



City of Johannesburg
Johannesburg Roads Agency

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MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

THE NEW BRIDGE LINKING PROTEA NORTH AND NALEDI OFFERS A SAFER ROUTE FOR SOWETO RESIDENTS

The Naledi-Protea North Bridge that links two of the well-known townships in Soweto has just been completed offering easy access and improved safety for pedestrians.

Johannesburg's Executive Mayor, Cllr Mpho Parks Tau opened the bridge which was constructed at a cost of R65-million today.

He said the new bridge is part of a comprehensive programme launched by the **Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)** to revitalise road and storm water infrastructure across the city. As part of the City's R100-billion investment in infrastructure over ten years the JRA investigated the state and quality of the 814 bridges in Johannesburg with a combined asset value of more than R15-billion.

The conclusion reached was that many of these bridges require extensive rehabilitation and upgrade as well as to add features in line with modern engineering and safety trends.

Chairman: J Manche,
Executive Directors: Dr. S Phillips - Managing Director, G Mbatha CA(SA) - Chief Financial Officer
Non-Executive Directors: P Govender, J Maina, A Torres, N Msezane, E Ngomane, L Mashamaite, L Nxumalo, H Mashele.
Company Secretary: K Mills

Registration No. 2000/028993/07

The MMC for Transport, Councillor Christine Walters, says the new bridge demonstrates the City's commitment to deliver quality infrastructure to communities and to create safer environments.

The Bridge holds a special significance for residents of Protea North and Naledi. The two suburbs are located 'a stone's throw apart' but are separated by a railway line. Motorists had to take a 10 kilometre detour by road to get to Protea North and Pedestrians risked their lives daily by crossing the dangerous railway tracks.

Today, both Naledi and Protea North are part of Johannesburg's Corridors of Freedom programme which eradicates the legacy of apartheid spatial planning and creates new economic opportunities close to transport corridors.

Walters says the bridge will contribute to community safety in Soweto, especially in Wards 14 and 20. All road users can now cross the railway line using the bridge and public lighting and other safety features were included in the design.

Local SMME contractors benefited from the construction activities and were responsible for the bulk earthworks, steel fixing, kerbing, paving as well as installation of the storm water infrastructure.

Walters says one of the JRA's primary concerns is the safety of communities that are often affected by floods that cause damage to bridges and roads during the rainy seasons. In Soweto, which often have to bear the brunt of the worst floods, low-lying bridges were raised above the flood lines at a number of locations, including, the Nxumalo Bridge, Kinini-Leselinyana, and the Zulu-Mahalefele Bridge.

Other areas of Soweto are also benefiting from heightened road construction activities undertaken by the JRA. The upgrading of gravel roads to surface standards in Doornkop and Thulani, road resurfacing, conversion of the area's open storm water drains into an underground system and related infrastructure. Eight subcontractors were offered work packages to assist the JRA in road maintenance and 78 local people were employed, contributing to job creation and skills transfers in the community.

The Naledi-Protea North Bridge forms part of the JRA's intensive "bridges programme" which includes the rehabilitation of a number of bridges city-wide including the Oxford, Federation and Double Decker bridges on the M1 Freeway.

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About the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)

The JRA is a City-owned agency responsible for the maintenance, repair and development of Johannesburg's road network and storm water infrastructure, including bridges and culverts, traffic lights and signage. The organisation is committed to providing quality roads that are accessible, safe and liveable for our communities.

Issued by:

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