



## Media Release

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For Immediate Release

December 2014

### **Eastern Cape's largest mall exceeds jobs targets by 43%**

*R1.7bn Baywest Mall on track for April 2015 opening*

**(Port Elizabeth)** – Developers of the R1.7bn Baywest Mall in Port Elizabeth's western suburbs are seeing out the year with a bang, celebrating news that they have exceeded their job creation targets during the construction phase by more than 40%.

Independent auditors BTKM have confirmed that since construction kicked off in mid-2013, almost 4,300 people have been employed on site. This represents a 43.3% increase on the 3,000 direct jobs which developers initially forecast for the construction phase of the project.

"The Baywest development is a massive economic driver for the region," said Baywest MD Gavin Blows. "Not only is the construction phase of the mall creating much needed jobs, but once the mall opens in April next year, a further 1,500 permanent jobs will be created for the mall's operational phase."

Blows said project's Community Liaison Officer had been inundated with CVs from people wanting to be considered for employment once the mall opened.

"We are using the CVs to compile a database which we will pass on to our tenants when they look for employees for their stores," said Blows. "Although the decision of who to employ rests with the stores, we are doing what we can as developers to assist in helping people in this region find employment."

But the employment would not end once the mall opened, he said.

"Because Baywest Mall is kicking off the development of entire Baywest City precinct, construction will continue once the mall opens as other developments get underway. Baywest City will be to the Eastern Cape what Century City is to the Western Cape," said Blows.

#### **SEEING OUT 2014**

Given the imminent opening of the mall, construction would only partially shut down during December, Blows said.

Construction milestones being wrapped up on site included the completion of the mall's 65,000m<sup>2</sup> roof this month, as well as the completion of the latest bridge over the N2 freeway which is part of the R300 million Baywest roads development project.



Basil Read, which is responsible for the roads development, is on course to complete the first phase of the project by March next year. This includes linking Port Elizabeth's western suburbs to the N2 freeway by extending Walker Drive in Sherwood with a multi-lane road that will encircle the mall.

The entire roads project will be completed by September next year when Cape Road in Bridgемеade/Rowallan Park is linked up with the N2 via a series of on-ramps and off-ramps which will lead to Baywest Mall.

"The roads development is set to unlock crucial economic growth in the western suburbs," said Blows.

### **A BUMPER 2015**

With the fittings of many of the 250-plus Baywest Mall stores already underway, Blows said everything was on track for the handover to the major tenants in January. This meant the likes of Edgars, Game, Pick n Pay and Woolworths – who will be stationed at the four quadrants of the mall – could begin fitting out their stores, he said.

Landscaping – already underway with the planting of Coral trees in front of the mall – would continue in earnest from January and be wrapped up by March," said Blows. In keeping with the mall's focus on the environment, indigenous gardens would be created around the mall, he said.

"We have had a good year despite having to deal with strikes which brought the industry to a standstill. We are working hard to create a destination which will become the pulse of Nelson Mandela Bay," said Blows. "It is an exciting project which is going to change the face of the city, create jobs and boost tourism. After years of meticulous planning and research, it is an honour to witness this development unfolding."

**(ends – 612 words)**

Images:

**[Baywest SMME\_a]**

HANDS ON: Nomsa Mde and her team (background) from Wozo General Trading have been hard at work on the Baywest Mall. Mde and her team are part of the 4,300 individuals who have been employed to date on site.

**[Baywest Dec 2014\_b]**

ECONOMIC BOOST: Independent auditors have revealed that Baywest has exceeded its job creation targets by 43%. About 4,300 people have been employed on site to date. Developers had originally forecast that 3,000 direct jobs would be created during the build.



#### **FAST FACTS ABOUT BAYWEST:**

- The mall size, 90,000m<sup>2</sup>, is the gross leasable area and excludes the parking area for about 3,200 vehicles.
- 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 interchange onto/off the N2 freeway, as well as the Redhouse-Chelsea arterial road, linking the suburbs of Sherwood and Rowallan Park/Bridgемеade via a road over the N2.
- The mall is central to the development of the greater Baywest City project, which will be similar in concept to Cape Town's Century City development.
- About 25% of the 320ha 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.

#### **Distributed by Brian Anthony Communications**

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