

SOUTHWEST CALGARY RING ROAD

The City of Calgary Connectors

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Calgary Ring Road?

Over the past 30 years, the City of Calgary and the Province of Alberta have planned for a high capacity road system around Calgary to accommodate The City's and the Province's future growth. The Calgary Ring Road is envisioned as a combined Transportation and Utility Corridor (TUC), designed to meet Calgary's growing population and provincial transportation needs, as well as accommodate major power lines, pipelines and municipal utility lines.

What is the Southwest Calgary Ring Road (SWCRR)?

The SWCRR is the connection of the Ring Road between Highway 8 and Highway 22X. Other portions of the Ring Road are either under construction or in the final stages of functional planning. Several alignment options for the SWCRR have been examined over the past 30 years and shared with the public.

The current SWCRR Project is a partnership that includes the Provincial Government, the Tsuu T'ina Nation, and The City of Calgary.

What option is The City of Calgary considering for linking Southland Drive and 90 Avenue to the Ring Road in the Southwest?

The City of Calgary Transportation Planning is currently exploring various connection options to the SWCRR. These include Southland Drive or 90 Avenue S.W. or a combination of both. These options are being evaluated as a result of concerns raised at the last public open houses.

What is the purpose of the SWCRR connections?

Connecting to the Ring Road will:

- Be consistent with The Calgary Transportation Plan's (*Go Plan*) key policies on balancing mobility with community and environmental quality and costs
- Increase the efficiency of The City's transportation system
- Result in a reduction of green house gas emissions and energy consumption by reducing travel times and congestion
- Facilitate transit connections and access for emergency vehicles

What about the environmental impacts of the connector roads on established communities?

The following issues were identified at the July public open houses and subsequent communication, and passed on to the project staff to take into consideration during the development of a recommended roadway network. All of the issues identified can be managed and mitigated during the functional planning stage once the land requirements for the roadways have been finalized. The issues that were identified are:

- Noise
- Shortcutting
- Pedestrian safety
- Projected traffic volumes
- Visual impact
- Loss of green space

Can I still have input into the process?

Yes. Presentation of an impact analysis of some of the potential connections will form part of the continuing discussion. During this phase, the Technical Committee is meeting with community leaders and will then conduct open houses for directly affected communities. This community-focused discussion will precede a second set of Calgary general public open houses scheduled for late fall 2005.

City Administration will ultimately be bringing forward a report with recommendations to the Standing Policy Committee on Land Use Planning and Transportation and then to a subsequent regularly scheduled meeting of City Council for consideration regarding city land requirements associated with the SWRR.

Dates and locations of the public meetings will be provided to community members via a community update distributed to households, as well as newspaper ads. Information on the dates and locations of meetings will also be available on The City of Calgary and provincial government web sites.

Why are so many connector roads required?

Calgary's transportation system consists of a series of interconnected roadways of varying levels of importance. Transportation corridors such as freeways, expressways and major roads, are designed to provide mobility and the safe movement of goods and services. These corridors are strategically spaced on a grid system to provide the maximum benefit for all users, including transit riders, pedestrians and cyclists.

Major roadways such as 90 Avenue and Southland Drive served as the basis for development of the existing communities. When communities are in the planning stages, the connectors to major freeways significantly influence land use assumptions and potential build out. The development potential for the communities was originally based on an internal and external transportation network that meets the servicing requirements of not only the community but the surrounding network as well.

The current version of Calgary's transportation system was planned with the understanding these connections would be made. More important, this is what City Council have based all their decisions on, for previous as well as current transportation and land use planning studies.

Why are 90 Avenue and Southland Drive being considered as access roads in addition to Anderson Road and Glenmore Trail?

The provincial Ring Road and The City of Calgary connector roads are being planned to reflect population and land use for the next 50+ years of growth.

Considerable population growth is expected in new developments in southwest Calgary. Roadway connections on the southwest side of the city cannot sustain the anticipated growth.

The projected traffic volumes on Anderson Road and Glenmore Trail expressways exceed the available capacity based on the ultimate lane configurations. Without the major roadways of Southland Drive and 90 Avenue connected to the Ring Road, homes along both expressways would have to be removed and significant costs incurred to construct additional required infrastructure.

Why are you considering linking Southland Drive to 90 Avenue?

Traffic analyses indicate that with only one primary connection, the vehicle trips within the communities are not evenly distributed. This places significant traffic volumes and pressures on the residential roadways within the community nearest to the roadway that is connected.

By connecting both Southland Drive and 90 Avenue, the vehicle trips are more evenly distributed throughout the communities and are within the acceptable environment guidelines for the major roadway designation for Southland Drive and 90 Avenue.

Why are you considering an interchange at 90 Avenue, given that 90 Avenue ends at 14 Street?

The Ring Road is designed to a freeway standard, with free flow conditions and minimum spacing requirements for interchanges in order to minimize weaving conflicts. The minimum distance from the proposed systems interchange at Anderson Road determines the next permitted location to the north for another interchange. Southland Drive is too close. However, the 90 Avenue connection falls within the stipulated design criteria for a freeway.

Will the connector roadways need to be widened to allow for additional traffic?

No. 90 Avenue and Southland Drive are designated as major roadways as identified in the City of Calgary Transportation Bylaw. This designation determines the minimum road right-of-way requirements, maximum number of lanes, recommended traffic volumes, lane widths, access controls, pedestrian and cyclist facilities, intersection spacing, etc.

Traffic analysis completed to date indicates that with Southland Drive and 90 Avenue connected, the current available road right-of-way is adequate.

What is the impact on 14 Street with and without the connections and the construction of the Ring Road?

14 Street is classified as an expressway standard of roadway. It is anticipated that 14 Street, in its ultimate configuration, would become a free flow transportation corridor.

Findings from recent transportation planning studies suggest the requirement for future interchanges along 14 Street may be delayed for an extended period of time. However, these studies, approved by City Council, always assumed that 90 Avenue and Southland Drive would form a connection to the Ring Road.

Will a connection of 90 Avenue or Southland Drive create short-cutting through our community and unsafe conditions for pedestrians?

The adjacent communities will be bordered by high capacity expressways/freeways which carry high volumes of traffic at a much higher speed with greater distance provided between intersections, and ultimately interchanges. The tendency for motorists to remain on these corridors far exceeds traveling through communities at a reduced speed with closely spaced intersections, traffic control devices

such as stop signs, yield conditions, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings.

What is the schedule of work associated with the SWCRR

Work is underway on the environmental and ultimate roadway requirements. This will establish the amount of land required for this project. Land requirements are scheduled to be finalized early in November. Functional planning work is expected to continue well into late next year where details and staging plans will be developed. The Province has not committed to the actual timing for construction of this section of the Ring Road. The City's connections will be ranked and evaluated against all other city-wide transportation priority projects.

How can I get more information on the impact of this project on my community and me?

For more information on the Calgary Ring Road, contact Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation:

- www.inftra.gov.ab.ca
- Eileen Kahler, TransTech Engineering – ekahler@transtech.ca

For more information on the Ring Road connectors, contact The City of Calgary:

- www.calgary.ca
- Andrew Albiston, Transportation Planning - andrew.albiston@calgary.ca