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The vehicle involved in the accident. > Photo: Supplied/Divergent OPS

Calls for pedestrian bridges on busy R40 gain momentum

Riot Hlatshwayo

MBOMBELA - An accident in which a pedestrian was killed on the R40 between the CBD and Riverside Mall on Monday has sparked a flood of reactions from Lowvelders.

Many readers commenting on Lowvelder's Facebook page agreed that the busy road needs pedestrian bridges, while others offered suggestions for preventing similar accidents.

The identity of the man killed remains unknown, with some authorities speculating that he was part of Mbombela's homeless population. He was struck by a car travelling

from Riverside towards the Mbombela CBD at around 12:00. Juandré Rautenbach, COO of Divergent Ops' emergency medical services division, confirmed the incident.

In one comment, Anatasha Joubert said: "If they can do an advertising board across the road, they can do a pedestrian bridge across the road."

Meanwhile, Adré Martyn wrote: "I can't understand why the bus stop is so randomly situated on that main road, with nowhere for pedestrians to cross."

Investigations by Lowvelder revealed that the R40 between Riverside Mall and Mediclinic Nelspruit has many bus stops but no pedestrian crossings for the large number

of commuters using the route.

"Most of us alight from buses and taxis, but it remains unsafe to cross the road," said Bongani Nxumalo, who regularly travels to work by bus.

The spokesperson of the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Bongani Dlamini, said Sanral is responsible for the R40. Lowvelder contacted the roads agency to establish whether there are any plans to erect pedestrian crossings along the busy stretch of road.

Sanral's marketing and communications co-ordinator, Lerato Moloi, acknowledged receipt of the enquiry but had not provided a response by the time of going to print.