

Road repairs to be completed in 2018

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THE R226m road resurfacing project of the R67 between Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort is set to be complete by October 2018.

The project by the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral), which is already in progress in the Eastern Cape, is about 70.7km long, extending northwards from the intersection to the N2 all the way to where it meets the R63 in Fort Beaufort.

The work is located within the boundaries of two district municipalities, including Dr Beyers Naude (previously known as Sarah Baartman) and Amathole and in the local municipalities of Makana and Raymond Mhlaba (previously known as Nkonkobe).

Eastern Cape residents have never been strangers to potholes, but innovative programmes by the department of roads and public works over the years have aimed at making potholes in the

province a thing of the past.

Lutho Ongo is a commuter on this road. He says the road was not in a horrendous state like other roads he has driven on.

"It is good that this road is getting fixed because there were areas where it needed fixing," Ongo said.

Sanral southern region manager Mbulolo Peterson said the road section of the R67 from Grahamstown to Queenstown was transferred from the Eastern Cape provincial government to Sanral in 2012.

"The condition of the road could be described as fair to poor as maintenance activities were not carried out regularly. Thus it had potholes and sections in distress and these were deteriorating further. While traffic volumes are not too high, the route is of importance to tourists and links the Bathurst area with Queenstown," Peterson said.

He said the road was being fixed to facilitate economic activity and con-

nectivity of the province. "Construction started in February 2017 after we received the work permit from the department of labour."

"They have ensured that the date of completion will be achieved in record time through Sanral scrutinising and critiquing the contractor's implementation plan."

Furthermore, there are farmers who fix their own damaged dirt roads. They can now, in terms of a specific court order, send the bill to the government. The Grahamstown High Court ordered the provincial department of roads and public works to immediately begin implementing plans to repair and maintain its extensive and largely dysfunctional rural road network. Significantly, the judgment sets out the conditions under which farmers can arrange to have damaged gravel roads repaired themselves and then bill the government for the work.

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SMOOTH RIDE: Sanral is resurfacing 70km of the R67 road between Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort.



With Sindy Mabe




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