

# Ballito's CBD to get a facelift

Network Reporter

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**B**ALLITO'S CBD is set to get its own urban improvement precinct along the lines of successful urban regeneration partnerships in uMhlanga, Cape Town and Durban.

The move comes after the KwaDukuza Municipality gave the go-ahead for the establishment of a special ratings area covering public spaces in Ballito.

The move was hailed by the iLembe Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism last week, but came amid news of businessman Louis Luyt jr reporting the municipality to the Office of the Public Protector for poor service provision.

The Daily News reported last week that Luyt, who is also the chairman of the Dolphin Coast Ratepayers and Residents Association, had sent a "119-page dossier" to the public protector's office complaining that the municipality was failing to provide basic services.

The Mercury understands that Luyt and KwaDukuza mayor Ricardo Mthembu had a war of words at the very municipal meeting that the new ratings policy was approved.

iLembe chamber chief executive Trenley Tilbrook refused to be drawn on the matter, but said the new ratings policy was a positive milestone.

"We need to commend the KwaDukuza Municipality for embracing and supporting a special ratings area policy, which makes provision for the establishment of an urban improvement precinct for Ballito," he said in a statement last week.

"The proposal to have a special ratings area policy was proposed by the chamber in response to rising business concerns of increasing crime, grime and general deterioration of public areas in Ballito – a factor which could negatively impact

against investor confidence," Tilbrook said.

"The urban improvement precinct mechanism is based on the Municipal Property Rates Act of 2004, which makes provision for the establishment of what is technically termed a special ratings area... This is a defined geographic area within which the majority of property owners agree to pay for certain services supplementary to those supplied by

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the municipality," he added.

Brian Wright, project manager for the Ballito urban improvement precinct, said: "So what does this mean for Ballito? It means that policy is now in place to build on the success story of uMhlanga's urban improvement precinct where a structured partnership between the municipality and private sector has resulted in a rejuvenated economic

Wright was appointed by key property owners in Ballito to assist with the process and to conduct a feasibility study which includes a management structure, sustainable business plan and costing to provide supplementary services to public areas. He said the first such partnership was developed in Canada and the concept had now spread.

"A special ratings area is referred to by a variety of descriptive names

such as an urban improvement precinct, city improvement districts, business improvement districts or management districts. One of the biggest urban improvement precinct success stories is Cape Town city's improvement district, where this year alone property owners will contribute nearly R40m to supplementing municipal services in Cape Town's city centre," added Wright.