



EPPING CITY IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

Epping CID adds value

by William Wakefield, chairperson, Epping CID

Since the introduction of the Epping CID in 2003, there's been an increase in demand for industrial space which has seen property rentals and values rise – great news for investors.

The introduction of city improvement districts (CIDs) has been a catalyst for the turnaround of many precincts.

The CID concept, where landowners contribute an additional levy over and above their property rates to facilitate additional cleaning and security services, has proven to be a sound mechanism to assist municipalities that struggle to keep up with service delivery demands. Importantly, though, the Epping CID works beyond that core mandate and, in addition to several social-upliftment projects, has become a communication conduit between property owners and the City Council.

Epping has always been a favourite destination for industrial tenants: it's well served by public transport, it's close to a large and skilled labour pool, and it has good access to the main arterial roads – the N1, N2 and R300. And now that the security and cleaning issues are sorted, we're seeing a spike in demand for businesses looking to locate here. In fact, a number of older buildings are being demolished or redeveloped into space that better suits the needs of modern users.

The levy contributed by property owners is spent entirely within the area and has been used to fund a 24-hour security operation, additional cleaning crews and the hiring of law-enforcement officers: in the past year more than 2 000 spot fines have been issued totalling almost R1 million. A network of

closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras has also been installed, with 24/7 off-site monitoring. The control room is linked by radio to ground patrols and has contributed to a significant crack-down in criminal behaviour.

One of the elements that makes Epping attractive for industrialists is the availability of rail services, yet it is these wide arteries that contributed to an ongoing security risk. Epping has been proactive in this regard and has installed several CCTV cameras in strategic positions to monitor these quiet zones, erected fencing, gates and high-level lighting, and increased road patrols by security guards using offroad quad bikes – all factors that have greatly reduced the incidence of crime in these formerly vulnerable areas.

A number of additional projects have been undertaken, such as the painting of road markings and the creation of additional parking areas to ensure free-flowing traffic in previously congested areas.

Epping CID also has a heart: thanks to the generosity of several businesses in the precinct, donations have been made to the Langa Baptist Church and the Church of Nazarene feeding scheme in Bonteheuwel.

Epping CID is very much in a partnership with City Council; it's all about understanding the needs of the



landowners and surrounding community within the limitations of what Council can provide. Much has been achieved since the establishment of the ECID, and I look forward to our building on those foundations and making further improvements. Thank you to all the property owners for their faith and commitment, and also to the tenants in the precinct for their ongoing support.

Security is the real measure of success

There's hardly a corner of the Epping industrial precinct that isn't under some sort of surveillance – and that, says ECID security manager Ryan Ord, has led to increased arrests and fines.

The country's economic woes are biting hard on the communities that live in and around the Epping industrial node, and this has led to a spike in criminality in the area. But, says ECID security manager Ryan Ord, the ECID has security under control.

'Since February this year we've increased our security presence to six guards on patrol around the clock, and four law enforcement officers operating Monday to Friday from 06h00 to 18h00 on staggered shifts,' he explains. The six security guards are in four vehicles and two quad bikes, the latter ideal for accessing the rail spurs. The law enforcement officers also have vehicles, and so it's normal for eight vehicles to be on patrol within the Epping precinct at any one time. Sixteen CCTV cameras monitor the area, including the rail spurs.

Epping is one of the few industrial nodes that have an active rail service but this in itself brings security challenges. A combination of security lights to illuminate dark areas and fencing to close up unused

sidings has improved the overall security of these spurs.

'A cornerstone of our success has been the close working relationships we enjoy with the two SAPS stations we fall under – Pinelands for Epping One and Elsie's River for Epping Two,' says Ryan. 'We've also helped the SAPS with various visible policing initiatives and see it as us playing our part in this symbiotic relationship.'

Budget is always a limiting factor in service provision. Up to now the funding for the

law enforcement officers has come largely from corporate sponsorship. However, the City Council has suggested that this be incorporated in the general levy, which is being phased in over a four-year period that started in 2012.

If you have a security concern in the Epping area, do not hesitate to contact the 24-hour Control Room on 073 881 7781. In addition, the ECID is happy to assist with a security evaluation of your property should you feel that existing measures are not up to scratch.



Keeping it clean and tidy

Essential Cleansing Services keeps the Epping industrial area as clean as possible.



If you've noticed that Epping is looking a lot cleaner lately, it's thanks largely to the work of Essential Cleansing Services' 18-member team under area manager Euwyne Linno. They're responsible for the general cleanliness of the areas outside company premises, including street sweeping, grass cutting of public spaces and removal of dumped building materials. They also check for missing manhole covers and road-name signs,

unblock storm drains and report any other damage they come across.

When it comes to illegal dumping, Euwyne says it's been sorted out. 'We still encounter significant mess where informal scrap collectors disassemble items like fridges and just leave the non-metal items on the side of the road, but we're working with scrap-metal merchants to try and stop this practice,' he says.

Another area that's a challenge is the informal fresh-food market, because of the volume of waste generated. 'We're working closely with law enforcement about this challenge,' says Euwyne.

The ECID has made significant strides in recycling waste material: garden refuse is taken to a composting plant nearby, and items like glass, plastic and paper are collected into clear plastic bags and taken to the Langa recycling point.



Projects that make a difference

Projects that benefit the area aren't a core responsibility of the ECID, but have become an important part of the organisation's duties.



'Most of our budget is allocated to operational expenses, leaving very little for projects,' says ECID manager Lizette Johnstone. 'However, we often receive money back from City Council from the retention amount they hold back to account for bad debts, and this is used almost exclusively for projects benefiting the area.'

Cleansing and security are the main responsibilities of the ECID, so that's where most of the money goes.

A recent example was the resizing of the Christian Avenue traffic island. The island sustained constant damage to its kerbs and drains from large trucks. This resizing project, undertaken and funded by the ECID with technical guidance from the City Council, resulted in a smaller circle that allows large vehicles a wider turning circle

and has eliminated the damage. Other projects undertaken by the ECID include the construction of the Moody Avenue parking area; the conversion of the Hawkins traffic circle into a parking area; the installation of 16 CCTV cameras, additional waste bins, and lighting in five alleyways/walkthroughs; the installation of 17 floodlights on the rail sidings; the planting of 80 trees; the gating-off of 21 rail sidings; and the repainting of road markings in Epping 2.



Message from the coordinator

Established following Council approval in 2003, and funded entirely by an additional levy on industrial property owners within the geographical footprint of Epping One to Four, the Epping City Improvement District (ECID) has come a long way in fulfilling its core objectives.

City improvement districts were established to provide top-up services – mainly security and cleansing – that the City Council were unable to provide because of the large demands on an already-stretched fiscus. Epping 1 to 4 comprises 273 erven and the businesses employ over 20 000 people. The industrial area is a significant contributor to the economic wellbeing of the larger area, and it's important that we continue to maintain and build on the functions that have been introduced.

The ECID's work is guided by a Board of eight directors drawn from the ranks of property owners in the area. They serve for a three-year term, meet every three months and oversee the activities of the management team.

From the outset, we've aimed to provide a safe industrial area. If investors, employees and visitors feel safe, it's more likely they will invest in, work with and visit us. This increased economic activity will in turn create jobs, improve the tax base so that government at all levels benefits, and add value to our national gross domestic product – a win-win all round.

At the same time, we've tried to ensure that we're inclusive in our approach and recognise that we have social responsibilities outside of our core cleansing and security duties. In this regard, we often accommodate emerging entrepreneurs in finding space to establish small vending operations, in a way that provides a valuable service to people passing through the area and that also meets with our goals of creating a clean and safe environment. Our support of various charities within the area is expanded on in this newsletter.

We see our activities as a work in progress, and we look forward to continue adding value to one of the oldest and most significant economic hubs in greater Cape Town.

Regards
Tony Bartram
ECID Coordinator

Contributing to a caring Epping

While no city improvement district has a legislated mandate to take on social responsibility issues, it makes sense to assist where we can.



The ECID has no budget allocation for social issues but has been innovative in the way they've elicited regular donations from companies in the area to make life a little easier for those who need it most.

The Langa Baptist Church is one beneficiary of regular monthly food parcels. The church members were funding a small-scale food-parcel and sandwich-making project, but thanks to donations from the ECID, they've been able to expand this. Now, 23 families receive food parcels every month and about 200 children get sandwiches every Sunday.

Another recipient has been the Church of Nazarene, which has various initiatives such as food parcels for needy families and a soup kitchen for the destitute. They are currently caring for about 250 families in Kalksteenvontein, Golden Gate, Bonteheuwel, Netreg and Valhalla Park.

'This programme relies on the generosity of companies operating within the Epping precinct,' says ECID manager Lizette Johnstone. 'Without the support of Premier Foods, Capepots, Bokomo Foods and Giant Hyper we wouldn't be able to assist. If any other corporate – or individual – can help out, it will be greatly appreciated.'



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Epping CID Security: 073 881 7781

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EMERGENCY PLAN AND PROCEDURES

Epping Fire Department:	021 534 1387
Ambulance:	10177
Saps:	10111
Disaster Risk Management:	080 911 4357
Law Enforcement/Metro/Traffic:	021 596 1999
All Emergencies:from Landline/Cell	107 / 122
Water/Sewerage/Drains/Roads:	0860 103 054
Power Failure-Eskom:	0860 037 566
Power Failure-City Of Cape Town:	0800 220 440

Can you help?

The Langa Baptist Church wishes to re-establish a soup kitchen that had to be closed because of a lack of resources. They need a large cooking pot (about 200-litre capacity) and an industrial gas burner-and-cylinder setup to once again provide this much-needed service at least two days per week.

The Church of Nazarene is on the look-out for a chest freezer; three 100-litre pots; dinner plates, soup bowls and cutlery for 250 people; and the ongoing refilling of a 44kg gas bottle.

Please phone Lizette on 021 535 5814 if you can help.

