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## MEDIA RELEASE

**28 March 2017**

**For immediate release**

### **JRA Wages R88 million War on Potholes**

City of Johannesburg Mayor, will take to the streets of Ivory Park and Midrand in Region A, on 28 March 2017, as part of an R88 million mayoral intervention to address the pothole repair backlog, city wide.

Johannesburg Roads Agency Managing Director, Dr Sean Phillips said the initiative forms part of the City's development agenda and prioritised 9 point plan to foster a 5% economic growth. He said: "We are declaring war on potholes and prioritising the repair of failing road surfaces. As a priority service delivery project, R88 million has been allocated to Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA) from the City's 2016/17 Adjustment Budget to fast track the process. We are committed to improving mobility within the city, through the provision of safe roads and infrastructure network. We are bent on improving resident's experience and service delivery. As part of this exercise, a city-wide inspection will be carried out in accordance with the use of JRA's Visual Condition Index (VCI) criteria, every two years, to enable the scientific prioritisation of roads for reconstruction and resurfacing."

The 2017 city wide VCI inspection indicates that 40% of the City's roads are in very good condition, 15% in a good condition, 15% in a fair condition, 14% in a poor condition and 15% in a very poor condition.

Through JRA's integrated citizen communications channels, 37 450 potholes were reported between April 2015 and February 2017, of which 32 740 have been resolved. This indicates an 87.4% resolution rate. However, the time taken to repair potholes is not yet up to scratch, and the JRA is working on improving the turn-around time for repair of potholes.

The following interventions have been put in place to address the current pothole repair backlogs:

- The City provided additional funding to the JRA in the 2016/17 adjustment budget:

- R60 million for materials and equipment for pothole repairs and other types of road maintenance; and
- R28 million to start to address the 40% staff capacity shortage in the road maintenance teams.
- A contractor has been appointed to assist with repair of potholes while additional staff are being recruited
- Pot-hole repair teams are working overtime to tackle the backlog, including on weekends.

It must be noted that pothole repairs are a short term fix to ensure the safety of all road users, while resurfacing and/or reconstruction of roads remain the long term solutions to improving the condition of the road network. Road reconstruction involves repairing underlying structural road pavement layers to strengthen the road. Roads resurfacing involves putting new asphalt or tar overlays on top of roads, to improve the riding surface and to prevent water from getting into the underlying structural layers, which causes potholes to form. As an interim solution, roads that have deteriorated but do not meet the VCI criteria for prioritisation within the available funding will undergo routine maintenance.

This will include pothole repairs and deep patching where possible, until roads are scheduled and budgeted for resurfacing or reconstruction.

Transport Member of Mayoral Committee, Councillor Nonhlanhla Makhuba said: “The Road Reconstruction and Resurfacing Programme forms part of the JRA’s 10-year Roads Development Plan to achieve targeted improved road conditions across the City by 2023. The JRA is responsible for a total of 13 428 km of roads and there is an estimated R3.5 billion backlog for road surfacing and R2.3 billion backlog for roads reconstruction. While the current budget allocation for resurfacing and reconstruction does not fully address these backlogs, it is the intention of the City to gradually increase the budgets for these activities over time.”

### **How are Potholes Formed?**

Potholes are formed when the rock structural layers of the road (beneath the tar) fail. This is usually due to water getting into the structural layer and washing out particles of rock, which causes localized collapsing of the structural layer. This explains why there are always more potholes after heavy rains.

If the surface or tar layer on top of the road is in a poor condition, water is more likely to get into the structural layers and cause potholes to form. This is why the resurfacing programme is important to prevent potholes from forming in future.

The structural layers of roads which are old and which have not been well-maintained, or which are subject to a large volume of heavy trucks, can become weak and start to break up, causing potholes to form. This is why it is necessary to reconstruct the structural layers of such roads in order to prevent potholes from forming in future.

Follow JRA for the latest developments, journey planning tips, alternative routes, and traffic advisory via:

- Website: [www.jra.org.za](http://www.jra.org.za)
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- Facebook: Johannesburg Roads Agency
- Email [hotline@jra.org.za](mailto:hotline@jra.org.za),
- JRA Find&Fix mobile app

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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.

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