

# City's bus troubles to go

## **MHLABUNZIMA MEMELA**

GO Durban!, eThekweni's concept Integrated Rapid Public Transport System (IRPTN), was launched yesterday, and it is hoped the system will finally bring closure to the city's troubled bus system.

The concept is expected to be running in some areas by 2016 after construction of the bus lanes and transfer stations has been completed.

About six contractors for phase one of the project will be appointed soon to build the multibillion-rand infrastructure.

The R22 billion project, which will see the remainder of the system completed by 2027, is expected to incorporate buses, taxis and trains into a single public transport system, allowing commuters to seamlessly change modes of transport by swiping a single card. This transport strategy is aimed at reaching 85% of Durban residents. The project is a joint project between eThekweni municipality and the Passenger Rail Agency of SA.

Yesterday, eThekweni Transport Authority head Thami Manyathi said six tenders to the value of R3 billion for the construction of Pinetown to Bridge City corridor will take place soon. He said the seventh contractor is already on site.

"This contractor was appointed by the province for the construction of roads in the Clermont area," he said.

Manyathi said the city plans to purchase over 450 buses for this project.

"The Go Durban! project will provide a fully fledged transportation system for the people of eThekweni. We aim to revolutionise and modernise the way of life for all citizens, tourists and business people travelling through the city," he said.

Tenders for construction of corridors from Bridge City to the CBD and Bridge City to Umhlanga are scheduled to be advertised before the end of the financial year, he said.

"We are engaging with the taxi and bus operators for their full participation in the Go Durban! system," said Manyathi.