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Currently there are some features that need to be completed and some bugs that prevent GIMP 2.8 from being finally released. Martin Nordholts just posted something about that on the official mailing list. There is also a discussion about spending money for fixing bugs (so-called bounties), which could be a good way to speed things up. However in the past the devs didn't like the idea of bounties, because it is difficult to determine what bugs are eligible of being bountied, and of course it isn't so easy to get a good workflow for a bounty-system in place.

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[2] <http://www.gimpusers.com/news/00339-gimp-2-8-scheduled-q1-q2-2011>