



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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To: The Premier of the Eastern Cape

Cc: The Leader of the Official Opposition

The Chief Whip of the Official Opposition

30 January 2024

Request for urgent intervention in rural road network

Dear Premier

As the Provincial Leader of the DA in the Eastern Cape and a Member of Parliament elected from this province, I have received a number of complaints from the agricultural and tourism sectors regarding the poor condition of rural roads across the province.

The news of the closure of the Mazeppa Bay Hotel is a devastating blow to the tourism sector in the former Transkei region of the province and is tragically symbolic of the issue in question. A letter from the hotel circulating on social media highlights the poor condition of the roads as a key factor in the closure of that business.

Farmers are contacting my colleagues and I on a weekly basis regarding the collapsing road infrastructure in the Sarah Baartman District, the Chris Hani District, the Joe Gqabi district as well as OR Tambo district.

Both agriculture and tourism are key drivers of our economy in general and of our rural economies in particular. Most of our small towns depend primarily on agriculture and tourism yet the provincial, district and municipal roads which feed these sectors have been neglected to the point of collapse in many cases.

I hereby request that you urgently prioritize our rural roads network through one or all of the following interventions:

1. A special appropriation bill to rescue our rural roads
2. Engage with the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) in order to identify areas of strategic cooperation for maintenance and reconstruction.
3. Meet with organized agriculture and tourism structures to identify the most urgent roads requiring intervention.

I look forward to receiving your urgent response to my request.

Regards

Andrew Whitfield, MP