

## TECHNICAL WORKSHOP 3 – CITY OF UMHLATHUZE



## EMPANGENI CBD REVITALIZATION, UMZINGWENYA SETTLEMENT PLAN, STEEL BRIDGE CONCEPTUAL RE-DESIGN

## 1. BACKGROUND

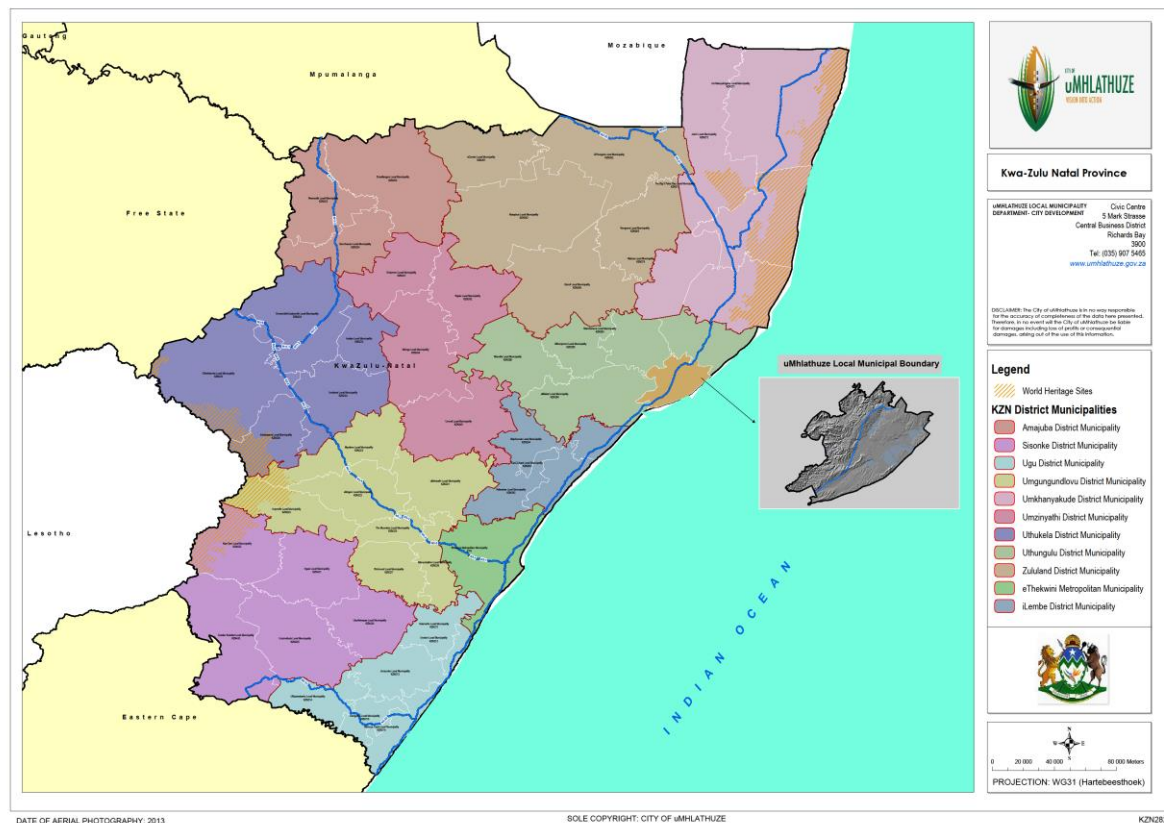
The City of uMhlathuze is an administrative area in the King Cetshwayo District and is located on the north-east coast of the province of KwaZulu-Natal, about 150 kilometers north-east of Durban. The uMhlathuze area covers 795 km<sup>2</sup>. The municipal area includes the formal towns of Empangeni, Richards Bay, eSikhaleni, Ngwelezane, eNseleni, Vulindlela and Felixton as well as the Traditional Authority areas under Amakhosi Dube, Mkhwanazi, Khoza, Mbuyazi and Zungu. Apart from the areas of natural significance, large tracts of land are under commercial agricultural production.

The population is estimated at 334459 (2011 Census). The municipality borders a coastline that spans approximately 45 kilometers. The N2 highway traverses the uMhlathuze Municipality in a north-east direction towards the Swaziland border and south-west towards Durban.

The uMhlathuze Spatial Development Framework gives consideration to a number of development interventions which, amongst others, includes the revitalization of the urban spaces, settlement densities, movement corridors, natural features and identified a number of expansion areas to accommodate future development. A number of technical investigations and growth projections informed the identification of spatial interventions; and

the technical workshop will be based on some of those interventions. These projects resonate with the sub-themes of the Congress as they relate to Transforming Human Settlements, Planning Activism and Social Justice, Urban Planning and Policy Making in Times of Uncertainty and Insecurity as well as Planning for Interlinked and Integrated Rural-Urban Development.

## 2. LOCATION MAP



### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

There are a number of natural and man-made phenomenon's that have shaped and continue to shape the uMhlathuze Municipality. The area is inundated with a system of wetlands and natural water features such as Lakes Cubhu, Mzingazi, Nsezi and Nhlabane. Major rivers include the Mhlathuze and Nsezi. The municipal areas includes the formal towns of Empangeni, Richards Bay, eSikhaleni, Ngwelezane, eNseleni, Vulindlela and Felixton as well as the Traditional Authority areas under Amakhosi Dube, Mkhwanazi, Khoza, Mbuyazi and Zungu. Apart from the areas of natural significance, large tracts of land are under commercial agricultural production.

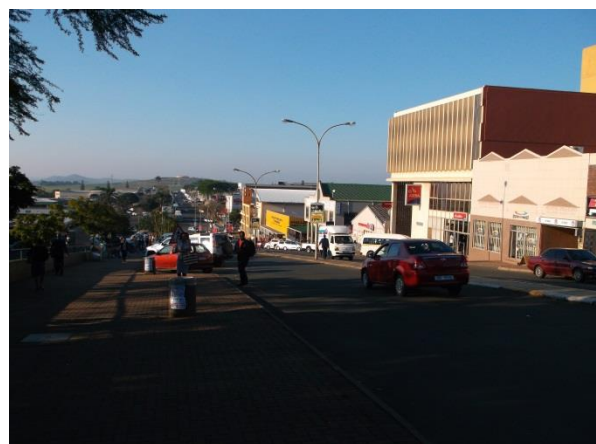
This technical workshop has three study areas which provide a mix of all the themes of the conference.

### 3.1 Integrated Urban Development Framework: Empangeni CBD Revitalization

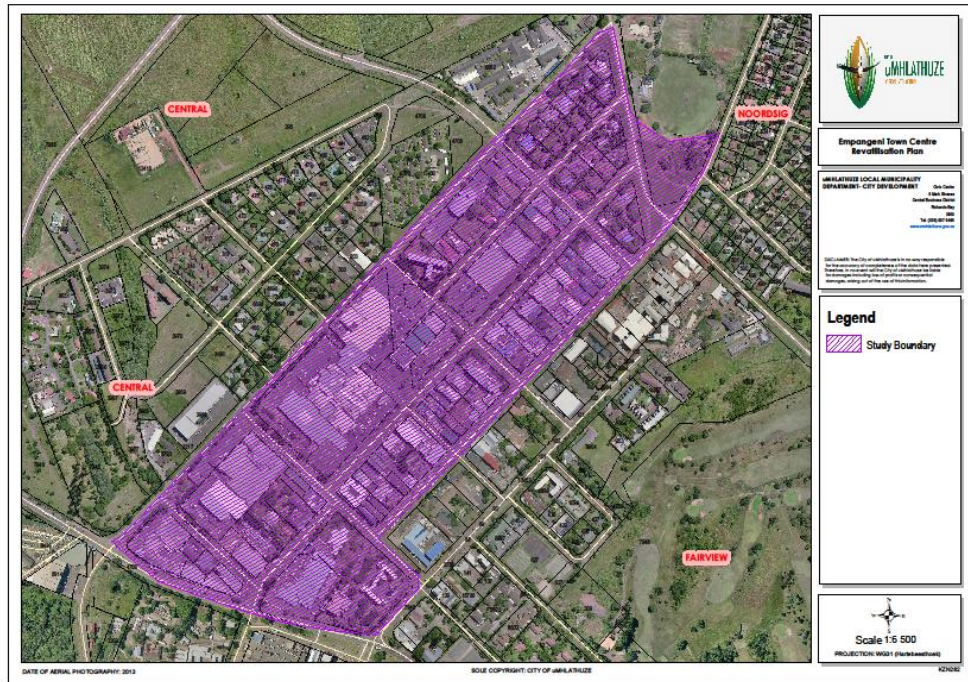
Study area one focuses on Empangeni town and specifically its CBD which evolved naturally over time into a functional town that serves a significant community and hinterland. However, town planning intervention is needed to improve the functionality and longer terms sustainability of the Empangeni CBD. The following challenges lead to the preparation of the Empangeni CBD Revitalization Plan:

#### Challenges:

- Lack of an overall Master Plan addressing urban form, movement, urban renewal and densification;
- There is limited space for expansion;
- There is no policy framework to guide future development;
- Conflict between vehicles and pedestrians;
- Unauthorised business operations, especially in adjacent residential areas;
- Lack of land availability for small commercial and office developments; and
- Unplanned informal business areas.







Given the identified challenges, the Empangeni CBD Revitalisation Plan has the following **vision elements**:

- Identification and development of Distinct Clusters – Core, Frame, Periphery
- Introduction of Quality Built Form
- Integration of Transport Facilities
- Integration of Public Realm
- Informal and Semi-Formal Retail



### 3.2 uMzingwenya Settlement Upgrade Plan

Study area two is the uMzingwenya (Crocodiles Home) settlement that borders the R293 Township of Esikhaleni. It is located between the Main Road (Mdlebe Ntshona) to the east and the Mzingwenya River to the west. There is a major Eskom power line that passes through the settlement that has 35M servitude. The settlement has developed over the last 30 years. Land is owned and allocated by the Traditional Authorities and in some instances by local landlords who operate without consideration of environmental and service installation issues.

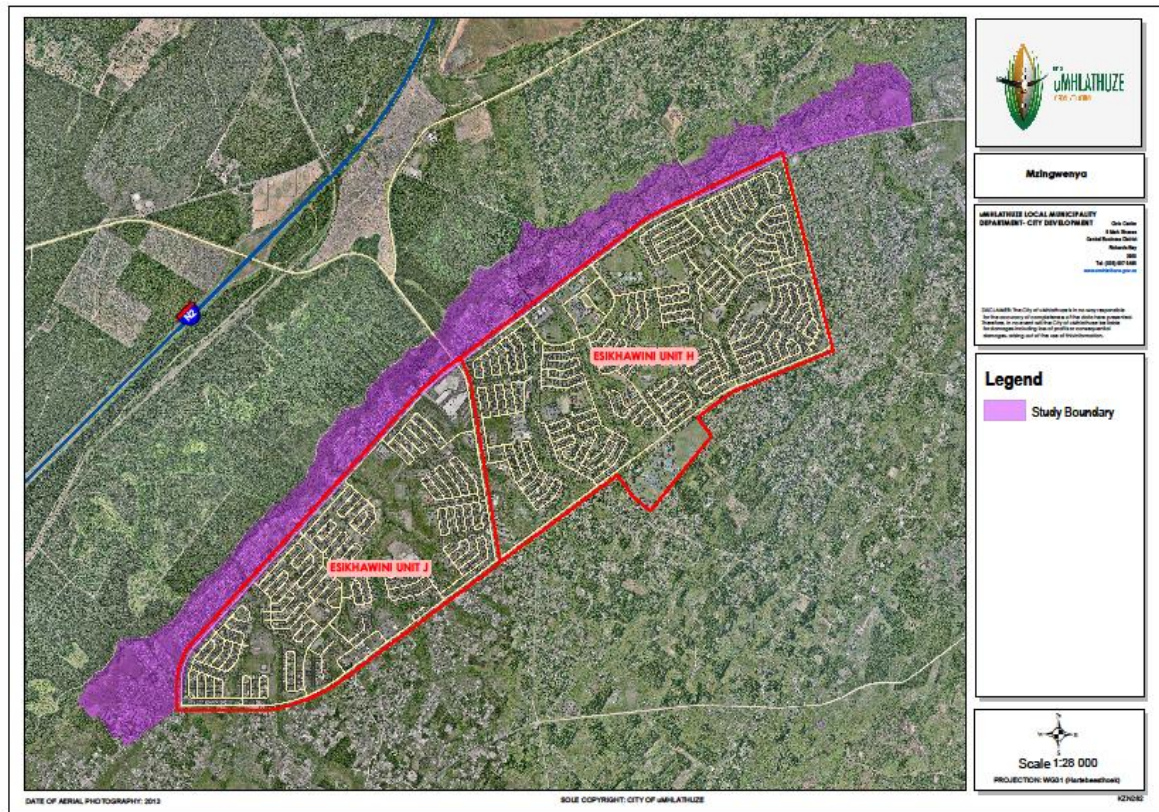
The uMzingwenya area has been earmarked as a Restructuring zone by the uMhlathuze Municipality with the support of the National Upgrading Support Programme (NUSP) which is run by the National Department of Human Settlements. By definition, restructuring zones are intended to serve as an instrument (among others) to pursue restructuring of South African cities. This is essentially about integration of economic, racial and social aspects of development. The restructuring is largely about moving away from housing interventions that further entrench segregation and buttress social and economic disparities. Amongst others, the following challenges have lead to the preparation of the uMzingwenya Settlement Upgrade Plan:

#### Challenges:

- Majority of the site within the 100 year flood line;
- Many houses under Eskom powerline servitude;
- Suggested waterborne sewerage due to seepage concerns from existing VIP's;
- Sub tenancy and possible resistance to formalisation;
- Administrative and Judicial differences between land development on Traditional Authority and Government or private owned land; and
- Environmental degradation as a result of downstream effects on Lake Cubu.







The successful preparation of the Mzingwenya Informal Settlement Upgrade Plan heavily relied on Participatory Community Action Planning (PCAP). The outcome of the Plan posed the following three scenarios for consideration:

- Scenario 1: Relocate all households from the environmentally sensitive area and underneath the power line servitude
- Scenario 2: Interim Services and settlement management
- Scenario 3: Do Nothing

### 3.3 Steel Bridge Conceptual Re-design

The Richards Bay Steel Bridge is located at the 'gateway' of the Richards Bay Waterfront and spans over the Mzingazi canal. The prime location of the Richards Bay Waterfront attracts a diverse range of users that evokes a proud sense of place and culture in the region. The area has developed as a playground for boating and water sports enthusiasts. As such, the Richards Bay Waterfront accommodates a small craft harbour, where luxurious ocean yachts dock. In addition, an upmarket office complex, numerous shops, pubs,

restaurants, luxurious accommodation and walk on moorings in this precinct all add to the vibrant atmosphere of the area.

The overall intention of this project is to lay the proverbial foundation for the development of an iconic bridge structure, in order for the area to reach its full potential. Apart from the need for it to have aesthetic appeal, the proposed bridge design must address a number of key qualities such as:

- Contributing to the efficient movement of people, goods and vehicles;
- Ensure the safety of its users;
- Ability to cope with natural environmental forces, whilst ensuring that the bridge design elements are neither threatened or obtrusive;
- Make a positive, iconic contribution to the wider Richards Bay area, environment and community by creating an attractive new bridge as a regional 'feature'; and
- Subscribe to global trends whilst appreciating local context and timelessness.





- The Technical Workshop is structured in such a manner to indicate to workshop participant's typical development planning challenges experienced at the local municipal level in KwaZulu-Natal.
- These challenges relate to three different divisions, i.e. human settlements, commercial development as well as the promotion of a local sense of place and culture, including tourism.
- The Technical Workshop will indicate planning solutions proposed to the challenges experienced in the respective areas.
- There will be an opportunity to benchmark challenges as well as solutions posed to similar situations by workshop attendees with national and international exposure.



## 5. ITINERY

Technical Workshop Item	Description	Time
<b>1. Workshop Delegates depart from Durban ICC</b>	All participants and delegates depart from the Durban ICC	07:30
<b>2. Arrival of delegates at Richards Bay Council Offices, uMhlathuze Local Municipality for Mayoral Reception.</b>	All participants and delegates will be welcomed by the Honourable Mayor of uMhlathuze Municipality.	10:00 – 10:30
<b>3. Technical Tour Briefing: Overview and Session 1 (Steel Bridge)</b>	Delegates and participants will receive a briefing of the Technical Tour with specific focus on Session 1 (Steel Bridge)	10:30 – 11:00
<b>4. Technical Tour: Session 1</b>	The attendees will be transported to the Steel Bridge study area for a site visit of the project and surrounding area.	11:00 – 12:00
<b>5. Tea and Refreshments</b>	The attendees will depart for Empangeni for Tea and Refreshments	12:00 – 12:45
<b>6. Technical Tour Briefing Session 2 (Empangeni CBD Revitalization Plan)</b>	After tea, delegates will receive a briefing of the Technical Tour Session 2 (Empangeni CBD Revitalization Plan)	12:45 – 13:30
<b>7. Technical Tour: Session 2</b>	The attendees will be transported to the Empangeni CBD for a site visit.	13:30 – 14:15
<b>8. Technical Tour Briefing Session 3 (uMzingwenya Settlement)</b>	The attendees will depart for a venue in Esikhaleni receive a briefing of the Technical Tour Session 3 (uMzingwenya Settlement)	14:15 – 15:00
<b>9. Technical Tour: Session 3</b>	The attendees will be transported to the uMzingwenya Settlement for a site visit.	15:00 – 16:00

<b>10. Discussions</b>	Discussions based on the Technical Tour will be done at a suitable venue.	16:00 – 17:00
<b>11. Refreshments</b>	The Municipality will provide refreshments and entertainment at the conclusion of the experience.	17:00 – 18:00

## 6. TECHNICAL WORKSHOP LEADERS

- Mrs Brenda Strachan - Manager: Spatial and Environmental Planning
- Mr Mthokozisi Mhlongo - Project Manager: Spatial Planning