

Meridian Street Upgrading Options

Recommendation

That the December 1, 2020, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development report UFCSD00022, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the August 17/19, 2020, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration return to Committee with an information report, outlining options for Meridian Street upgrading, including developer partnership opportunities and phasing.

Executive Summary

Meridian Street from 153 Avenue to Manning Drive is a key roadway that services the Horse Hill area. It is designated as a developer arterial and upgrades will be required of area developers as they proceed with land subdivision. The cost of arterial road upgrades are shared among developers as per Bylaw 14380 Arterial Roads for Development. Typically, the City does not fund arterial upgrades in developing areas, unless the Bylaw specifically identifies a City obligation, and currently the City does not have a budget identified to assist with developer arterial roadways.

Developer upgrades to Meridian Street will be staged and discussions with developers are ongoing. Dates for construction have not been set as a servicing agreement has not been signed.

The section of Meridian Street from 153 Avenue to 161 Avenue requires regular maintenance and costs the City approximately \$55,000 per year to keep the driving surface suitable. Administration receives numerous inquiries about the condition of this roadway and understands the importance of maintenance and timely upgrades.

This report outlines the history of development and roadway upgrades in the area, the opportunities for further upgrades, partnership opportunities between developers and the City, and phasing/staging options.

Report

Background

Meridian Street from 153 Avenue to Manning Drive is currently a two lane rural road with turn bays at 153 Avenue and 162A Avenue. The roadway provides access to the Quarry Ridge development, Evergreen development, The Quarry golf course, other rural residential developments, farms, greenhouses, nurseries, and various other businesses.

With Stage 1 of the Quarry Ridge development, Meridian Street was upgraded from 161 Avenue to 167 Avenue with hot mix asphalt paving. The developer paid funds (approximately \$300,000) to the City to complete this upgrade in 2001. Stage 2 of Quarry Ridge added the turn bays at the 162A Avenue access location in 2004. At that time, the primary access to the Quarry Ridge development was the Manning Drive - 167 Avenue intersection, east on 167 Avenue and south on Meridian Street to the Meridian Street - 162A Avenue and 161 Avenue intersections. This construction provided an upgraded roadway surface on the most direct access to the Quarry Ridge development.

Anthony Henday Drive was constructed from 2012 to 2016 and included an upgraded connection east on 153 Avenue and turn bays at the Meridian Street - 153 Avenue intersection. Upgrades were limited to the immediate vicinity of the Transportation Utility Corridor. The construction of Anthony Henday Drive eliminated the east leg of the intersection at Manning Drive - 167 Avenue and changed the most direct access to Quarry Ridge. Residents now primarily access Quarry Ridge from 153 Avenue and north on Meridian Street to 161 Avenue and 162A Avenue, along the portion of Meridian Street that was not upgraded with Quarry Ridge development.

Meridian Street is planned to be a minimum four lane urban arterial roadway as outlined in the Horse Hill Area Structure Plan, the Marquis Neighbourhood Structure Plan and the Arterial Roadway Assessment Bylaw (Attachment 1). As per the Arterial Roads for Development Bylaw, the upgrades of Meridian Street, to a four lane cross section, are cost sharable by all developers within the assessable area. Meridian Street will be upgraded in stages as a condition of subdivisions in the Horse Hill area. The first stage of construction is typically a two lane (one lane in each direction) urban arterial roadway with shared use path, turn bays, lighting, curb and gutter, and signalized intersections.

The City has been working closely with area developers to stage upgrades to Meridian Street. The typical requirement of developers is to upgrade an arterial connection from an upgraded roadway to the subdivision development access.

Current Maintenance

The City performs spot grading on Meridian Street between 153 Avenue and 161 Avenue every two weeks between June and October. In addition, pothole repair and base work are also performed and the annual maintenance cost is estimated to be \$55,000. The level of service that the area is receiving is consistent with the other areas in the City, for regular routine maintenance.

Since January of 2018, the City has received 176 notifications that maintenance is required on this portion of Meridian Street. The City also responds to notifications through 311 in the area and will address concerns in priority order if an emergency issue arises.

An increase in the level of maintenance/service for this specific area must be considered and weighed against other priorities as there are numerous other roads in the City that require regular maintenance and Administration is not able to increase maintenance due to the budget and resource requirements.

Current Development Activity and Proposed Staging

The City Plan promotes efficient and compact city building which will incrementally enhance its long-term fiscal efficiency. Growth and change will occur city-wide but higher anticipated residential unit growth is expected in redeveloping areas or along nodes and corridors.

The City Plan's anticipated residential growth will be strongly influenced by market demand; however, the phasing activation plan does not identify the Horse Hill area for City investment within the anticipated growth from 1 - 1.25 million people.

Several developers are active in the Horse Hill Neighbourhood and have been discussing with Administration how to advance subdivisions and/or have submitted subdivisions for review. Upgrades of Meridian Street have been conditioned with several subdivisions in Horse Hill; however, a servicing agreement has not been signed to commit developers to completing Meridian Street upgrades. While negotiations with developers may evolve, the current proposal for Meridian Street is a staged upgrade consisting of the following and is shown on Attachment 2.

- Stage 1 - A maintenance agreement from 153 Avenue to 167 Avenue, sharing costs for maintenance equally between the Developers and the City until the roadway is upgraded to City standard for an urban arterial road
- Stage 1 - Upgrades to Meridian Street from Marquis Boulevard to 167 Avenue including a wildlife crossing to a two lane urban arterial standard
- Stage 2 - Upgrades to Meridian Street from 161 Avenue to 153 Avenue on the proposed new alignment to a two lane urban arterial standard

- Stage 3 - Upgrades to Meridian Street from 167 Avenue to 161 Avenue to a two lane urban arterial standard

All upgrades will require the developer to purchase any land for road construction from adjacent land owners, including a parcel required from the province for realignment of 153 Avenue to Meridian Street.

The timelines for these stages of upgrades have been discussed previously but will require further negotiation with the developer when a servicing agreement is prepared and signed. The City cannot compel a developer to enter into a servicing agreement until they agree. There has also recently been discussion with area developers of upgrading Meridian Street from their subdivision (in the Marquis Neighbourhood) north to Manning Drive instead of south to 153 Avenue. Addressing the current condition of Meridian Street from 153 Avenue to 161 Avenue is a priority to the City and is part of the negotiations with developers.

Opportunities for Partnership

Opportunities for partnership between the City of Edmonton and area developers may be available, and are detailed in Attachment 3, including:

1. Use of City Funds to Front-End Urban Upgrades
2. Municipal Stimulus Program
3. Roadway Renewal
4. Local Improvement

Next Steps

- Current levels of roadway maintenance will continue as outlined above
- Continue negotiations with developers for staged urban arterial upgrades with development approvals
- Review and prioritize Meridian Street for possible Municipal Stimulus Program funding
- Use of City funds to front-end urban upgrades, Roadway renewal and local improvement will not be pursued further by Administration unless directed by Council

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City of Edmonton has sustainable and accessible infrastructure	Edmontonians' Assessment: Well-Designed	53 percent (2017)	55 percent (2018) And increasing year

	Attractive City (percent of survey respondents who agree/strongly agree)		over year
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Attachments

1. Horse Hill ARA Bylaw Map
2. Proposed Staging of Developer Upgrades
3. Opportunities For Partnership

Others Reviewing this Report

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- J. Meliefste, Acting Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor