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Project update on the upgrading of Louis Fourie Road, Mossel Bay

The Department of Infrastructure (DOI) is hard at work upgrading a 2.75km portion of Louis Fourie Road in Mossel Bay between Beach Boulevard West and Garret Street. Louis Fourie Road links Mossel Bay to Diaz Beach, Voorbaai, and Hartenbos. The project commenced in July 2022 and, despite some difficulties, is still set to be completed in 2026.

Project C0964.02 involves major works, including turning the existing single carriageway along this section into a dual carriageway, building two new bridges, upgrading all of the intersections, and undertaking ancillary works. The project is unusually complex because it includes having to relocate services such as municipal water mains, a municipal sewer trunk line, a municipal electrical substation, and additional protection works to the PetroSA pipelines. In addition, the project has to accommodate the relocation of the existing Telkom cables along the route into new ducting, and the installation of a new level crossing for Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) at the Langeberg Mall entrance.

"The DOI is well aware that members of the public are frustrated by traffic congestion caused by construction works along this route, and we offer our sincere apologies", said acting Head of Department Adv. Chantal Smith. "We are doing everything in our power to ensure that the project progresses as quickly as possible. That said, the upgrading of this section of Louis Fourie Road involves major works along a busy road for an extended period. The work will continue for approximately two more years. We are confident that, once the project is finally complete, its benefit for Mossel Bay and nearby towns will be felt for years to come", she added.

A temporary bypass is currently in use between Boland Park and Via Appie intersections so that permanent roadworks can commence on the western (seaside) of Louis Fourie, and the rest of the bypass between Via Appie and Garret Street will be completed in due course. Work on the foundation and lower road layers is currently underway between Agrimark and just beyond Boland Park. Most of the new stormwater system has been put in place here and new streetlights have been installed along this section.

The construction of the Beach Boulevard West intersection will commence shortly, and this intersection will be closed for a short time to allow for full width construction. Traffic will be diverted through the Beach Boulevard East intersection during this period. A temporary two-way bypass will be constructed at the Total garage intersection (Industrial Road) when this intersection upgrade is planned. Other intersection upgrades

at Industrial Road and Beach Blvd East are currently being planned and these intersections may also be closed for approximately three days per intersection during construction. This may result in further congestion and inconvenience in these areas, albeit for a short duration. Half width construction of these intersections (which will allow continued restricted access) will cause longer periods of congestion of a month or more per intersection. The concrete retaining walls are mostly complete on both sides of the road. This will permit Telkom to install their new cables and fibre lines along the entire construction zone.

Piling for the foundations of the new Blinde River Bridge on the inland side of Louis Fourie is nearly complete. The lanes open to traffic has moved to the western (inland) side so that piling can be installed for this new bridge on the eastern side. Given the limited workspace at the Blinde River, DOI expects traffic to be slow here for about one year while the eastern side of the bridge is built.

New traffic signals were installed at the Shell garage so that the Alwyndale link up to the N2 bridge can be upgraded. The DOI is aware that these signals are slowing the flow of traffic, but this is a necessary step to enable construction to proceed. These signals will have to remain in place for approximately one year. Further ways to alleviate the congestion here are currently being looked at.

The biggest challenge to traffic flow will come when construction commences at the entrance to Langeberg Mall. Traffic accommodation will be carefully planned to minimise access delays and to enable construction to take place at this location.

Construction of the Garret Street Bridge has been completed and backfilling of the rail embankment is almost complete. Once that is done, Transnet will be able to reinstate the railway lines. Half-width construction is underway on Garret Street under the bridge. When construction begins on the portion of Louis Fourie from Vyfbrakkefontein to beyond the end of Garret Street, traffic will be accommodated under half width operation so that stormwater installation and road construction can proceed.

The main contractor is on track to meet its contract participation goals in respect of spending on local subcontractors. The subcontract to build the safe pedestrian sidewalk at Sonskyn Vallei has been awarded and work is expected to commence soon. Other subcontracts have been awarded to local sub-contractors for work that includes the excavation of trenches, the construction of gabion walls, pipelaying, manhole construction and kerbing.

ENDS.

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