



Environment & Infrastructure Portfolio

Monthly Progress Report # 03

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page No

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	GREENING & AESTHETICS	3
2.1	Budget	3
2.2	The Cowies Hill Conservancy	3
2.3	Verge Competition 2022.....	3
2.4	Greening & Aesthetics _ Activities.....	4
2.4.1	Site B03_ Woodside Junction	4
2.4.2	Site B04 _Josiah Gumede (East)	4
2.4.3	Site B05_ _Josiah Gumede (West).....	4
2.4.4	Site C12_ Paradise Flyover	5
2.4.5	Site B31_ Dudley Road Park	5
2.4.6	Site B02_ MacDoland Rd Gate.....	6
2.4.7	Site B01 _Norfolk Terrace.....	6
2.5	Refuse & Litter Collection	7
3	MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES.....	7

1 INTRODUCTION

This report covers activities under Greening & Aesthetics.

A comprehensive strategy to deal with Municipal Infrastructure and Services is currently being developed. A key component of this plan will be the reporting process, municipal response (reference numbers etc), turn-around time for repairs and completion.

2 GREENING & AESTHETICS

2.1 Budget

Work undertaken for the period June and July had commenced prior to the preparation and approval of the draft “Greening” budget by the CHE Board. The total approved Draft Greening Budget for the financial year 2022 _ 2023 is R325 000

The budget split is

R94 500 Capital Expenditure (30% Capex)

R230 000 Operational Expenditure (70% Opex).

This translates to an average monthly spend R 7 800 Capex and R 19 000 Opex.

2.2 The Cowies Hill Conservancy

The Cowies Hill Conservancy (Reg No 105 CKZN-02) is an active member of the eThekweni Conservancies Forum (ECF).

Engagements with the ECF included a meeting at the Beachwood Mangroves Nature Reserve on Saturday 30 July. Issues and projects discussed included

- Arbour Day - planning for tree planting project in September. Each Conservancy, including Cowies Hill, has submitted a tree list to eThekweni Municipality’s Natural Resources Department.
- Small Projects Fund – Hillcrest Conservancy Wetland Project
- “Upscaling river management: What will it take?” – This was the title of a presentation by Jo Doves Manager; eThekweni Municipality Environmental Planning Unit. Jo and her team have been working with the C40 Cities Finance Facility to build a business case and implementation framework for upscaling river management as part of the city’s climate change adaptation response. Our Palmiet Catchment is a significant part of the plans for river management.

2.3 Verge Competition 2022

The eThekweni Municipality Parks, Recreation and Culture Unit invites residents to participate in the “Verge Completion” for prizes. Nominations run between 1st July and 30 September 2022. Criteria for scoring include: Wow factor, Civic pride, Sustainability, biodiversity, aesthetic appeal, waterwise considerations, construction, maintenance design and invasive alien plant free gardens.

Members of the Cowies Hill Estate will be encouraged to nominate residents.

Cowies Hill Estate will also submit an entry for our various beautification sites Rockhaven Rockery, Woodside Junction, Braby Place and MacDonald Road Morewood Crescent Intersection.

2.4 Greening & Aesthetics _ Activities

All sites identified for both capital and operations expenditure have been issued with unique Project Codes to assist manage the budget and to ensure that all of Cowies Hill Estate will be managed equitably.

2.4.1 Site B03_ Woodside Junction

Work commenced in the middle of June at the Woodside Junction and large quantities of highly invasive Erect Sword Fern (*Nephrolepis cordifolia*) was removed. Ben Botha Landscapes was contracted to assist with the creating of rockery gardens on both sides of the Josiah Gumede & Woodside T – Junction. A number of large undesirable trees were also felled.

The Green Team was involved with the preparation of the garden beds, obtaining additional rocks and logs for landscaping and the sourcing of plants.

Cowies Hill Estate is very appreciative of the generous donations of plants from residents Rob Crankshaw, Cathy Hulbert, Nydia Conrads, Margaret Daniel and from Ben Botha Landscapes. The estimated value of plants donated is in excess of R 6 700. In addition, Mr Bob Norval made a cash donation of R5000 towards the Woodside Junction project.



Removal of invasive Sword Fern, tree felling and landscaping at Woodside Junction

2.4.2 Site B04 _Josiah Gumede (East)

Work undertaken by the “Green team” included brush-cutting along verges at Josiah Gumede Rd opposite SASOL and along the M13 Exit 13 Offramp. Protective PVC collars were placed around Erythrina saplings and additional holes were dug to replace young Erythrina trees that were destroyed by municipal weed eater operators.

2.4.3 Site B05_ _Josiah Gumede (West)

The Paradise Place “enclave” has recently signed up with Cowies Hill Estate and an effort was made to demonstrate CHE’s presence to these new members. The road verges between Paradise Place and the Comrades Marathon Water Fountain (“Comrades Corner”) were heavily infested with IAPs

namely Indian Laurel (*Litsea glutinosa*), Madeira vine (*Anredera cordifolia*) Tree Daisy / Montanoa (*Montanoa hibiscifolia*), Indian Shot (*Canna indica*) and Red Ginger Lily (*Hedychium coccineum*). The team cut and stacked 3 truckloads of material for disposal.

Work will continue along this portion of Josiah Gumede Rd in August prior to the Comrades Marathon.

A large Mahogany tree branch and Camel Foot tree were also cut back to provide line of sight for both our CHE CCTV camera and also for the safety of residents entering onto Josiah Gumede Road.



IAP Eradication opposite Paradise Place & Branch clearing

2.4.4 Site C12_ Paradise Flyover

The barrier hedge along the old fence of the Paradise Nature Reserve fly over was also attended to. Replacement stock will be planted in spring.

2.4.5 Site B31_ Dudley Road Park

One of the goals of the CHE's biodiversity restoration project is to reclaim public open space. Late in June work on the eradication IAPs commenced in the Dudley Road Park (area straddling Cheshire Ave).

Whilst cleaning the site it was discovered that municipal contractors who had resurfaced a portion of Cheshire Ave had illegally dumped the tarmac debris into the bush. Additional help was hired for 2 days and 90% of the rubble was collected and bagged and chunky debris was stacked and alongside Cheshire Ave. A complaint was lodged with the municipality's Road Maintenance department and the contractor was instructed to remove the debris from the site.

A truckload of soil from the landslide at the M13 offramp was delivered to the site and it will be used to bury surplus tarmac fragments and the Dudley Road Park will be transformed into a low maintenance wild grassland site.



Illegally dumped tarmac and general litter was removed from the Dudley Road Park & roadside gutter cleaned

2.4.6 Site B02_MacDoland Rd Gate

The embankment below the MacDonald Road boom was severely scoured during the April and May Floods. Bags of tarmac debris from the Dudley Road Park was used to pack the donga and two truckloads of earth from the above mentioned M13 Offramp site was used to fill and reinstate the bank.

The bank is heavily infested with Tropical Chick weed (*Drymaria cordata*) and herbicide has been sprayed to eradicate the weed before the spring rains.

The MacDonald Road Gate area will be planted out in August – prior to the Comrades Marathon as another feature to promote the Cowies Hill Estate concept.



Re-establishing the MacDonald Road embankment

2.4.7 Site B01 _Norfolk Terrace

Some tree trimming was done along Norfolk Terrace where low hanging branches over the road were creating a problem for larger vehicles.



Branch trimming

2.5 Refuse & Litter Collection

Despite 2 months of communication with Tyson Properties, the offer of sponsorship of a refuse bin fell through when the sales agent left the Tyson property group to join another estate agency.

Mr Cele continues to collect litter along our streets and road verges on a weekly basis.

3 MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Major water supply interruptions occurred at various places in Cowies Hill the end of July. It is quite apparent from CHE own Wapp group as well as broader community Wapp groups that fault reporting, general communication and community report-back on issues requires improvement.

A proposal for dealing with Municipal Infrastructure and Services will be prepared for consideration by the CHE Board after a presentation and assessment of possible IT programme on 16th August.