

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROJECT IN TEMBISA

One of the public transport projects that ITS Engineers recently undertook was the planning, design and implementation of public transport facilities for the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in Tembisa.

The project included the upgrading of the Thiteng taxi rank on the corner of Benji and Mokhari Street as well as the construction of various bus and taxi lay-bys along public transport routes in Tembisa.



More than 10 000 commuters use the Thiteng rank on a daily basis, making it one of the busiest ranks in the area. The access to the rank and the adjacent street intersections were found to be severely congested with Levels of Service as low as F during peak hours. Traffic flow inside the rank was also unsatisfactorily, requiring upgrades to be done to the rank itself as well as to roads adjacent to the rank.

A new entrance was provided and the internal layout was altered to allow for one-way movement of traffic through the rank. Traffic circulation outside the rank was improved by widening the frontage road, providing drop-off lanes, converting stop controlled intersections to roundabouts and upgrading the main intersection serving the rank.

In order to improve the general commuter experience, attention was also given to “soft” issues such as fencing, landscaping, street furniture and informal trade stalls.

As part of the Expanded Public Works Programme, the project was unbundled into five separate construction contracts with a total value of R6,6 million. Each of the five contractors included in the municipality’s learnership programme had to complete a work package to the value of approximately R1,3 million.

Apart from challenges such as the contractors’ lack of experience, specifically with regards to specialised work including the stabilisation of sub-bases and concrete kerbing, the contractors also had to learn construction management and administrative skills such as ordering materials and preparing payment certificates.



Other challenges included the accommodation of traffic and pedestrians as the rank had to remain operational and access roads had to remain open during construction. The fact that most of the work was done without making use of heavy construction equipment also made it difficult to cope with rain as excavations generally remained open longer than would have been the case on a conventional construction project.

Notwithstanding the challenges, the project was completed successfully. The most rewarding part of the project was to see the contractors obtaining valuable skills which will empower them not only to become employed but also to employ others in future.