**Media Release**

**Construction of GO!Durban dedicated bus lane on first route nears completion**

Substantial progress on the eThekwini Municipality’s integrated rapid public transport network GO!Durban means that the construction of the dedicated bus lane from Pinetown to KwaMashu is nearing completion with some sections ready for hand-over to the municpality in December this year.

eThekwini Transport Authority Deputy Head of Road Systems Management Carlos Esteves told the public at an update meeting, about the progress of the project with specific reference to the Moodie street  Station, that the civil works that have affected traffic and businesses in the central business district will be completed in December. This includes the stretch of road between Beviss Road and Lahee Park.

Esteves says the contractors face a R35 000 per day penalty for not completing the civil work timeously, which means, barring floods, there will be no delays in finalising the roadworks. Thereafter, construction on the steelworks for the Moodie Street Station, the initial public transport station in Pinetown, will begin in a few months time.

GO!Durban is the public transport system aimed at converting Durban into Africa’s most liveable, sustainable city by 2030. The integrated rapid public transport network involves modern transportation, professional city planners and several other highly skilled work streams collaborating to ensure the project runs smoothly and the common goals are achieved within the designated timeframe.

The project has four main phases consisting of nine main routes with dedicated bus lanes connecting areas of the City. The dedicated bus routes will include feeder systems transporting people between surrounding areas and stations along the route.

Esteves says each phase has been planned to generate world-class results with the city wholly transformed with stations, roads, rail and bus lines interlinked by 2030 to connect different parts of the city.

“Advanced public transport will provide new opportunities for travelling long distances throughout the city, making new possibilities for employment available to all. GO!Durban will not only create a better transport network within the city, but also vastly improve the city itself – the network will lessen the need for cars, creating a more eco-friendly and sustainable solution for transport,” Esteves says.

Another element of the GO!Durban upgrade was that by Christmas citizens will be able to drive along the M577 without interruption from Pinetown to Inanda. Several interruptions and disruptions had previously delayed the installation of services between Josiah Gumede Road along Qashana Khuzwayo Road to Dinkelman/Otto Volek Roads with estimates being the road will only be finished by March 2017.

Esteves says the new Moodie Street Station and the surrounding development paves the way for businesses to submit innovative, economically viable investment opportunities. The Moodie Station will initially constitute a 50m platform between Moodie and Anderson Streets that will eventually be double that length.

Government regulations dictate all public transport nodes be universally accessible, accommodating partially and wholly sight and hearing deficient citizens as well as anyone wheelchair bound. The redevelopment will also include a greening project that will plant 200 new trees – or three for every one removed – into the Pinetown precinct.

“This is an arena in which an urban improvement precinct can play a key role by indicating the types of trees that should be planted and what greening initiatives can add value to property values,” Esteves says.

Esteves says new tenders for Dinkelman Road and a section of the upgrade in KwaMashu have been issued and he encourages contractors to keep abreast of tenders for infrastructure contracts for other phases of the project that will be going out through the relevant municipal channels.