

# Bridge City development gains momentum

According to Brian Ive, development executive at Tongaat Hulett Developments, Bridge City is gathering momentum this year with 65% of the 53ha development area sold to date to a mix of public and private sector investors. 360,000m<sup>2</sup> of bulk is still available for purchase in Bridge City.



A number of new developments – including a petrol filling station (PFS)/ retail facility and a mixed-use development to the value of R220m – are set to begin in March 2017. The environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the first phase PFS is underway while the second phase of this mixed-use development is expected to begin construction towards the end of 2017.

He added that construction of the third phase of the combined medical and retail centre adjacent to the Bridge City shopping centre was already well underway and due for completion by the end of June 2017.

Construction of the Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme Memorial Hospital, a 500-bed regional state facility, is proceeding well. Now that the structure is complete, contractors are focusing on finishing the interior of the building ahead of an envisaged opening in 2019.

At the same time, earthworks for the 150-bed private hospital that is also to be located at Bridge City have been completed. Work on the top structure is scheduled to commence this month (March 2017) and the hospital is expected to open at the end of 2018.

## Job creation

Bridge City is expected to attract upwards of R10bn in investment once it has been completed, creating thousands of construction jobs whilst also facilitating a wide range of skills and enterprise development opportunities across a plethora of sectors.

“Our vision for Bridge City is one that combines a mix of public sector facilities, services and infrastructure with a wide range of private investment opportunities. At its heart, it will have a world class, inter-modal transport system that links the areas of Phoenix and Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu (INK) to the CBD’s of Durban, uMhlanga, Cornubia and Pinetown. This will become a bustling, mixed-use urban hub that offers attractive investment opportunities in a professionally managed, integrated and dynamic development node,” said Ive.

He added that the recent completion of the new half diamond interchange off the M25 that provides dedicated access to Bridge City for road users and later this year, for the R20bn GO!Durban bus rapid transport network (BRT) which will mark another important milestone for the development of Bridge City.

## **Effingham Development Joint Venture**

Bridge City is the second leg of the Effingham Development Joint Venture public-private sector partnership between Tongaat Hulett and the eThekweni Municipality. From its earliest days on the drawing board, it has included residential, retail, recreational, medical and commercial facilities as well as a 13-hectare business park that is likely to appeal to both established businesses and entrepreneurs.

Ive said that Bridge City was particularly attractive to businesses as all sites were fully serviced and ready for development, cutting through potential red tape and delays in other areas.

The INK (Inanda, Ntuzuma and Kwa Mashu) area has the largest residential concentration of about 800,000 people in the eThekweni region.

## **Live, work, play**

“Bridge City completely redefines how people will live, work and play in formerly neglected and marginalised townships. Through the creation of job opportunities, residential accommodation and lifestyle choices, Bridge City will have a major economic impact on both the immediate INK area and its surrounds,” he said.

A deal about to be concluded will deliver 348 affordable housing units and will play a key role in attracting new entrants into the retail property development space. Through the creation of a dynamic mixed use precinct, the reduction of management association levies for residential use and reductions in transfer duties by government for entry level buyers, he said that more property owners were also likely to enter the as yet under invested township real estate market.

Ive said that the eThekweni Municipality was finalising the investment of approximately R84.5m in six sites at Bridge City. Five of these are in the town centre. Of these, three are earmarked for social housing and two for GAP (affordable) housing.

The sixth site purchased by the municipality – located within the business estate precinct – will be developed into a business incubator.

## **Commuter transport**

Ive pointed out that improved commuter transport via the GO!Durban BRT is also expected to boost retail development. Bridge City is likely to be the second busiest commuter exchange in the Durban area and the GO!Durban terminal is

expected to accommodate in excess of 100,000 daily commuters on completion.

He noted that the Bridge City shopping centre, which was completed in 2009, is already regarded as a major retail hub and has extended its pool of shoppers from the immediate vicinity to surrounding areas. Shopper numbers increased during 2016 and the mall currently has only a 3% vacancy rate.

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