

Highway 2 /Gaetz Avenue Interchange

Project Description

Highway 2, Gaetz Avenue and Taylor Drive Interchange Improvements

Beginning summer 2016, construction will start on the reconstruction of the interchanges at Highway 2 at Gaetz Avenue and Taylor Drive near the City of Red Deer. The project will include the removal of three bridge structures, construction of five new bridge structures, reconfiguration of ramps and intersections, realignment of the highway, expansion to six lanes and the construction of new collector-distributor roads.

The new Taylor Drive/Gaetz Ave and Highway 2 interchange system will consist of the realignment of Highway 2 to improve the geometry through the corridor, expansion to six lanes (three in each direction) from 32nd Street to Mackenzie Drive and the introduction of a collector-distributor (C-D) road system that will run parallel to Highway 2.

The interchange system is designed to separate high speed highway traffic from low speed local traffic. This is accomplished with the construction of a new C-D road system. The C-D road system will include a one way road on each side of the highway that will run parallel to the highway and have a posted speed limit of 70km. The new C-D road configuration is a significant safety improvement to the existing interchange.

The southbound C-D road starts North of Taylor Drive and terminates at the North end of Leva Avenue in the Gasoline Alley (West) Business District. Once on the C-D road motorists will have the option of travelling North on Taylor Drive, South on Highway 2A, entering the Gasoline Alley business district or entering Highway 2 southbound.

The northbound C-D road will start South of Gaetz Avenue and terminates North of Taylor Drive. Once on the C-D road motorists will have the option of travelling North on Gaetz Avenue, North on Taylor Drive (via new access to Taylor Drive), South on Highway 2A or enter Highway 2. As well, motorist travelling on the Gasoline Alley East service road will be able to access Highway 2 directly via the C-D road.

The new interchange will improve safety and accommodate increased growth in the Red Deer area.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this project needed?

The project is needed to address increasing traffic demands on Highway 2 . It will expand the capacity of the highway and provide numerous safety improvements.

Once the project is complete, what changes will I notice?

Noticeable improvements for drivers include:

- Expansion to 6 lanes on Highway 2, (three lanes in each direction) from 32nd Street to Mackenzie Road
- Elimination of the sharp curve in the northbound direction at the Gaetz Avenue overpass,
- Replacement of the left hand merge onto Highway 2 southbound from Gaetz Avenue with a ramp that will separate the low speed local traffic to Gasoline Alley from the high speed highway traffic,
- New northbound and southbound collector/distributor (C/D) roads (similar to service roads), used to separate (low speed) local traffic from (high speed) Highway traffic.

Is this the best option?

The design of this project has gone through numerous evaluations to ensure that the best possible design has been selected to accommodate changing populations and transportation corridor use. The design will meet the growing traffic demands now and in the future, ensuring the safety of the travelling public along the Highway 2 corridor. This design will also accommodate the continued growth and development of neighbouring municipalities, including surrounding commercial development.

Have the public and business owners been involved in the planning?

Over the past few years, affected stakeholders including business owners and neighbouring municipal partners have been invited to participate in various consultation sessions which included open houses, information sessions and presentations to elected municipal officials.

How long will this project take to construct?

Construction is anticipated to start summer 2016 and is expected to span three construction seasons.

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How will traffic access Gasoline Alley?

During construction, access to Gasoline Alley will be maintained via Mackenzie Road and Lantern Street (from Highway 2A). Once complete, a new collector/distributor (C/D) road system (similar to a service road) will allow drivers to access Gasoline Alley via Gaetz Avenue, Taylor Drive and Highway 2.

How will pedestrians access Gasoline Alley?

Currently, there is no pedestrian access from the City of Red Deer to Gasoline Alley. The selected design will accommodate pedestrians via a path along Taylor Drive, under Highway 2. The connecting trail systems are under the jurisdiction of the City of Red Deer and Red Deer County.

Why are you building a roundabout at the entrance to Gasoline Alley?

As part of the design process, Alberta Transportation is required to investigate opportunities to utilize roundabouts at controlled intersections. A roundabout was identified as the preferred option. Additional information on roundabouts can be found on our website at: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/roundabouts.htm>

Will there be an impact to the environment?

Construction will impact surrounding wetlands. An environmental assessment has been completed and has determined the best way to minimize these impacts. Alberta Transportation will ensure that all required permits and approvals are in place.

Will there be disruption to traffic?

As with any type of highway construction, drivers may experience delays. Alberta Transportation is taking steps such as developing a staging plan to ensure that disruption to the travelling public can be minimized. Two lanes of traffic in each direction are expected to remain open during daylight hours on Highway 2, with a reduced speed limit.

For up to date road information, please visit 511.alberta.ca

How much will this project cost ?

The project is estimated to cost \$100 million.