

Busy street to become road to pleasure during congress

Mpume Madlala

OUTDOOR restaurants, music and exhibitions will be some of the new features in Dr Pixley Ka Seme (West) Street when the city turns this busy road into a pedestrian zone for seven weeks from August.

Construction is to begin in July, just a month before the International Union of Architects World Congress in August.

Municipal spokesman Thabo Mofokeng

said the pilot project would see the number of lanes reduced to accommodate the changes.

“The key element will be that pedestrians and non-motorised transport will be given priority and (the number of) motorised transport lanes will be reduced,” he said.

The thinking was that restaurants trading in the area would be given outdoor space so that people were seen to “occupy” the street.

Limited temporary infrastructure

would be in place for the activities taking place during the congress.

“We will also hopefully include music and dancing performances, a few temporary food stalls and some interactive activities for children,” said Mofokeng.

“The street will be decorated and there will be security.

“Under the urban management zone programme, the area has been prioritised to address crime.”

Mofokeng said the municipality

would engage the public through interviews and exhibitions on a long-term project to turn the entire street into a pedestrian zone.

Other cities had similar projects, he said.

St George’s Mall in Cape Town was successfully pedestrianised in 1992 and is lined with coffee shops, restaurants, trees and shops.

Times Square in New York City is a famous example of a successfully pedestrian zone.