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JDA kicks off next phase of BRT construction, warns of road closures

21ST AUGUST 2015 BY: NATALIE GREVE - CREAMER MEDIA CONTRIBUTING EDITOR ONLINE



Photo by: Duane Daws

Advancing development of what it describes as a sophisticated public transport network, the Johannesburg

Development Agency (JDA) has started the implementation of Phase 1C of the bus-rapid transit (BRT) roadworks along Louis Botha avenue, between Parktown and Wynberg, and along Katherine street, in Sandton, from Marlboro to the Gautrain station.

Construction works were also under way on two new bridges over the M1 highway, one of which was the Grayston pedestrian bridge linking Alexandra and Sandton.

The construction of the two bridges was expected to continue for a period of 18 months until February 2017.

Phase 1 of the flagship public transport project, which started in February 2014 and was completed in June, encompassed the road strengthening of around 12 km of the north and southbound BRT lanes, as well as the construction of a dividing median from Empire road, in the south, to Lees street, in the north, along Louis Botha avenue and Old Pretoria road.

Contractors Axton Matrix were appointed to complete the 6 km section between Empire road and Louis road, while Bophelong Construction was awarded the contract for the 6 km section from Louis road to Lees street, in the north.

“All works in this phase of construction have been completed, with the exception of the resurfacing of some major roads onto which traffic is diverted from Louis Botha avenue. The anticipated completion of this work is the end of August,” the JDA said in a statement on Friday.

Phase 2 of the project would, meanwhile, entail the widening and upgrading of the traffic lane to be used by the travelling public, improvements to pedestrian sidewalks and the construction of BRT bus stations along the route from Empire road to Lees street, along Louis Botha avenue.

“This work will require the long- and short-term closures of the existing traffic lanes along the route,” the agency cautioned.

It added that long-term traffic diversions would be required for the construction of some of the BRT bus stations, where alternative routes would be used for the deviation of traffic.

Short-term closures would encompass the closure of single traffic lanes between 9:00 and 15:30 and, in certain circumstances, between 19:00 and 05:30.

Contractors Mivami Construction and Nyoni Projects had been awarded the contracts for this phase of development, which was expected to be completed by April 2016.

Construction work on the Grayston drive pedestrian bridge had, meanwhile, started in May and would require the closure of the slow lane shoulder in both north- and southbound directions of the M1, around 300 m from both sides of the existing Grayston drive bridge.

In addition, the fast lane shoulder in both directions would be closed for a distance of 100 m on either side of the Grayston drive bridge for a period of 18 months.

Short-term lane closures of the M1 would also be needed for the placing of concrete traffic barriers to close off the shoulders and would be carried out at night between 22:00 and 04:00.

There would also be occasional rolling closures for the positioning of personnel and adjustment of barriers, which would take place outside of peak hours under the control of the attenuator truck.

“Other than the closure of the shoulders, the impact of the construction works on the travelling public should be minimal,” the agency held.

In Sandton, construction works on the Katherine street BRT bridge over the M1 highway, started at the end of May, with completion expected in November 2016.

The JDA cautioned of short-term lane closures and contraflows on weekends for erecting temporary supports for the new Katherine street BRT bridge, which were expected to take place in November.

Where short-term carriageway closures were implemented, these would occur over weekends.

The JDA had also kicked off the widening of the Sandspruit bridge, between Katherine street and Marlboro drive, with construction currently in Phase 1, which entailed the construction of a temporary deviation off Katherine street to enable the construction of the remainder of the bridge.

The widening of Katherine street between West street and Westbrook was, meanwhile, nearing completion. 

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