

SUCCESS STORY:

Community Action Safeguards Investment and Local Economic Stability

When infrastructure challenges threaten economic activity, leadership sometimes rises from within the community itself.

In a remarkable show of unity and determination, volunteers in Industrial Area 2, near the entrance of Mandela Park Section, stepped forward to repair a severely damaged road that had become almost undriveable. The deteriorating condition — marked by deep potholes and persistent water pooling — was restricting access for clients, suppliers and heavy vehicles servicing the area.

As recently highlighted in the Eastern Free State Issue (EFS Issue), the road’s condition had reached a critical point. Previous municipal patchwork repairs had not withstood heavy rains, leaving businesses vulnerable and investor confidence at risk.

Rather than waiting indefinitely, the community chose action.



A Community-Led Intervention

The initiative was spearheaded voluntarily by Thebe Ketsise, Manager of Thebe Excellent Pavers.

“We decided to do it ourselves so that clients in Industrial Area 2 can continue accessing businesses and so that investors can be retained,” Ketsise explained in an interview with the EFS Issue.

Importantly, the project was not only about fixing a road — it was about building capacity. Women workers were intentionally included in the project to equip them with paving and construction skills, turning a short-term intervention into a skills-transfer opportunity.

Using bricks, sand and cement — with materials sourced from Builders Hardware, Truss Mecca and salvaged supplies — the volunteers restored access and improved safety for motorists and heavy trucks entering the industrial hub.



For more information, please contact:

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SUCCESS STORY:

Protecting Economic Activity

For businesses operating in the precinct, the stakes were high.

Surin Ranjith, Chairperson of the QwaQwa Textile Clothing Association, emphasised that the road condition had been affecting traffic volumes and business operations for some time.

By repairing the road, the volunteers ensured that:

- Heavy trucks can continue delivering goods
- Clients can access businesses safely
- The industrial area remains functional and attractive to investors

Infrastructure is the backbone of economic growth. When roads fail, investment slows. This intervention safeguarded more than just transport — it protected livelihoods.



Looking Ahead: Sustainable Support Needed

While the volunteer effort has made a significant impact, the group has expressed the need for longer-term, sustainable solutions.

They are calling for:

- Permanent road surfacing that can withstand heavy rains
- Expanded job opportunities for community members through skills development
- Stability for businesses operating in Industrial Area 2
- Support in attracting investors to partner with local SMMEs who are already maintaining and strengthening the precinct

The volunteers have also indicated plans to engage the municipality to ensure proper collaboration going forward, combining community spirit with institutional backing.



Unity in Action

This initiative serves as a powerful reminder that unity is more than a slogan — it is action. When community members come together with a shared purpose, they create environments where businesses can thrive and investors can remain confident.

Industrial Area 2 stands as proof that sustainable economic development is strongest when driven by collective responsibility, resilience and proactive leadership from within the community.

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