



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR. B.H. CELE DURING THE SOD
TURNING CEREMONY AT UMSINGA ON SATURDAY 14 JUNE 2008.**

All Protocol Observed.

- We all know that just five months ago we were here at Umsinga for the sod turning for the upgrade of Main Road 32. During that ceremony, the local community members highlighted the poor state of D1273 and I personally made a commitment that this road would be investigated with a view to make it a viable route in all conditions.
- Indeed, I do not have to mention how many times we have come to this area of Umsinga. In fact, the KZN Department of Transport allocated a total budget of R120 million in 2008/2009 financial year to deal with the service delivery challenges in the Umzinyathi District.
- We have injected cash in the road maintenance, the construction of new infrastructure and poverty alleviation and empowerment. Our projects include among others, the construction of Dicky Bridge, Sphongweni Road, Nxamalala Road, Nyonini Road, Ezingulubeni Road, Mbalane Bridge, Matimatolo Road, Nhlesi Road stone pitching, P32, Zonyama Road and KwaLeje Pedestrian Bridge.

- I am therefore delighted that today another milestone is recorded in the lives of people of Umsinga, as we do the sod turning to mark the beginning of the upgrading of the Road D1273 from gravel to blacktop which will take about 18km at the tune of R53 million.
- The first phase which is 10km will cost R29 million and is to be completed in June 2009. The second phase which is 8km will cost R24 million and is to be completed in January 2010.
- This road serves a large community with schools and health services. These services are accessible via vehicular traffic due to poor state of this access road. This road serves about 4000 households and about 20 000 people. There are no alternate routes for community members to get to town centres such as Greytown and Pomeroy to access basic amenities.
- But I want to emphasize that when we bring these projects we do it for people irrespective of which political party they belong to. Our government's policy says that during the construction work, cost must remain an economic benefit to the communities that project will serve.
- All contractors are compelled to source all materials from the local suppliers and employ all artisans and labour from the nearby communities. The job creation during this upgrade is estimated at 3 500 person days.

- My appeal is that you use our Departmental community structures such as RRTFs and CRSCs that we have put in place in all communities. I am appealing to you as communities to refuse to be manipulated by politicians and officials who use your weakness for their political gain. But as this Department we have resolved that we will not have political office bearers in any of our structures.
- In closing, I want to emphasize that the Department of Transport has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that our people have a safe and reliable transport system in the province.
- When completed, the design speed of this road will be 60km/h over most sections with speed reduction measures installed at steep grades and non-standard curves to reduce the speed to 40km/h.
- I am emphasizing road safety here because it has become clear that there is no use to build roads that will kill our people. We need to strengthen our road safety awareness campaigns wherever we are, so that we build roads in order to develop people, and not to kill them.
- Finally, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the community of Umzinyathi District on all road and bridge projects they have received and yet to receive. Our goals are indeed centred around the lives of our people.

I thank you.