



Nelson Mandela Boulevard opened in Cape Town

July 18, 2011 - 16:15

Cape Town - The City of Cape Town has renamed Eastern Boulevard in the city centre after Nelson Mandela ahead of the former President's 93rd birthday on Monday.

The event is one in a series of activities scheduled to honour Mandela in the city as the country and the world gears for Mandela Day celebrations next week.

The renaming and opening of the road ceremony, led by Mayor Patricia de Lille, was attended by Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, Transport MEC Robin Carlisle and former mayors Frank van der Velde and Gordon Oliver, among others.

A handful of African National Congress supporters in colourful T-shirts were also part of the historic moment.

"This is a great day for the City of Cape Town, we take a step towards making our city even more inclusive... we make a firm commitment to honouring our history, a history that has allowed us to come together in our diversity and celebrate this moment together," said De Lille.

"There is a great truth that the spaces in which we live influence our perceptions, our very way of thinking. Our past, and the trauma and hope that are mingled in it, is [written] across our landscape.

"The apartheid government knew full well what it meant to claim ownership of our public spaces. Through a careful strategy of selective naming and selective cultural recognition, it sought to stamp its interpretation of the world on future generations."

De Lille said they were renaming Eastern Boulevard after Nelson Mandela because Mandela had shown the way towards a society full of opportunities and built on mutual respect.

The mayor said the road should not be thought of as something physical but as the "one upon which we travel as a city to achieve Madiba's vision."

"The history of all our people is important. No one should ever have their history rewritten or eradicated.

"As we honour our old spaces, so too must we create new spaces that provide a true reflection of where we come from and where we are going," she said.

By the end of the year, De Lille said that they would have renamed Oswald Pirow Drive to Christiaan Barnard, a celebrated surgeon in the country.

A square of St. Georges Mall would also be named after a great Khoisan leader, Krotoa, she said.

The mayor added that the Concourse between the Civic Centre and the Artscape would be renamed in honour of Inkosi Albert Luthuli.

The renaming reaffirmed "our commitment to building greater inclusivity and acknowledging our history by honouring Tata Madiba's legacy," she said.

- Report by Francis Hweshe for BuaNews

Nelson Mandela Boulevard opened in Cape Town

Published on Architect Africa Online | Architects Association (SA) (<http://architectafrica.com>)

