**Media Release**

**eThekwini Municipality’s** **GO!Durban opens dialogue with Industry and Business in Durban with a “Hambanathi Experience”**

Durban, South Africa. Yesterday, December 1, Councillor Ntando Khuzwayo, acting on behalf of the Mayor of the eThekwini Municipality, Councillor Zandile Gumede, officially opened the dialogue between GO!Durban and business with a special tour of the first sections of the  new public transport infrastructure that is nearing completion.

Dubbed the ***Hambanathi (Come with us) Experience***, 30 captains of industry and businesses met with officials and politicians spearheading the new public transport network, and were taken on a tour of the first dedicated bus route currently nearing completion.

“We have taken industry leaders on a tour to demonstrate how the new transport system within our City paves the way for economic growth and development,” said Cllr Khuzwayo. “There are many examples from across the globe as to how transport has transformed economies, and our new transport plans in GO!Durban are no different.”

Inviting business and industry leaders to join forces with government in a combined vision, CllrKhuzwayo said “Exciting times are ahead, as the City of Durban shifts up a gear to deliver on our promise to make this the most caring and liveable City in Africa by 2030.”

“As government we can only create the policy framework and foundation for the economy to develop. But it is through your innovation, influence and direction that the economy is able to thrive and expand. So we are inviting industry and business to join us as we plan and implement for this brighter future for all.”

“This may be through independent ideas and projects, or public private partnerships, which, history has shown, are able to infuse a project of this magnitude with innovation and improved operational efficiency, accountability, cost effectiveness, financial efficiencies and productivity.”

To further illustrate the success of private public partnerships Danny Hattingh, Business Development Manager at PRASA gave an overview of the plans to improve commuter rail and opportunities that are inherent in this, while Michael Deighton, MD of Tongaat Hulett Developments gave a testimonial on the success of the company’s ongoing partnerships with government and the value these add to developing opportunities for business in the City.

Cllr Khuzwayo reminded the gathering that world-over cities are recognising that transport is a key instrument to a better urban future and an enabler of societal and economic growth and development. “We acknowledge that an improved public transport system for Durban will be the lifeblood of the socio-economic development of our City.”

“The Mayor’s office is faced with many key decisions impacting the people of eThekwini, and ultimately its goal is to create a City of opportunity for our people,” he said calling for more collaboration between industry, business and government, and giving her commitment to prioritising transport in the City and that key decisions be made promptly to moving delivery on the GO!Durban project.

The business leaders were taken on a tour to experience how the City’s new transport vision will support and possibly lead to further growth of the local economy. The tour enabled them to experience the current transport challenges many of their employees faced, how public transport has already begun to transform, and were given a glimpse of how the new bus rapid transport (dedicated bus lanes) and improved fleet and operations will work towards improving the local economy.

“The conversation with business will enable*us to* appreciate the challenges we as government and private enterprise face together,” explained Cllr Khuzwayo. “We will be able to demonstrate what we have already achieved, so that we can align our goals, and develop a shared vision for the betterment of all.”

Cllr Khuzwayo pointed out that the City was open to proposals that were innovative and economically viable for the development of precincts around the various GO!Durban stations and linked areas, from businesses and industry.  “We welcome suggestions and ideas on how the new transport system could best serve the economic interests of the businesses and industry in the City, and how we can collaborate with a joint vision for all.”

GO!Durban plan to host a number of “Hambanathi Experiences” with business and industry leaders going forward. For more information go to [www.godurban.co.za](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.godurban.co.za&d=DgMFaQ&c=4JOzdpIlQcN5fHQL_PMhCQ&r=EQW2lCVPBSV1Cg_rQ9EZSDpG2LZuVh7m186w5yie1dw&m=K_8nB1Xhtu-RvTYZ_V1CKyFln8EcX88AoLXsizSLKKY&s=Hxud7kA0GNHQsDAkIWRmraaD6oabk5rzFSmneM3TidA&e=) or email info@godurban.co.za.

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