

NE Ring Road

Province seeks private partners for northeast Calgary ring road

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(Calgary) - The Alberta government is taking the first steps to building the northeast leg of Calgary's ring road using a unique, made-in-Alberta public-private partnership (P3) process.

"This process is being used with great success in the construction of Edmonton's southeast ring road and I'm confident the process will work for this project," said Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "A P3 allows a project to be built more quickly than through conventional delivery and government is guaranteed a fixed price and delivery date."

Government will issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) to evaluate the potential private partners' qualifications for the project. The top three candidates will be asked to submit proposals to determine which of them, if any, will be chosen to undertake the project. The successful proponent would be responsible for the project's design, construction, financing, and operation for 30 years. The proponent would recoup these costs through equal payments from government over 30 years once the road is open to traffic. Government also receives a 30-year warranty on the work.

"Government will carefully examine the RFQ results and proposals before making a final decision whether to proceed with this project as a P3," added Oberg. "Public-private partnerships are used only when there are clear benefits to government and taxpayers."

The project will extend Stoney Trail from Deerfoot Trail to 17 Avenue SE and involves 21 kilometres of four and six-lane roadway, six interchanges, and 22 bridge structures. The roadway will be completely free-flow and have no traffic lights. If built through the P3 process, the road would be finished two years earlier than through conventional delivery. To ensure a fair, competitive bidding process, government will not release cost estimates until proposals are received.

Calgary Mayor Dave Bronconnier offered strong support for the Alberta government's move to build the next portion of the ring road.

"There are over 160,000 vehicle trips on Deerfoot Trail every day - it's the busiest piece of road in the province," said Bronconnier. "Moving forward with building the east portion of the ring road is definitely good news for Calgarians."

The RFQ will be issued immediately and the three successful candidates will be chosen by Fall 2006. Final contract award is expected by early 2007 and construction could begin as early as Spring 2007 and completed by Fall 2009.