

N2 bypass on track for August 2021

By [Asanda Nini](#) -
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A R450-million bypass to divert traffic around Butterworth's congested CBD could be a reality by August 2021.

That's the word from roads and public works MEC Thandiswa Marawu.

Her department has already set aside the R450-million needed for the much-anticipated project, and construction is expected to start in September 2019.

The road will be a welcome development for motorists, who have to sit mired in traffic for hours when passing through the town.

Marawu was responding to written questions in the Bhisho legislature from DA MPL Veliswa Mvenya, who wanted to know about the project's progress and cost implications.

Marawu said plans were at an advanced stage and she had already met with Mnquma municipal bosses and officials from the South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral) regarding the construction project.

The parastatal will be roped in by the provincial government to help make the multimillion-rand project a reality.

When the bypass was first mooted a few years ago, it was proposed that it would start at the Ndadakazi turnoff about 10km west of Butterworth, and link up with the N2 on the Dutywa side.

However, Marawu's spokesman Mphumzi Zuzile yesterday said the road was set to be diverted "two or 3km before Butterworth when you are coming from the East London side and just after Walter Sisulu University's Ibika campus on the other side".

Zuzile said the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the project had already been completed for the project.

The spokesman said the EIA report was now waiting for approval from the provincial department of environmental affairs.

"After Sanral has obtained the necessary approval from the department, that is when we will go to tender so that we will be ready for work to begin by September 2019," Zuzile said.

In May last year, Sanral approved construction of the bypass subject to the EIA.

At the time, former Mnguma mayor Baba Ganjana said: "Approval of the N2 bypass in this area is an achievement.

"During the early and late hours of the day the transport is so congested in this area. Approval means that the traffic will be flowing at all times.

"We have had traffic congestion for a long time and it is something that the people of Butterworth are not happy about," Ganjana said at the time.

He added at that stage that Sanral still had to report back to the municipality on the results of the EIA and the exact route of the bypass. After that the municipality would negotiate with households that would have to be relocated to make way for the road.

Numerous attempts to reach the municipality's current mayor, Thobeka Bikitsha, or her spokesman Loyiso Mpalantshana, proved fruitless at the time of writing yesterday. — asandan@dispatch.co.za