

Ray Gibbon Drive

(A. Knack)

Recommendation

That the February 19, 2021, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_8133, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 19/21, 2020, City Council meeting, Councillor A. Knack made the following inquiry:

Can Administration provide a report detailing the discussions they have had with both the City of St. Albert and the Province on the status of existing and future development of the Big Lake Neighbourhood at the intersection of 137th Ave/Ray Gibbon Drive (including developer funded infrastructure). This report is to include any analysis completed on operational concerns of the current access to the communities of Big Lake and the interim road that is being used.

Executive Summary

The City of Edmonton, City of St. Albert and Alberta Transportation are working collaboratively to advance the twinning of Ray Gibbon Drive, the future realignment of the 137 Avenue intersection and the development of the Big Lake Neighbourhood. Administration is working with developers, landowners and the City of St. Albert to advance the development of the neighbourhood transportation linkages within the Big Lake area. The development of the ultimate transportation network currently has an undefined construction timeline.

The City of St. Albert is currently advancing the widening of Ray Gibbon Drive. Through the development of the first phase of construction, north of 137 Avenue, both Alberta Transportation and the City of St. Albert expressed an initial preference to closing the existing intersection at Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue. In response, the City of Edmonton, the City of St. Albert and Alberta Transportation completed analysis and agreed on a plan for interim improvements at this intersection. The intersection improvements are included in the City of St. Albert's design and construction tender for the Ray Gibbon Drive widening improvements and are scheduled for construction in 2021. Further, the jurisdictions have outlined a shared commitment to determining a path forward for funding and construction of the ultimate realignment of the intersection to LeClair Way.

Report

The development of the Big Lake area has been underway for several years. The neighbourhoods falling within the Big Lake Area Structure Plan are currently served by two primary access points:

- 215 Street, north of Yellowhead Trail; and
- Ray Gibbon Drive at 137 Avenue (interim) / LeClair Way (ultimate).

The long-term transportation network plan for the Big Lake area is shown in Attachment 1. This includes the extension of 215 Street to the north, paralleling Big Lake, and connecting to LeClair Way. This future road alignment will serve as access to the broader Big Lake area.

When the future road alignment connecting to LeClair Way is constructed, the access point located at Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue intersection will be removed. The ultimate alignment has not yet been constructed and a timeline for construction has not been defined. The alignment has impacts on lands that are currently owned by landowners not participating in the Big Lake area development, owned by the Province or under the jurisdiction of the City of St. Albert.

The City of Edmonton and the City of St. Albert have agreed on preference for the permanent and ultimate realignment of LeClair Way. However, this work is currently not reflected in a funded capital plan or as a development responsibility (i.e. ARA Bylaw) in either municipality. As such, the timeline for LeClair Way is unknown.

Ray Gibbon Drive Twinning

In February 2019, the Government of Alberta announced funding for the twinning of Ray Gibbon Drive in St. Albert, through the completion of a cost-sharing agreement with the City of St. Albert. Through the development of the first phase of construction, north of 137 Avenue, both Alberta Transportation and the City of St. Albert expressed a preference to closing the existing intersection at Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue. This intersection experiences operational and safety issues due to queuing and the proximity to the Anthony Henday Drive interchange off-ramp.

The closure of the Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue intersection would result in immediate access issues for neighbourhoods within the Big Lake area, as the timeline for construction of the ultimate access is undetermined. The closure of this intersection would also impact access to the City of Edmonton lands east of Ray Gibbon Drive and south of 137 Avenue with future access to these lands from the South Riel development in St. Albert.

The City of Edmonton, the City of St. Albert and Alberta Transportation have been working collaboratively to evaluate the area and develop an interim plan to alleviate operational concerns associated with the current intersection at Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue. As a result of the collaborative effort of all parties, an operational analysis was completed (Attachment 2) and a plan was developed for modifications to the Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue intersection and the off-ramp from Anthony Henday Drive (Attachment 3). The changes agreed to by all parties include:

- Closing the westbound to northbound right turn merge from Anthony Henday Drive on to Ray Gibbon Drive;
- Constructing a dedicated right turn lane at the signalized intersection of Ray Gibbon Drive / Anthony Henday Drive westbound ramp;
- Developing a northbound acceleration lane to Ray Gibbon Drive north of Anthony Henday Drive;
- Extending the northbound to westbound left turn bay at the Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue intersection; and
- Modifying the northbound to eastbound right turn geometry at Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue to allow only simple right turn movements to mitigate the informal use of the east leg of 137 Avenue as a u-turn.

In combination with the operational benefits provided by the widening of Ray Gibbon Drive, these modifications are anticipated to improve operations and safety in this area for the short term. For efficiency, the work is being coordinated to be delivered by the City of St. Albert as a scope addition of the Ray Gibbon Drive widening project. These improvements are scheduled for construction in 2021 and will serve as an interim solution until the future connection of LeClair Way can be accomplished.

Further, the City of Edmonton is working closely with the Big Lake Area Structure Plan developers to review development related traffic and the required roadway improvements. Any additional zonings in the Big Lake Area Structure Plan will require Transportation Impact Assessment updates to determine if development related roadway or access improvements are required.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Goods and services move efficiently			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Goods and services move efficiently	Business satisfaction: goods and services transportation (percent of survey respondents who are satisfied/very satisfied)	50.5% (2017)	53.0% (2018)
	Travel Time and Reliability for Goods and Services Movement	10:09 (2017) - 50% of the time	12:30 (2018) - 50% of the time

	(time in minutes: seconds to drive a 10-km route)	13:35 (2017) - 85% of the time	16:00 (2018) - 85% of the time
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Attachments

1. Big Lake Area Structure Plan - Long Term Transportation Network
2. Summary of Operational Analysis
3. Interim Improvement Plan for Ray Gibbon Drive / 137 Avenue

Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor