

Mr Gay World moved from Cape Town

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By GayNZ.com Daily News staff

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Cape Town appears to have pulled the rug out from under this year's Mr Gay World competition, refusing to help facilitate the event in the city. It's now being moved entirely to Knysna instead, a seaside town in the Western Cape Province.

The event was supposed to be held between both Cape Town and Knysna.



The final was supposed to be held at Cape Town City Hall

The move comes just a month from the start of the global competition, in which New Zealand will be represented by Aucklander Matt Fistonich.

A Cape Town Councillor and member of its Tourism, Events and Economic Development committee had appeared in the official Cape Town bid video, and expressed support for Mr Gay World, stating "we are keenly anticipating welcoming you to Mr. Gay World Cape Town and Knysna 2015, right here on our beautiful sunny shores." However Mr Gay World's producers say when they submitted paperwork to ask the city to help with the likes of financial support, a tour of landmarks, a meet and greet with the Executive Mayor and "access to anything that would promote Cape Town to the delegates, Directors and President of Mr Gay World" they were declined all on counts. It comes after representatives from Cape Town Tourism confirmed their attendance at a Mr Gay World media conference earlier this month, but didn't turn up. "Support from the local host city government and tourism authorities is crucial for an international event like Mr. Gay World," says Managing Director of the 2015 event Coenie Kukkuk. "In fact, it is a requirement." Kukkuk says past host city officials and tourism authorities have always supported the event and have met with Mr Gay World representatives during their visit. "Knysna's authorities have shown their support to the producers and the event. Knysna's Executive Mayor is hosting a special welcoming function for the delegates on the evening of 29 April and we look forward to an outstanding Grand Finale of Mr. Gay

World 2015 in Knysna. The delegates will also march in the annual Pink Loerie parade on Saturday 2 May at 3pm."He says Cape Town has lost an opportunity to boost its reputation as a welcoming and gay-friendly tourism destination."There are visitors and delegates arriving from more than 30 countries. That in itself shows the reach of the event. And each will not only be spending at local businesses, but could become goodwill ambassadors. That cannot be put into monetary terms. Word of mouth is still the best tool to market a destination.â€Mr Gay World President Eric Butter says itâ€™s sad that such an amazing and unique city as Cape Town turned the event down â€œBut one door closes and another one opens and we are delighted to be coming to such a magical place like Knysna for our Grand Finale.â€The Mr. Gay World Grand Finale will now take place on Saturday 2 May.

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