

ST. ALBERT TRAIL BARRIER WALL – DEER RIDGE

Frequently Asked Questions

June 4, 2018

What is the St. Albert Trail barrier wall?

The City of St. Albert constructed a precast concrete wall along St. Albert Trail between 1983 and 1992 to reduce noise and create a visual barrier between residents and St. Albert Trail. The barrier wall has two sections: a southern section extending from Hebert Road to Sturgeon Road along the east side of St. Albert Trail and a northern section extending from Giroux Road to Villeneuve Road along the west side of St. Albert Trail.

Why is the St. Albert Trail barrier wall being replaced?

The barrier wall is nearing the end of its lifespan and its condition is regularly monitored. In 2010, a scheduled evaluation and condition assessment completed by a third-party engineering consultant identified deterioration and structural issues with the barrier wall. It was recommended that the barrier wall be completely replaced by 2020.

How is sound measured?

Sound is measured in decibels (dBA). The higher the dBA level recorded; the more intense or loud the sound is. Sound monitors (microphones) were placed in strategic areas along St. Albert Trail, in front of and behind the barrier wall, to record sound levels. The sound monitoring measured dBAs for approximately 48 hours and was completed during September 2017.

Common industry practices limit the average 24-hour sound level to a maximum of 65 dBA, which is approximately the level of a restaurant conversation or listening to background music.

Is the whole wall being replaced?

Yes. The City has identified that the safest and most cost-effective way to respond to the current deterioration of the barrier wall is to completely reconstruct it. This will allow engineers and designers to construct a wall that is continuous, stable, aesthetically pleasing, manages current and future sound levels and continues to provide a visual barrier.

What will the new wall look like?

The concept design of the new barrier wall in Deer Ridge was introduced at the November 2017 and May 2018 Information Sessions. The wall system consists of concrete piles with precast columns and wall spans, like the existing wall. The wall will have two different textures (public side vs private side) and be painted with a natural walnut colour covered by an anti-graffiti application. The design was based on geotechnical investigations, current sound levels, existing infrastructure, future needs and aesthetic appeal.

Who will choose the design of the new wall?

The final design was influenced by many factors including findings of the geotechnical investigations, sound levels, existing infrastructure, cost, City standards and type of material. Residents of St. Albert had the opportunity to provide their input on design preferences that will meet the City's infrastructure evaluation. Thank you to those who attended the Information Sessions in November 2017 and in May 2018. The new wall's texture and colour scheme has been approved and finalized by the City Engineer.

How tall will the wall be?

The proposed height of the new barrier wall in Deer Ridge will be the same height as the current wall in Deer Ridge, which is approximately 1.98 m. This is based on the findings of the data collection and the proposed material. The goal of the new barrier wall is to provide an effective visual and sound barrier that maintains current and future modeled noise levels below an average 24-hour limit of 65 dBA.

How long will design and construction take in Deer Ridge?

The project began in the summer of 2017 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2018. It is being conducted in three phases:

- Phase 1 – Deer Ridge - Evaluation
 - Data collection was completed in October 2017 and included geotechnical investigations, measuring current sound levels and collecting existing infrastructure information.
- Phase 2 – Deer Ridge - Design/Engineering
 - Design and engineering were completed by the end of May 2018. During this phase, the City corresponded with residents who have property immediately adjacent to the barrier wall through mail out notification and invitation to two information sessions in November 2017 and May 2018.
- Phase 3 – Deer Ridge Construction
 - Construction is scheduled to occur in July 2018 and last until the end of August (weather dependent).

Will the existing wall be taken down before the new wall is constructed?

Yes. The entire span of the existing wall will be demolished (approximately 300 metres). As the old wall is removed, temporary privacy fencing delineating the construction zone will be placed on the homeowner's property to keep people and animals safe. Only authorized personnel will be allowed in this work zone. Residents will be asked to keep pets and children away from the work zone. The temporary construction fence will not be as sturdy as the existing barrier wall. Pets may need to be kept on leashes to prevent them from escaping.

Why was infrastructure information collected near the barrier wall?

An understanding of the existing infrastructure surrounding the existing barrier wall has an impact on the design and construction of the new barrier wall; therefore, it was important to collect data on underground utilities, trees (including tree canopies), infrastructure (sheds, gardens, etc.) and private property lines.

How are residents in Deer Ridge being informed about this project?

The City is committed to maintaining communication with residents throughout the project. Communication will include meetings with residents, letters, City website updates and public information sessions. Residents directly affected by the barrier wall replacement will have additional communications provided to them including one-on-one meetings where applicable.

The first Information Session for Deer Ridge residents took place in November 2017. A second Information Session was held in May 2018.

Residents can also contact the City of St. Albert Construction Help Desk at 780-459-1762 or email: barrierwall@stalbert.ca. The Construction Help Desk is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Inquiries will be answered within two business days.

Will there be any agreements needed by the City for this work?

To facilitate inspection of the wall and accommodate any required maintenance of the new wall, the City will require a Utility Right-of-Way agreement to be registered on homeowners' property. This agreement will allow an inspector to examine the wall when required and provide access from your backyard. Homeowners will typically be notified when access is required. The agreement will also allow the City adequate room to work, in the case that the wall must be repaired. An additional temporary workspace agreement may also be required to provide adequate workspace during construction. The City will directly contact homeowners to discuss these agreements in detail in the coming months.

What is a Utility Right-of-Way?

A Utility Right-of-Way (URW) is a defined area where the City locates services such as underground gas, water, wastewater and storm water lines. The area can also be used to accommodate berms and barriers. The URW includes a specified distance adjacent to the utility that allows room for maintenance or future improvements, if required. The homeowner owns the land where the URW is defined; however, the City acts as the main interest holder for the URW. The new barrier wall is considered a utility; therefore, a URW agreement must be registered on the affected land parcels. Click on [Utility Right-of-Ways](#) for more information.

Do I have a Utility Right-of-Way on my property?

Every property is unique. Your Real Property Report will provide this information. Alternatively, individual one-on-one sessions between the City and the homeowner who reside adjacent to the wall will be scheduled in the future and will provide more information.

What is a Public Utility Lot?

A Public Utility Lot (PUL) is a titled parcel of land which is owned by the City of St. Albert. These parcels are designated for City or private utility services and/or provide access to service locations. Click on [Public Utility Lots](#) for more information.

Where is my backyard property line?

As each property is unique, homeowners can retrieve information pertaining to their property boundaries from a Real Property Report (RPR), which is a legal document prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor.

The existing barrier wall in Deer Ridge was built adjacent to the property line, on the Public Utility Lot, which is owned by the City.

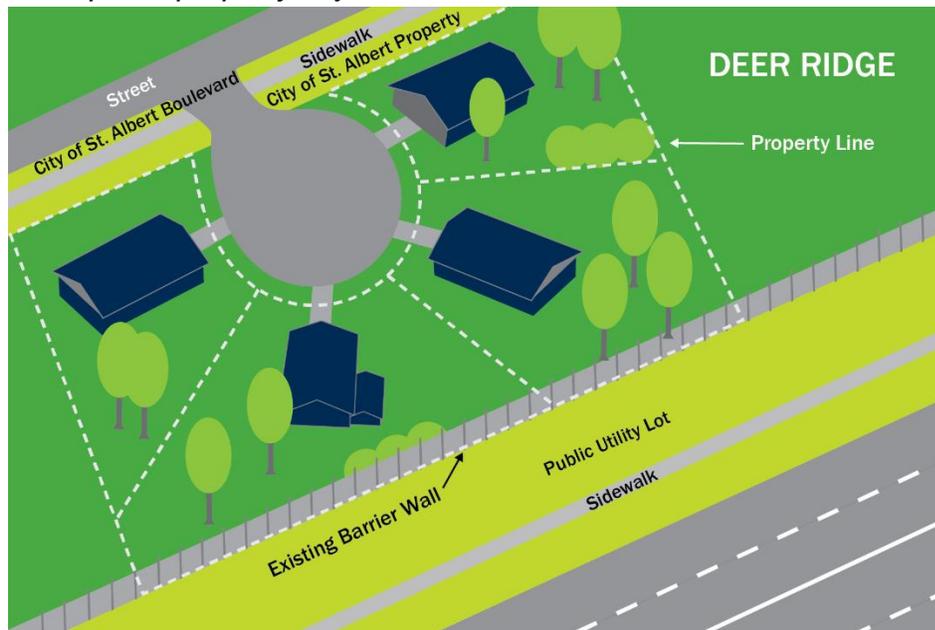
Click on [Real Property Reports](#) for more information.

What is an encroachment? What is an encroachment agreement?

An encroachment is when a homeowner adds a structural improvement, such as a shed, garage or retaining wall to City-owned land, or land in which the City holds an interest. It can also be the personal use of Public Land (i.e. adding a patio, garage or pool to land that does not belong to you).

An encroachment agreement acts as the formal authorization between the homeowner and the City and outlines the terms and conditions for allowing an encroachment to remain in place. An encroachment agreement is registered on the property and transfers with the sale of the property. Click on [Encroachments](#) for more information.

Example of property adjacent to Barrier Wall



I have a tree canopy which crosses my property line and extends into the City's property. Am I responsible for removing them?

Landscaping will need to be evaluated and discussed individually, with the property owner. The City will identify these and is planning one-on-one consultations with the owner of properties that have landscaping or structures which cross over City property. Individual homeowners will be contacted by the City to set up a meeting to discuss the project as details emerge.

What happens to the trees near the barrier wall?

Pending the results of the data collection and the final design; action may be required to remove anything in conflict with the final placement of the wall, which may include the removal or pruning of trees in the construction zone. Further and direct communication will be made with residents impacted. Trees originally planted by the City that need to be taken down for construction will be replaced.

Is the alignment of the barrier wall changing?

In Deer Ridge, the barrier wall will be constructed in the same alignment as the existing wall. It will be constructed on the Public Utility Lot, which is owned by the City.

What does this mean for my property?

Each property will have unique circumstances due to the location of the existing wall. In Deer Ridge, the new wall will be in the same location. Existing landscaping adjacent to the wall may be impacted during construction. This will be discussed with each affected homeowner individually.

Will the City compensate me for the change in value of my house?

The value of your house will not be affected by the new barrier wall. The legal lot size will not change due to the installation of the new barrier wall.

What will happen to my yard during this work?

The Utility Right-of-Way and a space surrounding this zone will be utilized for construction. Temporary privacy fencing delineating the construction zone will be placed on the homeowner's property to keep people and animals safe. Only authorized personnel will be allowed in this work zone. The City will ask that residents keep pets and children away from the work zone. The temporary construction fence will not be as sturdy as the existing barrier wall. Pets may need to be kept on leashes to prevent them from escaping.

What will happen to my fence that is constructed against the current barrier wall?

The portion of the fence that is attached to the current barrier wall will need to be removed. Residents can do this themselves just prior to demolition of the old wall or the wall contractor will do it. It is very unlikely that the wall contractor will salvage any fence materials. At conclusion of the project, each resident will be responsible to reinstate the small portion of their fence that would connect it to the new wall.