

# HIGHWAY 63 FUNCTIONAL PLANNING STUDY FROM TWP RD 642 TO HWY 55

## PLANNING PROCESS NEEDS PUBLIC INPUT

### BACKGROUND

Alberta Transportation has retained CastleGlenn Consultants Inc. to undertake a functional planning study along the Highway 63 corridor in the vicinity of the Village of Boyle.

The study is to **analyse** the existing conditions and traffic operations within the general study area, as well as the results of previous studies. Also the study is to **generate** options for both a short-term and long-term strategy for twinning the highway, which is to the satisfaction of the County of Athabasca, Village of Boyle and Alberta Transportation. Finally the study will **recommend** an alignment considering the short and long term plans together with the future economic growth of the affected area.

The general study area extends from the Hwy 63/Twp Rd 642 intersection on the south to the Hwy 63/Hwy 55 intersections on the north.



Highway 63 is classified as a Level 1 highway and therefore planning is underway to identify:

- A short-term initial 4-lane (*expressway* standard) cross-section, which would be serviced by at-grade intersections and integrate with the economic development objectives of the Village of Boyle and the County of Athabasca.
- A longer-term or “*ultimate*” solution is also required to accommodate the timeframe when at-grade intersections would no longer function and access would have to be provided by a 4-lane cross-section (*freeway* standard), with access provided to the Village of Boyle by a grade-separated interchange.

## ***EXISTING CONDITIONS***

Existing traffic volumes within the study area currently reach up to 5,100 vehicles-per-day (vpd) on Highway 63 (just north of the Highway 831 intersection) and reach up to 3,900 vpd (just south of the Highway 663 intersection). Twinning this segment of the Highway 63 corridor will be considered when the traffic volumes reach 10,000 vpd.

Developing a concept that would provide for both an “interim” expressway and an “ultimate” freeway corridor within the study area poses numerous design challenges recognizing existing lakes, railway corridors, utility corridors and cemeteries, all of which must be taken into consideration in the planning of future roadway infrastructure.

## ***STUDY PROCESS***

The proposed methodology for the project has the following six distinct simultaneous phases :

### *Phase 1: Information Collection*

- Land use plans, historical collision statistics and historical traffic information collection
- Undertake traffic overview and forecast volumes

### *Phase 2: Public Involvement*

- Undertake Focus Groups with those individuals that may be directly impacted by the highway improvements
- Public Open House # 1 - Study introduction and review of potential alignments
- Review and consider all public input present a focus groups and the public open house
- Focus Groups and Public Open House # 2 - Presentation of “preferred” short- and long-term solution
- Review public input and refine the preferred solution

### *Phase 3: Evaluation of Alberta Energy Corridor (AEC) Interim Highway 63 Configuration*

- Meet with AEC representatives to discuss the interim Highway 63 configuration and vision

### *Phase 4: Evaluation Comparison of All Viable Alternatives*

- Identify “first-cut” alternative concepts
- Assess operational traffic analysis, structural and service road requirements of the alternative concepts
- Undertake environmental, geotechnical and historical studies and confirm utility, drainage and property impacts
- Undertake a comparative assessment and a benefit-cost analysis

### *Phase 5: Preliminary Design and Evaluation of a Long-Term Highway 63 Solution*

- Determine the preferred short- and long-term concept
- Develop a staging strategy

### *Phase 6: Functional Design and Right-of-Way (ROW) of Short- and Long-Term Highway 63 Solution*

- Prepare Functional Plans and ROW plans
- Advance study recommendations to Alberta Transportation

This study represents the initial stage in the planning process. Representatives from the Village of Boyle and Athabasca County are members of the Technical Review Committee.

For more information on this planning study, please contact **Mr. Arthur Gordon**, Consultant Project Manager, **CastleGlenn Consultants Inc.** by phone toll-free at (855) 857-9303, by fax at (403) 252-9331, or by mail at 110/120 1710 Radisson Drive SE, Calgary, Alberta T2A 7E9.