



CITY OF ST. ALBERT ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER

TITLE: RECOMMENDATION FOR TIMING OF RAY GIBBON DRIVE TWINNING

Administration is providing the following recommendations for timing of widening Ray Gibbon Drive, along with an update of advocacy performed and “next steps” as information to Council.

BACKGROUND:

Timing of Widening

Administration completed an operational analysis of Ray Gibbon Drive using current (2017) traffic volumes and forecasted growth to deliver an evidence based approach to acknowledge and plan for Ray Gibbon Drive improvements.

The operational analysis gave the following predictions of when traffic congestion will be at unacceptable levels at the Ray Gibbon Drive intersections; based on existing traffic volumes and annual growth rates shown from 2% to 8% per year. The LeClair Way intersection has experienced an annual traffic growth rate of 6.5% per year for the past five years.

Table 1: *Growth Rates and Triggers for Widening of Ray Gibbon Drive*

Intersection	Growth Rate (Volume of Traffic Growth / Year)			
	2%	4%	6%	8%
LeClair Way	Currently failing under existing volumes.			
McKenney Avenue	3 years	1 Year		
Giroux Road	22 years	11 years	7 years	5 years
Villeneuve Road	25 + years			

From the evaluation results identified in Table 1, Table 2 provides a recommendation of staging for widening of Ray Gibbon Drive.

- a) Cost estimates shown in Table 2 represent an estimated cost of construction based on the Ray Gibbon Drive Functional Study, updated to 2017 construction costs, with an accuracy of +/- 25%.
- b) The time frames shown in Table 2, represent a two to four percent growth rate with triggers identified in Table 1.

Table 2: Recommended Staged Widening of Ray Gibbon Drive and Cost Estimate

Stage	Road Segment	Engineering / Design	Construction	Construction Cost Estimate (2017 value) (+/- 25%)
1	Existing 4-Lane cross-section (south City Limit) to just south of the Sturgeon River	2018	2018	\$28.0 million
2	South of the Sturgeon River to North of the McKenney Avenue intersection	2020	2021	\$20.6 million
3	From North of the McKenney Avenue intersection to Villeneuve Road	2028	2029	\$46.6 million

- c) The relevance of “2018”, signifies the priority for this area improvement; representing that the road segment and intersection are currently over capacity and warranted for capital investment.
- d) There are currently no Capital Project Charters within the 10-year Capital Plan for widening of Ray Gibbon Drive.
- e) Ray Gibbon Drive Off-Site Levy Model.
 - a. Half of the costs associated with the initial construction of the first two lanes of Ray Gibbon Drive were captured within the Off-Site Levy model.
 - b. No further offsite levies are anticipated to be charged for widening

Advocacy for Provincial Capital Investment in Ray Gibbon Drive

City of St. Albert representatives have advocated to the Province for funding the widening of Ray Gibbon Drive from both the political and administrative level.

Actions have been inclusive of:

- 1) Acknowledgment of Ray Gibbon Drive twinning as an Advocacy Initiative
- 2) Letters written to the Provincial Minister of Transportation
- 3) Identification of Ray Gibbon Drive widening and extension within the Capital Region Board (CRB) Transportation Priorities Report
- 4) Meeting directly with Provincial representatives on local and regional transportation project priorities

From the above actions, the following results have occurred:

- 1) Within the 2017 – 2019 Alberta Capital Plan, Ray Gibbon Drive was added to the “unfunded” list of Capital Projects. This is the first Provincial budget to acknowledge the roadway and investment opportunity.

- 2) Communication received from the Minister of Transportation office (letter dated June 2016), has identified that Alberta Transportation was performing traffic modeling work to evaluate operations of Ray Gibbon Drive and they had completed a corridor study to extend Ray Gibbon Drive to Highway 37.
 - a. The correspondence indicated that the modeling would be completed in 2016 and further communication would occur.
 - b. To date, no further communication or information has been received in regard to the Provincial roadway modeling.

- 3) For the 2017 Capital Region Board Transportation Priority Report, Administration requested that the project of Ray Gibbon Drive be amended by breaking it into three road segments and thus three separate projects, versus being referenced as a single long road corridor as a single project.
 - a. The road sections identified within the 2017 operational analysis align with the road segments proposed within the Capital Region Board Transportation Priorities Report.

Next Steps

The following actions are in progress or planned:

- 1) Administration is attempting to meet with Alberta Transportation representatives to discuss Ray Gibbon Drive, topics inclusive of:
 - a. The modeling work performed by the Province, the resulting report and recommendations generated by their work
 - b. Information gathered from the City of St. Albert's Operational Analysis of Ray Gibbon Drive.
 - c. Regional impact and priority of Ray Gibbon Drive
 - i. Local priority level
 - ii. Regional priority level
 - iii. Provincial priority level

Leading into discussions with the Province, Administration is exploring non-traditional alternatives to fund Ray Gibbon Drive with effort to expedite the southern portion of the project. Further updates and information will be provided to Council members as communication occurs and details are finalized.

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