

# ‘We cannot do this alone’

## City residents, businesses urged to play their part in the CBD clean-up initiative

**NOKUTHULA NTULI**

“MSUNDUZI residents, take responsibility for the cleanliness of your city by stopping the littering and illegal dumping of waste.”

This appeal was made by the general manager for community services Boniwe Zulu, who is heading the City’s CBD clean-up and urban renewal programme. The multi-disciplinary initiative, which kicked off last month, is not just focused on sweeping the streets and trimming trees but also enforcing by-laws and fixing infrastructure such as pot-holes and street lights.

While Zulu was optimistic about the initiative, she said it would not achieve the desired outcomes if the community and business did not play their parts.

“We cannot do this alone. Even communities that are [getting out of] taxis have a role to play. Don’t throw your paper or any litter on the floor. It doesn’t mean you are creating

**“Don’t throw your paper or any litter on the floor. It doesn’t mean you are creating a job for a municipal employee when you are littering.”**

a job for a municipal employee when you are littering,” she said.

Rather, littering is resulting in the city being called a city of filth, she said.

She admitted there were challenges with curbing some of the things that led to the CBD being in its current condition.

“I understand there might be few street bins and they are far apart but businesses can donate bins and advertise their services on those bins and as the municipality we will line those bins with plastic refuse bags and remove the waste.”

Zulu said when she joined Msunduzi in

2013 the City had a CBD task team that looked at functions of the municipality.

She said it was working well until the waste department — which was one of its key components — was moved from the community services unit to the office of the municipal manager in 2016.

The programme was revived towards the end of last year after waste was returned to community services and teams have been on the ground since the first week of January.

Zulu said after cleaning up the CBD the teams will be moving to places like Imbali, Scottsville, Raisethorpe and Edendale.

“We are now going to augment the programme because we have EPWP (expanded public works programme) workers in wards. We need to pull them into the fold and see how we can include them so that we can reach far and wide with the little capacity [we have] as a municipality.

“We cannot shy away from the fact that we are challenged in terms of the financial capacity but we are doing everything we could [to] remove the stigma of being a dirty city.”

She said the municipality was in discussions with some businesses to donate bins and were appealing to all the businesses in

the City to do the same.

“I’m also challenging the PCB (Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Business) to come to the party.”

Zulu said the municipality was also willing to engage with other businesses and individuals who wanted to lend a hand in the clean-up and urban renewal programme.

On businesses adopting spots to look after she said in the past there was a challenge as some ended up abusing the process by building on those spaces.

“We are not completely opposed to the idea but if we do it we will need to tighten the agreements that we sign with those businesses.”

Today the City’s clean-up task team — including law enforcement, business licensing environmental health — will be joined by the political leadership in cleaning up parts of the CBD, starting on Church Street at 8 am.

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