

Highway 16 Study Round 1 Engagement Summary

Introduction

As part of the national highway system, Highway 16 is a critical link within the Alberta Capital Region and a key part of the east-west inter provincial trade corridor. This study focuses on the 22.5-kilometre section of Highway 16 between the Anthony Henday and Highway 779.

A functional planning study is the first step in understanding and evaluating the future needs of the highway. To accommodate long term growth and operational requirements of the Highway 16 corridor west of Edmonton, Alberta Transportation & Economic Corridors is looking to expand the highway from 2 to 4 lanes in each direction and examine the accesses and interchanges within the study area.

This study considers:

- operational constraints and capacities, access control, interchange types and configurations and right-of-way requirements
- input from multiple stakeholders, and
- the accesses at Range Road 261 and 270 for safety improvement in the near term and access closure in the long term

The study is anticipated to be completed in 2024. Detailed design and construction timelines have not been established at this time.

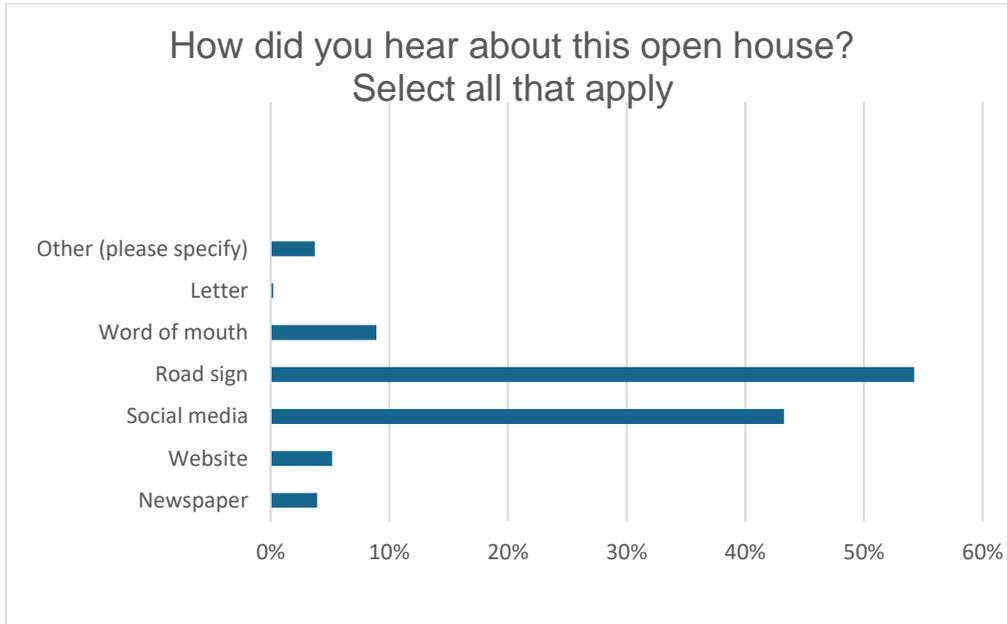
The recommendations identified from this study will improve safety and efficiency along the corridor.

Engagement Process

The study will consider input from stakeholders including the City of Edmonton, the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain and Parkland County, country residential areas and the Acheson Industrial area.

The engagement opportunity between November 2 and 16, 2021 was advertised using:

- The Government of Alberta website
- Road signs along Highway 16 between Anthony Henday Drive and Highway 779
- Advertisements in the Stony Plain Reporter and Spruce Grove Examiner on Friday, October 29 and November 5, 2021
- Social Media ads shared with Parkland County, the City of Edmonton and the Town of Stony Plain to post on their platforms
- Letters sent to stakeholders in the study area



Other:

- Facebook
- MLA
- Road Signs
- AMTA Newsletter
- Word of mouth
- Reside in the area
- GOA website

Interested Albertans participated in the online public engagement between November 2 and 16, 2021.

A total of 483 participants responded to the survey. In addition, four emails from stakeholders and members of the public were received.

Key Themes

CONCERNS

Participants were asked to share any issues, concerns or information they had about the widening Highway 16 and the current highway interchanges and at-grade accesses between Anthony Henday Drive and Highway 779. A summary of key themes by location below is detailed below.

Widening Highway 16 from Anthony Henday Drive to Highway 779.

- Some participant shared that they had concerns and issues with the overall project. The top concerns and issues participants shared included:
 - High traffic volumes and congestion within the project area.
 - Safety concerns due to high volumes of traffic, speeding/speed limit, and at-grade accesses

- Flow of traffic, length of time and disruption construction could have to commuters and users of the highway.
- Impacts to the Wagner Natural Area, wildlife, and the environment.
- Road surface is currently in poor condition.
- Suggestions that participants provided to improve the overall project area include:
 - Expansion of the highway to four-lanes in each direction needs to be done, sooner rather than later.
 - Expand the boundary west past Highway 779.
 - Upgrades to overpasses, on and off ramps and merge lanes.

Highway 16/Winterburn Road Interchange

- Some participants shared that they had concerns and issues with the current Highway 16 and Winterburn Road Interchange along Highway 16. The top concerns and issues participants shared included:
 - High traffic volumes create bottlenecks and congestion during peak travel times.
 - Eastbound interchange is too close to the Anthony Henday Drive and creates congestion, near-misses, and safety concerns.
 - Congestion on the exit ramps back-up onto Highway 16 and cause traffic to come to a stop during peak travel times.
- Suggestions that participants provided to improve the interchange includes:
 - Upgrade the overpass to include turning lights.
 - Longer merge/exit lanes to improve traffic flow entering and exiting the highway.
 - Add additional westbound exit lanes onto Winterburn Road to address the back-up of vehicles onto Highway 16.
 - Changes to the interchange configuration were suggested including cloverleaf and Parclo-B interchanges and a flyover between Winterburn Road and Anthony Henday Drive.
 - Prioritize this interchange to address safety and congestion concerns.
- Some participants indicated that they had no concerns or issues with the current interchange

Highway 16/Highway 60 and Highway 16/44 Interchanges

- Some participants shared that they had concerns and issues with the current Highway 60 and Highway 44 interchanges along Highway 16. The top concerns and issues participants shared included:
 - Merge lanes at the Highway 60 and 44 interchanges are too short and do not allow traffic to properly accelerate and merge into traffic on Highway 16.
 - High traffic volumes and congestion in general and especially during peak travel times.
 - Short exit ramps/lanes and high traffic volumes creates congestion and traffic to back-up on the highway during peak travel times.
 - High volumes of semi-truck traffic entering the highway at both interchanges causes congestion and slows traffic as they are unable to accelerate effectively into traffic on Highway 16.
- Some participants indicated that they had no issues or concerns with the current Highway 60 and Highway 44 interchanges.

- Some participants indicated that widening the highway would improve traffic flow, congestion and safety along Highway 16.
- Some participants indicated that there were traffic congestion issues on Highway 60 and suggested an overpass over the train tracks be implemented.
- Some participants indicated that there were traffic congestion and safety issues at the Highway 60 interchange and suggested the addition of traffic lights at the Highway 16/60 interchange.

Highway 16/Century Road or Highway 16/Jennifer Heil Way Interchanges

- Some participants indicated that they had concerns and experienced issues using the interchanges at Highway 16 and Century Road and Jennifer Heil Way. The top concerns and issues identified by participants included:
 - High traffic volumes and congestion along the highway and those entering and exiting the highway at both interchanges at peak travel times.
 - Traffic backing-up onto the highway at peak travel times which makes it challenging to enter the merge lane and causes safety issues between traffic stopped/merging and those travelling at high speeds along the highway.
 - Noise, construction, road maintenance and costs associated with highway or interchange improvements was also noted as a concern.
- Suggestions that participants provided to improve these interchanges included:
 - Longer merge/exit lanes to improve traffic flow entering and exiting the highway
 - A dedicated exit lane or two exit lanes for traffic exiting the highway at each of the interchange locations.
 - Signage placed more in advance of highway exits to better inform drivers of the upcoming exit.
 - Remove the traffic lights at the interchanges through design (e.g. loop ramps or a cloverleaf design) or improving the synchronization of the lights was suggested by some participants.
 - Improved lighting at interchanges
 - Widening the highway to include three lanes in each direction
 - Widening Century Road and Jennifer Heil Way to include two lanes in each direction north and south to improve traffic flow/reduce congestion.
- Some participants indicated that they had no concerns or issues with the current Century Road or Jennifer Heil interchanges along Highway 16.

Highway 16/Highway 779 Interchange

- Some participants indicated that there are no issues or fewer issues at this interchange than others in the study area.
- Some participants indicated that they had concerns and experienced issues using the interchange at Highway 16 and Highway 779. The top concerns and issues identified by participants included:
 - High traffic volumes and congestion entering and exiting the highway at peak travel times.
 - Traffic backing-up onto the highway at peak travel times which makes it challenging to enter the merge lane and causes safety issues between traffic stopped/merging and those travelling at high speeds along the highway.

- Suggestions that participants provided to improve these interchanges included:
 - Longer merge/exit lanes to improve traffic flow entering and exiting the highway
 - A dedicated exit lane or two exit lanes for traffic exiting the highway
 - Signage placed more in advance of highway exit to better inform drivers of the upcoming exit.
 - Remove the traffic lights at the interchange through design (e.g. loop ramps or a cloverleaf design) to improve traffic flow
 - Improved lighting
 - Widening the highway to include three lanes in each direction

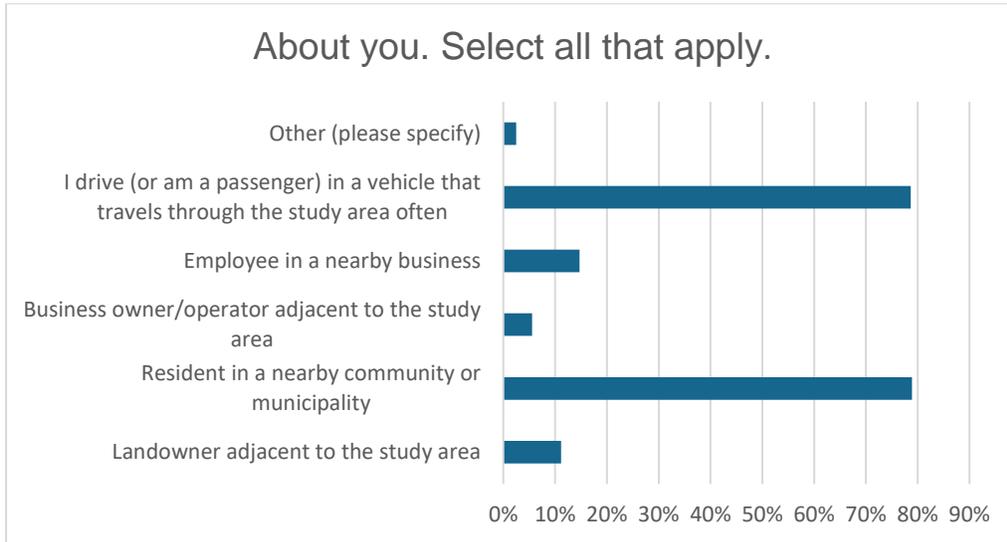
Range Road 261 (between Highway 60 and Winterburn Road) and Range Road 270 (between Century Road and Highway 44) at-grade Accesses

- Some participants indicated that both accesses to Highway 16 at Range Road 261 and 270 should be closed as they are unsafe and suggested that other accesses can be used/modified for local access.
- Some participants indicated that the median should be closed at Range Road 270 and Highway 16 to prohibit left turns which are unsafe and challenging to do with the current traffic volumes and congestion.
- Increase the length of merge and exit lanes to allow drivers to accelerate/decelerate more effectively and reduce back-ups on Highway 16.
- Some participants indicated that Range Road 261 is an important connection to maintain as was the access south of Highway 16 at Range Road 270 to access destinations such as the Winterburn Industrial Area, Wagner Natural Area and Kiwi Nurseries.

Other information, concerns or issues

- Many participants restated their concerns and issues along Highway 16 and the interchanges and at-grade accesses in the study area regarding the high traffic volumes and congestion, short exit/merge lanes and only having two lanes in each direction which causes traffic to slow, back-up on the highway and creates unsafe driving conditions.
- Some participants suggested that signage be installed to remind drivers to remain in the right lane unless they are passing and that semi-trucks be banned from using the left lane once there are three lanes along the highway in each direction.
- Some participants indicated that improvements in the study area are needed in the short term due to the high traffic volumes, congestion, unsafe driving conditions and poor condition of the road surface.
- Some participants were concerned about potential impacts to adjacent natural areas (e.g., Wagner Natural Area), properties and businesses due to changes to the highway, interchanges, or accesses.
- Some participants suggested that paving secondary highway 628 would provide drivers with an alternate route and reduce traffic volumes on Highway 16.
- Some participants indicated concerns regarding noise, road maintenance and winter driving conditions as well as snow clearing.

DEMOGRAPHICS



Next Steps

Feedback received from stakeholders and the public will be used along with technical work and considerations to inform the development of options which will be shared for feedback in the second round of engagement in Fall 2022.