

## Baywest begins the big countdown

**(Port Elizabeth)** – Baywest Mall developers Abacus Asset Management and Billion Group yesterday [March 19] began the one year countdown until the doors of the Eastern Cape's largest mall open to the public on March 19 next year.

Celebrating the launch of the countdown on Algoa FM yesterday morning [March 19], Baywest MD Gavin Blows said everything was on track for the super regional mall to welcome visitors from March 2015.

"We are very excited," said Blows. "The roof of the mall is busy going up and will be completed by July. After that we start on the interior of the mall."

Work on major tenants Woolworths, Pick n Pay, Checkers and Game – which together represent 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of the 87,000m<sup>2</sup> mall – would start first. Blows said the bigger stores meant Baywest Mall shoppers would be exposed to the same sorts of extensive catalogues previously reserved for shoppers at Johannesburg's Sandton City, Cape Town's Canal Walk or Durban's Gateway shopping centres.

Research has shown that shoppers will travel for up to two hours to spend a day at the mall, meaning footprint stretching inland past Grahamstown and to Plettenberg Bay along the coast, said Blows.

The mall will also house the region's only ice rink, which will be located in the Baywest Mall Fun Factory alongside state-of-the-art Ster Kinekor cinemas, a bowling alley, and a games arcade, among others.

Blows also reiterated the convenience of the mall's location – along the N2 freeway in the city's western suburbs – saying it took just 14 minutes to drive to site from the Humewood Fire Station, along the freeway.

The drive time is something which Algoa FM deejay Charlton Tobias tested last week, driving from the station's Boardwalk headquarters to the site where he inspected progress of the development and even climbed one of the construction cranes after a thorough site safety induction. The result of his driving test was uploaded to YouTube [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dw-2vkywc9Y&feature=youtu.be>].

During the Daron Mann Breakfast Show, Algoa FM listeners Abigail Hiscock, Greg Geldenhuys and Leigh Ann Minderon each won R2,000 for correctly answering questions pertaining to the mall.

Blows said work on site would escalate rapidly towards mid-year, with an estimated 1,500 workers set to be on site come June/July, increasing to between 2,000 and 2,500 early next year as developers add finishing touches to the mall. At the same time, the mall's 250 tenants will be feverishly working to complete fitting their outlets, said Blows.

Meanwhile, work on the R300-million new road network in the area was progressing well, said Blows. Basil Read, which has been awarded the tender for developing a road network around the mall by the SA National Roads Agency Ltd (SANRAL), is building an offramp from the N2 freeway to the mall and also connecting Walker Drive in Sherwood with Old Cape Road in Rowallan Park – the start of the long awaited Redhouse-Chelsea arterial road.

Come October, work on the final stages of the mall will be underway. The landscaping is scheduled to start by the end of that month, while the 250 shops will begin being by December. The mall will boast about 3.5km of shop fronts and a mammoth 35km of electrical cabling.

“Baywest is more than just the mall,” said Blows. “It is going to change the face of the region. In 10 years Baywest City will rival the likes of Century City in Cape Town and Sandton City in Johannesburg,” he said.

“The first phase will cover about 35% of the total developable land with the super regional mall being the trigger for this component. The Baywest Mall will open with approximately 87,500m<sup>2</sup> of lettable area and is expected to expand to 110,000m<sup>2</sup> over the next 10 to 15 years,” he said.

The first phase will also house 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of office and commercial tenants and about 2,000 housing opportunities. A private School and hospital are also planned, Blows said.

**(ends – 644 words)**

Photograph (“BaywestCountdown.jpeg”):

**START THE CLOCK:** Celebrating the one year countdown to the opening of Baywest Mall is Baywest MD Gavin Blows (second from left) with the Algoa FM Daron Mann Breakfast crew, (from left) Daron Mann, Carol-Ann Kelleher and Charlton Tobias.

#### **ADDITIONAL FACTS:**

- The mall size, 87,500m<sup>2</sup>, is the gross leasable area and excludes the parking area
- The development of the mall is a joint venture between Abacus Asset Management and Billion Group
- The construction value of the mall is approximately R1.7-billion, with a further R300-million being spent on developing the road network in the area. The road network includes an intersection onto/off the N2, as well as the Redhouse-Chelsea arterial road, linking the suburbs of Sherwood and Rowallan Park via a road over the N2
- The mall is central to the development of the greater (longer-term) Baywest City project, for which the developers have earmarked 300 hectares.
- Up to 30% of the Baywest City site has been allocated for environmental preservation and will not be developed at all

#### **ABOUT THE DEVELOPERS:**

- The Baywest development is a joint venture between two major South African developers, Abacus Asset Management and Billion Group. Between them, the developers have over 25 years

of experience specialising in retail, commercial and mixed-use developments located in major South African cities. With super-regional shopping centres, landmark office towers and golf course developments, the developers have successfully completed malls such as Hemingways in East London, Eikestad Mall in Stellenbosch, Cape Gate in the Western Cape and Mooi Rivier Mall in Potchefstroom.

*For any additional information about this project, please call Baywest media liaison Brian Hayward, of Brian Anthony Communications, on 084-250-2932*