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Jubilation all round as Mayor Zakhele Mnqayi cuts the ribbon to open the vital link road

PHOTO: DAVE SAVIDES



An aerial view of the new East Central Arterial, with the connection to John Ross Parkway in the foreground and the Richards Bay CBD in the distance

R30-m boost for road infrastructure

# HASSLE-FREE HIGHWAY OPEN

Dave Savides

THE critical East Central Arterial linking the John Ross Parkway to the Richards Bay CBD and regional airport was officially opened on Thursday.

Built at a cost of close to R30-million, the road will also unlock development of a large parcel of land south of Guldengracht, opposite the new Unizul city campus.

Speaking after cutting the ribbon on site, uMhlatuze Mayor Cllr Zakhele Mnqayi praised all those responsible for the 'hassle-free' construction of the road. He was joined by Cllr Elphas Mbatha and Cllr Nontho Mzimela in lauding the fact that from design to completion, the project ran according to budget, with no disputes or requests for additional funding.

This despite challenges relating to environmental concerns and a high water table, among others.

'South Africa has one of the best standards of roads, and the City is up with the best of them.

'The team that built this road displayed the highest professionalism.

'Local government must always look at value for money and must be committed to spending on infrastructure that is the catalyst to development,' said Mnqayi.

'This link road meets both criteria; in years to come we will see the real economic spin-off and impact.

'The decision to build the arterial was founded on a vision guided by solid planning - we can't have ad hoc development, as this will lead to wasteful expenditure.'

Mnqayi announced that government has made R3.8-million available for planning of development in the south block adjacent to the new 1.2km road.

The City's Departments of Infrastructure and Technical Services, Finance and Town Planning were singled out for their contribution to the successful completion.

So too were Ilifa Africa Engineers, WJ Shuphulinkunzi Joint Venture, the Provincial Department of Transport and Henwood & Nxumalo - project managers for the John Ross Parkway project.

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