

BLACK GOLD DRIVE | ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

Grant MacEwan Boulevard to 50th Street | 2019-2020

Frequently Asked Questions

When is construction expected to be complete? Why is it taking two years?

Construction is on schedule, and regular traffic patterns are expected to resume by the end of 2020. A significant amount of road is being repaired (nearly 2.5 km). Construction is happening in smaller phases rather than one large stretch to minimize disruptions to traffic, which requires time to complete.

I know rain can impact construction, but why doesn't work always immediately restart after the sun comes back out?

Even on days that it isn't raining, conditions may not be suitable for construction. After a rain event, the base of the road becomes saturated and unsuitable for construction as proper compaction cannot be achieved. For every day of rain, there are sometimes several days of waiting for the site to dry out before work can continue. When this happens, the contractor makes every effort to continue work in other areas on site where possible. Despite 2020 being a rainy season, the project remains on schedule.

Why does it look like work is started in one area and then abandoned for an extended period of time?

Sometimes weather can impact progress, especially in areas where the road has been removed and the base is exposed to the elements. It is also common in construction to encounter unidentified third-party utilities or utilities in a different place than expected. Sometimes this can be addressed with a last-minute design change; other times construction has to wait for the third-party utility to relocate their services. The contractor also coordinates to ensure there is enough work ready in a particular phase (such as concrete or paving) before bringing in a subcontractor, crews or equipment. Bringing these in multiple times can be costly, so the contractor waits until there is sufficient area to complete to ensure the city receives the best value for the project.

Why are construction crews tearing out work that was previously completed?

Sometimes, the work can be deemed deficient. In this instance, it is the contractor's responsibility to remove and replace the deficient work at their cost. In other cases, the work was installed temporarily to make the road accessible to vehicles during construction. An example of this on Black Gold Drive is where additional asphalt was installed to smooth out sharp transitions between the new and old structures until the old ones are reconstructed. Another example is at the culvert installation at Fred Johns Park where a thin, temporary asphalt cap was installed to accommodate a detour and completion of the culverts. In this instance, the structure below the temporary cap is the permanent structure that will continue to be built up before the permanent surface is installed.

Will construction be done before school starts in fall 2020?

Construction will still be underway in fall 2020. By this time, the intersection at 50th Street and the remaining concrete curb and sidewalks are scheduled to be complete (pending weather). However, the full depth reclamation of the old lanes (south two lanes between 50th Street and QEII, and north two lanes between QEII and Grant MacEwan) is scheduled for September 2020. Two-way traffic will be maintained at all times when school starts, and a traffic plan will be posted closer to this time so that parents, schools and bus drivers know what to expect.

What is a road reconstruction?

The road is excavated down to the base (gravel) or sub-grade (clay) layer depending on its condition. The sub-grade is re-stabilized and the base and surface are replaced. All curbs and gutters are also replaced.

What is the difference between road reconstruction and full depth reclamation?

Full depth reclamation does not require excavation and removal of the base materials. The surface of the asphalt is pulverized and mixed with the existing base, and then a new layer of asphalt is laid. This process is significantly faster than reconstruction. While the area at the 50th Street intersection required reconstruction, the old lanes were always planned for full depth reclamation.

Why do all the concrete curb and sidewalks require replacement?

Sometimes the curb and sidewalks have reached the end of their lifespan and require replacement. Other times, it can be a design issue. When a road is reconstructed, the existing drainage of the road is reviewed. Where drainage problems exist or road elevations need to be adjusted as part of the design, the curb and sidewalk also need to be adjusted to ensure water is draining properly and that they do not need additional work shortly after the reconstruct.

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The road doesn't look like it needs repairs in some areas, why is this happening now?

Although Black Gold Drive may appear to have minimal damage on the surface, the layers below require work. As roads age, weather and the weight of traffic wear on its structure, and the layers begin to degrade. Completing construction now proactively addresses repairs before there are larger safety issues and extends the overall lifespan of the road.

Why isn't the road being twinned?

Black Gold Drive's current and future traffic capacity is not high enough to warrant twinning the road; however, the addition of left-hand turning lanes at intersections will promote better traffic flow and ease congestion during peak travel times. There are also space restrictions underneath the QEII overpass that limit expansion.

How will my commute change?

Two-way traffic will be maintained through most of construction, but some areas will be reduced to a single lane. Residents should plan for slightly slower travel time given reduced lane sizes and speed limits. Updates are provided on the [City of Leduc's website](#) and [Facebook page](#) when possible so residents can plan accordingly.

How will residents living along Black Gold Drive be impacted?

Aside from potential traffic impacts, residents along Black Gold Drive may also notice increased noise levels during the day when construction occurs (Community Standards Bylaw, Section 18: construction may occur between 7 a.m. - 10 p.m. weekdays; 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. weekends).

What about areas with a single access point off of Black Gold Drive?

Local traffic will be provided single-lane access in areas where there is only one access point. Lanes will only be reduced when construction impacts the immediate area, and a flag person will direct traffic. Residents in these areas will be provided notification in advance of construction.

Will this impact Fred Johns Park or Aileen Faller Park?

Access to Fred Johns Park and its parking lot will be maintained throughout construction.

Parking in the Aileen Faller lot on Black Gold Drive will be limited during construction; however, St. Benedict and Leduc Estates School parking lots are available outside of school hours. The **toboggan hill** has been reshaped to direct toboggans further away from the widened road, and **multiway** to the west of the hill has been rerouted. Fencing and additional landscaping define new tobogganing areas. Some trees and shrubs were removed, but landscaping has planted new greenery.

Will there be any multiway detours?

Yes, the contractor will be sequencing their work and detours may change throughout construction. All detours will be clearly marked.