

Mthatha cleans up its act

More bins placed on streets, managers deployed in CBD

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King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) municipal bosses are on a mission to keep the Mthatha central business district clean.

They will soon acquire more dustbins for distribution around town.

Managers and supervisors in the municipality's cleaning services unit will also have to go out on the streets every day to check if they have been cleaned up.

These changes were rung by the municipality following mayor Dumani Zozo's mayoral lekgotla this week.

Municipal spokesperson Son-

wabo Mampoza told the Dispatch that the lekgotla had resolved that more dustbins should be made available in public places.

"We have two shifts of people that clean up the streets, some in the morning and others in the evenings.

"We will also be utilising our Expanded Public Works Programme people to make sure that Mthatha becomes attractive again," said Mampoza.

Earlier this year, almost all streets in the Mthatha CBD resembled a dumping zone, after they were trashed – allegedly by striking workers – with piles of rubbish strewn on every street corner.

A section of municipal workers aligned to both the South African Municipal Workers' Union and the Independent Municipal & Allied Trade Union

embarked on a strike, demanding the removal of Zozo and then acting manager Mbulelo Sigaba. Such calls were made amid accusations that the pair were a divisive influence in the municipality.

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On Thursday Mampoza was unable to say how much would be set aside for the latest endeavour to beautify the city.

However he said the mayoral lekgotla had agreed that a portion of the soon to be passed

adjustment budget would be allocated towards that project.

"They [dustbins] are so urgent. It might not be this week as we are busy with procurement issues, but definitely it is going to happen very soon."

Mampoza also confirmed that refuse removal has been going very slowly in Mthatha even after the end of the municipal workers strike.

"Mthatha has a good history. It's so unfortunate that it is now a shadow of its former self. We want to ensure that by-laws are implemented that would assist in restoring it to its former glory," he said.

OR Tambo District Chamber of Business president Vuyisile Ntlabati said he was not convinced that putting up dustbins would prove a solution to the problems faced by Mthatha.

He concurred that the city

was filthy beyond measure, but stressed that the problem was made worse by people who littered everywhere.

"There are no by-laws. People are just dumping everywhere because there are no consequences," Ntlabati said.

Mthatha Residents and Ratepayers Association spokesperson Madyibi Ngxekana described the city as a health hazard.

He said what was shocking was that the municipality had health inspectors who were paid salaries every month, but were not doing their jobs.

"Ratepayers pay for services such as refuse removal but are not getting any value for money in return.

"The authorities are preoccupied with political infighting at the expense of bringing services to the people."