

Murdock Avenue will be repaved in 2027, Council decides

Murdock Avenue will be repaved in 2027 as planned, following a decision made at the January 28 Council meeting.

The decision comes after a Pavement Rehabilitation Strategy report recommended that roadwork for the street be performed then.

The report, prepared by Planning and Development Services, was based on a pavement assessment conducted in 2023. It states that, based on the current condition of the pavement on Murdock Avenue, the condition of existing affiliated infrastructure, and budget thresholds, the road is recommended for pavement milling and overlay in 2027.

The report was ordered by Council at a Committee of the Whole meeting on January 14 after residents requested Murdock Avenue be added to the Town's list of road work projects for 2025.

Murdock Avenue is situated between Gilbank and McLeod Drive—two roads that will receive extensive road work along with other surrounding streets this summer. Since Murdock is in close proximity to the project area, residents wondered whether it would be possible to include Murdock in the contract.

Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning and Development Services, clarified the Planning staff's decision at the meeting, explaining that the work needed on Murdock Avenue is less extensive than what is required on nearby Gilbank and McLeod Drives.

McLeod and a few other roads surrounding [it] were included for rehab work in 2025. It's not just a mill and overlay of the pavement, there's also water and sewer pipes that need replacement," said Ramunno. "Murdock will require some work, but it's slated for shave and pave in 2027 with no underground work. So, it's in better condition than the surrounding roads that are actually part of the capital project coming up this year."

Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson voiced some of the residents' concerns, asking Ramunno whether repairing Murdock Avenue alongside Gilbank and McLeod would be more cost-effective.

"Murdock terminates at Gilbank and McLeod, which, you know, we are doing. Is there not any savings by doing Murdock at the same time as Gilbank and McLeod as opposed to, in 2027, sending a new crew out just to do that small stretch of road?" Thompson asked.

Ramunno acknowledged the question, clarifying that Town staff had considered the option in their decision and that Murdock Avenue's work would be done with other similar projects in 2027. Still, he promised to present further cost details to Council for review.

Residents had also voiced concerns that the heavy machinery used to repair Murdock Avenue would cause damage to the streets paved in 2025 if Murdock's road work was performed at a later date. Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland asked Ramunno whether any damage to the surrounding streets would be patched when Murdock's work is done in 2027.

Ramunno reassured Council that Town planners work closely with contractors to prevent this, but stated, "If there is damage, then obviously we'll ensure that the contractor repairs any damage done to local streets."

Other Council members expressed regret over the situation.

"I understand why these residents came forward and I'm sorry we can't help them," said Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner. "We need to watch our money; we have a \$3.5 million deficit in our repair and replacement plan. But the expectations of the residents are different."

Councillor Gilliland echoed Gaertner's sentiments, expressing disappointment that Murdock could not be added to the 2025 project.

“All of the dollars and cents were already allocated towards the ones in the worst shape possible, and this just happens to be one of those streets that are in that pecking order, unfortunately,” she said. “However, in 2027, it's already there. We know it's going to come in the budget. It's something that we know that has to be done.”

As it stands, Murdock Avenue's long-awaited road work is set for 2027, with no changes expected to the timeline unless further decisions are made in the coming years.

By Selena Loureiro