



Briefing Note



To: Members of Council

Subject: SW Area Construction over Easter Weekend

Date: April 23, 2019

This briefing note has been prepared to provide Council with an overview of the construction activity that occurred over the long weekend in SW Calgary, summarize the actions taken, and provide next steps moving forward.

Situation Summary

Construction Activity Overview

SW BRT: The SW BRT project had a planned Easter weekend closure that closed all lanes on 14th Street, between Southland Drive and Heritage Drive, and lanes on 90 Avenue from 14 Street to 16 Street through a staged approach starting on Thursday April 18 and continuing to Tuesday April 23 at 5:00 am. A temporary access from southbound 14th Street in to Glenmore Landing shopping centre was provided. Extensive communication was undertaken in the weeks and months leading up to this work, including notifications to EMS, AHS, CPS and Calgary Fire, Community Associations, mail outs to residents, mail outs and in-person contact with businesses (including Heritage Park) and regular communications with Ward 8, 11 and 13 offices.

When the contractor was retained for the SW BRT project in late 2017, we began working on the construction schedule and reviewing the best way to accomplish work that needed to be done within the roadway. In 2018, we recognized that a full closure of the 14th Street/90th Avenue intersection would allow significant work to be done cost effectively and with less impact on the traveling public than would occur if the work was spread over 6 weeks or more (the time that would be required to complete the same work without a full multi-day closure). The team evaluated conducting the work over the Thanksgiving long weekend in 2018 and the Easter long weekend in 2019. Local businesses expressed that the Thanksgiving long weekend was their busiest weekend of the year, so we selected this Easter long weekend for the work. The work included:

- installing one major sanitary line crossing and one storm line crossing 14th Street,
- installing an 80m section of watermain along 90th Avenue,
- installing two fire hydrant leads, making six new catch basin connections, and installing three electrical crossings, and
- removing three sections of abandoned oil and gas pipelines from the centre of the intersection and along 90th Avenue

Anderson Road: The Anderson Road widening project also had a planned off-peak lane closure for paving of the median that occurred on Thursday April 18 from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm in the off-peak direction (eastbound). The purpose of this closure was to pave the median, allowing us to shift traffic onto the median to maintain four full lanes of travel during continued widening of Anderson Road in preparation for connection with the Ring Road next year. Extensive public engagement is not undertaken with single lane closures like this, but the information is provided on the City's construction and detours website and associated traffic control is planned in support of the closures ahead of time.

Impact of Construction Activity and Action Taken

Our goal is always to minimize construction impacts to people who live, work and travel through our work sites, as much as possible, while balancing cost and schedule impacts to projects and Calgarians. We recognize that the overlap between the two projects resulted in increased delay and inconvenience to Calgarians. This was a result of a breakdown in communication which resulted in more simultaneous work than intended during the day on Thursday.

Briefing Note

The City received 115 calls via 311 on Thursday and an additional 35 calls Friday through Sunday. As a result of the unexpected level of congestion observed in the field, the following immediate actions were taken on Thursday:

- Calgary Police Service were called to flag the intersections of Southland Drive and 14th Street, Anderson Road and Woodpark Boulevard, and Anderson Road and 24th Street
- City crews temporarily reversed one eastbound lane closure on Anderson Road to one westbound lane to help ease southbound 24th Street traffic delays for a short time prior to the PM rush hour
- Our signal crew was dispatched to the site and signal timing at Southland Dr./14 St was revised
- We rescheduled any additional work planned throughout the SW until the full closure of 14th Street and 90th Avenue was reopened (which occurred ahead of schedule, April 22 at 3pm)
- Work on Anderson Road was stopped as soon as the paving trucks that had been dispatched had finished their work. No further paving or work was undertaken on Anderson Road throughout the weekend.

Over the course of the weekend, City staff continued to carefully monitor the area, adjusting signal timing and the messaging on the 13 variable message signs used for the project.

Current status / next steps

We have completed work ahead of schedule. The 14 Street and 90 Avenue S.W. intersection was re-opened Monday April 22 at 3 p.m. Our project teams held a cross-departmental de-brief on Monday, April 22, following the weekend work. We will be moving forward with the following actions:

- A cross-departmental construction coordination committee was established in the summer of 2018 during peak construction season to oversee the communications and planning for all construction projects throughout the SW – the committee was on hold over the winter construction slow down and hadn't been started yet for 2019. This committee is now active, effective immediately. This team includes representatives from Transportation Infrastructure, Roads, Communications, and additional Departments and stakeholders depending on need. Any concerns identified by the committee are escalated accordingly. This model can be used across the City.
- Weekly newsletters that consolidate construction updates for the full SW area will also resume effective immediately. We will continue the current protocol for communicating all closures to emergency services, Ward offices, community associations, businesses and residents.
- Continue holding monthly cross-corporate Capital Works committee meeting (includes Enmax and Atco) – this allows an early look at projects during the planning stages to optimize construction in a way that minimizes things like ripping up a street twice within a few years for two different needs that could have been done concurrently
- Continue weekly meetings within the Detours team to review and coordinate all road closures requested from across the corporation (includes water, Enmax, Atco, etc.) with the exception of emergency closures. All full closures and multiple lane closures that we anticipate having significant impacts to traffic are scheduled during off peak hours, weekends, evenings and nights where feasible. In the rare case where single lane closures are identified in addition to full closures, the requests will be approved through the construction coordination committee. Flaggers for adjacent signals will be reserved on-call on the rare occasion that simultaneous closures are required.
- As an added measure, our Traffic Management Center monitors major closures. They provide daily situation reports and updates on the status of traffic during weekdays and have 24/7 crews that can respond to an event if required.