.

Bheki Mbambo, Chairperson of the EMMTC pledged his support and said the taxi council would work hand in hand with the Municipality to make the IRPTN a success.

"The taxi industry is very optimistic and looks forward towards the GO! Durban project negotiations and implementation as long as it improves the current situation of existing operators and commuters as well as employees," he said.

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