One traffic lane has just been reopened at 15h00 at the Umzimkhulu River Bridge: Duma pays tribute to all stakeholders who have worked with the Department

Media and Public Statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma.

07 December 2025

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We wish to announce to the residents of Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality and the whole Ugu District that today, 07 December 2025, we are scheduled to reopen single-lane traffic on Umzimkhulu River Bridge.

The piers of the bridge, which was built in 1958, were destabilized by prolonged rainfall with flooding causing them to rotate.

This compromised the bridge's structural integrity, making it unsafe for motorists, and the closure was necessary to ensure public safety.

Since the beginning of the rehabilitation and repairs in March this year, we have been extremely worried about the destruction of the local economy.

It is for this reason we have worked extremely hard, despite challenges, to turn the situation around.

It should be remembered that in April last year, the municipality experienced devastating floods that destroyed road infrastructure, with Margate Airport getting flooded.

Port Shepstone CBD and other areas became inaccessible, resulting in the disruption of suppliers and the entire supply chain management.

This increased costs with major financial ruin experienced by business. Job losses that followed pushed many people to live below a poverty line.

The reopening of one lane is a major milestone that we should all celebrate. We thank residents, captains of industry, civil society, and more importantly, Amakhosi for working with the department.

Equally, we thank the Mayor of Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality, Cllr Zodwa Mzindle, Mayor of Ugu District Municipality, Cllr Sikhumbuzo Isaac Mqadi.

We wish to draw the attention of residents and the media to the following:

1. Approximately 256 of parapets have been concrete cast and approximately 289 of steel fixings are currently in progress;

2. Cleaning and scrubbing work is currently in progress on 5 out of 15 bridge spans. Patching work on Span 15 is also underway;

3. New pile cap work for Pier 2 commenced on 3 November and was completed on December 2. The 767 m^3 of concrete and 180 tons of steel.

4. Geotechnical drilling has been completed, and grouting work is in progress with a total of 12 boreholes drilled.

5. Surface deck repairs on Span 5 to Span 15 have been completed.

Due to prolonged rainfall and erratic weather, we lost working days.

Consequently, we decided to adopt and approve effective work acceleration measures.

These include extending daily working hours by an additional three hours for piling activities, incorporating weekend work, and 24-hour operations for the pile cap construction.

Having achieved this progress, we are now aiming for the reopening of two-way traffic by the 25 February 2026.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

Enquiries

Ndabezinhle Sibiya | 082 375 4742 | MEC for Transport and Human Settlements