

UMzimkhulu River Bridge Repairs to proceed after stoppage, and the National Department of Transport grants another toll fee waiver: Duma praises all teams for the professional handling of application for the permit in line with KZN Amafa & Research Institute Act No.5 of 2018 – 37 (1)(a)

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

23 September 2025

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We wish to inform residents of Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality and Ugu District at large of the two major developments.

Firstly, the KZN Amafa & Research Institute has granted the Department of Transport a permit to proceed with the repairs and rehabilitation of the UMzimkhulu River Bridge.

Secondly, following our new application to the Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy weeks ago, residents, who are frequent users of the N2 South Coast Oribi Toll Plaza – Northern Ramps, and the Umtentweni Southern on-and-off ramps, have been granted a 100% frequent user rebate.

On the 18th of September, we received a letter from Amafa ordering the Department to stop any work on Lot 156 at Umzimkhulu Mouth, Rial Reserve for Bazley Harbour Wall, as well as its extension to form the Bazley Breakwater Wall (1879-1893).

The bridge was constructed in 1958.

In the letter we were instructed to stop any work to improve the bridge, which is older than 60 years, in Port Shepstone.

The letter was issued in terms of Section 50 (10) of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999.

In our public statement, we want to assure residents we would never turn our back on them during this critical moment.

Accordingly, a roving team from the Department scheduled an urgent meeting with Amafa for the 19th September.

After a few days of consultations and presentation of proposals and applications, we have received a permit allowing us to steam ahead with the repairs.

As the custodian of our heritage, we salute Amafa for the professional handling of the application and all other processes.

As indicated this week, all categories of staff in the Department and in the region have been mobilized to ensure that we turn around the situation.

Recent geotechnical reports indicate that only Pier 2 is affected, and repair efforts are focusing primarily on this area while also addressing P464, which is currently being used as a detour.

The bridge is targeted for re-opening to traffic by 02 December 2025. This is in alignment with the suspension of the obligation to pay toll fees until 23h59 on the same day.

Before the stoppages, we had planned to bring the re-opening date forward to 13 November 2025.

As indicated on various platforms, weeks ago I mandated the project team to be agile and show a high level of speed and a sense of urgency.

The team is building on the following successes while revising the following targeted dates:

- The river mouth has been successfully diverted to clear Pier 2.
- Access and platform construction for Pier 2 was initially targeted for completion by 19 September 2025. This date is being revised.
- Drilling is set to be completed by 02 October 2025. This date is being revised.
- Foundation work will be finalized by 07 November 2025.
- Casting will occur on 09 November 2025.
- Curing of concrete is scheduled for completion by 09 October 2025.
- Jacking of the bridge on Pier 2 is planned for 13 November 2025, at which point we aim to reopen to traffic while continuing necessary repairs.

Ends

Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

Enquiries

Ndabezinhle Sibiyi | 082 375 4742 | Spokesperson | MEC for Transport and Human Settlements