

WATERFALL WALK

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Midrand

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Abcon Developments

PROJECT MANAGER
Abcon Developments

LEASING MANAGER
Dorpstraat

ARCHITECT
Boogertman + Partners

TOWN PLANNERS
Abcon Developments | Craft

QUANTITY SURVEYOR
Quanticost

CIVIL & STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
Kantey & Templer Consulting Engineers

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
MNS Consulting Engineers

MECHANICAL ENGINEER
Q-Mech Consulting Engineers

WET SERVICES
Wills Franklin Pretorius

FIRE ENGINEER
Ronald Koekemoer & Associates

HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTANT
Cairnmead Industrial Consultants

MAIN CONTRACTOR
Mike Buyskes Construction

PHOTOGRAPHY
Malan Kotze, courtesy of
Boogertman + Partners

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Waterfall Walk is a premium open-air retail centre located just off the Allandale/N1 interchange in Midrand, Johannesburg. Opened in March 2025, it has been designed to cater to daily shoppers by merging architectural elegance with convenience and a high-quality retail environment. The tenant mix is aligned with the needs of the local community, balancing everyday essentials with lifestyle and leisure offerings. Anchored by Woolworths Food, Woolworths Café and Clicks, the centre includes fashion boutiques, health and beauty outlets, coffee shops and eateries. Ample parking and a strong emphasis on safety and cleanliness meet the expectations of modern shoppers.

Client Brief

The centre's core aim was to offer a convenient and enjoyable shopping experience tailored to the local community. Conceived as accessible and visually appealing, it was intended to become a preferred destination for everyday shoppers seeking an elevated





retail experience. The brief called for a distinctly modern environment that would establish a comfortable and vibrant neighbourhood centre suited to both quick errands and leisurely visits.

Design Concept

Waterfall Walk's architecture is defined by elegant simplicity, thoughtful spatial planning and a premium material palette.

The architectural language is characterised by clean lines softened by the integration of subtle curves. Organic concrete canopies frame key entrances and seating areas, providing shelter and serving as sculptural focal points. The design

prioritises natural light and fresh air and offers generous access to outdoor seating across cafés, restaurants and retail outlets.

The palette of steel, concrete, glass and timber creates a sophisticated yet welcoming aesthetic. The interplay between clean lines and organic curves, particularly within the concrete canopies, introduces visual interest and architectural refinement. Planters throughout the walkways contribute biophilic elements that soften the industrial tones and create a more inviting environment.

A key innovation lies in the structural design of the walkways, where steel canopy columns are





integrated into the shopfronts to form the roof's supporting beams. This approach removes the visual clutter of traditional standalone columns, resulting in an open, unobstructed walkway that improves pedestrian flow, increases shopfront visibility and enables a seamless transition from the on-grade parking.

At the heart of the centre is a vibrant gathering space framed by the restaurants Malt and Bakehouse. Their outdoor seating overlooks landscaped gardens and a sculptural water feature

with views towards Allandale Road. This central zone forms a natural social hub that encourages relaxation and interaction.

A dedicated staff pause area offers tenant staff a comfortable space to unwind separate from customer-facing areas.

Façade Design and Materials

Steel, concrete, glass and timber are used to establish a refined and cohesive architectural language. Bamboo composite components are paired with





black steel to create distinctive roof canopies, façades and screening elements. The composite material was selected for its consistency and versatility, allowing its use across balustrades, extruded aluminium pergolas, freestanding screens and façade cladding. This continuity reinforces a polished and unified visual identity.

Another notable feature is the restricted black-and-white signage palette designed by Boogertman + Partners. This simple yet impactful guideline strengthens visual cohesion and elevates

the centre's overall aesthetic. It also contributes to a consistent brand experience and reinforces the development's premium positioning.

Attention to detail throughout construction enhances the visitor experience, establishing an understated sense of luxury and timeless architectural appeal.

Access and integration into the surroundings

Waterfall Walk integrates seamlessly with the neighbouring Waterfall Ridge centre, introducing





a lively retail and social environment to the broader precinct. Ease of access is central to the visitor experience, with direct shopfront access from parking and high-quality central ablutions contributing to comfort and convenience. The development also includes upgrades to public infrastructure, including roads, landscaping and green spaces, improving both accessibility and overall appeal.

Sustainability

Although Waterfall Walk does not hold formal sustainability ratings, it incorporates a range of practical, environmentally conscious measures.

Its open-air design improves natural airflow, reducing reliance on mechanical ventilation and enhancing comfort. Provision for solar panels supports common-area energy needs, while LED lighting improves efficiency. Clerestory windows in the largest anchor tenant space maximise daylight, reducing the need for artificial lighting. Walkway canopies provide shade that minimises solar heat gain on shopfronts and reduces cooling demands. Bamboo composite cladding offers a sustainable alternative to conventional materials.

Landscaping features indigenous, drought-resistant planting that supports biodiversity and



WEST ELEVATION





NORTH ELEVATION

reduces irrigation requirements. The integration of planters and trees into walkways and seating areas improves air quality, offers shade and creates a pleasant pedestrian environment. Tenants are encouraged to use low-consumption electrical fittings and energy-efficient bulbs. Together, these measures demonstrate a commitment to operational efficiency, environmental responsibility and improved user comfort.

Conclusion

Waterfall Walk's success lies in its understated sophistication and commitment to a seamless, elevated visitor experience. Every element, from

materials to layout, has been considered to ensure that architectural beauty and functional simplicity work in harmony, creating a welcoming environment that feels both contemporary and accessible. The central people space is a defining feature, offering a vibrant landscaped plaza where architecture and nature intersect. Curved steel columns within the shopfronts open the walkways and improve the flow of movement, while planters and contrasting textures soften the overall visual language.

Waterfall Walk stands as a refined retail and leisure destination that serves its community with longevity, relevance and lasting appeal.

