



Florida Road bus shelter 1950, with a Leyland double decker bus 1948 model.



The former tram shelter during the restoration process.

# Florida Road historic tram shelter restored

THE oldest tram shelter in the city, situated in Florida Road, has been restored by the eThekweni Municipality.

This project is part of collective efforts by the City and the Florida Rd Urban Improvement Precinct (UIP) to create good quality public open spaces that enhance the experience and functionality of this key node in the city.

Built in 1880, Kevan Mardon, an eThekweni-Durban Municipal Transport Historian, explained that the shelter was first used as a stop for the private horse-drawn tram service in Durban, which was inaugurated on 25 March 1880. On 1 August 1899, the Durban Municipal Corporation took over the service, with the last horse-drawn tram running on 25 October 1903.

The shelter was then used as a stop for the Umbilo Service that ran the electric trams that first began operations on 1 May 1902. It was then the turn of the double-decker electric trolley buses that began services on 24 February 1935 and ran alongside the electric tram until they ended their services in 1949. The first diesel double-decker buses commenced operations on June 1925. Since then services such as the Mynah Buses, mini bus taxis and the City bus service have made use of the shelter.

“The restoration of the shelter has not only made a huge difference to the aesthetic of this section of Florida Road, but has retained a piece of Durban’s history,” said Jarrod Evans, Precinct Manager of the Florida Road UIP.

The shelter on Florida Road is one of three left in Durban, with the others in Problem Mkhize (Cowey) and Stella Roads.

“The UIP wishes to thank everyone in the City who was committed to retaining and restoring this historical piece, in particular the Urban Design, Landscape Planning and City Architects Department, who secured funding from Durban Local History Museums. The UIP provided support by repairing and painting the benches under the shelter, with the restoration work carefully carried out by Southern Roofing,” said Jarrod.

He said it is hoped that a storyboard depicting Durban’s transport history will be created and installed at this location, making it a destination site that provides a glimpse into the history of Florida Road and the area.



The former tram shelter after the restoration was complete.