



MAKING THE DURBAN INNER CITY CLEAN, GREEN AND SAFE

SUMMER 2026 | VOLUME 3

A PUBLICATION OF RIDGEVIEW ACADEMY

admin@durbancbduip.co.za



DURBAN CBD UIP
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



MARCH 11, 2026 | 15h00

**SEE
BACK
PAGE**

SLOW AND STEADY BID TO GET THE DURBAN CBD THRIVING AGAIN



**VASANTHA
ANGAMUTHU**

The Durban city centre, like city centres the world over, has suffered from decentralisation over the years. Now, however, there is a slow but noticable reversal in fortunes.

The Durban CBD is seeing a return of retail and commercial tenants and growing optimism that the centre can reclaim its reputation as a bustling commercial centre.

The uptick in commercial and retail tenancy is the result of the focused and consistent safety and cleaning programs by the Durban CBD Urban Improvement Precinct; investments by developers in building upgrades; the lower rentals in the central business district; initiatives by the eThekweni municipality to revive the inner city; and ease of transport. The CBD also offers value for money rentals for those wanting to be close to government and the port.

What helps the renewed optimism in the CBD is the positive response from locals and visitors alike to a clearly cleaner and safer inner city.

PUBLISHER: RIDGEVIEW ACADEMY
EDITOR: Vasantha Angamuthu
CONTACT: office@ridgeview.co.za

MYDURBANCBD is a hyperlocal paper published by Durban resident Vasantha Angamuthu. Vasantha is a former CEO of iol.co.za and the African News Agency, former head of communications for the eThekweni Municipality, former Vice President at Hindustan Times Media Ltd and a journalist who covered South Africa's transition to democracy. She is a local businessperson with interests in media, hospitality, culture and education.

**OUR PARTNER
DURBANCBDUIP**

CONTACT: admin@durbancbduip.co.za
CHAIR: Gugu Ngobese



Lion Security and Durban CBD UIP Ambassadors are visibly present in the city centre, keeping it safe and clean for locals, tenants and visitors

PRAISE FROM VISITORS AND LOCALS FOR CLEAN, SAFE DURBAN CITY CENTRE

December was a high point for the Durban CBD Urban Improvement Precinct as visitors, locals and tenants took to social media to express surprise and delight at how clean and well run the CBD was looking.

This was testament to the foundation set and the work done by the Durban CBD UIP since the new board was installed early last year. The Durban CBD UIP set out to focus attention on security and cleaning. And the results did not go unnoticed.

Comments on the cleanliness of the CBD; visible ambassadors; presence of security patrols and the round-the-clock cleaning could be found on all social media platforms.

Author Zakes Mda, commenting on Facebook, said: "Is there a new local government in eThekweni. The last time I visited Durban it was as filthy and smelly as Johannesburg, if not worse. This time it's no longer skanky. It's spick and span."

Durban has, over the past decade, struggled with negativity due to the lack of attention on inner city security and cleanliness. This changed over December when the inner city, which falls within the ambit of the Durban CBD UIP, received praise. There were numerous reports of increased cleaning staff, municipal workers and security,

creating a more secure environment.

The general sentiment was one of "renewed civic pride" and improved conditions. Much of this is attributed to the Festive Season plan that the Durban CBD Urban improvement Precinct implemented for the precinct to be safe, clean and welcoming throughout the 2025 festive season.

Chairperson of the Durban CBD UIP Gugu Ngobese said strategic upgrades in safety and cleaning during the city's busiest time of year built on two quarters of dedicated efforts to turn around the inner city with respect to safety and cleanliness.

This, she said, would continue to be a focus in 2026.

Board member Lizelle Shewels said one of her highlights was seeing the shift in how the Durban CBD is starting to be perceived.

"Recently, tenants have mentioned how much safer the city feels when they see the Durban CBD UIP teams in their bright orange uniforms on the ground. Hearing that kind of feedback makes the work feel very meaningful.

"It has been rewarding to see businesses starting to relocate back to the Durban CBD. Watching buildings fill up again shows that confidence is returning and that the work being done is making a real difference."

LIZELLE'S MISSION TO MAKE THE CBD DESIRABLE AGAIN

Easy public transport for workers, cheaper rentals and a functional Urban Improvement Precinct is seeing a return of commercial and retail tenants to the Durban centre

Lizelle Shewels is on a mission. The regional property manager of Delta Property Fund, with her record of high occupancy in the nine CBD buildings in her portfolio, wants Durban to reclaim its position as the centre for business and commerce in KZN.

Lizelle, a board member of the Durban CBD Urban Improvement Precinct, believes there is an uptick in city centre commercial tenancy. This is driven, she said, by lower rentals; the public transport infrastructure that enables workers to get to their offices easily; and a re-invigorated confidence in the central business district.

Lizelle has a degree from UNISA and is a seasoned property management professional. She said the CBD offered value and there was a niche demand - for businesses requiring close proximity to government offices, legal chambers, and financial services. It also offers competitive rental rates that appeal to SMEs.

Lizelle said there were many driving forces to successfully filling commercial property. "Over the years, many businesses left the Durban CBD because they no longer felt safe and because buildings and public spaces were not being maintained and looked after. For tenants to return, they need to see visible security, cleaner streets, functioning lighting and a faster response to issues. When people feel safe coming to work and clients feel comfortable visiting, occupancy follows.

"The second driver is being realistic about the market. That means flexible lease terms, sensible rentals, and making sure buildings are positioned for the type of tenants that are active in the CBD today, including government and mixed-use users. Lastly, it comes down to coordination.

"When property owners, the UIP and the municipality work together, service delivery improves, the environment stabilises, and it becomes easier to operate in the CBD.



"A well-managed, safe precinct attracts tenants far more effectively than any marketing ever could," Lizelle said.

She believes that the Durban CBD UIP has made a massive difference. "2025 was about getting back control and visible improvements. One of the UIP's biggest achievements is a strong security presence, ambassadors on the ground and a consistent cleaning programme, which is changing how the CBD looks and feels."

Lizelle said that there was also better coordination with the municipality and service providers, which meant that faults, infrastructure issues and problems were dealt with quickly and followed through properly. "The UIP showed it can move from plans to real, measurable action. Property owners, tenants and businesses could see things starting to improve, which is critical to rebuilding trust in the CBD."

She said this year the Durban CBD UIP would pay attention to ensuring consistency. "Safety and cleanliness are our priorities. The more reliable and predictable the environment becomes, the more comfortable businesses and tenants will be to invest, stay, and grow in the CBD. There needs to be ongoing focus on basic infrastructure, things like lighting, pavements, waste management and quick fault reporting."

She said the Durban CBD UIP must continue working on activation and placemaking, making sure improvements

translate to foot traffic and better trading conditions.

"My dream is a CBD that works again. I would like to see buildings fully occupied, businesses operating with confidence and people feeling safe to work, shop, and move around the inner city. A place where the basics are done properly, streets are clean, security is visible, and public spaces are respected. Most of all, I want the Durban CBD to be a place where property investment and business activity make sense again, and where the improvements we are starting to see now continue to grow into long-term, sustainable recovery.

Lizelle was born at Addington Hospital not far from her offices at Embassy Building. She said working in the CBD felt personal because it was part of where her story began. She completed a Bachelor of Commerce in Law, later qualified in real estate through my NQF4 and NQF5, and holds a Certificate in Shopping Centre Management. "This gives me both strong legal grounding and very practical, on-the-ground property expertise."

What Lizelle loves about her job is working with people. "It's a people-focused industry that keeps you thinking, solving problems, and constantly learning, which I find exciting and rewarding."

Lizelle oversees a large portfolio of office, retail, government-tenanted and customer-facing properties, including nearly 6 000 parking bays across multiple sites.

BACK TO BASICS, BUILT FOR REGENERATION

We interview the chairperson of the Durban CBD Urban Improvement Precinct, Gugu Ngobese, as the UIP prepares for its annual general meeting

The chairperson of the Durban CBD UIP, Gugu Ngobese, believes their mandate is straightforward - to make the CBD safer, cleaner, functional and investment-ready.

Gugu believes that if you “don’t win the basics, you don’t win confidence”. As the Durban CBD UIP prepares for its annual general meeting in March, Gugu talked us through the UIP’s Business Plan which explores how precinct-based management aligns with municipal initiatives aimed at restoring confidence in the city centre.

The Business Plan allocates resources deliberately: approximately 35% to cleaning and maintenance, 30% to public safety and security, and 15% to urban management and municipal coordination. The remaining allocation supports sustainability, administration, and stakeholder engagement.

“Inner-city regeneration is observable. People must see and feel the difference.” Daily street cleaning, litter removal, pavement washing and hotspot maintenance form the backbone of the UIP’s operational model. The chairperson emphasised that consistent, visible cleaning creates a multiplier effect: businesses invest more readily, foot traffic increases and anti-social behaviour declines.

On greening, the Durban CBD UIP supports recycling initiatives, environmental awareness, and targeted beautification projects. These efforts align with the municipality’s messaging around a safer, cleaner, greener Durban.

Informal trading remains a complex aspects of CBD management. The Durban CBD UIP supports structured demarcation, infrastructure upgrades, and predictable rule enforcement. Recent municipal statements referencing investment in informal trade infrastructure signal a policy direction focused on formalised trading environments rather than displacement. The Durban CBD UIP’s role is to assist with coordination, conflict mitigation and maintaining cleanliness standards.

Security remains a central pillar of the regeneration strategy. The Durban CBD UIP deploys visible patrols, monitors hotspots, and coordinates with SAPS and Metro Police. Technology integration is also under discussion, including CCTV optimisation and potential Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) capability to strengthen enforcement and deterrence.

The chairperson cautioned that technology without monitoring capacity and lawful governance simply becomes ‘camera theatre.’ Effective deployment requires response systems, uptime management, and compliance with data protection legislation. “Cameras only work if someone is watching - and someone is responding.”

The Durban CBD UIP’s Business Plan includes transparent three-year projections, reflecting modest operational deficits if no efficiencies are introduced.

The Board has committed to tighter procurement discipline, measurable performance outputs, and strengthened oversight. “Stakeholders deserve transparency. If we want credible regeneration, the governance must be as visible as the cleaning crews,” Gugu said.

The Municipality has invited public comment on the potential establishment of an Inner-City Municipal Entity to enhance CBD management, tourism activation, and investment facilitation. The Durban CBD UIP views this as an opportunity - provided roles are defined and delivery remains outcome-driven.

For the Durban CBD UIP, its priorities are clear - disciplined, daily delivery that rebuilds trust in the city centre.

It set out five Commitments:

1. Consistent, measurable cleaning and maintenance coverage.
2. Structured, visible safety patrols linked to coordinated response.
3. Collaborative management of informal trading environments.
4. Responsible integration of surveillance and smart enforcement tools.
5. Transparent governance and accountable financial management.



DURBAN CBD UIP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(Reg Number 2023/844988/08)

MARCH 11, 2026
at 15h00

VIRTUAL MEETING
Teams link will be provided 24 hours before the meeting on receipt of proxy forms

CONTACT
admin@durbancbduip.co.za



SCAN HERE
FOR AGM DOCUMENTS

PROPOSED AGENDA

1. Confirmation of Notice and Quorum
2. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous General Meeting
3. Presentation of Budget 2026/ 2027
4. Consideration of Annual Financial Statements
5. Appointment/Re-appointment of Auditors
6. Election or Confirmation of Directors, where required
7. General