



## **Bridge City to drive job creation in Durban**

Bridge City, a strategically located industrial, commercial and residential precinct to the north of Durban, will drive substantial economic development and job opportunities.

Brian Ive, Development Executive at Tongaat Hulett Developments said this week that both established and emerging businesses stood to benefit from a strategically located mixed use residential, commercial and business hub that is the first of its kind in a former “township environment” in KwaZulu-Natal.

It is expected to uplift the INK (Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu) area which has been earmarked for development and job creation initiatives as well as greater Durban.

Already, 60 percent of the bulk available - or 70 percent of Bridge City by site area - has been sold.

To date, 12 properties have been or are in the process of being transferred. This is expected to grow by the end of the year as on-going negotiations that are likely to lead to the sale of additional sites at Bridge City progress.

Just three large sites in the Bridge City Business Estate are still available.

Ive said the development of a mixed use property anchored by a petrol filling station was expected to begin early in the New Year, this being undertaken by local black-owned business. Construction of the NJR Steel distribution centre on a large site on the Business Estate is already well underway and is expected to be operational by early-2017.

He emphasised that all service infrastructure was in place at Bridge City making it an ideal location to fast track development in a city where shortages of serviced land often caused delays and lost development opportunities.

“At Bridge City, land is ready to sell, transfer and start building. There are not that many developments in KwaZulu-Natal that have that state of readiness,” he explained.

Ive said a site on the business estate had been earmarked for one of the eThekweni Municipality’s small business incubators.

The eThekweni municipality has identified industry sector development as a key economic driver and will realise this as well as national priorities and strategies put forward by the Economic Development and Investment Promotion Unit, through the establishment and support of industry bodies (clusters). These are intended to enhance the competitiveness of prioritized sectors within the local and provincial economy.

“The site will consist of a business park with mini factories/shops. Business incubators will be located in areas that are designed to provide opportunities for small businesses and are also close to intermodal/multinodal transport and movement nodes,” Shunnon Tulsiram, head of the municipality's Economic Development and Investment Promotion Unit explained.

He said a feasibility study was still needed to ascertain which market segment would be served by this particular incubator.

Ive noted that Bridge City's business incubator and the wider Bridge City business community stood to benefit from the city's integrated rapid public transport network (IRPTN) that aims to link nine transport corridors through various modes of transport (bus, rail and taxi) by 2027. This will provide access to work, schools, hospitals and boost economic development, especially in previously inaccessible areas.

The first leg of the Go! Durban bus transport link to Bridge City is due for completion during the first half of 2017.

Rail traffic through Bridge City was already gaining momentum and use of Bridge City facilities was increasing as expected, Ive added.

This inter-modal capacity (facilitating the interaction between pedestrian, taxi, rail and a rapid bus system) is expected to serve an estimated 100 000 commuters per day once fully developed.

He confirmed that the half diamond interchange on the M25 would be open and fully functional by year end. This provides dedicated and easy access to Bridge City and the Phoenix Industrial Park.

Bridge City has been developed through a public, private sector partnership (PPP) between the eThekweni Municipality and Tongaat Hulett.

“This had not only resulted in the efficient development of both this precinct and the highly successful Riverhorse Valley Business Estate, but has also set an important precedent for future development to the north of the city, especially at Cornubia,” Ive concluded.

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## **About Tongaat Hulett**

Tongaat Hulett is an agriculture and agri-processing business, focusing on the complementary feedstocks of sugarcane and maize. Its on-going activities in agriculture have resulted in the company having a substantial land portfolio within the primary growth corridors of KwaZulu-Natal with strong policy support for conversion at the appropriate time. A core element of Tongaat Hulett's strategic vision is to maximise the value generated from the conversion of land in the portfolio by responding to key demand drivers and identifying its optimal end use for all stakeholders.

Through its sugar and starch operations, Tongaat Hulett produces a range of refined carbohydrate products from sugarcane and maize, with a number of products being interchangeable. Global sweetener markets continue to be dynamic and the business seeks to optimise its various market positions, leveraging off its current base to maximise revenue from these products. The business's sugar operations are well placed to benefit from evolving dynamics of renewable electricity and ethanol in South Africa, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Tongaat Hulett continues to focus on value creation for all stakeholders through an all-inclusive approach to growth and development and regards its constructive interfaces with governments and society to be of significant importance.