

With e-toll saga closed, infrastructure projects gain momentum

 By [Lindsey Schutters](#)

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The South African National Roads Agency (Sanral) announced the termination of toll collection on the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project (GFIP) effective at the precise time of 23:59:59 on 11 April 2024, as outlined in [Government Gazette 50418](#). The move coincides with Sanral securing increased borrowing limits from Treasury. This will enable the agency to approach the market to unlock funding from the private sector to finance its existing pipeline of capital expenditure projects.



Transport Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga addresses the media at the Sanral briefing

These include comprehensive upgrades to the N2-N3 corridors, the development of the N2 Wild Coast Road, and the revitalisation of Moloto Road. These projects are expected to be a boost for job creation and investment, signalling a robust period of growth for the nation's infrastructure.

Mid-term toll capital expenditure projects will also received a significant boost with increased borrowing limits. This financial leverage has unlocked a series of developmental projects across the N1, N3, and N2 corridors, encompassing both upgrades and new constructions.



E-toll payments soon a thing of the past

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Years of discontent

Implemented in 2013, the e-toll system faced persistent public outcry and political friction. In 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa established a high-level committee to find a solution. The committee, comprising the Ministers of Finance and Transport alongside Gauteng's Premier, reached an agreement in March to address outstanding e-toll debt and secure alternative funding for highway maintenance.

"We trust this resolution brings certainty to Gauteng motorists after a protracted period of uncertainty," Transport Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga said.

After the cancellation of e-tolling, road users will not be required to take any action. Current valid accounts can still be used for payments at toll plazas and other value-added services, such as parking. This is crucial for the ongoing, long-term benefit of interoperability.

"While tolling ceases, Gauteng residents can take comfort in the knowledge that the e-toll network has served as a catalyst for massive infrastructure investment between Johannesburg and Pretoria," said Themba Mhambi, Sanral chairman. "The country still stands to benefit greatly from the assets and systems that were developed for the e-tolls."

Gantry lights and cameras will continue to be operational for road safety purposes. Sanral account holders who have opted in on the Sanral app will receive notifications if they exceed the speed limit between two toll gantries on the Gauteng e-roads. As of now, these notifications serve purely informational purposes and do not constitute infringements.

Looking forward

With the e-tolls chapter closed, Sanral can now set its sights on the future. Highlighted projects to be funded by the new capital expenditure include:

N1 Corridor (Estimated cost: R14bn)

- Louis Trichardt to Masekwaspoort
- Musina south to Musina north
- Scotland to Winburg South
- Zandkraal and Scotland (km 55.7)
- Rietvley to Polokwane
- Huguenot Tunnel North Bore

N2 Corridor (Estimated cost: R3.9bn)

- Tongaat Toll Plaza - Ballito I/C
- Ballito I/C to Tinley Manor
- Tinley Manor and New Guelderland
- Mtunzini to Richards Bay

N3 Corridor (Estimated cost: R5.5bn)

- Marianhill Plaza - Key Ridge
- Paradise Valley - Marianhill Plaza
- Marianhill Toll Plaza Upgrade

"We understand that the resolution of this issue might have taken longer than some people wanted, but it involved complex negotiations, which were handled in a mature and professional manner by all concerned," Chikunga said.

ABOUT LINDSEY SCHUTTERS

Lindsey is the editor for ICT, Construction&Engineering and Energy&Mining at Bizcommunity

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