



ALBERTA
TRANSPORTATION

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Grande Prairie-Wapiti*

AR62652

August 13, 2014

Ms. Jacquie Hansen-Sydenham
President
Discovery Ridge Community Association
PO Box 75023
Westhills RPO
Calgary, AB T3H 3M1

Dear Ms. Hansen-Sydenham:

Thank you for your letter regarding construction of the West Calgary Ring Road. As Minister of Transportation, I am pleased to respond.

The planning phase for the West and Southwest Calgary Ring Road project was completed in 2009 and the public open houses held during that process were the formal means for residents to provide their comments on the project at that time.

We recognize that the current plans for the West Calgary Ring Road adjacent to the community of Discovery Ridge puts the roadway closer to the existing residential development compared to other areas of the Calgary Ring Road. The philosophy of building first the outside (collector) lanes of the express-collector freeway systems is being applied throughout the corridor primarily to reduce impact to traffic and reduce overall cost when additional capacity is required in future. This approach also provides a consistent median width throughout the project, giving optimum driving aesthetics and added safety in the first stage as the opposing traffic lanes are separated by the maximum distance. However, my department will review this approach and the design further to see whether opportunities exist for any modifications to the current design.

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My department is currently updating the noise modeling study for the West Calgary Ring Road project based on Alberta Transportation's standards. We recognize this is not the same criterion the City of Calgary uses; however, it has been used on all the other sections of the Calgary Ring Road project. Any noise mitigation measures that may be needed to meet this criterion will be identified by this study. Based on this review we will look at what options are appropriate to address these issues. We anticipate having the results of this work by September of this year.

Landscaping within the Transportation and Utility (TUC) corridor is minimized to prevent future conflicts with the use of this land for transportation and utility work. As you have noted, this section is narrower than majority of the TUC around Calgary, with future utility lines to be installed in this corridor. Keeping these lands available for these uses is part of the primary purpose of the TUC.

As you have noted, the Calgary Ring Road and the Edmonton Ring Road are fully illuminated urban freeways. The decision to illuminate these roads has been made to increase the safety of the road users. As the cities continue to grow, traffic will continue to increase adding to the need to ensure these roadways operate in a safe manner. As lighting technology is evolving we will review the lighting requirements used for this and the remaining sections of the Calgary Ring Road prior to proceeding with the project.

The Elbow Valley Constructed Wetland will be impacted by the Southwest Calgary Ring Road and we are currently in discussions with the City of Calgary regarding this issue. At this time, an alternative location for this facility has not yet been determined. Currently, we are working with the City of Calgary on storm water management for the West and Southwest Calgary Ring Roads. I can advise that all work will meet the standards and requirements of Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.

The proposed interchange at 69 Street / Discovery Ridge Boulevard and the West Calgary Ring Road will have both a sidewalk on the west side of the overpass and a regional pathway on the east side of the overpass. We have worked with the City of Calgary on these pathway connections.

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Alberta Transportation and Alberta Infrastructure have been working cooperatively with the Calgary Parks Foundation on their Calgary Greenway initiative and will continue to do so. However, a pathway within the Transportation and Utility Corridor is not part of the current construction plans for the West Calgary Ring Road project.

I have instructed my department to contact you shortly to arrange a meeting with your Ring Road committee to go over your concerns on site.

Alberta Transportation will continue to review the issues you have raised in your letter and we will keep you informed of the results of our review of the alignment of the roadway.

At this time, we are planning on holding public information sessions for the Southwest and West Calgary Ring Road projects late this fall. The dates, timing and locations have not yet been determined but will be advertised in advance of the meetings.

I trust this information is of use to you. Thank you for taking the time to write.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Drysdale". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Drysdale
Minister