



700 - 9990 Jasper Avenue,
WORLD TRADE CENTRE EDMONTON
Edmonton, Alberta Canada T5J 1P7

tel 780.426.4620 fax 780.424.7946

Edmonton Ring Road System

November 2009

Background

Sustainable and efficient movement of goods and services for the betterment of the Edmonton region's business community has for a long time been a priority of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. To that point, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce continues to be a strong advocate of transportation planning initiatives that are enablers of economic development and the efficient functioning of our roadway system. From that perspective the Government of Alberta deserves credit for the foresight and financial commitment to developing Anthony Henday Drive and for initiating plans for an outer ring road in the Edmonton Capital Region.

However, the manner in which Anthony Henday Drive is being developed is in some ways in contrast with the principles of efficiency and transportation infrastructure as an enabler of development. For example, the first (south-west) phase of Anthony Henday Drive was not initially developed with free flow access and egress, not only was this inefficient from a traffic flow perspective but is now a necessary add-on that is also more costly than it would have been if fully developed from the start.

Most recently, construction on Anthony Henday Drive at the 137 Ave interchange, with a flyover of 137 Avenue instead of access ramps, does not provide adequate access to one of the largest employment clusters within the Edmonton Capital Region. It has been suggested that the responsibility for the movement of inter-municipal goods and services along this route could be downloaded to the Municipal level (and subsequently to various business owners). However, the cost to fund this additional and necessary access at an estimated \$12.8 Million is prohibitive both for the municipalities, who would most likely have to rely on provincial grants for such a project, and for the developers who need to remain competitive and affordable with new projects. Not only does this approach act as a deterrent to development it contradicts the fundamental principle of integrating land-use planning with transportation planning especially in the context of the recently approved Capital Region Integrated Growth Management Plan. As opposed to enabling growth, the current construction approach, which limits access to and from the ring road system, has the potential of sterilizing adjacent land-use and thus has direct economic consequences for the growth and sustainability of the Edmonton Area business community.

As the Province moves forward with the next and final phase of the Anthony Henday, the NE quadrant, which is currently in the functional planning stage and the future Edmonton regional outer ring road system, currently in the conceptual planning stage, it is essential that unintended negative consequences resulting from partial builds of these transportation systems is avoided

Recommendations

That the Government of Alberta:

1. Ensure complete integration of regional and municipal land use plans within the provincial transportation planning process;
2. Avoid any downloading of costs that may be necessary for an immediate full build of approved transportation infrastructure within provincial jurisdiction; and
3. Ensure strict adherence to the principles of efficient movement of goods and services and transportation infrastructure as an enabler of growth in all phase of construction on the Anthony Henday Drive and the future outer ring road system.