

Bakwena construction projects poised to enhance traffic flow and road safety

Bakwena places great importance on their road users' experience of the routes and therefore are sharing a significant update on the work they are currently engaged in as a means of keeping road users informed and prepared for any road works that will be taking place.

Sefako Makghato Interchange (Zambezi upgrades) Bakwena will soon be implementing an upgrade that will see its current Zambezi interchange being converted into an innovative diverging diamond interchange (DDI) that will enhance traffic capacity, alleviate congestion and provide free flow of traffic for road users. In particular, the upgrade is expected to ease bottlenecking at the N1/Sefako Makghato Interchange for many years to come.

The project, coming in at an estimated construction cost of R29-million, is being funded by Bakwena at no additional cost to its road users and will begin on 23 March 2015. Completion is expected in early November 2015.

SANRAL introduced the first DDI in the southern hemisphere on a left hand drive system in KwaMashu in Durban last year, reflecting similar designs introduced in France and the USA. In addition to improving the capacity and safety of these interchanges, traffic/pedestrian conflict points have also been greatly reduced, with a consequent overall reduction in accidents and a complete elimination of right turn accidents.

A DDI is a type of diamond interchange in which the two directions of traffic on the non-freeway road cross to the opposite side on both sides of the bridge. Vehicles cross over the lanes at a two-phased signalised intersection to drive on the "wrong" side of the road, allowing free and unopposed right and left turns onto and off the freeway.

Commenting on the introduction of this innovative traffic interchange, Executive mayor of Tshwane, Kgositso Ramokgopa, said the City of Tshwane welcomed the partnership with Bakwena that will not only improve traffic flow and ensure world class roads, but will also herald a

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significant reduction in road accidents and fatalities. He was referring to Bakwena's exemplary road safety record over the 2014/5 holiday period in which no major incidents occurred. Ramokgopa added that the proper maintenance of roads in this area also ensured improved trade between Tshwane and the provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West, which bodes well for economic growth in the region.

Doornpoort Plaza upgrades

In another section of its concession, Bakwena will soon enhance road users' driving experiences at the Doornpoort plaza with the construction of four (two per direction) reversible lanes to help ease traffic congestion.

Construction will commence on Monday, 30 March 2015 and will be completed by end May 2015. The functionality upgrade of these lanes will contribute 28% more capacity for enhanced movement on the N4 routes.

"The experiences of those who frequently use this route is are important to us and the construction of these reversible lanes at Doornpoort is our response to the requests received from road users to help ease traffic congestion," says Liam Clarke, spokesperson of Bakwena.

"While the construction will have an impact on the normal flow of traffic during the construction period, we assure our road users that we will have measures in place to manage the process in the best way possible."

Traffic will be closely monitored during these construction periods and mitigation measures will be implemented during peak periods to ease any congestion. These measures include lifting of the booms that will be managed when queues exceed a pre-determined length.

Bakwena complies with international engineering standards during road construction and maintenance, including the road design standards, which determines the number of lanes and lane widths, to ensure sufficient capacity to handle safely the volume of anticipated traffic.

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“During this construction period, we urge motorists to exercise particular caution and to bear with us during the improvement operation. We look forward to opening the reversible lanes for added convenience by end May 2015,” concludes Clarke.

For any construction related queries, please phone the head office on 011-519- 0400.