



RIVER VALLEY ROAD/ GROAT ROAD INTERCHANGE CONCEPT PLANNING

AUGUST 2015

ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY for RECOMMENDED CONCEPT PLAN May 26 – June 15, 2015

WHAT WE HEARD

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The City of Edmonton has finalized a long-range concept plan for the River Valley Road / Groat Road interchange.

This interchange is a popular commuter and recreation route for all travellers. It provides all directional movements between River Valley Road, Groat Road and Victoria Park Road and provides access to Government House Park and the River Valley trail system.

Various communication methods were used to foster information sharing and consultation with stakeholders, including one-on-one meetings, e-newsletters, online surveys, social media, and a public open house, as well as communicating directly with Edmontonians through emails and telephone calls.

To address congestion and navigation issues experienced by commuters and to improve safety and accessibility for all modes of transportation, a recommended concept plan has been completed for the interchange and was shared with the public on the project website. An online survey was posted alongside the recommended plan between May 16 and June 15, 2015 to solicit feedback.

FEEDBACK RECEIVED

A total of 148 responses to the online survey were received. The following provides an overview of the results of the surveys submitted. **Note: not all respondents completed each question, some questions allowed for multiple answers.**

The majority of survey respondents are commuters who use the interchange (78%). 33% and 39% of survey

respondents use the corridor for jogging and cycling respectively. Fewer respondents (14%) are employed at an adjacent area business/park and 5% are transit users.



Based on previous input gathered through the open house in November 2014, we heard that maintaining all existing movements was important, and 75% of people felt full reconfiguration of the interchange was not necessary. Respondents were asked if the improvements to specific sections of the interchange outlined in the recommended plan are sufficient to address current operational and safety concerns. 58% of respondents agreed that the plan was sufficient while 23% disagreed.

THEMES

The themes identified through this online survey are similar to those we've heard throughout the public engagement process.

Signage Standards

The City's Traffic Operations group undertook a signage review and concluded the current interchange signage meets standards. Although 46% of respondents agree that the signage requirements were sufficiently reviewed, 25%



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believe that signage at this interchange still poses a problem.

The project team has shared the comments and results of the online survey with Traffic Operations for additional consideration. Traffic Operations has noted that the improvements outlined in the recommended concept plan will require changes to signage to reflect the new configuration.

New Traffic Signal

44% of respondents agreed that the new signalized intersection will be safer and smoother than the existing situation, while 35% disagreed.

Some survey respondents had concerns about the addition of a new traffic signal outlined in Improvement #2. Notably, there was confusion over the type of signal being installed and concern that a new signal would increase congestion.

The new traffic signal will remain green for the heavier east-west movement along River Valley Road and will only change phases if a pedestrian presses the button to cross or a vehicle approaches from the Groat Road off-ramp.

Thorough traffic analysis conducted by the City has shown that this type of signal with an eastbound left-turn lane operates better than the existing configuration in the peak periods, which will reduce delays and create a safer situation for crossing pedestrians and turning vehicles.

Pedestrians and Cyclists

Safety of pedestrians and cyclists was a common theme among survey responses. There was strong support for the changes with respondents agreeing that the new crosswalk locations (51%) and realigned shared-use path (46%) were improvements over the existing configuration. Only 15% did not agree with the new crosswalk locations and 16% disagreed with the shared-use path alignment.

A few respondents who did not agree with the improvements were concerned with the longer walking distances to cross Groat Road Bridge and the need to wait for a signal light to cross River Valley Road. Although slightly longer, the widened and realigned shared-use path reduces the steep slope making it safer for cyclists and pedestrians, especially in slippery winter conditions. With the existing mid-block crosswalk on River Valley Road relocated to the new signalized intersection, there is better visibility of the pedestrian crossing coupled with more driver awareness when approaching an intersection, creating a safer crossing situation.

Speed Limit

A number of respondents were concerned about the design speed of 60 – 70 km/h, as shown in the recommended concept plan. To clarify, this is a factor of safety used in roadway design. For example, the length of turn lanes depends on this design speed, allowing enough time for vehicles to slow down and stop (if necessary) prior to turning at an intersection. The posted speed limit for the interchange will remain at 50 – 60 km/h as it is today.

DESIGN UPDATE: IMPROVEMENT #2

The design of Improvement #2 has been modified from what was originally posted on the project website in May 2015. In order to reduce confusion and meet driver expectation, the new design now reflects a more traditional T-intersection.

In the new design, westbound vehicles on River Valley Road turning right must enter a channelized right turn bay at the intersection and yield to eastbound vehicles turning left.

The new design is shown below.



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WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Using the information received from the online survey and feedback from other City of Edmonton departments, the project team updated the recommended concept plan with a few minor adjustments and submitted it for approval. The plan was approved on July 27, 2015.

There is currently no funding identified for the construction of improvements at the River Valley Road / Groat Road interchange, therefore exact construction timelines are unknown. Transportation Planning undertakes concept planning so that if funding becomes available, plans are in place to move quickly into the detailed design and construction phase of a project. Construction for any or all of the localized improvements for this project may occur once funding becomes available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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