

Buffalo City

East London □ Bhisho □ King William's Town
Province of the Eastern Cape
South Africa

Website: www.buffalocity.gov.za



Office of the Executive Mayor

PO Box 134, East London, 5200
1st Floor, City Hall, East London, 5201

Tel: 043 705 1071

Fax: 043 722 1024

Email: execmayor@buffalocity.gov.za

Statement on the City's 2010 preparations

Buffalo City is on track in its preparations as base City for the 2010 World Cup Soccer and confusion being created about an alleged u-turn on a 40 000-seater stadium for the City is the work of mischievous ignorant sources.

Executive Mayor Zintle Peter has **NEVER** said such a stadium would be a waste of money and it is regrettable that she is being misquoted, resulting in the people of Buffalo City being misinformed.

The true facts are as follows:

Our stand as a base City is being strategically moulded because we can never be left out of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the world's biggest sporting extravaganza and all the benefit it brings to our country. This is an opportunity for which Africa has waited 100 years.

There is clear a distinction between a host city and a base city.

In our presentation to the Provincial 2010 Soccer Summit in Port Elizabeth last week, we at pains to outline our support as a base city for our sister city, Nelson Mandela Metro, which is our Provincial host city. We are part of the Provincial Co-ordinating Committee and the excellent work being done by the Provincial 2010 Office as well as being linked politically to the 2010 Cabinet cluster where we report.

Port Elizabeth must have a 40 000-seater stadium which they are building. As a base City, we merely need to have practice facilities that will enable our City to accommodate one of 32 teams participating in the 64-match series.

To be Fifa compliant for our City to accommodate one of the team's for the month long tournament, we need an approximately 12 000-seater stadium.

This is our immediate need as a base City and we are busy looking at our options. We have existing facilities which can be re-engineered to meet the Fifa requirements.

These include the Absa Stadium, Amalinda Stadium, Mdantsane Stadium and the Bisho Stadium.

We believe we can work on these facilities and make one of them compliant to enable one of the teams to make Buffalo City their headquarters. Such a project can easily be ready by the time the Fifa inspection takes place at the end of 2008.

But there is also nothing to stop us researching and investigating the prospect of a long-term greenfield project for a big stadium that can enrich our legacy from World Cup 2010 which is one of the biggest infrastructure investment episodes since the dawn of our democracy.

This forms part of our City Development Strategy we are busy rolling out at present together with targeted stakeholders. This roll out of this modern-day pro-poor strategy will culminate in an investment conference in October.

We are well aware of the needs of communities, especially the soccer community, and we will never let the City down by not exploiting all the 2010 opportunities. There is no one more sensitive to this than our Executive Mayor.

We are well aware of the projected 159 000 jobs being created in the run up to and including the 2010 tournament, the billions of rands to be poured into our economy and the spin-offs from the expected 250 000 to 500 000 visitors expected for the tournament.

We would be irresponsible local government leaders if we were to sit back and let such opportunities pass us by.

We are definitely not sitting back. We have applied for millions of rands of the R3,5 billion set aside by the Department of Transport for road infrastructure for municipalities gearing for 2010. We are awaiting an urgent response because we believe while a stadium is vital, transportation, safety and security and the leisure industry preparedness are all just as important to get the City on a sound footing.

Our 2010 Steering Committee will soon be calling stakeholders to a meeting where we will thrash out plans for our readiness jointly, especially with the business and soccer community. Our technical committee is there to support us.

Communities must understand that we have gained very valuable experience from Germany and our contacts there are guiding us.

The Executive Mayor paid a special arranged visit to the town of Wurzburg in the Stuttgart area where the headquarters of Daimler Chrysler is located.

Wurzburg was a base City and we learnt from the Office of the Lord Mayor who drove the City's project exactly how they went about their preparations and how they linked with their stakeholders, especially business and DaimlerChrysler in particular, to accommodate a team.

An example of how these things worked for the is the fact that the 12 000-seater stadium in the town had to be relawnd according to Fifa specifications. It cost the City approximately R700 000. It divided the City because some felt it was a too costly investment just for the World Cup while soccer lovers and some businesses felt there would be a good return on investment.

Post-2006 showed that it was well worth the investment and everybody in Wurzburg are happy that they were part of 2006 World Cup.

In a nutshell, Buffalo City is well on top of this game but we are no rushing in headlong. We explained all this at the summit in Port Elizabeth and also about the fact that because we are not a host city, the preparations are not as pressing in terms of time.

Wurzburg went about its preparations long before they were told they had been awarded the right to accommodate a team. They were only told six months before the tournament started that they would be hosting a team.

Our preparations are on track and the people of Buffalo City must not be misled. We will use all channels to communicate the true position of the City with them, not of course those channels which deliberately set out to confuse our people.

Councillor Mhleli Matika
Chairperson: BC 2010 Committee.