

EAST CORRIDOR

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*Understanding the people, places, projects and investments
shaping Calgary's East Corridor.*

Infrastructure Watch

Highway 1's Next Wave

**The interchanges changing access,
development and investment east of
Calgary**

Highway 1 is the economic spine of Calgary's East Corridor.



It carries commuters, commercial traffic and goods between Calgary, Chestermere, Strathmore and the communities and employment lands beyond. It also divides a fast-growing region: the highway moves traffic efficiently east and west, but many local roads still meet it at grade.

That is why three planned interchanges matter.

Engineering and design activity is advancing at Garden/Conrich Road, Highway 791 near Chestermere High School, and Range Road 264 near De Havilland Field. Each location serves a different pressure point:

- Garden/Conrich Road links Highway 1 to one of the region's most important logistics and industrial areas.
- Highway 791 is a community and safety connection serving rural residents, Chestermere High School and the route south toward Indus.
- Range Road 264 is expected to become a principal access point for De Havilland Field and its future aerospace workforce and supply chain.

These are not interchangeable projects, and they are not all under construction.

Their common signal is that the corridor's transportation network is beginning to respond to growth that is already visible in employment announcements, industrial development and community expansion.

An interchange does more than move vehicles. It can improve safety, strengthen travel-time reliability and change which lands are practical for development.

But the effect is not automatic. Engineering, funding, construction timing, local-road connections, land-use approvals and servicing must all align.

The next wave has entered design. What happens next will help determine where growth can actually land.

Three connections to watch

Source: Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors;
De Havilland Field Area Concept Plan.

Location

Primary Corridor Role

Garden/Conrich Road

Logistics and industrial access

Highway 791 / Range Road 280

Community safety and north-south movement

Range Road 264

De Havilland Field and future employment access

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ACCESS WATCH

THREE INTERCHANGES. THREE DIFFERENT JOBS.

The three planned interchanges sit along the same highway, but each responds to a different kind of growth.

1. GARDEN / CONRICH ROAD

The Garden/Conrich project is the westernmost of the three. Provincial planning work has examined a new interchange between the existing Garden Road and Conrich Road connections, with the intention of linking the two local roads across Highway 1.

Its importance extends beyond local traffic.

Conrich has become a major logistics and industrial node anchored by CN's intermodal facility and surrounding warehousing, distribution and employment lands. A stronger Highway 1 connection would improve access to that regional network while reducing reliance on at-grade highway movements.

Public reporting indicates the project has moved into design with an engineering consultant involved. Construction timing has not been confirmed.

2. HIGHWAY 791 / RANGE ROAD 280

Highway 791 meets Highway 1 east of Chestermere at an at-grade intersection. It connects north toward Highway 564 and south toward Indus and the Glenmore Trail corridor. It is also closely associated with access to Chestermere High School.

Provincial functional planning has long identified the need for an interchange at Highway 1 as part of the future Highway 791 corridor. More recent provincial reporting places the project in design and consultant procurement.

Here, the first case is safety and reliable local access. The longer-term case is a stronger north-south connection through the corridor.

3. RANGE ROAD 264 / DE HAVILLAND FIELD

Range Road 264 sits beside the 1,500-acre De Havilland Field site west of Strathmore.

The project's Area Concept Plan and federal impact-assessment documents envision a new Highway 1 interchange at Range Road 264, together with related road upgrades needed to serve the aerospace campus.

Engineering procurement moved forward in 2026. Current project information describes planning and engineering as underway, with construction tentatively identified for 2029 and the construction budget still to be determined.

This is the corridor's clearest example of transportation planning following a major employment anchor.

STATUS MATTERS

Planning identifies the need. Design determines what can be built. Funding and tendering determine when construction can begin.

The three projects are meaningful signals. They should not yet be described as three active construction sites.

Source: Government of Alberta functional planning studies and Provincial Construction Program; De Havilland Field planning and impact-assessment documents.

ACCESS CAN CHANGE LAND VALUE. IT DOES NOT CREATE READINESS BY ITSELF.

Interchanges influence development because they change movement.

They can reduce turning conflicts, separate local traffic from highway traffic and make travel times more predictable. For employers and logistics users, that predictability matters. For residents, the most immediate benefit may be safer, clearer access to schools, services and neighbouring communities.

For landowners and investors, however, a planned interchange is a signal—not a development approval.

THE INTERCHANGE EFFECT

A new interchange can:

Improve access to employment and industrial lands. Strengthen freight connections to Stoney Trail, Calgary and regional highways.

Increase the practical development radius around a corridor node.

Support emergency access and more reliable daily travel.

Shift traffic onto local roads that may themselves require widening or reconstruction.

It can also create constraints. Provincial right-of-way requirements, ramp geometry, drainage, access controls and local-road realignments can affect how nearby land is used. A parcel that appears close to an interchange may not receive direct access.

FOUR QUESTIONS BEFORE CALLING LAND “INTERCHANGE-READY”

1. Is construction funded?

Design work reduces uncertainty, but it does not guarantee a construction date.

2. Where is the final footprint?

Bridges, ramps, stormwater facilities and road realignments can require substantial land.

3. How will local roads connect?

An interchange only works as well as the municipal road network feeding it.

4. Are land use and servicing aligned?

Water, wastewater, stormwater, utilities and municipal approvals still determine whether land can support urban or industrial development.

Source: Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors; Rocky View County planning documents; Wheatland County and De Havilland Field planning documents.

THE CORRIDOR LENS

The three locations reveal a broader pattern:

Conrich is about connecting an established logistics cluster more efficiently to the *Trans-Canada Highway*.

Highway 791 is about safety today and a more functional north-south route tomorrow.

Range Road 264 is about building access around a new employment anchor before full operations begin.

The strongest investment signal is not an interchange announcement by itself. It is the convergence of transportation design, construction funding, municipal servicing and approved land use.

That is when access begins to become readiness.

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INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

What to Watch From Here

The projects have moved beyond general discussion. The next milestones will show which connections are closest to becoming buildable.

1. DETAILED-DESIGN COMPLETION

Final design will clarify interchange footprints, bridge and ramp configurations, local-road tie-ins and required right-of-way.

2. CAPITAL FUNDING

Watch provincial budgets and project announcements for construction allocations. A project can remain in design until funding and delivery timing are confirmed.

3. TENDERS AND CONTRACT AWARDS

Construction becomes materially more certain when bid documents are issued and contracts are awarded—not when a conceptual plan is first published.

4. MUNICIPAL ROAD AND SERVICING WORK

Interchanges must connect to roads, utilities and development areas on either side of Highway 1. Those supporting projects may determine the real pace of growth.

5. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

New industrial, commercial and residential proposals around the three nodes will show where the market believes improved access can be converted into usable land.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Highway 1 already connects Calgary's East Corridor. The next question is how effectively it connects the communities, employers and investment lands growing beside it.

The three planned interchanges are important because they respond to three real needs: industrial access, community safety and employment growth.

But infrastructure credibility depends on precision. Design is progress. It is not construction.

The most valuable signal will be the moment planning, funding, local servicing and development begin moving together.

Lori Olijnyk

Publisher, East Corridor Insider



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