



Safer Seward Highway Project  
Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118,  
Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project No.: Z566310000/0A31034

# Environmental Assessment

*Appendix V: Stakeholder Engagement  
(Public and Agency Coordination)*

DRAFT

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAHP	Alaska Association of Historic Preservation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
AKRO	Alaska Region
AMATS	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions
APD	Anchorage Police Department
APE	Area of Potential Effects
ARRC	Alaska Railroad Corporation
ATA	Alaska Trucking Association
ATIA	Alaska Travel Industry Association
BA	Biological Assessment
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CIRI	Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
Climbers Alliance	Climbers Alliance of Southcentral Alaska
CSP	Chugach State Park
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
CVTC	Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
DMLW	Division of Mining, Land, and Water
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
DPOR	Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
EA	environmental assessment
EIS	environmental impact statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
Forest Service	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
HLB	Heritage Land Bank
KIT	Kenaitze Indian Tribe
KMTG	Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area
KPB	Kenai Peninsula Borough
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
MOA	Municipality of Anchorage
MP	Milepost
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notification of Intent
OWJ	Officials with Jurisdiction
PI	Public Involvement
PIH	Plans in Hand
PIP	Public Involvement Plan
PRD	Protected Resources Division
Project	Safer Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Project
PVCC	Potter Valley Community Council
PWSEDD	Prince William Sound Economic Development District
RCCC	Rabbit Creek Community Council
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SWG	Stakeholder Working Group
TACC	Turnagain Arm Community Council
UAA	University of Alaska Anchorage
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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# 1 Introduction

Public involvement (PI) is a systematic process designed to provide clear and consistent information to people and groups who might be affected by a project (i.e., stakeholders), and to engage them at appropriate, meaningful levels of the project's decision-making process. For the Safer Seward Highway Milepost (MP) 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Project (Project), stakeholders could include area residents and businesses, recreational users, federal and state agencies, local government, emergency services, utilities, Tribal entities, and non-governmental organizations. The Project team offered stakeholders and the public multiple ways to communicate their thoughts regarding the Project, including hosting public, small group, and one-on-one meetings; an online open house; and listening posts. The Project team collected public and stakeholder input by gathering comments using robust, comment-management software; developing a third-party survey; providing an interactive digital toolbox to facilitate analyzing concepts; and distributing information to an extensive (more than 700 contacts) email and mail contact list.

This document explains the PI concepts that were developed and implemented throughout Project and environmental assessment (EA) development and describes the results of the PI efforts.

## 1.1 Project History

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' (DOT&PF's) current effort to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Girdwood and Anchorage began with the following efforts, many of which also involved public and stakeholder outreach that the Project team has considered for the current EA process:

- Seward Highway Safety Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MPs 105–115, Categorical Exclusion approved in 2004
- Seward Highway MPs 105 to 107, Windy Corner project, began in 2013 with the Class of Action revised to an EA in 2017
- *Seward Highway Route Development Plan Reconnaissance Study* (for MPs 90 to 118), completed in 2017<sup>1</sup>
- *Seward Highway: MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner Environmental Assessment*<sup>2</sup>, made publicly available in March 2020
- Seward Highway MPs 105 to 109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point project, DOT&PF conducted public and agency scoping during spring 2021<sup>3</sup>
- Seward Highway Reconstruction MPs 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, DOT&PF published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Floodplain Encroachment on January 25, 2023

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<sup>1</sup> DOWL, 2017, accessible at <https://safersewardhighway.com/project-library-1/>

<sup>2</sup> DOT&PF, 2020, *Seward Highway: MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner Environmental Assessment*, accessible at <https://safersewardhighway.com/project-library-1/>

<sup>3</sup> DOWL, 2021, *Seward Highway Windy-Rainbow MP 105–109.5 Scoping Summary Report*, August 2021

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Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek**

*Appendix V: Stakeholder Engagement (Public and Agency Coordination)*

PI for the Windy Corner project, the precursor for this Project, began in 2013. The Project team reviewed all comments submitted on the Windy Corner project prior to commencing outreach for this Project. In response to these comments, the Project team took the following actions:

- Adopted a separated, paved pathway as part of the Project description and Proposed Action due to clear public interest in such a pathway
- Developed a Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) that provides ongoing feedback, such as during scoping as well as alternatives development and evaluation, because many competing priorities and overlapping jurisdictions occur within the Project corridor; see Section Stakeholder Working Group
- Developed the EA scope to address potential impacts identified during the Windy Corner project, including visual impacts and material site selection, which were high-interest topics that garnered many public comments, as well as emergency access, wildlife, tourism, and recreation

The Project involves the state-owned and operated Seward Highway within the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) and is within a DOT&PF Designated Safety Corridor, which is a segment of state highway with a higher-than-average incidence of fatal and major injury crashes. The Seward Highway has been recognized for its scenic, natural, historical, and recreational values and is designated as a U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road. Concerns regarding safety and these values have been raised by the public and stakeholders during the PI process, which are summarized in this report.

## 2 Public Involvement Plan

Prior to development of this Project's Public Involvement Plan (PIP) or initiation of scoping, the Project team hosted a booth at DOT&PF's annual Transportation Fair in Anchorage at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Alaska Airlines Center on January 12, 2023. The purpose of this early outreach effort was to inform the public that the Windy Corner project was transitioning to the new and expanded Safer Seward Highway Project as well as restarting the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This early public feedback informed development of this Project's PIP and NEPA process.

The Project team created the PIP at the Project's onset and posted it to the Project website (<https://safersewardhighway.com/>). The PIP details the proposed methods for involving stakeholders, including residents and local businesses; local, state, and federal agencies; Tribes and Tribal entities; non-governmental organizations; and the public during EA development; see Attachment A Public Involvement Plan. The PIP is intended to guide broad-based outreach to diverse audiences and stakeholders across the MOA and within the State of Alaska to meet local, state, and federal regulatory requirements, and to solicit input on the Draft EA during its development.

The primary goals of the PIP are to:

- Conduct early and effective stakeholder engagement through education and involvement;
- Clarify DOT&PF and stakeholders' roles, responsibilities, and ability to influence decisions; and
- Meet relevant federal, DOT&PF, and MOA requirements.

The PIP is based on the following principles:

- The Project team will keep an open mind and consider all points of view.
- The Project team will keep stakeholders and the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback regarding how stakeholder and public input has influenced Project decisions.
- The Project team will openly share information to help stakeholders and the public become familiar with the issues and NEPA process.
- The Project team will clearly define, acknowledge, and communicate milestones in the process to allow for stakeholder and public comment when input could potentially affect decision making.
- The Project team will offer input opportunities in multiple formats so stakeholders and the public can communicate in a manner that best meets their needs.
- The PIP is a working document, and the Project team can revise it as needed.

### 3 Stakeholder and Public Scoping

In accordance with NEPA regulatory requirements, the Project team conducted scoping to:

- Provide early notification of the NEPA process to stakeholders such as local, state, and federal agencies; Tribes and Tribal entities; local residents and businesses; and non-governmental organizations as well as the public
- Provide an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to discuss the Project
- Provide forums and other means for the Project team to gather input, ideas, questions, data needs, and concerns from the public and stakeholders
- Ensure early data gathering from agencies and other entities (e.g., utilities, Alaska Railroad Corporation [ARRC])
- Engage the public and stakeholders in identifying areas of concern and potential alternatives

During scoping, the Project team used meetings and other PI activities/strategies to:

- Listen to the ideas and concerns of stakeholders and the public potentially affected by the Project
- Determine the Project’s key issues, potential benefits, and alternatives to be addressed in the NEPA document
- Determine specific needs for special technical studies
- Identify sources of information for the NEPA process
- Identify useful forms of PI activities to inform the Project development process

The scoping period ran from January 25 to July 24, 2023, and is described in the following sections.

#### 3.1 Public Notice

Public scoping began on January 25, 2023, when the Notice of Intent (NOI) to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Floodplain Encroachment was published, initiating the NEPA process. DOT&PF requested that comments be submitted by February 24, 2023. Table 3-1 identifies the NOI publication locations. Copies of these notices are available in Attachment B Public Scoping Summary.

**Table 3-1. NOI publication locations.**

Date	Media Outlet
01/25/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> , legal advertisement
01/25/2023	<i>The Seward Journal</i> , legal advertisement
01/25/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> , legal advertisement
01/25/2023	<i>Homer News</i> , legal advertisement

#### 3.2 Public Scoping Meetings

The Project team hosted three in-person public meetings during March 2023 in Girdwood, Indian, and Anchorage as well as an online open house between March 21 and April 20, 2023. Public scoping meetings were advertised for 8 weeks, beginning in February, with a combination of advertisements as well as print and online postings to reach a wide range of stakeholders (see

Attachment B). Table 3-2 summarizes the outreach methods used to notify the public and stakeholders of public meetings and the open house during the scoping period.

**Table 3-2. Publicity for public scoping meetings and open house.**

Date	Outreach Method
2/20/2023	Project website update
2/27/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Display Advertisement #1
2/27/2023	State of Alaska Online Public Notice
2/27/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Public Community Calendar
2/27/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> Public Community Calendar
2/27/2023	<i>Homer News</i> Public Community Calendar
2/27/2023	DOT&PF Central Region Public Involvement Community Calendar
2/28/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> Display Advertisement #1
2/28/2023	Eblast #1
3/1/2023	<i>Homer News</i> Display Advertisement #1
3/1/2023	<i>Seward Journal</i> Display Advertisement
3/13/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Display Advertisement #2
3/14/2023	Eblast #2
3/14/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> Display Advertisement #1
3/14/2023	Social Media Post #2 – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter <sup>a</sup>
3/16/2023	<i>Homer News</i> Display Advertisement #1
3/20/2023	Eblast #3
3/20/2023	Social Media Post #3 – Facebook, Instagram
3/21/2023	Twitter <sup>a</sup> Post – Girdwood Public Meeting Announcement
3/22/2023	Twitter <sup>a</sup> Post – Indian Public Meeting Announcement
3/23/2023	Twitter <sup>a</sup> Post – Anchorage Public Meeting Announcement
3/30/2023	Social Media Post Video – Thank You, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter <sup>a</sup>
3/6/2023	Social Media Post #1 – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter <sup>a</sup>
3/7/2023	Facebook Event – Anchorage Meeting
3/7/2023	Facebook Event – Girdwood Meeting
3/7/2023	Facebook Event – Indian Meeting
3/8/2023	Postcard to 1,546 residents
3/9/2023	Flyers posted at Kaladi Brothers Coffee (Brayton Drive and Industry Way locations in Anchorage), SteamDot Coffee (Anchorage), and CoasT Pizzeria (Girdwood)
4/20/2023	Social Media Post Video – Last Day for Online Open House – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Twitter was rebranded to X on July 23, 2023; its domain name changed from twitter.com to x.com on May 17, 2024

Table 3-3 summarizes the number of attendees per meeting location. In addition to members of the general public, representatives of Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC), Bike Anchorage, and Girdwood Board of Supervisors attended the in-person meetings.

**Table 3-3. Public scoping meetings.**

Date	Location	# of Attendees
3/21/2023	Girdwood Community Center, Girdwood	15
3/22/2023	Valley Bible Chalet, Indian	20
3/23/2023	Goldenview Middle School, Anchorage	28

At these in-person meetings, attendees could interact with the Project team by asking questions and submitting comments. The meetings included a formal presentation and open house stations on the following topics:

- Project location, overview, and history
- EA process
- Draft purpose and need
- Traffic and safety data
- Key issues identified for further study in the Draft EA
- Request for public comments

An online, interactive, and self-guided public open house was available on the Project website for 30 days, between March 21 and April 20, 2023. It offered Project information and multiple ways to comment during the scoping period, including an online comment form. The online open house website was viewed 244 times by 183 users (Attachment B).

Public scoping comments were requested by April 20, 2023. However, the Project team has accepted public and stakeholder comments, and has considered them, throughout the development of the Draft EA. Comments received focused on a range of topics, including the difference between an EA and an environmental impact statement (EIS), the Project status and schedule, the anticipated time when alternatives would be available for review, public access to Project data, upcoming PI opportunities, and other issues. For a summary of comments received, see Section 9 Summary of Comments.

### 3.3 Agency Scoping Letters

The agency scoping period began in March, and scoping letters were sent out on June 14, 2023, to agencies anticipated to have an interest in protecting resources or special expertise in the Project (Table 3-4; Attachment C Agency Scoping Materials). The letters identified the Project location and termini; described the relationship to the prior Windy Corner Project EA; and requested feedback from agencies by July 24, 2023. Comments were requested on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed Project description, and preliminary environmental research. Additionally, scoping letter recipients were asked to let the DOT&PF know if further analysis was needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed Project, if regulatory permits and/or clearances were required, and/or whether there were any concerns or issues with the proposed Project.

**Table 3-4. Agencies, organizations, and Tribal entities sent scoping letters.**

Agency	Contact(s)
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	James Rypkema, Jason Olds
Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Ben Mulligan, Josh Brekken
Alaska Department of Natural Resources	Ben Corwin, Matthew Wedeking
Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions	Aaron Jongenelen
Alaska Railroad Corporation	Brian Lindamood
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Stuart Hartford
Bureau of Land Management	Tom Sparks
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.	Sophie Minich
Eklutna, Inc.	Kyle Foster
Eklutna Native Village	Faith Rukovishnikoff
Federal Highway Administration	Sandra Garcia-Aline
Knik Tribal Council	Richard Porter, Kevin Toothaker
Municipality of Anchorage	David Whitfield, Elizabeth Appleby
National Marine Fisheries Service	Angela Tallman, Jill Seymour
State Historic Preservation Office	Judy Bittner, Sarah Meitl
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Sara Longan
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Susan Sturges
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sara Boario
U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service	Francisco Sanches, Ruth Damico
U.S. National Parks Service	Elizabeth Bella, Joan Darnell

Agencies responded to the scoping letter with the following suggestions and information for the Project team regarding the Project:

- The Project should avoid impacts from construction activities on large mammals and marine mammals, as well as their habitat.
- The Project should avoid impacts to Potter Marsh and other ponds.
- The Project should maintain and enhance trailheads, turnouts, and parking areas.
- The Project should replace all impassible fish culverts with fish passable culverts.
- The Project should make changes to the purpose and need statement.
- Agency scoping contacts had questions about the NEPA and other processes.
- The Project should provide a railroad crossing for pedestrians at Beluga Point.
- The Project should provide access to Turnagain Arm for emergency responders and the public.
- Agency scoping contacts provided information regarding contamination within the Project area.
- Agency scoping contacts provided clarification regarding the Section 6(f) land conversion process and material sites within Chugach State Park (CSP).
- Agency scoping contacts stated support for a separated bike path.

The Project team considered these comments during the development of the Project EA. For a summary of comments received, see Section 9 Summary of Comments.

### 3.4 Small Group Scoping Meetings

In addition to the notices regarding scoping, scoping letters, and scoping meetings and the online open house, the Project team met with organizations to introduce the Project and request feedback. Table 3-5 lists the small group introductory meetings held during the scoping period.

**Table 3-5. Small group scoping/introductory meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
3/8/2023	Introductory Meeting	Alaska Railroad Corporation
3/9/2023	Introductory Meeting	Rabbit Creek Community Council
3/10/2023	Introductory Meeting	Chugach State Park
3/10/2023	Introductory Meeting	National Park Service, State Historic Preservation Office
3/15/2023	Introductory Meeting	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
3/17/2023	Introductory Meeting	Girdwood Board of Supervisors
4/12/2023	Introductory Meeting	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Freight Advisory Committee
4/13/2023	Introductory Meeting	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Technical Advisory Committee
4/25/2023	Introductory Meeting	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Community Advisory Committee
4/27/2023	Introductory Meeting	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Policy Committee
5/11/2023	Introductory Meeting	Turnagain Arm Community Council
6/5/2023	Introductory Meeting	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
6/13/2023	Introductory Meeting	Alaska Railroad Corporation Board of Directors

## 4 Agency Consultation/Coordination

DOT&PF conducted the following consultations to meet regulatory requirements.

### 4.1 Clean Water Act

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is the agency with jurisdiction over the Clean Water Act and permitting actions related to wetlands and waters of the United States. The SWG, described further in Section 6 Stakeholder Working Group, has included at least one representative from USACE. In addition to the SWG meetings, an introductory meeting occurred on March 23, 2023. A meeting was held on September 13, 2023, to discuss alternatives analysis required, constraints, potential impacts on water and wetlands, and potential mitigation measures. On October 6, 2023, a joint meeting was held with the USACE and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to discuss potential impacts on water and belugas, special aquatic sites, and essential fish habitat. Table 4-1 lists the consultations that occurred with the USACE.

**Table 4-1. USACE consultation meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
5/23/2023	Small group session; one-on-one kick-off	USACE
9/13/2023	Small group session	USACE
10/6/2023	Small group session	NOAA, NMFS, USACE

### 4.2 Endangered Species Act Consultation

NOAA Alaska Region (AKRO) Protected Resources Division (PRD) is the branch responsible for implementing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the marine mammal species that occur within the Project area. The SWG, described further in Section 6 Stakeholder Working Group, has included at least one representative from PRD. In addition to the SWG meetings, an introduction to the Project meeting occurred on March 15, 2023; an initial meeting with AKRO PRD staff regarding ESA consultation, which included Project details, effects on ESA-listed species, and potential mitigation measures, occurred on June 18, 2024. The first Biological Assessment (BA) and request for consultation was submitted to NOAA on October 3, 2024. After DOT&PF's submittal of the BA and AKRO PRD staff's preliminary review, it was suggested that the Project could qualify for expedited informal Section 7 consultation with minor revisions to the BA. DOT&PF submitted a revised BA on January 2, 2025. AKRO provided their Letter of Concurrence to DOT&PF and USACE on March 24, 2025, concluding the Section 7 process. See EA Appendix M Section 7 Biological Assessment and Consultation for additional information. Table 4-2 lists the NOAA consultations that occurred during EA development.

**Table 4-2. NOAA consultation meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
3/15/2023	Project introduction	NOAA
9/27/2023	Small group session; one-on-one kick-off	NOAA
10/6/2023	Small group session	NOAA, NMFS, USACE
6/18/2024	One-on-one meeting	NOAA
12/2/2024	One-on-one meeting	NOAA
2/11/2025	One-on-one meeting	NOAA

### 4.3 Section 4(f) Consultation

DOT&PF met with the Officials with Jurisdiction (OWJs) regarding Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act properties within the Project area to specifically discuss the boundaries and significance of properties that are potentially protected by Section 4(f). DOT&PF later met with the OWJs to discuss the Proposed Action as well as its impacts and mitigation on Section 4(f) properties. The OWJ for CSP is the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR); the OWJ for Potter Marsh is the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Additional information is in EA Section 3.3.12 Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. A complete description of the Section 4(f) OWJ consultation process is included in the Individual 4(f) Evaluation document in EA Appendix S Section 4(f) Evaluation. Table 4-3 lists the Section 4(f) consultations that occurred during EA development.

**Table 4-3. Section 4(f) consultation meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
6/21/2023	Update on project design, learn ADNR-DPOR plans for CSP	ADNR-DPOR
9/8/2023	Update on project design, discuss management of Anchorage Coastal Wildlife refuge	ADF&G
6/13/2024	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) properties and significance	ADNR-DPOR
8/22/2024	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) properties and significance	ADF&G
8/26/2024	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) properties and significance	ADNR-DPOR
4/10/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR
4/24/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR
5/1/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADF&G, ADNR-DMLW
5/22/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADF&G, ADNR-DMLW
6/4/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	MOA HLB
7/11/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR and SHPO
7/25/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR and SHPO
8/8/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR and SHPO
8/25/2025	Consultation regarding Section 4(f) property impacts and mitigation	ADNR-DPOR and SHPO

Notes: DMLW = Division of Mining, Land, and Water; HLB = Heritage Land Bank; SHPO = State Historic Preservation Officer

## 4.4 Section 6(f) Consultation

DOT&PF consulted with ADNR and NPS in association with the Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) consultation process. Additional information is included in EA Section 3.3.13 Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act and EA Appendix T Section 6(f) Evaluation. Table 4-5 shows the Section 6(f) consultations that took place during EA development.

**Table 4-4. Section 6(f) consultation meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
7/10/2023	Introduce LWCF 6(f) involvement in the Project (Proposed Action, purpose and need, geographic and topographic constraints)	ADNR-DPOR
2/12/2024	LWCF kick-off; meet parties involved, discuss process and DOT&PF's past LWCF processes	ADNR-DMLW, ADNR-DPOR
8/7/2024	Discuss Section 6(f) approval process	ADNR, National Park Service
4/3/2025	Discuss yellow-book appraisal, LWCF Mitigation options, ADNR preferences	ADNR-DPOR, DOT&PF

Note: DMLW = Division of Mining, Land, and Water

## 4.5 Municipality of Anchorage, Context Sensitive Solutions, Planning Review

Because a portion of the Project falls within the boundaries of the MOA and Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) area, the Project must comply with MOA standards, plans, and review and approval processes. The process is governed by Title 21, Chapter 3 Review and Approval Procedures<sup>4</sup>. Specifically, the project completed the required steps under the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Transportation Project Site Plan Review.

Per MOA's *A Strategy for Developing Context Sensitive Transportation Projects*<sup>5</sup>, the CSS process policy applies to projects "when design funding is provided via the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the AMATS Transportation Improvement Program, the Municipal Capital Improvement Program or a legislative appropriation"<sup>6</sup> (). This Project is currently in the environmental phase and will not enter the design phase until the EA is complete. However, verbal communications with MOA staff indicate that the intent of the CSS process is to allow the Planning and Zoning Commission and the public's input to affect decision making and is appropriate during the NEPA phase of this Project (meeting notes March 2023). For these reasons, the CSS process is being advanced parallel to the environmental/NEPA process.

In June 2023, DOT&PF submitted a Concept Report to MOA, which was provided to the Planning and Zoning Commission as an informational item and included in their regular meeting on September 24, 2024. No comments were received from the Planning and Zoning Commission or MOA at that time.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/Projects/t21/Documents/Chapter%203.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.muni.org/Departments/traffic/Documents/MOA\\_CSS.pdf](https://www.muni.org/Departments/traffic/Documents/MOA_CSS.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.muni.org/departments/traffic/documents/cstp.pdf>

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*Appendix V: Stakeholder Engagement (Public and Agency Coordination)*

During early 2025, DOT&PF completed a CSS Draft Design Report for review by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Based upon discussions with MOA, DOT&PF elected to complete this step prior to completion of the Draft EA. On April 4, 2025, DOT&PF met with MOA for a pre-application meeting to discuss the requirements of the CSS Design Report with multiple representatives from MOA departments. A follow-up meeting was held on May 9, 2025, with MOA representatives to continue providing information and answering questions.

The CSS Draft Study Report<sup>7</sup> was submitted on May 27, 2025, with a request for a Planning and Zoning Commission review and public hearing (MOA Case 2025-0087). A staff report was published, including comments requesting additional information from several MOA departments, and a staff recommendation to return the application to the Project team for additional work. The Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing was held on September 8, 2025, at the Z.J. Loussac Library. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted to “return the application to the Project management team for additional work in accordance with department recommendations”<sup>8</sup> ().

In a follow-on letter sent on September 18, 2025, DOT&PF notified the MOA Planning Department that DOT&PF is continuing to advance the EA and will address these comments during the design phase, following completion of the environmental process. Feedback from the Draft EA comment period will inform the Plans-in-Hand (PIH) design. Each future phase of the Project will continue the next steps of the CSS process during a PIH design review and approval. This resolution is in accordance with the MOA Title 21 Land Use Planning, Section 21.03.190, Subsection B Street Review, Subpart 6 Conformance with Recommendations.

See Section 9.2 for a discussion of comments received, including CSS comments, during drafting of this EA.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://safersewardhighway.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2025y05m27d\\_Safer-Seward-Highway-MP-98.5-118\\_MOA-PZ\\_CSS-Design-Report.pdf](https://safersewardhighway.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2025y05m27d_Safer-Seward-Highway-MP-98.5-118_MOA-PZ_CSS-Design-Report.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [Planning and Zoning Commission September 8, 2025 6210 Minutes 9 8 2025 6 30 00 PM.pdf](#)

## 5 Tribal Coordination

### 5.1 Section 106 Consultations

For purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, DOT&PF, acting on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration under the 23 U.S. Code 327 Memorandum of Understanding, initiated consultation with potential consulting parties on December 22, 2023, to identify historic properties that may be affected by the Project. Consultation was conducted in accordance with the 2017 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement...Regarding Implementation of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the Federal-Aid Highway Program in Alaska*. Additional information regarding Section 106 consultation is included in EA Section 3.3.5 Archaeological and Historical Resources, and EA Appendix Q Section 106 Consultation/Findings

DOT&PF invited the following entities to participate in the Section 106 process as Consulting Parties via a letter sent in December 2023:

- Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC)
- Eklutna Native Village
- Eklutna, Inc.
- Knik Tribe
- Knikatu, Inc.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service)
- MOA
- Alaska Association of Historic Preservation (AAHP)
- Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)
- Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance
- Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area
- Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association

As the Section 106 process got underway, additional organizations were invited to be Consulting Parties, including:

- ARRC
- Kenai Mountain Turnagain Group (KMTG)
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe (KIT)
- Prince William Sound Economic Development District (PWSEDD)
- Tyonek Native Corporation

As of October 2025, no requests for government-to-government consultation have been received from any Tribes. Table 5-1 lists meetings held as part of the Section 106 process.

**Table 5-1. Section 106 meetings.**

Date	Participant	Location	Purpose
10/12/2023	DOT&PF, SHPO, HDR	HDR offices and online	One-on-one Project kick-off meeting with SHPO
5/29/2024	DOT&PF, SHPO, BLM, HDR	HDR offices and online	Project overview, coordination on APE, 2023 cultural resources survey results
6/10/2024	DOT&PF, SHPO, BLM, HDR	HDR offices and online	Project overview, coordination on APE, cultural resources survey results, discussion on potential effects to historic properties
6/10/2024	DOT&PF, KIT, HDR (Invited but did not attend: Tyonek Native Corporation; KMTG; Eklutna, Inc.; Eklutna Native Village; CVTC; Knik Tribe)	HDR offices and online	Coordination on APE, cultural resources survey results, discussion on potential effects to historic properties
6/25/2024	DOT&PF, Eklutna Native Village, KIT, HDR	HDR offices and online	Project overview, coordination on APE, discussion on potential effects to historic properties
7/29/2024	DOT&PF, SHPO, BLM, Chugach Alaska Corporation, KMTG, KIT, Knik Tribe, HDR (Invited but did not attend: CVTC; Eklutna Native Village; Eklutna, Inc.; PWSEDD; Tyonek Native Corporation)	HDR offices and online	Project overview, coordination on APE, discussion on potential effects to historic properties
12/3/2024	DOT&PF, SHPO, KIT, BLM, MOA, CVTC, ARRC, USFWS, Forest Service, AAHP, Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, HDR (Invited but did not attend: KMTG; CIRI; Eklutna, Inc.; Eklutna Native Village; Knik Tribe; Knikatnu, Inc.)	HDR offices and online	Project overview, coordination on APE, discussion on Project not having effects to historic properties within Project corridor
06/23/2025	DOT&PF, SHPO, ADNR-DPOR, HDR	Online	Cultural resources update, discussion of Potter Section House
07/25/2025	DOT&PF, SHPO, ADNR-DPOR, HDR	Online	Cultural resources update, discussion of Potter Section House

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*Appendix V: Stakeholder Engagement (Public and Agency Coordination)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
08/8/2025	DOT&PF, SHPO, ADNR-DPOR, HDR	Online	Cultural resources update, discussion of Potter Section House and Bird Creek Campground
08/28/2025	DOT&PF, SHPO, ADNR-DPOR, HDR	HDR offices and online	Project overview, in-person design review, discussion of Section 106 process and status update

Notes: APE = Area of Potential Effects

## 6 Stakeholder Working Group

An SWG was convened to provide ongoing, early feedback during scoping, preliminary engineering, and EA development. This transparent, collaborative group met to provide feedback on work in progress. The SWG included both agency and public stakeholders. This was intentional to build awareness about the diversity of competing and overlapping interests within the Project corridor, and to identify win-win solutions where possible.

Organizations invited to participate in the SWG included key state, federal, and local agencies as well as community organizations; representatives should have the power to speak on behalf of their organizations or act as a conduit for information. The Project team asked agencies and organizations to nominate a primary and secondary representative. Table 6-1 provides a list of the agency and organizations invited to participate in the SWG as well as the representatives' names and position titles.

**Table 6-1. Agency and organization representatives invited to participate in the SWG.**

Organization	Representative Name	Representative Position
ADNR/CSP	Ben Corwin	Park Superintendent
ADF&G – Habitat Section	Josh Brekken Sue Rodman	Habitat Biologist Fish & Game Coordinator
SHPO	Judith Bittner Sarah Meitl	Chief, State Historic Preservation Officer Review and Compliance Coordinator
ARRC	Brian Lindamood Kate Duber	Vice President, Chief Engineer Engineer
MOA Planning and Zoning	Elizabeth Appleby	Manager and Platting Officer
AMATS	Aaron Jongenelen	AMATS Coordinator
NOAA Fisheries	Jill Seymour	Lead Biologist
USACE	Heather Markaway Emily Vullo	South Branch Chief Project Manager
Bike Anchorage	Emily Weiser	President
Friends of Chugach	Tom Meacham (declined participation)	Agent
Alaska Trucking Association	Joe Michel Darren Kessler	Executive Director (resigned during SWG process) Executive Director
Alaska Travel Industry Association	Jeff Samuels	Director of Policy and Communications
Turnagain Arm Community Council	Patrick Athey	Council Representative
Rabbit Creek Community Council	Ann Rappoport Nancy Pease	Co-Chair Land Committee Chair
Girdwood Board of Supervisors	Amanda Sassi Jennifer Wingard	Roads and Utilities

The SWG met monthly from June to December 2023, approximately every other month during 2024, and once in 2025. Meetings were scheduled to allow the greatest number of participants to attend. All SWG meetings were noticed on the State of Alaska’s online public notice system. Verbal and written feedback was used to refine ideas and inform Project team decision making.

All SWG meetings began with roll call and updates from the SWG participants. The Project team gave updates on engineering, environmental, and PI progress. Each meeting had at least one topic of in-depth discussion with the SWG. Many meetings were dedicated to describing the preliminary engineering underway and exploring potential concepts to evaluate in the Draft EA. Table 6-2 provides a list of the SWG meetings held throughout development of the EA.

**Table 6-2. SWG meetings held during EA development.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Discussion Topics</b>
6/15/2023	Kick-off Meeting	Michael Baker International, 3900 C Street, Suite 900, Anchorage	Project introduction and scope, draft purpose and need, SWG goals and objectives, SWG ground rules
7/13/2023	Project Update: Agency Briefings	Michael Baker International, 3900 C Street, Suite 900, Anchorage	Project update, agency presentations, traffic data/design team issues, draft purpose and need exercise
8/24/2023	Project Update: Concepts Discussion I	Michael Baker International, 3900 C Street, Suite 900, Anchorage	Project update, Concepts – Constraints overview, introduce Sandbox – Pinch Point Discussion Part I
8/31/2023	Project Update: Concepts Discussion II	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Project update, review last meeting highlights, Sandbox – Pinch Point Discussion Part II
9/28/2023	Project Update: Blended Concept	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Project update, introduce small group meetings, Sandbox – Blended Concept
11/2/2023	Project Update: Screening	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Project update, Blended Concept review, introduce public opinion survey, screening criteria discussion
12/14/2023	Project Update: Public Meetings	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Project update, public meetings review, 10- versus 25-foot offset pathway discussion
2/29/2024	Project Update	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Environmental update, engineering update – design speed, communications update
5/9/2024	Project Update	DOT&PF, 4111 Aviation Avenue, Anchorage	Concept updates, screening, public opinion survey results
7/18/2024	Project Update	Z.J. Loussac Library, 3600	SWG team updates, design updates, environmental updates, Listening Post reports

Date	Purpose	Location	Discussion Topics
		Denali Street, Anchorage	
9/26/2024	Project Update: Preferred Concept	Z.J. Loussac Library, 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage	SWG team updates, alternatives update, design update, environmental update, communications update
5/15/2025	Project Update	Z.J. Loussac Library, 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage	SWG team updates, MOA CSS update, funding update, safety express projects update, social marketing campaign brainstorm

In addition to the SWG meetings, the Project team held one-on-one meetings in September and October 2023 as well as summer/fall 2024 with all SWG members who were interested in discussing the concepts in greater detail. Table 6-3 lists these one-on-one meetings as well as the participating agency or organization.

**Table 6-3. List of SWG one-on-one meetings.**

Date	Who	Location	Purpose
9/7/2023	ATIA	HDR offices	Discuss Project with ATIA members
9/8/2023	ADF&G	HDR offices	Discuss impacts on Potter Marsh, mitigation options
9/15/2023	ARRC	HDR offices and online	Project impacts to ARRC
9/15/2023	USACE, Alaska District	HDR offices	Project impacts on waters of the United States
9/21/2023	ADNR, CSP	HDR offices	Project impacts on CSP
9/27/2023	NOAA Fisheries	HDR offices	Environmental Class of Action discussion
10/3/2023	ATA	HDR offices	Project impacts to Alaska commercial vehicles on the Seward Highway
10/6/2023	USACE and NOAA Fisheries	HDR offices	Concept updates, screening, Public Opinion Survey results
10/12/2023	ADNR and SHPO	HDR offices and online	Project impacts on key historic locations within the Project boundaries
10/12/2023	Bike Anchorage	HDR offices	Bike path discussion

<b>Date</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
6/19/2024	ATA	ATA, 3443 Minnesota Drive Anchorage	Introduce new ATA Director to Project
8/26/2024	ADNR, CSP	Teleconference	Project update – alternatives discussion
9/23/2024	ARRC	ARRC, 327 West Ship Creek Avenue, Anchorage	Project update in lieu of SWG meeting

Notes: AITA = Alaska Travel Industry Association; ATA = Alaska Truckers Association

As a result of this ongoing, collaborative discussion, the SWG affected decision making during EA and design development. The SWG members:

- Strongly advocated for a separated bike/pedestrian path that covers the full length of the Project and ties into existing paths both north and south of the Project boundaries; this pathway is included in the Project description
- Engaged in and influenced the final purpose and need language focusing on transportation corridor safety for all users
- Strongly advocated for minimizing impacts on Cook Inlet beluga whale habitat, which impacted design decisions around Project centerline locations along the route to minimize impacts
- Strongly advocated for the 55-mile-per-hour design speed that DOT&PF adopted
- Focused on minimizing impacts on Potter Marsh, influencing design decisions around roadway centerline through the area
- Influenced the addition of frontage roads in the design at the communities of Indian and Bird
- Advocated the need for and influenced the choice of Safety Express projects, encouraging DOT&PF to identify and fund small projects that could improve safety along the corridor before major construction projects begin
- Advocated consideration of a three-lane design alternative/concept, which was developed for the entire corridor and studied in the traffic and safety analysis
- Provided feedback on the questions that comprised the final public opinion survey conducted by DOT&PF (see Section 9.3 Public Opinion Survey)
- Provided examples of design solutions to minimize the Project footprint, which energized the design team to explore multiple design scenarios focused on minimizing the overall Project footprint, reducing Project impacts

## 7 Public Meetings

Public meetings provide an important venue for the Project team to reach a broad group of potentially affected road users with information about the Project and to receive feedback. The following is a description of public meetings held following the scoping period as well as a discussion of the Project information dissemination tools used.

### 7.1 Concepts Evaluation Public Meetings

The Project team held three public meetings in early December 2023 in Indian, Girdwood, and Anchorage as well as an online open house between December 5, 2023, and January 4, 2024.

The concepts evaluation public meetings were advertised for 8 weeks, beginning in November 2023, with a combination of advertising as well as print and online postings to reach a wide group of roadway users. Copies of these notices are available in Attachment D Concepts Evaluation Public Meeting Materials (December 2023). Table 7-1 provides a description of the public meeting and online open house dissemination methods.

**Table 7-1. Publicity for concepts evaluation public meetings and online open house.**

Date	Method
11/6/2023	State of Alaska Public Involvement Calendar
11/6/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Legal Advertisement
11/6/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Display Advertisement #1
11/6/2023	State of Alaska Online Public Notice
11/6/2023	State of Alaska GovDelivery Email
11/8/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> Display Advertisement #1
11/7/2023	E-Blast #1
11/9/2023	<i>Homer News</i> Display Advertisement #1
11/16/2023	Social Media Post – Instagram, Twitter <sup>a</sup>
11/17/2023	Social Media Event – Anchorage Public Meeting
11/18/2023	Social Media Event – Girdwood Public Meeting
11/19/2023	Social Media Event – Indian Public Meeting: Public Meeting Announcement
11/21/2023	Flyers posted at SteamDot – O’Malley, SteamDot – Midtown, Anchorage Loussac Library, UAA/Alaska Pacific University Consortium Library, UAA ConocoPhillips Building, UAA Administration Building, Carrs Huffman, Carrs Abbott, Carrs Northern Lights, Costco Dimond, Fred Meyer – Abbott, Fred Meyer – Northern Lights, REI, Spenard Roadhouse, South Coffeehouse + Café, Bear Tooth Theatre, Kaladi Brothers/Yak & Yeti, Post Office – Huffman, Post Office – Dimond Mall, Dimond Center, Dimond Center YMCA, Girdwood Brewing, The Bake Shop, Birch & Alder
11/22/2023	Coffee sleeves at Birch & Alder Restaurant and Anchorage Public Library
11/27/2023	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> Display Advertisement #2
11/27/2023	Table tents at Girdwood Brewery and Anchorage Public Library
11/27/2023	<i>Seward Journal</i> Display Advertisement
11/27/2023	<i>Seward Journal</i> Online Advertisement
11/28/2023	E-Blast #2
11/28/2023	Social Media Post – Instagram, Facebook, Twitter <sup>a</sup> : Public Meeting Reminder
11/28/2023	<i>Peninsula Clarion</i> Display Advertisement #2

Date	Method
11/29/2023	E-Blast #3
11/30/2023	<i>Homer News</i> Display Advertisement #2
12/1/2023	GovDelivery Email
12/5/2023	E-Blast #4
12/5/2023	Social Media Post – Instagram, Facebook, Twitter <sup>a</sup> : Anchorage Public Meeting Reminder
12/6/2023	Social Media Post – Instagram, Facebook, Twitter <sup>a</sup> : Girdwood Public Meeting Reminder
12/7/2023	Social Media Post – Instagram, Facebook, Twitter <sup>a</sup> : Indian Public Meeting Reminder

<sup>a</sup> Twitter was rebranded to X on July 23, 2023; its domain name changed from twitter.com to x.com on May 17, 2024

Table 7-2 lists the three in-person public meetings. In addition to members of the general public, representatives of Bike Anchorage, Girdwood Board of Supervisors, and Alaska Travel Industry Association attended the in-person meetings.

**Table 7-2. Concepts evaluation public meetings and open house.**

Date	Purpose	Location	Attendance
12/5/2023	Concepts	Anchorage Public Library, Anchorage	41 (36 in person, 5 digital)
12/6/2023	Concepts	Girdwood Community Center, Girdwood	24 (23 in person, 1 digital)
12/7/2023	Concepts	Valley Bible Chalet, Indian	10 (10 in person, 0 digital)

At the meetings, members of the public could interact with the Project team by asking questions and submitting comments. These meetings focused on two design concepts for the Project: a three-lane alternating passing roadway and a four-lane, barrier- or median-divided roadway. The public meetings, held in Girdwood, Indian, and Anchorage, included a formal presentation and open house stations on the following topics:

- Project location, overview, and history
- Traffic and safety data
- Purpose and need
- Scoping results
- SWG
- Constraints analysis
- Environmental field work
- Design concepts
- Screening discussion
- Project timeline
- Request for public comments

To reach members of the public who could not attend in-person, as well as better present concepts, the Project team held an online, interactive, and self-guided public open house on the Project website. The online open house was available for 30 days, running from December 5, 2023, to January 4, 2024. The online open house outlined Project information and offered

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multiple ways to comment on the Project, including an online comment form. The purpose of the online open house was to inform the public about the Project; share the Project's schedule, scoping process, two Project concepts, and next steps; and to collect initial Project feedback from communities. The online open house site was viewed by 218 users (see Attachment D).

Comments received focused on a range of topics, including design speed, expanding facilities/amenities, pathway offset, climbing routes, wildlife impacts, and other issues. The Project team considered these comments as well as additional comments provided during and after the public open house comment period during EA development. For a summary of public comments received, see Section 9 Summary of Comments.

## 8 Additional Stakeholder Outreach

PI and SWG coordination have been ongoing and collaborative throughout the EA process. The following provides a summary of key public and stakeholder coordination as well as outreach efforts following scoping (January 25 to July 24, 2023), not including the concepts evaluation public meetings and open house (December 2023 to January 2024).

### 8.1 Community Council Meetings

Several community councils were identified as key stakeholders for the Project. The Project team invited community councils to participate in the SWG (see Section 6 Stakeholder Working Group) and offered to give presentations to all community councils within immediate proximity of the Project area, including, but not limited to, the RCCC, Turnagain Arm Community Council (TACC), Potter Valley Community Council (PVCC), and Girdwood Community Council. Several individual and group meetings were held with the community councils to develop an open channel for communication, while Project status presentations were given at regularly scheduled council meetings. Table 8-1 shows the Project update meetings that were held.

**Table 8-1. Community council Project update meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
9/6/2023	Project update meeting	RCCC, TACC
1/9/2024	Project update meeting	RCCC
2/26/2024	Project update meeting	PVCC Homeowners Association
8/28/2024	Project update meeting	TACC
9/10/2024	Project update meeting	RCCC
12/12/2024	Project update meeting	TACC
3/4/2025	Project update meeting	RCCC

### 8.2 Small Group Meetings

In addition to scoping and SWG meetings, the Project team met with additional community stakeholders to introduce them to the Project, request feedback, and provide Project updates at EA milestones. The Project team met with the following organizations at small group meetings and/or coordinated with them during EA development:

- DOT&PF Civil Rights Office
- Alaska State Senator Cathy Giesel
- Alaska Truckers Association (ATA)
- AMATS: Freight Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee (CAC), Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Policy Committee
- Anchorage Mayor’s Office
- Anchorage Police Department (APD)
- Anchorage School District
- Bike Anchorage
- Chugach Electric Association
- Climbers Alliance of Southcentral Alaska (Climbers Alliance)

- Girdwood Inc.
- Girdwood Fire Department
- Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB)
- National Audubon Society

Table 8-2 lists the small group meetings held during EA development.

**Table 8-2. Small group meetings.**

Date	Purpose	Organization
11/28/2023	Introductory meeting	Girdwood Inc.
11/29/2023	Introductory meeting, review of outreach strategies	DOT&PF Civil Rights Office
12/18/2023	Introductory meeting	Climbers Alliance
2/21/2024	Introductory meeting	APD
2/22/2024	Introductory meeting	KPB
6/19/2024	Introductory meeting; new SWG representative	ATA
4/2/2024	Introductory meeting	National Audubon Society
4/23/2024	Project update meeting	AMATS CAC
8/26/2024	Proposed Action meeting	ADNR, CSP
9/10/2024	Project update	Girdwood Inc., Girdwood Fire Department
9/23/2024	Project update	ARRC
9/26/2024	Introductory meeting	Senator Kathy Giessel, District E
10/14/2024	Project update meeting	CSP, Citizen Advisory Board Meeting
10/15/2024	Introductory meeting	Anchorage Mayor LaFrance Office
10/23/2024	Project update meeting	APD, Traffic Unit/Major Collision Investigation
11/6/2024	Project update meeting	AMATS Work Session
4/16/2025	Project update	Girdwood, Inc.

### 8.3 Anchorage Transportation Fairs

On January 12, 2023, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., the Project team staffed a booth at the Anchorage Transportation Fair held at the UAA Alaska Airlines Center. The purpose of this participation was to raise awareness regarding the Project, provide introductory information, and foster positive public relations and community goodwill as well as to provide attendees an opportunity to meet the Project team and ask questions. A total of 17 individuals signed in at the booth.

On Thursday, March 28, 2024, the Project team hosted a large booth at the Anchorage Transportation Fair at the UAA Alaska Airlines Center to spread awareness about the Project, share Project progress, and answer questions. Ten people were added to the Project mailing list from the booth sign-in sheet. One comment received suggested having a bike path along the Potter Marsh side of the Seward Highway instead of the Alaska Railroad side.

On April 15, 2025, the Project team hosted a large booth at the Anchorage Transportation Fair at the UAA Alaska Airlines Center to spread awareness about the Project. More than 90 people stopped by the booth to chat with the Project team and learn more, and 5 individuals elected to sign in at the booth.

## 8.4 Listening Posts

A series of pop-up booths in strategic community locations served as listening posts for those who were unable to attend public meetings, or access online or print materials. Ten listening posts were organized at businesses, festivals, and events where a large number of the public would attend. A key outcome of these posts was informing the public of the Project and spreading awareness.

Information provided at the listening posts was conveyed via posters (Project information, concept renderings, Project contact information) and handouts (Project fact sheet, frequently asked questions, comment forms, Project team contact information, Project promotional items).

The complete *Listening Post Report* is located in Attachment E Listening Post Outreach Summary. Additionally, Table 8-3 provides information about when and where the Project team held listening posts, as well as how many attendees the listening posts received.

**Table 8-3. Listening posts.**

Date	Time	Location, Event	Total Attendees
7/21/2023	12:00–4:00 p.m.	Anchorage, Skinny Raven Sports Storefront	4
8/22/2023	4:00–7:00 p.m.	Anchorage, Alaska Rock Gym	23
9/8/2023	2:00–6:00 p.m.	Beluga Point	10
6/1/2024	11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Potter Marsh, Potter Marsh Discovery Day	7
6/16/2024	9:00–11:00 a.m.	Bird Ridge, Bird Ridge Race	12
6/16/2024	5:00–7:00 p.m.	Anchorage, Alaska Rock Gym	32
7/27/2024	1:00–3:00 p.m.	Indian, Chugach State Park, Indian Creek Ballfield, Indian Community Picnic	21
7/28/2024	11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Girdwood, Girdwood Farmers Market	11
8/10/2024	12:00–2:00 p.m.	Girdwood, Alyeska Blueberry Festival	20
9/21/2024	1:00–3:00 p.m.	Anchorage, REI	16

## 8.5 Project Website

On February 20, 2023, the Project website was launched at [www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com). The website includes an archive of prior Windy Corner Project materials. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant website provides Project information, meeting notices/PI opportunities, key contacts, a mechanism to submit comments, and other materials to support public education about the Project and encourage feedback. The website is maintained to ensure timeliness and accuracy of messaging.

The website landing (“Home”) page provides the history of the Project, Project description, Project development process and schedule, purpose and need, PI, and contact information.

The “Public Involvement” page informs about PI activities, such as the most recent public meeting and its associated materials, as well as ways the public and stakeholders will be engaged during the NEPA environmental review process. Links to subscribe to the Project mailing list, leave comments, connect with the Project team, and attend public meetings are displayed on this page.

The “Project Library” page provides all meeting materials, reports, and other pertinent Project information. Materials include, but are not limited to:

- Project materials
- Public meeting materials
- E-newsletters
- Media coverage
- Windy Corner archive

The “Contact” page provides ways to connect with the Project team through email, telephone, and U.S. postal mail. A convenient comment form was developed to give users the ability to submit questions or comments.

## 8.6 E-Blasts

The Project team has developed and maintained a contact list of almost 800 individual email addresses. The Project team initially developed this list using resources from previous DOT&PF projects near the Project corridor (e.g., the Windy Corner Project EA phase, with 519 subscribers). The Project team has kept this list current using contact information gathered through tools such as sign-in sheets at in-person events, as well as subscribers via email, website, and QR codes on print materials.

As of October 2025, the Project team sent a total of 22 e-blasts through MailChimp, and tracked engagement and analytics data, including open rate, read rate, and reach. Table 8-4 provides a summary of e-blast results.

**Table 8-4. E-blasts summary.**

Date	Purpose	Recipients	Open Rate (%)	Click Rate (%)
2/28/2023	Welcome + Project Launch	707	66.2	22.0
3/14/2023	Scoping Public Meeting Announcement	670	54.4	4.8
3/20/2023	Scoping Public Meeting Reminder	670	53.2	3.5
7/14/2023	FAQs & Website Updates Notice	730	53.0	10.5
8/17/2023	Photo Contest & Upcoming Events	723	53.7	3.1
9/7/2023	Potter Marsh Update & McHugh Listening Post	740	67.0	19.8
9/8/2023	Location Change: Beluga Point Listening Post	715	52.9	0.0
10/26/2023	Website Update: FAQ & Project Fact Sheet	718	66.1	30.3
11/7/2023	December Public Meetings Announcement	711	60.9	2.7

**Safer Seward Highway Project | Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118,  
Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek**

*Appendix V: Stakeholder Engagement (Public and Agency Coordination)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Recipients</b>	<b>Open Rate (%)</b>	<b>Click Rate (%)</b>
11/7/2023	December Public Meetings Announcement – Corrected Link	703	61.8	5.6
11/28/2023	December Public Meetings Reminder	703	48.6	2.9
12/5/2023	December Public Meetings ANC Today	706	47.4	3.6
3/26/2024	Anchorage Transportation Fair	750	47.3	3.7
4/10/2024	Public Opinion Survey	743	63.6	13.1
5/31/2024	Potter Marsh Discovery Day Listening Post	742	59.7	4.5
6/14/2024	Bird Ridge Race Listening Post	745	48.0	3.1
7/25/2024	Listening Posts: Chugach State Park Indian Ballfield Picnic and Girdwood Farmers Market	746	52.1	3.5
8/8/2024	Listening Post: Alyeska Blueberry Festival	764	48.4	2.1
12/2/2024	Safety Express Projects	761	48.0	3.3
6/25/2025	MOA CSS Design Report Available / August Planning & Zoning Commission Public Hearing	760	38.8	9.2
7/8/2025	Safety Express Project Update	753	37.4	3.1
8/11/2025	MOA CSS Planning & Zoning Hearing Postponed to September	749	26.9	3.8

## 9 Summary of Comments

Various tools were used to collect Project input, including a formal comment management system, a public opinion survey, and monitoring of media outlets. The following sections provide a description of comment management; a summary of comments received throughout the scoping phase and EA development from meetings, media comments, and the public opinion survey; and a description of media tracking and outreach analytics.

### 9.1 Comment Management

The Project team invited the public, organizations, agencies, and Tribes to provide comments in a variety of ways from Project initiation through the development of the Draft EA. At every outreach event, comments were gathered and shared with the Project team for consideration. Communications were accepted in writing through comment forms, email, postal mail, a website form, and telephone. Communications were then screened to identify specific comments. For example, a single communication (i.e., letter) could contain multiple comments. Each comment was coded into a topic area and subtopic area as appropriate.

Comments were shared with the Project team during development of preliminary engineering and the Draft EA. Table 9-1 describes the numbers of commenters, communications, and comments received during scoping and Draft EA development.

**Table 9-1. Comments received.**

Category	Scoping (January 25 – July 24, 2023)	Draft EA Development (July 25, 2023 – October 28, 2025)
Number of Commenters	8	53
Communications Received	173	202
Comments Identified	206	64

### 9.2 Summary of Comments Received

#### 9.2.1 Scoping and Draft EA Development Phase

The following provides a summary of comments received throughout the development of the Draft EA. The comments received from the public and non-agency stakeholders during the public scoping period (January 25 to July 24, 2023) can be viewed in Attachment B Public Scoping Summary. Agency scoping comments can be viewed in Attachment C Agency Scoping Materials. Comments received during the development of the Draft EA, including those received for the CSS process with MOA (see Section 4.5), can be viewed in Attachment F Comments During Development of Draft EA.

Comments received during scoping included:

- Focus on traffic enforcement (safety, speed)
- Focus on safety, and agree that safety improvements are needed in this corridor
- Consider that highway expansions may create more demand on the highway, increasing traffic volumes, speeds, and likelihood of vehicle collisions
- Consider multimodal use when developing alternatives

- Consider other alternatives (e.g., bridge across Turnagain Arm, commuter rail, divided highway)
- Consider design issues/considerations (e.g., design day versus design year, traffic counts, speed, divided highway, turnouts, pullouts, slow traffic/passing lanes, traffic modeling, intersections)
- Coordinate with ARRC
- Consider highway users when determining locations/numbers of meetings (i.e., more meetings in Anchorage)
- Include a separated bike/pedestrian pathway
- Extend/connect/improve the current pathway
- Provide access (i.e., to trails, recreational facilities, wildlife viewing, fishing [hooligan])
- Consider connections with local roads
- Include dedicated turn lanes (McHugh Creek, Indian, Bird)
- Provide a better CSP Headquarters/Visitor Center
- Consider Project cost and financing
- Consider capability and funding for maintenance (e.g., winter plowing)
- Consider quality of life
- Consider/address rockfall/rock cuts and material blasting impacts (e.g., add soil/vegetate terraces left from rock cuts/blasting)
- Consider avalanches
- Consider road closure issues (develop an alternate route in addition to main route)
- Consider impacts on properties, neighborhoods, Potter Marsh
- Consider right-of-way issues
- Consider current noise issues
- Consider visual impacts/aesthetics; maintain the highway's National Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road designations
- Seed the sides of the highway with native wildflowers that are pollinator friendly, not treated with pesticides, instead of grass
- Consider mitigation options
- Explain Transportation X project management
- Consider class of action (i.e., Project should be an EIS instead of an EA)

The Project team considered these comments and additional comments provided during and after the public comment period while designing the Project and developing the Draft EA.

### **9.3 Public Opinion Survey**

In February 2024, DOT&PF used a third-party professional surveying company, Dittman Research, to develop a public opinion survey about the Project. The survey included a sample size of 500 Anchorage (58 percent), Matanuska-Susitna Valley (27 percent), and Kenai Peninsula (15 percent) residents.

The public opinion survey was conducted via telephone call and text message. The survey was intended to measure public sentiment toward the Project using a statistically verifiable process. Screening questions such as, "Do you drive the Seward Highway?" were asked before the survey was conducted to eliminate respondents who had no firsthand knowledge of the corridor. A total of 31 questions were asked during the survey. The survey questions were developed collaboratively by the Project team, DOT&PF, Dittman Research, and SWG. All survey

questions focused on the 20-mile stretch of the two-lane road between South Anchorage and Bird Flats, just north of Girdwood.

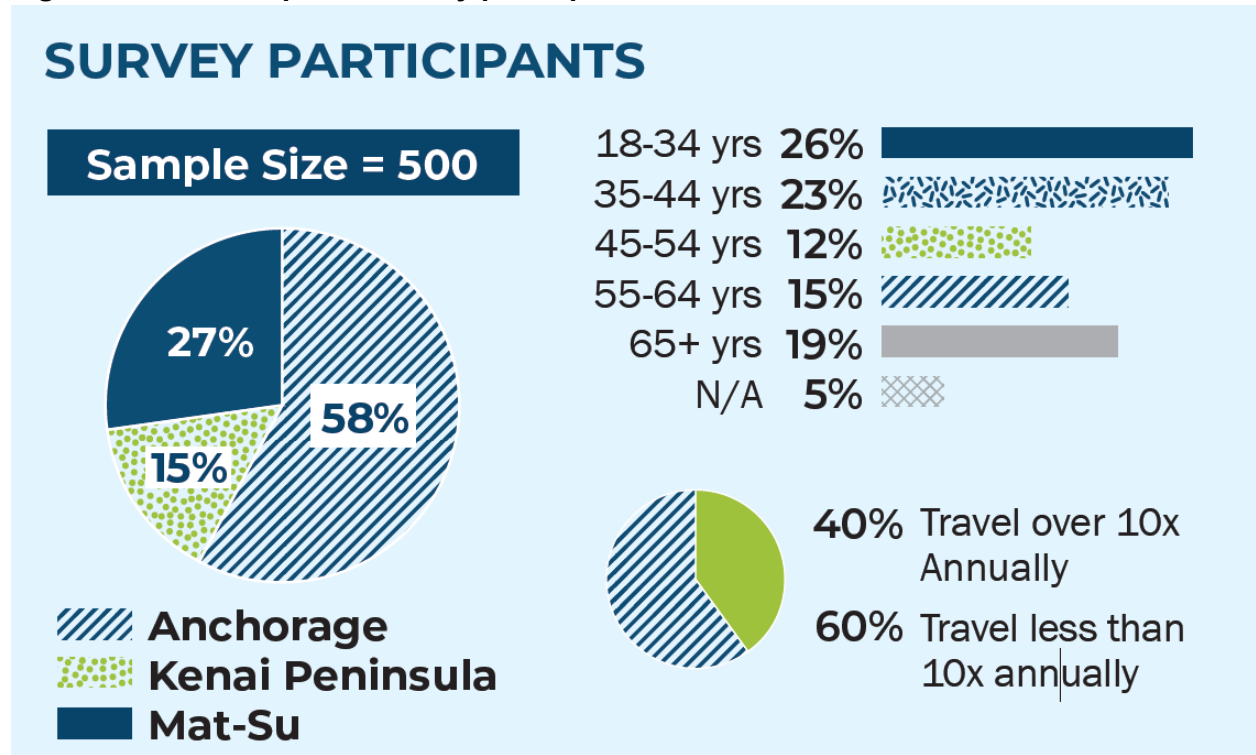
### **9.3.1 Survey Findings**

The survey collected information from February 22 to 24, 2024. Key findings included:

- Respondents frequently use the highway.
- Respondents viewed the highway as hazardous (46 percent believed the highway to be generally or very hazardous, 32 percent believed the highway to be of average safety, and 21 percent believed the highway to be generally or very safe).
- Respondents indicated safety improvements are a priority (38 percent identified it as a high priority, 37 percent as a medium priority, and 9 percent each as a top and low priority; safety was rated highest by respondents as a Project goal [4.19 on a 5-point scale]).
- More than 90 percent of respondents support the Project (56 percent strongly support and 35 percent somewhat support).
- Respondents indicated that rock and ice fall mitigation and additional lanes are the most important Project improvements.
- More than 70 percent of respondents stated that they would rarely or never use the separated pathway.
- Respondents expressed broad support for the use of rock blasting and placing road (fill) material.
- Respondents commonly asked about Project duration, cost, and travel impact during construction.
- Respondents primarily used this highway section during summer (48 percent) or year-round (47 percent), traveling through (74 percent) for recreation (75 percent).

Figure 9-1 shows information regarding survey participants. The complete survey results, including a summary sheet, can be reviewed in Attachment G Public Opinion Survey Results.

Figure 9-1. Public opinion survey participant information.



## 9.4 Media Monitoring and Analytics

The Project team monitors news articles, letters to the editor, and other published sources to gather information and relevant public input. Media monitoring and data analytics software services provided alerts of any mention of the Project and its associated keywords when used on the internet. Online hits and traffic for data-driven PI reporting are also tracked. Data and relevant information are reported to DOT&PF. Findings are important in understanding public sentiment around the Project and assessing feedback.

Several news platforms published stories about the Project, including interviews with Project staff about the process and timeline (Table 9-2).

Table 9-2. Publications’ reporting on the Project.

Date	News Outlet	Article Title
3/23/2023	KTUU – Alaska’s News Source	“Department of Transportation to begin Safer Seward Highway Project”
4/2/2023	Girdwood, Inc.	“Girdwood Inc Issue VIII – Prop 7, Housing Survey, Police Contract & Seward Highway Safety Project”
12/9/2023	<i>Turnagain News</i>	“A Seward Highway Safety Meeting”
2/19/2024	<i>Turnagain News</i>	“Seward Highway Plans Put Off For Lack of Funding”

## 10 Accessibility

Visual or hearing-impaired individuals' inability to participate in meetings and access materials may preclude or inhibit those people from attending or participating in Project activities. In response to this potential accessibility barrier, the Project team used ADA-compliant techniques for all materials and made reasonable accommodations for meetings. The Project team used Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as the baseline to make all public Project documents accessible.

When designing materials, the Project team considered colors, patterns, and spacing for accessibility. The Project team designed all documents for screen readers to accurately read the document in specific order, which includes attention to character and paragraph style. Website links were given alternative text instead of reading the full URL. After design and before implementation, all documents underwent remediation that analyzed the document and gave an accessibility score. All major errors were addressed and checked against the PDF Universally Accessible, or PDFUA, before being placed online.

## **Attachment A. Public Involvement Plan**

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# Public Involvement Plan Safer Seward Highway

TransportationX

Prepared for:  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

May 2023

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
ADN	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
ad	advertisement
ARRC	Alaska Railroad Corporation
CE	categorical exclusion
CRO	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Civil Rights Office
DOT&PF	State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
EA	environmental assessment
EPM	<i>Alaska DOT&amp;PF Environmental Procedures Manual</i>
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
HPCM	<i>Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual</i>
MOA	Municipality of Anchorage
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	milepost
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
OWJ	official with jurisdiction
PDF	Portable Document Format
PI	public involvement
PIP	Public Involvement Plan
Project	Seward Highway MPs 98.5 to 118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Project
QR	Quick Response
REM	Regional Environmental Manager
ROW	right-of-way
SME	subject matter expert
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation

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# 1 General Information

## 1.1 Project Overview

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is proposing to construct safety improvements along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek, from mileposts (MPs) 98.5 to 118 (hereafter referred to as the Project; see **Figure 1**).

Proposed improvements may include the following:

- A divided highway with expansion up to four travel lanes and/or sections of up to four travel lanes
- Realignment of the highway to flatten curves
- Relocation and realignment of the Alaska Railroad Corporation's (ARRC) railroad tracks (as needed)
- Construction and/or improvement of turnouts/parking areas
- Construction of acceleration and deceleration lanes
- Construction of rock catchments (as needed)
- Construction of non-motorized pathways and facilities

The Seward Highway is a state-owned and operated highway within the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). The Project area falls within a DOT&PF Designated Safety Corridor, a segment of state highway with a higher than average incidence of fatal and major injury crashes. The Seward Highway is also recognized for its scenic, natural, historical, and recreational values and holds three designations: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road. These designations recognize and protect the most scenic, historic, and recreational highways in the United States.

Figure 1. Project Base Map



## 1.2 Project History

The current effort to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Anchorage and Girdwood began in the early 2000s. In 2004, DOT&PF proposed design improvements for a problematic section of the Seward Highway between MPs 105 and 115 to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety along this highway. DOT&PF and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) signed and approved a categorical exclusion (CE) in 2004; however, design and permitting efforts for this project were suspended due to lack of available construction funding.

In 2006, the Seward Highway from MPs 90 to 117.5 was designated as the state's first safety corridor due to the elevated rate of fatal and major injury (high-severity) crashes. Since 2007, DOT&PF has made efforts to provide physical safety improvements along stretches of the corridor with historically higher rates of high-severity crashes (DOT&PF 2017). Many factors affect crash severity, including roadway geometry; road and weather conditions; speed; seatbelt use; vehicle type; driver impairment, fatigue, and/or attitude; and emergency response resources. Since 2006, safety improvement projects have targeted the stretch between MPs 99 and 111 due to the higher frequency and severity of crashes.

A CE prepared for Project Z566310000 (Seward Highway Safety Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MPs 105–115) was approved in 2004 and re-evaluated as a part of the smaller Seward Highway MP 105–107 Windy Corner Project, which kicked off in 2012. As a result of public feedback and consultation with FHWA, DOT&PF revised the Class of Action from a CE to an environmental assessment (EA) in 2017. DOT&PF conducted the Seward Highway MP 105–107 Windy Corner Project in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, producing a Draft EA that was made available to the public in March 2020 ([DOT&PF 2020](#)). After reviewing public comments received on that document, DOT&PF evaluated extending this project north, between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point at MPs 105 to 109.5.

In 2022, DOT&PF further extended the scope of the study to encompass the highway from MPs 98.5 to 118. This Project has been identified as Project No. 0A31034/ Z566310000 Seward Highway MPs 98.5 to 118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek. This will allow DOT&PF to develop solutions for a longer corridor, considering impacts and mitigation in a comprehensive manner. The Project team will incorporate comments, issues, and analyses from prior projects in identifying the needs and potential transportation solutions during this Project. The NEPA process will begin anew to address the changed project termini.

### 1.3 Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed Project is to implement safety upgrades to decrease high-severity crashes and improve traffic operations to alleviate traffic congestion. Because it is a designated safety corridor, DOT&PF is actively managing the tightly constrained, two-lane highway to keep through and local traffic moving and safe. The Project will also seek to provide capacity for long-term growth and peak traffic periods. More specifics on the purpose of and need for the Project will be developed and summarized in a purpose and need statement, which will be available for public review and comment during scoping.

### 1.4 Purpose of the Public Involvement Plan

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) details the proposed methods for involving agencies, organizations, and the public during the EA. Public involvement (PI) is the systematic process designed to provide clear and consistent information to those people who might be affected by the plan (stakeholders), and to engage people and groups at appropriate, meaningful levels of the decision-making process. Good PI also provides clear expectations for the Project sponsor as well as the various stakeholder groups.

The primary goals of this PIP are to:

- Effectively engage stakeholders through education and involvement;
- Clarify DOT&PF and stakeholders' roles, responsibilities, and ability to influence decisions; and
- Detail the relevant federal, DOT&PF, and MOA requirements for PI that will govern the PI process.

This PIP is based on the following principles:

- The Project team will keep an open mind and consider all points of view.
- The Project team will keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback regarding how public input has influenced Project decisions.
- The Project team will openly share information to help the public become familiar with the issues and public process.
- The Project team will clearly define, acknowledge, and communicate milestones in the process to allow for public comment at the times when input has the potential to affect decision-making.
- The Project team will offer input opportunities in multiple formats so each stakeholder can communicate in a manner that best meets their needs.
- This PIP is a working document, and the Project team may revise it as needed.

## 1.5 Regulatory Requirements

Public and agency involvement on transportation projects completed by DOT&PF within the MOA are guided by a range of documents including:

- *Alaska DOT&PF Environmental Procedures Manual (EPM)*
- *Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual (HPCM)*
- NEPA Assignment Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FHWA and DOT&PF
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code (Chapter 21.03.190)
- MOA's Context Sensitive Solutions Policy

## 2 Project Decision-Makers and Stakeholders

This section describes the decision-makers and stakeholders involved in the Project. Different stakeholders will have varying levels of interest in the process. Brief summaries of agency and stakeholder roles, and how each group will be involved in the PIP, are provided below.

### 2.1 Agency Decision-Makers

This section lists key decision-makers at the local, state, and federal levels who will be engaged regularly to review issues, make key decisions, and determine key messaging that will be shared with Project stakeholders. Section 4, Stakeholder Involvement Methods and Tools, identifies methods, tools, and processes used to engage key agency decision-makers to ensure continuity and coordination on key Project and stakeholder issues.

#### 2.1.1 Key Local Decision-Makers

Key local decision-makers, who are local-level stakeholders with key interests in the success of this Project, include:

- Anchorage School District
- MOA:
  - Anchorage Fire Department
  - Anchorage Police Department
  - Mayor's Office
  - Anchorage Assembly
  - Department of Economic and Community Development
  - Parks and Recreation Department
  - Planning and Zoning Commission
  - Planning Department
  - Urban Design Commission

#### 2.1.2 Key State Decision-Makers

Key state decision-makers, who are state-level stakeholders with key interests in the success of this Project, include:

- Alaska Governor's Office
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Habitat Section
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources:
  - Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
  - State Historic Preservation Office(r)
- DOT&PF:
  - Office of the Commissioner
  - Central Region Director
  - Regional Environmental Manager (REM)
  - Statewide NEPA Program Manager
  - Right-of-Way (ROW) and Utilities
- ARRC

### 2.1.3 Key Federal Decision-Makers

Key federal decision-makers, who are federal-level stakeholders with key interests in the success of this Project, include:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)/FHWA
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## 2.2 Other Informed Organizations or Individuals

Other organizations or individuals who are stakeholders with key interests in the success of this Project include:

- U.S. Representative and Senators:
  - Alaska Representative, District At Large
  - Alaska Senator, Senior
  - Alaska Senator, Junior
- Alaska Legislature: Senators and Representatives:
  - Senate District C
  - Senate District D
  - Senate District E
  - House District 6
  - House District 7
  - House District 8
  - House District 9
  - House District 10
  - House District 11
- Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions:
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
  - Citizen's Advisory Committee
  - Freight Committee
  - Policy Committee
  - Technical Advisory Committee
- Federation of Community Councils:
  - Girdwood Board of Supervisors
  - Turnagain Arm Community Council
  - Rabbit Creek Community Council
  - Old Seward/Ocean View Community Council
- Homeowners' Associations:
  - Rainbow Valley Homeowners' Association
  - Chugach Park View Homeowners' Association
  - Potter Creek Homeowners' Association
  - Goldenview Park Homeowners' Association

- Southpark Terrace Homeowners' Association

## 2.3 Potential Stakeholders

The Seward Highway has numerous potential stakeholders, including area residents and businesses, recreational users, federal and state agencies, local government, emergency services, utilities, tribal entities, and non-governmental organizations. **Table 1** provides a list of potential stakeholders, including:

- Those who actively participated in prior related environmental studies and
- Those who may be impacted by construction.

**Table 1. Potential Stakeholder Groups**

Potential Stakeholder Groups	
<b>General Public</b>	
Residents and property owners Surrounding local businesses Consumers statewide	Traveling public Commuters Park/trail users
<b>Users</b>	
Cargo businesses Ground transportation services ARRC	Alaska tour companies Developers
<b>Public Utilities</b>	
Alaska Communications Systems Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility	Chugach Electric Association General Communications Incorporated
<b>Local Governments</b>	
Director, MOA Office of Economic and Community Development Director, MOA Parks and Recreation Director, MOA Planning and Zoning Commission Kenai Peninsula Borough	City of Seward City of Whittier City of Kenai City of Soldotna City of Homer
<b>State/Federal Agencies</b>	
Alaska State Troopers National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service National Park Service State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game	State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources DOT&PF U.S. Environmental Protection Agency U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Coast Guard U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service U.S. Department of the Interior FHWA U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<b>Tribal Organizations / Governments</b>	
Cook Inlet Region, Inc. Kenaitze Indian Tribe	Ninilchik Traditional Council Chenega Corporation

Potential Stakeholder Groups	
<b>Elected Officials</b>	
Governor of Alaska Mayor of Anchorage Anchorage Municipal Assembly Alaska State Senate	Alaska House of Representatives U.S. House of Representatives U.S. Senate
<b>Nongovernmental Organizations</b>	
The Alaska Center Anchorage Trails and Greenways Coalition Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge Nordic Ski Association of Anchorage Bike Commuters of Anchorage Bike Anchorage Cruise Lines International Association	Anchorage Citizens Coalition Alaska Municipal League Anchorage Park Foundation Anchorage Waterways Council Anchorage Running Club Kenai River Sportfishing Association Alaska Outdoor Council
<b>Community and Economic Development Organizations</b>	
Alaska Travel Industry Association Alaska Trucking Association Alaska Chamber of Commerce Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Anchorage Economic Development Corporation Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Corridor Communities Association	Arctic Bicycle Club Chugach State Park Citizens' Advisory Board Climber's Alliance Federation of Community Councils Girdwood Community Council Hope Alaska Chamber of Commerce Bike Anchorage

## 2.4 Environmental Justice

Project communications (i.e., PI) will meet the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Executive Order 12898 *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, and FHWA Order 6640.23A *FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*. Based on the Windy Corner Project, linguistic, cultural, or institutional disparities are not anticipated; however, the project team has conducted a high-level review. The analysis has confirmed that there is a low likelihood of environmental justice impacts based on the following demographic data:

- The lowest average household income of the seven block groups that intersect the project area is \$97,500; the highest is \$184,722. This is higher than the most recent poverty guidelines for Alaska, published in 2017 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- The project area is less diverse than the MOA as a whole. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the MOA is 56.5 percent “White.” The project area is more “White,” ranging from 70.3 percent in Tract 27.13 to 86.9 percent in Tract 29.

## 3 Public Involvement Methods and Tools

This section outlines the outreach steps, methods, tactics, and activities that will be used to engage the public and Project stakeholders and enable them to meaningfully contribute to the Project. The activities will build upon each other to solicit public comments that will be incorporated into the PI report.

The activities described below are not listed in chronological order. Many of these activities will occur concurrently throughout the Project. Actual dates will coincide with Project activities, milestones, and deliverables.

### 3.1 Scoping

NEPA requires scoping to determine the scope of environmental issues that need to be addressed, identify alternatives and measures that may mitigate adverse environmental impacts, and identify other environmental requirements that should be performed concurrently with Draft EA development.

#### 3.1.1 Agency Scoping

Scoping letters will be sent to inform agencies with expertise or jurisdiction within an area affected by the Project. An agency scoping meeting will be held in early 2023, and a Stakeholder Working Group will be convened. It is anticipated that this working group will meet on a monthly basis. Please see Section 4, Stakeholder Involvement Methods and Tools, for more information on the plan to involve agencies, which will begin prior to scoping and continue after scoping.

#### 3.1.2 Public Scoping

Public scoping will begin with a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Begin Engineering Studies to be published to inform the public and agencies of DOT&PF's intent to begin environmental review for this Project. This NOI will be published in a local newspaper and online on the State of Alaska Online Public Notices website. A 30-day public comment period will be provided. Additionally, public scoping will be announced on the Project website and via the communications tools described below, including a deadline for comments. Newspapers in which advertising will be considered include: *Anchorage Daily News* (ADN), *Peninsula Clarion*, *Homer News*, and *Seward Journal*. A public meeting will be held during scoping, anticipated during the first quarter of 2023, to solicit input. All comments received will be reviewed by the Project team and appended to a scoping summary report.

### 3.2 Public Notices

Public notices, including NOIs, Notices of Availability (NOA), and Notices of Public Meetings/Hearings, will be managed per guidance provided by the EPM and HPCM. In addition to the specific requirements for different notice types, all notices will include the standard practices described in the following subsections.

### 3.2.1 National Environmental Policy Act Notice Language

The NEPA Assignment Program MOU between FHWA and DOT&PF requires DOT&PF to include the following disclosure as part of agency outreach and PI procedures, including any NOIs, scoping materials, scoping meeting notes, public meeting notices, NOAs, or public hearings:

*The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this Project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated November 3, 2017, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.*

### 3.2.2 Civil Rights/Title VI/Americans with Disabilities Act Notices

DOT&PF is required by federal agreement to include a disclosure regarding Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) compliance as part of agency outreach and PI. The Project team will work with the DOT&PF Civil Rights Office (CRO) to confirm the most current language prior to publication. At the time of writing this PIP, the current language is:

*It is the policy of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) that no one shall be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and State of Alaska funds. Full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy: [dot.alaska.gov/tvi\\_statement.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml). To file a complaint, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/cvlrts/titlevi.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/cvlrts/titlevi.shtml). For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-676-3777.*

CRO notices will be published with all public announcements, and Title VI documents will be displayed at public meetings and documented in the meeting record.

### 3.2.3 Notices of Public Meetings/Hearings

Public meetings held during scoping or other periods in which the Project team desires to inform the public and/or solicit feedback will be noticed following the standard requirements. If the public meeting is being held in conjunction with a public hearing, the meeting notice will also include the additional requirements for a public hearing.

The Project team anticipates that a public hearing will be held following release of the Draft EA for public comment. The Notice of Public Hearing may be published jointly with the Draft EA NOA.

In addition to meeting standard requirements, a Notice of Public Hearing will be:

- Issued at least 15 days in advance of the hearing to appropriate agencies, officials, property owners, community groups, FHWA, and the DOT&PF Commissioner and Regional Director;

- Published in local and regional newspapers: the first time 30 to 40 days prior to the hearing and the second time 5 to 12 days prior to the hearing; newspapers in which advertising will be considered include ADN, *Peninsula Clarion*, *Homer News*, and *Seward Journal*; and
- Published on the State of Alaska website as an Online Public Notice.

The notice will include the following information:

- The deadline for submitting comments (a minimum of 30 days from the availability of the Draft EA until a minimum of 10 days after the public hearing)
- The statement: "...public hearing is for the purpose of considering the economic, social, and environmental effects of the Project and its consistency with the goals and objectives of such urban planning as has been carried out by the community"
- Project background information including:
  - Description of the proposed Project
  - Map or graphic of the proposed Project
  - Contact person's name and phone number
  - Locations of the following information:
    - Drawings maps, plans, reports, or other project information
    - Environmental documents
    - Written views from agencies, private groups, and individuals
- The procedure for submitting written comments
- The disclaimer "All public comments received will become part of the public record and may be subject to Freedom of Information Act request."
- The Project purpose and need, alternatives, and tentative schedule for ROW acquisition and construction
- Indication that relocation assistance programs will be discussed with applicable individuals and/or businesses
- Mandatory ADA text and other notices required by laws, Executive Orders, and regulations (e.g., Title VI, floodplains, wetlands, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act)
- Availability of the Draft EA NOA and where it can be found for review

### **3.2.4 Notices of Availability**

Per EPM Section 7.5.5, DOT&PF will issue a public NOA after the Draft EA has been approved for distribution. In addition to meeting standard requirements, this NOA will:

- Describe the Project and its impacts, and explain where the Draft EA can be found for review;
- Be combined with the Notice of Public Hearing, if possible;
- Be published by other methods, as appropriate; and
- Be published a minimum of 15 days prior to a public hearing held for the purpose of releasing the Draft EA.

Once approved for distribution, the approved Draft EA will be made available in the following ways:

- Distributed electronically by DOT&PF to appropriate agencies for their review and comment
- By request for public review, including online via the Project website
- Via hard copies delivered to the Anchorage Loussac Library and Girdwood Community Library for public review
- Via hard copies kept on site at the Anchorage DOT&PF Central Region office and Statewide Environmental Office for public review

The Draft EA must be available for review and comment for a minimum of 30 days from the date the NOA was published.

In the event of a Finding of No Significant Impact, notice of such will be emailed to involved federal and state agencies. This notice will follow standard requirements and will be distributed by the same methods as the Draft EA NOA.

### **3.2.5 *De minimis* Impact Finding (if needed)**

Per EPM Section 8.6.1, the public must have opportunity to review and comment on any DOT&PF intention to approve a *de minimis* impact finding related to parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966. This does not apply to historic sites. This comment opportunity is provided by way of a public notice, which:

- Should be combined with other required NEPA process public notices;
- Is required to provide at least a 2-week review and comment period;
- Should provide a longer review period if the HPCM's Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Chapter requires a longer period;
- Must include a comment period that occurs before the official with jurisdiction (OWJ) concurs with the *de minimis* finding; and
- Must be approved by the Statewide NEPA Manager prior to publication.

Public notices for a proposed *de minimis* impact finding must:

- State in the heading "Notice of Proposed *de minimis* Section 4(f) Finding" along with the project name and number;
- State that DOT&PF intends to make a finding that the proposed Project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of the Section 4(f) property(ies) after consideration of impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation or enhancement measures and consultation with the OWJ;
- State that DOT&PF is requesting public comments on an intended *de minimis* Section 4(f) Impact Finding for the proposed Project and identify the property(ies) that is protected under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966;
- Describe the potential impacts to the Section 4(f) property(ies); and
- Include the NEPA Assignment Program MOU language noted in Section 3.2.1.

### 3.3 Public Meetings/Open Houses

Public meetings/open houses will focus on the communities directly affected by the Project, centering on the people and businesses in communities that will likely feel the biggest impacts of the Project's development (Rabbit Creek, Turnagain Arm, Girdwood, Rainbow, and Indian). The Project team proposes to hold three sets of meetings: one during scoping, one for alternatives development, and for the Draft EA release. Each set of meetings will be held in three locations: once in South Anchorage, once in Indian, and once in Girdwood. To show that the Project team is listening and that its approach is reasonable, sensible, and responsible, the Project team will update the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) following each meeting. Each event will include a poster called "We Heard You" that highlights overall feedback and shows how the Project team responded to this feedback. The Project team will staff meetings to answer questions. Each meeting will begin with a short presentation from the Project team, followed by an open house and/or public hearing format as appropriate to answer specific questions the public may have and collect feedback.

The three anticipated meetings include the following:

- **Public Meeting #1 Scoping Meeting:** Scheduled for Quarter 1 of 2023 to solicit input regarding initial impacts to be considered during development of the Draft EA.
- **Public Meeting #2 Alternatives:** Scheduled for Quarter 3 of 2023 to share the proposed action and the alternative(s) that will be evaluated in the EA, provide an update on any engineering adjustments and analysis underway, and share the resources that will be the focus of the EA analysis.
- **Public Meeting #3 Draft EA and Draft Section 4(f) Analysis (may include Public Hearing):** Scheduled for Quarter 3 of 2024 to present the Draft EA and Section 4(f) analysis.

Two newspaper advertisements (ads) are planned for each public meeting, with additional communication methods (detailed in Section 3.5) planned to remind stakeholders of the comment period dates and opportunities to comment. The first newspaper ad will be published at the start of the comment period. The second newspaper ad will be published on the Sunday or Monday prior to the public meeting. Each newspaper ad will be one-quarter page in the ADN and other local papers. The ads will be in black and white. To comply with NEPA standards, the required legal language will be included in the newspaper ads. Public meeting ads will also include meeting details, comment period dates, and ways to comment. The newspaper ads will be submitted to the DOT&PF Project Manager for approval prior to submittal for publication.

### 3.4 Key Messaging

Messaging will consist of two components: (1) a simple and easily repeated broad Project message, and (2) topic-specific messaging. Each will be responsive to what the Project team hears from the public, how the Project progresses, and what topics Project staff deem most important for the public to know and understand. Safety (current safety issues and design improvements) will be at the center of all messaging.

Throughout the life of the Project, as formal comments are received, social media comments are reviewed, and Project staff converse with the public and stakeholders, issues will be re-evaluated and new messaging will be incorporated as appropriate.

Messaging will be developed with the audience at the forefront. Plain language will be used for maximum understanding. Technical language that is not commonly used or understood by a general audience will be avoided. Acronyms will be used sparingly and avoided if possible.

#### **3.4.1 General Project Messaging**

HDR, in coordination with DOT&PF, has developed general project messaging through the new project name and project logo: Safer Seward Highway. This message is easily repeatable by Project staff across all platforms, in each interview, and at every meeting. It will introduce the most important concept and will feed into more specific messaging.

#### **3.4.2 Topic-Specific Messaging**

Messaging about specific topics will be developed based on the issues of highest concern to the public. Examples include safety, rockfall mitigation, pedestrians and cyclists, recreational trail access, construction impacts, tourism, and speed limits. The key messages described below will be updated on a regular basis.

### **3.5 Media and Engagement**

#### **3.5.1 Branding**

The Project team will develop a brand package to ensure a consistent look, feel, and message associated with the Project. The brand will help ensure that every tool and tactic reinforces the Project's key messages, education, and awareness goals. The brand will work to simplify this complex Project and communicate the value of the Project through every channel and at each touchpoint. The brand package will include:

- Tagline
- Key messages
- Graphic design concept and associated imagery: An info-graphics-heavy concept focused on simplicity, making the Project memorable and reinforcing project benefits, is anticipated.

The contractor will provide two or three options for DOT&PF's review and selection. Once an option is agreed upon, all communications tools will be developed in alignment with the brand concept.

#### **3.5.2 General Outreach Campaign**

In addition to the required advertising associated with public meetings, the Project team intends to use a variety of advertising, public, and media relations tactics to raise awareness and build support for the Project. Examples include:

- Social media advertising/boosted posts: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn (detailed in Section 3.7 Social Media)

- Develop a video series focused not only on Project information, but also on messaging from high-profile Project advocates (details in Section 3.6, Electronic/Digital Communication), which will align with the Project brand
- Radio ads, to include local stations as well as Spotify and possibly Pandora
- Radio talk show interviews with a variety of Project subject matter experts (SMEs) and third-party Project advocates
- Podcasts with a dynamic individual interviewing SMEs and Project advocates
- Movie theater ads in Anchorage and Kenai Peninsula communities
- Airport advertising
- Bus signage (interior and exterior)
- Flyers
- Coffee cup sleeves at coffee shops, particularly smaller communities south of the Project area
- Proactive media relations to help direct the narrative; pitch stories to key publications (*ADN*, *Peninsula Clarion*, *Alaska Journal of Commerce*, *Alaska Public Media*, *Homer News*, and *Seward Journal*), and provide interviewees (recognizing that the journalists will seek opposition interviews for a balanced story)
- Outreach to targeted key stakeholder groups from **Table 1**, including exploring opportunities to have the Project added to standing meeting agendas, providing regular updates via email, and/or other opportunities
- Project ambassadors who are identified and assigned to have direct communication with key members of active opposition groups; establish direct personal relationships to build trust, help to answer questions, educate, and identify and address concerns
- Other opportunities with a particular focus on reaching stakeholders in more rural communities

### 3.5.3 Print Materials

Print materials will help reinforce Project messaging at public events and are particularly useful in reaching individuals and communities with insufficient or unreliable internet access. Project print materials will include:

- Fact sheets
- Flyers (with Quick Response [QR] code directed to Project website)
- Brochures
- Pop-up banners (for in-person meetings, events, etc.)
- Other print materials such as postcards/mailers (to be considered and used if needed)

While the brochures and pop-up banners will be high level and static, flyers and the fact sheet will be updated when new information becomes available, posted on the Project website, and made available in advance of and at public events.

### 3.5.4 Public Meetings

Each public meeting will also be publicized using social media, emails/e-blasts, and the Project website. The Project team will explore radio advertising, public service announcements, and other mechanisms to ensure robust awareness.

### **3.5.5 Media Queries and Contacts**

Shannon McCarthy, DOT&PF, is authorized to speak with the press/media about the Project. All media queries should be directed to Shannon, with a copy sent to HDR Public Outreach Lead Katherine Wood. DOT&PF will coordinate with the authorized spokespeople. If additional information is needed from the Project team, the HDR Public Outreach Lead will coordinate information gathering and response to DOT&PF.

## **3.6 Electronic/Digital Communication**

### **3.6.1 Website**

The Project Team will develop and maintain a Project website branded in alignment with and in support of the broader public information campaign. The website will be hosted by HDR at the following address: <https://safersewardhighway.com/>. The site will be ADA compliant and will provide Project information, meeting notices/PI opportunities, key contacts, a mechanism to submit comments, and other materials to support public education about the Project. The website will be maintained to ensure timeliness and accuracy of messaging, and the comments will be monitored and analyzed for message development and Project input.

### **3.6.2 E-blasts/Emails**

A contact list that includes email addresses will be developed and maintained by HDR, initially using resources from previous DOT&PF projects near the Project corridor (e.g., the Windy Corner Project EA phase). The list will be kept current using contact information gathered through many of the tools outlined in this PIP.

The Project team will send e-blasts (and/or emails) as approved by DOT&PF. E-blasts use a paid service that includes the ability to track engagement and provide analytics including open rate, read rate, and reach.

### **3.6.3 Text Alerts**

The Project team will investigate and recommend a system to push out text alerts for public meetings and other significant Project announcements. The GovDelivery system has a text feature and is an option.

### **3.6.4 Other**

The Project team will investigate and recommend other forms of electronic and/or digital media that will help reach more remote audiences and/or key stakeholders. Some examples include 30-second to 1-minute Project videos (for social and/or paid advertising), QR code for use on print materials, and online message boards frequented by target audiences.

## **3.7 Social Media**

Social media content will be developed by the consultant and sent to DOT&PF communications staff for posting on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Content will be provided in multiple formats to conform to the requirements and aesthetics of each platform. The consultant will provide scheduling and ad-boosting recommendations when delivering content to DOT&PF.

All content will be provided for posting on DOT&PF's main social media accounts. The consultant will provide sharing recommendations for Facebook groups where applicable.

Social media will serve as both a tool to drive engagement in the public process as well as to educate and inform regarding Project benefits. Posts will use a variety of high-impact imagery, including infographics; photographs; or short, engaging videos intended to inspire support for upgrades to the infrastructure. Language in the posts will be casual and easy-to-understand for broad comprehension and appeal. Each post will link back to the Project website, where the user can find more information and Project contact information.

Content will focus on specific topics or calls to action related to the Project and will be posted consistently throughout the NEPA process. Social media messaging will integrate with other communication tactics by mirroring other messaging and outreach activities. For example, if the Project team sets up a booth at a cycling event, social media posts in the days surrounding the event could focus on multimodal transportation alternatives. Each focused post will work in concert with the overall, general Project messaging. Potential topics include pedestrian and cyclist access, scenic pull-outs, rockfall mitigation, addressing safety concerns, corridor history, and recreational trail access.

Tactics to strengthen engagement will include calls to action (e.g., attend a meeting, comment on alternatives, click a link, tag a friend in the comments) and platform-specific tactics. Potential examples include a photography contest on Instagram or a poll/quiz on Twitter.

In addition to communicating information to the public and stakeholders, social media will be used to understand what the public is saying about the Project. Social media comments will not be considered formal Project comments but will be reviewed to increase awareness of the public conversation about the Project, help guide messaging, and evaluate the effectiveness of messaging.

## **3.8 In-Person Events**

### **3.8.1 Traveling Open Houses/Listening Posts**

The Project team will develop and implement Traveling Open Houses/Listening Posts, each of which will consist of a set of informational displays and handouts set up in a public place over a period of at least 4 hours. HDR will provide staff to answer questions and listen to input from participants. The Traveling Open House/Listening Post event(s) will be advertised through postcards; contact with the media, including newspaper ads; social media; and on the Project website.

Up to eight Listening Posts are planned over the course of the Project. Proposed locations include:

- Community events in Anchorage, Girdwood, Kenai, and surrounding communities (e.g., Girdwood Forest Fair, Anchorage Transportation Fair)
- Local sporting goods shops, including REI, Skinny Raven, and others

- Recreational events such as the Alaska mountain runners trail series, Alyeska Slush Cup, and Kenai Silver Salmon Derby

### **3.8.2 Road Show to Peninsula**

To facilitate maximum engagement at in-person events, a road show package will be compiled, consisting of a variety of outreach materials that could include:

- Printed materials
- Tablets to show digital renderings of the design
- Virtual reality goggles for viewing digital renderings
- DOT&PF and/or Project swag
- Computers to allow submission of geo-located comments
- Games or contests
- Logo promotional items

The Project team will reach out to the Alaska Chamber of Commerce, local Chambers, and the Alaska Municipal League to identify local events with the biggest draws.

### **3.8.3 Community Council Updates**

The Project team will offer to make presentations to all community councils within immediate proximity of the Project area, including, but not limited to the Turnagain Arm Community Council, Portage Valley Community Council, Rabbit Creek Community Council, Bear Valley Community Council, Old Seward/Oceanview Community Council, Anchorage Hillside Home and Landowners Organization, and Girdwood Community Council (Girdwood Board of Supervisors). These presentations will provide information regarding the Project's status, scope, and schedule.

Upon request, the Project team will give updates to additional community councils and other interest groups. Community councils and other interest groups will be included in email updates, and public notices will be sent to representatives of these groups with a request that they distribute the notice to their members.

## **3.9 Accessibility**

Visual or hearing-impaired individuals' inability to participate in meetings and access materials may preclude or inhibit them from attending or participating in Project activities. In response to this potential accessibility barrier, the Project team will use ADA-compliant techniques for all materials and have reasonable accommodations for meetings.

## **3.10 Research, Data, and Reporting**

### **3.10.1 Comment Database**

Comments received via website submittal, email, mail, phone, or written form will be distributed to the Project team and archived in a comment database managed by HDR.

Comments received outside of a comment period will be acknowledged and considered by the team but will not receive individual responses. If a question is asked that is answered by

existing materials, the Project team will provide the materials that share the information. If a question is asked that is not answerable based on existing analyses or data, the question will be acknowledged and shared with the Project team. The DOT&PF Project Manager will determine if additional research will be performed to answer the question, or if the question will be forwarded to the next stage of the study.

All comments gathered during the Scoping and Draft EA comment periods will be collated and summarized. Comments received on the Draft EA will be responded to in the Final EA.

The following protocol (see **Table 2**) has been developed to streamline tracking, integration, and response to comments received from the public and agencies. This protocol will be managed by the PI Team Lead and implemented by all Project team representatives. Compliance will be monitored, and this protocol can be adjusted as necessary throughout the Project.

**Table 2. Public Involvement Tracking Protocol**

Type	Procedure
Email Inquiries	Emails received from the public or agencies will be forwarded to the PI Task Lead. Emails will be converted to electronic, text-selectable Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files and stored in Project files.
Inquiries Mailed to DOT&PF	Mail delivered to DOT&PF will be date stamped, scanned (including the envelope to show date postmarked and who the mail was addressed to), and emailed to the PI Task Lead by DOT&PF staff to enter, and will be stored electronically in the Project files.
Telephone Calls	The call receiver will summarize the call in a telephone log, which will be forwarded to the PI Task Lead.
Face-to-Face Conversations	Comments received in face-to-face conversations will be summarized on a comment sheet, on a contact log, or in an email and sent to the PI Task Lead.
FAQ Responses	Standard responses to anticipated questions/comments or FAQs will be drafted to help facilitate the understanding and consistency of responses to standard inquiries.
Media Inquiries	All media inquiries will be directed to the DOT&PF Commissioner’s Office Public Information Officer.
Social Media Posts and Comments	Comments and questions submitted via social media will not be responded to or included in the comment database. Social media will be monitored for questions that need to be addressed by the PI or Project team through FAQs or public information materials.

### 3.10.2 Public Opinion Survey

The Project team will engage a third-party research firm to develop and execute a public opinion survey to establish baseline sentiment regarding the Project and test messaging. A follow-up survey will be conducted after 9 months to assess progress, adjust messages as needed, and inform the plan for continued Project outreach.

The Project team may recommend online focus groups, an online survey, or other less formal research depending on the public response during early engagement.

### 3.10.3 Media Monitoring and Data Analytics

The Project team will monitor news articles, letters to the editor, and other published sources to gather information and relevant public input. Media monitoring and data analytics software

services can be used to provide alerts of any mention of the Project and its associated keywords when used on the internet. It will also track online hits and traffic for data-driven PI reporting. Data and relevant information will be reported to DOT&PF.

## 4 Stakeholder Involvement Methods and Tools

### 4.1 Agency Introduction and Scoping Letters

Engagement with agencies will be initiated by DOT&PF’s Central Region or Statewide Environmental Office personnel. Initial outreach will occur through a letter of introduction that includes information regarding Project leadership, Project purpose and need, Project goals, areas of impact, and expected actions needed under NEPA for the EA. Introductory letters will invite the recipients to an Agency Kick-off Meeting, during which Project staff will provide an overview of the Project and identify the key agency decision-makers who will participate in regular coordination meetings. Key agency decision-makers should have the authority to speak for their respective organizations. The Project team will support these engagements by crafting the Project introduction letter and key messaging, preparing a presentation and agenda for the kick-off meeting, and producing informational leave-behind documents. Refer to Section 3.1 for details on scoping, including an agency scoping letter and an agency meeting.

### 4.2 Stakeholder Working Group

The Stakeholder Working Group will consist of representatives from key state, federal, and local agencies as well as community organizations with the power to speak on behalf of their organizations. Following Project initiation and scoping, this group will meet regularly (anticipated monthly) to discuss Project progress, issues, and resolutions, particularly as they relate to the EA. **Table 3** provides a list of the agencies and community organizations that are anticipated to be invited to participate in the Stakeholder Working Group.

The Project team will continue to populate the following tables as contact information is collected.

**Table 3. Stakeholder Working Group**

Organization
Alaska Department of Natural Resources / Chugach State Park
Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Habitat Section
State Historic Preservation Office
Alaska Railroad Corporation
Municipality of Anchorage Planning and Zoning
Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions
National Marine Fisheries Service
Bike Anchorage
Friends of Chugach
Alaska Trucking Association
Alaska Travel Industry Association
Potter Marsh Homeowners Association
Chugach Park Homeowners Association
Turnagain Arm Community Council

Organization
Rabbit Creek Community Council
Girdwood Board of Supervisors

### 4.3 Other Informed Organizations / Agencies

**Table 4** provides a list of other organizations, individuals, and agencies who may be interested in the Project and will be added to the email list.

**Table 4. Other Informed Organizations/Agencies**

Agency
Alaska Congressional Delegation
Alaska Senate, Districts C, D, and E
Alaska House of Representatives, Districts 7, 8, and 9
Alaska State Troopers
Anchorage School District
Portage Valley Community Council
Anchorage Assembly
Municipality of Anchorage
Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Anchorage Fire Department
Anchorage Police Department
Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department
City of Seward
City of Soldotna
City of Homer
City of Whittier
City of Kenai
Audubon Alaska
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
Chenega Corporation
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Ninilchik Traditional Council
Qutekcak Native Tribe
Rainbow Valley Homeowners' Association
Golden View Homeowners' Association

## 4.4 Stakeholder Working Group Communications

The purpose of the communications process is to keep all key decision-makers and other key stakeholders up to date on all identified issues, ensure a common understanding, and provide assurance that their issues are being heard and addressed as completely as possible.

As outlined above, communications will kick off with an introductory letter followed by an Agency Kick-Off Meeting with each key decision-making agency. Representatives from each agency and organization will be invited to participate in an Stakeholder Working Group, which will hold regular virtual meetings (anticipated monthly). During each virtual meeting, Project staff will provide a Project update and discuss key issues, identified risks, potential solutions/mitigation, and course of action. This discussion will be recorded in a Key Issues document (described below).

This document will be disseminated to all participating key agency decision-makers, and all outstanding issues will be reviewed at each Stakeholder Working Group meeting. As each issue is addressed and finalized, that issue will be “closed.” If a formal response is required, the accountable agency will attach the response and the date sent. The Project team will support agency responses, keep and update the Key Issues list, and facilitate Stakeholder Working Group meetings.

Two known determinations needed for the EA are determinations for Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. These determinations will be made by DOT&PF Environmental personnel.

**Table 5** provides a draft Key Issues template that the Stakeholder Working Group will use to track ongoing Project issues. This document will be used by the key decision-makers to communicate internally and externally with one voice on Project issues. A stakeholder matrix will be maintained to track stakeholder engagement, meetings, and issues.

**Table 5. Draft Key Issues Template**

Seward Highway MP 98.5–118 Key Issues									
No.	Agency	Issue/ Policy	Risk	Proposed Mitigation/ Solution	Course of Action	Message	Open/ Closed	Agency Attachment	Date Sent
1									
2									
3									
4									

## 5 Implementation of Public Involvement Plan

**Table 6** provides a draft implementation plan for the Project. Note that all dates and tools are subject to change.

**Table 6. Implementation Plan**

Step in Process	Timing	Key Input Points	Tools
Initiation	January – February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PIP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Notice (NOI to begin engineering and environmental studies)</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Branding</li> <li>Project handouts</li> <li>Public opinion survey</li> </ul>
Scoping	February – May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope of the study</li> <li>Purpose and need</li> <li>Alternatives to be considered (proposed action and no action, request for any others?)</li> <li>Meet with MOA Planning and Zoning (P&amp;Z)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scoping letter sent out</li> <li>Public notice (Public Meeting #1)</li> <li>Public Meeting #1/open house/scoping meeting</li> <li>Introductory stakeholder one-on-one meetings</li> <li>Stakeholder Working Group meetings</li> <li>30-day comment period</li> <li>Mobile Campaign</li> </ul>
Affected Environment Studies	January – November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 106 process</li> <li>MOA P&amp;Z Application with Concept Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media photograph contest</li> <li>Listening posts</li> <li>First Stakeholder Working Group meeting</li> <li>P&amp;Z Commission meeting</li> </ul>
Alternative(s) Refinement	January – November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design refinement including road, rail, pathway, trail, and access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Notice (Public Meeting #2)</li> <li>Public Meeting #2/open house/alternatives meeting</li> <li>Listening posts</li> </ul>
Draft EA and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation	June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOT&amp;PF may identify a preferred alternative</li> <li>Alternatives impact analysis outcomes</li> <li>Proposed mitigation measures</li> <li>Section 4(f) <i>de minimis</i> impact finding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public notice (Public Meeting #3 Hearing/NOA for Draft EA/<i>de minimis</i> Impact Finding)</li> <li>Public Meeting #3/open house/potential public hearing</li> <li>30-day comment period</li> <li>Road trip to Kenai Peninsula</li> </ul>
Final EA and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation; Finding of No Significant Impact	November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A preferred alternative must be identified</li> <li>Informs of DOT&amp;PF's final decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public notice (Final EA NOA)</li> <li>Statute of Limitations and publication in <i>Federal Register</i></li> </ul>

Step in Process	Timing	Key Input Points	Tools
Ongoing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Informational updates</li><li>• General Project awareness building</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stakeholder Working Group meetings</li><li>• Community council meetings</li><li>• Social media</li><li>• Earned media</li><li>• Website</li><li>• Email</li><li>• Listening posts</li><li>• Media coordination and monitoring</li></ul>

## 6 Project Contacts

The following contacts will be used for public materials:

- General:
  - Project Email: [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)
  - Phone: (907) 802-3656
- Project Website:
  - <https://safersewardhighway.com/>

## **Attachment B. Public Scoping Summary**

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# Safer Seward Highway Public Outreach Summary

## Scoping Public Meetings

**Girdwood, Indian, &  
Anchorage, Alaska  
March 21 - 23, 2023**

Alaska Department of Transportation  
and Public Facilities

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Overview of Public Involvement Activities .....	1
Public Meetings .....	1
Attendance .....	1
Stakeholders .....	1
Advertising .....	2
Summary of Comments.....	2

## Attachments

- Attachment A: Online Open House
- Attachment B: Online Open House Results
- Attachment C: Advertisements in the *Anchorage Daily News, Peninsula Clarion, & Homer News*
- Attachment D: E-Blasts
- Attachment E: Project Flyer
- Attachment F: Postcard
- Attachment G: Sign-In Sheets
- Attachment H: Comments
- Attachment I: Public Meeting Notice
- Attachment J: Public Notice of Intent

# Introduction

This Public Outreach Summary is used for tracking and documentation of public involvement activities. It outlines the public involvement strategies and tactics used to engage the public on the Safer Seward Highway Project. The summary includes a description of the outreach strategies implemented, the tools used for implementation, the results of the public outreach, and the feedback collected during the comment period of March 25 – April 20, 2023.

## Overview of Public Involvement Activities

The project team conducted a variety of public outreach tactics to engage and inform the public on the Safer Seward Highway Project.

### Public Meetings

On Tuesday, March 21, 2023, the Safer Seward Highway Project team kicked off an online, interactive, self-guided public open house on the project website that was available through Thursday, April 20, 2023 (Attachment A). The Online Open House outlined project information and offered multiple ways to comment on the project, including an online comment form. The purpose of the Online Open House was to inform the public about the project, share the project's schedule, scoping process, and next steps, and to collect initial project feedback from the communities.

In conjunction with the Online Open House, the project team hosted three in-person Public Meetings, listed below, at which members of the public could interact with the project team by asking questions and submitting comments.

- Tuesday, March 21, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm
- Wednesday, March 22, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm
- Thursday, March 23, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm

### Attendance

The Public Meetings had a total of 63 attendees. The number of attendees per meeting location are noted in Table 1. During the duration of the comment period (March 25 – April 20), the Online Open House site was viewed 244 times from 183 users.

**Table 1: Public Meeting Attendees by Location**

Public Meeting Location	Number of Attendees
Girdwood Community Center, Girdwood, AK	15
Valley Bible Chalet, Indian, AK	20
Goldenview Middle School, Anchorage, AK	28

### Stakeholders

Representatives from the following organizations attended the meetings in person:

- Rabbit Creek Community Council

- Bike Anchorage
- Girdwood Board of Supervisors

## Advertising

The Public Meetings and Online Open House were advertised in the following ways:

- Meeting information on the project website: <https://safersewardhighway.com/>
- Postcard mailer to residents near the project area (total of 1,546; Attachment B)
- Two advertisements in the *Anchorage Daily News*, *Peninsula Clarion*, & *Homer News* (Attachment C)
- Two E-Blasts sent to the project's email list (total of 717 recipients; Attachment D)
- Flyers posted at the locations in Table 1 in the project area (Attachment E)

**Table 1: Flyer Posting – Organizations/Businesses**

Anchorage		
Kaladi Brother's (6921 Brayton Dr, Anchorage, AK 99507)	Kaladi Brother's (12350 Industry Way, Anchorage, AK 99515)	Steam Dot Coffee
Girdwood		
CoasT Pizza		

- Social media posts of the meeting announcement and a meeting reminder
- State of Alaska Online Public Notice
- Posts to the *Anchorage Daily News*, *Peninsula Clarion*, & *Homer News*, *DOT&PF Central Region* Community Calendars

## Summary of Comments

The comments received during the Public Meetings are listed in Attachment F. Comments focused on a range of topics, including the difference between an Environmental Assessment and an Environmental Impact Statement, the project status and schedule, anticipated time when alternatives will be available for review, public access to project data, upcoming Public Involvement opportunities, and several other issues. Questions included:

- Why isn't this an EIS?
- Will you be mining materials from the [Chugach State] Park?
- What can you do to make rock cuts look nicer? Maybe tier them and encourage plants to grow along the tiers.
- How much will the project cost? Can we afford it? Where is the funding coming from?
- I thought you were going to have drawings of the highway proposal here. When do I get to see those?
- When will we see alternatives?
- Where can we see traffic data?
- When are upcoming opportunities to get involved after the meeting?

# Attachment A

## Online Open House



# Welcome to the Safer Seward Highway Spring 2023 Online Open House

Available March 25 – April 20, 2023

Seward Highway MP 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek | Project No. 0A31034/ Z566310000

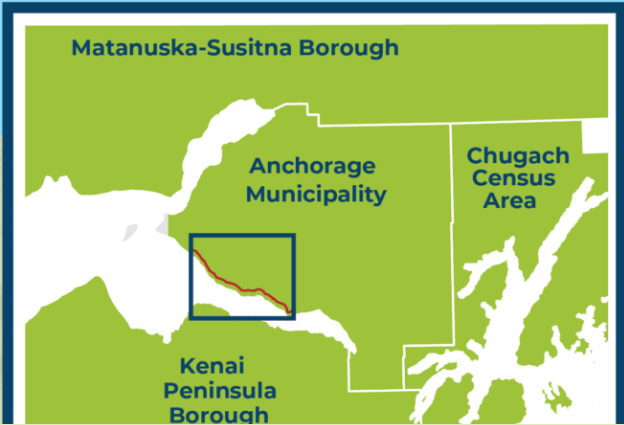
Welcome to the Online Open House for the Safer Seward Highway Project. This project is aimed at constructing improvements along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek. (Mile posts 98.5-118)

The purpose of this Online Open House is to share information regarding the project that was presented at the March 2023 Public Meetings.

## Navigating this site



*This site is best viewed on your desktop or laptop computer at 100% view. You may scroll down using your mouse to view each station at your leisure or use the top navigation pane to skip to different stations.*





## Welcome

Safer Seward Highway Seward Highway MP 98.5-118,  
Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Spring 2023 Public Meeting

Project No. 0A31034/ Z566310000

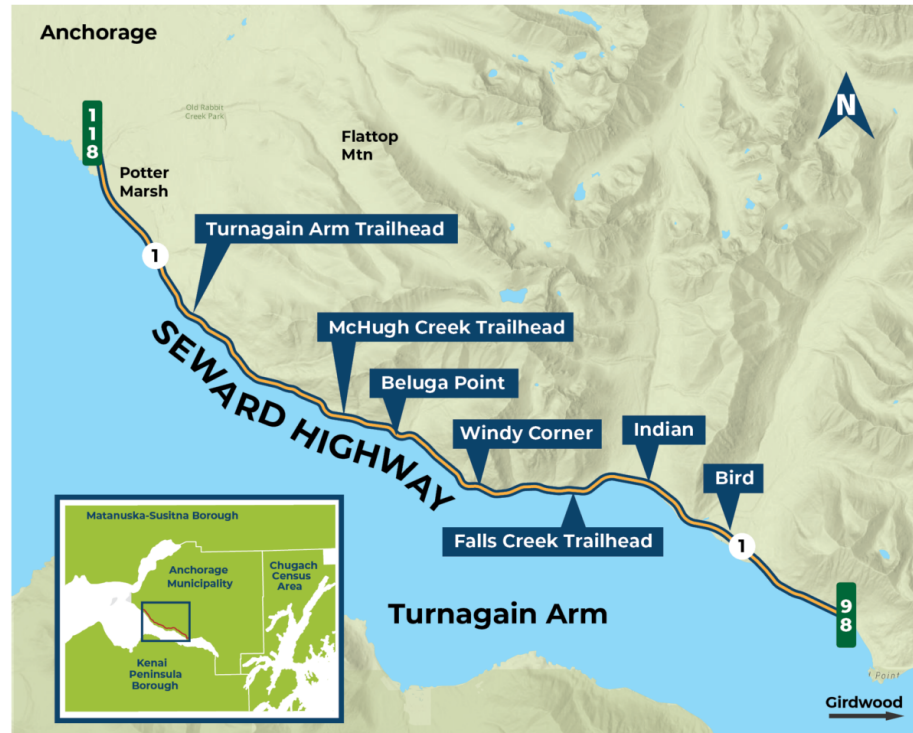
# ABOUT THE PROJECT



DOT&PF is proposing to construct improvements along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek. This major infrastructure project will make long-term permanent highway improvements to allow decommissioning of the Traffic Safety Corridor between Anchorage and Girdwood.

We are beginning this new project with environmental scoping, studies, and assessment of impacts. This process will lead to the design, development, and ultimately construction of long-term improvements. Input and participation from interested parties is critical to the success of this project.

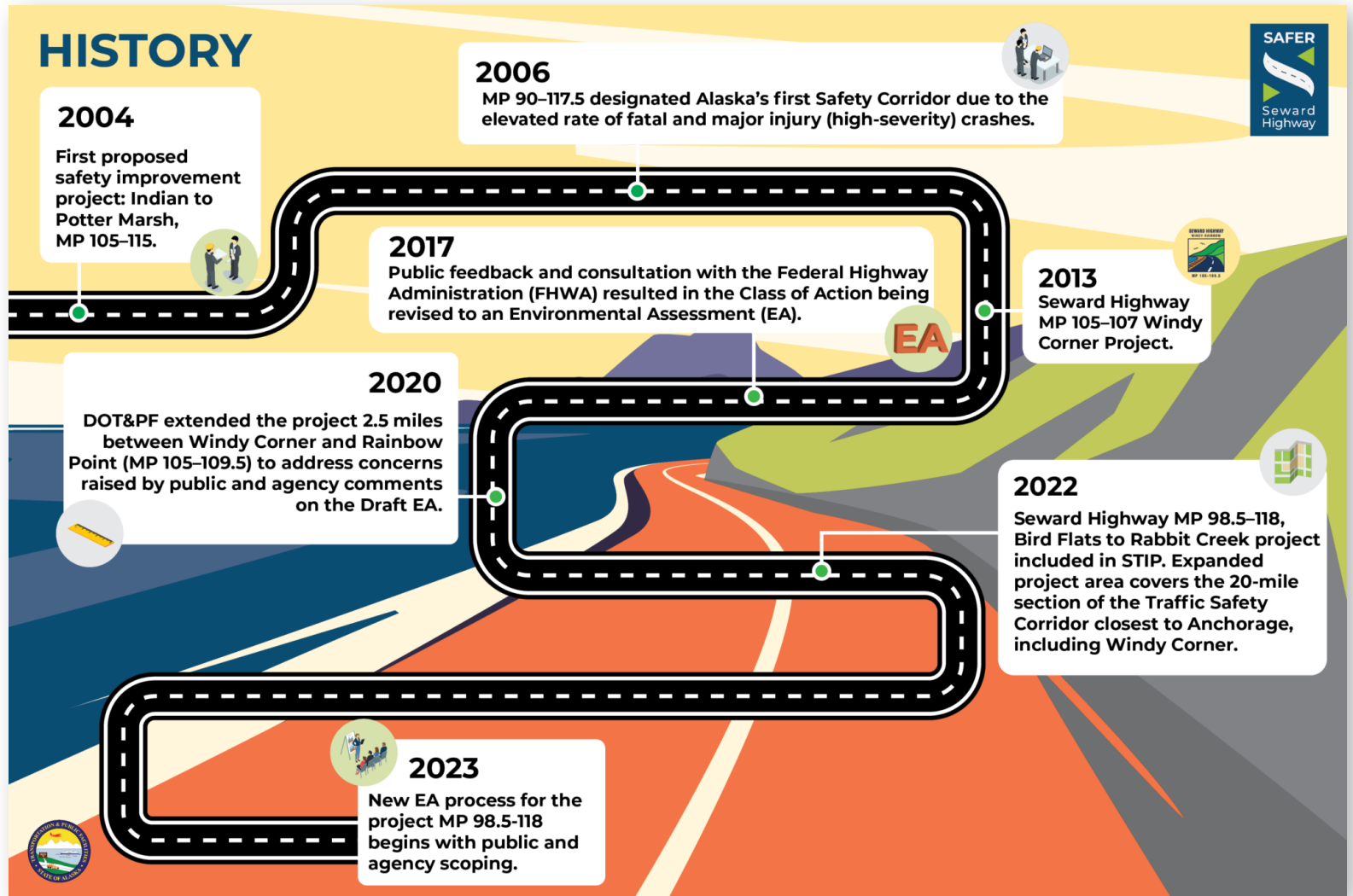
The initial idea on how to solve a problem and satisfy the purpose and need is a proposed action. In this case, DOT&PF has identified a four-lane divided highway with a multi-use pathway as the proposed action. Additionally, the Municipality of Anchorage Context Sensitive Solution (CSS) process will be kicking-off and will provide another opportunity for engagement and development of solutions.



## About the Project

DOT&PF is proposing to construct improvements along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek. This major infrastructure project will make long-term permanent highway improvements to allow decommissioning of the Traffic Safety Corridor between Anchorage and Girdwood.

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## History

- **2004** – First proposed safety improvement project: Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105–115.
- **2006** – MP 90–117.5 designated Alaska's first Safety Corridor due to the elevated rate of fatal and major injury (high-severity) crashes.
- **2013** – Seward Highway MP 105–107 Windy Corner Project.
- **2017** – Public feedback and consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) resulted in the Class of Action being revised to an Environmental Assessment (EA).

- **2020** – DOT&PF extended the project 2.5 miles between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point (MP 105–109.5) to address concerns raised by public and agency comments on the Draft EA.
  - **2022**– Seward Highway MP 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project included in STIP. Expanded project area covers the 20-mile section of the Traffic Safety Corridor closest to Anchorage, including Windy Corner.
  - **2023** – New EA process for the project MP 98.5–118 begins with public and agency scoping.
-

# EA PROCESS



## What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 establishes a national environmental policy and provides a framework for environmental planning and decision making by Federal agencies. NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.

## What is an Environmental Assessment (EA)?

An EA is prepared for projects when the significance of the potential environmental impacts is uncertain. Major components of an EA include:



Purpose and Need



Alternatives



Affected Environment



Environmental Consequences



Mitigation Measures



Effective November 3, 2017, the DOT&PF has entered into the NEPA Assignment Program through an MOU with FHWA to assume responsibilities under NEPA and all or part of FHWA's responsibilities for environmental review, consultation, or other actions required under any Federal environmental law with respect to one or more Federal Highway projects within Alaska.



*Effective November 3, 2017, the DOT&PF entered into the NEPA Assignment Program through a Memorandum of Understanding with FHWA to assume responsibilities under NEPA and all or part of FHWA's responsibilities for environmental review, consultation, or other actions required under any federal environmental law with respect to one or more FHWA project within Alaska.*

## The EA Process

What is NEPA?

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### **What is an Environmental Assessment (EA)?**

• An EA is prepared for projects when the significance of the potential environmental impacts is uncertain. Major components of an EA include:

- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives
- Affected Environment
- Environmental Consequences
- Mitigation Measures

# PURPOSE AND NEED



## Purpose

The purpose of the Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, Reconstruction project is to reconstruct this segment of the highway to meet current design standards for a component of the Interstate Highway System and eliminate the current designation as a Highway Safety Corridor. The project purpose can be achieved by improving safety for all users, correcting roadway deficiencies, and reducing roadway congestion.

## Need



### Improve Safety

In 2006, this segment of the Seward Highway was designated as the state's first Highway Safety Corridor in recognition of the fatal crash rate. Improvements that reduce the crash rate must be completed to remove the Safety Corridor designation.



### Correct Roadway Deficiencies

The roadway does not meet current design standards for its function and traffic levels.



### Reduce Congestion

The highway becomes congested resulting in reduced travel speeds, long platoons (lines) of vehicles, and a degraded level of service. The Seasonal (summer) peak traffic is predicted to exceed the capacity of the highway by 2027. Local access (intersections and pull-offs) further worsens roadway congestion due to the prevalence of recreational activities in the corridor.



What suggestions do you have for the purpose & need statement? What other safety or travel problems do you encounter in the project area?



What suggestions do you have for the purpose & need statement? What other safety or travel problems do you encounter in the project area?

## Purpose and Need

This draft Purpose and Need statement is based on existing studies and analyses of recent traffic data.

### Purpose:

The purpose of the Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, Reconstruction project is to reconstruct this segment of the highway to meet current design standards for a component of the Interstate Highway System and eliminate the current designation as a Highway Safety Corridor. The project purpose can be achieved by improving safety for all users, correcting roadway deficiencies, and reducing roadway congestion.

### Needs:

**Improve Safety.** In 2006, this segment of the Seward Highway was designated as the state's first Highway Safety Corridor in recognition of the fatal crash rate. Improvements that reduce the crash rate must be completed to remove the Safety Corridor designation.

**Correct Roadway Deficiencies.** The roadway does not meet current design standards for its function and traffic levels.

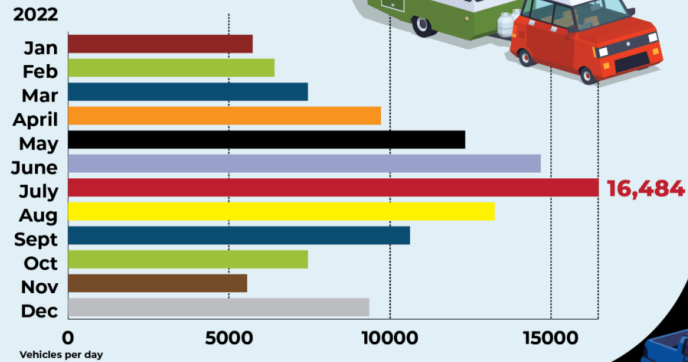
**Reduce Congestion.** The highway becomes congested resulting in reduced travel speeds, long platoons (lines) of vehicles, and a degraded level of service. The Seasonal (summer) peak traffic is predicted to exceed the capacity of the highway by 2027. Local access (intersections and pull-offs) further worsens roadway congestion due to the prevalence of recreational activities in the corridor.

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## Traffic

3 million annual trips

Monthly average daily total at Potter Marsh:



## Rockfall

Rockfall occurrence has increased nearly x3 after the 2018 7.1M earthquake on the Seward highway between MP 113-114.

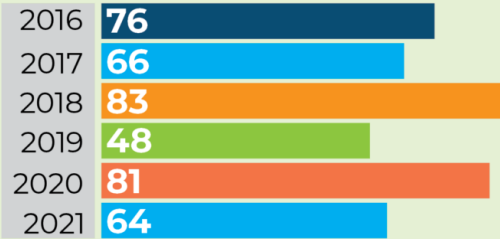
The project corridor has 15 identified roadside rockfall zones (HSIP findings).



**14** crashes associated with rockfall from 2016 - 2021.

## Crashes

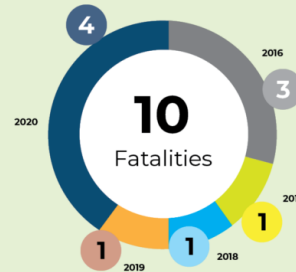
418 crashes between 2016-2021, average of 70 per year



### MYTHS & DATA

- Myth:** Darkness is what makes the road so dangerous.  
**Data:** 59% of crashes happen in the daylight.
- Myth:** There are a lot of drunk drivers causing crashes on the road.  
**Data:** Only 6% of crashes were suspected to have involved drugs and alcohol (less than 0.01% confirmed).

## 10 fatalities in 5 years



### FACT

- 49 head-on collisions were recorded in 2016-2021 totaling 12% of crashes.
- 70% of the 10 fatalities were head-on collisions.

## 23 Serious injuries



### FACT

- An average of 5 high-severity crashes occur in the corridor every year.



## Safety

The data gathered for this area illustrate some issues that must be addressed to remove the safety corridor designation.

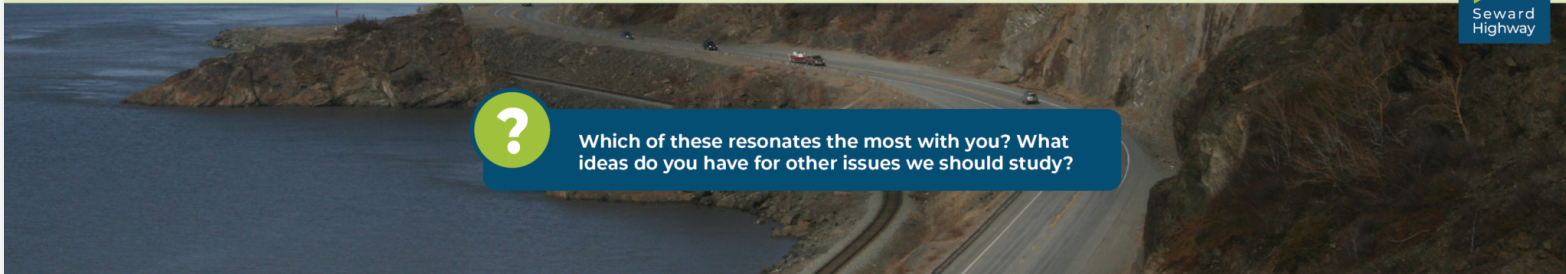
More than 3 million trips occur along the corridor every year, reaching an average daily traffic of 16,484 during the month of July.

Between 2016 and 2021, more than 400 crashes occurred, averaging a rate of 70 crashes per year. The data show that some speculate that drunk drivers may be a cause of high crash rates; however, only 6 percent of all crashes within the area were suspected to have a drug or alcohol component, with less than 1 percent of cases confirmed. Another speculation is that darkness is a major contributor of crashes along the winding corridor; however, more than 59 percent of crashes occur during daylight hours.

One of the major issues for this area is rockfalls. Rockfall risk has increased threefold between Mileposts 113 and 114 since the 2018 earthquake. In fact, the Highway Improvement Safety Plan (or HISP) has identified 15 roadside rockfall zones within the proposed project boundaries. Between 2016 and 2021, 14 crashes have been associated with rockfall hazards within the proposed project area.

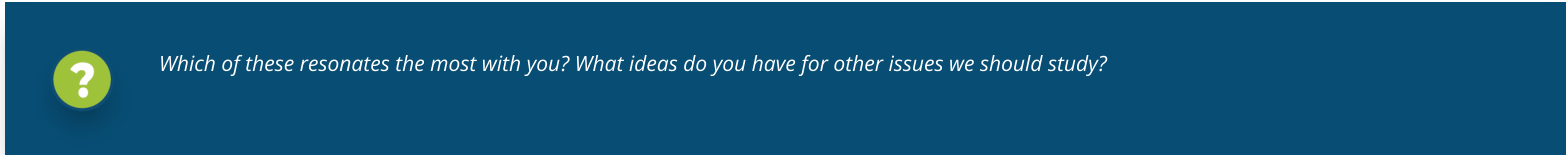
Crashes along this corridor have resulted in 23 serious injuries and 10 fatalities (between 2016 and 2021), with head-on collisions accounting for 70 percent of these fatalities and 12 percent of all accidents across the studied years. Currently, an average of five high-severity crashes occur along the corridor every year.

# KEY ISSUES



Here's what past studies have shown us about key issues in the corridor. These will be analyzed in the Draft EA:

- » Steep mountainsides
- » Turnagain Arm
- » Beluga whales, sheep, and other wildlife
- » Alaska Railroad tracks
- » Pedestrians, bikes and other users
- » Trailheads
- » Viewpoints
- » Potter Marsh
- » Local access (Bird, Indian)



## Key Issues

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- Alaska Railroad tracks
- Pedestrians, bikes and other users
- Trailheads
- Viewpoints
- Potter's Marsh
- Local access (Bird, Indian)



# TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



You can participate in the Safer Seward Highway Project in several ways. Scan the QR codes below with your smartphone to instantly:

## SIGN-UP FOR EMAILS

Receive meeting notices, project announcements, and other up-to-date information in your email inbox!



## LEAVE A COMMENT

Leave a comment using forms available here tonight or use the QR code below to submit them electronically.



## EMAIL US DIRECTLY

You can email the project team directly.  
info@safersewardhighway.com



## CALL US

If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team. (907) 802-3656.



We would like your feedback. Here's what we want to know:

- » Purpose and Need – suggestions for additional needs?
- » Alternatives – any improvements? Other ideas we should look at?
- » Issues we should study?



**Mailing Address:**  
Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**General Project Information:**  
[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)

**Comments due  
by April 20.**



We would like your feedback. Here's what we want to know:

- **Purpose and need:** Do you have suggestions for additional needs?
- **Alternatives:** Do you have any suggestions for improvements? Other ideas we should look at?
- **Issues:** Do you have any issues we should study?

## Tell Us What You Think!

You can participate in the Safer Seward Highway Project in several ways. Scan the QR codes with your smartphone to instantly:

- **Sign up for emails:** You can receive meeting notices, project announcements, and other up-to-date information via email: [Email Sign-up Link](#)
- **Leave a comment:** You can leave a comment using forms available here tonight or use the QR code below to submit them electronically: [External Comment Form Link](#)
- **Email us:** You can email the project team directly at [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

## Meeting Document Library

Below are the documents featured at the Spring 2023 Public Meetings. Acrobat Reader is required to view the documents below. You may obtain a free version of the program by visiting [get.adobe.com/reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader).



[Project Fact Sheet](#)



[Comment Form 1](#) | [2](#)

## Project Contact and Comment Information



## EMAIL

[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



## PHONE

(907) 802-3656



## US MAIL

Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

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DOT&PF Staff Resources  Staff Newsletter

This website is managed by the [Safer Seward Highway Project Strategic Outreach Team](#).

**Department of Transportation & Public Facilities**

PO Box 112500 (mailing)

3132 Channel Drive

Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

**DOT & PF Contact Info**

# Attachment B

## Online Open House Results

Location

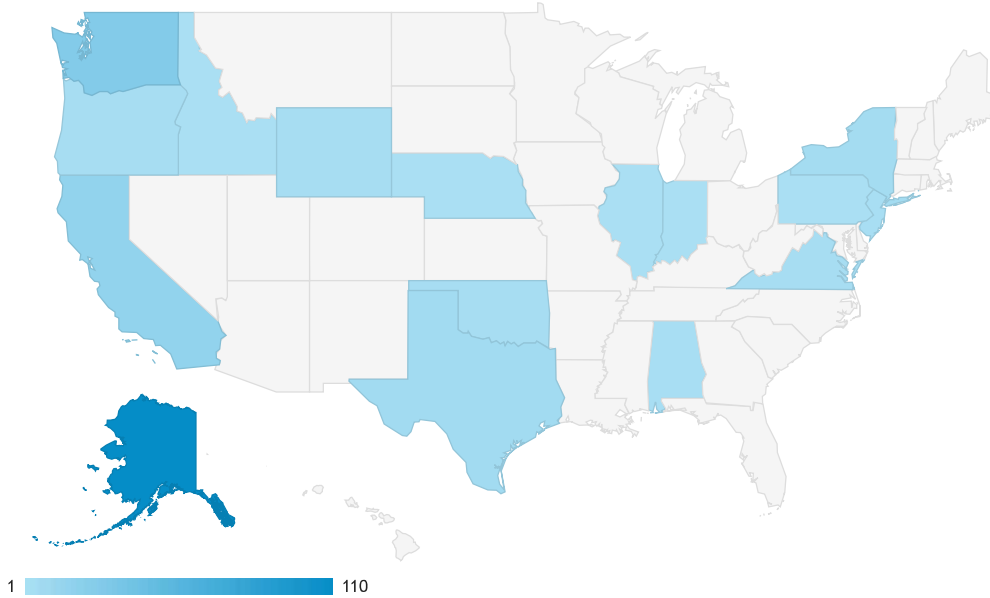
ALL » COUNTRY: United States

Mar 21, 2023 - Apr 20, 2023

All Users  
98.39% Users

Map Overlay

Summary



Region	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions		
	Users ↓	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal Conversion Rate	Goal Completions	Goal Value
	<b>183</b> % of Total: 98.39% (186)	<b>184</b> % of Total: 98.92% (186)	<b>244</b> % of Total: 98.79% (247)	<b>86.48%</b> Avg for View: 86.64% (-0.19%)	<b>1.26</b> Avg for View: 1.26 (0.25%)	<b>00:00:41</b> Avg for View: 00:00:41 (1.23%)	<b>0.00%</b> Avg for View: 0.00% (0.00%)	<b>0</b> % of Total: 0.00% (0)	<b>\$0.00</b> % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. Alaska	<b>110</b> (58.51%)	<b>110</b> (59.78%)	<b>160</b> (65.57%)	<b>86.25%</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>00:00:44</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
2. Washington	<b>27</b> (14.36%)	<b>24</b> (13.04%)	<b>28</b> (11.48%)	<b>75.00%</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>00:00:47</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
3. California	<b>17</b> (9.04%)	<b>16</b> (8.70%)	<b>21</b> (8.61%)	<b>90.48%</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>00:00:57</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
4. Texas	<b>6</b> (3.19%)	<b>6</b> (3.26%)	<b>6</b> (2.46%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
5. New York	<b>5</b> (2.66%)	<b>5</b> (2.72%)	<b>5</b> (2.05%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
6. Oklahoma	<b>3</b> (1.60%)	<b>3</b> (1.63%)	<b>3</b> (1.23%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
7. Oregon	<b>3</b> (1.60%)	<b>3</b> (1.63%)	<b>3</b> (1.23%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
8. Virginia	<b>3</b> (1.60%)	<b>3</b> (1.63%)	<b>3</b> (1.23%)	<b>66.67%</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>00:01:39</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
9. Wyoming	<b>3</b> (1.60%)	<b>3</b> (1.63%)	<b>3</b> (1.23%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
10. (not set)	<b>2</b> (1.06%)	<b>2</b> (1.09%)	<b>2</b> (0.82%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
11. Alabama	<b>2</b> (1.06%)	<b>2</b> (1.09%)	<b>2</b> (0.82%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
12. New Jersey	<b>2</b> (1.06%)	<b>2</b> (1.09%)	<b>2</b> (0.82%)	<b>50.00%</b>	<b>1.50</b>	<b>00:01:45</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
13. Idaho	<b>1</b> (0.53%)	<b>1</b> (0.54%)	<b>1</b> (0.41%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
14. Illinois	<b>1</b> (0.53%)	<b>1</b> (0.54%)	<b>1</b> (0.41%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
15. Indiana	<b>1</b> (0.53%)	<b>1</b> (0.54%)	<b>1</b> (0.41%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
16. Nebraska	<b>1</b> (0.53%)	<b>1</b> (0.54%)	<b>1</b> (0.41%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)
17. Pennsylvania	<b>1</b> (0.53%)	<b>1</b> (0.54%)	<b>2</b> (0.82%)	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>00:00:00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>\$0.00</b> (0.00%)

## Attachment C

***Advertisements in the Anchorage Daily News,  
Peninsula Clarion, & Homer News***



# Safer Seward Highway

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034

## Online Open House and Public Meeting Notice

### IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS

The public meeting will be in an open house format held from **5:30 PM to 7:30 PM** at each location. Members from the project team will be present to share information about the project and to listen to your questions and input.



#### GIRDWOOD

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

Girdwood Community Center  
250 Eglhoff Dr.  
Girdwood, AK 99587



#### INDIAN

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy  
Indian, AK 99540



#### ANCHORAGE

**Thursday, March 23, 2023**

Golden View Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99516



### ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023

[www.safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://www.safersewardhighwayonline.com)

**Can't make it to the in-person public meeting?** Join us online on March 21, 2023 to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input.

### SUBMIT A COMMENT & CONTACT US

Submit comments via email, website or mail:



#### EMAIL

[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



#### PHONE

(907) 802-3656

Please submit your comments by April 20, 2023.



#### US MAIL

Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503



#### PROJECT WEBSITE & INFO

[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)



Scan me with your smart phone to visit the project website!



It is the policy of the DOT&PF that no one shall be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and State of Alaska funds. To view the full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/tvi\\_statement.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml). To file a complaint, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/cvlrts/titlevi.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/cvlrts/titlevi.shtml).

The DOT&PF complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special modifications to participate in this public meeting should contact Katherine Wood, 907-644-2153, or TDD number 711. Requests should be made at least 5 days before the accommodation is needed to make any necessary arrangements.

# Attachment D

## E-Blasts

# March Public Meetings E-Blast

[Campaign Preview](#)

[HTML Source](#)

[Plain-Text Email](#)

[Details](#)



## Safer Seward Highway Upcoming Public Meetings

Please join us! The Safer Seward Highway project will be hosting in-person public meetings at three locations:

### GIRDWOOD

Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
Girdwood Community Center  
250 Egloff Dr.  
Girdwood, AK 99587

### INDIAN

Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy,  
Indian, AK 99540

### ANCHORAGE

Thursday, March 23, 2023  
Goldenvue Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr,  
Anchorage, AK 99516

Meetings will be held in an open house format at each location from **5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**. Can't make it in-person? We will be hosting an online open house as well. Visit our website for more information.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

We look forward to your participation and input on the Safer Seward Highway project.

Thank you,

Safer Seward Highway Project Team



*You are receiving this email because you were on the Windy Corner email list or have signed up on our website for the new mailing list. If you do not wish to receive future correspondence about Safer Seward Highway you can unsubscribe at any time using the links below.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

Feedback





## This Week: Safer Seward Highway Public Meetings

Please join us this week for the Safer Seward Highway project public meetings. There will be in-person public meetings at three locations:

### **GIRDWOOD**

Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
Girdwood Community Center  
250 Egloff Dr,  
Girdwood, AK 99587

### **INDIAN**

Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy,  
Indian, AK 99540

### **ANCHORAGE**

Thursday, March 23, 2023  
Goldenview Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr,  
Anchorage, AK 99516

Meetings will be held in an open house format at each location from **5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**. Can't make it in-person? We will be hosting an online open house as well. Visit our website for more information.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

We look forward to your participation and input on the Safer Seward Highway project.

Thank you,

Safer Seward Highway Project Team



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Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

# Attachment E

## Project Flyer

# Want a Safer Seward Highway?

MP 98.5-118: , Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

## Please join us!

### Public Meetings and Online Open House

The public meeting will be an in-person open house held from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at each location. The DOT&PF project team will share information about this new project and listen to your questions and input.

#### GIRDWOOD

Tuesday  
March 21, 2023

Girdwood Community Center  
250 Egloff Dr.  
Girdwood, AK 99587

#### INDIAN

Wednesday  
March 22, 2023

Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy.  
Indian, AK 99540

#### ANCHORAGE

Thursday  
March 23, 2023

Golden View Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99516



### ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Can't make it to the in-person public meeting? Join us online at [safersewardhighwayonline.com](https://safersewardhighwayonline.com) from **March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023** to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input. Comments are due by **April 20, 2023**.

Learn more and sign up for email updates at [safersewardhighway.com](https://safersewardhighway.com)

# Attachment F

## Postcard

# WANT A SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY?



**Please join us!  
Public Meetings and  
Online Open House**

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034



Safer Seward Highway Project  
C/O HDR  
582 E. 36th Ave Suite 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

## IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETING(S)

The public meeting will be an in-person open house held from **5:30 PM to 7:30 PM** at each location. The DOT&PF project team will share information about this new project and listen to your questions and input.

### GIRDWOOD

Tuesday  
March 21, 2023

Girdwood Community  
Center  
250 Egloff Dr.  
Girdwood, AK 99587

### INDIAN

Wednesday  
March 22, 2023

Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy.  
Indian, AK 99540

### ANCHORAGE

Thursday  
March 23, 2023

Golden View Middle  
School  
15800 Golden View Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99516

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*The DOT&PF complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special modifications to participate in this public meeting should contact Katherine Wood, 907-644-2153, or TDD number 711. Requests should be made at least 5 days before the accommodation is needed to make any necessary arrangements.*

## ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Can't make it to the in-person public meeting? Join us online at [safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://safersewardhighwayonline.com) from **March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023** to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input. Comments are due by **April 20, 2023**.



Learn more and sign up for email updates at [safersewardhighway.com](http://safersewardhighway.com)

# Attachment G

## Sign-In Sheets



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 21, 2023 | Girdwood Community Center | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, A, P, O)
Edith Mekee	Edith.mekee@hdrinc.com	Y	M	W, AN,
Morgan Miller	Morgan.miller@hdrinc.com	Y	F	W
Sean Baski	Sean.Baski@alaska.gov	Y	M	
Shannon McCarthy	Shannon.McCarthy@alaska.gov	Y	F	
Taylor Horne	Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com	Y	M	
Chris Hughs	Chris.Hughs@hdrinc.com	Y	M	
Alice Rademacher	Alice.Rademacher@hdrinc.com	Y	F	W
Briana Sullivan	bsullivan.gbos@gmail.com	on it!	F	W
MARK EISENMAN	mark.eisenman@alaska.gov	Y	M	U
Matt Wedeking	mattwedeking32@gmail.com	Y	M	
Diana Rhodes	diana@anchorageparkfoundation.org	Y	F	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 21, 2023 | Girdwood Community Center | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, A, P, O)
Beth Nordlund	Beth@AnchorageParkForestry.org	Y	F	
Camilla Seifert & Dave Seifert	seifert@acsalaska.net		M/F	
Kevin Opalka	kopalka@gmail.com			
Mike Opalka	mopalka@alaska.net			
ORION LECROY	ORION.LECROY@GMAIL.COM	N	M	
Dan Kiland	dankiland@yahoo.com	am on email list	M	C
Meredith Gutierrez	meredithlueck@gmail.com	Y	F	
Matt Bermark				
Kristy Arnd	kerend_ak@hotmail.com	Y	F	W
Chris Uuskant	flywhatever@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Jim FARR	Jamesfar99520@gmail.com	Y	M	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 22, 2023 | Indian - Valley Bible Chalet | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Morgan Miller	morgan.miller@hdrinc.com	Y	F	W
Bob Childers	bobchilders@mcc.com	Y	M	
Dorothy Childers	dorothy.childers3@gmail.com	Y	F	W
RICHARD IBARQUEN	ibarflan@gmail.com	Y	M	H
Roger Cowles	indianvalleyminr@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Carol Bushnell	bushnellcarol@yahoo.com	Y	F	
Cindy Ahmericks	akh2ogeek@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Cat Rose, Margu Kinn	alaskanbutterfly@hotmail.com	Y	F	W
Carrie Sorensen	Carrie.L.Sorensen@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Jeremiah Drage	Jerdrage@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Wendy Wolf + Pat Athey	akpaww@gmail.com	Already on	F/M	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 22, 2023 | Indian - Valley Bible Chalet | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Harley Gehman	Harleyg@GCI.net		M	
Vicky Musgrave	aK.fishbonker@gmail.com			
Reece Whitefell	rwhitefell@dowl.com	Y	F	W
PATRICK WHITESSELL	patrick.whitesell@mbakerintl.com		M	W
Sean Holland	hollandsrnak@yahoo.com	Y	M	W
Veronica Lambertsen	veronicalambertsen@gmail.com	Y		
Venek Piekarski	veneks@gmail.com	N	M	W
Rita Klofta		N	F	

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 23, 2023 | Anchorage - Golden View Middle School | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Marsha Burns	mburns@gei.net	Y	F	W
LYNN HIGHLAND	LYNNHIGHLAND@GMAIL.COM		M	W
MICHAEL FEJSTER			<del>A</del>	<del>W</del>
Rick Maron	rmaron@GLI.net	Y	M	W
Pat Hansen	pat.hansen.ak@gmail.com	Y	F	W
DAVID EVANS	david-evans@gci.net	Y	M	W
John Hall	flyfrBrs@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Barbara Hall	barbhall29@gmail.com	Y	F	—
Vivian Mendenhall	fsgadair@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Nancy Darigo + Paul Risse	paulrisse@gci.net	Y	F/M	W
Devora Barrera	dev@bikeanchorage.org	Y	F	AN

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).

12/20



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

Sign-in Sheet

March 23, 2023 | Anchorage - Golden View Middle School | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Jesse <del>GRONKAT</del>	elsajss@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Eka Aegerter	↑ same		F	W
Jennifer Wingard	skijester@gmail.com		F	
Stan Moll	shun99516@yahoo.com	Y	M	
Nancy Pease	nancypease2@gmail.com	✓		
Ann Rappoport	anr.rccc@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Lucas Smith	lucas.smith28@hotmail.com	Y		
Ben Wirman	bdn29@cornell.edu	Y	M	W
Paul Wardock	paultapo@gsi.net	X		
Tom Meacham	thos.meacham@gmail.com	X	M	-
MYRON WRIGHT + MARY BETHE W.	goldendena1@hotmail.com		M	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Spring Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

March 23, 2023 | Anchorage - Golden View Middle School | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
MATT DIETRICK	matthew.dietrick@alaska.gov	Y	M	W
Bob Selzer		N	M	W
TROND JENSEN	trond.b.jensen@conorophillips.com	Y	M	W
KNEELAND TAYLOR	KNEELANDTAYLOR@GMAIL.COM	✓	M	W
ANNA BOSIN	anna.bosin@alaska.gov	✓	F	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).

# Attachment H

## Comments

CommentId	CommunicationId	CommentText	Topic
2822	38140	Look into getting the Troopers back out into the area, or Bureau of Highway Patrol so that the primary focus is traffic and traffic enforcement. Having a team dedicated specifically for traffic in this area will help get traffic to be more mindful and lower fatal numbers.	Traffic Design Speed
2823	38141	I am writing to ask that the Seward Highway expansion project focus on multimodal transportation over lane additions for cars.  Safety is very important and a worthwhile goal of this project. However, decades of research show that highway expansions actually create more demand on the Highway, increasing traffic and instances of vehicle collisions.  Alaska is lucky we are a young state and we have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of DOTs Outside. Please, use the opportunity to innovate new solutions to transporting people down the Turnagain arm. A commuter rail to Girdwood would be a great addition and provide an alternative option to get cars off the road and give more space for vehicles making their trip to the peninsula. I ask that we not waste so much money and instead take an incremental, innovative approach that could improve safety and quality of life for generations to come.	Alternatives
2824	38142	I would love to see a paved bike path from Anchorage to Girdwood.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2826	38147	Marc Gruber: (907) 227-2417. I know you received my comment about the ludicrous ness of having three public meetings, all of which, virtually no one in Anchorage can get to considering that most of the people who will be using the safer Seward highway are people from Anchorage. So I had hope that there would be some late note indicating that there are additional meetings for Anchorage people scheduled. You can imagine my disappointment, what I saw, no such incremental, public involvement, so I look to hear from someone to demonstrate that you want to hear from people in acreage. best mark	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2827	38148	All future upgrades to the Seward Highway should include dedicated bicycle paths, which are physically separated from the vehicle roadway. To do otherwise, is extremely shortsighted and too narrow in planning and engineering scope.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2828	38149	Rather than spend hundreds of millions of dollars to upgrade the Seward Highway from Potter Marsh to Girdwood, a better alternative would be to build a bridge that connects south Anchorage to the land on the other side of Turnagain Arm, and thereby creates a second, shorter road link between Anchorage and the Kenai Peninsula.  This bridge would significantly decrease vehicle traffic on the Seward Highway between Anchorage and Girdwood and points south; and thereby eliminate the need for costly safety upgrades to the Seward Highway. It would also eliminate the dangers of travel through Turnagain Pass in winter; and more safely link the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage than would mere safety upgrades to the existing Seward Highway.	Alternatives
2829	38150	Make separation of path btw Girdwood and anchorage better. If close to highway have fencing. Particular area near bird creek and mile point 101.5 ish. The trail gets really close to the highway but no warning sign on trail and basically if a child or dog leaves the trail at all at risk of being hit and killed by vehicles.	Extend the Pathway
2830	38151	Please seed the sides of the highway with native wildflowers that are pollinator friendly not treated with pesticides instead of grass.	Biological
2832	38153	The current bike path runs into pull offs/parking areas which is not safe. The trail could continue along with a connector trail from parking to the trail. Please consult with alaska trails before constructing an unsafe bike path. And please fix the errors made in the original path.	Extend the Pathway
2833	38154	Thanks for all the helpful information!	Outreach Process
2834	38155	Avalanche mitigation should also be considered.	Mitigation
2835	38156	Consolidated access at Brid Creek and Indian. Dedicated left turn opportunities at popular pullouts north of Indian. Well developed Transportation Operations plan (including PIP).	Alternatives
2836	38157	We want an underpass under the Seward Hwy. to get us to the coastal side at Potter Marsh. Logical terminus should be on the west side. Don't preclude having a logical terminus on the west side of the Hwy.	Alternatives
2837	38158	Thanks you for continuing to chip away at the rockfall issue. It's important to keep pushing back on the rocks for safety.	Physical

2838	38159	NOISE;wow. ripping cars, massive trucks,herds of motorcycles,pick -ups with tires that come to your waist and for desert;rub lines that roar through the valley any time day or night. in the summer beginning on thursday night and through sunday an outdoor conversation is impossible. sign language required.you could say the noise is horrible but it's actually worse. ear plugs for sleeping.	Physical
2839	38160	The project library Appendices show Alternative 4 for an interchange that takes out two houses and puts a new swath across the north end of Potter Marsh. Not good for the Marsh or neighborhoods. Where can the public see the Alternative interchange designs?  Same question for the configuration at Potter Valley Road.	Alternatives
2840	38161	Thank you for putting this information together. My comment is related to the Purpose and Need statement. These are driven by safety and congestion along this section of the highway. I am strongly in favor of improving recreational access along this section of road and that appears to be missing from the purpose. I want to see a separate multiuser path along this section of highway that allows pedestrians/cyclists to move up and down this section of road safely. This will give them room to move up and down the highway by parking at specific lots with good on/off ramps rather than stopping on shoulders. You never know where the wildlife will be!  I also do not see any mention of Chugach State Park Headquarters in the Purpose/Need. This facility will likely be run over by the highway improvements. The state needs a State Park Visitor Center with good access. The current headquarters doesn't allow folks time to get on/off the highway. Tourists blow by it in the summer without any idea it's there. The beginning of this highway project needs to include a welcome to Alaska State Parks and Visitor Center that is easy to access. This will allow park staff to direct tourists to appropriate parking for wildlife viewing along the corridor as a way to mitigate summer congestion.	P&N
2841	38162	If you removed the Kenai Peninsula drivers to a high bridge over the water and connected to the Nikiski road (or further in) on that side, it would make a big difference in the safety factor. There would then be an alternate route during avalanches or other fewer road closures. Tourists and local people could really enjoy the scenic drive down the Arm and those in a hurry could drive the alternate route. I doubt this will ever happen in my lifetime, but in the long term, it would save lives, money, and time, plus open more land for new businesses and badly needed housing.	Alternatives
2842	38163	1. Design for the long term. There are locations where the cliffs are much steeper than the angle of repose or there are groundwater (and thus ice) issues and the only solution is to move the road, and thus the railroad, away from them. Don't be afraid to do this. 2. Design for the long term. Where you install culverts, ensure they have a 100 year design life in salt water, ie aluminum.	Alternatives
2843	38164	Frankly, I think that the current plan is based on transportation engineering theories that are roughly thirty years out of date, and I think this plan is driven NOT by a desire to truly make the Seward highway safer, but by a desire to feel important and to be able to place "designed a highway interchange" on certain peoples' resumes.  I think if you really cared about traffic safety, you would've considered narrowing the highway and decreasing the speed limit accordingly; adding stop lights; and ensuring that intersections and crossings include features to make them safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. According to YOUR OWN DATA, many of the drivers on the Seward highway wish to take a slower pace - so design the roads to accommodate that pace! A child could put this together, and yet our DOT struggles with basic undergrad-level transportation engineering. It makes me wonder if engineers at AKDOT have bothered to keep up with their continuing education credits. Are you up to date? Because it sure sounds like you've been asleep the last ten years.  Do better - and read a book while you're at it.	Alternatives

2844	38165	<p>I would like to respectfully ask for funding for officers to begin issuing tickets for any driver that is 5 miles over the posted speed limit and please start issuing tickets for people using there phones for texting. I see them more often than not. I'm sure if we had more officers designated for traffic violations the state could increase revenue and help people understand that if you are endangering our citizens lives with your inattentive or dangerous driving you are going to pay major fines. This will in turn raise the drivers insurance rates that will induce safer driving habits. It is so dangerous to drive here. People basically know they are not going to be stopped. People are driving 50 plus mph on 30mph streets. Most of the time there eyes are on there phone. The Glenn is called the Alaska autobahn for good reason. Many times I've had to drive upwards of eighty mph just to keep from getting bullied off the road while doing 70. I know you want feedback for the Seward hwy and suggestions on how to make improvements for safety. I'm betting that some of the safety concerns on the Seward hwy are the same or very similar as our city and residential neighborhood safety concerns. Its not safe. We really need more enforcement on our roads and highways. Drivers would start to realize that we care about the citizens of this state and respect the laws of the road. They are there for a very legitimate reason. We all want to get home alive and it's a big concern when the excessively high rates of speed goes unchecked along with the distracted driving. It's not even safe for me to take my dog for a walk in my neighborhood. The 25 mph speed is more often than not completely disregarded. The majority of drivers are texting on there phone. Please help us. Any chance you could send this request to the mayor of Anchorage? I'm not very good with this phone. I'm older and I don't know how to do all that copying and pasting stuff. Good thing is I can't and won't text and drive. This would also be a worthwhile and well recieved investigation for your station to cover so we could all feel safer on the Seward, the Glenn and most of all our community. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	Social
2845	38166	<p>I would recommend education and INFORCEMENT of tailgating issues The rule I learned was one large car distance for each 10 miles per hour - that needs to be implemented! So if you are driving 50 mph imagine five SUVs are between you and the car in front of you. And if it is icy this distance must increase even more. Even cops tail gait! They need to provide a good example! (Ps. The 2 second rule I recently heard is difficult to implement without taking your eyes off the road so I don't recommend it)</p>	Social
2846	38167	<p>I attended the Open House at Goldenview Middle school this evening. I believe that maintaining the intrinsic beauty of the Seward Highway should be listed as one of the "Key Issues" that will be analyzed in the Draft EA. The corridor is designated as a National Scenic Byway, an Alaska Scenic Byway and an All American Road. I believe that the final esthetics of the project should be taken into consideration from the beginning and part of the assessment of impacts should be visual aesthetics.</p>	Social
2847	38168	<p>1) There was no mention at all of the importance of maintaining (or even perhaps improving) the visual quality of the driving experience along this official Scenic Byway. It does not appear as a factor on the board outlining "Key Issues" of the project. This aspect - the aesthetics of the completed project - need to be considered right from the start. It would be a tragedy to repeat the mistakes made during construction of the Bird Creek parking lot. The visual scar of that wall of blasted rock is an eyesore that is visible even from across Turnagain Arm while driving the road to Hope, and it will, unfortunately, endure forever.</p>	Social
2848	38169	<p>STIP cost seems to align with the sum of the relevant sections outlined in the 2016 recon study (~620mil), however that studies cost explicitly do not include environmental permitting, mitigation, ROW acquisition, or any non-typical engineering challenges. What does the department expect the additional costs to be over what is shown in the STIP for the unique environmental permitting, mitigation, ROW acquisition, and engineering challenges? FHWA's National Highway Construction Cost Index has jumped by more than 50% since recon study was written in 2016.. How does the project team and the department reconcile these old costs vs current costs? What can the public expect as the final cost for this entire project?</p>	Financing Issues

2849	38170	<p>The one thing that I dread the most is driving the Seward Highway. It's just NOT safe at all. In CA most freeways have a center divider. The main cause of accidents in the entire state, including the Glenn Highway are heading collisions.</p> <p>It seems unreasonable to assume that cars will stay on their side of traffic when there exist an unmeasurable amount of distractions. There's wildlife, cell phones, children, headlights, drinking, eating, intoxicated, weather and more. Ideally drivers would stay on their side but it's not always possible.</p> <p>I've always felt that the state was negligent and at fault for many accidents as the highways are not safe. Currently due to the rock fall mediation it has felt safer to drive because there are those concrete center dividers. I think that center dividers on all major highways such as the Seward highway, Sterling highway and Glen highway would benefit Alaska residents.</p> <p>Center dividers though not aesthetically pleasing would immediately mitigate the problem. It may not stop the accidents from occurring but at least they wouldn't be head on.</p>	Alternatives
2850	38171	<p>Connectivity shown in Appendix H -4 for the area north of the marsh is inadequate given existing traffic on Rabbit Creek Rd and increased traffic contribution from Potter Valley and adjacent neighborhoods that would now need to navigate Rabbit Creek Rd to get to and from anticipated New Seward Highway alignment. Connectivity solution should include the consideration of redesign of freeway access at Rabbit Creek/New Seward that is directly adjacent to this area. Also could provide southbound access to new alignment for traffic using rifle range underpass; perhaps also southbound exit to Potter Marsh from new alignment using underpass as well.</p>	Alternatives
2851	38172	<p>There is here is not an alternative way into Anchorage from Girdwood. If this corridor is going to be made safer and improved then the state needs to look at an alternative route for if the main route were to go down. The problem with this corridor is once it closes to an accident it's closed until the accident is cleared. And sometimes it can take hours to clear the accident.</p>	Alternatives
2852	38174	<p>Where it has been widened to 4 lanes near Girdwood, really takes away from it. Not only that, a lot of folks go 100 mph in those areas, and where the two lane hwy is, they just can't. I'd hate to see highway built into the mudflats, more mountains blown up, and honestly give more high speed zones for reckless drivers.</p>	Alternatives
2853	38175	<p>There needs to be turn lane at McHugh Creek. Also in Indian more turn lanes (Forget Me Not Nursery, Reindeer meat business, Brown Bear Salon, etc.). They should also have flashing lights and slower speed signs through Indian and Bird. Like they do in Moose Pass. There are more business and residents in Indian and Bird now; also the school bus has several stops to pick up school children. It is very dangerous, especially during dark winter months.</p>	Alternatives
2854	38176	<p>Twenty years ago it felt like it was a regular occurrence that the sheep would come down by sunshine ridge- beluga point, cross the road and hang out on the rocks by the inlet. I haven't noticed this very much anymore, my guess is because of increase in speed of traffic and volume. Many sheep and goat populations (world wide) travel long distances to find salt. I'm wondering if the health decline of the local population isn't from an inability to get to salt by coming down to the inlet and licking the rocks.</p>	Biological
2855	38177	<p>Take out the south bound left turn to Mchugh creek. Very dangerous. A left turn lane won't help because of the curb.</p>	Alternatives
2856	38178	<p>Why is the project team considering and discussing a future 'design day' rather than the industry, and AKDOT, standard of 'design year'? Do we really need to accommodate the single worst day for vehicular traffic in some theoretical future growth scenario? This seems like a plain and obvious method to design the biggest highway possible. How massive and expensive would our entire roadway network be if we designed for a 'design day' instead of a 'design year'. All roads in the Anchorage bowl are subject to the same cycles of weather, tourism, and recreation. The project should cease considering the 'design day' and should only consider a 'design year'.</p>	Alternatives

2857	38179	<p>As the eagles and seagulls remind us each spring ♦ HOOOLIGAN HAPPENS!!</p> <p>Please consider a large pullout adjacent to the freshwater system(s) that these fish return to as the bounty draws hundreds of people and their gear.</p> <p>HUGE SAFETY ISSUES!!</p>	Social
2858	38180	4 lane divided highway is needed.	Alternatives
2859	38181	<p>There are several turnouts between Anchorage and Girdwood. There have been many times when we were towing our travel trailer and wanted to stop at a turnout to allow traffic behind us to pass. However, the signs for most of the turnouts don't provide enough notice. By the time we see the sign, it's too late to slow down to make the turnout. It would be very helpful if, as part of the upgrade project, you would add signs a few hundred feet further from the turnouts.</p>	Alternatives
2860	38182	<p>Purpose &amp; Need: this seems like a highway widening project pretending to be a "safety" project. Many of the project materials indicate that moving vehicles quickly and conveniently is DOT's underlying preference for this project; if that is the case please consider renaming the project to "Seward Vehicle Flow" or something similar to be more accurate. (Previous Seward Highway projects were labeled "mobility"--it seems that someone finally learned to stop saying the quiet part out loud).</p> <p>If the primary goal is safety, then the alternatives presented should center on slower speeds and raised center medians. In your materials please be explicit about the tradeoffs between actual safety improvements (slower speeds, etc) and vehicle flow (time, or whatever other metric used). ("Reducing speeds and adding a median would eliminate deaths, but might delay you by 3-4 minutes on 5-6 days per year")</p>	P&N
2861	38183	<p>Has the project team considered the capability and funding for maintaining all of this added infrastructure? The project team should consider conducting a comprehensive analysis on how road maintenance will deteriorate across the Anchorage maintenance district area because of this highway expansion project. Adding more lane miles means it will take longer for our roads to get plowed next winter.</p>	Financing Issues
2862	38184	<p>Expanding highways and adding lanes does not make a road safer. At the cost of the environment, it's just going to create more congestion and reckless driving. Why are there always millions of dollars for deadly road expansions that so easily destroy our local ecosystems? One death by car collision is too much yet all the designing and engineering of our city perpetuates it. I hope one day Alaska can look at developed countries and take notes. There is even a railroad along the highway ♦. such wasted potential.</p>	P&N
2864	38185	<p>The entire length of this highway needs barriers between traffic directions to prevent all the drunk, texting, dope smoking idiots from crossing over into oncoming traffic.</p> <p>More turn lanes are needed but that won't completely stop the idiots from plowing into your rear end.</p> <p>Slow traffic lanes are needed for the ocean liners that creep along the highway, and we need enforcement of the requirements to use them.</p>	Alternatives

2865	38186	<p>The Idea that highway safety is accomplished by widening or adding lanes to a highway is ridiculous. If you want to increase safety you need to think about all users to an area not just motorists, especially when traveling through a quite populated area like Indian and Bird Creek.</p> <p>My recommendation is that either you separate the Highway from the neighborhoods or you make it not worth the risk to go faster (speeding) you do this by lowering the speed limit and doubling the fines in the area. I mean come-on if you think hitting moose are bad enough between the valley and north Anchorage imagine the risk when you have a park on one side, neighborhood on the other and a natural tourist attraction. I would hate for Alaska to make the same mistake as other states when it comes to road safety especially given how much research has already been done.</p> <p>Widening/adding lines does not make it safer- this only makes drivers motorists have the illusion of safety, therefore they take more chances and make poorer decisions in the moment. You do not increase reaction time by creating more openings. You increase it by slowing down!</p>	Traffic Design Speed
2866	38187	<p>The state of Alaska as a whole studies many projects to death. This problematic highway has been a problem for many years.</p> <p>Why not just build a bridge across the inlet? Bite the bullet and do something! This avoids avalanches, traffic deaths, closures, railroad issues and studying the highway to death again. Many arctic countries have addressed these issues by building bridges. There are no ships that deliver goods or anything else.</p> <p>This will help John Q. public as well as the tourists who are not considered when accidents happen. Most accidents are caused by state residents anyway.</p>	Alternatives
2867	38188	<p>Hi: It Help Bunch if drivers didn't Speed. Nice lanes were added north of Girdwood, but it's a real Drag Strip going North from Girdwood about mile up from Tesoro &lt; &amp; Highway from Rabbit Creek South to Weigh Station seems ok.</p>	Traffic Design Speed
2868	38189	<p>I don't know if this reached your level of attention but there was an incident around the time of Fur Rendezvous. A sled dog some how got loose from her owner/transport vehicle. The entire neighborhood of Bird Creek and Indian made an effort to find Donna (the sled dog). She was finally found and returned to her owner. I know the DOT does not track animal losses. The only instance of a notice about animals that I know of is the moose fatality sign between Anchorage and Palmer and I assume that's fish and game. The point I'm trying to make is a lot of people would be like: dogs belong on leashes, you should be more responsible, etc. But the people of Bird Creek and Indian just care and made the effort to help. A lot of people here own dogs and love them like members of their family. We all do our best to keep them safe but the Seward highway is already a very dangerous place. It cuts right along two communities and a park. I've personally helped rescue 3 dogs that some how ended up on or near the highway. I don't think their owners were negligent I think accidents happen and when they happen near an highway with people driving 65-75 mph it often ends in tragedy. And as my neighbor said at the meeting so many of these people just drive by an animal without noticing or caring. There was another instance I witnessed where a car hit and killed a dog and just kept driving. Only a couple cars stopped to help. And they were people who live or have lived in Indian and Bird Creek.</p>	Other
2869	38190	<p>Some thing you may not know or have considered. Indian and Bird Creek are kind of havens for horse owners. The easy access to the trails into the park lands and the standard 2.5 or larger lots of land are great for equestrians. You should consider horse trailer movements as part of this design. Large RVs are likewise in need of special consideration.</p>	Alternatives

2870	38191	<p>Let me just mention what I would consider to be the most urgent improvement:</p> <p>PHYSICAL SEPARATION OF OPPOSING TRAFFIC</p> <p>This can be accomplished by several means and methods, but the narrowness of the corridor in many areas, bordered by inlet on one side and steep and rocky mountain walls on the other side, make traditional divided highway standards extremely difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish in many areas.</p> <p>My urgent suggestion would be to implement a continuous physical cement barrier system for the entire portion of the highway between oncoming lanes of traffic that cannot be separated by typical divided highway standards, which would help to isolate problems that developed in traffic flow. This moveable barrier system already exists, and is often used in construction zones. Special care and creativity around the need for turning traffic for turnouts would have to be implemented. (I have personally seen the dangers that traffic entering or leaving the flow to or from typical highway speeds, can experience even from well announced, designated view point parking lots, especially when traffic enters or leaves to or from across the median.)</p> <p>This continuous barrier system could be implemented even now, before actual dirt work would begin. It could be adjusted as construction on any proposed separation of lanes would ensue. This physical barrier is especially crucial around the portions where the road curves, where visibility is limited, and where ice and water make for hazardous driving conditions. In my opinion, this physical barrier should be considered as a permanent feature of this section of the Seward Highway.</p>	Alternatives
2871	38192	Please add me to the email updates.	Outreach Process
2872	38193	<p>Where is the Open House being held?</p> <p>People are encouraged to attend an open house on the project, Thursday, April 23, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.</p> <p>Department of Transportation to begin Safer Seward Highway Project</p> <p><a href="https://www.alaskasnewsresource.com/2023/03/24/department-transportation-begin-safer-seward-highway-project/">https://www.alaskasnewsresource.com/2023/03/24/department-transportation-begin-safer-seward-highway-project/</a></p>	Outreach Process
2873	38194	<p>What is the "TransportationX" project management style being used for this project? How does Transportation X impact the communities ability to be involved in the project development process. Departmentally, who is leading the project team? Why is the Department utilizing non-local staff to run this project? Central Region implements the lion's share of the surface transportation program and is currently implementing both a CMGC and DB project. By using a department team of outsiders DOT&amp;PF is throwing away local knowledge and drowning out the voices of local communities when those pulling the strings lives 100s of miles away.</p>	Other
2874	38197	<p>The project should consider developing and evaluating project alternatives based on crash modification factors. If the purpose and need of the project is to improve safety then the project should use safety infrastructure recognized in the state's Highway Safety Improvement Handbook: providing a center median barrier, adding right turn lanes, access management. Reducing rear end, angle, and head on crashes through proven safety countermeasures recognized in the handbook could likely eliminate a majority of the project's crashes, both in severity and amount.</p>	Alternatives
2875	38198	<p>How far have conversations progressed with the Railroad? The feasibility and cost of this project are entirely hinged on ARRC's willingness to cooperate. Consider reaching for an MoU with ARRC that you make publicly available before finalizing the alternative development process. Their participation is crucial. Strongly consider any option with ARRC that could reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled.</p>	Other
2876	38201	<p>"All models are wrong but some models are useful" [George Box] How is the project team managing the inaccuracies inherit in modeling traffic growth. How resilient are the team's ideas to the consistent over-estimation of vehicle volume? Is the project still a smart and economically viable if volume doesn't grow as anticipated?</p>	Social

2877	38202	<p>It's certainly possible that the 1980's funding for the 3rd lane on Minnesota southbound at the lagoon included more than just safety money. It's just that at the time, it was described as a safety project, and I remember studying the criteria and point counts that warranted safety funding. (Reducing the number of light poles was a significant factor.)</p> <p>In terms of the New Seward Highway, a neighbor insisted it would not be safe until it was 'straightened.' Somehow I would expect there are reports that describe the numbers and severities of crashes pre and post 'improvements,' most of which seem to involve straightening.</p> <p>Another way of asking the question: what have we learned about how NSH improvements have affected the number and severity of NSH crashes?</p> <p>Perhaps you can forward this email to the project team as well? I look forward to hearing from them.</p>	Other
2880	38203	<p>I suspect this project will involve blasting the side of the mountain along the route (as was the case between Bird Point and Girdwood many years ago). The blasting process appears to create 2-3 terraces.</p> <p>I suggest that the ledges of the terraces have soil dumped on them to encourage natural revegetation, which will a) hide at least some of the ugly blasted rock and drilling channels and b) help stabilize any loose rock left behind as roots grow into it.</p> <p>The blast area at the Bird Creek parking area is unacceptably ugly to me; I believe a soil remediation as described above could still be used at that site, and that it wouldn't be very expensive. Perhaps use that site as a test of the procedure to see if it works before the main project is conducted? I think it will work, as some vegetation has taken root on the Bird Pt to Girdwood section (but not enough, and it's been too slow).</p> <p>I've attached a photo of the Bird Pt to Girdwood section to show what I mean. There is some growth on the ledges that I think could be easily enhanced.</p>	Mitigation
2881	38204	<p>AMATS is currently developing a Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) list and TSMO projects. Because peak summer flow is the only potentially (emphasis on potentially) volume critical aspect, the project team should consider an alternative focused solely on TSMO (plus basic safety) methods for volume concerns rather than lane expansion. Access management, parking management, and congestion pricing could all be cheap, innovative, tools to address seasonal peak hour demand. We shouldn't build a road just to manage a few heavy traffic days, we should leverage smart, innovative solutions so this roadway isn't just a maintenance burden that functions as a drag strip 99.9% of the year.</p>	Alternatives
2883	38206	<p>Need to look at better access on and off the highway at Potter Marsh and the Potter Marsh Trail head. During peak hours (Sundays with returning traffic from Girdwood and every day in July) it is hard to maintain safe distances turning on and off the highway without acceleration lanes and adequate turn pockets. Possibly look at moving the Turnagain Arm trail head parking lot to Potter Marsh to reduce points of controlled access.</p>	Alternatives
2884	38207	<p>Under the Transportation X project management style, what will be the delegation of authority for NEPA Approvals under Alaska DOT&amp;PFs NEPA Assignment? When regional processes underpin the functioning and compliance of the department's 327 MoU then it seems like there could be NEPA issues if TrX operates in some ether beyond any singular region. For those that will have NEPA approvals for this project: Do they work directly for or appointed by the governor? How can the public be sure that design for this project wasn't pre-determined when the headlines for this project announcement literally read "Dunleavy budget calls for widening Seward Highway"?</p>	Other

2885	38208	This corridor is a safety corridor and the project is being marketed as safety motivated, but where does this project area rank in crash cost per mile, fatalities per mile, and serious injuries per mile compared to other corridors in the region? Considered the project is marketing this project as a safety project, the project team and department should publish a ranking list on the project site comparing crashes of various severities for all high-crash corridors in the state, for the sake of comparison.	Social
2886	38209	July 2 2022, a Saturday on the holiday weekend, saw the highest hourly volume of the year during the 3PM hour. During the single highest traffic hour of the year the 85th percentile speed through the Bird area (posted 55MPH with double fines) was above the posted speed limit for all four 15 minute periods in the hour. If the 85th percentile traffic is travelling above free flow speed in the single busiest hour of the year has free flow speed above the speed limit, what congestion does the project team allege? Is this billion dollar (inevitable) project being constructed based off of a single design hour? Can the department tolerate one single hour in a year where speeds are actually below the speed limit?	P&N
2887	38211	This project should conduct an EIS rather than an EA. MinnDOT did one for the 12.5 mile four-lane expansion of Highway 14. TxDOT is doing one for US380 on Dallas and one for i-35. Lafayette, LA is doing for the Lafayette regional expressway. Missouri DOT is doing one for I-57. AKDOT did one for Sterling 45-60. Why wouldn't this project merit and EIS?  This project will have a significant impact and should conduct and EIS to fully consider the environmental, economic, and social repercussions.	Other
2888	38214	The Windy Corner EA identified unrestricted access as one of the four safety concerns.  How many crashes in the last three year are directly attributed to an angle, t-bone, or rear-end crash at or directly following an uncontrolled approach that haven't been mitigate with the recent bird and indian projects?. Are the uncontrolled approaches remaining in 2023 driving the safety issues on the project? Has the project team evaluated how stop-controlled approaches through these communities will be affected by highway expansion? Left turns out of these communities could be significantly more cumbersome with higher speeds and more lanes to evaluate and turn across. Will Unisignalized intersection crashes go down with a wider highway? Intuition leads me to believe that it is easier to enter the Seward Highway from either a controlled or uncontrolled approach when traffic is two-lane rather than four-lane, where traffic can be moving at different speeds next to each other and the distance to cross is so much greater.Reconsider if unrestricted access is a serious or relevant enough safety concern to drive the purpose statement for 9-figure project. How does Unrestricted Access as purpose contribute to the need of a four-lane divided highway? Access Management can be implemented independent of cross-sectional width.	P&N
2889	38216	A huge challenge to this corridor is the right-of-way. Consideration should be given to having legislative designation for a transportation corridor that would include sufficient space for the widened highway and relocated Alaska Railroad otherwise challenges working within the Chugach State Park will continue to be an issue.	Social

2890	38219	<p>The Windy Corner EA identified Roadside parking as one of the four areas of safety concern.</p> <p>How many crashes in the last three year are directly related to a parking area, pullout, or frequently used shoulder? Does the project team intend on removing parking opportunities from the project or adding in access managed parking opportunities? Strongly consider the desires of locals and recreational users when deciding how to manage parking in the project area - Chugach State Park has existing community access issues and this project should not contribute to worsening community access to the state park as that would be an additional environmental impact. Could the project team consider alternatives that include the addition of frequent parking areas as was implemented on the Seward Highway 75-90 project? Is unrestricted access or roadside parking a more severe issue, according to crash data available to the project team? Reconsider if roadside parking is a serious enough safety issue to be a driving safety purpose of a 9-figure project. If Roadside parking is a valid purpose for a 9-figure project, reconsider how roadside parking as a safety purpose contributes to a the need for a four-lane divided highway.</p> <p>Roadside Parking can be dealt with independent of cross-sectional width.</p>	P&N
2891	38221	<p>Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit of citizens and professionals whose mission is to preserve the integrity and biological diversity of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR). This easily damaged subarctic saltmarsh system supports an unusual diversity of plants, birds, mammals, and invertebrates, and is of continental conservation significance. The proximity of the refuge to Alaska's largest city makes it important for public education and enjoyment but also makes it highly vulnerable. While safety and connectivity along this route are important for citizens, visitors, and the economy, considering FAR's mission, italicized above, our comments focus mainly on related environment, wildlife, and outdoor recreation.</p>	Other
2892	38222	<p>The project should include a separated pathway for the length of the project and from positive network connections at the termini of the project.</p>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2893	38224	<p>The project should not intentionally increase speeds on the Seward Highway by raising the speed limit in this project.</p> <p>By using a design speed of 65mph this whole project gets bigger, wider, and more expensive. The project could likely save 10s of millions of dollars if not over a 100million dollars simply by preserving or reducing the design speed. A higher design speed will increase noise for Bird and Indian. Locals and visitors to these communities will have more difficulty getting back onto the highway higher volume of traffic that is going faster. The project should evaluate the time and expense that could be saved by maintaining a design speed of 55mph</p>	Traffic Design Speed
2894	38225	<p>It's been known for years that widening highways does not a) decrease traffic accidents and b) reduce traffic. All a wider highway does is ruin the environment, waste taxpayer money, and increase throughput which in turn increases traffic. You are wasting millions of dollars of taxpayer money for an "improvement" that will make the situation actively worse.</p> <p>Why not try to keep people off the roads, to reduce traffic incidents? The less people on the road, the less cars, and the less accidents. Expand the railroad, repair it and make it a smoother ride. Increase the amount of bus stations and protected bike lanes so that there are less people on the road and less openings for incidents. It's not that difficult.</p>	Alternatives

2895	38226	<p>The project team should consider what would make this corridor the best road: 30 years from now, what features would make this road a piece of cornerstone infrastructure to Southcentral Alaska?</p> <p>Is higher speeds and wider lanes at the expense of the locals and the environment the end goal? Is that the pie in the sky?</p> <p>The project should consider the following key goals that could make this project great, rather than a maintenance burden that only serves as a political campaign talking point.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Reducing fatal and serious injury crashes</li> <li>2) Preserving or improving access to Chugach.</li> <li>3) Reducing environmental impacts to the maximum extent possible.</li> <li>4) Preserving and amplifying the corridor viewsheds.</li> <li>5) Maximize tourist and recreational access to Bird, Indian, and Girdwood.</li> </ol>	P&N
2896	38227	<p>The project team should consider what would make this corridor the best road: 30 years from now, what features would make this road a piece of cornerstone infrastructure to Southcentral Alaska?</p> <p>Is higher speeds and wider lanes at the expense of the locals and the environment the end goal?</p> <p>The project should consider the following key goals that could make this project great, rather than a maintenance burden that only serves as a political campaign talking point.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.</li> <li>2) Preserving or improving access to Chugach.</li> <li>3) Reducing environmental impacts to the maximum extent possible.</li> <li>4) Preserving and amplifying the corridor viewsheds.</li> <li>5) Maximize tourist and recreational access to Bird, Indian, and Girdwood.</li> </ol>	P&N
2897	38228	<p>Traffic Congestion saves lives.</p> <p>In the early days of COVID, with rush-hour traffic down by three-quarters, empty were finally able to be used at the high speeds for which they were designed. The result was the largest one-year increase in motor vehicle deaths since the earliest days of motordom. As the number of miles driven dropped by more than an eighth, driving deaths rose by a quarter.</p> <p>Our own innate sense of risk is one of the things that keeps us the most safe. The notion that "this stretch of the Seward Highway is "one of the most dangerous highways in America" while false, is probably a major factor in why the road isn't more dangerous. By removing any sense of risks and eiding the highway this project will remove any friction in the subconscious and the average Seward Highway will be subconsciously be driving much more dangerously as the roads risk profile in their mind has gone down.</p> <p>The project should be adding trees, adding guardrail, adding concrete barriers to signal to the subconscious in every driver how the road should be driven.</p>	Social
2898	38231	<p>The project should include maintenance burden as a criteria to evaluate design alternatives and include each alternatives classification in the environmental document.</p> <p>Each square foot of asphalt needs plowing, patching, painting. Guardrail posts need replacing. Street lights need bulbs. In an era where USDOT is operating under a policy of Fix It First and AKDOT maintenance is flat broke, maintenance burden should be one of the most important factors when proceeding with a project.</p> <p>Will their be extra money in the maintenance budget to afford the maintenance on this project?</p>	Financing Issues

2899	38232	<p>Highway expansion can have negative impacts on communities and the environment. For example, it can lead to eminent domain where people lose their homes and land. It can also cause traffic congestion and urban sprawl. Expanding highway capacity may not be an efficient solution to major highway congestion issues because it attracts more drivers and makes congestion relief temporary. Additionally, highways have been known to cut through neighborhoods, disrupt pedestrian landscapes, worsen air quality and torpedo property values.</p>	Social
2900	38233	<p>This property next is largely a duplication of DOTs methods for highway expansion elsewhere in the region. The concept of highway expansion to eliminate a safety corridor is the modus operandi; the project team should not feel constrained to this alternative only. The project team should consider reviewing the safety performance of the previous phases of the Parks highway expansion projects to see if the crash cost reduction per daily driver would merit the inflated cost of this project, specifically.</p> <p>In an era of cost constrained maintenance departments the project team should consider scalpel like safety improvements that don't add even more infrastructure that the department will struggle to maintain.</p>	Alternatives
2901	38235	<p>As a resident of the Upper Golden View neighborhood and an avid cyclist, my only request is for the project to heavily consider if enough is being done to ensure locals can cycle safely from the Old Seward/Rabbit Creek Road interchange to Girdwood safely and without getting flattened by a swerving, sightseeing, novice tourist in command of a rental RV, et al. For my part, I promise to don my hideous day glo kit, along with attaching a bright tail light on my rig to increase my odds for staying...alive...to the best of my ability while in the 55mph zone from Potter's to Indian. I will also continue to try to knock my rides out early well before most people hit the road in their vehicles.</p>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2902	38238	<p>The project should consider negative safety impacts of the alternatives it is using. Introducing a new traffic behavior to the corridor will result in an associated increase in a particular type of crash. Adding two continuous lanes will include crashes as a result from passing on the left, passing on the right, side swipes, etc. Considering these negative safety impacts is not something that projects often do but considering the likely safety performance of the finished product is important, not just the safety issues it is trying to fix.</p> <p>A center median barrier would reduce the most severe crash types but would not introduce new traffic behavior that leads to more complex turns across and the highway, varying speeds in the same direction of travel, passing, etc. These should be considerations if this is truly a safety project.</p>	Alternatives
2903	38239	<p>Who specifically was the decisionmaker that behind the 65 MPH speed? This decision and the design implication are enormous. The difference between 55mph design and 65 MPH have a massive difference in how big and expensive the project will be; it's not unreasonable that the diet gentler road may be hundreds of millions more expensive than if it was designed for 55.</p> <p>How does the project justify increasing the speed in a safety project. Currently speeding is such an issue that it has enhanced enforcement from the Troopers and the fines are doubled. How do we get from those existing conditions to raising the speed limit?</p> <p>The project team should consider evaluating the design speed as part of a robust and well thought out alternative development process. The project team should NOT treat the design speed as an assumed design criteria. Request from DOT that design speed be part of the environmental process.</p>	Traffic Design Speed
2904	38240	<p>The project team should take the Alaska Long Trail seriously as part of this project. The Alaska Long Trail has the potential to attract tourism and local recreation, bringing benefits that transcend vehicle mobility. A well articulated approach and implementation could bring a piece of non-motorized infrastructure that is cherished for decades. Alaska Long Trail efforts should be a centerpiece in the project's design and the project team should engage with Alaska Long Trail advocates early and often.</p>	Extend the Pathway

2905	38241	Would you please call and leave a message as to how I get the detailed shoot set for the short highway projects that were shown at the open house? I'm not getting the details that I've been told exist.	Outreach Process
2906	38242	The goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is an official goal of the U.S. Government policy as it is stated in sections of the Clean Air Act (CAA), the President's 1993 Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), and in the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) included in both the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), U.S.C. 23, Section 149.	Physical
2907	38246	In my view the purpose and needs statement for this project is inappropriate. True, the corridor has a well-known safety issue, but congestion is not a pressing issue here. Speeds remain high even during the busiest period of the year. In the view of the DOT, how often must a corridor exceed capacity to merit a widening?	P&N
2908	38247	<p>Before beginning this project the team and the department should review whether or not this safety corridor section is still relevant.</p> <p>When whole premise of this project is to decommission the safety corridor. It is completely blind to the actual results of the project and is just assuming what it builds is safer. It is a plain copy and paste measure and the department is doing this all over the region. Review the crashes and resulting injuries. Compare them against crash costs in the rest of the state. This route is nowhere near the top. Most arterials in Anchorage are far, far, more dangerous. Does this corridor truly need a total reconstruction to be safe? Would the department implement smaller changes like barriers, access Management, and turn lanes where appropriate and then see if the safety corridor can go away at that point?</p> <p>Everything looks like a nail if you only have a hammer. And in this case the department is slamming the nail over and over and over again.</p>	Editorial
2909	38248	<p>As a 50 year Anchorage resident and fan of our Seward Highway along Turnagain Arm, I submit these comments:</p> <p>Congestion is only a problem during certain times during our tourist season.</p> <p>Four lanes is an extremely expensive and unappealing solution to a part time problem, and likely will encourage speeding.</p> <p>Safety and scenic solutions should take priority over faster traffic. A transparent middle barrier, mass transit or creative use of Alaska RR should be considered, and would be better use of the funds available.</p>	Editorial
2910	38249	<p>infrastructure we have already and now we want to spend close to 1B to widen this road through some of the most scenic and sensitive natural areas that we have here near Anchorage!?! This is a terrible idea and only benefits those who utilize this road during peak congestion times. All others who use this road are not fighting summer traffic and the road is acceptable as is. The cost per driver is going to be immense. The money is not free, just because it is allocated doesn't mean we need to spend it on this. Let's not blast anymore of the mountains down to make roadbeds. Let's leave the sheep on the slopes and just deal with what we have. I OPPOSE THIS PROJECT, and I know a lot of other Alaskan's do as well.</p>	Editorial

2911	38252	<p>Non-motorized hard surface transportation infrastructure should be studied and I think is most important. This includes ways to maintain a safe distance between vehicles and pedestrians, ideally fully separated. Waypoints and pullouts should include non-motorized users and infrastructure that goes with it. Ways to ensure all season use of the non-motorized infrastructure. What impacts would road maintenance have on a non-motorized pathway (road spray, plow over, dust, rocks, etc.)?</p> <p>Maintaining the Turnagain Arm Trail (soft surface) and impacts to it should be studied. Safe access to existing trailheads should be considered as well as ways to discourage pedestrians from crossing the road to access trails or view wildlife. Users should stay on the side they parked.</p> <p>Maybe the highway lanes need to be separated by a median. Trying to make left turns with heavy traffic is difficult and unsafe. The "Michigan Left" is an alternative to traditional left turns, where right turns are only allowed NO LEFTS, periodically offer U-turn lanes to change direction across the medians.</p> <p>Most importantly, one should be able to travel between Anchorage and Girdwood on a protected hard surface pathway without a motorized vehicle.</p>	Alternatives
2912	38253	<p>I do not support the Safer Seward Highway plan in its current form. There are many, and far less costly, alternatives to improve safety in this corridor. Enhanced enforcement during peak travel times in the summer; increased maintenance to address snow and ice conditions in the winter. The environmental impact of this project is simply unacceptable and I have serious doubts that the cost won't increase substantially. There are also innumerable questions about the veracity of traffic volume studies and the undeniable evidence that building more roads simply invites more traffic, which in turn increases safety risks. It's a vicious and illogical cycle. Please focus your resources on improving vehicle AND pedestrian and recreational traffic without expanding the corridor's footprint, upsetting sensitive environmental areas, or burdening future residents with maintaining an overpriced road that's simply not needed.</p>	Other
2913	38254	<p>Thank you for acknowledging the issues surrounding local access. I live in Indian and frequently experience issues turning off the highway onto Indian Rd. I have been nearly rear-ended multiple times, thankfully there is barely enough space for most cars to swerve into the railroad access area to avoid an accident. My suggestion would be to create a turning lane here, just a southbound lane would suffice. I have not experienced the same issues when turning northbound.</p> <p>Other issues I experience as I commute to Anchorage 3 times a week are the ice falls. Either individuals parking on the side of the road to climb them or and the need to reroute traffic each year due to ice falls melting.</p> <p>One of the biggest safety issues I experienced for many years was pedestrians crossing the road to access the water pipe at mile 109, please do not reopen this. Removing and preventing water collection at this pipe has greatly reduced my concern as a approach this section of the road.</p>	Supportive
2914	38255	Please see my comments attached.	Alternatives
2915	38256	<p>The STIP description of this includes "reduce congestion". As professional engineers the team should not interpret this description as a mandate to create a massive highway expansion. It doesn't take a traffic engineer to realize that much of the slow down is from traffic turning off and on the roadway. It doesn't take an economist to tell you that a \$1,000,000,000 project to solve congestion on summer weekends only is a bad investment. The project team should take serious effort to investigate any and every option to reduce congestion OTHER than lane addition.</p>	Editorial

2916	38257	<p>mile stretch for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recent safety improvements to this stretch of Highway over the last couple of years have greatly improved Highway safety (ie. bridge replacement on Indian Creek along with widening and straightening on both sides of the bridge, turn lane for south bound traffic and warning light installed at Boretide Road).</li> <li>2. Proposed road improvements for the Windy Point to Rainbow Project draft EA should be incorporated and approved in this expanded proposal.</li> <li>3. I would suggest investing road funds to plan, design and construct a freeway through Anchorage as a needed dollar investment for additional road safety.</li> </ol> <p>Recommendations Reduce Speed Limit I recommend a reduced speed limit of 50 mph from Indian Road to MP 118, Rabbit Creek bridge.</p> <p>Maintenance and Operations Safety Improvements MP 118 at the Rabbit Creek Bridge: the southbound on ramp to the Seward Highway has evergreen shrubs that block the sight of oncoming traffic as well as traffic driving south at this on-ramp. These shrubs should be removed or topped to improve sight distance.</p> <p>MP 118 at the Rabbit Creek Bridge: snow plowing on the Rabbit Creek bridge throws snow onto both north and south bound lanes of the Seward Highway. This creates a road hazard and numerous winter accidents have occurred thru the years. There is no reason this should happen. Snow should be removed in a better manner.</p> <p>More Improvements MP 118: More moose signage</p>	Indirect/Cumulative
2917	38258	<p>The Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual section 485 defines Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) as an approach to congestion mitigation that seeks to identify improvements to enhance the capacity of an existing system through better management and operation of existing transportation facilities. TSMO techniques are designed to improve traffic flow, accessibility, and safety.</p> <p>The HPCM also says TSMO strategies are generally low-cost but effective in nature and eliminate the need for major projects.</p> <p>The project team should consider an exclusively TSMO based option to limit the size, capital cost, and maintenance burden as much as possible, in line with USDOT's Fix-it-First mantra.</p>	Editorial
2918	38259	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide a turn lane for McHugh Creek park and add additional space for parking.</li> <li>-Create more parking for trail access at Rainbow.</li> <li>-Expand parking for Falls Creek trail.</li> <li>-Cut back the rock wall that builds up the ice curtain and requires a 2 month detour as it melts.</li> <li>-Decrease the sharper curves, but the other curves are fine.</li> <li>-I am opposed to increasing the speed limit. It should be slower at Bird Creek and Indian.</li> <li>-I am opposed to a "rest-stop" with restrooms along Turnagain Arm.</li> <li>-No more lights along Turnagain Arm.</li> <li>-More signage to indicate places to turn off of the highway.</li> <li>-Keep the reflective guardrail.</li> </ul> <p>I want Turnagain Arm to continue to be the valuable scenic highway that people can enjoy, not a freeway where drivers are driving as fast as they can get away with. There are many recreational and residential areas that are accessed in the project area where people need to turn off the highway, so the speeds need to stay low.</p> <p>Living in Indian, I am sooooo tired of highway construction. What ever is decided, please consider that locals and minimize the impacts of noise and stopping traffic.</p>	Indirect/Cumulative

2919	38260	<p>The Girdwood project as proposed is just a money pit in search of a place to waste it. An extra lane for a few hundred feet for turning into Girdwood from the south or north and for leaving Girdwood to the north is all that is needed. Please revise your plan to safely meet the need. We don't need a full-blown Lower 48 type exit, just safe entry and exit to Girdwood.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	Other
2940	38143	<p>The Safer Seward Highway project website identifies, this is the only road connecting Anchorage with Kenai Peninsula communities, and it is heavily trafficked by residents, visitors, businesses, and industry. The primary goal of this project should be to preserve the integrity of this route in perpetuity for these purposes and needs. The project could ultimately be viewed as successful only if it facilitates continued traffic growth maintaining heavily but also freely trafficked use by residents, visitors, businesses, and industry into the foreseeable future. Misguided planning philosophies which threaten the integrity of this essential highway in other segments running through the Municipality of Anchorage include AMATS Complete Streets Policy and the U.S. DOT Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program. Given the Alaska DOT&amp;PF's newly envisioned TransportationX project delivery approach, I implore the project team to exclude these radical philosophies and planning approaches from this project. As Jarrett Walker writes in his blog, Human Transit, of Jane Jacobs' 1961 book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, This is how attrition of automobiles works. And apart from grand gestures like a freeway removal, it is mostly the work of small, steady work: little increases in friction to cars that subtly shift a balance.</p>	P&N
2941	38143	<p>Freeways and highways are broadly and traditionally recognized as the domain of motorized vehicles, not pedestrians or bicyclists. The notion that bicyclists and pedestrians are entitled to share the traffic lanes, paved shoulders, or any other portion of rights-of-ways within this project corridor is less than rational. This assertion is especially relevant given the fact that this project lies within a DOT&amp;PF Designated Safety Corridor.</p>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2942	38143	<p>A grant request currently active in the Alaska Legislature includes CAPSIS Project 66547. Alaska Trails requests \$1,000,000 of state funds for a project that aims to connect south Anchorage to Girdwood by developing a gap in the Alaska Long Trail. The Project description also states, The Alaska DOT&amp;PF Statewide Transportation Plan (STIP) is starting its community engagement process to re-design the Seward Highway between Potter Marsh and Bird - the MP 98.8 to 118 project. A coalition has formed to advocate for a protected multi-use path the full length of that highway project. This is highly concerning.</p> <p>The project website also identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The Seward Highway between Anchorage and Girdwood is constrained between the steep slopes of the Chugach Mountains and the waters of Turnagain Arm.</li> <li>* These roads are at or near traffic volume capacity</li> <li>* Long term, major road projects are needed to address traffic volume growth.</li> </ul> <p>Given the extreme corridor constraints, the undeniable need for economic growth and that desired growth's obvious connection to increased traffic volume and capacity demand, how could the Alaska DOT&amp;PF possibly ensure it will continue to defend and maintain the integrity of this route while also accommodating recreational facilities like the Alaska Long Trail? This raises the question, what is the Alaska Long Trail? Is it a transportation facility? is it a recreational facility? Is it a park facility?</p>	P&N
2943	38143	<p>Should the Alaska Long Trail successfully establish itself as a legitimate facility within this constrained and essential corridor, what consequences would its creation and existence bring should the Seward Highway need to be widened or realigned in the future. What status and what rights would the facility and facility users of this quasi-public facility be entitled to claim? How might those claims impact the continued use and utility of the Seward Highway? Will the Alaska Long Trail serve to constrain the Seward Highway and Alaska Railroad even more than the mountains of Chugach State Park and the tides of Turnagain Arm? Have you ever tried to build a highway through a park?</p>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway

2944	38143	With Alaska Railroad track realignment being a proposed improvement, I must assume that the Alaska Railroad is a partner in the TransportationX process. Given the same corridor conditions, constraints, and expectations the Alaska Railroad's duties outlined in AS 42.40 make its operational areas equally unsuitable for accommodating sections of the Alaska Long Trail. Accommodating trails within its 200-foot-wide corridor does not support the intent of enacting legislation. The rail cars of the Alaska Railroad should be full of fuel, equipment, materials, and supplies headed north returning to ports and access to markets with loads of Alaska's natural resources. Accommodating obstructions like trails where additional sidings could be constructed become future obstacles.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2945	38143	It is corridors like this essential, critical, and with extreme constraints which demand new legislation to ensure transportation corridors are preserved and utilized to the fullest extent. As it stands now, our critical transportation network is vulnerable to being eroded, degraded, and consumed for use as a grand bicycle park at the hands of a small group of persistently vocal trail advocates.	Legal Issue
2946	38143	For this project, please resist the temptation to submit to the small, steady work. Dedicating a swath of right-of-way twenty miles long for a multi-use path between mileposts 98 and 118 would lead me to question whether the DOT was truly dedicated to the safety of motorists when that same right-of-way could be utilized so many other ways for the benefit of motorized users.	P&N
2947	38143	Also, I should not need to remind the Alaska DOT&PF that the price of ANS Crude now sits at \$70.84 per barrel and the FY24 budget forecast released on December 15, 2022 is based on \$81 per barrel.	Other
2948	38143	In urban areas like Anchorage, where many residential and collector routes offer drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists many route alternatives and more reaction time to avoid each other, the Alaska DOT&PF should consider pursuing and advocating for restrictions on bicycle use focusing on highways and state routes, which often include critical freight corridors. Examples of regulations the Alaska DOT&PF should seriously consider pursuing include:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Prohibiting bicycle access and use within the traffic lanes and paved shoulders of highways</li> <li>* Prohibiting bicycle access and use within the traffic lanes and paved shoulders of non-highway state routes including urban state routes within the Municipality of Anchorage</li> <li>* Creating Far-to-Right, Mandatory Bike Lane, and Mandatory Shoulder Use laws containing suitable provisions to ensure truck and freight traffic are unobstructed along major freight movement routes by bicyclists especially within the municipality of Anchorage.</li> <li>* Requiring bicyclists to use side paths (not merely the side of the roadway) if they are available. This should include sidewalks where they are present, municipalities could be permitted to designate their own speed limits and speed limit traffic enforcement patrols for cyclists utilizing sidewalks in urban and business district areas).</li> <li>* Creating an Impeding Traffic Law for bicyclists who back up traffic on non-residential roadways (kids need a way to get around the neighborhood).</li> <li>* Creating two-abreast riding laws prohibiting such practices for bicyclists.</li> </ul>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2949	38117	I was looking at the project website and noticed a typo, "Transportation" in the header included an "X" at the end	Editorial
2950	38117	This made me think about the Department's website compliance standards (found here< <a href="https://web.dot.state.ak.us/admsvc/webmaster/">https://web.dot.state.ak.us/admsvc/webmaster/</a> >), and I believe your site's banner may be out of compliance. Small detail, I know, but since I noticed, I thought I'd pass it along in case you wanted to know and perhaps review the rest of the site for conformity.	Outreach Process
2951	38122	I support making the Seward Highway safer	Supportive
2952	38122	I also have great concern that the state is going to need to come up with another plan down the Road for Example another connection from the Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage.	P&N
2953	38122	This stretch of the Seward Highway has been getting even dangerous with dozens of rock, snow and huge avalanches happening throughout this corridor.	Other

		<p>This corridor also needs to be widened into a 4 lane road with a grass section being added to divide the road in between.</p> <p>This corridor also needs another road option like a back road option so if the road ever gets closed down for what ever reason people can still get into anchorage. (Comment 2954)</p> <p>I'm not sure what the states plans are for this corridor but it would be nice if the mountain could be cut back significantly allowing room for a regular Highway as well as a continuation of the New Seward interstate/ Freeway. (Comment 2954)</p>	
2954	38122		Alternatives
2956	38122	I hope something can be done so this corridor can be safer and also allow for further expansion of the freeway.	P&N
2957	38123	The times for the public meeting times are not listed on your website. It's at least 3 layers in before you find meeting times. I would recommend adding them to the landing page on the link below and anywhere else the meetings are mentioned with the project website.	Outreach Process
2958	38123	The big "project website" button is not working on the website.	Outreach Process
2959	38124	Two-lane divided highway solves many problems.	Alternatives
2960	38125	<p>This project effects everyone in Anchorage and you have 3 meetings scheduled which most Anchorage bicyclists cant even access, forget about pedestrians!</p> <p>While I was excited about the new vision when I talked to the engineer at the Transportation Fair, the scope of public involvement smacks of the historic inability of DOT to do just about anything well :-)</p> <p>Fix this. Fix it now!</p> <p>This is an historic opportunity to FINALLY do something right. Don't fuck it up.</p>	Outreach Process
2961	38126	Unless DOT actually implements a segregated bicycle highway connecting existing safe bicycle infrastructure in South Anchorage with the Indian to Girdwood bike path not a cent should be spent doing anything for motor vehicles.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2962	38139	I appreciate your recognizing my response though I do not believe you take me seriously.	Outreach Process
2963	38139	I will continue to promote a safer highway without making it another Glenn Highway.	Alternatives
2964	38139	You are stripping Girdwood of the culture it once was..	Social
2965	38151	please have speed reduced to 45 miles an hour in the communities of Indian in Bird Creek	Traffic Design Speed
2966	38152	Extend separated path to Anchorage. It is definitely not safe to bike along the Seward highway.	Extend the Pathway
2967	38152	Provide better separation of the path from the highway. Some areas are WAY too close to the highway and need to be separated by space or chain link fence or some thing. It's really not safe.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2968	38152	<p>Welcome to Indian and Welcome to Bird Creek signs so people know they are driving through a community.</p> <p>It's dangerous to have a neighborhood and a park on opposite sides of the highway. Better separation needed, Reduced speeds, higher fines, etc.</p>	Social
2969	38152	It would be better to have a bridge or some thing bypassing the inlet so people wanting to go to the Kenai Peninsula can do that without endangering the lives of locals along the inlet	Alternatives
2970	38152	<p>Maintain the trail better in winter so it can be used year round. Even if just groomed/compacted for skiing.</p> <p>For trailheads near communities have signs stating slow residential area.</p> <p>More scenic pullouts with more space so people aren't parked along the highway or in the lanes of travel.</p>	Social

2971	38152	I'm not sure how I feel about more lanes. One one hand they seem useful but on the other it just encourages people to drive faster. Even people in Seward say people drive the Seward Highway way too fast. It's safer and better if people just drive 55 unless near residential areas then 35-45.	Traffic Design Speed
2972	38152	Pullout lanes for residential streets onto and off of the highway.  This should be a scenic byway with an alternate route for heavy traffic. Likely won't happen now but should be in the 20 year plan.  If the highway is separated how are people in Bird and Indian supposed to get in and out of town? There would need to be breaks in the separation.	Alternatives
2973	38152	Also most of the trailheads are on the north side so how does that work? People also hate paying for parking so they park in dangerous locations to avoid paying. Consider free parking if you have an AK license plate like CO does. Or an annual parking pass for all trailheads etc that's cheaper for locals.	Social
2974	38152	Lots of people swim and kiak in the inlet but there aren't a lot of good access points.	Social
2975	38152	The rumble strips are really loud near residential areas. Consider alternatives.	Alternatives
2976	38152	Consider lighting the bike path for extended winter use.	Social
2977	38152	The speed limit changes too much from anchorage to Girdwood it's confusing. It should be 55 with a reduced speed zone at Indian and bird. Most people drive 65-75 now and that is not safe.	Traffic Design Speed
2978	38152	There should also be better maintenance of the community roads especially with so many non community people using them to get to trails or using to turn around etc.	Other
2979	38155	Safety should be the number one priority. The safety of communities like Indian and Bird creek should be considered not just highway collisions.  To me a 4 lane separated highway sounds like more people driving faster and not caring what they hit along the way.  I was told at the meeting the goal is to build as fast as possible. I think the goal should be to build a sustainable road that is safer and better for the communities it serves and a 4 lane divided highway is not going to accomplish that. I think this design needs to be carefully considered and planned. There are lots of interim steps that could make the highway safer while the design is developed. If the is project is rushed it may cause more deaths not less. The people of bird creek and Indian deserve to be safe on our roads and trails. Please don't rush a project that could put us and our families even more at risk. Implement measures to make us safer today while designing for our future.	Social
2980	38155	Very likely 4 lanes with a trail is not realistic. Should consider alternating lanes and connecting lanes.	Alternatives
2981	38155	Like that a separated multi use path is being incorporated along the length.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2982	38156	Other considerations are current problems with railroad at pullouts.	Social
2983	38145	Consider separated non-motorized facilities.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2984	38158	the link for the Fact Sheet isn't working: <a href="https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230302_XSC_SHW98-118_PFS_PDFUA.pdf">https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230302_XSC_SHW98-118_PFS_PDFUA.pdf</a>  (404 file not found; I'm using Chrome on Windows 11)	Outreach Process
2985	38158	Could you fix the link or email the document to me directly?	Outreach Process
2986	38158	Thank you for doing this project all at one time - expanding the Windy Corner Project.	P&N
2987	38158	Need: A way to reduce congestion would be to build a safe non -motorized connection for the full length of the road. Many people drive to Indian to start the Bird to Gird trail. This will take a few cars off the road!	P&N
2988	38158	Protecting the Chugach State Park pullouts is critical. This is such a tourism corridor. Building a safe non-motorized connection with an underpass at Potter March and a path all the way to Indian to connect the Bird to Gird is critical. The underpass at Potter Marsh allows cyclists to safely get to Potter Marsh from the Moose Loop Trails.	Social

2987	38159	<p>SAFETY;this should be in red ink.the engineers from outerspace will not allow us a speed reduction based on the fact that we do not have a school in bird creek,missing the fact that we are ALL in school all our lives and we all learned that speed kills long ago.recently the esteemed engineers widened a turn off at steller jay and painted an impossible diagram on the pavement that is supposed to inform you how and where to turn off.preparing for this turn you can feel a shiver crawling up your spine and hope to hell someone will find your will. there are no less than 10 left turns into bird creek going south.lately they've dangled a blinking yellow light over the highway at sawmill road.that's one road and there's no sawmill.in the valley the one widened and painted lane is un-affectionately known as the suicide lane and it's no joke.a lower speed limit would prevent the potential for catastrophes . i personally know people who absolutely will NOT drive the seward highway. there is a lovely and well attended campground on one side of the highway but if you want a potato chip, a bundle of firewood or a newspaper from the little convenience store at the gas station you are required to make a death-defying dash across the only race track going between anchorage and the kenai.TWICE to get back to your sweet campsite.</p>	Social
2988	38159	<p>ALASKAN DRIVERS are known far and wide to be aggressive and rude. perhaps engineers should remember that in their planning. a divided 4 lane highway moved out and away from residential areas is a rational solution.</p> <p>COMMUTER RAIL;my understanding is that monies for commuter rail are ignored in favor of pavement.why can't we have both?not everyone is suited for driving.we already have the world here which the state vigorously encourages. .why not elevate our transportation options to world class status?</p>	Alternatives
2989	38163	<p>3. Maintain the speed limit at a maximum of 55 mph. It does not need to be faster and should not vary between Potter and Bird.</p>	Traffic Design Speed
2990	38163	<p>4. You can never have enough viewpoints and trail access parking. There should be parking at every trailhead, and on the trailhead side of the highway</p>	Social
2991	38163	<p>5. A separated bike path is essential.</p>	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
2992	38163	<p>6. Consider not putting rumble strips anywhere on this corridor.</p> <p>7. No chain link fencing that prevents views from viewpoints! If ARRC wants fencing, let them put it adjacent to their tracks.</p>	Alternatives
2993	38163	<p>1. Build up of winter sand prevents road drainage. Figure out a way to construct guardrails so that they do not impede removal of winter sand.</p> <p>2. Create signage, perhaps artistic, perhaps humorous, that reminds people that the speed limit is 55, not 45, not 65, but 55!</p> <p>3. Add signage proudly stating that this is a National Scenic Highway.</p> <p>And a final comment: Above all else, remember, it is a National Scenic Highway, keep the curves, 55 speed limit, minimize the affect on the landscape.</p>	Alternatives
2994	38168	<p>2) The earlier "Windy Corner" project proposed sourcing significant quantities of construction rock from a quarry to be created from land "traded" (seized) with/from Chugach State Park. No mention of material sources were presented during this open house. There should be an upfront commitment that Chugach Park land will not be considered for sourcing construction material beyond whatever minimal "bycatch" may be obtained while realigning roadways to reduce curve radii. Even then, every effort must be made to leave the resulting rock walls with a natural look, as contrasted with the terrible looking "drilled and blasted" appearance of the massive wall behind the Bird creek parking lot.</p>	Physical
3008	38171	<p>2) Please mitigate noise impacts of the new highway on adjacent Potter Valley neighborhoods. Minimize lighting to preserve winter night skies in that area as well.</p> <p>3) Traffic calming for road along marsh (current New Seward) is required to mitigate speeding (long straight road) and allow safe recreational use.</p> <p>4) Coordinate with ADFG to enhance Marsh habitat (dredging) while equipment is in the area as offset to loss of habitat due to new road placement.</p> <p>5) Create meaningful separation between roads and railroad using water features to discourage persons accessing tracks for viewing/recreation.</p>	Mitigation

3011	38172	There is also no pedestrian path along this corridor. There is times where having a pedestrian path from Anchorage to Girdwood would be nice allowing bicyclists and pedestrians to walk along the corridor without having to worry about traffic.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
3012	38172	The next concern is making the road into a four-lane divided highway, while making this stretch into a four-lane divided highway would be great this route also needs an Alternative route. This corridor if closed can be closed for hours keeping traffic in both directions at a standstill causing traffic to back up all the way to girdwood as well as Anchorage.  This then creates problems for the traffic In Anchorage as you can't get to the last exit depending on how bad traffic gets back up. This also causes traffic problems in girdwood as traffic can't move forcing several streets in girdwood to be blocked.	Alternatives
3013	38172	The state should look at doing an alternative route which is a continuation of the old Seward with a turning lane in the middle to make access to the turnouts easier to access. This would help elevate traffic from being backed up as it would allow for traffic to continue to flow. By doing this the state could add on and off ramps every few miles giving access to the alternate route if necessary.  The state should also look at doing a continuation of the New Seward Highway, making it a four-lane divided highway with on and off ramps in both directions every few miles giving access to and from the freeway to the old Seward Highway from the main road.	Alternatives
3014	38176	It would be awesome and probably expensive to provide a wildlife bridge for the animals to once again gain access to the salty rocks.	Mitigation
3015	38182	Alternatives: All alternatives should have lower speeds, a raised center median, and a multipurpose path.	Alternatives
3016	38182	Issues: Please look at how this amount of public money could be spent elsewhere in the system for a wider impact. DOT has many intersections which were designed to be deadly, how many of those could be improved?	Financing Issues
3017	38182	In general please be a bit more clear in your language for public materials.	Outreach Process
3018	38182	Please provide an analysis of induced demand impacts.	Social
3019	38182	air quality impacts (whether the state requires it or not)	Physical
3020	38182	noise impacts	Physical
3021	38182	Please provide some accounting of how much the proposed expanded facility would require from maintenance and operations and how AKDOT plans to pay for it in the long term.	Financing Issues
3022	38189	Adding more lanes doesn't make any of us safer. In fact studies show that more lanes does not decrease crashes. This project needs to think about more than just the number of cars accommodated per mile. I don't want more people to die in car crashes, but I also don't want more dogs and pedestrians and wildlife to die either. I know it doesn't fit the amount of traffic but this is a scenic byway. It should be treated like a scenic byway with traffic calming and lower speed limits. If the concern is for traffic maybe it's time to construct alternate routes. I'm sure that other scenic byways like the Natchez Trace used to be a busy commuter path (for the time) till it was deemed better as a scenic byway and other routs were created around it. If you do a google search the Seward highway always ranks high in the list of scenic byways. Do we really want to ruin a nationally ranked roadway? See an example here: <a href="https://www.roadandtrack.com/about/g6862/50-most-scenic-drives-across-the-country/?utm_source=google&amp;utm_medium=cpc&amp;utm_campaign=arb_dda_ga_rt_md_pmx_us_urlx_18673621190&amp;gclid=Cj0KQCQjw2v-gBhC1ARisAOQdKY1tdlygn2voYrTlgzwCUxcelKpBRxubT6YuJnPT6zkcT_aJ_EhVxJgaAqUTEALw_wcB">https://www.roadandtrack.com/about/g6862/50-most-scenic-drives-across-the-country/?utm_source=google&amp;utm_medium=cpc&amp;utm_campaign=arb_dda_ga_rt_md_pmx_us_urlx_18673621190&amp;gclid=Cj0KQCQjw2v-gBhC1ARisAOQdKY1tdlygn2voYrTlgzwCUxcelKpBRxubT6YuJnPT6zkcT_aJ_EhVxJgaAqUTEALw_wcB</a>  I understand that there are limitations due to geography but if Norway can build submerged floating bridges to help move people more efficiently while preserving their fiords then I think Alaska can come up with a better idea than more lanes even if they are divided. I know my voice isn't the only voice that matters but as a born and raised Alaskan who is also an Engineer I implore you to please reconsider how you approach this project. Think outside the box. Be creative and please make every effort to make our community safer along with the highway.	Alternatives

3023	38190	Some thing that might be considered as a gesture of goodwill is a covered riding arena near the Bird Valley Trailhead. It could be used as a community space for parties and reunions etc as well as for horse owners in the area. Another consideration is if the bike path is extended possibly making it horse friendly as well with a shoulder part of the path with sand instead of pavement.	Mitigation
3024	38190	the safety measures and considerations made when people think of horses usually makes for a better and safer trails for all.	Alternatives
3025	38191	I am happy that the prospect for creating a safer Seward Highway is moving forward. I have driven that corridor countless times, and each time I have done so, knowing that I am taking my life and the lives of others with me into my hands.	Supportive
3026	38192	I live at mile 100.5 Auriga Rd in Bird..southbound traffic that turns left on Auriga has no turn lane and there is somewhat of a bottleneck there..it's dangerous and I personally have been rear ended at Seward Hwy and Auriga rd. Someone couldn't stop in time and I couldn't turn left due to oncoming traffic. It was minor but a reminder of how dangerous the road is. To remedy I would move the highway down by the water like what was done at Girdwood. The speed limit could then be lowered to 45 on the Old Seward Highway going through Bird Creek.	Alternatives
3027	38200	<p>what evaluation is done to measure 'safety' after safety projects are completed? right now, my mind is on the new seward highway. and i'm asking about injury and death crashes.</p> <p>as background: decades ago, within weeks after a third lane was added southbound on minnesota at the lagoon, with speeds posted at 45? that year, there was a major multicar rear-end pile up in the right lane near the west high off ramp. apparently the cause was windshield glare along with high speed travel. it's possible i could still find the file.</p> <p>as i remember it, the numbers from that pile up greatly overcame the crash statistics that had generated the third lane.</p> <p>so - - what evaluations are done - - random, periodic, any - - after safety projects are completed?</p>	Social
3028	38208	The project team should also consider publishing a preliminary cost/benefit analysis given the project's current estimate and anticipated safety improvements; these cost/benefit ratios should be compared against the State of Alaska Highway Safety Handbook.	Social
3029	38216	The project funding will be a huge challenge as well.	Financing Issues
3030	38216	Alaska residents must determine if this is in fact our highest priority, not use the current governor's. We seem to have great difficult delivering high cost, controversial projects.	Other
3031	38221	The entire ACWR is part of the Anchorage Coastal IBA (Important Bird Area). IBAs are designated and ranked against a rigorous set of scientific criteria and are important tools to conservation. The ACWR stretches from Potter to Woronzof and is a 16-mile refuge of continuous connected habitats that support approximately 220 bird species. Significantly, the narrow stretch of habitat nearest the base of the coastal bluffs with brackish waters and freshwater seeps or ponds, and about 20' up the forested bluff are very important to this diversity. In addition, these habitats are important to birds that live here year-round, migratory birds, and most of the wildlife; voles to snowshoe hares, foxes, coyotes, porcupines, lynx, moose and bears, to name a few. All extent wildlife need these areas to forage, shelter, hunt, hide, breed, and raise young. Wildlife, especially birds, use the full width of the refuge for foraging and migratory staging, but that unique habitat that people who want a trail through this refuge seem to covet, is critically important to the presence of wildlife.	Biological
3032	38221	Do not fill ACWR wetlands or clear native plants, trees, or understory from adjacent important habitats. Clearing of flora leaves wildlife with no place to live. Fill degrades the resource by displacing the water flow that supports the flora upon which wildlife depend.	Biological
3033	38221	To do the best job please work with biologists of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), US Fish and Wildlife, and US Forest Service as well as knowledgeable groups and members of the public for this scoping.	Outreach Process

3034	38221	<p>Potter Marsh is an important part of the ACWR that is inland, separated by the railroad and highway that has become popular not only with Anchorage citizens, but to Alaskans, and visitors from all over the world. It is important to not add to the sediments with construction as the flow from the hillside, both natural and development caused, already make it necessary to dredge specific areas to maintain welcoming habitat for a wide variety of birds, fish, and other wildlife. In recent years a few pairs of sandhill cranes and one pair of trumpeter swans have chosen to breed, nest, and raise their young to fledge to migration. This requires both protecting the ponds, marshes, and fragile soils from being inundated by erosion and intentional fill. It also requires well designed and vetted interpretive signage as upgrades are made, guided by the Potter Marsh Master Interpretive Plan.</p> <p><a href="https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/lands/protectedareas/anchoragecoastal/pdfs/potter_marsh_interp_plan.pdf">https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/lands/protectedareas/anchoragecoastal/pdfs/potter_marsh_interp_plan.pdf</a></p> <p>The road behind Potter Marsh would be a good place to consider a safe multiuse facility for trail users. It would be scenic and high value with the native vegetated bluffs on one side and the greater marsh on the other side. Again, attractive, reasonably sized, well vetted and placed interpretive signage should guide appropriate use of the area. Not only here, but in a number of areas along the project additional parking will be needed. To alleviate some of that stress, perhaps the Municipality or local businesses can plan a shuttle to Potter Marsh from key pick up areas that do have adequate parking.</p>	Social
3035	38221	<p>Investigate all culverts for appropriateness of size and ensure that those failing are replaced to ensure passage for fish and other wildlife as determined germane. ADFG would be lead to connect with for this.</p>	Biological
3036	38221	<p>Work with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) who is responsible for Cook Inlet beluga whales (listed in 2008 under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)). In 2011 the National Marine Fisheries Service designated Critical Habitat Area, as part of the ESA process. Critically endangered the last NOAA estimate is just 279 belugas in 2022, down from the historic abundance estimate of 1300 in 1979. It is important to preserve existing shore, intertidal and adjacent habitats such as creeks, streams, and wetlands, valuable to the ecosystem. Belugas bring their young to the shallow waters of the ACWR observed by FAR citizen scientists during a study that spanned 2008-2012. The 2008-2011 segment of the project was highlighted in Marine Fisheries Review. (Barbara ♦varn♦ Carlson, Sims, Christy, and Brunner, Sylvia DOI: 10.7755/MFR.77.2.7)</p> <p>That project was the Anchorage Coastal Beluga Survey (ACBS). One of FAR's NGO partners in this survey stepped down from participation because their attorneys deemed the Seward Highway along which a number of the projects observation sites were located, was too dangerous to allow participation.</p>	Biological
3037	38221	<p>When considering safety be aware that not only visitors like to slow down and enjoy the views and abundant wildlife, but also local residents. Faster is not always safer. As a triple designated scenic highway (USDA Forest Service Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road) travelers need more safe pullouts and viewing spots on both sides of the road. This allows for those moving more slowly to locate pull outs easily and take in more of the ambiance without slowing traffic. Increasing the number of lanes is not always a good idea and it does not seem like the best idea here. Sometimes increased numbers of lanes only encourage higher speeds, leading to high-speed crashes. Throughout the pandemic there has been increased interest, up even before COVID, in non-motorized travel. Multiuse trails that are separated from the road where possible help safely meet this growing nonmotorized travel and recreational interest. While addressing the many needs that will be considered in this process, identify all the most likely places people may need to cross the highway for access, for reasonable reasons such as street crossings, fishing, trail heads, or other multiuse trail connectivity, and provide safe ways for those accesses. This, too, could funnel use to amenities and most of all prevent tragic accidents.</p>	Social

3038	38222	<p>The project should include landscaping between the vehicular travelled way and the pathway to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-increase non motorist comfort.</li> <li>-reduce vehicular noise (rumble strips)</li> <li>-counteract air quality deterioration because of induced vehicular traffic.</li> <li>-help capture more storm water on site. Trees are excellent green infrastructure.</li> <li>-shield that pathway from snow drifting, reducing maintenance efforts</li> </ul>	Mitigation
3039	38222	The project should consider using a barrier with crash worthy end treatments between the pathway and the roadway so as not to expand the cross sectional width to get the pathway outside the clear zone.	Alternatives
3040	38235	<p>It make sense, at least to me, to protect the roadway for cyclists from Rabbit Creek Road to Indian (where the bike path begins), but I'll also request to also consider improving the surface of the Bird-to-Gird pathway within the scope of the project. There are several frost heave areas and other blacktop degradations at various locations along the entire length of the paved trail, as well as side portions of the trail that have been reclaimed by the encroaching vegetation on both sides of the trail. This occurs particularly between the trail's beginning by the old Arm Pit BBQ joint and the tunnel where the trail switches from the South side of Seward highway to the North side.</p>	Alternatives
3041	38235	The long range request would be to construct a nice wide (physically protected?) shoulder for cyclists to get from Anchorage to both Homer and Seward in relative safety, but I believe this is well beyond the scope of the current project.	Separated Bike/Ped Pathway
3042	38235	I am sure protecting cyclists has been considered already, but thank you for taking the time to engage the public on all matters related to the Seward highway upgrade project. If it is feasible and/or welcomed, I can also offer to do some reasearch myself, to help out, perhaps with what is being done in places like Holland and Denmark to improve traffic calming where cyclists are present on roadways that cater primarily to vehicles.	Other
3043	38242	The project should include reducing VMT as an objective of the project and all alternatives should be designed accordingly.	P&N
3044	38246	The project details suggest that the corridor will exceed capacity in 2027. However, the DOT's forecasts have consistently overestimated the extent of future demand. Can you please comment on the degree to which previous forecasts have been accurate? Why should we expect more vehicular traffic given the declining population in Anchorage? More fundamentally, how can we justify a billion dollar investment to save a few minutes during one month of the year? Can you please calculate the per person costs of the travel time savings? If tourists and residents are unwilling to spend that amount to save a few minutes, why should the state make this investment?	Social
3045	38246	How did the team prioritize this corridor for a safety improvement? True, it is a safety corridor, but there are other high-crash corridors in Anchorage that merit consideration. How did the team prioritize this investment?	P&N
3046	38246	How did the team select the design speed for this corridor? The design speed should not be treated as an apolitical assumption. It is a political choice with profound consequences for project costs. As you know, increasing the design speed will require a much larger clear zone, at great expense. How much wider must the ROW be to accommodate a design speed of 65 mph? Can you please give a rough order of magnitude estimate of the additional cost of this wider ROW?	Traffic Design Speed
3047	38246	As you know, there are two competing philosophies for improving safety. One option, which you propose, is to widen the roadway to be more forgiving. However, this would require considerable expense. A far cheaper and more effective strategy is to keep speeds lower (55 mph) and provide a narrower clear zone. I would like to see enhanced speed enforcement and a narrower clear zone as one of the alternatives for assessment in the environmental review process. If you do not include it, why have you excluded it as an alternative?	Alternatives
3048	38246	Widening a roadway will induce new travel on the corridor. Have the consultants included induced demand in their forecast? How many new miles of travel (and associated carbon emissions) will this project create? I suggest using the SHIFT Calculator from the Rocky Mountain Institute. <a href="https://shift.rmi.org/">https://shift.rmi.org/</a>	Social

3049	38246	It appears that we are making the classic mistake of assuming that federal DOT money is ♦free♦ money, but we know that highway expansions will bring with them new maintenance costs. How will a wider roadway affect long-term maintenance costs? Where will the money for this come from?	Financing Issues
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# Attachment I

## Public Meeting Notice

# ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

## AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Account #: 100579 HDR Alaska, Inc  
2525 C STREET STE 500, ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Order #: W0036297

Cost: \$428.2

STATE OF ALASKA  
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Adam Garrigus being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that she is a representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

02/27/2023

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals.

Signed Adam Garrigus

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 27th day of February 2023.

Lisa McGuire

Notary Public in and for  
The State of Alaska.  
Third Division  
Anchorage, Alaska

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES

2026-08-04

Lisa M. McGuire  
ELECTRONIC NOTARY PUBLIC  
STATE OF ALASKA  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 08-04-2026

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**  
**Project Title: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek**  
**Project No.: Z566310000/OA31034**

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is hosting public meetings for the project that would reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, in the Municipality of Anchorage. This project is an expansion of the previously advanced 4.5-mile project titled, Seward Highway MP 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point and will be referred to as the "Safer Seward Highway" project. The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety and mobility for all corridor users.

Please join us at a public meeting to learn more about the project, ask questions and provide input. The public meeting will be in an open house format held from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at each location. Members from the project team will be present to share information about the project and to listen to your questions and input.

Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
Girdwood Community Center  
250 Eglhoff Dr  
Girdwood, AK 99587

Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy  
Indian, AK 99540

Thursday, March 23, 2023  
Goldenview Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr  
Anchorage, AK 99516

Can't make it to the in-person public meeting? Join us online to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input.

Online Open House: March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023, at [www.safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://www.safersewardhighwayonline.com)

Your comments will help us evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of this project, as well as impacts to historic and cultural resources. Please submit your written comments to the following:

Email: [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)

Website: [www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)

Mail: Safer Seward Highway, c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Comments are requested by April 20, 2023. If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated November 3, 2017, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

It is the policy of the DOT&PF that no one shall be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and State of Alaska funds. To view the full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/tvi\\_statement.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml). To file a complaint, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/cvirts/titlevi.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/cvirts/titlevi.shtml). For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-676-3777.

Pub: Feb. 27, 2023



# Safer Seward Highway

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034

## Online Open House and Public Meeting Notice

### IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS

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#### GIRDWOOD

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

Girdwood Community Center

250 Egloff Dr.

Girdwood, AK 99587



#### INDIAN

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

Valley Bible Chalet

29135 Seward Hwy

Indian, AK 99540



#### ANCHORAGE

**Thursday, March 23, 2023**

Golden View Middle School

15800 Golden View Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99516



### ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

**March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023**

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### SUBMIT A COMMENT & CONTACT US

Submit comments via email, website or mail:



#### EMAIL

[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



#### PHONE

(907) 802-3656



#### US MAIL

Safer Seward Highway

c/o HDR

582 E 36 Ave Ste 500

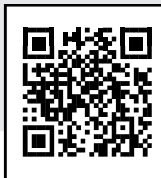
Anchorage, AK 99503



#### PROJECT WEBSITE & INFO

[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)

**Please submit your comments by April 20, 2023.**



**Scan me with your smart phone to visit the project website!**



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*The DOT&PF complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special modifications to participate in this public meeting should contact Katherine Wood, 907-644-2153, or TDD number 711. Requests should be made at least 5 days before the accommodation is needed to make any necessary arrangements.*

# DOT&PF NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING: SEWARD HIGHWAY MP 98.5 TO 118, BIRD FLATS TO RABBIT CREEK

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**Project Title: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek**

**Project No.: Z566310000/0A31034**

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Indian, AK 99540

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Anchorage, AK 99516

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**Attachments, History, Details**

**Attachments**

None

**Revision History**

Created 2/24/2023 1:08:08 PM by morganmillerhdr

**Details**

Department:	Transportation and Public Facilities
Category:	Public Notices
Sub-Category:	
Location(s):	Central Region
Project/Regulation #:	Z566310000/0A31034
Publish Date:	2/27/2023
Archive Date:	3/27/2023
Events/Deadlines:	

# Stocks steady after rough last week

By STAN CROE  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK** — Stocks steadied themselves Monday following Wall Street's worst week since early December. The S&P 500 rose 12.20 points, or 0.3% to 3,982.24 for just its second gain in the last seven days. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 72.17, or 0.2%, to 32,889.09, while the Nasdaq composite climbed 72.04, or 0.6%, to 11,466.98.

Stocks have struggled in February after a strong start to the year as reports have shown inflation and much of the overall economy are staying more resilient than expected. While the strong economic data calms fears that a recession may be imminent, it also has forced Wall Street to raise its forecasts for how high the Federal Reserve will take interest rates and how long it will keep them there.

High rates can drive down inflation, but they also raise the risk of a recession in the future because they slow the economy. They also hurt prices for stocks and other investments.

The heightened expectations for rates have been most evident in the bond market, where yields have shot higher in recent weeks. On Monday, the yield on the 10-year Treasury slunk back a bit, which eased some of the pressure on stocks.

The 10-year Treasury yield dipped to 3.92% from 3.95% late Friday. That yield helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans. The two-year yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, slipped to 4.79% from 4.81%. It's near its highest level since 2007.

Yields eased after a report showed that orders for machinery, aircraft and other long-lasting manufactured goods fell by more

than economists expected in January.

Economists have been expecting more softness in the economy after the Fed jacked up rates last year at the fastest pace in decades. But reports on everything from the job market to spending by consumers to inflation itself have been coming in firmer than expected over the last few weeks.

The fear is that if the economy stays on strong footing, it could feed into upward pressure on inflation. That's why expectations on Wall Street have swung so hard, from earlier thinking the Fed could soon take it easier on interest rates to now believing it could raise them above 5.25%.

The Fed's key overnight rate is now in a range of 4.50% to 4.75%, up from virtually zero at the start of last year.

Even Monday's weaker-than-expected report on durable goods had some underlying strength. After

ignoring transportation-related equipment, orders jumped last month to the biggest gain since March. It was much stronger than the drop that economists expected to see.

Economies around the world have remained more resilient than feared, with China loosening its business-damaging anti-COVID restrictions and Europe avoiding a worst-case energy crisis. That's helped give the U.S. economy support, said Sameer Samana, senior global market strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

He came into this year expecting a recession to hit in the early to middle parts of 2023, which could have encouraged the Fed to cut rates by the end of the year. Given all the strength, though, he now doesn't expect a recession to hit until the second half of the year. That could encourage the Fed to keep hiking rates further as it tries to get inflation

down to its 2% goal. It also likely removes the possibility of rate cuts this year.

Even with the worries about rates going higher than expected, the S&P 500 is still holding onto a gain of 3.7% for the year so far, and shoppers are still continuing to spend at stores. Both can add upward pressure on inflation.

"I'll term it animal spirits, both in markets and consumers," Samana said. "I think there's a lot of speculation still going on in markets" with some of the riskiest bonds and stocks rallying in price. "And for consumers, somehow the consumer has brushed it aside and said it's more difficult for me to consume but I'll keep doing it."

"We can call it persistence or stubbornness, but we've seen it both on the part of copurers and investors. And that's made the Fed's job much harder."

On Wall Street, shares of Union Pacific jumped

10.1% for one of the market's biggest gains after the railroad announced plans to replace its CEO later this year. The company has been under pressure from a hedge fund with a big ownership stake in it.

Most companies have already reported their results for the last three months of 2022, but a couple dozen companies in the S&P 500 are still scheduled to report this week.

"They may offer a window into how well U.S. households are holding up amid higher interest rates and inflation. Advance Auto Parts, Kroger and Target are some of the companies on the schedule for this upcoming week."

Overall, this earnings reporting season has been lackluster. Companies in the S&P 500 are on track to report their first drop in earnings per share from a year earlier since the summer of 2020, according to FactSet.

# 'Dilbert' comic strip makes hasty disappearance

By DAVID BAUSER  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK** — The comic strip "Dilbert" disappeared with lightning speed following recent remarks by creator Scott Adams, but it shouldn't come as a shock to anyone who has followed them both. Adams, who is white, was an outspoken presence on social media long before describing Black people as a "hate group" on YouTube and, to some, "Dilbert" had strayed from its roots as a chronicle of office culture.

The editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, which dumped "Dilbert" last year, said the comic strip "went from being hilarious to being hurtful and mean." The Los Angeles Times, which joined dozens of other newspapers in dropping the comic following last week's remarks, had quietly replaced four of Adams' strips last year.

"He kind of ran out of office jokes and started integrating all this other stuff so after a while, it became hard to distinguish between Scott Adams and 'Dilbert,'" said Mike Peterson, columnist for the industry blog The Daily Cartoonist.

As individual newspapers told readers they were dropping "Dilbert," the company that distributed the strip, Andrews McMeel Universal, said it was severing ties with Adams. By Monday, "Dilbert" was gone from the GoComics site, which also features many top comics such as "Peanuts" and "Calm and Collected." Adams said Monday that the strip, which first appeared in 1989, will only

be available on his subscription service on the Locals platform.

"Dilbert" is effectively dead, Peterson said. Adams said Monday on YouTube that his distributor didn't really have a choice because clients and other cartoonists were mad. "They were just forced into it," he said.

On Twitter, he said his book publisher and book agent had "canceled" him. The Penguin Random House imprint Portfolio said it wouldn't publish Adams' book "Reframe Your Brain" in September, according to the Wall Street Journal. Adams has long been active on Twitter, whose CEO, Elon Musk, was among the few to publicly back him. He also blogs regularly and puts out a regular podcast on YouTube.

He's attracted attention for comments he's made in the past, including saying in 2011 that women are treated differently by society for the same reason as children and the mentally disabled — "it's just easier this way for everyone." He said 2016 GOP presidential candidate Carly Fiorina had an "angry wife face."

Adams became a vocal supporter of former President Donald Trump, saying Trump had a hypnotist's skill in attracting followers. He said that stance cost him money in lost speaker's fees.

He said he lost the prime-time animated "Dilbert" series that ran on UPN for two seasons for "being white" when the network decided to target a Black audience, and that he lost two other corporate jobs

because of his race.

During the Feb. 22 episode of his YouTube podcast "Real Coffee with Scott Adams," he referenced a Rasmussen Reports survey that had asked whether people agreed with the statement "It's OK to be white." Most agreed, but Adams noted that 26% of Black respondents disagreed and others weren't sure.

The Anti-Defamation League said the phrase at the center of the question was popularized as a trolling campaign by members of "chan" — a notorious anonymous message board — and was adopted by some white supremacists. Rasmussen Reports is a conservative polling firm that has used its Twitter account to endorse false and misleading claims about COVID-19 vaccines, elections and the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Adams repeatedly referred to people who are Black as members of a "hate group" or a "racist hate group" and said he would no longer "help Black Americans." On his podcast Monday, he called his "hate group" remark "hyperbole," but continued to defend his advice that white people "get the hell away" from Blacks.

In announcing that "Dilbert" would be cut from the Kansas City Star, the newspaper's community engagement editor, Derek Donovan, said Adams' "antagonistic, childishly macho persona" has been a constant for years.

"It's not cancel culture," editor Richard Green of the Santa Rosa Press Democrat in California said. "It's doing

the right thing."

The Sun Chronicle in Attleboro, Massachusetts, left a blank space Monday where "Dilbert" would normally run and said it would keep it that way through March "as a reminder of the racism that pervades our society."

The San Francisco Chronicle stopped publishing "Dilbert" last October — a move that drew only a handful of complaints. Editor-in-Chief Emilio Garcia-Ruiz said in the newspaper that he had objected to a strip that said in an effort to diversify

workplaces, straight men should pretend to be gay.

In a Sept. 2 "Dilbert" strip, a boss said that traditional performance reviews would be replaced by a "wokeness" score. When an employee complained that could be subjective, the boss said, "That'll cost you two points off your wokeness score, bigot."

In an August strip, the boss said the company was getting into the "pandemic prevention market" and creating demand by unleashing a deadly virus. A Black employee featured

in an Oct. 20 strip noted that his boss ignored his actual accomplishments to recommend him for a job for which he was not qualified. The employee backed down when told it would be a big jump in pay.

Peterson said there are other examples of how Adams' attitudes had replaced the biting humor that Peterson and a legion of middle managers loved. Adams seemed to run out of jokes.

"The strip jumped the shark," he said.

## Safer Seward Highway

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034  
**Online Open House and Public Meeting Notice**

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### IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS

The public meeting will be in an open house format held from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at each location. Members from the project team will be present to share information about the project and to listen to your questions and input.

**GIRDWOOD**  
Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
Girdwood Community Center  
250 Egloff Dr.  
Girdwood, AK 99587

**INDIAN**  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy  
Indian, AK 99540

**ANCHORAGE**  
Thursday, March 23, 2023  
Golden View Middle School  
15800 Golden View Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99516



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**ONLINE OPEN HOUSE**  
March 21, 2023 – April 20, 2023

[www.safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://www.safersewardhighwayonline.com)

Can't make it to the in-person public meeting? Join us online on March 21, 2023 to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input.

---

### SUBMIT A COMMENT & CONTACT US

Submit comments via email, website or mail:

**EMAIL**  
info@safersewardhighway.com

**US MAIL**  
Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**PHONE**  
(907) 802-3656

**PROJECT WEBSITE & INFO**  
[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)

Scan me with your smart phone to visit the project website!




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		8093819	Net 30 days
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		1 of 1	
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01/31		BALANCE FORWARD			-157.46
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		AD CLASS: Legals			
02/28	2700411	Meeting announcement	3x10.5i	1	393.75
		Rory	31.5i	12.50	
		PAGE: A 5 General			
		Legal Affidavit Chrg			10.00
		Ad Class Totals: \$403.75		31.500 Inch	
		Publication Totals: \$403.75			
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# Attachment J

## Public Notice of Intent

# ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

## AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Account #: 100579 HDR Alaska, Inc  
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Order #: W0035636

Cost: \$775

STATE OF ALASKA  
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Lisi Misa being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that she is a representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the afore-said place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

01/25/2023

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals.

Signed Lisi Misa

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 27th day of January 2023.

*Jada L. Nowling*

Notary Public in and for  
The State of Alaska.  
Third Division  
Anchorage, Alaska

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES  
2024-07-14

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BEGIN  
ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
STUDIES AND FLOODPLAIN ENCROACHMENT

**Project Title: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek**  
**Project No.: Z566310000/OA31034**

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327 and is soliciting comments and information on a project that would reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, in the Municipality of Anchorage. This project is an expansion of the previously advanced 4.5-mile project titled, Seward Highway MP 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point and has the same state and federal project numbers. The purpose of the proposed project is to better accommodate traffic flow and address safety concerns.

The beginning of project is located at Latitude 60.949786, Longitude -149.395832 (approximately 2.3 miles south of Bird Creek Campground and Trailhead); and the end of project is roughly located at Latitude 61.087179, Longitude -149.834311 (approximately 0.80 miles north of the Rabbit Creek crossing of the Seward Highway).  
The efforts to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Girdwood and Anchorage began in the early 2000s.

- 2004 – A Categorical Exclusion (CE) was prepared and approved for Seward Highway Safety Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105 to MP 115.
- 2013 – The start of the smaller Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to 107 prompted a reevaluation of the CE.
- 2017 – Public feedback and consultation with the FHWA resulted in the Class of Action being revised to an Environmental Assessment (EA).
- 2020 – DOT&PF extended the project 2.5 miles between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5) to address concerns raised by public and agency comments on the Draft EA for the Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to MP 107.
- 2021 – Public and agency scoping commenced as a part of a new EA for the renamed project, Seward Highway, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5).
- 2022 – DOT&PF extended the project termini to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek (MP 98.5 to 118) to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor, requiring a new NEPA process.

Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

In November 2022, after reviewing public and agency comments, DOT&PF again extended the termini of the project to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor. Therefore, a new NEPA process is required for this project. Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

Proposed improvements may include:

- Construct a divided highway with expansion up to four travel lanes and/or sections of up to four travel lanes
- Realign the highway to flatten curves
- Relocate and realign the Alaska Railroad Corporation's railroad tracks (as needed)
- Construct and/or improve turnouts/parking areas
- Construct acceleration and deceleration lanes
- Construct rock catchments (as needed)
- Construct non-motorized pathways and facilities

Project actions and improvements will be further defined once alternatives are developed and additional public involvement is conducted.

Project activities, such as roadway and railroad realignments and incidental drainage work, may result in longitudinal encroachments into base floodplains adjoining Turnagain Arm and roadside ditches as well as crossing encroachments into the base floodplains adjoining numerous creeks. The project is located on Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map panels 02000051154D, 02000051170D, 02000051190D, 0200051500D, 020051200D, 020051475D, 0200051500D, 0200051482D, 02000511501D and 0200051505D. Base floodplain encroachments are anticipated to be minor, with no net changes to the base flood elevations, therefore they would not result in significant encroachments as defined in 23CFR 650.105(q) and USDOT Order 5650.2(4)(p).

The proposed project would comply with all applicable authorities including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Executive Order-11990 (Wetland Protection); Executive Order-11988 (Floodplain Management); Executive Order-12898 (Environmental Justice); Executive Order 11593 (Historic Preservation); Executive Order 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments); Clean Air Act; Clean Water Act; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; U.S. DOT Act Section 4(f); Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; Endangered Species Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act; and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

Engineering and Environmental Studies will be conducted during summer 2023.

DOT&PF is soliciting comments on the proposed project. Your comments would help us evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of this project, as well as impacts to historic and cultural resources. Please submit your written comments to the following address.

Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager  
DOT&PF Central Region Preliminary Design & Environmental  
P.O. Box 196900  
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900  
Email: [brian.elliott@alaska.gov](mailto:brian.elliott@alaska.gov)

To ensure that all possible factors are considered, please provide written comments to the above address by February 24, 2023. There will be additional opportunities for public comment and participation as this project is developed. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tom Schmid, R.E., Project Manager, at (907) 269-0543 or Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, at (907) 269-0539.

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PUB: 1/25/2023

Jada L. Nowling  
ELECTRONIC NOTARY PUBLIC  
STATE OF ALASKA  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 07/14/2024

## Notice of Intent to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Floodplain Encroachment. Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327 and is soliciting comments and information on a project that would reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, in the Municipality of Anchorage. This project is an expansion of the previously advanced 4.5-mile project titled, Seward Highway MP 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point and has the same state and federal project numbers. The purpose of the proposed project is to implement safety upgrades to decrease high-severity crashes and improve traffic operations to alleviate traffic congestion.

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- 2021 – Public and agency scoping commenced as a part of a new EA for the renamed project, Seward Highway, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5).

In September 2022, after reviewing public and agency comments, DOT&PF again extended the termini of the project to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor. Therefore, a new NEPA process is required for this project. Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

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and 0200051505D. Base floodplain encroachments are anticipated to be minor, with no net changes to the base flood elevations, therefore they would not result in significant encroachments as defined in 23CFR 650.105(q) and USDOT Order 5650.2(4)(p).

The proposed project would comply with all applicable authorities including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Executive Order-11990 (Wetland Protection); Executive Order-11988 (Floodplain Management); Executive Order-12898 (Environmental Justice); Executive Order 11593 (Historic Preservation); Executive Order 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments); Clean Air Act; Clean Water Act; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; U.S. DOT Act Section 4(f); Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; Endangered Species Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act; and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

Engineering and Environmental Studies will be conducted during summer 2023.

DOT&PF is soliciting comments on the proposed project. There will be additional opportunities for public comment and participation as this project is developed. Your comments would help us evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of this project, as well as impacts to historic and cultural resources. Please submit your written comments to the following address.

Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager  
DOT&PF Central Region Preliminary Design & Environmental  
P.O. Box 196900  
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900  
Email: brian.elliott@alaska.gov

To ensure that all possible factors are considered, please provide written comments to the above address by February 24, 2023. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tom Schmid, P.E., Project Manager, at (907) 269-0543 or Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, at (907) 269-0539.

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**Attachments, History, Details**

**Attachments**

None

**Revision History**

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**Details**

Department: Transportation and Public Facilities  
Category: Public Notices  
Sub-Category:  
Location(s): Anchorage, Central Region  
Project/Regulation #: Z566310000/OA31034  
  
Publish Date: 1/24/2023  
Archive Date: 2/24/2023

Events/Deadlines:

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**Notice of Intent to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Floodplain Encroachment.**

Project Title: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
 Project No.: Z566310000/OA31034

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327 and is soliciting comments and information on a project that would reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, in the Municipality of Anchorage. This project is an expansion of the previously advanced 4.5-mile project titled, Seward Highway MP 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point and has the same state and federal project numbers. The purpose of the proposed project is to implement safety upgrades to decrease high-severity crashes and improve traffic operations to alleviate traffic congestion.

The beginning of project is located at Latitude 60.949786, Longitude -149.395832 (approximately 2.3 miles south of Bird Creek Campground and Trailhead); and the end of project is roughly located at Latitude 61.087179, Longitude -149.834311 (approximately 0.80 miles north of the Rabbit Creek crossing of the Seward Highway).

The efforts to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Girdwood and Anchorage began in the early 2000s.

- 2004 - A Categorical Exclusion (CE) was approved by FHWA for Seward Highway Safety Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105 to MP 115.
- 2013 - The start of the smaller Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to 107 prompted a reevaluation of the CE.
- 2017 - Public feedback and consultation with the FHWA resulted in the Class of Action being revised to an Environmental Assessment (EA).
- 2020 - DOT&PF extended the project 2.5 miles between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5) to address concerns raised by public and agency comments on the Draft EA for the Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to MP 107.
- 2021 - Public and agency scoping commenced as a part of a new EA for the renamed project, Seward Highway, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5).

In September 2022, after reviewing public and agency comments, DOT&PF again extended the termini of

the project to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor. Therefore, a new NEPA process is required for this project. Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

Proposed improvements may include:

- Construct a divided highway with expansion up to four travel lanes and/or sections of up to four travel lanes
  - Realign the highway to flatten curves
  - Relocate and realign the Alaska Railroad Corporation's railroad tracks (as needed)
  - Construct and/or improve turnouts/parking areas
  - Construct acceleration and deceleration lanes
  - Construct rock catchments (as needed)
  - Construct non-motorized pathways and facilities
- Project actions and improvements will be further defined once alternatives are developed and additional public and resource agency involvement is conducted.

Project activities, such as roadway and railroad realignments and incidental drainage work, may result in longitudinal encroachments into base floodplains adjoining Turnagain Arm and roadside ditches as well as crossing encroachments into the base floodplains adjoining numerous creeks. The project is located on Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map panels 02000051154D, 02000051170D, 02000051190D, 0200051500D, 020051200D, 0200051475D, 0200051500D, 0200051482D, 02000511501D and 0200051505D. Base floodplain encroachments are anticipated to be minor, with no net changes to the base flood elevations, therefore they would not result in significant encroachments as defined in 23CFR 650.105(g) and USDOT Order 5650.2(4)(p).

The proposed project would comply with all applicable authorities including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Executive Order-11990 (Wetland Protection); Executive Order-11988 (Floodplain Management); Executive Order-12898 (Environmental Justice); Executive Order 11593 (Historic Preservation); Executive Order 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments); Clean Air Act; Clean Water Act; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; U.S. DOT Act Section 4(f); Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; Endangered Species Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act; and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

Engineering and Environmental Studies will be conducted during summer 2023. DOT&PF is soliciting comments on the proposed project. There will be additional opportunities for public comment and participation as this project is developed. Your comments would help us evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of this project, as well as impacts to historic and cultural resources. Please submit your written comments to the following address.

Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager  
 DOT&PF Central Region Preliminary Design & Environmental

P.O. Box 196900

Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Email: brian.elliott@alaska.gov

To ensure that all possible factors are considered, please provide written comments to the above address by February 24, 2023. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tom Schmid, P.E., Project Manager, at (907) 269-0543 or Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, at (907) 269-0539.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated November 3, 2017, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

It is the policy of the DOT&PF that no one shall be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and State of Alaska funds. To view the full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy, go to: dot.alaska.gov/tvi\_statement.shtml. To file a complaint, go to: dot.alaska.gov/cvtrts/titlevi.shtml. For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-676-3777.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
STATE OF ALASKA  
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Before me, the undersigned, a notary public, this day personally appeared, Michael Paschall who, being first duly sworn according to law, says that he represents TriDelta, Incorporated, publisher of the Seward Journal, a newspaper of general circulation published in Seward in said Third Judicial District and State of Alaska, and that the advertisement of which the annexed is a true copy, was published in said newspaper on the following day(s):

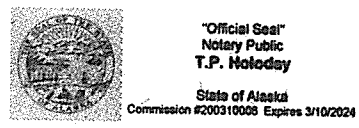
1/25/2023

and that the rate charged is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals, with the usual discounts.

[Signature]  
Michael R. Paschall

Subscribed and sworn before me this 1<sup>ST</sup> day of February, 2023.

[Signature]  
Notary Public in and for the  
State of Alaska  
My commission expires: March 10, 2024



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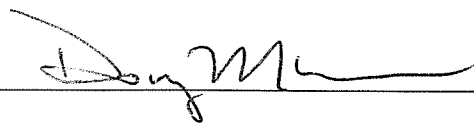
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Doug Munn being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says:

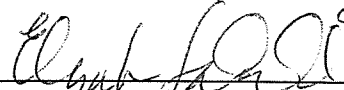
That I am and was at all times here in this affidavit mentions, Supervisor of Legals of the Sound Publishing / Peninsula Clarion, a newspaper of general circulation and published at Kenai, Alaska that the advertisement, a printed copy of which is hereto annexed was published in said paper on the dates listed below:

Notice of Intent  
01/25/23

X 

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN before me on this

13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023.

  
NOTARY PUBLIC in favor for the State of Alaska.

My commission expires 3/6/2024.

Elizabeth A. McDonald  
Notary Public, State of Alaska  
Commission #200306009  
My Commission Expires March 6, 2024

## NOTICE OF INTENT TO BEGIN ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND FLOODPLAIN ENCROACHMENT

Project Title: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project No.: Z566310000/OA31034

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327 and is soliciting comments and information on a project that would reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, in the Municipality of Anchorage. This project is an expansion of the previously advanced 4.5-mile project titled, Seward Highway MP 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point and has the same state and federal project numbers. The purpose of the proposed project is to better accommodate traffic flow and address safety concerns.

The beginning of project is located at Latitude 60.949786, Longitude -149.395832 (approximately 2.3 miles south of Bird Creek Campground and Trailhead); and the end of project is roughly located at Latitude 61.087179, Longitude -149.834311 (approximately 0.80 miles north of the Rabbit Creek crossing of the Seward Highway). The efforts to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Girdwood and Anchorage began in the early 2000s.

- 2004 – A Categorical Exclusion (CE) was prepared and approved for Seward Highway Safety Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105 to MP 115.
- 2013 – The start of the smaller Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to 107 prompted a reevaluation of the CE.
- 2017 – Public feedback and consultation with the FHWA resulted in the Class of Action being revised to an Environmental Assessment (EA).
- 2020 – DOT&PF extended the project 2.5 miles between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5) to address concerns raised by public and agency comments on the Draft EA for the Seward Highway: Windy Corner project, MP 105 to MP 107.
- 2021 – Public and agency scoping commenced as a part of a new EA for the renamed project, Seward Highway, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point (MP 105 to 109.5).
- 2022 – DOT&PF extended the project termini to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek (MP 98.5 to 118) to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor, requiring a new NEPA process.

Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

In November 2022, after reviewing public and agency comments, DOT&PF again extended the termini of the project to encompass 19.5 miles along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek to evaluate solutions for a longer corridor. Therefore, a new NEPA process is required for this project. Public and agency scoping as a part of a new EA is starting now for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

Proposed improvements may include:

- Construct a divided highway with expansion up to four travel lanes and/or sections of up to four travel lanes
- Realign the highway to flatten curves
- Relocate and realign the Alaska Railroad Corporation's railroad tracks (as needed)
- Construct and/or improve turnouts/parking areas
- Construct acceleration and deceleration lanes
- Construct rock catchments (as needed)
- Construct non-motorized pathways and facilities

Project actions and improvements will be further defined once alternatives are developed and additional public involvement is conducted.

Project activities, such as roadway and railroad realignments and incidental drainage work, may result in longitudinal encroachments into base floodplains adjoining Turnagain Arm and roadside ditches as well as crossing encroachments into the base floodplains adjoining numerous creeks. The project is located on Federal Emergency Management Agency



## **Attachment C. Agency Scoping Materials**

*This page is intentionally left blank.*



June 14, 2023

See Distribution List

Re: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
0A31034/Z566310000  
Request for Scoping Comments from Agencies

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) responsibilities under 23 U.S. Code 327, and is soliciting agency comments and information regarding a proposed project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek. The project limits are shown on the location and vicinity map (Figure 1).

This letter requests comments and information related to the proposed project, located within Sections 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, and 23, Township 10 North (N), Range 1 West (W); Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4, Township 10N, Range 2W; Sections 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34, Township 11N, Range 2W; Sections 4, 9, 10, 15, 22, 23, 25, and 26, Township 11N, Range 3W; and Sections 32 and 33, Township 12N, Range 3W, Seward Meridian. The beginning of the project is located at Latitude 60.9511, Longitude -149.4027 (MP 98.5 at Bird Flats); and the end of the project is located at Latitude 61.0871, Longitude -149.8344 (MP 118, north of Potter Marsh, at the intersection/overpass to Rabbit Creek Road).



Figure 1: Project Limits

## Proposed Project History

The current effort to improve safety along the Seward Highway between Girdwood and Anchorage began in the early 2000s. A Categorical Exclusion prepared for Project Z566310000 (Seward Highway Safety

“Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure.”

Improvements, Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105–115) was approved in 2004 and re-evaluated as part of the smaller Seward Highway MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner project, which commenced in 2013. As a result of public feedback and consultation with FHWA, the Class of Action was revised to an environmental assessment (EA) in 2017. The *Seward Highway Route Development Plan Reconnaissance Study* was completed in 2017, which evaluates potential long-term improvements to the corridor and their associated costs to assist with project planning and programming.<sup>1</sup> To produce the draft EA, DOT&PF conducted agency scoping and public involvement in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements. The *Seward Highway: MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner Environmental Assessment*<sup>2</sup> was made available to the public in March 2020.

After reviewing public comments received on the draft Windy Corner EA, DOT&PF extended the project limits 2.5 miles northward, to between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point. Due to the expanded corridor and passage of time, DOT&PF decided rescoping the project was warranted. In spring 2021, public and agency scoping to cover the changed conditions commenced for the renamed project: Seward Highway MP 105–109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point.

Following the 2021 scoping, DOT&PF expanded the project corridor to its current extent and renamed the project: Seward Highway Reconstruction MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek. On January 24, 2023, DOT&PF published a Notice of Intent to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies and Floodplain Encroachment for this project in several newspapers of record. The current project builds upon the prior work efforts and stakeholder feedback received on the draft Windy Corner EA and Seward Highway MP 105–109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point scoping.<sup>3</sup>

The project team intends to collaborate with stakeholders to identify transportation solutions and safety improvements within the project corridor. We are requesting your comments on the:

- draft purpose and need statement,
- proposed project, and
- preliminary environmental research.

Additionally, we would like to know if:

- further analysis is needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project,
- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments by **July 14, 2023**. The project team contact information is provided at the end of this letter.

## Existing Site Conditions and Facilities

The existing Seward Highway within the project corridor is a two-lane, undivided highway designated as an Interstate highway. The highway consists of two 12-foot-wide travel lanes and 8-foot-wide shoulders

---

<sup>1</sup> DOT&PF. 2017. Accessed at <https://safersewardhighway.com/library.html>.

<sup>2</sup> DOT&PF. 2020. *Seward Highway: MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner Environmental Assessment*. Accessed at [https://www.windycorner.info/documents/EA\\_Full\\_Doc.pdf](https://www.windycorner.info/documents/EA_Full_Doc.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> DOWL. 2021. *Seward Highway Windy-Rainbow MP 105–109.5 Scoping Summary Report*. August 2021. Accessed at [https://www.windycorner.info/documents/2021%20Scoping%20Summary%20Final\\_2021-08-31-reduced.pdf](https://www.windycorner.info/documents/2021%20Scoping%20Summary%20Final_2021-08-31-reduced.pdf).

with rumble strips. The posted speed limit is 55 miles per hour (mph), and passing and acceleration/deceleration lanes are limited. The highway is located between the steep slopes of the Chugach Mountains, the Alaska Railroad Corporation's railroad tracks, and the waters of Turnagain Arm. The existing highway does not meet current design standards, including several curves that do not meet the minimum horizontal radius for a 55-mph design speed, insufficient clear zones, lack of access control for the roadway's functional class, lack of passing opportunities, and proximity to rockfall zones.

The Seward Highway is a National/State Scenic Byway and an All-American Road. It provides the only overland access to communities south of Anchorage (e.g., Girdwood, Seward, Kenai Peninsula) and the Alaska Marine Highway System, which stops at Whittier, Seward, and Homer. The highway supports commercial, recreational, and residential traffic. The 2022 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) along the Seward Highway between MPs 100 (Bird) and 117.5 (Potter Marsh) ranged between 7,427 and 9,598 vehicles. However, the highway serves a substantially higher average daily traffic during the summer season, between May and September. The 2022 AADT between June and August ranged between 10,642 and 16,484 vehicles per day, with some days exceeding 22,000 vehicles.<sup>4</sup> The high volumes create congestion, which contribute to safety concerns. High traffic levels cause long traffic queues to form, which, combined with limited passing opportunities, cause drivers to make unsafe passing maneuvers.

Five trailheads to Chugach State Park (CSP) are within this portion of the Seward Highway corridor. Additionally, 15 scenic/parking turnouts provide sightseers the opportunity to pull over and view the Chugach and Kenai Mountains, Turnagain Arm, bore tides, beluga whales, and Dall sheep as well as provide additional access to CSP. The highway connects directly to 11 small, local roads as well as several residential and commercial driveways. The popularity of the corridor, with travelers stopping frequently as well as pulling onto and off the highway at these access points, contributes to the identified congestion and safety needs.

The Seward Highway segment from Anchorage to Girdwood is one of four designated Safety Corridors in Alaska due to an elevated rate of fatal/major injury crashes within the corridor.<sup>5</sup> From 2016 to 2021, 418 crashes occurred within this corridor, averaging 70 crashes per year. During that period, these crashes resulted in 10 fatalities. The Highway Improvement Safety Plan (HSIP) has identified 15 roadside rockfall zones within the proposed project boundaries. Between 2016 and 2021, 14 crashes were associated with rockfall hazards within the proposed project area; however, the rockfall risk increased threefold between MPs 113 and 114 since the November 2018 earthquake. DOT&PF has been cutting back slopes and placing mesh fencing to mitigate rockfall within this area since 2021 under the HSIP.

## Draft Purpose and Need Statement

The purpose of the Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Reconstruction project is to reconstruct this segment of the highway to meet current design standards for a component of the Interstate Highway System and eliminate the current designation as a Highway Safety Corridor. The project purpose can be achieved by improving safety for all users, updating the roadway to current standards, and reducing roadway congestion.

---

<sup>4</sup> HDR. 2023. Existing and Future Traffic Analysis Methodology; DOT&PF. n.d. Alaska Traffic Data: Site 000011410031. Accessed at [https://alaskatraficdata.drakewell.com/sitedashboard.asp?node=AKDOT\\_CCS&cosit=000011410031](https://alaskatraficdata.drakewell.com/sitedashboard.asp?node=AKDOT_CCS&cosit=000011410031) on March 23, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> DOT&PF. n.d. Safety Corridor. Accessed at [https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/safety\\_corridors.shtml](https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/safety_corridors.shtml) on March 23, 2023.

This project intends to address three needs:

1. **Improve Safety.** In 2006, this segment of the Seward Highway was designated as the state’s first Highway Safety Corridor in recognition of the fatal crash rate at that time. Despite additional enforcement presence, community education, and improved signage, segments still have a higher-than-average crash rate and severity. Improvements that reduce the crash rate must be completed to remove the Safety Corridor designation.
2. **Update Roadway to Current Design Standards.** The existing highway does not meet current design standards for its function and traffic levels. The existing highway contains curves, shoulders, guardrail, and clear zones that do not meet current design standards.
3. **Reduce Congestion.** The highway becomes congested, resulting in reduced travel speeds, long platoons (lines) of vehicles, and a degraded level of service. High traffic density (bumper to bumper) and travel speeds well below the currently posted 55-mph limit leads some drivers to make high-risk maneuvers, resulting in increased crashes and fatalities. Local access (intersections and pull-offs) further worsens roadway congestion due to the prevalence of recreational activities within the corridor.

## Proposed Project

DOT&PF is evaluating improvements to mobility and safety for motorized and non-motorized users of the Seward Highway between MPs 98.5 and 118. These improvements are anticipated to include both operational and safety improvements. Improvements may include managing access, incorporating turning and/or acceleration lanes, improving sight distances around curves, or adding travel lanes. Attachment A shows an example cross section of a four-lane divided highway and a separated multi-use pathway. Such upgrades would likely require widening the highway corridor either into the mountainside or toward the marine waters, and may include relocating railroad track sections. Attachment B is series of maps showing the project study area.

Alternative development and analysis will be conducted based on stakeholder input. The project team would appreciate your assistance in identifying resources as well as locations of interest and concern along the existing highway corridor. Please provide your comments regarding resources of specific regulatory or stakeholder interest within the project corridor and vicinity, as well as possible impact avoidance and minimization measures that could be incorporated into the design, no later than **July 14, 2023**.

## Preliminary Environmental Research

The project team conducted research using the most current available data to identify environmental resources within the proposed project vicinity; see Attachment C. We would appreciate your review and comments to supplement our understanding of the existing environment. Information will be used to conduct analyses for this project’s EA. Please provide your comments and recommendations no later than **July 14, 2023**.

## Additional Information

The Project Library page on the project website contains meeting materials, reports, and other pertinent information (available at <https://safersewardhighway.com/library.html>). The Project Library will be updated throughout the planning process as new information becomes available.

Questions and comments concerning the proposed project can be directed to Taylor Horne, Environmental Lead, at (907) 229-7145 or Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com.

Sincerely,

The Safer Seward Highway Team

### Enclosures:

Attachment A: Typical Section

Attachment B: Project Study Area Maps

Attachment C: Preliminary Environmental Research

### Distribution List:

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: James Rypkema, Jason Olds

Alaska Department of Fish and Game: Ben Mulligan, Josh Brekken

Alaska Department of Natural Resources: Ben Corwin, Matthew Wedeking

Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions: Aaron Jongenelen

Alaska Railroad Corporation: Brian Lindamood

Bureau of Indian Affairs: Stuart Hartford

Bureau of Land Management: Tom Sparks

Cook Inlet Region, Inc.: Sophie Minich

Eklutna, Inc.: Kyle Foster

Eklutna Native Village: Faith Rukovishnikoff

Federal Highway Administration: Sandra Garcia-Aline

Knick Tribal Council: Richard Porter, Kevin Toothaker

Municipality of Anchorage: David Whitfield, Elizabeth Appleby

National Marine Fisheries Service: Angela Tallman, Jill Seymour

State Historic Preservation Office: Judy Bittner, Sarah Meitl

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Sara Longan

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Susan Sturges

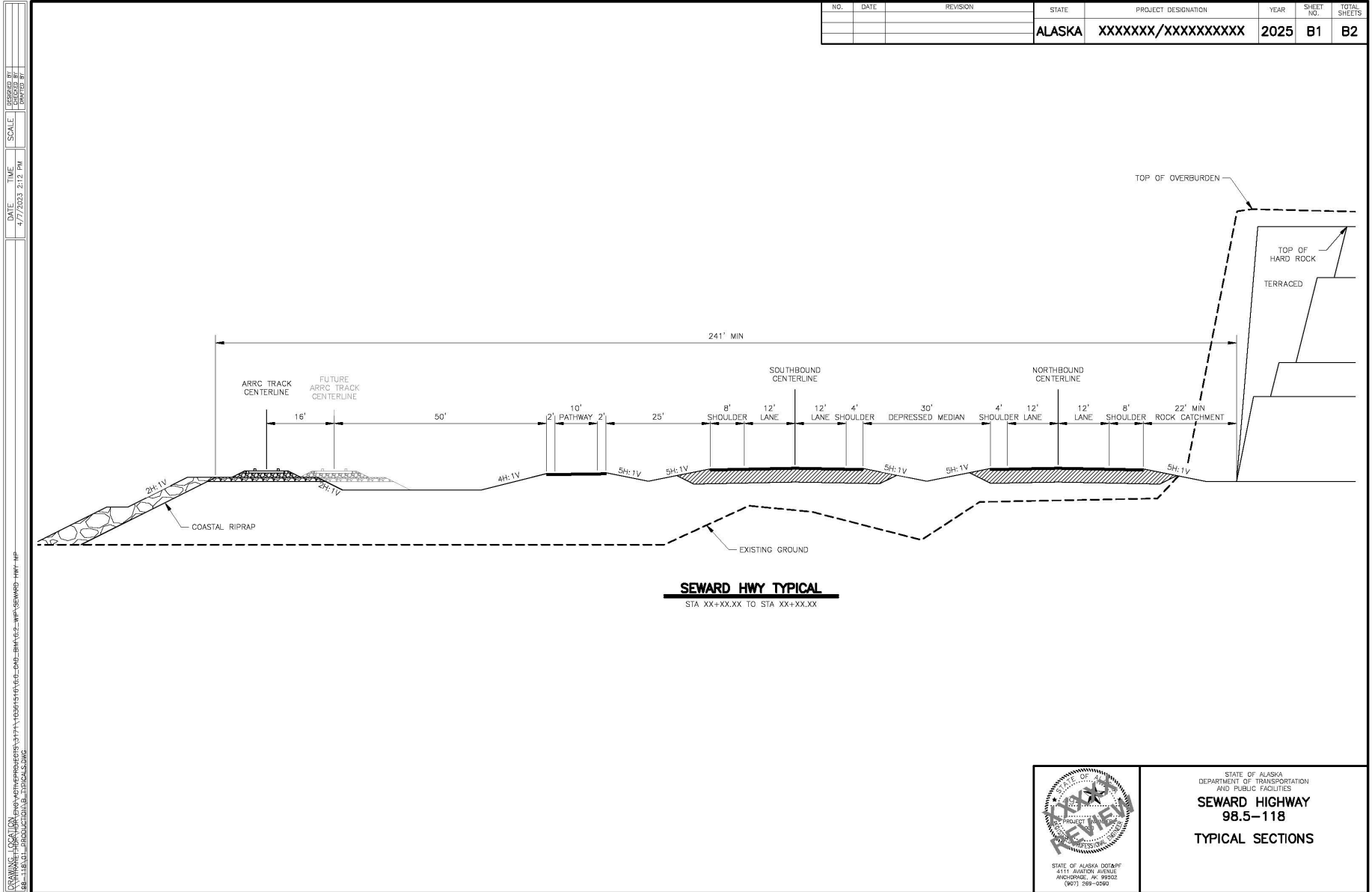
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Sara Boario

U.S. Forest Service: Francisco Sanches, Ruth Damico

U.S. National Parks Service: Elizabeth Bella, Joan Darnell

**Attachment A: Example Typical Section**

NO.	DATE	REVISION	STATE	PROJECT DESIGNATION	YEAR	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
			ALASKA	XXXXXXXX/XXXXXXXXXX	2025	B1	B2



DRAWING: LASCALON\proj\alaska\0A31034\Z566310000\0A31034\_Z566310000\_TYPICALS.DWG  
 DATE: 4/7/2023 2:12 PM  
 SCALE:  
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 CHECKED BY:  
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 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

STATE OF ALASKA  
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 AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

**SEWARD HIGHWAY**  
**98.5-118**

**TYPICAL SECTIONS**

STATE OF ALASKA DOT/DPF  
 4111 AVIATION AVENUE  
 ANCHORAGE, AK 99502  
 (907) 269-0090

### Attachment B: Project Study Area Maps

Attachment B: Project Study Area Map

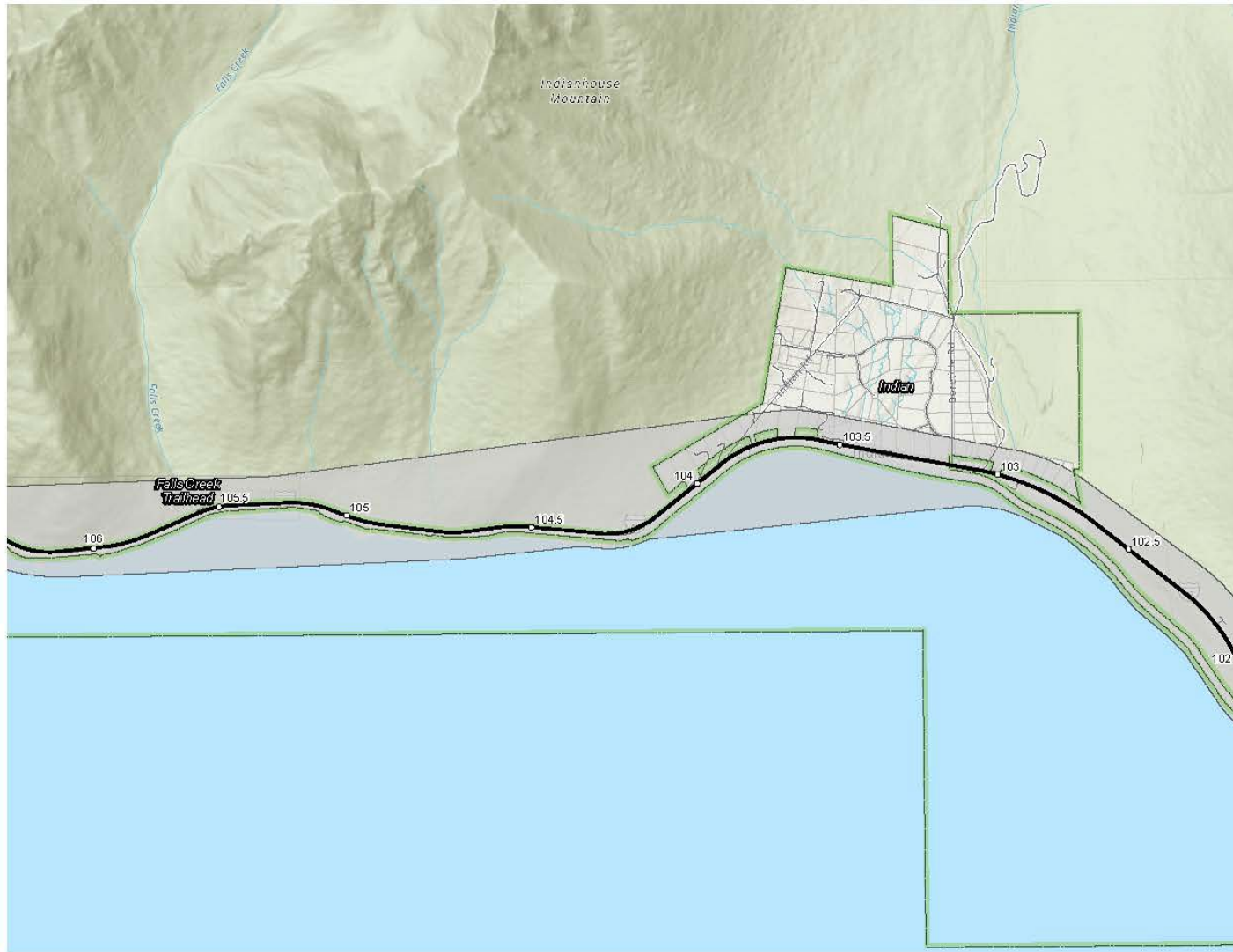


Seward Highway 98.5 - 118 Corridor  
Study Area

- Mileposts
- Existing Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118 Centerline
- Road
- Study Area
- Parcel
- ▭ State Park

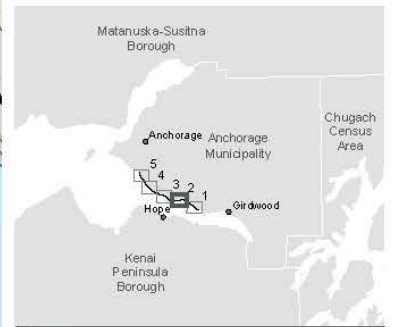


**Attachment B: Project Study Area Map**



**Seward Highway 98.5 - 118 Corridor  
Study Area**

- Mileposts
- Existing Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118 Centerline
- Road
- Study Area
- Parcel
- State Park



0 0.25 mi

Attachment B: Project Study Area Map

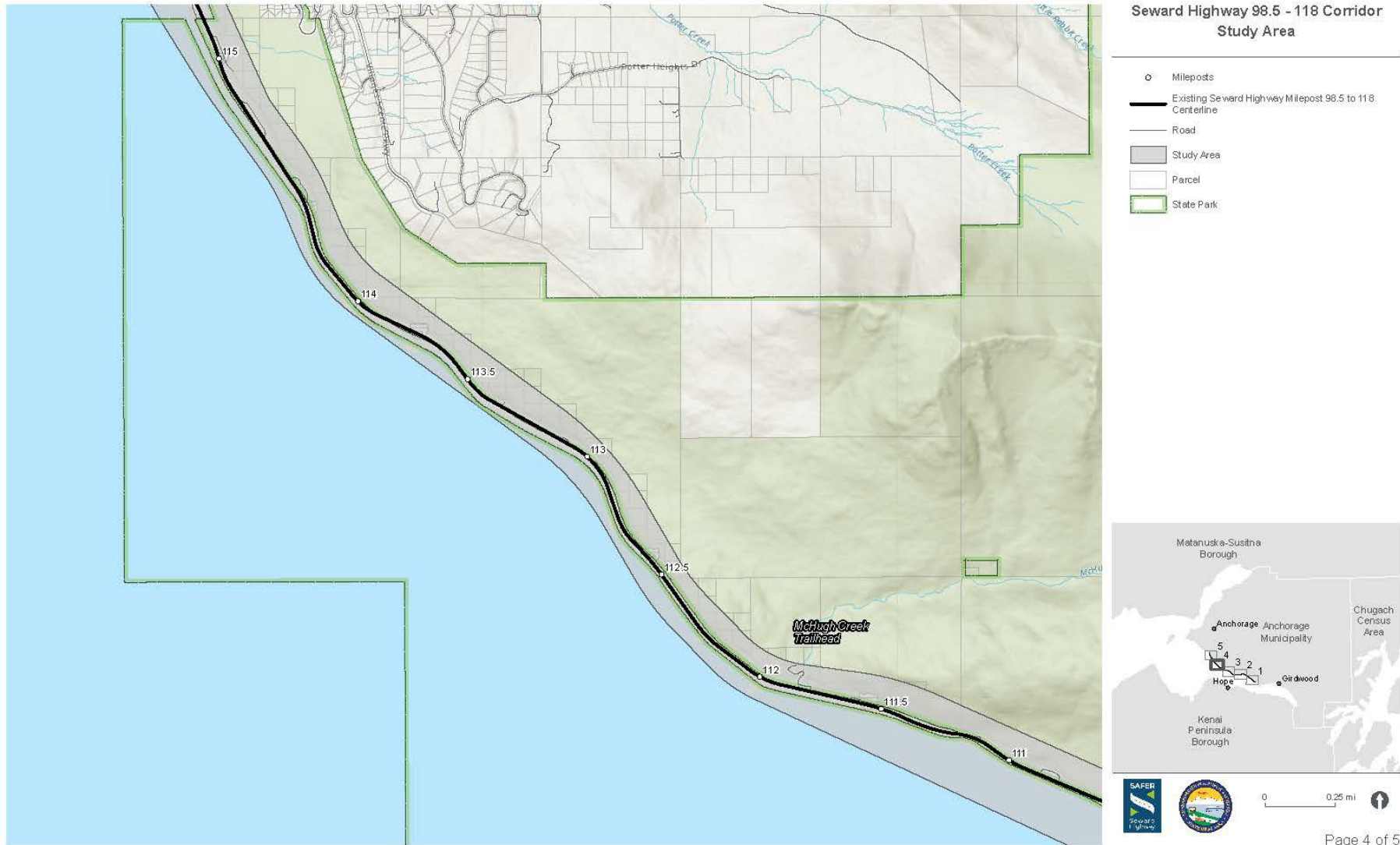


Seward Highway 98.5 - 118 Corridor  
Study Area

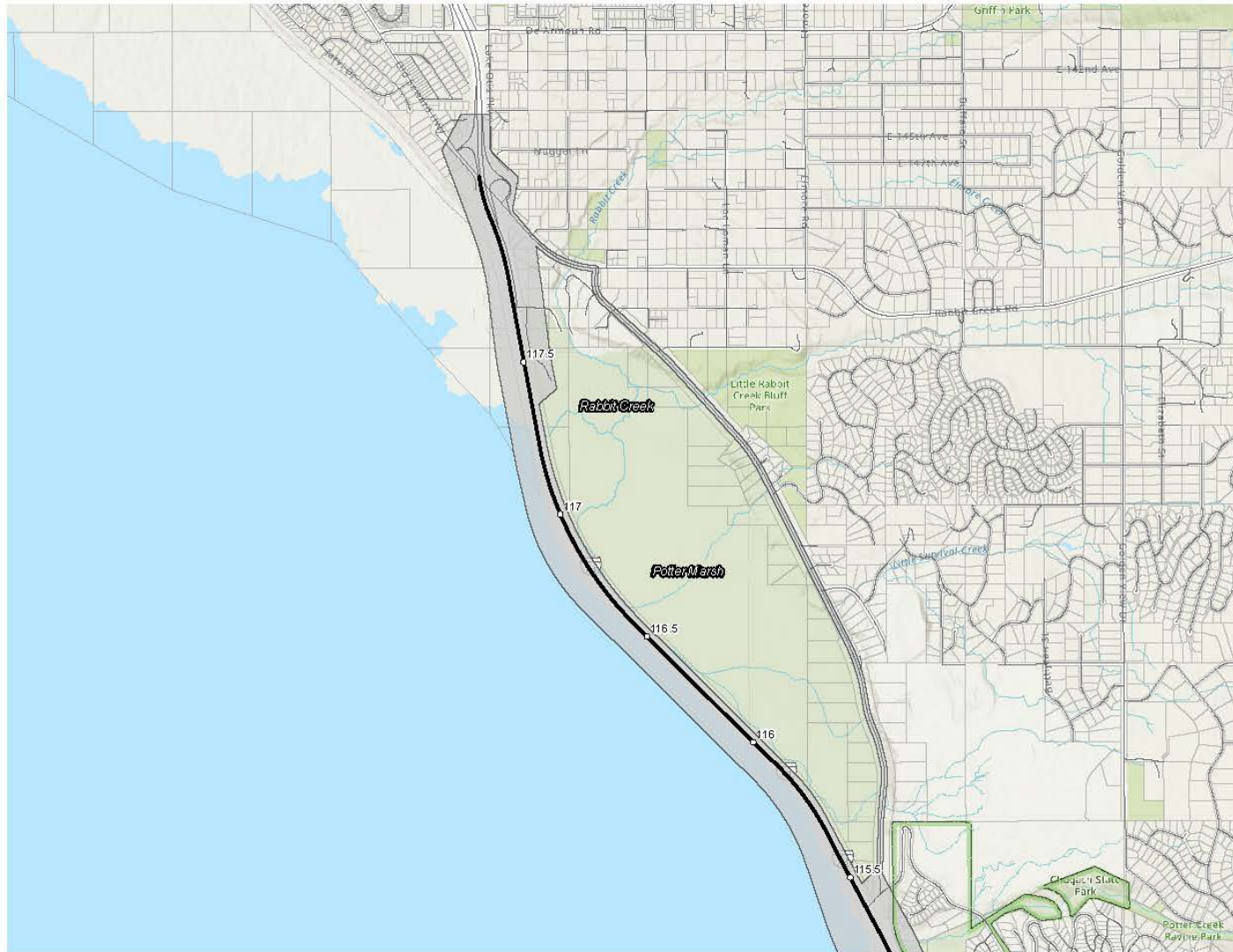
- Mileposts
- Existing Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118 Centerline
- Road
- Study Area
- Parcel
- ▭ State Park



**Attachment B: Project Study Area Map**



**Attachment B: Project Study Area Map**



**Seward Highway 98.5 - 118 Corridor  
Study Area**

- Mileposts
- Existing Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118 Centerline
- Road
- Study Area
- Parcel
- State Park



## **Attachment C**

### **Preliminary Environmental Research**

**Air Quality:** An August 2022 review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s List of Non-attainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants indicated the proposed Seward Highway Milepost (MP) 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project is not within an air quality non-attainment or maintenance area for National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Impacts on air quality during construction of the proposed project are anticipated to be minimal and temporary. No long-term impacts on air quality from the proposed project are anticipated.

**Bald Eagle Nests:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Bald Eagle Nest Sites database was reviewed in August 2022, and one nest record (2002) was identified within 660 feet (652 feet actual) of the Seward Highway along the proposed project corridor at approximately MP 114. Bald eagle nests are present on the northwestern end of Potter Marsh and within the Indian/Bird area. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) will conduct a survey of the proposed project area to determine if active eagle nests occur within the primary (330-foot) or secondary (660-foot) zones of potential alternatives. If an active eagle nest is identified within 660 feet of the proposed project area prior to or during construction, DOT&PF will seek guidance from USFWS regarding how to proceed. With implementation of conservation measures, to be developed in coordination with USFWS, no adverse impacts on bald eagles from the proposed project are anticipated.

**Migratory Birds:** Migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The project area contains areas that may provide nesting, rearing, wintering, and migratory habitat for a variety of water and land birds, most notably where the existing highway bisects the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR) adjacent to Potter Marsh. Vegetation clearing and grubbing would not be permitted within the bird nesting window as described by USFWS for this region, except as allowed by federal, state, and local laws and approved by the Project Engineer. Adverse impacts on migratory birds from the proposed project are not anticipated to occur.

**Contaminated Sites, Spills, and Underground Storage Tanks:** An August 2022 review of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Contaminated Sites Mapper shows one active contaminated site, the Essential 1 Gas Station (Former Shoreside Texaco; File ID 2105.26.001), in Bird Creek approximately 200 feet northeast of the proposed project area. ADEC records indicate residual soil contamination remains at 5 to 42 feet below ground surface, and groundwater contamination occurs at 40 to 50 feet below ground surface. Groundwater continues to be monitored at this location. Due to soil contamination and the depth to groundwater contamination, the likelihood of encountering contamination at this site during project construction appears to be low.

Three additional sites with a status of “clean up complete” are located within the proposed project area: a residence near MP 108 (File ID 2100.38.206), a pipeline leak near MP 102.9 (File ID 2111.38.003), and ACS Indian Substation near MP 103.5 (File ID 2111.38.001). Due to the status of these sites, the likelihood of encountering contamination in these locations during project construction appears to be low. However, ADEC notes in its project files that advanced approval is required from ADEC to transport soil or groundwater from these locations off site.

DOT&PF would coordinate with ADEC regarding contamination at the sites listed above so project design and construction activities can avoid encountering contaminated materials to the greatest extent possible.

**Essential Fish Habitat:** The entirety of Turnagain Arm is designated Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for all five Pacific salmon species, and serves as a migratory corridor for salmon and eulachon; however, it is not considered EFH for any non-salmonid marine fish or shellfish. Additionally, anadromous fish resources and EFH are present in eight streams crossing the proposed project corridor.

Since proposed project work is anticipated within Turnagain Arm and anadromous streams, DOT&PF anticipates consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding work affecting anadromous fish and their EFH. In previous 2003 and 2014 consultations with NMFS for nearby Seward Highway projects, DOT&PF agreed to implement the following conservation measures during construction to minimize impacts on anadromous fish and their habitat:

- In-water construction work would not be conducted between April 1 and June 15 to avoid disturbing out-migrating salmonid fry and smolts.
- In-water and intertidal work would be conducted at low tide, to the extent possible, to reduce sedimentation within the water column.
- All dredge and/or fill material would be free of contaminants prior to placement within the proposed fill area or any off-site location.
- Fill below the high-tide line would be clean shot rock and would be placed when the site is naturally dewatered by lower tide stages.
- During construction, the fill site would be graded to prevent ponding on the fill surface, which could trap fish between high tides.

DOT&PF anticipates the same measures would be applicable to this proposed project. Additionally, a 2001 memorandum of agreement between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and DOT&PF for the design, permitting, and construction of culverts for fish passage sets forth the responsibilities of each agency when culvert-related work is conducted within fish-bearing waters. DOT&PF will coordinate with NMFS and ADF&G regarding impacts on anadromous fish or EFH within the proposed project area.

**Fish-Bearing Streams:** Adult fish use Turnagain Arm as a primary migratory route, returning to spawning streams such as Rabbit, Potter, Indian, and Bird Creeks. The proposed project would cross these and other fish-bearing streams. Since the project proposes work below the ordinary high water of freshwater fish-bearing streams, an ADF&G Fish Habitat Permit is expected to be required at these crossings. DOT&PF would coordinate with ADF&G to ensure construction would follow Fish Habitat Permit stipulations.

**Floodplain Management:** According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps, portions of the project near Potter Marsh, Indian Creek, and Bird Creek are mapped 100-year floodplains. A flood hazard permit is required from the Municipality of Anchorage to place fill material within a FEMA-mapped 100-year floodplain. Most areas of the proposed project between these waters are Zone D areas, with no FEMA-mapped 100-year floodplain and an undetermined flood hazard. Project activities, such as roadway and railroad realignments as well as roadside ditch drainage work, may result in longitudinal encroachments into FEMA-mapped or unmapped base floodplains (100-year floodplains). Bridge and culvert work may result in transverse encroachments into these floodplains. Base floodplain encroachments are anticipated to be minor, with no net changes to the base flood elevations; therefore, they would not result in significant encroachments as defined in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 650.105(q) and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order 5650.2(4)(p).

**Historical, Archaeological, and Cultural Properties:** A preliminary Area of Potential Effects (APE) was established within which to identify cultural resources that may be affected by the proposed project. This preliminary APE has been offset from the existing highway centerline by approximately 550 feet at its narrowest and approximately 1,900 feet at its widest to encompass proposed future alternatives. An additional offset of 500 feet beyond each of the proposed project termini allows for transitions from the project segment to the existing roadway and the placement of guardrail, signs, and/or other roadside hardware that may be required. A review of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey database identified 56 sites within the study area, of which 10 have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), 24 have been determined not eligible for listing in the NRHP, 3 have “other” status (1 of which is pending consultation), and 19 have no determination of NRHP eligibility.

As part of this proposed project, DOT&PF anticipates conducting a cultural resources survey, determinations of NRHP eligibility, and evaluations of effects. If an adverse effect is determined for any NRHP-eligible cultural resource, DOT&PF would work toward developing a memorandum of agreement with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office and other appropriate consulting parties to resolve such adverse effects before proceeding with the proposed project.

**Land Use and Transportation Plans:** The proposed project is #12641 in Alaska’s 2020–2023 Statewide Transportation Implementation Plan and associated Amendment #5. The proposed project appears consistent with relevant policies in the following land use and transportation plans:

- *Statewide Transportation Implementation Plan 2020–2023* (2020)
- *Chugach State Park Management Plan* (2016)
- *Chugach Access Plan* (2010)
- *Chugach State Park Trail Management Plan* (2009) and *List of Recommended Revisions* (2016)
- *Turnagain Arm Comprehensive Plan* (2009)
- *Seward Highway Scenic Corridor Enhancements* (2002)
- *Seward Highway Corridor Partnership Plan* (1998)
- *Municipality of Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan* (1997)
- *Turnagain Arm Management Plan for State Lands* (1994)
- *Interpretive Plan for the Seward Highway Scenic Byway* (1993)
- *Seward Highway Scenic Corridor Plan* (1981)

Chugach State Park (CSP) borders approximately 90 percent of the proposed project corridor on both sides of the highway/railroad right-of-way (ROW), and is zoned as Public Lands and Institutions. The only exceptions are the short stretches of private lands within the communities of Bird, Indian, and Rainbow as well as the private lands north of the weigh station at MP 115. Most of the privately owned land is zoned R-11 Residential, with 35-foot height restrictions on structures and limitations on removing natural vegetation.

The proposed project is expected to be consistent with existing land use plans, and no adverse land use effects are expected to occur as a result of the proposed project.

**Rights-of-Way/Rights of Entry:** Much of the land within the proposed project corridor is owned by the State of Alaska and managed by DOT&PF, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), and the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC).

Generally, the existing transportation corridor consists of a 300-foot-wide highway ROW and a 200-foot-wide ARRC ROW that are each centered on their respective alignments and overlap for the majority of the corridor.

The highway ROW currently consists of land easements and any additional ROW that may have been purchased as part of past projects to allow for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Seward Highway. DOT&PF is allowed to permit utilities within its ROW. The ARRC ROW is exclusive to the railroad's purposes and allows ARRC to construct, operate, and maintain railroad facilities as necessary as well as grant permits for utilities that can be located within its ROW.

A total final ROW corridor width of 500 feet would be optimum along the entire transportation corridor. However, given the limited space within this corridor, the ROWs for the road and railroad would likely continue to overlap. Within areas where the existing rail alignment results in greater separation for a wider highway, the total ROW could be wider.

It is anticipated that the proposed project would require new permanent ROW in some locations to shift, widen, and realign the roadway and railroad facilities. Relinquished ROW could be returned to CSP management as mitigation. Should business or residential relocations be required, DOT&PF would conduct those in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.

DOT&PF anticipates needing Rights of Entry (ROE) agreements with landowners and managers, starting this summer for geotechnical, preliminary design, and environmental analyses of the project study area. Field activities for 2023 may include bathymetric and topographic surveys, geotechnical investigations, and cultural resource surveys. When ROE requests are submitted, they will include details outlining locations, equipment, access routes, and activity durations.

**Section 4(f) Lands:** Section 4(f) refers to the original section within the USDOT Act of 1966 that provided for consideration of park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites during transportation project development. Before approving a project that uses Section 4(f) property, DOT&PF (on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration [FHWA]) must determine that no feasible and prudent alternative exists that avoids the property, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property. Multiple properties afforded protections under Section 4(f) are within the proposed project study area, including CSP, ACWR, and the (historical) Alaska Railroad from Potter to Portage. Additional facilities are anticipated to also qualify, including the “Bird to Gird” multi-use trail, the historic rail building at the southern end of Potter Marsh, and eligible historic properties (i.e., cultural resources eligible for or listed in the NRHP).

DOT&PF will conduct evaluations to identify and characterize Section 4(f) properties; evaluate alternatives; and, if necessary, determine appropriate mitigation measures in cooperation with the 4(f) resources' officials with jurisdiction. If NRHP-listed or eligible properties occur within the proposed project area, efforts will be made to avoid and minimize adverse impacts on these properties and, if necessary, mitigate impacts through the Section 106 and Section 4(f) processes.

**Section 6(f) Lands:** CSP is a Section 6(f) (of the Land and Water Conservation Act) resource, having received Land and Water Conservation Funds to support land acquisition and park improvements. CSP is accessed from numerous trailheads along the proposed project corridor. Roadway widening and realignment is anticipated to result in conversion of parklands that surround the highway on both sides. Any facilities or trailheads that would be affected by the proposed project would be reconstructed such that there would be no long-term, adverse impacts on park access. The Section 6(f) conversion is

anticipated to be fully mitigated through the acquisition of replacement parklands of equal fair market value and usefulness.

**National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, and Wild and Scenic Rivers:** No National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, nor Wild and Scenic Rivers are located within the proposed project area or vicinity.

**National Wildlife Refuges:** No National Wildlife Refuges exist within the proposed project area or vicinity.

**State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries:** The ACWR, which includes Potter Marsh, borders both sides of the Seward Highway/ARRC ROWs between MPs 115.25 and 117.5. As previously described, road widening may require up to 43 acres of the ACWR outside the highway and ARRC ROWs. DOT&PF will coordinate with ADF&G regarding the project's impacts on the ACWR.

**Threatened and Endangered Species:** NMFS listed the Cook Inlet beluga whale (CIBW) distinct population segment (DPS) as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Critical habitat comprising 3,000 square miles and including all Turnagain Arm waters was designated for the CIBW DPS in 2011. Fill placed below Turnagain Arm mean high water would alter or remove CIBW habitat. Additionally, out-of-water blasting of adjacent rock faces may occur at select areas to move the alignment inland.

DOT&PF and FHWA previously prepared a biological assessment (April 2015) covering an action area (MPs 103.5 to 109.5) within the proposed project area and consulted with NMFS in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. This resulted in the following environmental conservation/mitigation measures related to CIBW for blasting noise:

- The contractor would use protected species observers to determine CIBW presence within a designated area surrounding the blast location. Should an observer notice CIBW within the range prior to a blast, blasting activities would be paused until the whales are outside the designated protection zone.
- In-water fill placement would not occur from April 1 to June 15.
- Fill placement would only occur during daylight hours and would be restricted to within 6 hours of low tide (3 hours before and/or after local low tide).
- On-shore blasting would only occur during daylight hours and would be restricted to within 6 hours of low tide (3 hours before and/or after local low tide).
- Blasting activities would not occur at or below the intertidal zone.

DOT&PF anticipates these measures would be applicable during construction of the proposed project. DOT&F will coordinate with NMFS regarding the potential impacts on protected species and their habitat from the proposed project, and anticipates preparing a new or updated biological assessment.

**Water Quality:** A review of ADEC records found one impaired waterbody, Little Rabbit Creek, within the proposed project area. This creek passes through Potter Marsh and crosses the Seward Highway through a series of culverts at approximately MP 117.3. The creek is listed as impaired for fecal coliform bacteria. The proposed project would not contribute additional fecal coliform bacteria to the creek. Temporary water quality degradation from sediment may occur during construction. Impacts from increased turbidity are expected to be temporary and not pose long-term threats to aquatic species adapted to the Turnagain Arm area.

A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan would be developed for the project in compliance with the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit for construction activities. Temporary water

quality impacts would be minimized through implementation of erosion and sedimentation control measures, as outlined in the proposed project's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

**Wetlands and Waters of the United States:** A review of the National Wetlands Inventory found that intertidal estuarine wetlands (exposed and flooded by tides) and subtidal estuarine waters (continuously submerged) of Turnagain Arm comprise the majority of waters of the United States (WOUS) within the proposed project area. These estuarine waters parallel the southwestern side of the highway for the proposed project's length. Additionally, some impounded emergent wetlands are located along the proposed project's length between the roadway embankment and Chugach Mountains. The largest and most prominent of these, located between MPs 115.5 and 118.0, is the 564-acre Potter Marsh. Other scattered emergent, shrub, and forested wetlands are located near the highway opposite Turnagain Arm. These are few and located on the northeastern side of the highway, mostly adjacent to creeks that cross under the highway and empty into Turnagain Arm.

The proposed project is expected to involve the placement of fill into WOUS, including wetlands, to widen and realign the highway.

Impacts on WOUS would require authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures would be proposed, and conditions of the permit would be followed to avoid and minimize impacts on WOUS. For wetland losses that are unavoidable, compensatory mitigation would be provided in accordance with permit conditions.

**Wildlife Habitat:** Terrestrial mammals such as moose, Dall sheep, and brown and black bears have been observed within the proposed project area. These animals either reside atop the steep Turnagain Arm hillside or traverse through the area to other habitats. Some wildlife may avoid the project area during construction activities, but the proposed project is not likely to cause permanent adverse impacts on wildlife.

Previous consultation with ADF&G for other nearby projects has resulted in the following guidelines to be implemented during construction:

- The project alignment would seek to avoid and/or minimize impacts on the important habitat areas identified by ADF&G.
- Blasting would not occur when Dall sheep are present within a designated blast zone.
- Blasting operations would not be allowed from May 10 through July 15 to protect Dall sheep during lambing.
- Observers would be used to monitor Dall sheep within 0.25 mile of the blast location. Blasting would be paused until sheep are more than 0.25 mile from blasting operations.

DOT&PF anticipates these conservation measures would be applicable and adequate to minimize potential impacts on Dall sheep from the proposed project.

**Traffic Noise:** The proposed project is likely to involve the addition of a new through-traffic lane and/or substantially alter the highway alignment as defined in 23 CFR 772. Each of these work activities triggers the need for a traffic noise analysis. Past noise analyses have been completed along the Seward Highway for projects with a similar scope, and noise impacts have generally not been identified. DOT&PF plans to collect noise measurements and use a traffic noise model to identify whether impacts would occur to sensitive land use areas, following the DOT&PF Noise Policy (November 2018).

**Invasive Species:** A review of the University of Alaska Anchorage’s Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse, Invasive Plants Mapper identified numerous invasive plant species within the proposed project vicinity.

Mitigation measures proposed to prevent or minimize the introduction and spread of invasive species include:

- Avoiding the use of listed noxious species for landscaping and erosion control purposes
- Sequencing construction activities to minimize the disturbed area
- Implementing timely seeding of project-disturbed areas with non-invasive species

With the implementation of practicable measures to minimize the introduction or spread of invasive species during construction, the proposed project is expected to result in no substantial invasive species impacts.

**Material Extraction and Disposal Sites:** It is a design goal of the proposed project to avoid and/or minimize the need to extract or dispose material outside the existing and proposed ROW limits. Where practicable, the proposed project would be designed to balance cut and fill operations within ROW limits, leaving minimal to no excess or surplus materials to import from or export to off-site locations. This would minimize extraction or disposal site impacts to resources outside the highway and railroad corridors.

**From:** [Brekken, Josh M \(DFG\)](#)  
**To:** [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**Cc:** [Benkert, Ronald C \(DFG\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
0A31034/Z566310000  
**Date:** Friday, July 14, 2023 10:44:17 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Taylor,

I believe most of these comments are being captured through the working group, but I thought I'd respond here too just the same. The ADF&G submits the following comments related to the Seward Highway Project, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek:

- ADF&G Fish Habitat Permits will be required for any construction or disturbance below ordinary high water and/or mean high water of any fish-bearing waterbody. Depending on the location and degree of impacts, seasonal timing windows for in-water work may be applied.
- There are a few unnamed waterbodies along the route that have not been surveyed for fish. These surveys should be conducted before permitting, or the assumption could be made that fish are present and fish passage provided. I have been talking with Erin Cunningham about this and hope to complete these surveys in early fall.
- Blasting can disturb or have major impacts to big game wildlife. Blasting should not occur within 0.25 miles of big game wildlife, including Dall sheep, black and brown bear, wolverine, moose, and any other large mammals. Bear dens exist within the study area and disturbance should be avoided during winter hibernation (October 1 – May 1). The disturbance of a denning bear is considered a “take” under regulatory definition. If a denning sow with new born cubs is disturbed from their den, it would almost certainly result in the death of the cubs.
- Impacts to the mineral lick at Windy Corner, which is frequented by Dall sheep, should be avoided.
- Moose calving occurs in the study area. If newborns (prior to June 1) are observed where work is occurring, construction activity and noise should be reduced to avoid abandonment/separation issues.
- Negative impacts to Potter Marsh habitat should be avoided, these include placement of fill, increased noise, increased traffic speeds, runoff, and water levels.
- The culverts on Rabbit Creek must be replaced with adequate fish passage structures. Other culverts that are rated as inadequate for fish passage must also be replaced (Potter Creek, Rainbow Creek, culverts west of Bird Point).
- The large ponds on the upstream side of highway between MP 97.5 and MP 99 provide rearing habitat for juvenile salmon. Impacts to these ponds should be avoided and access (adequate fish passage culverts) should be enhanced (see previous comment).
- The McHugh Creek and other trailheads are used by hunters in the fall. It is important to maintain or enhance public access to these trailheads and state lands during the construction process (accommodations made when possible) and post construction. Similar considerations should be given to the ADF&G managed Potter Marsh Wildlife Viewing Boardwalk and Rabbit

Creek Shooting Park and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (duck hunters).

- The project is within the Cook Inlet beluga whale critical habitat. If in-water work occurs, we recommend consultation with NMFS about potential impacts to beluga whales. Shifts in construction timing and activity level may be options to ensure disturbance is limited.
- Harbor seals occur in Turnagain Arm. Although there are no NMFS-mapped harbor seal or sea lion haul outs in the project area, project construction should consider the potential for pinniped interaction and mitigation measures. Harbor seals have been known to swim into Bird Creek during high tides. Much of this shoreline is already impacted by the existing road and the remaining natural coastline habitat should be preserved to protect potential haul out areas.

Thanks.

**Josh Brekken**

Habitat Biologist

Alaska Department of Fish and Game - Habitat

333 Raspberry Road

Anchorage, AK 99518

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**From:** Horne, Taylor <Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 12:31 PM

**To:** Sandra.Garcia-Aline <Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov>; stuart.hartford@bia.gov; tspark <tsparks@blm.gov>; blm\_ak\_afo\_general\_delivery@blm.gov; Angela Tallman - NOAA Affiliate <angela.tallman@noaa.gov>; jill.seymour <jill.seymour@noaa.gov>; NMFS.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov; sara.longan@usace.army.mil; R10-NEPA@epa.gov; sturges.susan@epa.gov; sara\_boario@fws.gov; ak\_fisheries@fws.gov; Sanchez, Francisco -FS <francisco.sanchez@usda.gov>; DAmico, Ruth - FS <ruth.damico@usda.gov>; joan\_darnell@nps.gov; elizabeth\_bella@nps.gov; Brekken, Josh M (DFG) <josh.brekken@alaska.gov>; Mulligan, Benjamin J (DFG) <ben.mulligan@alaska.gov>; DNR, DNR Parks Chugach State Park (DNR sponsored) <csp@alaska.gov>; Corwin, William B (DNR) <ben.corwin@alaska.gov>; Wedeking, Matthew D (DNR) <matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov>; CS.Scoping (DEC sponsored) <CS.Scoping@alaska.gov>; DEC-ICUNIT <DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov>; Rypkema, James (DEC) <james.rypkema@alaska.gov>; Olds, Jason R (DEC) <jason.olds@alaska.gov>; Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <judy.bittner@alaska.gov>; Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <sarah.meitl@alaska.gov>; DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <oha.revcomp@alaska.gov>; aaron.jongelenen@anchorageak.gov; david.whitfield@anchorageak.gov; elizabeth.appleby@anchorageak.gov; sminich@ciri.com; kfoster@eklutnainc.com;

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**Subject:** Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [taylor.horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:taylor.horne@hdrinc.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under 23 U.S. Code 327, and is soliciting agency comments and information regarding a proposed project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

The project team intends to collaborate with stakeholders to identify transportation solutions and safety improvements within the project corridor. We are requesting your comments on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed project, and preliminary environmental research. These are included in the attached scoping documents.

Additionally, we would like to know if:

- further analysis is needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project,
- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments to me by **July 14, 2023**.

Thank you,

**Taylor C. Horne**

*Transportation Environmental and*

*Planning Lead*

**HDR**

582 E. 36<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
4700 Elmores Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

**Taylor C. Horne, Transportation Environmental and Planning Lead**

07/10/2023

HDR

582 E. 36th Ave., Suite 500

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Dear Mr. Horne,

Here are my comment on the Safer Seward Highway project Purpose and Need document:

- Update Roadway to Current Design Standards:
  - The statement “updating the roadway to current design standards” makes it seem like you are only focused on one type of transportation. Instead, it should be more encompassing of all modes of transportation. For example, it could say “update the transportation corridor to current design standards for all users”. When you focus on the word roadway, it seems like you are ignoring the railroad and active transportation users (while active transportation users currently must use the roadway in certain parts, the goal should be to put them on a separate facility and to account for the separate facility that exist from Bird to Girdwood).
  
- Reduce Congestion. Here are some issues:
  - First, what level are you trying to reduce congestion to? Just using reduce congestion is really confusing.
  - Do you have data directly linking congestion with the crashes? If so, that would nice to see how you attributed the crashes with the congestion. It would be something we would need to look at doing within the AMATS are in other places that are heavily congested.
  - How many crashes and fatalities are directly linked to congestion? The document just says some drivers take risks. Quantifying this somewhere would be helpful.
  - Is this reoccurring congestion? Or non-reoccurring congestion?
  - Maybe use “Manage Congestion” instead. This gives you more options to be flexible with whatever design you come up with for the corridor. Reducing congestion is a never-ending cycle, where as managing congestion acknowledges that you will still have some congestion and how you manage it is the key, not eliminating it.
  - The reasons you list under this bullet are all safety specific, which matches up with the project name. How are they not already covered under the improve safety bullet? Bullet 3 and 2 for that matter are just ways you are going to help improve safety and not actually separate bullets for the purpose and need. An example of a purpose and need bullet that isn’t safety specific that will give

more support for this project is “Improve Travel and Tourism – This segment of the Seward highway has become an important transportation resource for the state of Alaska. Every year local residents and tourists use the highway, which is also a scenic highway, as a destination to view, participate, and enjoy the natural parts of Alaska through hiking, biking, animal sightseeing, and traversing through to other destinations.” (Obviously the title and rest should be word smithed to fit in with what you want to say). While this is the Safer Seward Highway project and safety is key, you are so focused on the safety aspect you are ignoring everything else that would be critical to this project.

- If you want to keep reduce congestion, then maybe you could include looking at TSMO and TDM options and say that in the bullet or maybe in the proposed project.
  
- Attachment A – It is a little strange you already have a 4-lane divided highway typical section. Have you already predetermined what you want? Why do you not have a typical section of anything else? When you say, “Alternative development and analysis will be conducted based on stakeholder input.” it makes it seem like you have not developed alternatives and will develop them based on stakeholder input, yet you have an example already. If this attachment is from some other document, like a reconnaissance study, then it might be best to say that in your document. Otherwise, it makes it seem like you have already done alternative development work as part of the this project.
  
- DOT&PF has already submitted a concept report to the MOA as part of the start of the CSS process. I didn’t realize this project was already at this stage. I guess it is not clear to me how far along DOT&PF is in project development based on the stakeholder meeting we just had. There is already a purpose listed with this report. I don’t understand how you can be asking for comments on the purpose and need when you have already submitted it to the MOA. I guess I might need some more help to understand my role on the stakeholder working group to ensure I am providing useful comment to the project team.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you.

*Aaron Jongenelen*

Aaron Jongenelen  
AMATS Coordinator

July 10, 2023

Taylor Horne  
HDR  
582 East 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue, #500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**ENGINEERING**  
**TEL 907.265.3095**  
**FAX 907.265.2638**

RE: Seward Highway MP 98.5-118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
0A31034/Z566310000  
Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Horne:

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (“ARRC”) has reviewed the Request for Agency Scoping Comments letter dated June 14, 2023 from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (“DOT&PF”). As stated in previous meetings regarding this project, ARRC is pleased to see this critical safety project moving forward and we are prepared to work with all parties to bring this challenging project to completion. Based upon our review, we have the following comments to offer:

- The Purpose and Need Statement only mentions highway safety, yet the intent of this project is broader, i.e., to remove the roadway’s designation as a “Highway Safety ***Corridor***” (emphasis added). Most of the safety concerns ARRC has through this narrow corridor are created and/or facilitated nearly exclusively by the Seward Highway itself. The result of the relatively narrow approach to safety proposed in the scoping letter would be to divorce the DOT&PF’s provision of facilities for vehicular access from the safety of their use by others, lawful or otherwise. ARRC is concerned that the burden of wayside public safety associated with the highway facility will be shifted from DOT&PF to its neighbors rather than being addressed directly by the proposed project itself. ARRC would therefore like so see the Purpose and Need Statement amended to consider not only the design of the highway and the associated safety concerns of the traveling public, but also to account for the safety of those who may choose to enjoy the public attractions and facilities throughout the length of the project.
- In reference to “Attachment A”, setting forth a typical cross section of the project, the proposed cross section shows a non-motorized pathway (“Pathway”) located 50-feet from a future ARRC track centerline, with the proposed highway on the opposite side of the Pathway. Although ARRC’s Technical Standards for Roadway, Trail and Utility Facilities in the ARRC Right-of-Way (“Technical Standards”) would generally suggest that 50-feet of separation is adequate, ARRC is concerned that the steep terrain through the corridor, balanced with existing land use and environmental concerns makes the broad application of this separation impracticable throughout most of the length of the project. Thoughtful attention to the premises used in the development of separation requirements may yield a more compact footprint. This was in fact the case for the Windy Corner project where the vertical separation between a vehicular pull-out and over-look and ARRC’s tracks, as well as other considerations, allowed for DOT&PF’s facility to be located more closely to ARRC’s ROW facilities than what is shown in Attachment A. ARRC looks forward to working closely with DOT&PF design staff to find acceptable means to reduce the overall corridor impact where practicable.

- The location of the Pathway shown in Attachment A appears to be within ARRC's railroad right-of-way ("ARRC ROW"). The location of such a pathway is subject to AS 42.40.420, which requires, amongst other things, approval of the presence and location of pathways by ARRC's Board of Directors, fencing and associated maintenance obligations, and indemnity from the owner of the pathway facility. These requirements may affect the ultimate design or location of the Pathway.
- Public access remains a root problem throughout the project corridor. There are multiple opportunities within the corridor for the traveling public to stop their vehicles and enjoy the natural beauty and park facilities along the Seward Highway. However, no facilities exist that allow the public to safely access the shore of Turnagain Arm when the roadway lies to the north of the railroad tracks. If, as part of this project, there remain places for the public to park their vehicles such that access across the tracks is desired, then that access must be grade-separated and provided as part of this project.
- The description of ARRC's right-of-way interest on page C-4 is somewhat vague. ARRC received, when the Alaska Railroad was transferred to ARRC from the federal government, the entire federal interest in a ROW which is generally 200 feet wide, but which may vary from location to location. Under the Alaska Railroad Transfer Act, 45 U.S.C. Sections 1200 et seq. ("ARTA"), ARRC was guaranteed at a minimum, a broad exclusive use easement for railroad, other transportation, and communication and transmission utility purposes, as defined in 45 U.S.C Section 1202. Throughout much of the rail corridor, ARRC has fee title to its ROW, but in all locations, ARRC holds, at a minimum, an ARTA exclusive use easement in its ROW. In addition, the railroad tracks may or may not be centered within any given section of ROW. DOT&PF's interest where the railroad and highway rights-of-ways overlap is spelled out in a Public Facilities Master Agreement between ARRC and DOT&PF relating to DOT&PF's facilities on ARRC's ROW. While this issue might seem to be a mere technicality at this juncture of the project, it may affect some future decisions as the project is developed.

Again, ARRC appreciates DOT&PF's coordination with ARRC with respect to this important project, and we look forward to continuing to work with DOT&PF towards its completion.

Sincerely,



Brian Lindamood, PE, SE  
Vice President, Engineering & Chief Engineer

Cc: Lauren Little, DOT&PF  
Sean Baski, DOT&PF  
Kate Dueber, ARRC  
Andrew Gallagher, ARRC  
Andrew Donovan, ARRC  
Andy Behrend, ARRC  
Bill O'Leary, ARRC

**From:** [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**To:** [mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com](mailto:mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com)  
**Subject:** FW: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
0A31034/Z566310000  
**Date:** Monday, June 26, 2023 2:19:11 PM

---

**Taylor C. Horne**

D 907.644.2172 M 907.229.7145

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**From:** Alimi, Adeyemi S (DEC) <[adeyemi.alimi@alaska.gov](mailto:adeyemi.alimi@alaska.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 26, 2023 11:23 AM  
**To:** Horne, Taylor <[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)>  
**Cc:** Czarnecki, Nick P (DEC) <[nick.czarnecki@alaska.gov](mailto:nick.czarnecki@alaska.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

**CAUTION: [EXTERNAL]** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Taylor Horne,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has requested Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) to comment on the proposed reconstruction and addition of safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek (Project # 0A31034/Z566310000).

1. Further analysis needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project.
2. Regulatory permits and/or clearances required from your agency.
3. Any concerns or issues your agency or organization might have with the proposed project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. The following comments are limited to Air Quality (AQ). Other divisions within ADEC will need to respond within their areas of expertise.

1. Further analysis needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project.

-  
The proposed project is not located in a non-attainment or maintenance area for air quality control under the Clean Air Act. Therefore, it does not require a conformity analysis under the Transportation Conformity Regulations.

2. Regulatory permits and/or clearances required from your agency.

-  
If any of the work involves disposal of organic debris and DOT&PF or their contractor chooses bush burning as a disposal method, they must use “reasonable procedures to minimize adverse environmental effects and limit the amount of smoke generated.” Also, they must apply for applicable permits. A complete description of the open burn information, including policies, can be found at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/air/air-permit/open-burn-info/>

3. Any concerns or issues your agency or organization might have with the proposed project.

Any construction activities should follow all reasonable precautions in accordance with 18 AAC 50.045(d) to prevent particulate matter from being emitted into the ambient air. Also, DOT&PF should use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to mitigate any potential dust issues during the project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Adeyemi Alimi (Yemi)  
State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Air Quality  
Air Non-Point Mobile Sources Section  
[adeyemi.alimi@alaska.gov](mailto:adeyemi.alimi@alaska.gov)  
(907) 269-6953

---

**From:** Horne, Taylor <[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 12:31 PM  
**To:** Sandra.Garcia-Aline <[Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov](mailto:Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov)>; [stuart.hartford@bia.gov](mailto:stuart.hartford@bia.gov); [tsparks@blm.gov](mailto:tsparks@blm.gov); [blm\\_ak\\_afo\\_general\\_delivery@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ak_afo_general_delivery@blm.gov); Angela Tallman - NOAA Affiliate <[angela.tallman@noaa.gov](mailto:angela.tallman@noaa.gov)>; [jill.seymour@noaa.gov](mailto:jill.seymour@noaa.gov); [NMFS.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov); [sara.longan@usace.army.mil](mailto:sara.longan@usace.army.mil); [R10-NEPA@epa.gov](mailto:R10-NEPA@epa.gov); [sturges.susan@epa.gov](mailto:sturges.susan@epa.gov); [sara\\_boario@fws.gov](mailto:sara_boario@fws.gov); [ak\\_fisheries@fws.gov](mailto:ak_fisheries@fws.gov); Sanchez, Francisco -FS <[francisco.sanchez@usda.gov](mailto:francisco.sanchez@usda.gov)>; DAmico, Ruth - FS <[ruth.damico@usda.gov](mailto:ruth.damico@usda.gov)>; [joan\\_darnell@nps.gov](mailto:joan_darnell@nps.gov); [elizabeth\\_bella@nps.gov](mailto:elizabeth_bella@nps.gov); Brekken, Josh M (DFG) <[josh.brekken@alaska.gov](mailto:josh.brekken@alaska.gov)>; Mulligan, Benjamin J (DFG) <[ben.mulligan@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.mulligan@alaska.gov)>; DNR, DNR Parks Chugach State Park (DNR sponsored) <[csp@alaska.gov](mailto:csp@alaska.gov)>; Corwin, William B (DNR) <[ben.corwin@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.corwin@alaska.gov)>; Wedeking, Matthew D (DNR) <[matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov](mailto:matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov)>; CS.Scoping (DEC sponsored) <[CS.Scoping@alaska.gov](mailto:CS.Scoping@alaska.gov)>; DEC-ICUNIT <[DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov](mailto:DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov)>; Rypkema, James (DEC) <[james.rypkema@alaska.gov](mailto:james.rypkema@alaska.gov)>; Olds, Jason R (DEC) <[jason.olds@alaska.gov](mailto:jason.olds@alaska.gov)>; Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <[judy.bittner@alaska.gov](mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov)>; Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <[sarah.meitl@alaska.gov](mailto:sarah.meitl@alaska.gov)>; DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <[oha.revcomp@alaska.gov](mailto:oha.revcomp@alaska.gov)>; [aaron.jongelenen@anchorageak.gov](mailto:aaron.jongelenen@anchorageak.gov); [david.whitfield@anchorageak.gov](mailto:david.whitfield@anchorageak.gov); [elizabeth.appleby@anchorageak.gov](mailto:elizabeth.appleby@anchorageak.gov); [sminich@ciri.com](mailto:sminich@ciri.com); [kfoster@eklutnainc.com](mailto:kfoster@eklutnainc.com); [rporter@kniktribe.org](mailto:rporter@kniktribe.org); [ktoothaker@kniktribe.org](mailto:ktoothaker@kniktribe.org); [faithr@eklutna.org](mailto:faithr@eklutna.org); [lindamoodb@akrr.com](mailto:lindamoodb@akrr.com)>

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**Subject:** Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

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Hello,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under 23 U.S. Code 327, and is soliciting agency comments and information regarding a proposed project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

The project team intends to collaborate with stakeholders to identify transportation solutions and safety improvements within the project corridor. We are requesting your comments on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed project, and preliminary environmental research. These are included in the attached scoping documents.

Additionally, we would like to know if:

- further analysis is needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project,
- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments to me by **July 14, 2023**.

Thank you,

**Taylor C. Horne**

*Transportation Environmental and  
Planning Lead*

**HDR**

582 E. 36<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500  
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**From:** [Wilburn, Dawn M \(DEC\)](#)  
**To:** [Mendivil, Gary A \(DEC\)](#); [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**Cc:** [CS.Scoping \(DEC sponsored\)](#); [Krebs-Barsis, Lisa K \(DEC\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 10:43:15 AM  
**Attachments:** [Essential1.pdf](#)

---

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Hello,

The attached file shows the approximate location of soil contamination (red circle) at the site and water flow direction (blue arrows). Depth of soil contamination extends to approximately 40 feet and groundwater contamination to 50 feet. If project activities were to impact the contaminated groundwater or soil, a waste management plan would need to be filed with DEC.

Please let me know if you have any further questions,

Dawn Wilburn  
Contaminated Sites Program  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
43335 Kalifornsy Beach Rd, Suite 11  
Soldotna, Ak 99669  
907-262-8200

---

**From:** Horne, Taylor <[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 12:31 PM  
**To:** Sandra.Garcia-Aline <[Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov](mailto:Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov)>; [stuart.hartford@bia.gov](mailto:stuart.hartford@bia.gov); [tsparks@blm.gov](mailto:tsparks@blm.gov); [blm\\_ak\\_afo\\_general\\_delivery@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ak_afo_general_delivery@blm.gov); Angela Tallman - NOAA Affiliate <[angela.tallman@noaa.gov](mailto:angela.tallman@noaa.gov)>; [jill.seymour@noaa.gov](mailto:jill.seymour@noaa.gov); [NMFS.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov); [sara.longan@usace.army.mil](mailto:sara.longan@usace.army.mil); [R10-NEPA@epa.gov](mailto:R10-NEPA@epa.gov); [sturges.susan@epa.gov](mailto:sturges.susan@epa.gov); [sara\\_boario@fws.gov](mailto:sara_boario@fws.gov); [ak\\_fisheries@fws.gov](mailto:ak_fisheries@fws.gov); Sanchez, Francisco -FS <[francisco.sanchez@usda.gov](mailto:francisco.sanchez@usda.gov)>; DAmico, Ruth - FS <[ruth.damico@usda.gov](mailto:ruth.damico@usda.gov)>; [joan\\_darnell@nps.gov](mailto:joan_darnell@nps.gov); [elizabeth\\_bella@nps.gov](mailto:elizabeth_bella@nps.gov); Brekken, Josh M (DFG) <[josh.brekken@alaska.gov](mailto:josh.brekken@alaska.gov)>; Mulligan, Benjamin J (DFG) <[ben.mulligan@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.mulligan@alaska.gov)>; DNR, DNR Parks Chugach State Park (DNR sponsored) <[csp@alaska.gov](mailto:csp@alaska.gov)>; Corwin, William B (DNR) <[ben.corwin@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.corwin@alaska.gov)>; Wedeking, Matthew D (DNR) <[matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov](mailto:matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov)>; CS.Scoping (DEC sponsored) <[CS.Scoping@alaska.gov](mailto:CS.Scoping@alaska.gov)>; DEC-ICUNIT <[DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov](mailto:DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov)>; Rypkema, James (DEC) <[james.rypkema@alaska.gov](mailto:james.rypkema@alaska.gov)>; Olds, Jason R (DEC) <[jason.olds@alaska.gov](mailto:jason.olds@alaska.gov)>; Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <[judy.bittner@alaska.gov](mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov)>; Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <[sarah.meitl@alaska.gov](mailto:sarah.meitl@alaska.gov)>; DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <[oha.revcomp@alaska.gov](mailto:oha.revcomp@alaska.gov)>;

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**Cc:** Baski, Sean M (DOT) <[sean.baski@alaska.gov](mailto:sean.baski@alaska.gov)>; Little, Lauren M (DOT) <[lauren.little@alaska.gov](mailto:lauren.little@alaska.gov)>;  
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Miller, Morgan <[Morgan.Miller@hdrinc.com](mailto:Morgan.Miller@hdrinc.com)>; McKee, Edith <[Edith.McKee@hdrinc.com](mailto:Edith.McKee@hdrinc.com)>; Elliott,  
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**Subject:** Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

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Hello,

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- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments to me by **July 14, 2023**.

Thank you,

**Taylor C. Horne**

*Transportation Environmental and  
Planning Lead*

**HDR**

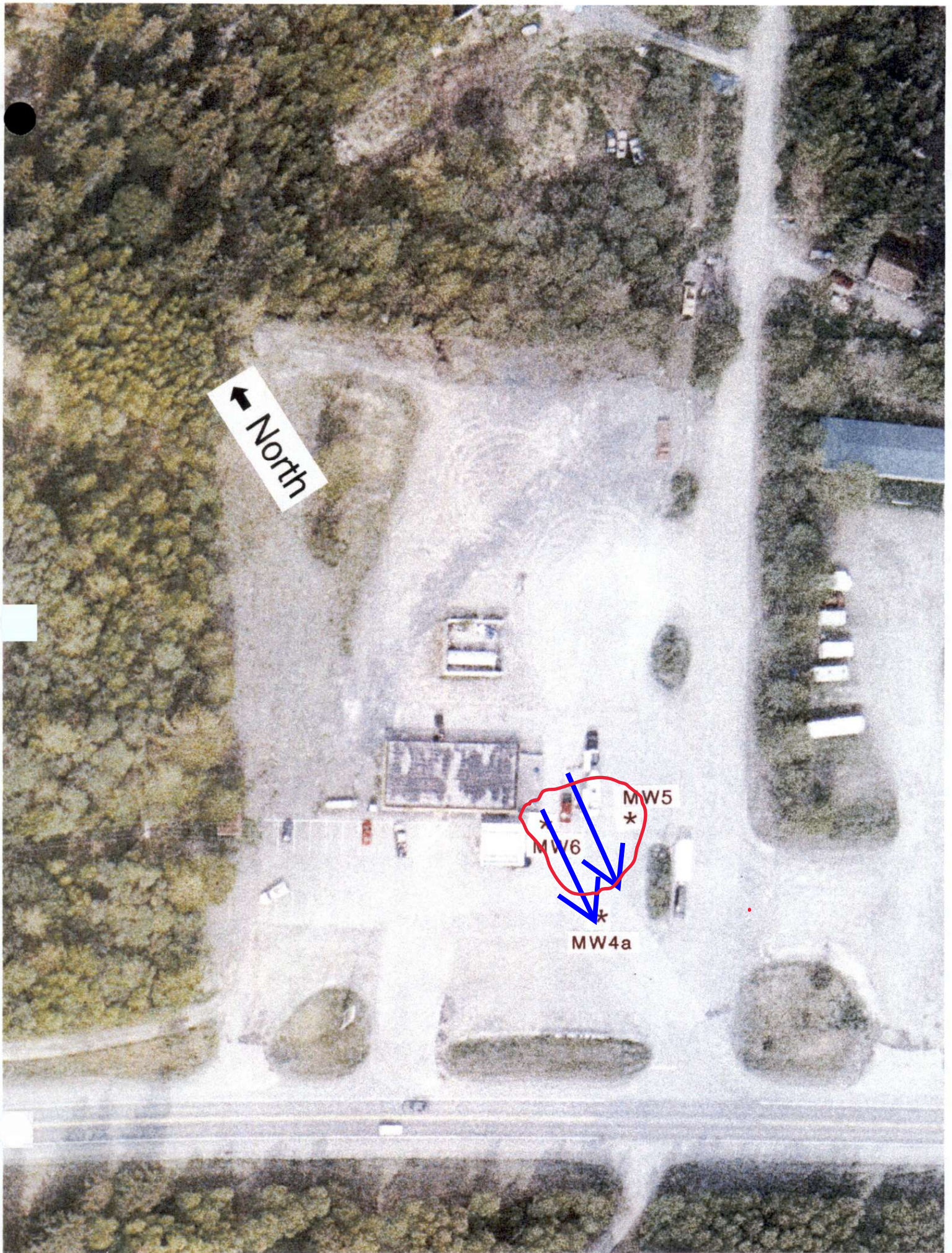
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← North

MW5  
\*  
MW6  
\*  
\*  
MW4a

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) Comments for Agency Scoping Seward Hwy Project MP 98.5-118

- Goes right through the Chugach State Park (CSP); will have a large impact on the park.
  - Will need more information on the plans to provide more accurate information.
  - Request that DPOR be at the table during the project planning process.
- Regarding sensitive sites:
  - Request relocation of the Potter Section House – turn into a walk-in building/museum like it was intended to be.
  - Create a new Head Quarters for CSP; new shop/compound in a new location.
  - Important to have access to the water for recreational use and also emergency access.
  - Windy Corner – mineral lick – important for Dall Sheep (assuming ADF&G will speak to this)
  - Encourage building the pedestrian overpass at Beluga Pt since the RR is likely to be moved as a result of this project. The public access the point across the RR tracks and this area has been identified by the NTSB as a safety issue.
- Park Facilities:
  - Request that every trailhead (TH) affected by the project receive upgraded facilities – new pavement, toilets, kiosks.
    - Bird Crk Campground – need power and water to host site, needs to be paved.
  - For park access/parking lots affected that do not currently have facilities – request facilities be put in – especially a toilet so fees can be collected.
  - Turning lanes to provide access to park trailheads/facilities.
    - Turning lanes that allow cross traffic flow – don't want visitors to have to drive miles in the opposite direction just to turn around and drive back to get access to a park area.
- Other:
  - Material sites are reclaimed; can be turned into a parking area to benefit the park and users. Must be able to be managed by DPOR safety and charge fees; don't want these areas to become a nuisance (a spot for derelict vehicles, etc.) Good example is the Bird Crk Material Site that was converted into a parking area.
  - Paved bike path extending the entire project area.
  - Will the speed limit be increased to 65 mph under the new project?
  - How much land will the park loose to this project?
    - Need better plans to make an accurate assessment of DPOR lands impacted.
    - Most of CSP is covered under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) which has certain requirements. Any site improvements are not counted toward LWCF replacement value. Only land value (monetary and recreational) counts in a conversion. UASFLA appraised value of replacement property(ies) must be equal or greater than appraised value of land taken/converted/removed from LWCF protection. Recreational value of proposed replacement land must also be of equal or greater value.

**Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** Since 1967, the State of Alaska Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation has used 16 LWCF grants to develop and improve areas in Chugach State Park (CSP). As such, CSP is protected in perpetuity for public outdoor recreation, per the federal LWCF Act of 1965. Any permanent use of land for purposes other than public outdoor recreation (such as for widening a major highway) would constitute a conversion which would need to be formally processed between the State and the National Park Service, Dept of the Interior. Among many other requirements, suitable land would need to be presented to replace any taken or converted.

**Existing facilities:**

- Chugach State Park Headquarters & Ranger Station
- Potter Trailhead
- McHugh Creek Trailhead
- Beluga Point Trailhead
- Rainbow Trailhead
- Windy Corner Trailhead
- Falls Creek Trailhead
- Indian Ballfield
- Bird Ridge Trailhead
- Bird Creek Fishing Access
- Bird Creek Overflow Campground and Parking Area
- Bird Creek Campground

**Proposed Facility upgrades:**

- New Headquarters facility and ranger station
- Return Section House to museum status
- Potter Creek Trailhead
  - Facility upgrades
  - New latrine
- Picnic Rock Scenic Overlook
- Separated paved bike path
- Access to popular rock climbing sites; Grunge Wall, Crack-in-the-woods, Pivot Point
- McHugh Creek
  - New latrines
  - Picnic pavilions & associated facilities
  - Trailhead upgrades
  - Latrine upgrades
- Beluga Point
  - ADA access
  - Establish viewing area
- Rainbow Trailhead
  - Latrine
  - Kiosk
- Windy Corner

- Create a dedicated paved parking area with latrine and kiosk
- Falls Creek Trailhead
  - Expand parking
  - Establish latrine & kiosk
- Expand parking at the Grotto
- Establish parking area at/near Mi. 104 access to Indian House Mt.
- Indian Ballfield
  - Facility upgrades and new latrine.
- Bird Ridge
  - Facility upgrades and new latrine
- Bird Creek Overflow campground
  - Water system upgrades
  - New latrines
  - Facility upgrades
  - Pave lower day-use parking area
- Bird Creek Campground
  - Pave campground and day-use
  - Electrify host site
  - Water and septic holding at host site
  - Facility upgrades.
  - Group camping area
  - Public use cabins

**From:** [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**To:** [mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com](mailto:mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com)  
**Cc:** [Miller, Robyn](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
0A31034/Z566310000  
**Date:** Monday, July 10, 2023 3:01:50 PM

---

**Taylor C. Horne**

D 907.644.2172 M 907.229.7145

[hdrinc.com/follow-us](https://hdrinc.com/follow-us)

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**From:** Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <sarah.meitl@alaska.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 10, 2023 2:51 PM  
**To:** Horne, Taylor <taylor.horne@hdrinc.com>  
**Cc:** Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <sarah.meitl@alaska.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

**CAUTION: [EXTERNAL]** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

3130-1R FHWA / 2023-00713

Good afternoon,

The Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (AK SHPO) received your correspondence (dated June 4, 2023) on June 22, 2023. Following our review of the documentation provided, we have no concerns or comments at this time. Thank you for submitting a Request for Scoping Comments for our review. We look forward to future consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Best,  
Sarah

***Sarah Meitl***

Review and Compliance Coordinator  
Alaska State Historic Preservation Office  
Office of History and Archaeology  
907-269-8720

---

**From:** DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <oha.revcomp@alaska.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:43 AM  
**To:** Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com

**Cc:** Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <sarah.meitl@alaska.gov>

**Subject:** Re: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

Hi Taylor,

Documentation received and logged in with me under 2023-00713. For future submissions to our office I recommend using [oha.revcomp@alaska.gov](mailto:oha.revcomp@alaska.gov).

Best,  
Sarah

***Sarah Meitl***

Review and Compliance Coordinator

Alaska State Historic Preservation Office

Office of History and Archaeology

907-269-8720

---

**From:** Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <[judy.bittner@alaska.gov](mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 12:50 PM

**To:** DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <[oha.revcomp@alaska.gov](mailto:oha.revcomp@alaska.gov)>

**Subject:** FW: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

---

**From:** Horne, Taylor <[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 12:31 PM

**To:** Sandra.Garcia-Aline <[Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov](mailto:Sandra.garcia-aline@dot.gov)>; stuart.hartford@bia.gov; tsparks <[tsparks@blm.gov](mailto:tsparks@blm.gov)>; [blm\\_ak\\_afo\\_general\\_delivery@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ak_afo_general_delivery@blm.gov); Angela Tallman - NOAA Affiliate <[angela.tallman@noaa.gov](mailto:angela.tallman@noaa.gov)>; jill.seymour <[jill.seymour@noaa.gov](mailto:jill.seymour@noaa.gov)>; [NMF5.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov](mailto:NMF5.AKR.HABITAT@noaa.gov); [sara.longan@usace.army.mil](mailto:sara.longan@usace.army.mil); [R10-NEPA@epa.gov](mailto:R10-NEPA@epa.gov); [sturges.susan@epa.gov](mailto:sturges.susan@epa.gov); [sara\\_boario@fws.gov](mailto:sara_boario@fws.gov); [ak\\_fisheries@fws.gov](mailto:ak_fisheries@fws.gov); Sanchez, Francisco -FS <[francisco.sanchez@usda.gov](mailto:francisco.sanchez@usda.gov)>; DAMico, Ruth - FS <[ruth.damico@usda.gov](mailto:ruth.damico@usda.gov)>; [joan\\_darnell@nps.gov](mailto:joan_darnell@nps.gov); [elizabeth\\_bella@nps.gov](mailto:elizabeth_bella@nps.gov); Brekken, Josh M (DFG) <[josh.brekken@alaska.gov](mailto:josh.brekken@alaska.gov)>; Mulligan, Benjamin J (DFG) <[ben.mulligan@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.mulligan@alaska.gov)>; DNR, DNR Parks Chugach State Park (DNR sponsored) <[csp@alaska.gov](mailto:csp@alaska.gov)>; Corwin, William B (DNR) <[ben.corwin@alaska.gov](mailto:ben.corwin@alaska.gov)>; Wedeking, Matthew D (DNR) <[matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov](mailto:matthew.wedeking@alaska.gov)>; CS.Scoping (DEC sponsored) <[CS.Scoping@alaska.gov](mailto:CS.Scoping@alaska.gov)>; DEC-ICUNIT <[DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov](mailto:DEC.ICUNIT@alaska.gov)>; Rypkema, James (DEC) <[james.rypkema@alaska.gov](mailto:james.rypkema@alaska.gov)>; Olds, Jason R (DEC) <[jason.olds@alaska.gov](mailto:jason.olds@alaska.gov)>;

Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <[judy.bittner@alaska.gov](mailto:judy.bittner@alaska.gov)>; Meitl, Sarah J (DNR) <[sarah.meitl@alaska.gov](mailto:sarah.meitl@alaska.gov)>; DNR, Parks OHA Review Compliance (DNR sponsored) <[oha.revcomp@alaska.gov](mailto:oha.revcomp@alaska.gov)>; [aaron.jongelenen@anchorageak.gov](mailto:aaron.jongelenen@anchorageak.gov); [david.whitfield@anchorageak.gov](mailto:david.whitfield@anchorageak.gov); [elizabeth.appleby@anchorageak.gov](mailto:elizabeth.appleby@anchorageak.gov); [sminich@ciri.com](mailto:sminich@ciri.com); [kfoster@eklutnainc.com](mailto:kfoster@eklutnainc.com); [rporter@kniktribe.org](mailto:rporter@kniktribe.org); [ktoothaker@kniktribe.org](mailto:ktoothaker@kniktribe.org); [faithr@eklutna.org](mailto:faithr@eklutna.org); lindamoodb <[lindamoodb@akrr.com](mailto:lindamoodb@akrr.com)>

**Cc:** Baski, Sean M (DOT) <[sean.baski@alaska.gov](mailto:sean.baski@alaska.gov)>; Little, Lauren M (DOT) <[lauren.little@alaska.gov](mailto:lauren.little@alaska.gov)>; Anderson, Ryan (DOT) <[ryan.anderson@alaska.gov](mailto:ryan.anderson@alaska.gov)>; Hughes, Chris <[chris.hughes@hdrinc.com](mailto:chris.hughes@hdrinc.com)>; Wood, Katherine <[katherine.wood@hdrinc.com](mailto:katherine.wood@hdrinc.com)>; Keith, Katherine M (DOT) <[katherine.keith@alaska.gov](mailto:katherine.keith@alaska.gov)>; McCarthy, Shannon K (DOT) <[shannon.mccarthy@alaska.gov](mailto:shannon.mccarthy@alaska.gov)>; Miller, Morgan <[Morgan.Miller@hdrinc.com](mailto:Morgan.Miller@hdrinc.com)>; McKee, Edith <[Edith.McKee@hdrinc.com](mailto:Edith.McKee@hdrinc.com)>; Elliott, Brian A (DOT) <[brian.elliott@alaska.gov](mailto:brian.elliott@alaska.gov)>; Dietrick, Matthew V (DOT) <[matthew.dietrick@alaska.gov](mailto:matthew.dietrick@alaska.gov)>; Kolwaite, Douglas S (DOT) <[douglas.kolwaite@alaska.gov](mailto:douglas.kolwaite@alaska.gov)>

**Subject:** Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000

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Hello,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under 23 U.S. Code 327, and is soliciting agency comments and information regarding a proposed project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

The project team intends to collaborate with stakeholders to identify transportation solutions and safety improvements within the project corridor. We are requesting your comments on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed project, and preliminary environmental research. These are included in the attached scoping documents.

Additionally, we would like to know if:

- further analysis is needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project,
- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments to me by **July 14, 2023**.

Thank you,

**Taylor C. Horne**

*Transportation Environmental and  
Planning Lead*

**HDR**

582 E. 36<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

**D** 907.644.2172 **M** 907.229.7145

[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)

[hdrinc.com/follow-us](http://hdrinc.com/follow-us)

**From:** [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**To:** [mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com](mailto:mail@sewardhwy.soar-mail.com); [Hughes, Chris \(Anchorage\)](#); [Wood, Katherine](#); [Miller, Morgan](#)  
**Cc:** [Cunningham, Erin E.](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Seward Highway Project  
**Date:** Monday, July 10, 2023 2:45:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

---

**Taylor C. Horne**

D 907.644.2172 M 907.229.7145

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---

**From:** Doug Limpinsel - NOAA Federal <doug.limpinsel@noaa.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 10, 2023 2:39 PM  
**To:** Horne, Taylor <Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com>; josh.brekken@alaska.gov; Luiken, Marc <Marc.Luiken@mbakerintl.com>; Keith, Katherine M (DOT) <katherine.keith@alaska.gov>  
**Cc:** Jill Seymour - NOAA Federal <jill.seymour@noaa.gov>; Greg Balogh - NOAA Federal <greg.balogh@noaa.gov>; sean.mcdermott <sean.mcdermott@noaa.gov>; Jodi Pirtle - NOAA Federal <jodi.pirtle@noaa.gov>; info@safersewardhighway.com  
**Subject:** Seward Highway Project

**CAUTION: [EXTERNAL]** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Again Taylor,

Per our discussion, I did want to follow up with you to provide some additional clarity.

NOAA/NMFS: Though the Habitat Conservation Division (HCD - fish and water) and Protected Resources Division (PRD - marine mammals) are both represented in the Anchorage office, we are two different divisions representing different species within two different consultation processes. PRD represents beluga whales under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) e.g. ESA consultation and IHA permits, and if needed HCD will represent Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and associated fish species such as Pacific salmon and/or groundfish species identified in Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs), authored by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC). ESA and EFH consultations are two distinctly different consultation processes.

The Project: I have reviewed the information we were provided via email. Based again on our conversation, at this early planning phase I currently see no immediate need to provide scoping comments. Currently, from an HCD perspective it remains questionable how or even if the proposed project will impact EFH.

Monthly Stakeholder Working Groups: It would benefit us to attend these monthly discussions to learn how the project evolves into the final design and alignment. If possible, please invite us to attend these monthly meetings. We will provide comments if needed.

V/r

--

Doug Limpinsel (He/Him/His)  
Alaska Region | Habitat Conservation Division  
[NOAA Fisheries](#) | U.S. Department of Commerce  
Office: 907-271-6379



*I respectfully acknowledge that I live and work on Dena'ina land.*

*Ecosystem Processes, Oceans and Atmosphere, Fish and Water, fail to recognize jurisdictional boundaries...*

**From:** [Jill Seymour - NOAA Federal](#)  
**To:** [Horne, Taylor](#)  
**Cc:** [Greg Balogh - NOAA Federal](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Agency Scoping Comments: Seward Highway Milepost 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek 0A31034/Z566310000  
**Date:** Thursday, July 13, 2023 4:22:42 PM  
**Attachments:** [Meeting#2 Agency brief NOAA Fisheries ESA resources.pptx](#)

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Good Evening Taylor,

In response to Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' (DOT&PF) request for comments about the above referenced project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, NOAA Fisheries Alaska Region Protected Resources Division (AKR-PRD) provides the following comments addressing threatened and endangered species.

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. § 1536(a)(2)) requires Federal agencies to ensure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat of such species. When a Federal agency's action "may affect" a protected species, that agency is required to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), depending upon the endangered species, threatened species, or designated critical habitat that may be affected by the action (50 CFR § 402.14(a)).

The project is immediately adjacent to occupied habitat for the federally endangered Cook Inlet distinct population segment (DPS) of beluga whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*; Cook Inlet beluga whale) as well as designated critical habitat for the DPS.

In 2015, in compliance with Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, AKR-PRD completed consultation on potential impacts to Cook Inlet beluga whales and their habitat for a previous version of this project. However, the current version of the proposed project is larger in scope and may differ significantly in other ways that will not be known until further design details are developed. In addition, new scientific information on the population has become available since the 2015 consultation, which may warrant an update to the effects analysis and mitigation measures. DOT&PF should contact AKR-PRD to discuss which approach, reinitiation of the prior consultation or initiation of a new consultation, is appropriate.

Other AKR-PRD comments on the proposed project were provided to the DOT&PF and its consultants on July 11, 2023, via the Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group, of which AKR-PRD is a member. These are attached to this email for your convenience and should be considered part of this response.

I'm available to answer questions regarding Cook Inlet beluga whales and their designated critical habitat, can assist in arranging a future discussion with AKR-PRD on consultation approach, and will continue to participate in early coordination as the AKR-PRD representative at the Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group meetings.

On behalf of AKR-PRD, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed

project.

Sincerely,

Jill Seymour

On Wed, Jun 14, 2023 at 12:33 PM Horne, Taylor <[Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Horne@hdrinc.com)> wrote:

Hello,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under 23 U.S. Code 327, and is soliciting agency comments and information regarding a proposed project to reconstruct and add safety improvements to the Seward Highway between Mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek.

The project team intends to collaborate with stakeholders to identify transportation solutions and safety improvements within the project corridor. We are requesting your comments on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed project, and preliminary environmental research. These are included in the attached scoping documents.

Additionally, we would like to know if:

- further analysis is needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project,
- regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency, and
- your agency or organization might have any concerns or issues with the proposed project.

Please provide your written comments to me by **July 14, 2023**.

Thank you,

**Taylor C. Horne**

*Transportation Environmental and*

Planning Lead

**HDR**

582 E. 36<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 500  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508  
D 907.644.2172 M 907.229.7145

[Taylor.Home@hdrinc.com](mailto:Taylor.Home@hdrinc.com)

[hdrinc.com/follow-us](http://hdrinc.com/follow-us)

--

I live and work on Dena'ina Etnena.

**Jill Seymour, PhD**

(Pronouns: [she/they](#))

*Marine Mammal Specialist*

*Cook Inlet Beluga Recovery Coordinator*

NOAA Fisheries | U.S. Department of Commerce

(323) 372-3328 (Google Voice)

Typical Work Hours: Mon-Fri 7:30am - 4:00pm

[www.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov)



To learn how you can help Endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales, visit:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/help-belugas>



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**REGULATORY DIVISION**  
**P.O. BOX 6898**  
**JBER, AK 99506-0898**

July 12, 2023

Regulatory Division  
POA-2023-00321

Dear Mr. Luiken:

The United States (U.S.) Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (Corps) is providing this letter as a written comment to the June 14, Safer Seward Highway Scoping Letter. Your project has been assigned number POA-2023-00321, Turnagain Arm, which should be referred to in all correspondence with us.

The Corps' regulatory authorities are based on two laws: Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (RHA) of 1899 (33 USC 403), which prohibits the obstruction or alteration of navigable waters of the U.S. without a Department of the Army (DA) permit from the Corps; and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), which prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. without a DA permit. Based on information provided, and available to our office, portions of the proposed work may occur in waters of the U.S. and would, therefore, be within the Corps' jurisdiction.

Waters of the U.S. include, but are not limited to, tidal waters, rivers both perennial and intermittent streams and wetlands. Wetlands are defined as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

The Corps' evaluation of a Section 10 and/or a Section 404 permit application involves multiple analyses, including (1) evaluating the proposal's impacts in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (33 CFR 325 Appendix B), (2) determining whether the proposal is contrary to the public interest (33 CFR 320.4), (3) complying with other federal laws (e.g. ESA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act) and (4) in the case of a Section 404 permit, determining whether the proposal complies with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (Guidelines) (40 CFR 230).

If the proposal requires a Section 404 permit application, the Guidelines specifically require that "no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences" (40 CFR § 230.10(a)). Time and money spent on the proposal prior to applying for a Section 404 permit cannot be factored into the Corps' decision whether there is a less damaging practicable alternative to the proposal.

In reference to specific comments requested, please see below.

1. Draft purpose and need statement: The Corps does not have a comment on the draft purpose and need statement. It is sufficient for the permitting process.
2. Proposed project: The Corps does not have a comment on the project at this point in time as it is currently proposed.
3. Preliminary environmental research: The Corps agrees with the preliminary environmental research. One question would be if the project would include replacement of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game listed red and gray culverts with culverts suitable for juvenile fish passage within the project area, or would only new culverts be designed to that standard? If the culverts are designed to US Fish and Wildlife Standards, this would be considered a part of further mitigation efforts.
4. Further analysis needed to evaluate sensitive resources potentially impacted by the proposed project: If compensatory mitigation is required, an assessment may need to be performed on proposed waters to be impacted to adequately calculate debits required.
5. Regulatory permits and/or clearances are required from your agency: A permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act would be required. Please confirm that all bridges over Section 10 waters in the proposed project area would qualify for an exemption under 6j. of the enclosed 2023 Memorandum of Understanding between the United States Coast Guard and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. If the work would not qualify for an exemption, a separate permit under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act would be required from the Coast Guard.
6. Any concerns or issues your agency or organization might have with the proposed project: The Corps does not have concerns or issues with the project at this point in time as it is currently proposed.

Nothing in this letter excuses you from compliance with other Federal, State, or local statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

Please contact me via email at [Emily.N.Vullo@usace.army.mil](mailto:Emily.N.Vullo@usace.army.mil), by mail at the address above, by phone at (907) 753-2704, or toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, if you have questions. For more information about the Regulatory Program, please visit our website at [www.poa.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory](http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory).

Sincerely,



Emily Vullo  
Project Manager

## **Attachment D. Concepts Evaluation Public Meeting Materials (December 2023)**

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# Safer Seward Highway Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings  
Anchorage, Girdwood, and  
Indian, Alaska



Alaska Department of  
Transportation and Public Facilities



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Table of Contents

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Overview of Public Involvement Activities .....	1
Public Meetings .....	1
Attendance .....	1
Stakeholders .....	2
Advertising .....	2
Summary of Comments.....	3

## Attachments

**Attachment A:** Meeting Presentation

**Attachment B:** Online Open House and Results

**Attachment C:** Meeting Materials

**Attachment D:** E-Blasts

**Attachment E:** Advertisements in the Anchorage Daily News, Peninsula Clarion, & Homer News

**Attachment F:** Meeting Flyer

**Attachment G:** Sign-In Sheets

# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Introduction

This Public Outreach Summary is used for tracking and documentation of public involvement activities. It outlines the public involvement strategies and tactics used to engage the public on the Safer Seward Highway Project. The summary includes a description of the outreach strategies implemented, the tools used for implementation, the results of the public outreach, and the feedback collected during the outreach.

## Overview of Public Involvement Activities

The project team conducted a variety of public outreach tactics to engage and inform the public on the Safer Seward Highway Project.

### Public Meetings

On Tuesday, December 5, 2023, the Safer Seward Highway Project team kicked off an online, interactive, self-guided public open house on the project website that was available through Thursday, January 4, 2024 (Attachment B). The Online Open House outlined project information and offered multiple ways to comment on the project, including an online comment form. The purpose of the Online Open House was to inform the public about the project, share the project's schedule, scoping process, and next steps, and to collect initial project feedback from the communities.

In conjunction with the Online Open House, the project team hosted three in-person Public Meetings, listed below, at which members of the public could view project information [posters](#) and interact with the project team by asking questions and submitting comments. Each meeting featured a 20-min [presentation](#).

- Tuesday, December 5, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm
- Wednesday, December 6, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm
- Thursday, December 7, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm

### Attendance

The Public Meetings had a total of 70 attendees. The number of attendees per meeting location are noted in Table 1. During the duration of the Online Open House (December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024) the site was viewed by 218 users.

**Table 1: Public Meeting Attendees by Location**

Public Meeting Location	Number of Attendees
Anchorage Public Library, Anchorage, AK	41 (36 paper, 5 digital)
Girdwood Community Center, Girdwood, AK	24 (23 paper, 1 digital)
Valley Bible Chalet, Indian, AK	10 (10 paper, 0 digital)

# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Stakeholders

Representatives from the following organizations attended the meetings in person:

- Bike Anchorage
- Girdwood Board of Supervisors
- Alaska Travel Industry Association

## Advertising

The Public Meetings and Online Open House were advertised in the following ways:

- Meeting information on the project website: <https://safersewardhighway.com/>
- Two advertisements each in the *Anchorage Daily News*, *Peninsula Clarion*, *Seward Journal*, & *Homer News* (Attachment E) three weeks before and one week before the meetings
- Three E-Blasts sent to the project’s email list for Announcement, Next Week Reminder, and This Week Reminder (total of 717 recipients; Attachment D)
- Flyers posted at the locations in Table 1 in the project area (Attachment F)

**Table 1: Flyer Posting – Organizations/Businesses**

Anchorage		
SteamDot O’Malley	SteamDot Midtown	Anchorage Loussac Library
UAA/APU Consortium Library	UAA ConocoPhillips Building	UAA Admin Building
Carrs Huffman	Carrs Abbott	Carrs Northern Lights
Costco Dimond	Fred Meyer Abbott	Fred Meyer Northern Lights
REI	Spenard Roadhouse	South Coffeehouse + Café
Bear Tooth Theatre	Kaladis/Yak & Yeti	Post Office Huffman
Post Office Diamond Mall	Diamond Center	Diamond Center YMCA
Girdwood		
SteamDot O’Malley	SteamDot Midtown	Anchorage Loussac Library
UAA/APU Consortium Library	UAA ConocoPhillips Building	UAA Admin Building
Carrs Huffman	Carrs Abbott	Carrs Northern Lights
Costco Dimond	Fred Meyer Abbott	Fred Meyer Northern Lights
Indian		
Birch & Alder		

- Social media posts of the meeting announcement and a meeting reminder
- State of Alaska Online Public Notice
- State of Alaska GovDelivery
- Alaska Chamber of Commerce Calendar
- E-blast from the Federation of Community Councils
- Posts to the *Anchorage Daily News*, *Peninsula Clarion*, & *Homer News*, *DOT&PF Central Region* Community Calendars

# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

- Coffee Sleeves at both the Anchorage Library and Birch & Alder Café
- Table Tents at Girdwood Brewery and Anchorage Library

## Summary of Comments

Comments received focused on a range of topics, including design speed, expanding facilities/amenities, pathway offset, climbing route, wildlife impacts and several other issues.

Questions/comments included:

- 4-lane would be nice, but can we afford it?
- General agreement that the need for the project is apparent. It would be good if the road were safer. Many people commented they had experienced negative driving situations.
- Concern about how long construction will go on. For the past several years, the communities have had ongoing construction projects in the area that routinely delay them 15-20 minutes on every trip.
- Bike Anchorage representatives continued to advocate for a smaller road footprint and a 25-foot offset pathway. They are concerned that the experience on a 10-foot offset pathway would be negative, and therefore not used. Some comments asked about making it closer to the ARRC tracks than the road. Interest in grade-separating the pathway.
- Detailed letter from Girdwood resident and former safety official
  - “This work on the Seward highway is probably the most important safety issue that DOT can be working on. The safest configuration for the Seward highway is a four-lane divided highway with barriers or a median between the lanes...The safest configuration for the Seward highway is a four lane divided highway with barriers or a median between the lanes.”
- What will the speed limit be?
- How will the new frontage roads be maintained?
- How much will the project cost? Can we afford it? Where is the funding coming from?
- This meeting was very informative. Thank you. I/we liked the online map tool.
- Community of Girdwood was mainly in favor of a 4-lane. Bird/Indian were largely opposed.
- Frontage road received primarily negative feedback from the community of Indian, as it would change their access patterns and they perceived that would route through-traffic along Bore Tide Road through other neighborhoods. Few were neutral on the matter. Several requested a left turn lane be added at Indian Valley Road instead of a frontage road. Those present were not as concerned about impacts to private property.
- There was some confusion about the safety statistics and years covered. Public requested definitions be included for major injury and minor injury.



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

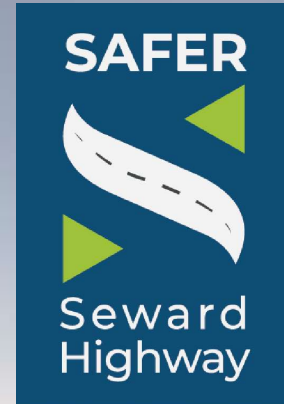
## Attachment A

### Meeting Presentation

# WELCOME

## PUBLIC MEETING #2

### DECEMBER 5-7, 2023



*Photographer: Logan Maddox*

# Welcome

## What we are going to cover:



Why this project?



What has been done?



What now?



What's next?

## Presenters:



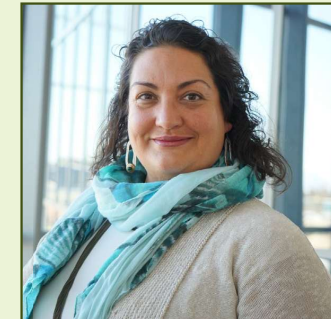
**Katherine Wood**  
*Communications Lead*



**Chris Hughes**  
*Project Management*



**Taylor Horne**  
*Environmental Lead*



**Edith McKee**  
*Engineering Lead*

# WHY THIS PROJECT?



*Photographer: Richard Dennis*



# PROJECT HISTORY

**2004**

First proposed safety improvement project: Indian to Potter Marsh, MP 105-115.



**2006**

MP 90-117.5 designated Alaska's first Safety Corridor due to the elevated rate of fatal and major injury (high-severity) crashes.



**2017**

Public feedback and consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) resulted in the Class of Action being revised to an Environmental Assessment (EA).



**2013**

Seward Highway MP 105-107 Windy Corner Project.



**2020**

DOT&PF extended the project 2.5 miles between Windy Corner and Rainbow Point (MP 105-109.5) to address concerns raised by public and agency comments on the Draft EA.



**2022**

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project included in STIP. Expanded project area covers the 20-mile section of the Traffic Safety Corridor closest to Anchorage, including Windy Corner.



**2023**

New EA process for the project MP 98.5-118 begins with public and agency scoping.



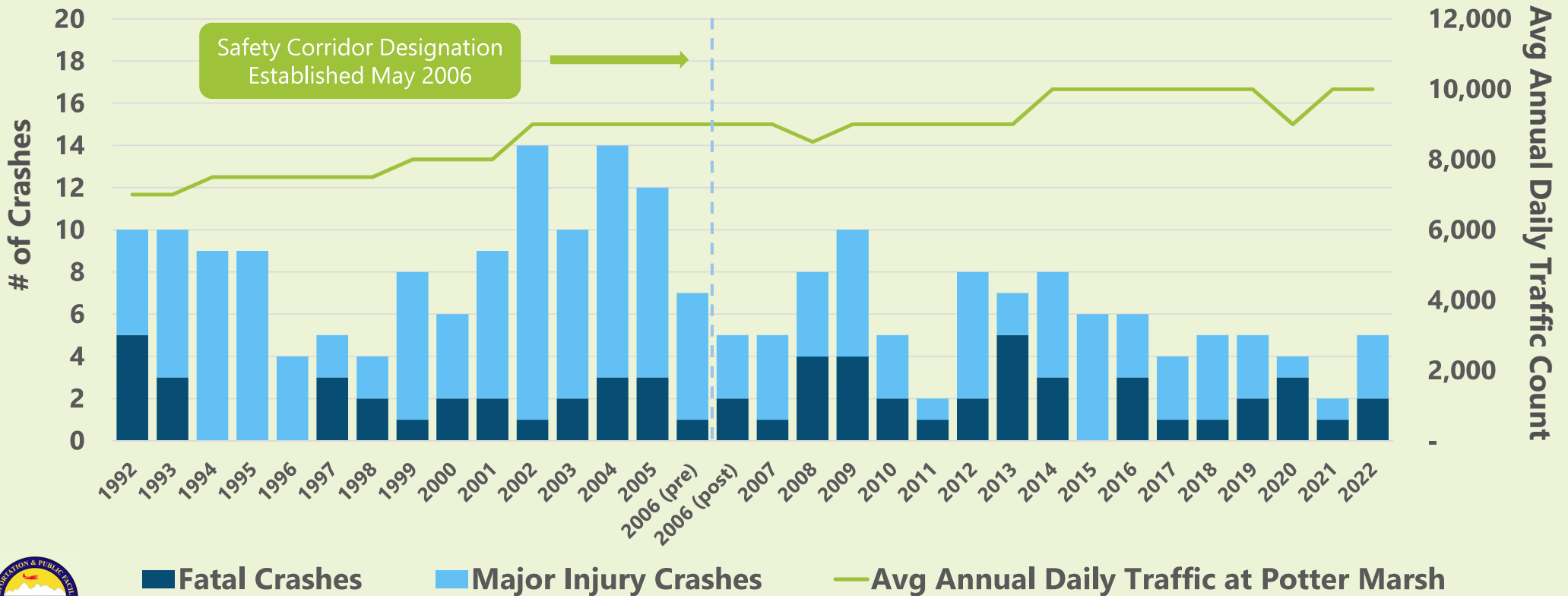
# Safety Data

**Why this project?**  
*Safety is a corridor wide issue*



# Safety Data

**Seward Highway Traffic Safety Corridor**  
Fatal and Major Injury Crashes, 1992 - 2022



# Purpose & Need

**The purpose** of the project is to reconstruct this segment of the highway corridor to improve safety for all users, to meet current design standards for a component of the Interstate Highway System and eliminate the current designation as a Highway Safety Corridor.

## PROJECT NEED

**Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity**

## PROJECT NEED

**Update to Meet Current Design Standards**

## PROJECT NEED

**Increase Mobility and Reliability**



# Environmental Assessment (EA)

## National Environmental Policy Act

An EA is prepared for projects when the significance of the potential environmental impacts is uncertain. Major components of an EA include:



Purpose  
and Need



Alternatives



Affected  
Environment



Environmental  
Consequences



Mitigation  
Measures

# Scoping Results

## PUBLIC FEEDBACK

“ I support making the Seward Highway safer. ”

“ I would love to see a paved bike path from Anchorage to Girdwood. ”

“ Safety should be the number one priority. ”

“ Highway expansion can have negative impacts on communities and the environment. ”

“ The current bike path runs into pull offs/parking areas which is not safe. ”

“ The project funding will be a huge challenge as well. ”

“ Consider not putting rumble strips anywhere. ”

“ It's important to keep pushing back on the rocks for safety. ”

“ Avalanche mitigation should also be considered. ”

“ Design for the long term. ”

“ I am happy that the prospect for creating a safer Seward Highway is moving forward. ”

“ Maintain the visual aesthetics. ”

“ Dedicated left turn opportunities at popular pullouts north of Indian. ”

“ There needs to be turn lane at McHugh Creek. ”

“ The project should include maintenance burden. ”



# WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?



*Photographer: David Schaff*

# Stakeholder Working Group

- Kicked-off June 15<sup>th</sup>
- What have we been doing?

***Purpose:*** An active working group to represent the interest of direct stakeholders of diverse interest.

## **Organizations:**

Municipality of Anchorage  
DNR, Chugach State Park  
Alaska Railroad Corporation  
Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Girdwood Board of Supervisors  
DNR, State Historical Preservation Office  
NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Services  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Anchorage Metropolitan Area  
    Transportation Solutions  
Turnagain Arm Community Council  
Rabbit Creek Community Council  
Bike Anchorage  
Alaska Trucking Association  
Alaska Travel Industry Association



# Constraints Analysis

## We are balancing a lot.

- Through-traffic and in-corridor use
- Tight Corridor: Steep topography, Inlet, Railroad, Chugach State Park
- Beluga Whale Habitat
- Scenic Byway – Interstate Highway, part of the National Highway System

*Photographer: Tracy Try*

# Constraints Analysis – Wildlife

**Wildlife Constraints**

- ★ Beginning of Project
- ★ End of Project
- Animal Related Crashes**
- Low Frequency
- High Frequency
- Habitat Constraints**
- Birds
- Sheep
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Critical Habitat



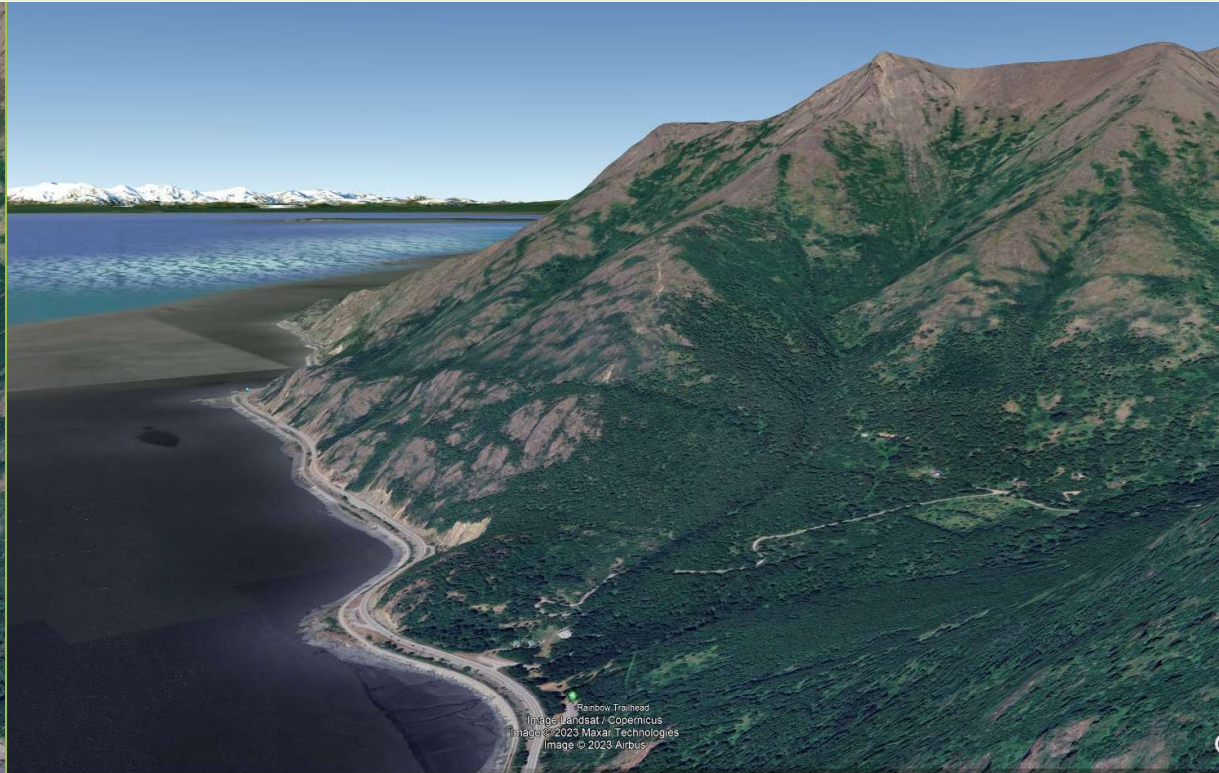
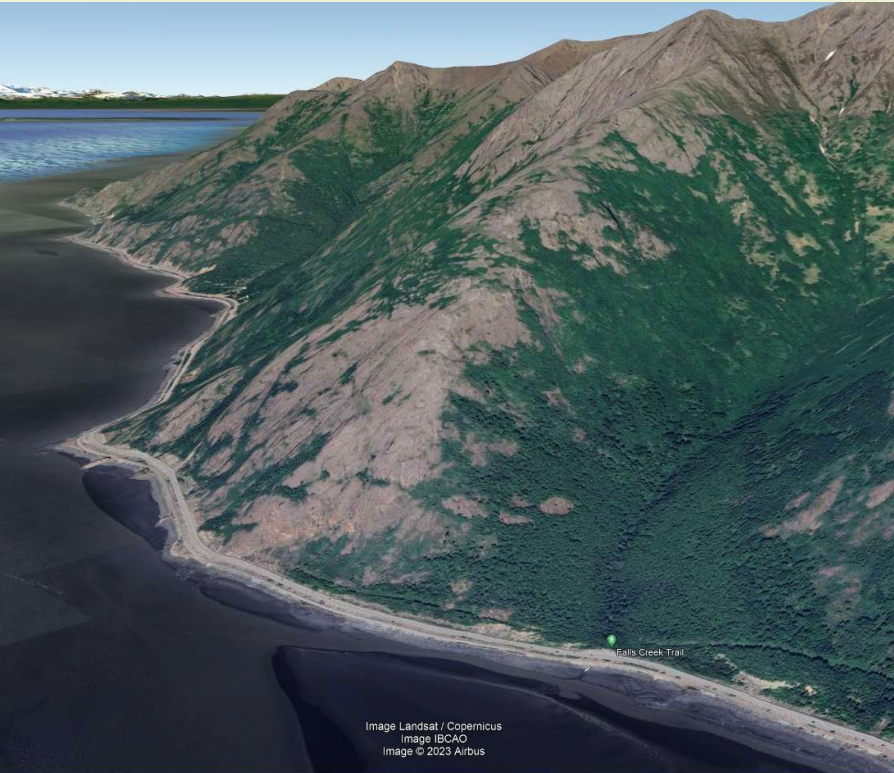
# Constraints Analysis – Recreation

### Recreational Constraints

★	Beginning of Project		Trailhead
★	End of Project		Climbing
□	Turnout/Pulloff		Surfing
—	Chugach State Park Trail		Fishing
■	Chugach State Park		Indian Ballfield
			Bird Campground

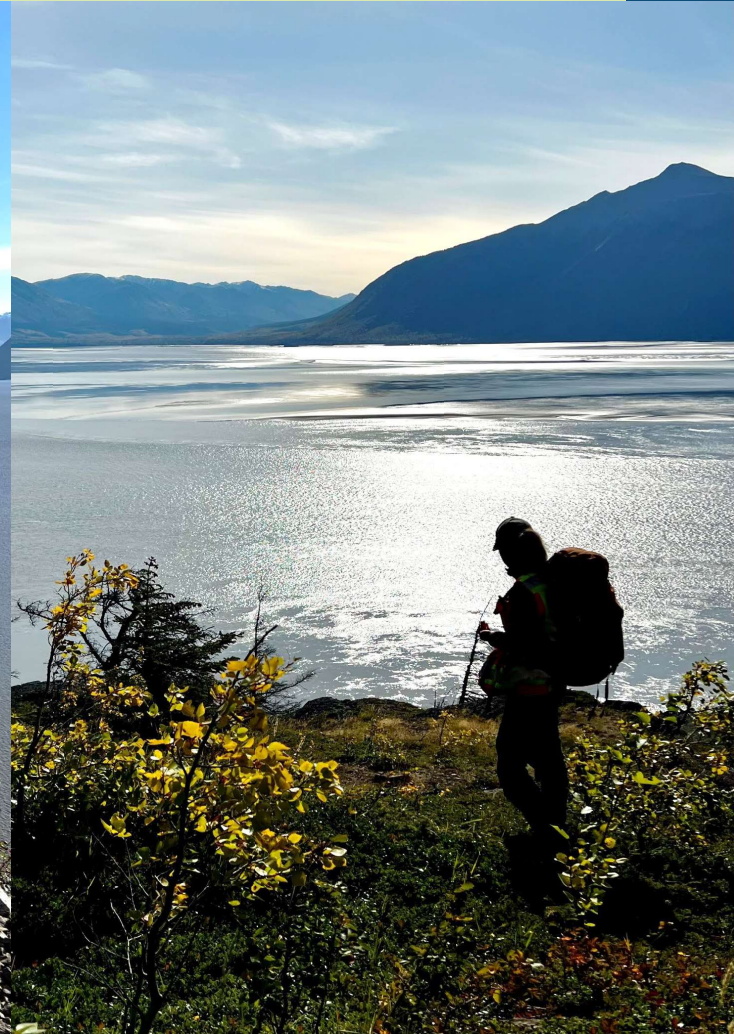


# Constraints Analysis – Topography



# Environmental Field Work

- Wetlands mapping
- Fish presence survey
- Noise (existing conditions)
- Cultural Resources survey
- Bald and golden eagle surveys



# WHAT NOW?

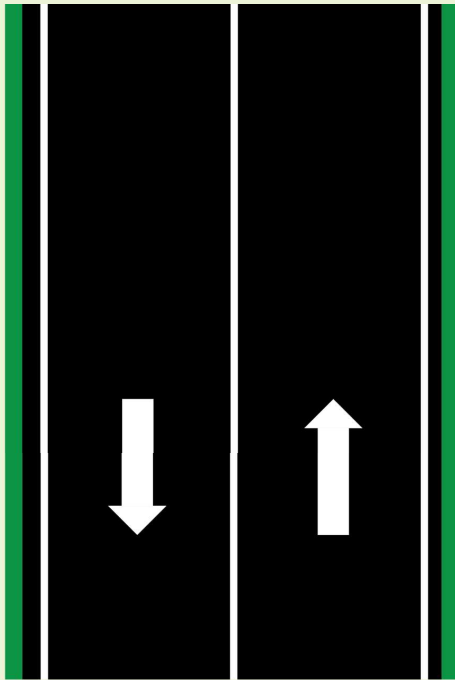


*Photographer: Tracy Try*

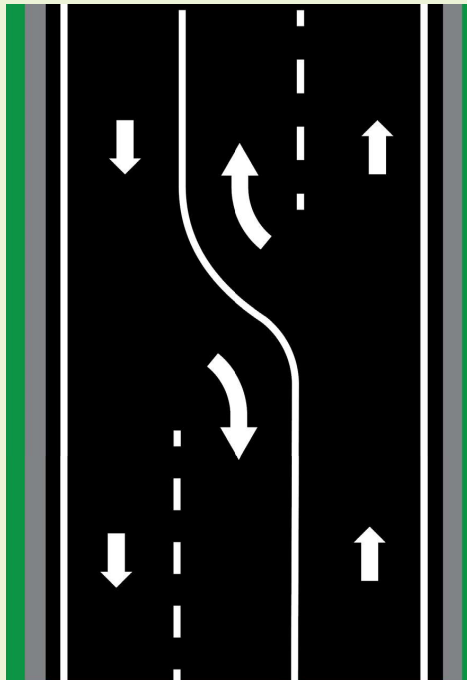
# Design Concepts

- Left / right / center
- Pathway included on 3-lane and 4-lane concepts

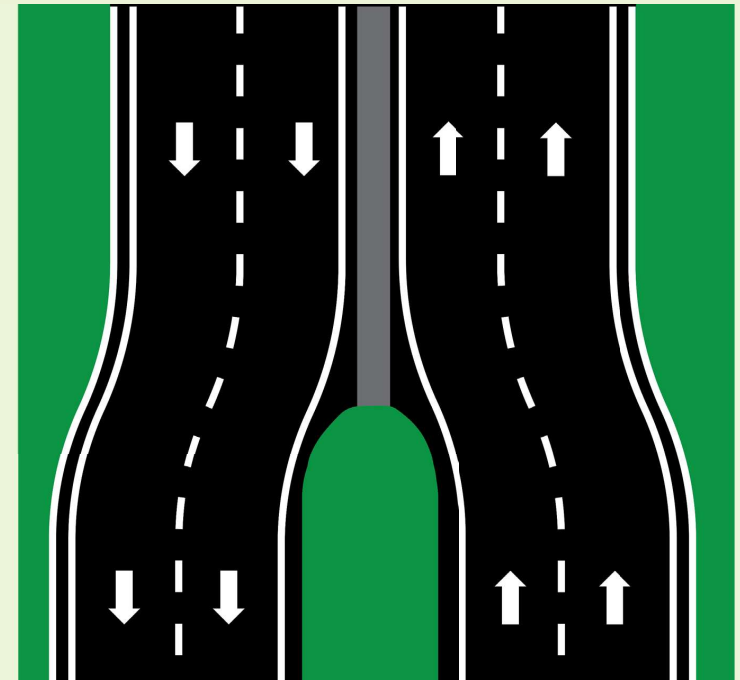
**2-Lane**  
Existing



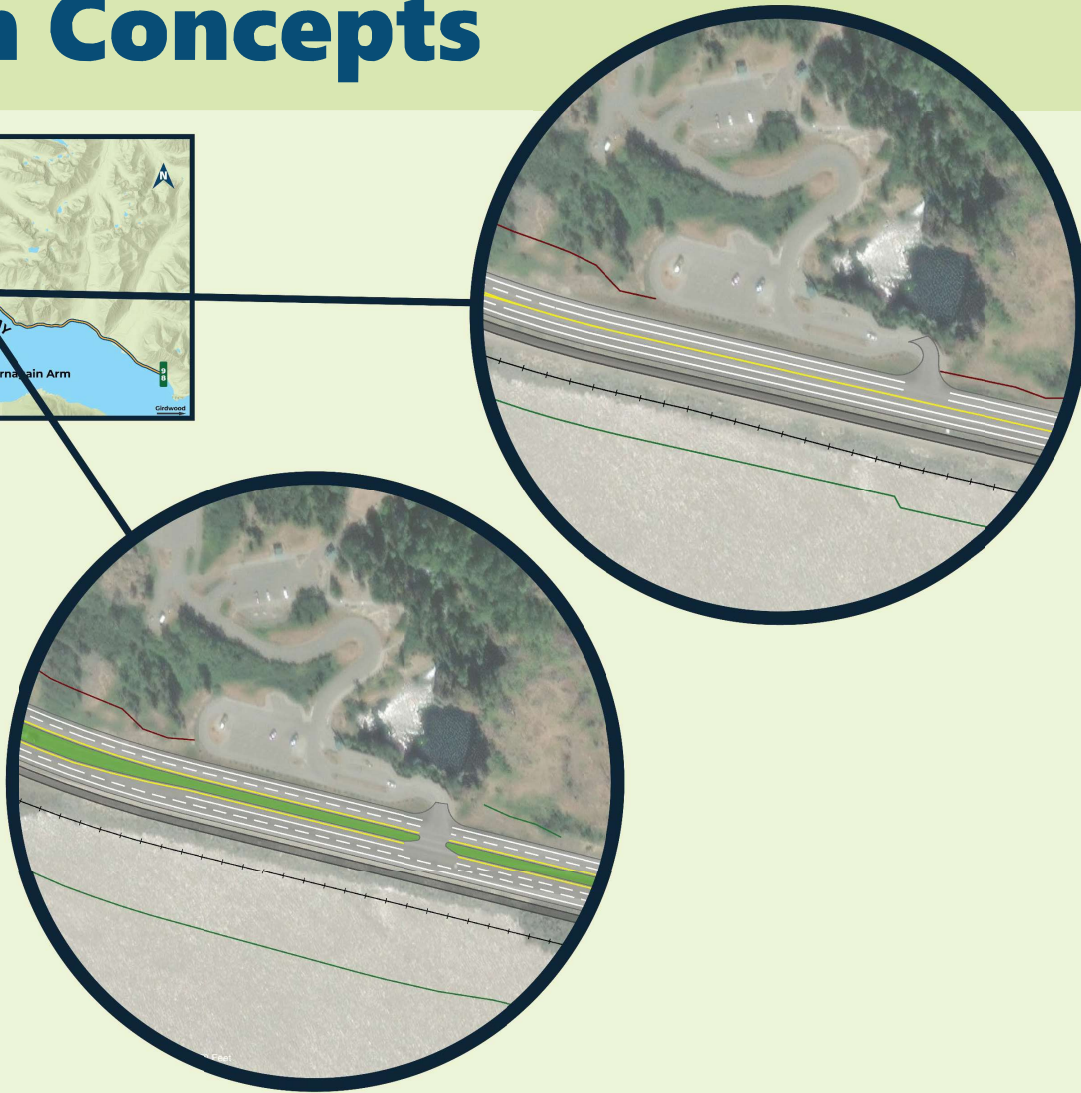
**3-Lane**  
Alternating Passing



**4-Lane**  
Barrier or Median Dividend



# Design Concepts



- Cut Line
- Fill Line
- + Railroad
- Lane Marking
- Lane Marking Solid
- Lane Divider Marking
- Asphalt Extent
- Path

# WHAT'S NEXT?



*Photographer: Tracy Try*

# Screening Discussion

  
**Concepts  
Ideas**

- Engineering
- SWG
- Public
- Agencies
- Prior studies
- Constraints

  
**Alternatives  
in the EA**

- No Build vs Build (1+)
- Detailed environmental impacts analysis
- Public and agency comment period

**Preferred  
Alternative**

- Design speed, design criteria (lanes/widths)
- Mitigation measures
- Permitting requirements

**We Are Here**



## Screening Factors

- Purpose & Need
- Traffic analysis
- Safety analysis
- Project Goals
- Practicable and Reasonable

## Environmental Analysis

- NEPA (environmental benefits & impacts)
- Section 404 (wetlands & US waters)
- Section 4(f) & 6(f) (parks)
- Section 106 (cultural & historic properties)

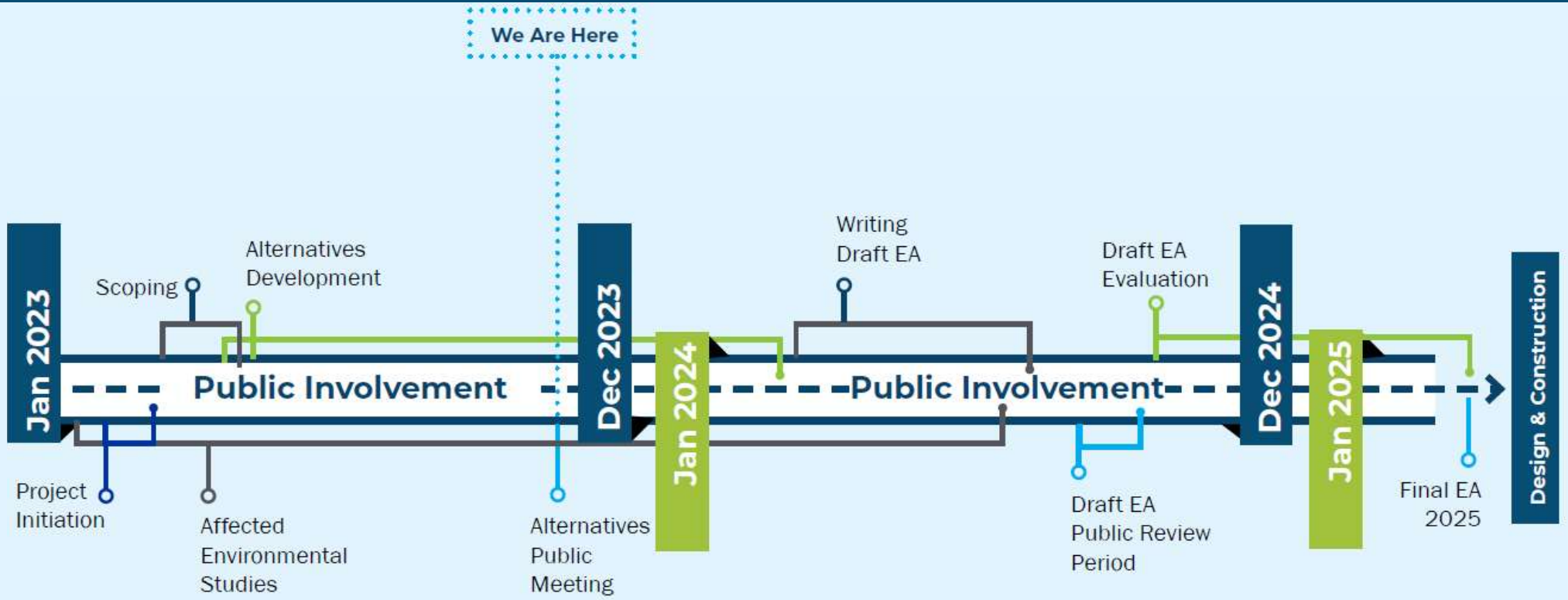
**Final EA**

**Design Phase**  
(Intersection Details, Final Location of Features, i.e. Pathway, Final Footprint)



**Construction**

# Timeline



# Feedback & Online Open House

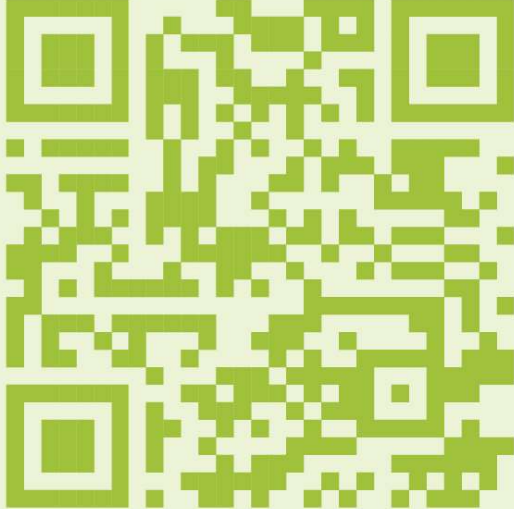


Or visit the  
comment  
table in the  
back

Online open house at  
**SaferSewardHighwayOnline.com**  
Open December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024

SCAN WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE



COMMENT ONLINE





**Thank you!**

**Have questions?** Find a team member!

Or contact us at [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment B

### Online Open House and Results



Home About Us Contact Us

Missed the December 2021 Public Meeting? No worries! You may visit the Online Chat Room from the start of January 4, 2022.

Visit the Online Open House!

Home About Us Contact Us

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Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity

Improve Visibility and Usability

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# Safer Seward Highway

DOT&PF > Central Region > Projects > Safer Seward Highway > Public Involvement

- Project Home
- Public Involvement
- Project Library
- Contact Us

Project Number: Z566310000/0A31034

## Public Involvement

### December 2023 Online Open House Details

Missed the in-person public meeting? Join us online between December 5, 2023 and January 4, 2023 to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input.

#### Online Open House:

December 5, 2023- January 4, 2024 at [safersewardhighwayonline.com](https://safersewardhighwayonline.com)



DOT&PF will work with the public, relay accurate and timely information about the project, and consider your comments and concerns in decision-making. During the environmental review, governed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we will be soliciting public input throughout the process.

You can participate in the Safer Seward Highway Project in several ways:

- [Sign up for our email contact list](#) – receive meeting notices, announcements, and other up-to-date information in your inbox.



- [Attend a public meeting](#) – attend a meeting to learn more about the project and to have your voice heard.

- [Leave a comment for the project team](#) – leave a comment by visiting the [Contact Us page](#) or leave an email for the team.



#### Project Information

- Project Fact Sheet
- Home
- Public Involvement
- Project Library
- Contact Us



#### Quick Links

- Central Region
- Central Region Projects
- DOT&PF Projects

- Site Map
- Policies
- Nondiscrimination
- Accessibility
- Employee Directory

DOT&PF Staff Resources



#### Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

PO Box 112500 (mailing)  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

Contact Info



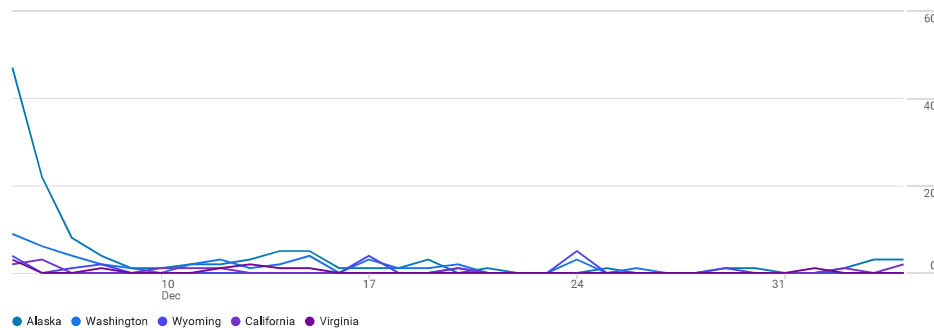
All Users Add comparison +

Custom Dec 5, 2023 - Jan 4, 2024

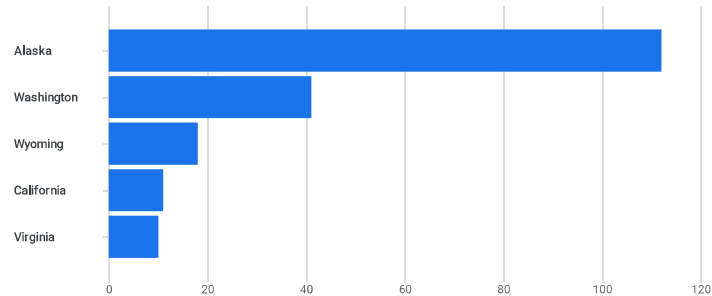
Demographic details: Region

Add filter +

Users by Region over time



Users by Region



Search...

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Region	Users	New users	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Engaged sessions per user	Average engagement time	Event count	Conversions	Total revenue
	225 100% of total	218 100% of total	135 100% of total	40.3% Avg 0%	0.60 Avg 0%	58s Avg 0%	1,204 100% of total	0.00	\$0.00
1 Alaska	112	110	76	41.99%	0.68	1m 18s	612	0.00	\$0.00
2 Washington	41	38	24	44.44%	0.59	47s	188	0.00	\$0.00
3 Wyoming	18	18	3	16.67%	0.17	6s	57	0.00	\$0.00
4 California	11	9	9	45%	0.82	1m 20s	75	0.00	\$0.00
5 Virginia	10	10	2	20%	0.20	5s	32	0.00	\$0.00
6 Arizona	6	1	7	58.33%	1.17	1m 21s	44	0.00	\$0.00
7 Texas	6	6	1	16.67%	0.17	9s	20	0.00	\$0.00
8 Colorado	5	2	5	62.5%	1.00	1m 42s	86	0.00	\$0.00
9 Iowa	5	5	3	60%	0.60	22s	18	0.00	\$0.00
10 Ile-de-France	3	3	0	0%	0.00	0s	9	0.00	\$0.00
11 Kansas	3	3	2	66.67%	0.67	0s	11	0.00	\$0.00
12 New York	3	3	1	33.33%	0.33	25s	10	0.00	\$0.00
13 (not set)	2	2	1	50%	0.50	0s	6	0.00	\$0.00
14 Oregon	2	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	5	0.00	\$0.00
15 Florida	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
16 Istanbul	1	0	1	100%	1.00	52s	1	0.00	\$0.00
17 Maryland	1	1	1	100%	1.00	0s	4	0.00	\$0.00
18 Michoacan	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	5	0.00	\$0.00
19 Ohio	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
20 Quebec	1	1	0	0%	0.00	8s	4	0.00	\$0.00
21 South Carolina	1	1	0	0%	0.00	2s	7	0.00	\$0.00
22 Tennessee	1	1	1	100%	1.00	1m 05s	4	0.00	\$0.00

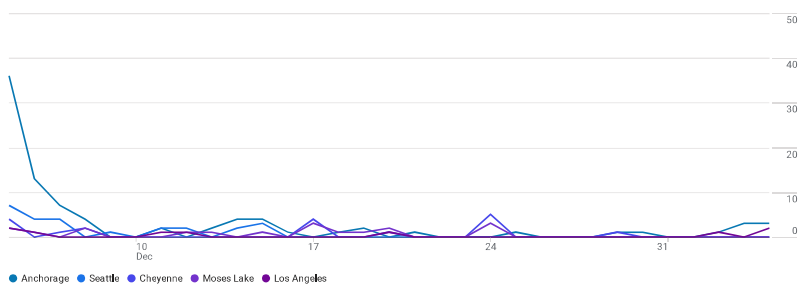
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Custom: Dec 5, 2023 - Jan 4, 2024

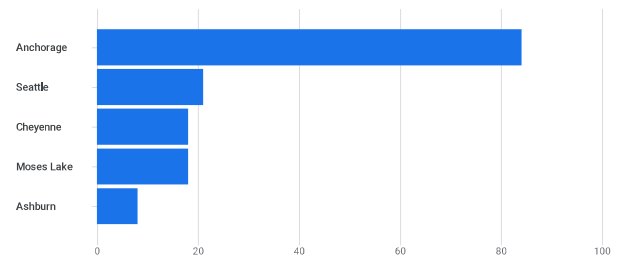
Demographic details: City

Add filter

Users by City over time



Users by City

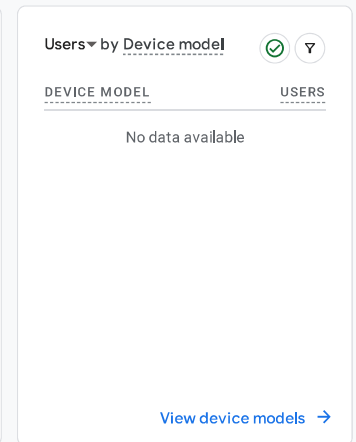
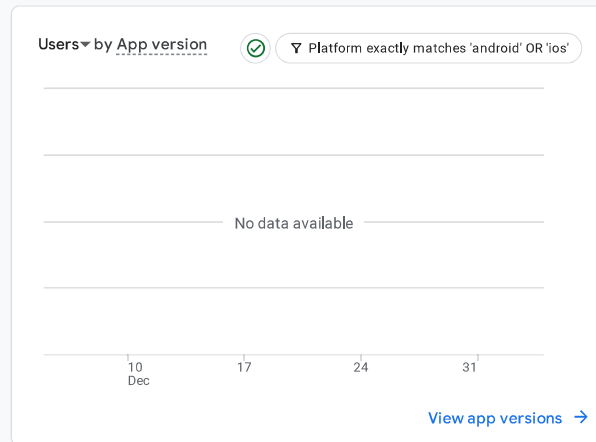
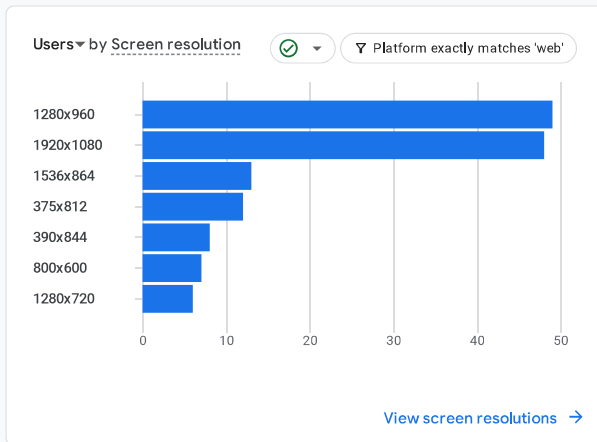
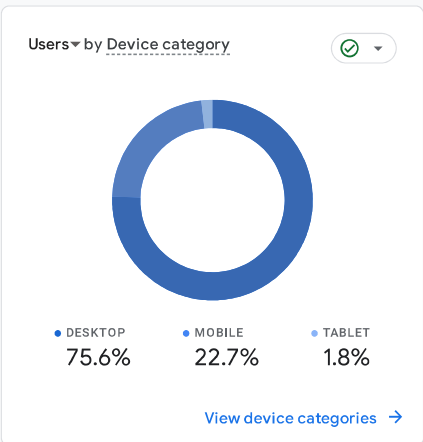
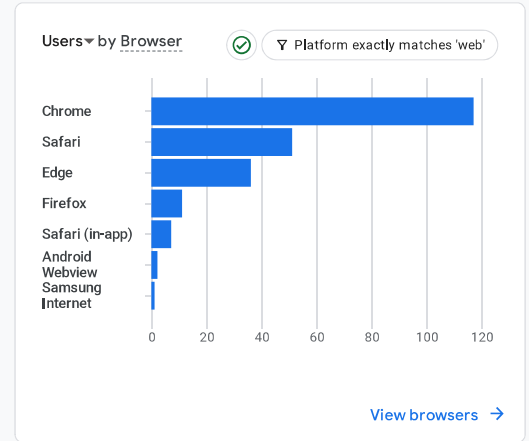
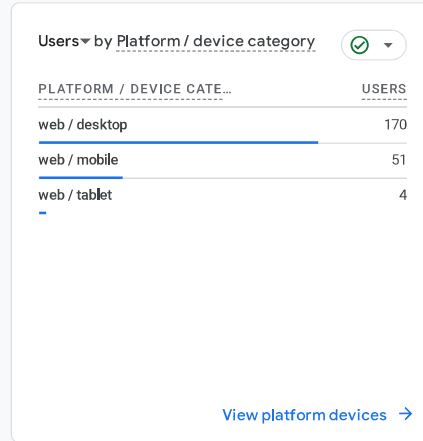
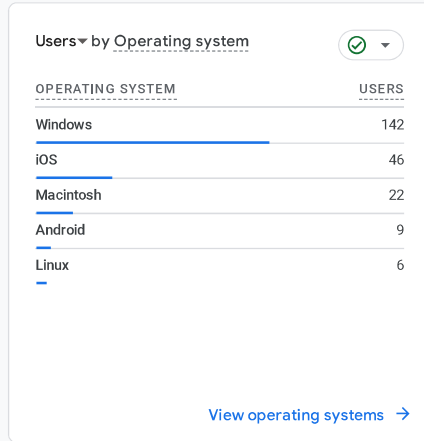
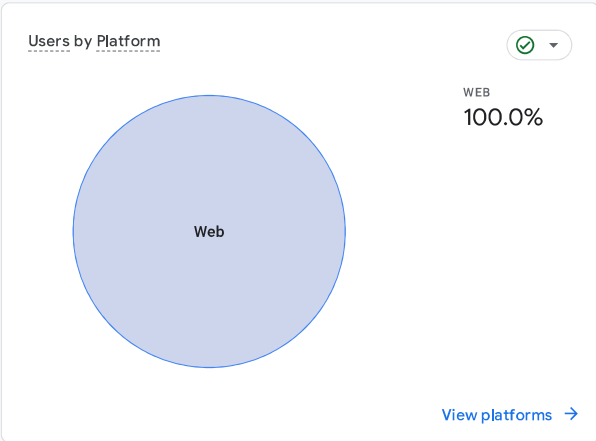


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	225 100% of total	218 100% of total	135 100% of total	40.3% Avg 0%	0.60 Avg 0%	58s Avg 0%	1,204 100% of total	0.00	\$0.00
1 Anchorage	84	81	57	43.18%	0.68	1m 26s	451	0.00	\$0.00
2 Seattle	21	18	16	47.06%	0.76	1m 21s	120	0.00	\$0.00
3 Cheyenne	18	18	3	16.67%	0.17	6s	57	0.00	\$0.00
4 Moses Lake	18	18	8	44.44%	0.44	14s	62	0.00	\$0.00
5 Ashburn	8	8	0	0%	0.00	0s	24	0.00	\$0.00
6 Los Angeles	8	6	7	41.18%	0.88	1m 12s	64	0.00	\$0.00
7 (not set)	7	6	4	50%	0.57	0s	22	0.00	\$0.00
8 Phoenix	6	1	7	58.33%	1.17	1m 21s	44	0.00	\$0.00
9 San Antonio	6	6	1	16.67%	0.17	9s	20	0.00	\$0.00
10 Denver	5	2	5	62.5%	1.00	1m 42s	86	0.00	\$0.00
11 Juneau	5	5	4	80%	0.80	44s	19	0.00	\$0.00
12 Des Moines	4	4	3	75%	0.75	28s	15	0.00	\$0.00
13 Palmer	4	4	2	33.33%	0.50	36s	21	0.00	\$0.00
14 Seward	4	2	2	33.33%	0.50	57s	17	0.00	\$0.00
15 Sitka	4	4	3	50%	0.75	43s	21	0.00	\$0.00
16 Coffeyville	3	3	2	66.67%	0.67	0s	11	0.00	\$0.00
17 Colombes	3	3	0	0%	0.00	0s	9	0.00	\$0.00
18 Soldotna	3	2	1	33.33%	0.33	0s	8	0.00	\$0.00
19 Valdez	3	2	2	66.67%	0.67	44s	15	0.00	\$0.00
20 Wasilla	3	2	1	25%	0.33	1m 36s	11	0.00	\$0.00
21 Fairbanks	2	1	1	25%	0.50	0s	8	0.00	\$0.00
22 Ketchikan	2	1	1	33.33%	0.50	11s	8	0.00	\$0.00
23 New York	2	2	1	50%	0.50	37s	7	0.00	\$0.00
24 Nome	2	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	5	0.00	\$0.00
25 Washington	2	2	2	100%	1.00	25s	8	0.00	\$0.00
26 Aberdeen	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
27 Albany	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
28 Boardman	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
29 Charles City	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
30 Columbus	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
31 Cordova	1	0	1	50%	1.00	12s	5	0.00	\$0.00
32 Five Forks	1	1	0	0%	0.00	2s	7	0.00	\$0.00
33 Frazier Park	1	1	1	100%	1.00	4m 35s	4	0.00	\$0.00
34 Fresno	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
35 Gustavus	1	0	1	100%	1.00	47s	1	0.00	\$0.00
36 Hialeah Gardens	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
37 Homer	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
38 Istanbul	1	0	1	100%	1.00	52s	1	0.00	\$0.00
39 Kodiak	1	1	1	100%	1.00	4m 35s	4	0.00	\$0.00
40 Kotzebue	1	1	1	50%	1.00	0s	6	0.00	\$0.00
41 Lake Oswego	1	0	0	0%	0.00	0s	2	0.00	\$0.00
42 Morelia	1	1	0	0%	0.00	0s	3	0.00	\$0.00
43 Nashville	1	1	1	100%	1.00	1m 05s	4	0.00	\$0.00
44 Quebec City	1	1	0	0%	0.00	8s	4	0.00	\$0.00
45 San Jose	1	1	1	100%	1.00	28s	4	0.00	\$0.00
46 Patzcuaro	0	0	0	0%	0.00	0s	2	0.00	\$0.00

Tech overview



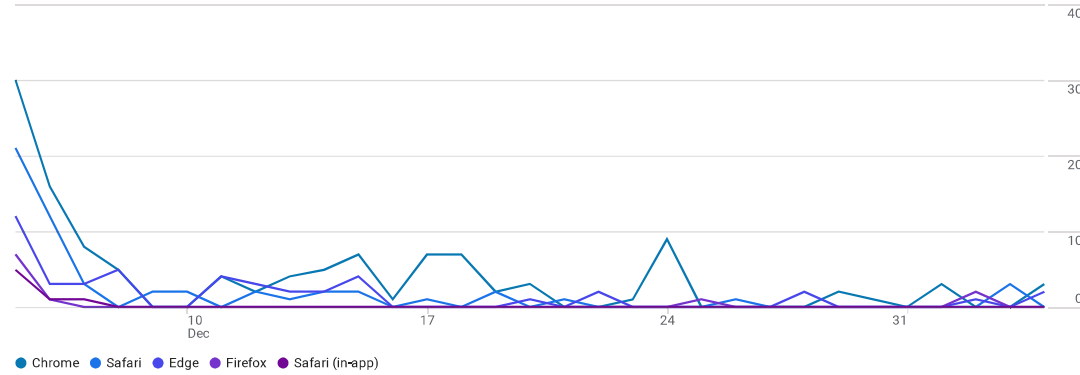
All Users Add comparison

Custom Dec 5, 2023 - Jan 4, 2024

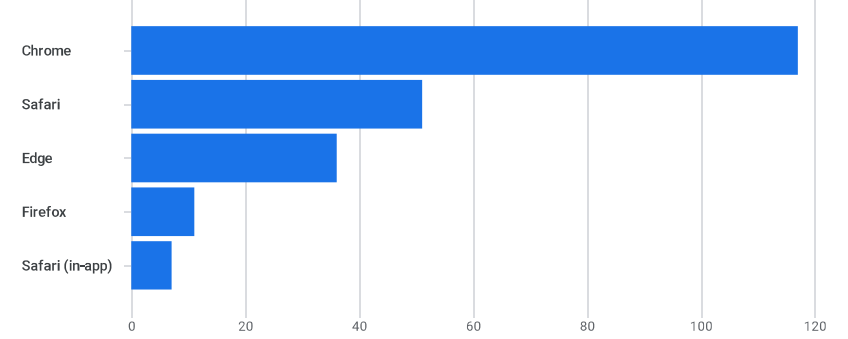
Tech details: Browser

Add filter

Users by Browser over time



Users by Browser



Search...

Rows per page: 10 1-7 of 7

Browser	Users	New users	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Engaged sessions per user	Average engagement time	Event count	Conversions	Total revenue
	225 100% of total	218 100% of total	135 100% of total	40.3% Avg 0%	0.60 Avg 0%	58s Avg 0%	1,204 100% of total	0.00	\$0.00
1 Chrome	117	116	62	40%	0.53	50s	539	0.00	\$0.00
2 Safari	51	51	32	36.36%	0.63	1m 10s	287	0.00	\$0.00
3 Edge	36	31	32	46.38%	0.89	1m 25s	299	0.00	\$0.00
4 Firefox	11	10	6	46.15%	0.55	41s	43	0.00	\$0.00
5 Safari (in-app)	7	7	1	14.29%	0.14	0s	23	0.00	\$0.00
6 Android Webview	2	2	1	50%	0.50	1m 06s	7	0.00	\$0.00
7 Samsung Internet	1	1	1	100%	1.00	1m 19s	6	0.00	\$0.00



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment C

### Meeting Materials



# WELCOME

PROJECT NO. 0A31034/ Z566310000

## Safer Seward Highway

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

WINTER 2023 PUBLIC MEETING  
PLEASE SIGN-IN



# ABOUT THE PROJECT

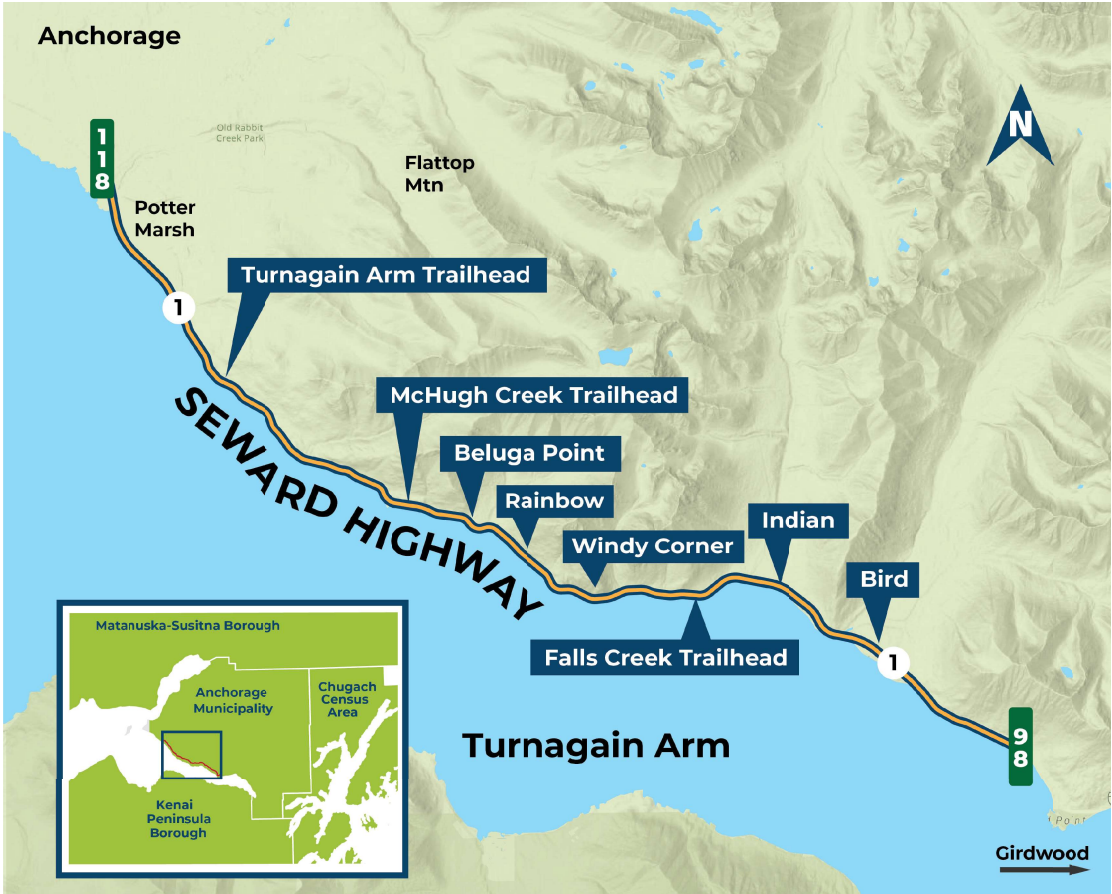


The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is proposing to construct improvements along the Seward Highway between Bird Flats and Rabbit Creek. This major infrastructure project will make highway safety improvements to allow decommissioning of the Traffic Safety Corridor between Anchorage and Girdwood.

The Seward Highway has a long history of vehicle crashes that result in serious injuries and fatalities. Due to the safety concerns, the Seward Highway was designated a Highway Safety Corridor in 2006. Since 2006, Anchorage area traffic traveling the Seward Highway to destinations such as Girdwood, Seward, and the Kenai Peninsula has increased, with 2021 Annual Average Daily Traffic between 7,000 and 10,000 vehicles. Seasonal traffic peaks in the summer further exemplify the problem, with daily traffic exceeding 15,000 vehicles per day during June, July, and August on this primarily two-lane highway.

We initiated this project with a scoping phase earlier this year. We received lots of input on important things to consider and what you think we need to do to make the highway safer. Since then, the project team has been doing some environmental field work, developing engineering concepts and investigations, and hosting a stakeholder working group and summer outreach.

We took all that information gathered and developed a few concepts that we need your feedback on!



# SAFETY DATA

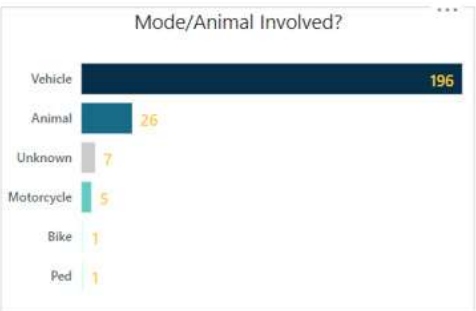
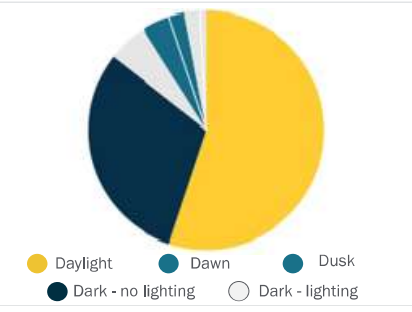
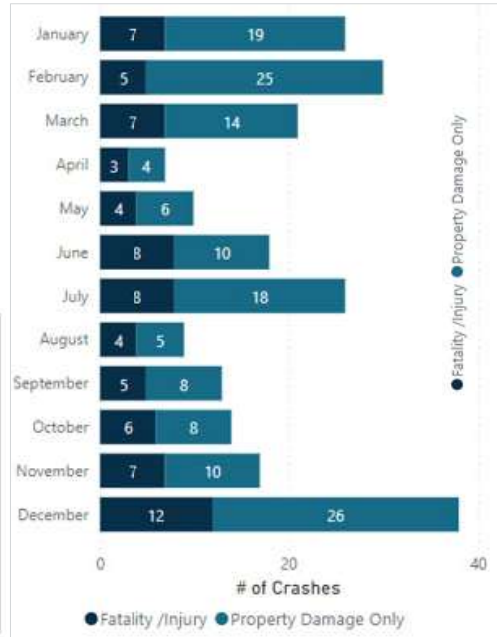
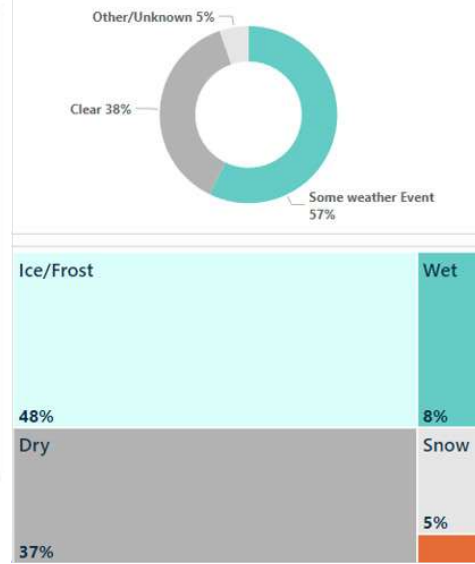


**Data is based on 5-year crash history 2017 - 2021**

**236**  
Crashes

**4** Deaths  
**8** Major Injuries

**26** Animal Involved  
**2** Bike/Ped Involved

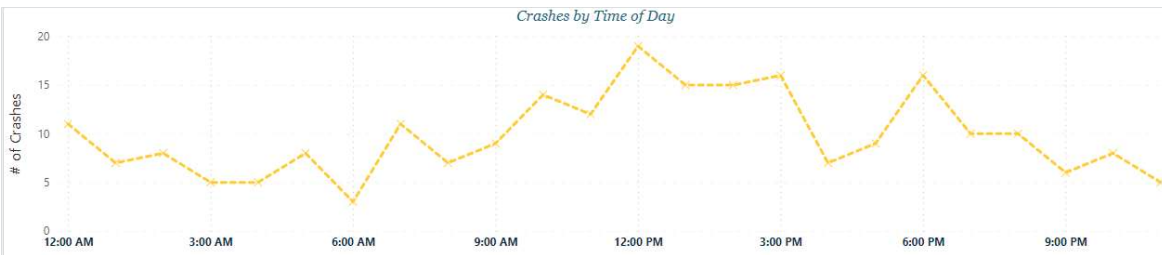


3% of crashes involved drug use

**6**

6% of crashes involved alcohol consumption

**14**



Injuries in the bar graphs include both major and minor injury crashes. Major injuries are those where a permanent life change results from the crash where as a minor injury would result in full recovery. Definitions for these crash types can be found on the FHWA KABCO Injury Classification Scale: [https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsp/spm/conversion\\_tbl/pdfs/kabco\\_ctable\\_by\\_state.pdf](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsp/spm/conversion_tbl/pdfs/kabco_ctable_by_state.pdf)

# SCOPING RESULTS: Public Feedback



“ Dedicated left turn opportunities at popular pullouts north of Indian. ”

“ Safety should be the number one priority. ”

“ There needs to be turn lane at McHugh Creek. ”

“ I would love to see a paved bike path from Anchorage to Girdwood. ”

“ Highway expansion can have negative impacts on communities and the environment. ”

“ I support making the Seward Highway safer. ”

“ Avalanche mitigation should also be considered. ”

“ The project funding will be a huge challenge as well. ”

“ Consider not putting rumble strips anywhere. ”

“ Maintain the visual aesthetics. ”

“ The project should include maintenance burden. ”

“ I am happy that the prospect for creating a safer Seward Highway is moving forward. ”

“ Design for the long term. ”

“ It's important to keep pushing back on the rocks for safety. ”

“ The current bike path runs into pull offs/parking areas which is not safe. ”



# SCOPING RESULTS: Draft Purpose and Need



## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, Reconstruction project is to reconstruct this segment of the highway corridor to improve safety for all users, to meet current design standards for a component of the Interstate Highway System and eliminate the current designation as a Highway Safety Corridor.

### Project Need

### Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity



#### Possible Improvements

- » Improved roadway signage
- » Improved scenic and recreational pull-offs
- » Increased line of sight
- » Divided highway

#### Measurable Result

- » Reduction in severe and fatal crashes
- » Removal of the Safety Corridor designation

### Project Need

### Update to Meet Current Design Standards



#### Possible Improvements

- » Curve flattening
- » Wider shoulders
- » Rock and ice fall mitigation
- » Additional/new guardrails

#### Measurable Result

- » Curves, shoulders, guardrail, and clear zones that meet current design standards

### Project Need

### Increase Mobility and Reliability



#### Possible Improvements

- » Separated multi-use pathway
- » Additional lanes/space
- » Adding turning lanes
- » Adding space for emergency response

#### Measurable Result

- » Decrease in time spent following (platooning of traffic) and traffic delays



# STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP



**We know there are no easy fixes, but there are opportunities.**

**We are working with a group of agency, organization, and community representatives to help us figure out some of the thorny issues. This corridor has so many unique challenges; the steep mountains of the Chugach State Park on one side and the waters of the Turnagain Arm on the other are challenging enough. Add to that the diverse uses, the railroad and recreation that happen throughout.**

**We are asking this group to help us identify issues and compromises we can all agree on... all with the goal of a safer Seward Highway in mind.**

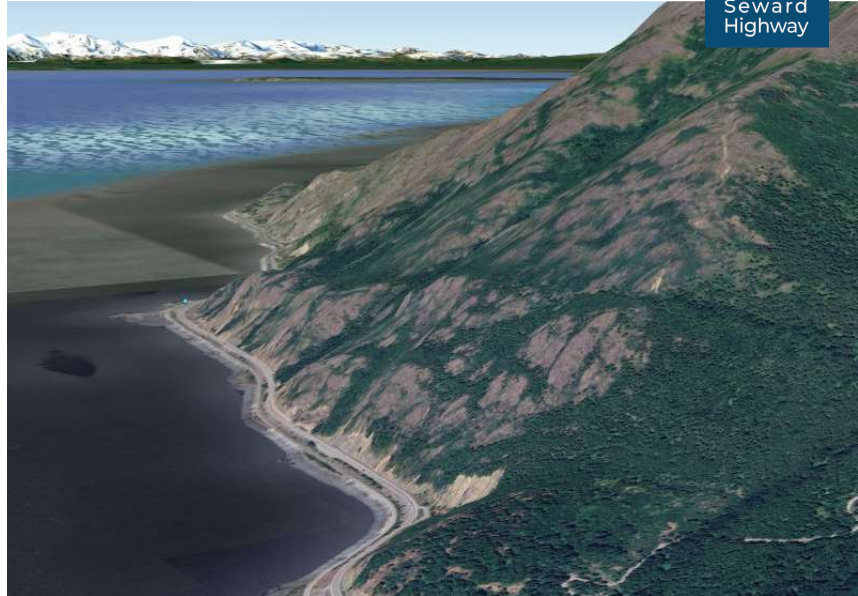
## Organizations:

- Municipality of Anchorage
- DNR, Chugach State Park
- Alaska Railroad Corporation
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game
- Girdwood Board of Supervisors
- State Historical Preservation Office
- NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Services
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Turnagain Arm Community Council
- Rabbit Creek Community Council
- Bike Anchorage
- Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions
- Alaska Trucking Association
- Alaska Travel Industry Association

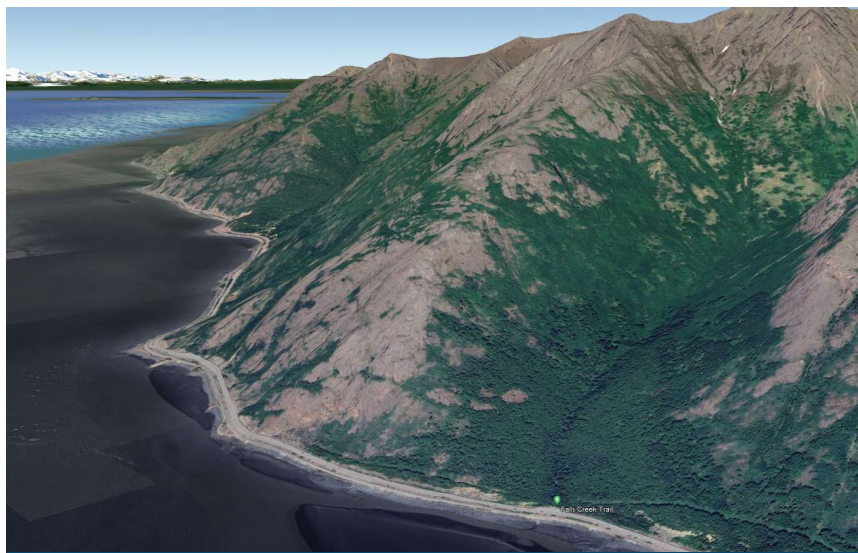


# CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

RECREATIONAL ACCESS



WILDLIFE



TOPOGRAPHY

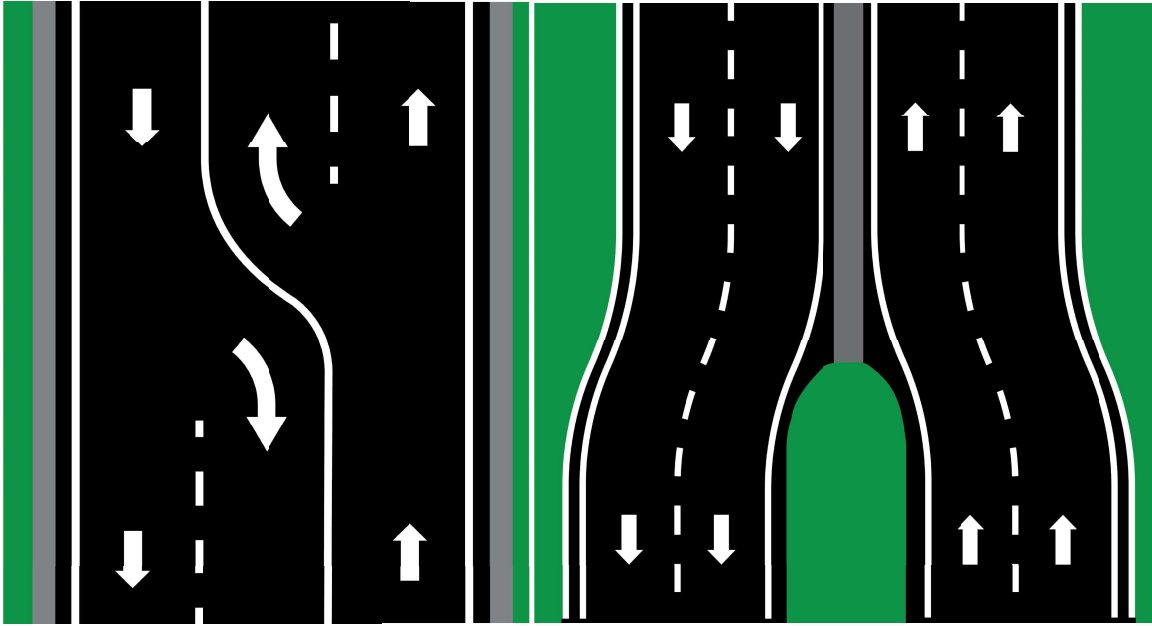


# WHAT NOW? DESIGN CONCEPTS

## 3-Lane

### Alternating Passing

- Smaller footprint/fewer impacts, although in areas where left-turn lanes are needed, potential for similar footprint to the 4-lane
- Would likely still contain a median barrier to maintain separation of northbound and southbound traffic.
- Potential to be two lanes during heavy snow
- May need another widening project in the future
- Less expensive



The team has also been investigating tunnels to see where they might be feasible from an environmental and practicability standpoint.



## 4-Lane

### Barrier or Median Divided

- Wider footprint / more impacts
- Snow storage available in a median section, and quicker, more efficient snow removal
- Median allows for space needed to add in left-turn lanes where needed
- Median would allow for enhanced visibility in tight curve areas
- Median would allow for more recovery area for run-off-the-road vehicles, without hitting a barrier
- Balances through traffic vs local access traffic better by providing continuous passing opportunities
- Less likely to need additional improvements in the future
- More expensive



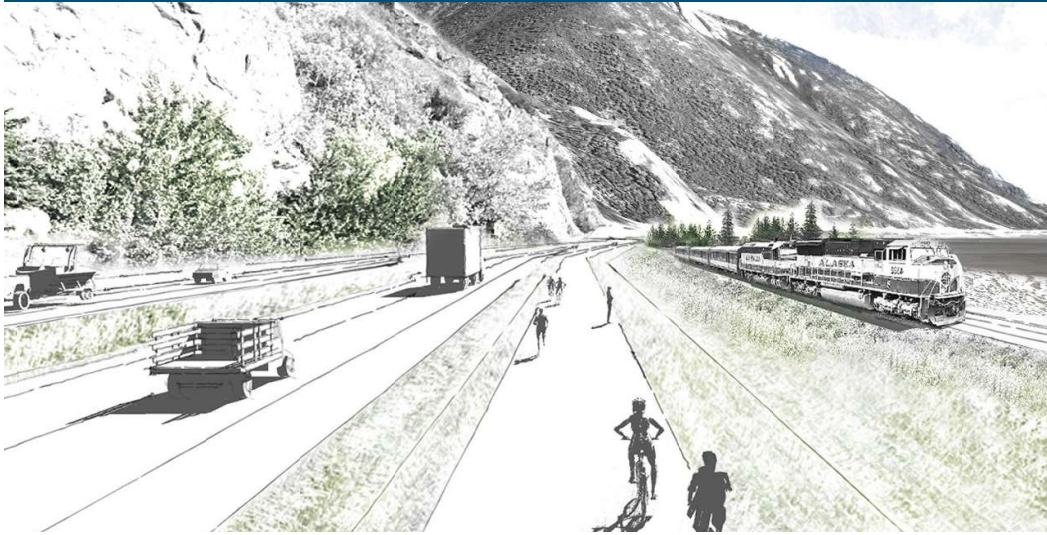
These maps and images are a tool we use to develop and explore ideas to see how they would fit. They contain about 10% level of engineering design, meaning, it is conceptual and meant to be used as a visual tool. **Questions? Ask a project team member with a name tag.**

# WHAT NOW? DESIGN CONCEPTS

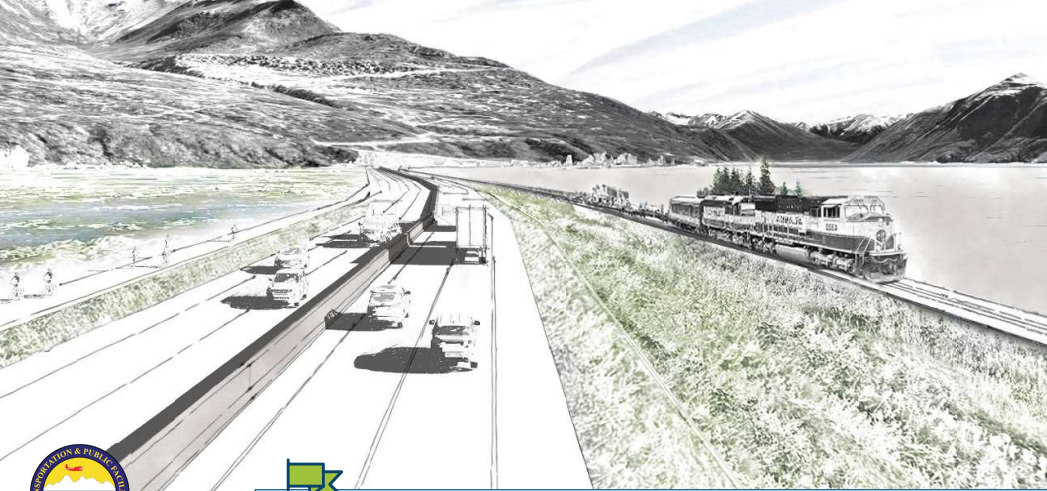
4-lane median divided with frontage road at Indian



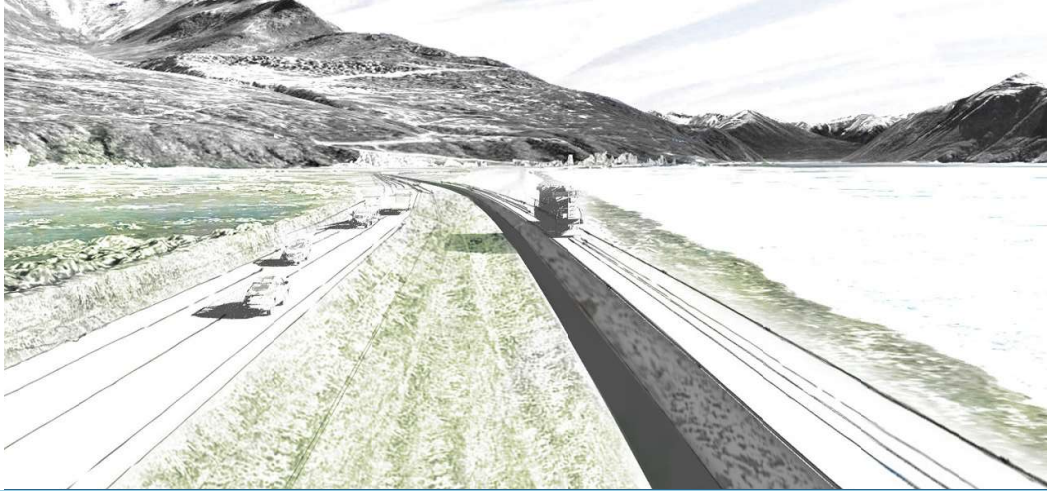
Multi-use pathway near Beluga Point



4-lane barrier divided at Potter Marsh



2-lane existing at Potter Marsh



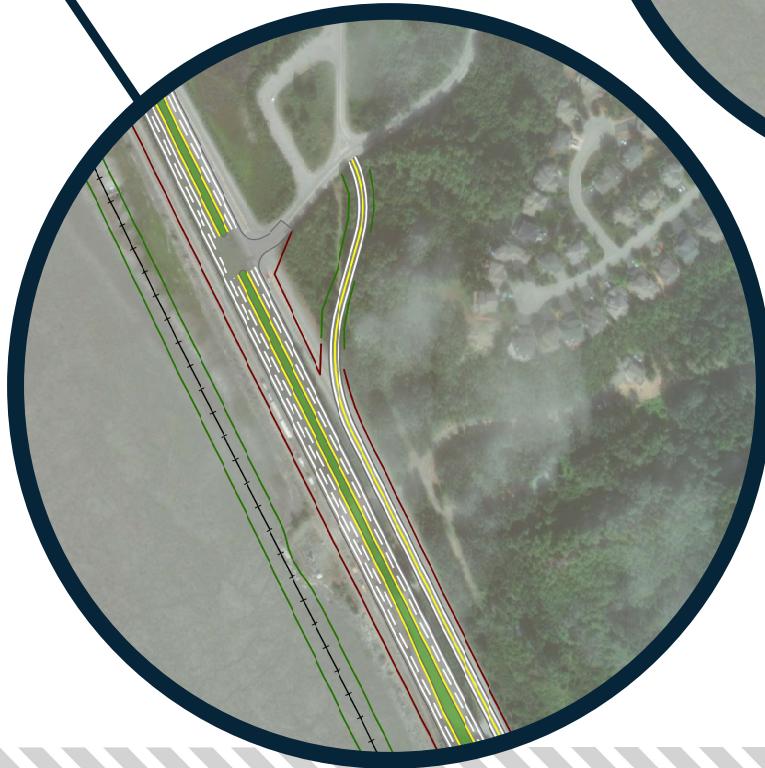
These are conceptual visuals to give some perspective on the ideas being discussed - what do you think?

# POTTER MARSH



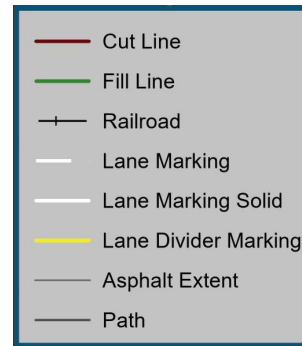
## 3-Lane

- Less impacts to adjacent wetlands
- Left turn lane at Potter Valley Road
- No need to move ARRC tracks at Potter Valley intersection
- Several direct access locations to the Seward Highway



## 4-lane

- Potter Valley becomes only access, consolidated access improves safety
- New frontage road to access trailheads and parking south of Potter Valley intersection
- Left turn lane at Potter Valley Road
- More impacts to the refuge on the west
- Must move ARRC tracks out
- Impacts historic Section House building



# MCHUGH CREEK



### 3-Lane

- Dedicated turn lane for turning left into parking lot



### 4-lane

- Dedicated turn lane for turning left into parking lot

	Cut Line
	Fill Line
	Railroad
	Lane Marking
	Lane Marking Solid
	Lane Divider Marking
	Asphalt Extent
	Path

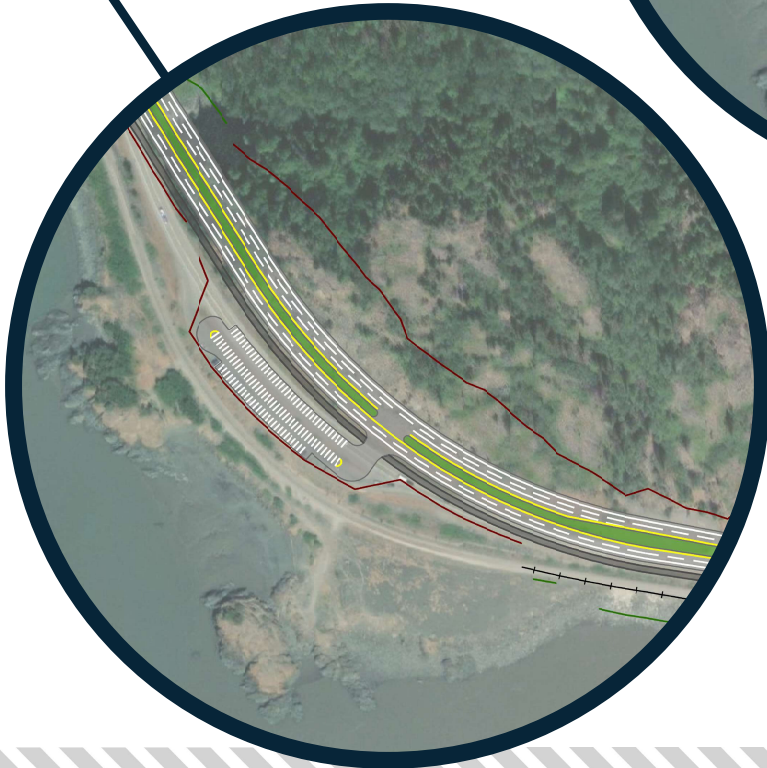


# BELUGA POINT



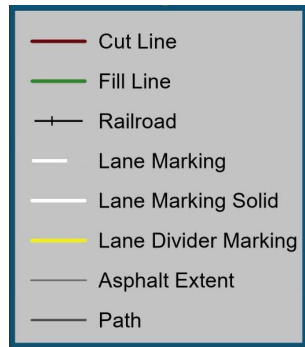
### 3-Lane

- Single entry / exit from parking
- Pedestrian crossing
- Prevent ARRC trespass
- Likely access from northbound and southbound
- Turning movements moved out of the travel way

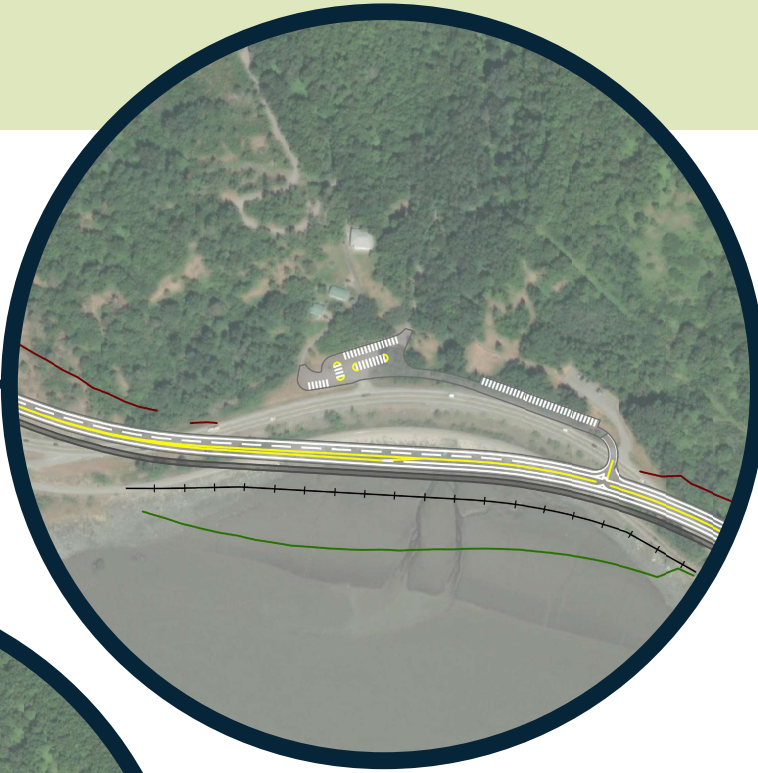


### 4-lane

- Turning movements moved out of the travel way
- Single entry / exit from parking
- Pedestrian crossing
- Prevent ARRC trespass
- Likely access from northbound and southbound

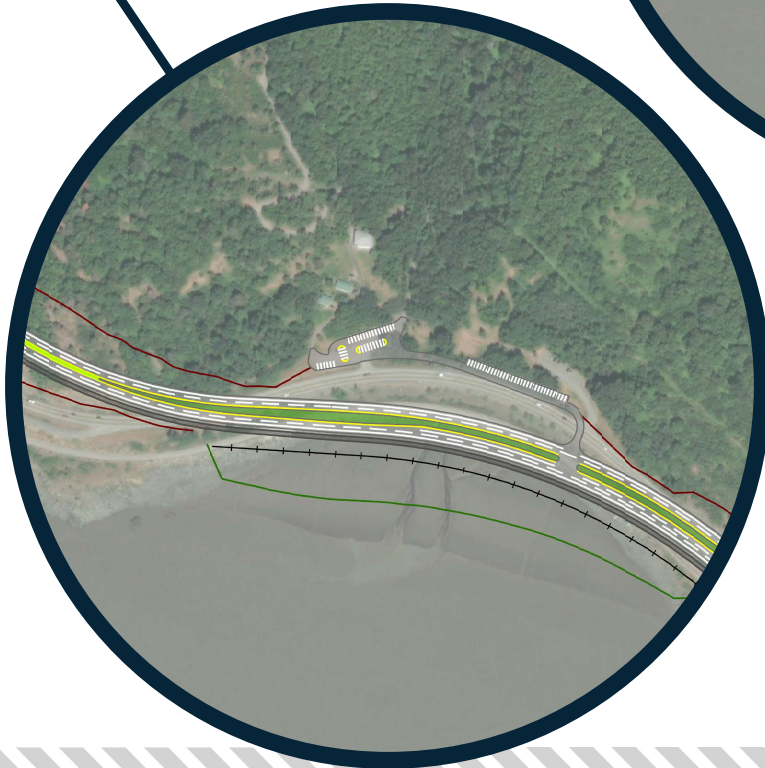


# RAINBOW



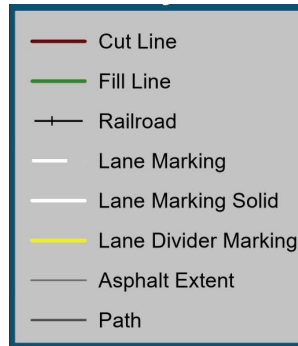
### 3-Lane

- Single entry / exit from parking
- Likely access from northbound and southbound
- One lane of through traffic in both directions due to turn lanes

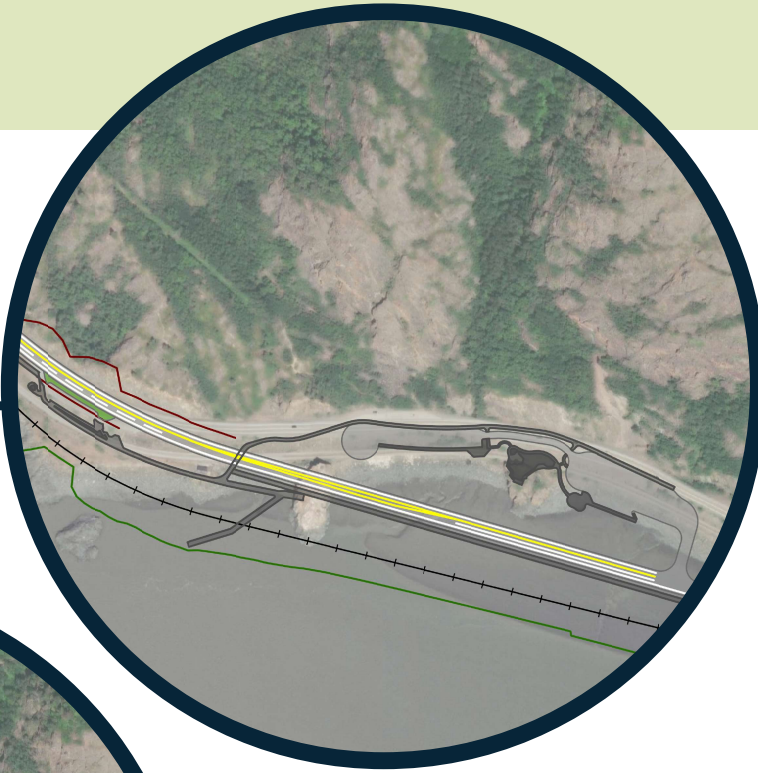
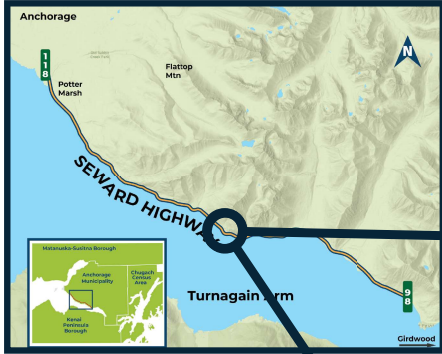


### 4-lane

- Single entry / exit from parking
- Likely access from northbound and southbound

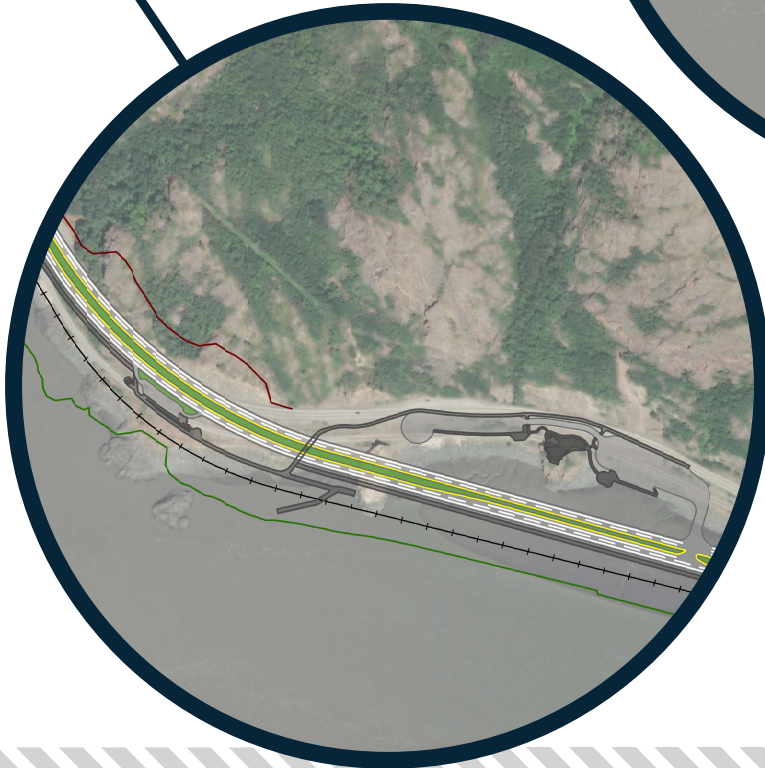


# WINDY CORNER



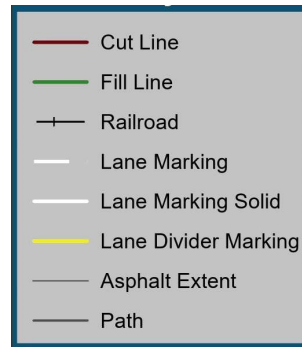
### 3-Lane

- Passing only for southbound traffic
- Waterside pathway access
- Expanded parking

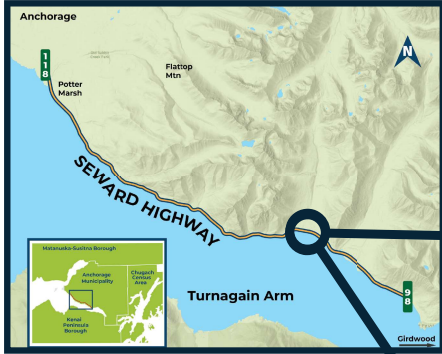


### 4-lane

- Turning movements have dedicated deceleration, turning bays
- Waterside pathway access
- Expanded parking

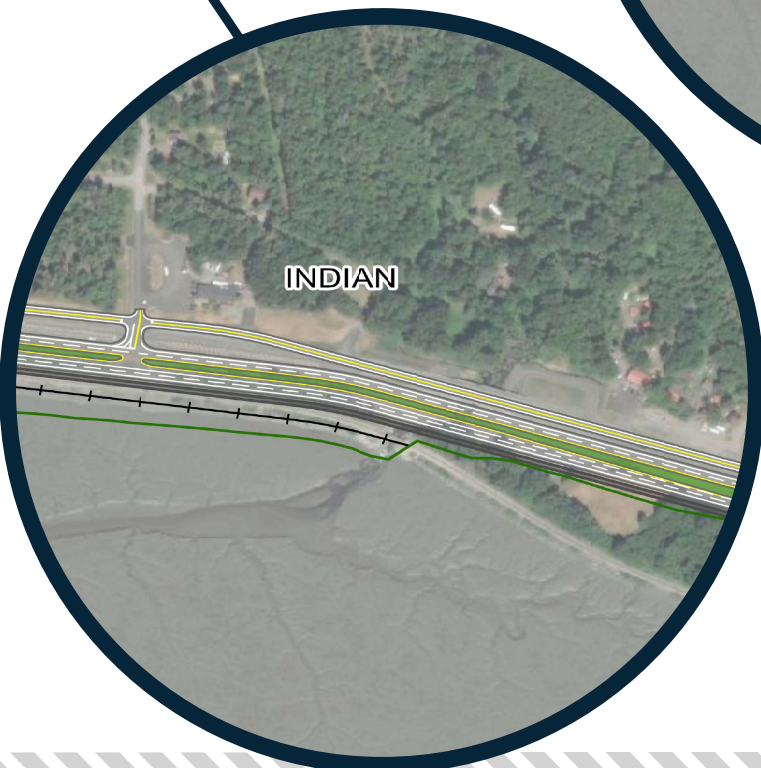


# INDIAN



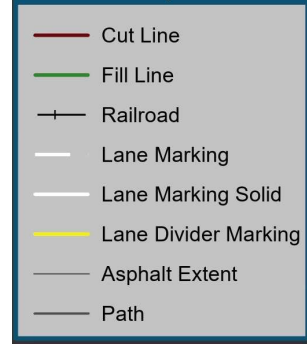
## 3-Lane

- Mostly on existing alignment
- Impacts the ballpark
- Does not consolidate access points

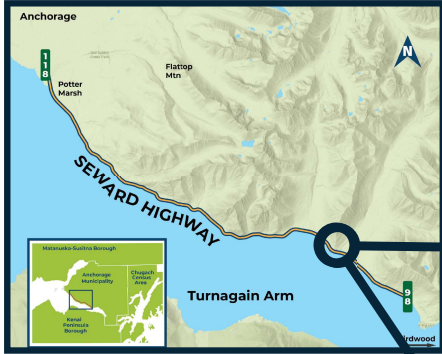


## 4-lane

- Frontage road provides additional separation from the highway
- Impacts the ballpark
- Frontage road reduces direct access points, improving safety



# BIRD



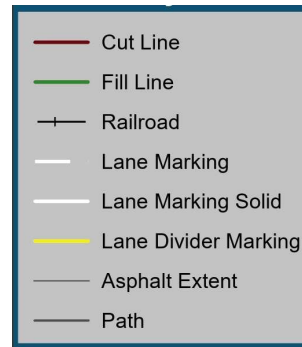
### 3-Lane

- Minimal impacts to Bird Campground
- Does not consolidate access points




### 4-lane

- Community frontage road, provides for additional separation from the highway
- Minor impacts to the Bird Campground
- Frontage road reduces direct access points, improving safety




# SCREENING PROCESS



  
**Concept Ideas**

- Engineering
- SWG
- Public
- Agencies
- Prior studies
- Constraints

  
**Alternatives in the EA**

- No Build vs Build (1+)
- Detailed environmental impacts analysis
- Public and agency comment period

**Preferred Alternative**



- Design speed, design criteria (lanes/widths)
- Mitigation measures
- Permitting requirements

**We Are Here**



### Screening Factors

- Purpose & Need
- Traffic analysis
- Safety analysis
- Project Goals
- Practicable and Reasonable

### Environmental Analysis

- NEPA (environmental impacts)
- Section 404 (wetlands & waters of the US)
- Section 4(f) & 6(f) (parks)
- Section 106 (cultural & historic properties)
- Endangered Species Act (Beluga whales and habitat)

**Final EA**

### Design Phase

Intersection Details, Final Location of Features (i.e. Pathway) Final Footprint



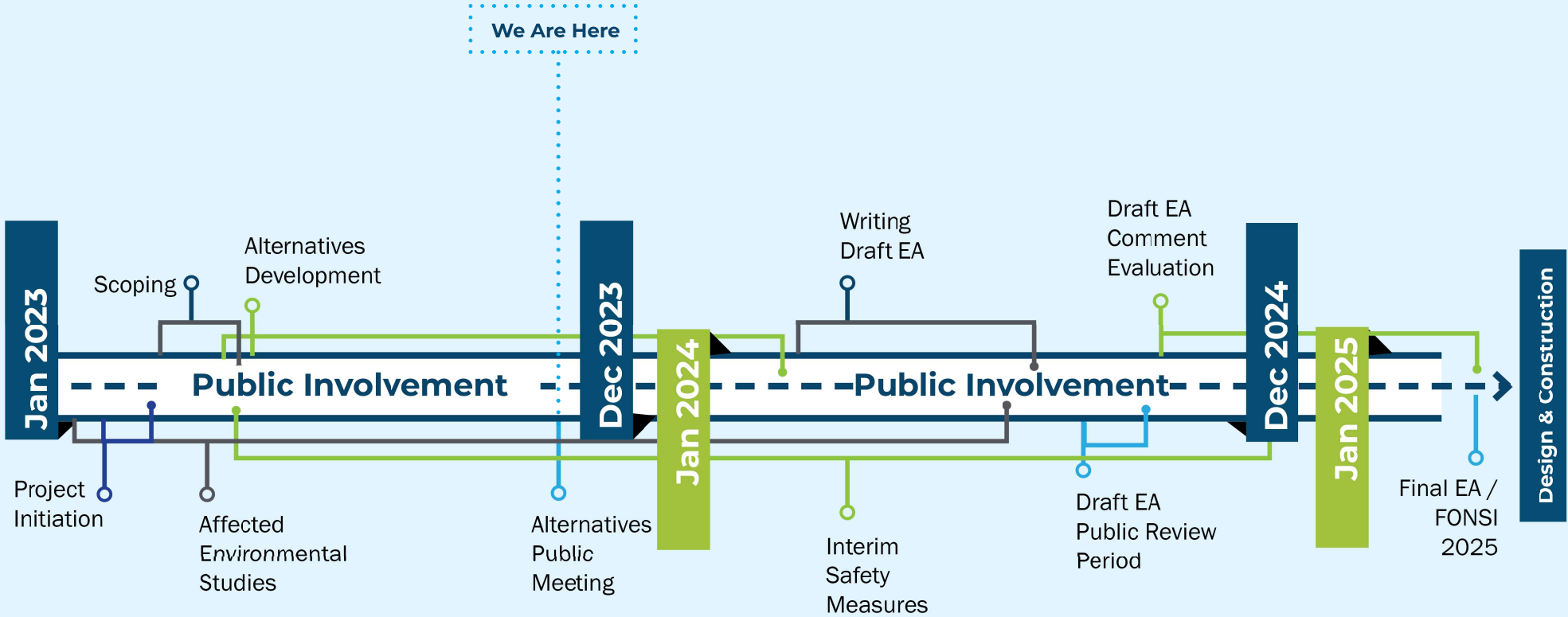
**Construction**



# TIMELINE



We Are Here



# TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

You can participate in the Safer Seward Highway Project in several ways. Scan the QR codes below with your smartphone to instantly:

## SIGN-UP FOR EMAILS

Receive meeting notices, project announcements, and other up-to-date information in your email inbox!



## LEAVE A COMMENT

Leave a comment using forms available here tonight or use the QR code below to submit them electronically.



## EMAIL US DIRECTLY

You can email the project team directly.  
[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



## CALL US

If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team. (907) 802-3656



We would like your feedback. Here's what we want to know:

- » Concepts – any improvements?
- » Other ideas we should look at?
- » Issues we should study?

**Mailing Address:**  
Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36 Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**General Project Information:**  
[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)



# SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Last Updated: October 2023

### 1. Why is the Safer Seward Highway (Seward Highway Milepost [MP] 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Improvements) Project needed?

The purpose of the proposed Safer Seward Highway Project is to improve public safety. This section of the highway has a much higher rate of fatal and major-injury crashes than similar corridors in the state. As such, in 2006 it was designated a Highway Safety Corridor. Since then, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has worked with public safety partners to increase enforcement, improve emergency response times, and educate users. This has helped to reduce serious crashes by 40% overall ([Safety Corridor Audit 2017](#)), but serious crashes are still happening at a high rate and there has not been an improvement to the rate of fatalities. Our plan is to develop improvements to the road cross-section and alignment that will decrease high-severity crashes and provide space for mixed user groups along the corridor.

### 2. What happened to the Windy Corner projects?

The “Windy Corner” (MPs 105 to 107) and “Windy Corner to Rainbow Point” (MPs 105 to 109.5) projects (collectively referred to as the “Windy Corner projects”) focused on smaller segments of the Seward Highway. In response to public and agency comments on the 2020 Draft Seward Highway: MP 105 to 107, Windy Corner Environmental Assessment (EA), DOT&PF expanded the project to a 20-mile corridor from MP 98.5 to 118. Looking at a larger highway section allows us to develop a more comprehensive safety solution and enable better coordination among agencies on similar issues that occur along the entire corridor.

### 3. How much of the previous design efforts (e.g., public and agency input, EA and other environmental documents, engineering) will be reused for this expanded project?

Everything! The comments and prior work are the starting point for this EA. Previously completed analyses and design will be considered and used where appropriate.

### 4. Can the proposed project be constructed within the existing right-of-way (ROW)?

DOT&PF’s top priority is enhancing safety for Seward Highway users. There likely isn’t enough room within the existing ROW to make the needed improvements (e.g., straightening curves, providing space along the road for falling rock or ice, adding lanes, adding a shared-use pathway). Additionally, the highway is currently at or near the minimum separation distance from the Alaska Railroad tracks. It’s likely that we will need to make rock cuts or place fill in Turnagain Arm, the extent of which will be determined during the EA process.

### 5. Can a separated, non-motorized pathway be constructed as part of the proposed project?

Yes, a separated, non-motorized, shared-use pathway is currently part of the design. During the Windy Corner projects, many public commenters asked for a shared-use pathway.

## 6. Would the aesthetics be suitable for a Scenic Byway?

We've heard that the public values the scenic nature of the road and surrounding area. During the EA process, we'll evaluate how proposed changes to the highway might affect aesthetics and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation will be evaluated to reduce visual impacts.

## 7. Will there still be access to the waterside at Windy Corner?

It's too soon to know. The team is utilizing the 2017 Reconnaissance Study and other work done to date at Windy Corner, taking comments from the public and agencies, and then we will determine where we need to develop additional design concepts. Maintaining reasonable access to trails, pullouts, recreation, and scenic opportunities is part of the project.

## 8. Why improve the highway if the Highway Safety Corridor designation has already improved corridor safety?

The Highway Safety Corridor designation has reduced high-severity crashes, but it hasn't reduced fatal crashes. Safety Corridor designations are intended to be temporary measures, used until long-term safety improvements are constructed. Safety upgrades and traffic operation improvements proposed for this project are the long-term solutions needed to permanently reduce fatal and major-injury crashes. As DOT&PF implements permanent engineered safety improvements, segments of the Seward Highway between MPs 87 and 117 may be removed (i.e., decommissioned) from the Highway Safety Corridor program based on recommendations in future DOT&PF Safety Corridor Audits.

Additional Safety Corridor program information is available at: [https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/safety\\_corridors.shtml](https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/safety_corridors.shtml).

## 9. How much will it cost?

At this stage of project development, we haven't prepared cost estimates. The proposed project's cost will depend on the design developed for the EA. The 2017 Reconnaissance Study estimated the project cost at \$830 million; in 2023 dollars, that would be a little over \$1 billion. We will be looking for cost savings and added value as the proposed project advances.

## 10. How long will the EA take? When will construction start?

DOT&PF is aiming to complete the EA by the end of 2024. Design would follow, with the earliest construction could begin in 2025.

## 11. Will the environmental document be an EA (similar to the Windy Corner projects)?

Yes. DOT&PF's preliminary analysis indicated an EA is the appropriate class of action based on several factors. The protected resources are well-defined in this corridor, based on the DOT&PF staff's long history of successfully avoiding, minimizing and mitigating impacts to these protected resources and communities over the decades of maintaining, operating and constructing improvements to the Seward Highway along Turnagain Arm. Additionally, the planned highway improvements aren't included in the Federal Highway Administration's list of example projects that normally require an environmental impact statement (listed in 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.115(a)(1) through (6)).

## 12. Where will road-building material come from? Will it be mined from Chugach State Park?

We're working with resource agencies, including Chugach State Park, to identify important natural resources within the corridor. We're currently designing a proposed alignment that we'll present to the public, agencies, and other stakeholders. At that time, we'll know more about where road building materials will come from and any potential impacts to Chugach State Park.

### 13. What is TransportationX?

The Safer Seward Highway Project has been designated as an Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) TransportationX project. The TransportationX program involves new ways of working that are outcome rather than process focused, and emphasizes community teaming, agile project management processes, and new ways of resourcing to achieve success. These efforts contribute to our vision of organizational excellence and Safety, State of Good Repair, Economic Vitality, Resiliency, and Sustainable Transportation investment areas. For more information, check out [DOT&PF's TransportationX Program \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com).

### 14. Who is the Project Manager?

The short answer is that DOT&PF Deputy Commissioner Katherine Keith is leading this project. However, under the agile project management process, leadership roles are not based on levels of importance/status, which helps foster a more collaborative and outcome-oriented team. Other DOT&PF leaders—Shannon McCarthy, Lauren Little, and Sean Baski—provide guidance and support as part of this dynamic project team. The team is split into cross-functional action teams with oversight from HDR's Chris Hughes, who serves as the action team liaison to project leadership, and action team leadership from HDR's Edith McKee for Engineering, Katherine Wood for Communications, and Taylor Horne for Environmental.

### 15. How would any new improvements be maintained? Can we afford it?

Maintenance costs would increase for additional pavement surface, such as for plowing. However, we expect costs would be offset by having fewer instances of the maintenance crew needing to set up traffic control/road closures to remove falling rocks and ice. New facilities would also initially reduce maintenance costs because the signs, guardrail, and pavement would not need replacement for some time. We also expect that the improvements would reduce community traffic delay, traffic control, and emergency response costs as well as offset some maintenance costs.

### 16. Is the project team considering a no build alternative?

Yes, analysis of the no build alternative is a required part of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and will be considered throughout the entire National Environmental Policy Act process. Once the Draft EA review period is complete, DOT&PF will review all feedback and decide whether to select the no build or build alternative.

### 17. Will this project take away resources from other projects that need to get done?

Part of the funds needed for this project have already been allocated in the Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) 2020–2023 budget (Need ID 12641). The project team is looking at other funding sources, such as federal grants, to fill that remaining gap as we start to move toward an idea of what the final improvements will be and their estimated costs. The STIP outlines all proposed federal highway-funded expenditures with a goal of balancing the safety and resiliency of our highway system with state, regional, and community desires.

### 18. How much will it cost to mitigate impacts on protected species and wetlands?

It is too early to know for sure. The project team has started collecting wildlife and wetlands information and data. We conducted a bald and golden eagle survey in May 2023; we will be conducting wetlands investigations, cultural resources surveys, and coordination with NMFS regarding the beluga whale migration during September and October 2023. We currently do not know what the exact footprint of the project will be, but the environmental and engineering teams will work together to develop a range of alternative footprints that will have varying impacts. Impacts on resources and mitigation plans will be shared in the Draft EA for public and agency review and comment.

## 19. How can you build into the Cook Inlet with the beluga whales?

All project work will comply with the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act. Turnagain Arm is designated critical habitat for endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales. Any in-water construction will be completed with mitigation measures, to the extent practicable, to reduce impacts on beluga whales, other marine mammals, and their habitat. These mitigation measures will be identified during consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which has management authority over beluga whales and other marine mammals within the project area. Mitigation measures could include performing work at low tide when the area is dry, stopping work when beluga whales or other marine mammals are near the work area, and/or using designated observers to implement and document the mitigation measures as specified by the NMFS permit. The team will be considering mitigation ideas during engineering design. Any potential impacts on beluga whales, other marine mammals, and their habitat, as well as mitigation measures to reduce these impacts, will be detailed in the EA, which will be available for public and agency review and comment.

## 20. Does the traffic data require widening the highway?

The purpose of the project is to improve safety along the highway for all users, and with the addition of shoulders and pedestrian pathways, rock catchment, and passing or deceleration lanes, it may be that the highway is wider in many sections. Many people have expressed concern over whether or not the project will widen the highway for additional vehicle traffic, and while traffic data analyzed to date appears to support the need for additional capacity, our analysis is not yet complete. Bear in mind that traffic data is only one component of determining the footprint of road, that could result in a wider typical highway section but other factors may limit an increase of highway width including topography and the need to avoid sensitive cultural, habitat, or recreational areas.

The team has started preparing a capacity and safety analysis, which will provide more information to facilitate design decisions. We are also updating the traffic numbers/projections to reflect existing conditions, rather than relying on older data. This will help us better understand the issues needing to be solved. When these analyses are complete, we will share them with the public.

## 21. Can a median barrier be enough to solve the highway's safety issue?

A median barrier is one option the team is considering. Based on available crash data, we can see that most highway fatalities between 2016 and 2021 were from head-on collisions. While median barriers can help prevent head-on collisions, they also have downsides. When looking into the use of a median barrier for this project, we will consider:

- Will the barrier provide the effectiveness needed?
- Will the barrier pose other safety hazards? What is the risk of vehicles deflecting back into traffic they strike the barrier?
- What additional space will be needed for the barrier? Will the additional space be used effectively to reduce crashes?
- Will the barrier impede the ability to properly maintain the corridor and provide emergency access?

While separating traffic will aid in preventing head-on collisions, we are taking a comprehensive look at all crash types. We will carefully consider ways to separate traffic to determine which method would be most effective and what is possible to build within the project corridor.

## Questions?

Email the project team directly at: [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)

Visit the Contact Us page on our website for more options:

[SaferSewardHighway.com](http://SaferSewardHighway.com)



# SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY PROJECT FACT SHEET



Version: October 2023

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is looking to make long-term highway improvements on the Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road (MP 118 near Potter Marsh) and Bird Flats (MP 98) to improve safety and eliminate the need for a special Safety Corridor designation.

Though a beautiful scenic byway, this is the oldest Safety Corridor in the state. This designation means that it has a higher rate of severe and fatal crashes and that improvements made have not been enough to lower the rate.

We've identified some contributing factors and are in the process of identifying solutions. And we're thinking big picture - a comprehensive solution that will last.

Today, we're in the beginning stages of an updated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental assessment (EA). We've proposed a "purpose and need" statement, which is the basis for everything moving forward. We're looking at options - alternative solutions - to meet the purpose and need of the project. We're also looking at the area around the corridor to see what might happen to the natural and built environment if any of the alternatives were to be built.

## We need your help!

Once we have alternative solutions, we'll ask you what you think. Are we on target? Are we missing anything? Did we forget something? You'll help us fix this problem!



### PROJECT NEED 1 Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity



#### Possible Improvements

- Improved roadway signage
- Improved scenic and recreational pull-offs
- Increased line of sight
- Divided highway

#### Measurable Result

- Reduction in severe and fatal crashes.
- Removal of the Safety Corridor designation.

### PROJECT NEED 2 Update Substandard Design



#### Possible Improvements

- Curve flattening
- Wider shoulders
- Rock and ice fall mitigation
- Additional/new guardrails

#### Measurable Result

- Curves, shoulders, guardrail, and clear zones that meet current design standards.

### PROJECT NEED 3 Increase Mobility and Reliability



#### Possible Improvements

- Separated multi-use pathway
- Additional passing lanes/space
- Adding turning lanes
- Adding deceleration and acceleration lanes
- Adding space for emergency response

#### Measurable Result

- Decrease in time spent following (platooning of traffic) and traffic delays.

# Project Schedule

Safer Seward Highway continued...

## Anticipated Project Benefits:

In addition to improving safety and traffic operations, the project proposes to:



Improve mobility and reliability for all users including motorized and non-motorized users.

Add a multi-use separated pathway to connect Anchorage to the Bird to Gird path.



Provide safe and improved access to viewing and recreational areas.



Provide emergency access to Turnagain Arm, allowing direct access for first responders.

## Get Involved:

DOT&PF will work with stakeholders, relay accurate and timely information about the project, and consider stakeholders' comments and concerns. You can participate in the Safer Seward Highway Project in several ways:

**Sign up for our email contact list** – receive meeting notices, project announcements, and other up-to-date information in your email inbox.

**Attend a public meeting** – attend a meeting to learn more about the project and to have your voice heard.

**Leave a comment for the project team** – leave a comment using the online comment form on the project website or by downloading a PDF comment form and sending it via email to the project email.

Visit the Contact Us page for more options.

## Contacts:

If you have any questions or require additional information, please leave a message for the project team:

[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)

(907)802-3656

Safer Seward Highway

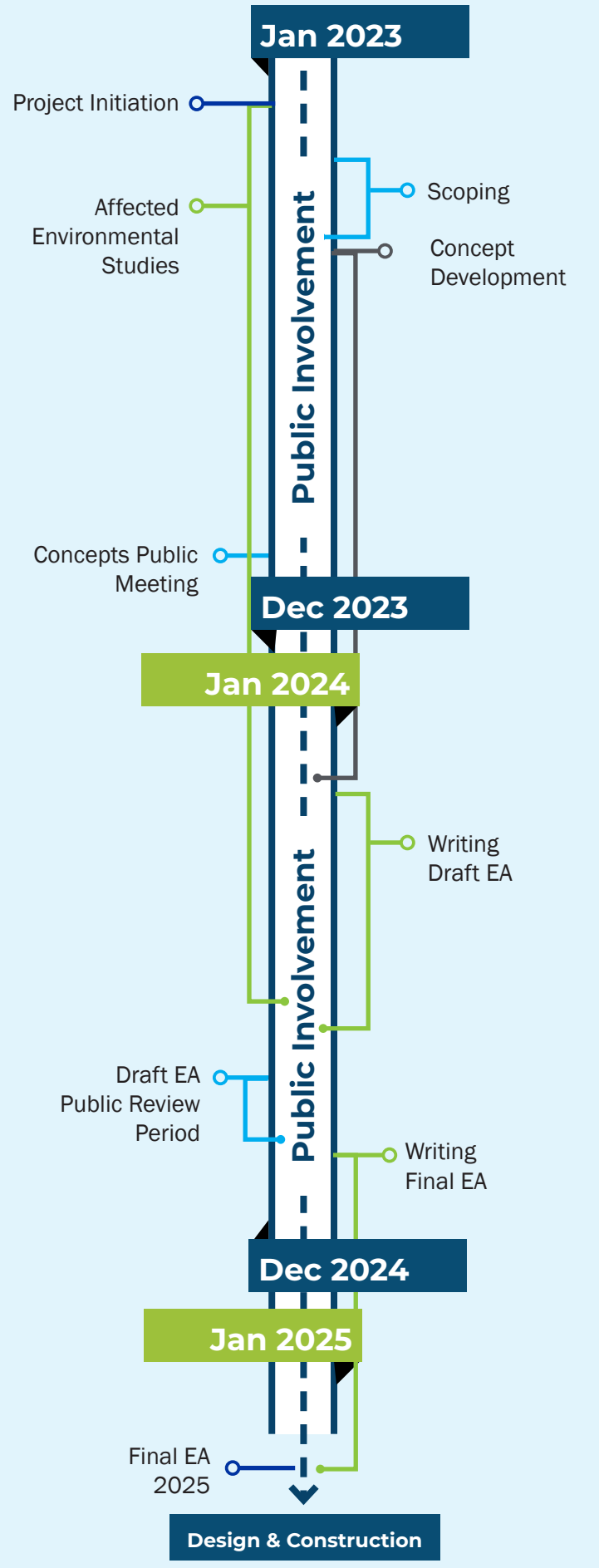
c/o HDR

582 E 36 Ave Ste 500

Anchorage, AK 99503

**Project Website:**

[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)





# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment D

### E-Blasts

**From:** [Safer Seward Highway](#)  
**To:** [Pantaleone, Pearl-Grace](#)  
**Subject:** Public Meetings: Join Us The First Week of December!  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 7, 2023 5:59:58 AM

You don't often get email from info@safersewardhighway.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: [EXTERNAL]** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

[View this email in your browser](#)



## Join Us The First Week of December!

We are holding our second round of public meetings for the Safer Seward Highway project (*Seward Highway MP 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project*) this December and you are invited! Join us to learn more about where the project is at and dive into some of our initial design concepts.

The meetings will be hosted in-person featuring an open house from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM, with a presentation at 5:45 PM at three locations:

### ANCHORAGE

Anchorage Public Library

### GIRDWOOD

Girdwood Library

### INDIAN

Valley Bible Chalet

3600 Denali Street

250 Egloff Drive

Seward Highway

Anchorage, AK 99503

Girdwood, AK 99587

Indian, AK 99540

Tuesday, December 5

Wednesday, December 6

Thursday, December 7

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### **Can't make the meeting?**

Visit us at [www.safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://www.safersewardhighwayonline.com)

from December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024, for an online open house.

Questions or comments?

Contact us at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

The Safer Seward Highway Project Team

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**From:** [Safer Seward Highway](#)  
**To:** [Pantaleone, Pearl-Grace](#)  
**Subject:** Public Meetings: Join Us Next Week!  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 28, 2023 6:00:25 AM

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## Join Us Next Week!

We are holding our second round of public meetings for the Safer Seward Highway project (*Seward Highway MP 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project*) this December and you are invited! Join us to learn more about where the project is at and dive into some of our initial design concepts.

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Valley Bible Chalet

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from December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024, for an online open house.

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Contact us at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

The Safer Seward Highway Project Team

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**From:** [Safer Seward Highway](#)  
**To:** [Pantaleone, Pearl-Grace](#)  
**Subject:** Public Meetings: Anchorage Public Meeting is TODAY! Online Open House Now Live  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:59:40 AM

**CAUTION:** [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

[View this email in your browser](#)



## ANCHORAGE PUBLIC MEETING IS TODAY!

Our second round of public meetings for the Safer Seward Highway kicks-off today and you're invited! Join us to learn more about where the project is at and dive into some of our initial design concepts.

The meetings will be hosted in-person featuring an open house from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM, with a presentation at 5:45 PM at three locations:

### ANCHORAGE

**Anchorage Public Library**

**3600 Denali Street**

### GIRDWOOD

Girdwood Library

250 Egloff Drive

### INDIAN

Valley Bible Chalet

Seward Highway

Anchorage, AK 99503

Girdwood, AK 99587

Indian, AK 99540

Tuesday, December 5

Wednesday, December 6

Thursday, December 7

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### Can't make the meeting?

Visit us at [safersewardhighwayonline.com](https://safersewardhighwayonline.com)

from December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024, for an online open house.

Questions or comments?

Contact us at (907) 802-3656 or [info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com).

The Safer Seward Highway Project Team

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Our mailing address is:






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Subject: Safer Seward Highway In-Person Public Meetings and Online Open House  
 Sent: 11/06/2023 04:20 PM AKST  
 Sent By: justin.shelby@alaska.gov  
 Sent To: Subscribers of Highway Safety Office or In Southcentral Alaska

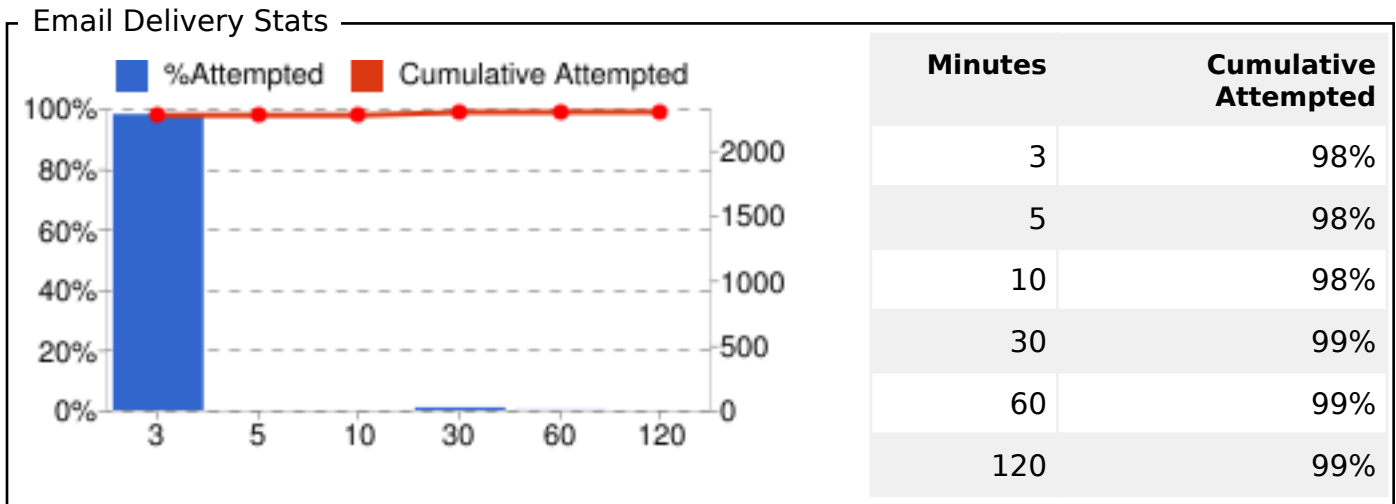
**2,322**  
 Recipients

-  Email
-  SMS
-  Facebook
-  Twitter
-  RSS

**97%**  
 Delivered



0% Pending  
 3% Bounced  
 35% Open Rate  
 1% Click Rate



Delivery Metrics - Details

- 2,322** Total Sent
- 2,247 (97%)** Delivered
- 0 (0%)** Pending
- 75 (3%)** Bounced
- 0 (0%)** Unsubscribed

Bulletin Analytics

- 903** Total Opens
- 489 (35%)** Unique Opens
- 16** Total Clicks
- 9 (1%)** Unique Clicks
- 11** # of Links

## Delivery and performance

*These figures represent all data since the bulletin was first sent to present time.*

	Progress	% Delivered	Recipients	# Delivered	Opened Unique	Bounced/Failed	Unsubscribes
<b>Email Bulletin</b>	Delivered	94.8%	1,250	1,185	449 / 37.9%	65	0
<b>Digest</b>	n/a	n/a	197	197	40 / 20.3%	0	0
<b>SMS Message</b>	Delivered	98.9%	875	865	n/a	10	n/a

Link URL	Unique Clicks	Total Clicks
<a href="http://www.safersewardhighway.com">http://www.safersewardhighway.com</a>	7	14
<a href="https://subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com/">https://subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com/</a>	1	1
<a href="https://www.facebook.com/AlaskaDOTPF">https://www.facebook.com/AlaskaDOTPF</a>	1	1
<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/AlaskaDOTPF">https://www.youtube.com/user/AlaskaDOTPF</a>	0	0
<a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/akdotpf/">https://www.flickr.com/photos/akdotpf/</a>	0	0
<a href="https://511ride.alaska.gov:8443/rss2">https://511ride.alaska.gov:8443/rss2</a>	0	0
<a href="https://twitter.com/AlaskaDOTPF">https://twitter.com/AlaskaDOTPF</a>	0	0
<a href="https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/o...">https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/o...</a>	0	0
<a href="https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/e...">https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/e...</a>	0	0
<a href="https://vimeo.com/user6209359">https://vimeo.com/user6209359</a>	0	0
<a href="https://subscriberhelp.granicus.com/">https://subscriberhelp.granicus.com/</a>	0	0



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment E

**Advertisements in the Anchorage Daily News,  
Peninsula Clarion, & Homer News**

**SAFER**



**Seward Highway**

# SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY PUBLIC NOTICE

## Announcement of In-Person Public Meetings and Online Open House

Seward Highway MP 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek  
Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034

### PUBLIC MEETING DETAILS

#### ANCHORAGE

Anchorage Public Library  
3600 Denali Street  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**Date:** Dec. 5, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.

#### GIRDWOOD

Girdwood Library  
250 Eglhoff Drive  
Girdwood, AK 99587

**Date:** Dec. 6, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.

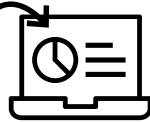
#### INDIAN

Valley Bible Chalet  
Seward Highway  
Indian, AK 99540

**Date:** Dec. 7, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.



#### Online Open House

Join us online to view the materials between  
**December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024 at**  
<https://safersewardhighwayonline.com>

#### WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?



The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is hosting public meetings for the project that proposes to reconstruct the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek. The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety and reliability for all corridor users. The DOT&PF is currently working on an environmental assessment. The project team will present data about the safety problems and progress made since the last open houses.

#### WHY THIS PUBLIC NOTICE?



Many Alaskans use the Seward Highway. This notice is to inform you of possible changes to the Seward Highway and to gather your feedback on potential solutions. Three in-person meetings and a 30-day online open house will be held to give you the opportunity to learn more about the project and tell us what you think about our work to date.

#### WHERE DO YOU COME IN?



Attend one or all in-person public meetings in Anchorage, Girdwood, and Indian and visit our online open house. Come listen to our presentation at 5:45 p.m., at each location, attend the open house after, and talk with real-life humans who have been working on this project. Have thoughts on the current design concepts? Do you have any concerns about using the Seward highway either as a motorist, bicyclist, pedestrian, or train goer? Do you have thoughts about conceptual renderings? Would you care to make any other comments on the project? Contact the project team!



[info@safersewardhighway.com](mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com)



[safersewardhighway.com](http://safersewardhighway.com)



Safer Seward Highway  
c/o HDR  
582 E 36th Ave Ste 500  
Anchorage, AK 99503



(907) 802-3656



#### SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

The DOT&PF operates Federal Programs without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy: [dot.alaska.gov/tvi\\_statement.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml). To file a complaint, go to: [dot.alaska.gov/cvtrts/titlevi.shtml](http://dot.alaska.gov/cvtrts/titlevi.shtml).

The DOT&PF complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special modifications to participate in this public meeting should contact Katherine Wood, 907-644-2153, or TDD number 711. Requests should be made at least 5 days before the accommodation is needed to make any necessary arrangements.



# **Safer Seward Highway**

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

## **Public Meeting Notice and Online Open House**

**Join us for a series of In-person  
Public Meetings  
December 5, 6, and 7, 2023.**

**Can't make it to the in-person public  
meeting? Join us online instead!**

**Visit**

**[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)**

**for meeting and project information.**



**SAFER**



**Seward  
Highway**

# Safer Seward Highway

## Public Meeting Notice and Online Open House

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

Visit the project website for details!  
[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)



### ANCHORAGE

**December 5, 2023**  
Anchorage Public Library  
3600 Denali Street  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

### GIRDWOOD

**December 6, 2023**  
Girdwood Community Center  
250 Egloff Dr  
Girdwood, AK 99587  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

### INDIAN

**December 7, 2023**  
Valley Bible Chalet  
29135 Seward Hwy  
Indian, AK 99540  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

### ONLINE

**12/5/23 – 1/4/24**





# Safer Seward Highway Public Meeting Notice and Online Open House

Seward Highway MP 98.5–118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Project Number: Z566310000/OA31034

- Anchorage**  
December 5, 2023
- Girdwood**  
December 6, 2023
- Indian**  
December 7, 2023
- ONLINE**  
12/5/23 - 1/4/24



visit [www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com) for meeting details and more information.



## **Safer Seward Highway**

Seward Highway MP 98.5-118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

Project Number: Z566310000/0A31034

## **Public Meeting Notice and Online Open House**

**Join us for a series of  
In-person Public Meetings  
and an Online Open House!**

**5:30 pm - 7:30 pm**

**ANCHORAGE & ONLINE**

**December 5, 2023**

**GIRDWOOD**

**December 6, 2023**

**INDIAN**

**December 7, 2023**



**Visit  
[www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)  
for meeting and project  
information**



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment F

### Meeting Flyer



# Want a Safer Seward Highway?



MP 98.5-118: Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek

## Please join us!

### Public Meetings and Online Open House

Each public meeting will feature an open house held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a presentation at 5:45 p.m. The project team will share information about this new project with a short presentation and listen to your questions and input during the open house. The DOT&PF is currently working on an environmental assessment. The project team will present data about the safety problems and concept designs that are in development.

#### ANCHORAGE

Anchorage Public Library  
3600 Denali Street  
Anchorage, AK 99503

**Date:** Dec. 5, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.

#### GIRDWOOD

Girdwood Library  
250 Egloff Drive  
Girdwood, AK 99587

**Date:** Dec. 6, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.

#### INDIAN

Valley Bible Chalet  
Seward Highway  
Indian, AK 99540

**Date:** Dec. 7, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**Presentation:** 5:45 p.m.

### ONLINE OPEN HOUSE



Can't make it to the in-person public meeting? Join us online at [safersewardhighwayonline.com](http://safersewardhighwayonline.com) from **December 5, 2023 – January 4, 2024**, to view information about the project and to submit your questions and input.

Learn more and sign up for email updates at [saferewardhighway.com](http://saferewardhighway.com)



# Public Outreach Summary

December 2023 Public Meetings

## Attachment G

### Sign-In Sheets



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

December 5, 2023 | Anchorage Public Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

42



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Mary Beth Wright	goldendenali@hotmail.com			
Myron Wright	" "			
Barbara Dall/John Hall				
Sharon Cissna/Sid Atwood				
Tyndall Ellis	tyndall.ellis@gmail.com	Y	M	
Sierra vonHafften	sierra.vonhafften@alaska.gov	Y	F	W
MARK EISENMAN	mark.eisenman@alaska.gov	Y	M	W
Jackie Stark			F	W
Kate Matusinec	kmatusinec@gmail.com	Y	F	
Connor O'Neal	connoroneal360@gmail.com	Y	M	
Emily Weiser			F	W

\*This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

Sign-in Sheet

December 5, 2023 | Anchorage Public Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Jessi Balzarini	jessibalzarini@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Ray Keleser	picea094@hotmail.com	Y	M	W
Victoria Lytle	victoria.lytle@gmail.com	N	F	W
Naomi Stock / climbers Alliance of Southcentral Alaska	climbersallianceak@gmail.com	Y	F	W
Ben Norman	bdn29@cornell.edu	Y	M	W
Dave & Dina Egan	you have it	on it	both	W
Jim Montgomery		N	M	W
Melisa Barb	melisa@greatlandtrust.org	Y	F	W
Anne & Jim Brooke	books_micheanne@gmail.com fneweed574@gmail.com	Y	F/M	Wx2
Kerry Lynch	Kerry@anchorageparkfoundation.org	Y	F	—
Tim Alderson		Y	M	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

December 5, 2023 | Anchorage Public Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
TIM GZIER	t.gzier@vncosolutions.com	Y	M	W
Brad Coy	bradly.coy@anchorageak.gov	Y	M	W
Franki Kenney	frankimich@a10@gmail.com	Y	F	AN/W/B
Shannon McCurdy	shannon.mccurdy@alaska.gov	already on it	F	

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

December 5, 2023 | Anchorage Public Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
DORN VAN DOMMELAN			M	W
DAVID PADSK				
Sean Basli	_____	_____	M	W
Sean Holland			M	W
Beau Durland	_____	N	M	W
Amber Cummings		N	F	W (AN)
Anna Busin			F	W
FRANK RAST			M	W
ALTA VINGR				
Samantha Wingar	Samantha_123895@yahoo.com AK		F	boobyga

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

Sign-in Sheet

December 6, 2023 | Girdwood Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Ruben Gonzalez	birchandalderak@gmail.com			
Matthew Williams	mattw42@gmail.com			
Krystal Hoke	krystalhoke@gmail.com			
Suzanne Ewsten		P.O. Box 661 Whittier AK 99183		
Haley Johnston	haleyjohnston@gmail.com	PO Box 1933 Girdwood, AK 99588		
Veronica Lambertsen	VML1995@icloud.com	Bird Creek Ak		
Erik Lambertsen	Lambertsen 77@gmail.com	Bird Creek		
Alan Drake	aladrake61@gmail.com	Girdwood		
DAVID PARSIF		✓		
Paul Rasmussen	Prasmussenak@hotmail.com			
Dan Kiland	dankiland@yahoo.com	✓		

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# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

Sign-in Sheet

December 6, 2023 | Girdwood Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
MATT WEDERINC	mattwedeking32@gmail.com	Y	M	
Soren Wuerth	sorenwuerth@yahoo.com	already on it		
JEFF Samuels	jeffdsamuels@yahoo.com		M	
RAINA HAMMEL	raina.hammel@gmail.com	Y	F	
Bob Childers	bobchilders@mac.com	<del>Y</del>	M	
Becky Jones	beckyjones914@gmail.com	Y	F	
Amanda Sassi	amandajsassi@gmail.com	N	F	
MIKE OPALKA	mopalka@alaska.net	Y	M	
B. Sullivan	briansull@gmail.com	already on	F	
Martin Cassens				
Tim Lydon	TIMLYDON-C1@GMAIL	Y	M	

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

## Sign-in Sheet

December 6, 2023 | Girdwood Library | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Maggie Donnelly	akskidogs@gmail.com	X	F	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).



# Safer Seward Highway 2023 Winter Open House

Sign-in Sheet

December 7, 2023 | Valley Bible Chalet | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Name (Please print)	E-mail	Join Our Mailing List! (Y or N)	Gender* (M/F)	Race* (W, AN, N, B, H, A, P, O)
Cindy Helmenicks + ?	akh2ogeek@gmail.com			
Ed POWELL	epowell@ci.seldakoa.net	Y	M	W
Laura Walter Michael Packard	Akironwood@pm.me	Y	M/F	W
Wendy Woolf	akpaww@gmail.com	Y	F	W
John Ford	texlaska@gmail.com	Y	M	W
RICHARD IBARGUEN	lbarAlan@gmail.com	Y	M	W
Carrie Sorensen & Tristan Reily-Orsk	Carrie.L.Sorensen@gmail.com	Y	F/M	W
Jenni Kuentzer	Jennie.polarwire.com	Y <sup>already</sup> on	F	W
Linda M. Her Harley Behman	harleyg@qci.net	Y	Bofa	
Mike Edgington	mike.edgington@gmail.com		M	W

\*This information is **voluntary**. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects and programs administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. Race Categories: White (W), Alaska Native (AN), Native American (N), Black (B), Hispanic (H), Asian (A), Pacific Islander (P), and Other (O).

								Gender	Race	
								This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facil...2	This information is voluntary. Its purpose is to ensure fair and equal representation by the public in all projects administered by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facil...	
ID	Start time	Completion time	Email	Full Name2	Company	Email Address	Address: City, State, Zip Code			Do you want to be added to our m
<b>ANCHORAGE</b>										
1	12/5/23 17:28:26	12/5/23 17:33:51	anonymous	Alexa dobson	Bike anchorage	Alexa@bikeanchorage.org	Anchorage, AK 99501	Woman	White (W)	Yes
2	12/5/23 17:34:16	12/5/23 17:36:48	anonymous	Ryan kemNnedey		Asrrk76@yahoo.com	2505 w 43rd ct	Man	White (W)	Yes
3	12/5/23 17:30:47	12/5/23 17:37:14	anonymous	Robbin La Vine	Self	Robbinlavine@hotmail.com	99508	Woman	White (W)	No
4	12/5/23 17:38:07	12/5/23 17:40:40	anonymous	R Lebmsn	Individual	Skateskis@gmail.com		Woman	White (W)	No
5	12/5/23 17:40:54	12/5/23 17:42:15	anonymous	Dan	Self		99517			No
<b>GIRDWOOD</b>										
1	12/6/23 16:59:22	12/6/23 17:29:15	anonymous	John RensE		Akrense@aol.com	P.O. Box 395, Girdwood, AK 99587	Man	White (W)	Yes

## **Attachment E. Listening Post Outreach Summary**

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# Listening Post Summary

Date	Location	Time Range	Staffing	Materials	Summary
July 21, 2023	Skinny Raven	12:00-4:00pm	Morgan Miller & Tatjana Spaic	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome</li><li>• Rendering</li><li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li></ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Fact Sheet</li><li>• FAQ</li><li>• Comment Form</li><li>• Contact Business Cards</li><li>• Project Swag detailed below</li></ul>	<u>Signed in:</u> 4 people <u>Added to E-Blast distribution list:</u> 3 people <u>Comments submitted:</u> 1 <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u> Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.
August 22, 2023	Alaska Rock Gym	4:00-7:00pm	Morgan Miller	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome</li><li>• Rendering</li><li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li></ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Fact Sheet</li><li>• FAQ</li><li>• Comment Form</li><li>• Contact Business Cards</li><li>• Project Swag detailed below</li></ul>	<u>Signed in:</u> 23 people <u>Added to E-Blast distribution list:</u> 20 people <u>Comments submitted:</u> 0 <u>Outreach:</u> 1 E-Blast <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u> Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.
September 8, 2023	Beluga Point	2:00-6:00pm	Morgan Miller	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome</li><li>• Rendering</li><li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li></ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Fact Sheet</li><li>• FAQ</li></ul>	<u>Signed in:</u> 10 people <u>Added to E-Blast distribution list:</u> 9 people <u>Comments submitted:</u> 4 <u>Outreach:</u> 2 E-Blasts <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u>



# Listening Post Summary

- Comment Form
- Contact Business Cards
- Project Swag detailed below
- Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.

June 1, 2024     Potter Marsh     11:00am – 1:00pm     Morgan Miller

- Posters:
- Welcome
  - Rendering
  - Contact & More Information
- Handouts:
- Project Fact Sheet
  - FAQ
  - Comment Form
  - Contact Business Cards
  - Project Swag detailed below

Signed in: 7 people  
Added to E-Blast distribution list: 6 people  
Comments submitted: 2  
Outreach: 1 E-Blast  
Summary of questions/discussion topics:  
Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.

June 16, 2024     Bird Ridge     9:00-11:00am     Morgan Miller

- Posters:
- Welcome
  - Rendering
  - Contact & More Information
- Handouts:
- Project Fact Sheet
  - FAQ
  - Comment Form
  - Contact Business Cards
  - Project Swag detailed below

Signed in: 12 people  
Added to E-Blast distribution list: 0 people  
Outreach: 1 E-Blast  
Summary of questions/discussion topics:  
Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.

June 16, 2024     Alaska Rock Gym     5:00-7:00pm     Mark Lukin, Tatjana Spaic, & Beth Steele

- Posters:
- Welcome
  - Rendering
  - Contact & More Information
- Handouts:
- Project Fact Sheet
  - FAQ
  - Comment Form

Stopped by the Table: 32 people  
Signed in: 10 people  
Added to E-Blast distribution list: 9 people  
Comments submitted: 1  
Summary of questions/discussion topics:  
Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team. Attendees also let the team



# Listening Post Summary

- Contact Business Cards
- Project Swag detailed below

know that they'd like to be notified when construction/project activities will take place to they can go retrieve rock climbing gear installed on existing routes.

July 27, 2024	Chugach State Park Indian Creek Ballfield, MP 103 Seward Hwy.	1:00-3:00pm	Morgan Miller & Katherine Wood	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Rendering</li> <li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li> </ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Fact Sheet</li> <li>• FAQ</li> <li>• Comment Form</li> <li>• Crash Data Summary</li> <li>• Contact Business Cards</li> <li>• Project Swag detailed below</li> </ul>	<p><u>Stopped by the Table:</u> 21 people  <u>Signed in:</u> 7 people          Added to E-Blast distribution list: 7 people  <u>Comments submitted:</u> 0  <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u>          Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team. Attendees also asked about the requirements and process for DOT&amp;PF to get fill permits, how wide the design will be, and notified the team of historic properties located in Indian.</p>
July 28, 2024	Girdwood Farmers Market	11:00am – 1:00pm	Mark Lukin & Beth Steele	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Rendering</li> <li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li> </ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Fact Sheet</li> <li>• FAQ</li> <li>• Comment Form</li> <li>• Contact Business Cards</li> <li>• Project Swag detailed below</li> </ul>	<p><u>Signed in:</u> 11 people  <u>Added to E-Blast distribution list:</u> 8 people  <u>Comments submitted:</u> 2  <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u>          Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team.</p>
August 10, 2024	Alyeska Blueberry Festival	12:00-2:00pm	Alice Horazdovsky & Beth Steele	Posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Rendering</li> <li>• Contact &amp; More Information</li> </ul> Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Fact Sheet</li> <li>• FAQ</li> </ul>	<p>Stopped by the Table: 20 people          Signed in: 5 people          Added to E-Blast distribution list: 4 people          Outreach: 1 E-Blast  <u>Summary of questions/discussion topics:</u>          Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how</p>



# Listening Post Summary

- Comment Form
- Crash Data Summary
- Contact Business Cards
- Project Swag detailed below

to connect with the project team. An attendee also let the team know that he felt the team delivered the survey results with biased messaging. Attendees were also made aware of upcoming interim safety solutions (i.e. signage updates).

September 21, 2024      REI      1:00-3:00pm      Alice Horazdovsky & Mark Lukin

- Posters:
- Welcome
  - Rendering
  - Contact & More Information

Stopped by the Table: 16 people  
Signed in: 4 people  
Added to E-Blast distribution list: 3 people  
Outreach:

- Handouts:
- Project Fact Sheet
  - FAQ
  - Comment Form
  - Crash Data Summary
  - Contact Business Cards
  - Project Swag detailed below

Summary of questions/discussion topics:  
Introduced the project, delivered a status update, and let attendees know where they can find more information and how to connect with the project team. Attendees noted that

- They support the project and agree the road needs to be safer
- It'd be preferred for drivers to have a consistent/safe way to pass people instead of the current intermittent passing lanes
- They are in support of a separated pathway that will connect to the Bird to Gird trail.

Branded Promotional items brought to each event: Nalgene water bottles; Stanley travel coffee mugs; Pens; Buffs; Reusable tote bags; Stress balls; Cotopaxi fanny packs

## **Attachment F. Comments During Development of Draft EA**

*This page is intentionally left blank.*

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Ann	Rappoport	Rabbit Creek Community Council	Hello SSH folks - At our last meeting we were brainstorming a bit about some of the options for Safer Seward Highway sections, and then we had that tragic crash and hours long highway closure this past weekend. So we wanted to add a couple thoughts. Some of this is particularly for ADOT to consider. We had raised the idea of using a roundabout at communities like Bird and Gird - I know Gird is outside our Stakeholder Working Group's area of consideration, but it's certainly part of the overall scheme of making the Seward Highway safer for all. Given the high traffic volume that pulls off or turns at the Seward/Alyeska highways intersection, it seems that a roundabout there might be particularly useful. The attached flyer describes a roundabout successfully implemented on a 55 mph section of a rural highway in Wisconsin. Regarding the recent highway crash and Seward Highway closure - we have someone from the Anchorage Police Department's Highway Safety Office scheduled to speak at our September Rabbit Creek Community Council meeting, but this is also a consideration for the State Troopers (responsible for most of the Seward Highway), and safety measures that can be implemented now, or be considered part of the design and management plan for the Seward Highway to increase safety and mobility. When the Seward Highway south of Potter is closed on a busy traffic day, south-bound traffic backs up along Potter Marsh, and then drivers try to "jump ahead" in the line by driving south on Old Seward Highway on the east side of Potter Marsh until that route, too, gets backed up. Then there is no direct way for residents who live along Old Seward Highway or Potter Valley Road to get to their homes. That forces residents to drive all the way up to Goldenview Drive and then down back roads to reach Tideview, Potter Valley Road, and other southern neighborhoods. In the case of an earthquake, wildfire, or other scary event, that extra time could mean life and death. This is totally avoidable if there was proactive traffic management. Signs warning travelers of the backup and directing them to turn around could be added at the Rabbit Creek offramp (similar to the one on the Seward at Potter Valley Rd), along with traffic management by APD, maybe at the Old Seward Highway and Rabbit Creek Road junction, or there could be a safer place. Cars without a local resident address should be turned back to wait their turn on the main Seward Highway, or be encouraged to turn around and postpone their trip if a closure is expected to last for over an hour. Or, APD/Troopers could do a pilot car operation in the remaining open lane of the Old Seward Highway. Perhaps the ADOT right-of-way/BLM lot at the corner of Old Seward and Rabbit Creek could be designated as an emergency APD/Troopers communications post, or even the Bird Treatment Learning Center parking lot, where people could turn around and exit the area. And finally, we're very glad to hear that wildlife crossings will be considered for the SSH project. It seems that minimizing the opportunity for vehicle/wildlife crashes could be quite the safety addition to the highway! Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Sincerely, Ann Rappoport, Co-chair Rabbit Creek Community Council
Brad	Muir	NULL	Hello- Thank you for all you do to help improve the safety on the Seward Highway. It has been nice to see so many improvements on our one road to and from Anchorage to the south. One location that still seems quite dangerous to me is the portion of the highway heading south as you approach the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center (AWCC). The speed limit slows down through the area near 20-mile where people fish (which is good). But, right after that area the speed limit goes up to 65 mph as traffic approaches the entrance/exit of the AWCC (the busiest tourist location in Alaska) where many vehicles are constantly entering and exiting. Vehicles exiting the AWCC now must enter the highway from a stop into 65 mph traffic with no merging lane. I have had this conversation with many friends, and we all agree that increasing the speed to 65 mph south of the AWCC entrance makes a lot more sense and would be much safer for a location with so many slow vehicles. Thank you, Brad
Jessica	Speed	NULL	Subject: Re: Introducing Safety Express Projects! Sincerely great to hear of all the safety improvements. I'm curious what that will mean for dall sheep viewing near the road and what that means for their habitat use. For instance will road safety improvements mean they will likely not use previous areas before the upgrades, and the wonderful wildlife viewing we had? Again, appreciate improvements for human safety. Thank you, Sent from my iPhone
Linda	Bennett	NULL	Subject: Silver Tip mtnce yard- DOT Turnagain Pass! Is the maintenance yard open up there? If not, why not? We have ONE road to the KP- Why was it closed 3 years ago? Hoping you will get it reopened! Linda Bennett Sent from my iPhone
Linda	Bennett	NULL	Subject: More Seward Highway input from a seasoned driver Hi SSH group I am glad to learn you are repairing the speed alert signs! I will tell you I commuted from Girdwood to Anchorage for 35 years in all kinds of weather 1. Cheap fix- the rumble strips are a great idea, but the middle and sides rumble the same; select one pattern for the middle that differs from the outside ones- There have been white out situations where I could not tell what part of the road I was on 2. There is fiber optic running for the phone lines next to the guardrail - could the guard rails be lit to provide a light guide? 3. All signs should be huge and easily read. 4. Silver Tip mtnc station- get it staffed and running again! And have cell phone service available throughout the pass- I am sure it is better now than years past. 5. Identify the icy patches with winter warning signs. 6. Talk regularly with the AST about problem areas on the road- blind spots- areas marked to pass that should not be. Sent from my iPhone
Linda	Bennett	NULL	Subject: More Seward Highway input from a seasoned driver Hi SSH group I am glad to learn you are repairing the speed alert signs! I will tell you I commuted from Girdwood to Anchorage for 35 years in all kinds of weather! 1. Cheap fix- the rumble strips are a great idea, but the middle and sides rumble the same; select one pattern for the middle that differs from the outside ones- There have been white out situations where I could not tell what part of the road I was on 2. There is fiber optic running for the phone lines next to the guardrail; could the guard rails be lit to provide a light guide? 3. All signs should be huge and easily read. 4. Silver Tip mtnc station- get it staffed and running again! And have cell phone service available throughout the pass! I am sure it is better now than years past. 5. Identify the icy patches with winter warning signs. 6. Talk regularly with the AST about problem areas on the road- blind spots- areas marked to pass that should not be. Sincerely, Linda Bennett Box 574 99587 Sent from my iPhone
Nancy	Pease	Rabbit Creek Community Council	Subject: What is the funding stream for SSH segment within AMATS boundary? Hello, SSH Team, Two questions. 1. On behalf of Rabbit Creek Community Council, I'm trying to clarify the funding stream for the portion of the SSH within AMATS's boundary. Our understanding is that the AMATS PC voted to delete the SSH from its MTP 2050 because the financial burden could preclude higher-priority projects in the AMATS area. We are not sure if that was a final action; but if so, what alternative funding streams does DOTPF propose for this segment of the project? Has DOTPF produced a verifiable source? 2. Does the current design include "cross-over/re-route" locations for traffic stoppages that may occur on one side of the proposed divided highway? The current AMATS budget proposes to add such features to the Glenn Highway incoming years. If this is state-of-the-art traffic management, how about for SSH? Thank you for your response. Sent from my iPad Nancy Pease
Nancy	Pease	Rabbit Creek Community Council	Subject: Re: What is the funding stream for SSH segment within AMATS boundary? Thank you, Pearl- Grace. I will share this information with Rabbit Creek Community Council at our monthly meeting this evening. I'll check with Ann and Tim about their availability for a joint briefing in the next week or so. Sent from my iPhone On Feb 13, 2025, at 10:45 AM, Safer Seward Highway <info@safersewardhighway.com> wrote: Hi Nancy, Thank you for reaching out to the Safer Seward Project Team! We are happy to answer these questions for you. We know you missed the last SWG meeting in September, and we would be happy to host a 1:1 with you, Anne, and Tim at the HDR office to get you up to speed and share more updates. Answers to your questions are below: Q1: Discussions are ongoing with members of the AMATS PC about potential funding solutions. Because of this, the project team does not have additional information currently. DOT&PF is still committed to improving the safety of the Seward Highway within the AMATS boundary and will continue analyzing the entire original length of the project in the Environmental Assessment. Q2: Yes, the current concepts include turnarounds and crossovers. The location(s) will be determined in final design and consider the following: * APD requested turnarounds for emergency management and speed enforcement. We will work with APD to determine the interval and location(s). * Displaced left turns for recreation and/or pullouts that are only accessible via right - in / right- out as a safety enhancement. Traffic will travel past the destination and use the crossover to turnaround and head back to and make a right in. Typically, drivers are not expected to travel more than one (1) additional mile from their destination. * Location(s) will be selected that minimize impacts to both the CSP, tidal lands, and ARRC facilities. Hope these answers help inform the RCCC. Please let us know if you are interested in a 1:1 meeting and I can arrange that for you. Thank you, Pearl-Grace Safer Seward Highway Project Team Member
Nancy	Pease	Rabbit Creek Community Council	Subject: Need the link to the line item of STIP Amendment #2 the truncates the SSH at MP 112 Hello, Pearl-Grace or Chris Hughes or any SSH project staff, Can you please provide a hyper link to the actual language of the STIP Amendment #2 that changes the length of the SSH and ends it at MP112? I have wasted a lot of time looking at DOTPF's website. Their STIP in many pages and their "Dashboard" with maps and project lists won't load for me. RCCC members like to look at this info with their own eyes, but we can't find it. Our next meeting is March 13, so I hope you can shoot me a quick reply. Thank you for your help. Nancy Pease RCCC Board and SSH Stakeholder Group participators.
Mark	Parmelee	NULL	Subject: Balancing Park and Whales All, On the website I don't see a discussion of where improvements should go. The balance of cutting into the State park or filling Turnagain Arm. My suggestion is to fill into the Arm when it makes sense. My thought is the Beluga Whales will be less affected than the State Park. I also am concerned about the source of fill. Pits along the highway are a visual problem. Lastly turn lanes need to be provided for safety. I think McHugh Creek trailhead needs better protection from south bound cars. Mark Parmelee Anchorage

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Tim	Alderson	Rabbit Creek Community Council	<p>To: Municipality of Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission Paul Hatcher, Municipal Planning Department From: Rabbit Creek Community Council RE: Comments on Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Design Report for the Safer Seward Highway Project Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Design Report for the Safer Seward Highway Project. These comments reflect community feedback and were approved by a vote of 15-1 at our July 24, 2025, council meeting. Our Council's initial reaction is one of concern regarding the scale, cost, and environmental impact of the proposed project. While we strongly support efforts to improve highway safety, the industrial intensity of the proposed design appears disproportionate relative to the safety benefits achieved and will result in radical disfigurement of the natural terrain that makes this a National Scenic Highway. From the outset of this project, there has been consistent and widespread input from stakeholders—including community councils, conservation groups, recreational users, and residents—emphasizing the importance of minimizing the project's physical and environmental footprint. Unfortunately, the current design appears to move in the opposite direction, expanding the highway's scope and scale in a way that is out of step with this feedback. General Comments: Escalation of Project Scope and Long-Term Maintenance Costs The scale and complexity of the project have expanded significantly, and with that expansion comes a long-term burden on the state. The added lane miles, separated corridors, and non-motorized infrastructure will substantially increase future maintenance costs. This is particularly concerning given current budget constraints and ongoing staffing challenges that already impair the state's ability to maintain the existing, smaller roadway. Scale and Cost Disproportionate to Benefits The dramatic increase in the project's scale raises concerns about cost-effectiveness. Should this project take priority over hotspots with a higher crash and fatality rate? How many smaller and more targeted safety projects could DOTPF and AMATS implement across the region if the current proposal were scaled back? Seasonal Bias in Safety Design The design appears overly focused on summer traffic congestion and passing delays, despite the fact that nearly half of serious accidents occur in winter months. Many of these crashes are related not to capacity, but to weather, driver behavior, and road maintenance. These critical factors deserve more attention in the design. Inadequate Consideration of Three-Lane Alternatives The dismissal of the three-lane alternating passing concept lacks sufficient justification. This approach should be favored in areas where four-lane construction would result in extensive environmental damage through hillside gouging or filling. Median vs. Center Barriers The use of wide medians significantly expands the highway footprint. The use of physical center barriers, as implemented south of Bird, is a more compact alternative and should be extended further along to other parts of the corridor. Unclear Winter Maintenance Responsibilities What are the projected costs of winter maintenance for the expanded corridor and the new non-motorized facilities? Why is there reference to a potential "negotiation" for the Department of Natural Resources to maintain portions of the pathway within DOT&amp;PF right-of-way? Lack of Alignment with Adopted Plans and Policies: • The Municipality of Anchorage's 2025 Long-Range Transportation Strategy prioritizes safety over high-speed or high-volume throughput. In the realm of all Anchorage safety projects and also specifically with the SSH project, SSH seems to conflict with Strategy S3: "Move away from default metrics that prioritize moving vehicles fast or in high volumes over other community priorities." • The Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan emphasizes preserving natural viewsheds, minimizing habitat disruption, and integrating infrastructure into the surrounding landscape. • The impacts to the Alaska Coastal Wildlife Refuge, which the corridor borders for several miles, are not even mentioned. What measures are being taken to address wildlife connectivity across a corridor that includes up to six traffic lanes, a non-motorized path, and an active railroad? • AMATS Complete Streets Policy should apply to approximately 4 miles at the northern end of the SSH project, within the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation solutions (AMATS) boundary. The AMATS Complete Streets first principle is that streets "are context-sensitive, considering economic, social, and environmental objectives." The SSH design does not meet these objectives, given the enormous fiscal cost, the opportunity cost to remedy urban safety hotspots, and the massive alteration of a national scenic corridor Threat to Scenic and Ecological Integrity: The Seward Highway holds triple designation for its unique scenic beauty: National Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road. The scale and industrial nature of the proposed SSH design—especially the extensive quarry cuts of up to 400 vertical feet, will fundamentally degrade the natural wild setting and may compromise the scenic designations. In the Potter Marsh area, there appears to be unmitigated fragmentation of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge. Specific Comments and Questions: • Potter Marsh pathway: The safety and visual effects along the pathway are unclear. Will the non-motorized pathway be fenced off from the highway, or fenced off on the marsh side, or both? How and where will wildlife cross the corridor from the Potter Marsh to the rest of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge? The Seward Highway north of the project forms a miles-long barrier to moose and other large wildlife, so continued east-west movement of wildlife is important in the Potter Marsh area. • Potter Valley Road Intersection: This intersection appears unsafe in its current configuration. Adequate acceleration lanes are needed, and the center "eddy" in the median for turning vehicles appears too small for safe maneuvering. • Potter Valley Frontage Road to Turnagain Arm Trailhead: Realignment appears to require creek relocation. Can this be avoided?</p> <p>(continued from above) Who will provide winter maintenance for this new access road, given that DNR does not currently plow its shorter existing road to the Turnagain Arm Trailhead? • Non-Motorized Access to Section House: The location of the existing pedestrian tunnel limits access to the Section House and parking area. A new spur trail west of the highway should be included to accommodate access. • Vertically Separated Lanes (Maps 6–9): The proposed split elevation from Potter Trailhead to McHugh Creek needlessly damages Chugach State Park terrain, especially the most heavily used section of the Turnagain Arm Trail. The northbound lanes, elevated 100 feet above and 200 feet inland of the southbound lanes, would devastate scenic, wildlife-rich parkland. A center barrier or three-lane option should be reconsidered here. • Recreational Crossings: Adequate underpasses or tunnels are needed to safely connect the non-motorized trail to inland recreation areas and restroom toilet facilities, especially at McHugh Creek and Rainbow. • Turnagain Arm Trail Preservation and Mitigation: The encroachment on the Turnagain Arm trail between McHugh Creek and Potter Trailhead is unacceptable. This SSH in this area is proposed to have a 200-foot-wide median and 100-foot-vertical rise for the northbound lanes that that places the lanes next to the existing trail. The current trail is in wildlife-rich woodland setting mostly insulated from the sights and sounds of the highway. The current trail attracts hundreds of urban users per day, especially in the shoulder seasons. The SSH should be redesigned to stay at sea level in a narrower corridor in the area from McHugh to Potter. We suspect that this alignment, with the huge amount of quarrying from McHugh Creek to Potter trailhead, may be driven by the need for fill material for tidelands in the Potter Marsh area. This recreation area on the urban boundary is too high-value to be a quarry site. In areas where highway construction approaches the Turnagain Arm Trail, the trail must be relocated and buffered with natural vegetation. The experience of the trail should remain scenic and immersive—not flanked by chain-link fencing and exposed quarry walls. • Bird and Indian Access: The loss of multiple highway access points will isolate the Bird and Indian communities and diminish access to local businesses. Commercial and residential impacts must be reconsidered. We urge the Department Planning and Zoning Commission to recommend revisions to this design to better reflect public input, minimize environmental and visual impacts, and ensure fiscal sustainability. We appreciate the CSS process and hope it leads to a design that reflects the values of the many Alaskans who care deeply about this unique and cherished corridor. Sincerely, Tim Alderson, Chair Rabbit Creek Community Council</p>
Richard Sherley	Moore Durtschi	NULL	<p>Thank you for the update. A vey well designed plan that is badly needed on that stretch of Seward!</p> <p>Subject: Re: New Signage Installed on the Seward Highway!</p> <p>People Don't Read Signs...</p>
Tracy	Try	CIV USAF PACAF	<p>Subject: SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY</p> <p>What about watermarks on images, like a sample attached</p>
Shari	Durocher	NULL	<p>I appreciate that plans are being made to increase safety on the Seward Hwy. Some of the most dangerous conditions are a result of drivers not paying attention to the law which requires them to pull over when five or more cars are being slowed by them. More enforcement of this law may help. Also, rental vehicle companies, especially those that rent campers and motor homes, should write about the law in their rental policy AND be required to verbally tell it to the customer! So many near-misses that I have witnessed on the hwy are due to frustrated drivers taking chances to pass vehicles that don't pull over when they should. I have noted that often camper drivers are traveling together. When multiple campers are close together it makes it almost impossible for others to pass or even turn onto the hwy. Could the rental companies let the renters know that in the interest of the safety of everyone on the hwy that they should space out more? While they are at it they might also mention that the hwy is for moving traffic not for stopping to gaze at wildlife. Designated turn lanes for McHugh Creek and the Pay to Mine at Indian are also very dangerous spots. other trailheads could benefit from a turn lane but these two are the worst. Would a flashing yellow light located a bit before these areas alert drivers that something that requires special attention help? When accidents happen on the hwy causing the highway to be shut down for hours is also a frustration for drivers, which again might result in them taking unnecessary risks. If something can be done to route the traffic around the accident more quickly that might be helpful, even if only one lane of traffic can move at a time. Shari Durocher</p>
Dave	Chase	NULL	<p>Thanks Morgan. Can't believe they are putting a bathroom there that close to the highway (pit stop for highway traffic) in front of a residential neighborhood.....but I appreciate the info. Dave</p> <p>On Sep 5, 2023, at 2:07 PM, Safer Seward Highway &lt;info@safersewardhighway.com&gt; wrote: Hi David, After we spoke last week, I received more information about what is going on at Potter Marsh. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is managing the project. They have posted an announcement here with more information and a contact: R2-AA-23-1088.pdf (Sue Rodman, sue.rodman@alaska.gov) Morgan for, The Safer Seward Highway Project Team</p>
Glenn Trish	Cravez Baker	NULL	<p>Safer Seward Highway Website Comments Name David Chase Email davechase@me.com Questions or Comments? Very concerned about the project at Potter Valley Rd and don't see much info about what you are doing. Why the lack of info. Even my state senator office says they don't know what you are doing and others have voiced their concerns. What I see looks like a bad idea to entice more people to a busy intersection and a parking lot that serves as a bus stop and mail box. Subject: Comment Yes, please, a separate dedicated multiuse path from Potter to Indian is desperately needed. Thank you. Glenn Cravez. Subject: Comment on project Z566310000/0A31034 Safer Seward Highway Project group: I'd like to suggest when you are planning improvements to this corridor that you consider moving the railroad to the inside (mountain side) of the highway, at least on the approaches to Beluga Point. Having the railroad between the parking area and an obvious recreational area poses a safety issue. The large parking area is an inviting place to stop. The hills across the railroad tracks likewise invite use - why else park there? But the railroad rules say crossing the tracks constitutes trespassing. This situation makes the entire parking lot and Beluga Point an "attractive nuisance" instead of a way for people to enjoy this very scenic location along one of North America's most photo-worthy scenic highways. The situation is exacerbated when beluga whales are present. Rather than fight the urge to cross the tracks, let's move the tracks and eliminate this safety concern and trespass issue. Respectfully, Trish Baker Anchorage, Alaska</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Patrick	Lavin	DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE	<p>Subject: Seward Highway project comment Hi HDR, Attached please find a comment letter from Defenders of Wildlife on the Safer Seward Highway project. Please let me know that you received the letter and attachments - I will send the latter in smaller batches because they may not all transmit in one message. If there is a person or group on your team focusing on belugas then please connect them with us as we're interested in learning more about the project status and how we might engage regarding minimization of impacts to Cook Inlet belugas. Please direct correspondence to my colleague, Ragen Davey, copied here. Thanks!</p> <p>Attachment Contents: Dear HDR: Established in 1947, Defenders of Wildlife is a national nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the protection of flora and fauna in its native habitat. Defenders has nearly 2.2 million members and supporters nationwide, including over 6000 in Alaska. We have long advocated for the conservation of Alaska's wildlife and habitat, including critically endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales. Defenders appreciates this opportunity to comment on the above- referenced project.</p> <p>Background We understand that the Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT) plans to straighten the Seward Highway between the sections of Mile Post 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, to improve highway safety. As noted in the project Open House materials, construction activities could impact Cook Inlet belugas. Because the belugas are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), both statutes apply to this project.</p> <p>Since ADOT plans to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we gather that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) would fund the project.<sup>1</sup> Under the ESA, federal agencies must ensure “that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by [the action agency] is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered species or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of [critical habitat].”<sup>2</sup> FHWA cannot fund or authorize any action that may affect Cook Inlet belugas or their designated critical habitat without first consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding those impacts.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Additionally, under the MMPA it is unlawful to “take,” or “harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.”<sup>4</sup> Harassment is further divided into “Level A” (any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance that has the potential to injure a marine mammal) and “Level B” (acts with the potential to disturb, but not injure, a marine mammal).<sup>5</sup> An activity that has the potential to incidentally take a small number of marine mammals may be permitted by regulation for up to five years if it will have no more than a “negligible impact on the species or stock and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stock for taking for subsistence uses.”<sup>6</sup> In the absence of such regulations, incidental take can be authorized for one year maximum, for harassment only.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>NMFS has not issued incidental take regulations for belugas, so ADOT/FHWA will either need to request those regulations or seek a maximum one-year Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) from the agency. Either way, the NMFS authorization must prescribe the permissible methods of taking belugas (or other marine mammals that may be impacted) by harassment and “effectuate the least practicable impact” on the species taken.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Cook Inlet belugas were listed as depleted under the MMPA in 2009 and as endangered under the ESA in 2008.<sup>10</sup> Cook Inlet belugas are one of NOAA Fisheries' “Species in the Spotlight” - an initiative that includes animals considered most at risk for extinction and prioritizes their recovery efforts. NMFS designated critical habitat for belugas in 2011.<sup>11</sup> The critical habitat designation identified the following physical or biological features essential to conservation (also known as primary constituent elements (PCEs)):</p> <p>(1)Intertidal and subtidal waters of Cook Inlet with depths less than 30 feet (MLLW)(9.1 m) and within 5 miles (8 km) of high and medium flow anadromous fish streams.</p> <p>(2)Primary prey species consisting of four species of Pacific salmon (Chinook, sockeye, chum, and coho), Pacific eulachon, Pacific cod, walleye pollock, saffron cod, and yellowfin sole.</p> <p>(3)Waters free of toxins or other agents of a type and amount harmful to Cook Inlet beluga whales.</p> <p>(4)Unrestricted passage within or between the critical habitat areas.</p> <p>(5)Waters with in-water noise below levels resulting in the abandonment of critical habitat areas by Cook Inlet beluga whales.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>The designation therefore recognized, among other things, the importance of minimizing noise in critical habitat areas because it can cause belugas to abandon them. It also recognized belugas’ need for free movement within and between critical habitat areas. The coastal waters that will be impacted by project activities are designated as critical habitat for belugas.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>CONTINUED: In 2016, NMFS completed a Recovery Plan for Cook Inlet belugas that identifies noise impacts as a significant threat to their recovery of high concern relative to other threats. (NMFS 2016). Their high auditory sensitivity, wide frequency bandwidth, and dependence upon sound to navigate, communicate, and find prey make belugas vulnerable to noise pollution, which can mask beluga signals, or if intense, may lead to temporary or permanent hearing impairment.<sup>14</sup> Both the degradation of the beluga acoustic communication and echolocation space, as well as the noise-induced chronic increase of signaling costs and stress, could lead to negative biological consequences at the population level. The Recovery Plan concluded that “there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the reproductive success and survival of cetaceans can be negatively impacted by noise.”<sup>15</sup></p> <p>Subsequent studies have reinforced the need to manage the soundscape to minimize impacts to Cook Inlet belugas. Anthropogenic noise exposure levels in upper Cook Inlet often exceed 120 dB, the standard level that NMFS uses to define behavioral harassment under the MMPA. (Castellote et al 2018). The spatial and temporal overlap of different high amplitude anthropogenic sources of noise calls for “a cumulative impact analysis approach as part of the permitting process.” Id. Similarly, another study concluded that “[h]abitat protection and regulation of anthropogenic activities with the potential to affect CIBWs should not be considered in isolation, but rather the cumulative effects of all activities in the range of CIBWs and their potential to affect the entire population must be taken into account. . .” (McGuire et al. 2020).</p> <p>Issues to Consider in a NEPA Analysis Cook Inlet belugas reside in Cook Inlet throughout the year and are seen daily along Upper Cook Inlet and Turnagain Arm during the spring (March through May) and fall (July through September) months. (Castellote et al 2020). Turnagain Arm is an important foraging area that provides salmon and eulachon, key components of their diet. (Quakenbush et al 2015). In seeking to effectuate the least practicable impact on belugas overall, ADOT/FHWA should consider noise reduction approaches generally and beluga feeding and transiting activity specifically during project activities.</p> <p>Throughout construction planning and implementation, ADOT should explore all feasible management and technology options to minimize construction-related noise. A review of recent permitting at the Port of Anchorage would inform this assessment. In an IHA issued to the Port, NMFS determined that merely halting project activities if belugas were spotted within the Level A harassment zone would fail to effect the least practicable impact on belugas, and instead required the Port to halt activities if belugas were seen in or approaching the Level B harassment zone.<sup>16</sup> It also prohibited certain pile-driving activity in August, when beluga activity is particularly high near the project area, and identified a number of additional actions to mitigate noise impacts, especially from pile-driving.<sup>17</sup> It required the Port to use a bubble curtain to reduce in-water noise levels.<sup>18</sup></p> <p>Turnagain Arm is one of four distinct locations in Cook Inlet where belugas congregate seasonally in large numbers, making the entire population particularly vulnerable to impacts encountered in these locations when congregations are present. (McGuire et al. 2020). Whales traveling among these distinct areas increase their likelihood of exposure to multiple, localized threats including, for example, “physical habitat alteration and rock-blasting noise from in-water highway expansion activities in Turnagain Arm.” Id. The distribution of Cook Inlet beluga whales in Turnagain Arm throughout the months of April to October is an important consideration when considering spatial and temporal beluga conservation. Id.</p> <p>It will therefore be important to consider the best available information regarding belugas’ temporal use of the project impact area in developing mitigation measures to minimize impacts. In consultation with NMFS, ADOT/FHWA should consider seasonal operational restrictions as well as halting any activities that would cause Level A or B harassment at any time. It should also consider other best practices and technologies for limiting noise, such as the bubble curtain used by the Port.</p> <p>Straightening the Seward Highway could involve disturbing eddies where belugas feed and spend much of their time in the months noted above. ADOT/FHWA should ensure that the project retains or replaces important microhabitats such as these eddies. The agencies should also consider habitat for spawning and other salmon life-cycle needs to limit the impacts to these critical areas.</p> <p>In exploring and taking every practical action to minimize impacts to belugas, ADOT/FHWA will not only comply with the law but increase the chances of survival for one of the most critically endangered listed species. We encourage ADOT/FHWA, in consultation with NMFS, to provide an important leadership role in educating everyone associated with this project, from project designers and engineers to construction workers to other state and federal agencies and the public, about the plight of Cook Inlet beluga whales and the agency’s diligent efforts to minimize project impacts. Further, we encourage you to consider incorporating beluga signage and information in the pullout areas to ensure that the project can continue to educate travelers about these critically endangered whales long after construction is completed.</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
			<p>CONTINUED: Sincerely, Pat Lavin Alaska Policy Advisor xxxx@defenders.org Ragen Davey Alaska Marine Representative xxxx@defenders.org cc:Greg Balogh, Supervisory Biologist, Alaska Region, NMFS, xxxx@noaa.gov Jill Seymour, Cook Inlet Beluga Recovery Coordinator, Alaska Region, NMFS, xxxxxx@noaa.gov Jon Kurland, Alaska Regional Administrator, NMFS, xxxxxx@noaa.gov Attachments: Castellote, M., B. Thayre, M. Mahoney, J. Mondragon, C. Schmale, and R. J. Small. 2016. Anthropogenic noise in Cook Inlet beluga habitat: sources, acoustic characteristics, and frequency of occurrence. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Final Wildlife Research Report, ADF&amp;G/DWC/WRR-2016-4, Juneau, AK at p. 77. Castellote, M., B. Thayre, M. Mahoney, J. Mondragon, M. O. Lammers, and R. J. Small. 2018. Anthropogenic Noise and the Endangered Cook Inlet Beluga Whale, <i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>: Acoustic Considerations for Management. Marine Fisheries Review, Final Wildlife Research Report ADF&amp;G/DWC/WRR-2016-4, Juneau, AK at p. 85. Castellote M., Small R.J., Lammers M.O., Jenniges J. et al. 2020. Seasonal distribution and foraging occurrence of Cook Inlet beluga whales based on passive acoustic monitoring. <i>Endang Species Res</i> 41:225-243. McGuire, T.L., Himes Boor, G.K., McClung, J.R., et al. 2020. Distribution and habitat use by endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales: Patterns observed during a photo-identification study, 2005–2017. <i>Aquatic Conserv: Mar Freshw Ecosyst.</i> 2020; 30: 2402–2427. National Marine Fisheries Service. 2016. Recovery Plan for the Cook Inlet Beluga Whale (<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>). National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region, Protected Resources Division, Juneau, AK. Quakenbush, L., Suydam, R., Bryan, A., Lowry, L., Frost, K., Mahoney, B., 2015. Diet of Beluga Whales, <i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>, in Alaska from Stomach Contents, March-November, <i>Marine Fisheries Review</i>, 77(1):70-84. Beluga Point Listening Post, 09/08/2023 Ruble Strips work! Nothing else does. (Illegible) trails prevent people from ruining the environment while still enjoying the sites. Alaska is beautiful! Let's keep it that way. Beluga Point Listening Post, 09/08/2023 Thank you for asking resident's and driver's opinions! Beluga Point Listening Post, 09/08/2023 Two levels - express level above, sightseeing level below.</p>
Hegar Susan	Rosenblum Opalka	NULL	<p>To Whom It May Concern: I am Wigi Tozzi, Campaign Manager for Chris Tuck's mayoral campaign. I was curious if the Stakeholder Meeting on Thursday is open to the public, or if Chris could be invited. He is interested in the process and would like to attend, if it is appropriate. Thank you... Wigi Tozzi Campaign Manager Tuck for Mayor</p>
Marc Paul	Grober Thurman	NULL	<p>Subject: AMATS Rumor has it that AMART just sabotaged the 2050 Plan to remove highway corridor bicycle infrastructure north of Eagle River. In light of such duplicity, can the public rely on your prior commitments to incorporating full fledged paved bicycle path connecting Indian north to Potter/Huffman? Thanks for the outreach and proactive communication of project activity and events. As a resident of Rainbow Valley, my primary concern is safe access to and from the highway for our community at MP 108.5. Of course, preserving the overall aesthetics and ambiance of Chugach State Park and Turnagain Arm to the greatest extent feasible throughout the corridor, and in conjunction with necessary safety improvements, is a very close second.</p>
John	Brown	NULL	<p>To further improve safety there needs to be a better effort at educating the public and then enforcing the laws. Slow drivers that are impeding traffic need to be cited. I know it is difficult to pull these vehicles over, but we need to work on some techniques and technologies to get this done. I would suggest that an effort be made to engage the RV and auto rental companies to disseminate information on the safety issues and applicable laws. We should also stop permitting oversize loads on the highway during peak traffic hours. These operations contribute significantly to traffic congestion. It would be great if we can make the highway safer, but engineering alone will not be enough.</p>
Philip Glenn Paul	Lopez Cravez Thurman	NULL	<p>Voicemail "Hello, my name is Philip Lopez, my Contact (XXX) XXX-XXXX. Look forward to speaking with you about the Safety Project. I'm deeply concerned the conduct of Department of Transportation, Please. Thank you." Yes to a separate multi purpose paved path from Indian to Rabbit Creek! Very important safety upgrade for this heavily used road. Thank you! Will the project team endeavor to retain USDOT / FHWA "National Scenic Highway" and "All American Road" designations through the corridor? Sent from my iPad</p>
NULL Margaret	NULL Tyler	NULL	<p>Subject: Re: Public Meetings: Join Us Next Week! For Girdwood, you are competing with a back country filmfest at the Sitzmark that evening. Subject: Poster for public meetings 12/23? HI there, Can you send me a poster version of the meeting announcement for the Dec meetings? I can help spread the word in Girdwood. Thanks, Margaret &amp; Recreation</p>
Nancy Courtney	Deschu Luff	NULL	<p>Whether 3 or 4 lane alternative is chosen- what is essential for safety is to reduce speed limit and lace double yellow line for no passing for that section. It is only one short mile that drivers will have to slow down to prevent accidents and protect birds and birdwatchers and moose-watchers and photographers. Subject: Project input Hello, my name is Courtney Luff and we live in Potter Creek neighborhood. I agree that something needs to be done. I think widening the highway with either option would be good. Driving to Girdwood always makes me a bit nervous and is always unpredictable. With the limitations on lanes those who only feel comfortable going the speed limit will often get tailgated for miles until a break comes up. I don't believe the Highway can stay the same forever, it's too dangerous and certainly safety over scenery needs more consideration. I also would like to see a solution coming off Potter Valley road and onto the Seward Highway. This area has been seeing an increase in traffic, not only in the summer but winter as well. Some days it will take up to 5 minutes or longer to merge onto the Seward and even then it's because we were able to see a quick break in the line of traffic. I don't know what the solution would be, if there could be an actual merge lane off and onto the Seward and or possibly reduce the speed just for that junction? But regardless it is becoming more and more of an issue. Thanks so much for your time</p>
Nick	D'Alessio	NULL	<p>This project has great ideas and I hope we can see some reality to these safety improvements. There is also a severe issue to public safety with the lack of budget for snow plowing and sanding throughout the Seward highway, and throughout the entire state of Alaska. The Turnagain Pass corridor specifically continues to be a major issue that results in dangerous situations for all vehicles traveling the highway and people trying to park for winter recreation. We desperately need the budget to AK DOT&amp;PF to be increased for snow removal. It is embarrassing to visitors to our state - the lack of snow removal efforts is unacceptable.</p>
Kerry Kerry Kerry Kerry	Lynch Lynch Lynch Lynch	NULL	<p>Could the train go in the middle of the divided highway? Since it's dead space anyway, may as well use it for the infrequent trains and turns world still be allowed when trains aren't passing. Limit need to fill out into the inlet. Roadway should convey drivers are in a state park and highlight trailheads and viewpoints rather than making them inaccessible or scary to access Make sure traffic projections are realistic, historical projections have proven to be highly inflated to justify road expansion. Our population is declining. Can the non motorized pathway be included in the railway design instead of the road? Rail is less frequent and less unpleasant to be near, since we're filling out into water anyway, can we design a better pathway with railroad? If a fence is needed for safety, the obstructed view would still be better than being near the pollution, danger and noise of the highway</p>
Kerry	Lynch	NULL	<p>Can we get an opinion from an engineer with more experience with bike/pedestrian design? I don't see much in HDRs portfolio and AK DOT does not have much experience and this is reflected in the options presented, neither of which really appeal to anyone outside a car. This is a unique area and we're missing an opportunity to design it right for Alaska, I'd love to see at least one option that provides adequate facilities for all modes.</p>
Kerry John	Lynch Rense	NULL	<p>can the bike path be elevated from the road or design a depression between the path and road? If a 10ft buffer is what we get, grade separation could help a lot with safety, comfort, and noise deflection. A very well done meeting. Good graphics, on time, concise but didn't feel rushed. Plenty of walk around and learning pr input opportunity. Stay the course and see what alternatives come out of the process. I don't see anything yet that shouldn't be evaluated. To help build more communication and support, consider the harbor masters in Seward and Whittier, and mayors in Seward and the Soldotna area. Also consider the large summer RV rental businesses in ANC - their rental clients do not enjoy that stretch of road.</p>
Mike	Edgington	Girdwood Board of Supervisors	<p>Hi project team, I attended the open house this evening in Indian and mentioned the recent work under the Division of Geological &amp; Geophysical Surveys to develop tsunami maps for Upper Cook Inlet, including Turnagain Arm. The DGGS webpage containing the report, community maps and other resources, including Shapefile <a href="https://dgggs.alaska.gov/pubs/id/31018">https://dgggs.alaska.gov/pubs/id/31018</a> As an example, here's the inundation map for the southern end of the project at Bird Flats: [image.png] From the online map viewer <a href="http://tsunami.alaska.edu/">http://tsunami.alaska.edu/</a></p>
Soren	Wuerth	NULL	<p>"I had a couple of questions as a follow up on the meeting incurred would. If you can give me a call back, I'd appreciate I'm writing a story on it. And my name is Lauren, S O R E N. Worth W U E R T H. I can be reached at XXX-XXX-XXXX, and I am with the trying to get news. Thank you so much. Have a great day."</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
William	Chadwich	NULL	My thoughts on the Seward Highway Project. My name is William Chadwick. I have been a Girdwood Resident since 1972. I am retired from a twenty-three-year career with the Anchorage Fire Department followed by seventeen years as the Girdwood Fire Chief. I have personally responded to many of the fatal and serious accidents on the Seward highway over the last forty-five years. I have had to witness too many times the community tragedy of losing family members and friends to a senseless crash on the highway. I have had the misfortune of presiding over community meetings following several of these tragedies where people plead for something to be done. I have been advocating for safety on the Seward highway for my entire career. I served on the state of Alaska Highway Safety Commission for two years and have actively worked with Girdwood 2020 as well as other state agencies in advocating for engineering, education, and enforcement on the Seward highway. I have written articles in the local papers and spoken at many other community groups and stakeholders concerned about safety on the Seward Highway. This work on the Seward highway is probably the most important safety issue that DOT can be working on. The safest configuration for the Seward highway is a four lane divided highway with barriers or a median between the lanes. The reason for this is simple physics; cars that crash while moving in the same direction expend far less energy against the occupants than a crash where vehicles are coming from opposite directions. A head-on collision at 45 miles an hour still creates a combined force of 90 miles an hour which is not survivable in my experience. A barrier between the lanes will prevent this kind of excursion and significantly reduce the morbidity and mortality resulting from auto crashes along the highway. With appropriate designs, the snow removal and emergency vehicle turnaround problems could be easily solved. I have always thought that the southbound lanes could be moved onto the existing Alaska Railroad rail bed, with the railroad right of way either moved farther out into the inlet or uphill from the road. And might I add how essential that emergency access boat ramp to the inlet be provided in at least one location along the route! If I may be of assistance in any aspect of this project, please contact me at the number, address or email below.
NULL	NULL	NULL	I have lived in Girdwood since 1993 and commuted on the highway until 1999. I then commuted again from 2021-2011. I am not working in Girdwood and drive the highway approximately twice a week. I am glad to see the many improvements that have happened over those years. I would like to see all passing lanes have the white stripes painted to steer the driver into the right lane. I have seen this on some of the newer passing lanes that have been put in (one near 20 Mile Bridge). I think this should be done for all passing lanes. I would like DOT to look at the possibility of an acceleration lane heading South out of Girdwood. The concept I think would work would be similar to what is used on the highway that runs between Vancouver, BC and Whistler. They seem to work very well for traffic turning left onto a high speed highway with limited visibility. A four lane with a divider would be nice but I am not sure if it is affordable and it make be too much of an impact on the terrain, railroad, and natural habitat. I would recommend turning lanes and acceleration lanes.
Tyndall	Ellis	NULL	Thanks for the presentation at Loussac Library in Anchorage. I appreciate all the time and energy that has gone into this project so far. I have two comments. 1) Based on the proposed alternatives and numerous user groups, I would like to see a corridor that balances that use. Designing space to turn off and onto the road will allow through traffic to maintain speed. Recreationists won't have to worry about being rear ended. Designing the road for 55 mph will continue to support the many uses of the road without turning it into a major thoroughfare. One of the biggest issues in that zone is allowing continuous flow of through traffic while also embracing the scenic nature of the zone. 2) I have concerns about the cost of this project. My understanding is this project may cost over \$1 billion. That said, I live near Tudor Rd where pedestrians continue to be injured/killed. If safety is the reason for the Seward Highway project, it's possible that Tudor could benefit and save more lives at a lower cost. There are no safe off road crossings of Tudor except at Elmore. I hope DOT compares the cost of saving lives on the Seward Highway with that of Tudor Rd when allocating money. For example, a bridge crossing Tudor at McInnes could create a north/south pedestrian/cyclist corridor that connects mid town neighborhoods to Campbell Creek Trail. A tunnel or underpass at Tudor and New Seward could also create another north/south corridor for non motorized users on the west side of the highway. Sorry for the long comment. Thanks for your consideration.
Carrie	Sorensen	NULL	Fore the multi use path I would recommend trying to keep the path as far from the highway as possible with a lot of vegetation/trees between the two. The portions of the trail that currently do not have this are much less present to be on. The highway is very loud and it feels less safe. Also on the topic of noise it would be great to reduce the current noise level along the entire corridor but particularly Indian and Bird Creek. The rumble strips are particularly noisy. It would be great to have lower speed limits and maybe even some roundabouts to reduce speeds and enable easier merging from side roads.
Carrie Phillip	Sorensen Rosenbaum	NULL	Mumble strips are some thing I just heard about. Could help with noise reduction while maintaining safety concept.
Rachel	Blakeslee	Kenai Mountains	Subject: Tunnel concepts for Seward Highway Hello. I saw on one of your concept posters that you guys were looking into tunnel alternatives for some sections of the highway. Do you have any more information regarding how many tunnels might be utilized and where they will be located? The poster showed a possible tunnel through the cliffside at Rainbow Point. It would be neat to see how those tunnels look on a larger scale overview of the project area. Thank you for your time. -Phillip
Frank Jackie	Rast Stark	NULL	Hi, my name is Rachel Blake's Lee, and I am the Executive Director of the Kenai Mountains trying to get on national heritage area. I am calling about your safer Seward Highway Project. Because reading through your website, starting about it a little bit last night, and then our community council meeting and saw that you guys have a stakeholder group that's been meeting about this project. Does that you guys have met?That's six times so far, with key stakeholders.And I wanted to inquire about becoming a stakeholder, as our organization is not currently listed, nor was invited to be a stakeholder in this project. Butour heritage area isa historic transportation corridors. It runalong the superhighway. And this project is backed up in the middle of our Heritage area. Soa lot of the natural and cultural resources that we steward, very much affected by this project. And we would like to bepart of whatever stakeholder meeting that you're having, if you can provide input, as well. So if you could give me a call back, I'd love to learn more about how we could actually, you come involved and have a seat at the table. Thank you so much. Bye."
Ryan Alexa	Kennedy Dobson	NULL	1) 55 MPH posted & design speed 2) 4-lane alternative with Jersey barrier 3) provide restrooms with run-outs parking Indian, Bird Creek, Windy Corner 4) Provide 12-foot width non-motorized pathway ADA accessible 5) proity funding over Richardson Highway
			I didn't see any plans for expanding facilities such as bathrooms, informational signs, and parking areas. Why isn't the MCA (mountaineering club of Alaska) or Climbers Alliance on your Stakeholder Group? Consider returning access to the water spring at mile 109.5+ Mile 110 is Sunshine Ridge Climbing area and is one of the most popular areas for beginners. It would be greatly benefit from a toilet and improved parking lot and turning lane. Consider putting a fillet station with running water. -How long will this project shut down the highway? -Is a ferry possible?
			Don't fence off Beluga Point. Make it so old people can get to the rocks and walk around.
			Investing in great bike infrastructure now could open up a ton of new opportunities for access and recreation along the highway. I urge you to prioritize a bike path that is a safe and comfortable distance from the highway. Shielded from road noise and fast-moving vehicles. Simply adding more lanes doesn't resolve the overall safety and usability needs of the corridor - indeed demand will simply cause it to get jammed up again. But a bike lane that is well protected and separated from the highway could be a huge new tourist draw, transform how we access our parks, and open up a new way for people to enjoy this beautiful area.
Carrie Paul Suzanne	Sorensen Rasmussen Eusden	NULL	Evaluate traffic calming geometry and landscape techniques to see modeled impact on safety.
			Please make this project 4-lanes the whole way. As a Girdwood commuter, the current road is not adequate for the amount of traffic.
			I am 100% opposed to 4-lane divided highway on ANY of this 20-mile stretch. It would cease being a scenic road. - Possibly some areas are 3-lane wide and turning lands. - Don't destroy Bird/Indian for residents - More cops/troopers to ENFORCE speeds and people passing on double yellow lines and curves! Enforce 5-in-a-row slow drivers to use slow vehicle pullouts. -The only sketch curves IS NORTHBOUND are at Rainbow and Beluga Point area. They have icy conditions. - Drive defensively, not offensively!!! I am a 34-year resident in Whittier, please add me to the mailing list:
Bob	Childers	NULL	1. You need an improved 2-lane with passing lanes and pullouts option. I was not clear a "No Action" alternative will/can include improvements. A minimalist primarily 2-lane option. 2. This section does NOT need a design-speed above 55 MPH. Over the 20 miles it makes very little travel time difference. Scenic highways throughout the US have slower speed limits on some sections.
Toni	Francisco	NULL	Dear Toni, Thank you for your comment and interest in the project. The State has evaluated constructing a bridge across Turnagain Arm to reach the Kenai Peninsula but it generally has been demonstrated as unreasonable and infeasible from both cost, environmental, and common engineering perspectives. It is a very constrained corridor with no practical alternate options. This project is limited to the corridor between Rabbit Creek and Bird Flats and seeks to improve the safety of the existing highway. However, the project team is looking at how best to meet the needs of both user groups. We are looking at adding passing lanes so those who are taking it a bit slower can do so without having through-traffic held up behind them. We are looking at adding acceleration and deceleration lanes, as well as turn lanes to safely move off of the highway, out of the flow of through-traffic. We currently have our online open house live on our website at <a href="https://safersewardhighwayonline.com/">https://safersewardhighwayonline.com/</a> till January 4th, please check it out for more information. Thank you, The Safer Seward Highway Project Team
			If you removed the Kenai Peninsula drivers to a high bridge over the water and connected to the Nikiski road (or further in) on that side, it would make a big difference in the safety factor. There would then be an alternate route during avalanches or other fewer road closures. Tourists and local people could really enjoy the scenic drive down the Arm and those in a hurry could drive the alternate route. I doubt this will ever happen in my lifetime, but in the long term, it would save lives, money, and time, plus open more land for new businesses and badly needed housing.
Cy Kerry	Two Elk Lynch	NULL	I have property at mile 101 at El Rocko Lane. I would prefer to have the 4-lane option in Bird Creek for safer access to our property via a frontage road. When my children get older and begin to drive, I'd like them to safer access than is available today, and with the 3-lane option.
			Will there be consideration of options for reducing single-occupant vehicles and vehicle-miles-traveled with this project? Both are goals for land-use and climate change plans in Anchorage and would help meet this project's goals to reduce congestion and crashes. For example, will designs to prioritize and accommodate bus and train travel between Anchorage and Girdwood be included in this project? Will we consider designs that meet our desired future reduction in vehicle traffic rather than forecasting straight-line growth of car traffic in the future? Will we be able to evaluate options to optimize transit options for those staying within the corridor while allowing southbound vehicles to pass through at safe speeds. In considering non-motorized improvements, will user experience be considered? Cycling/walking next to a busy, loud highway or needing to cross it to reach attractions or trailheads would be undesirable. With so many trails and sights, this corridor is a destination for many of the vehicles on it, will that use-case be considered along with high-throughput of vehicles and freight? There is broad support for the Alaska Long Trail and this corridor could potentially be an enjoyable part of that experience (as well as for increasingly popular bike-packing trips) if we design it this project accordingly.
Marc	Grober	NULL	Subject: Damn! You published your photo flyer and the link takes one to ( <a href="https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230302_XSC_SHW98-118_PFS_PDFUA.pdf">https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230302_XSC_SHW98-118_PFS_PDFUA.pdf</a> which suggests you have ALREADY dropped a paved bike path from the expected benefits! Shame on you! The public does not trust you, and for good reason! This project offered a ray of hope - and you are quickly making that disappear!
Marc	Grober	NULL	Subject: Re: Damn! Did you look at the listed benefits identified in the flyer at the link provided? Do you see anything about a bike path listed? This is the most important aspect of the project for most of the people the project could effect! On Aug 17, 2023, at 2:09 PM, Safer Seward Highway < <a href="mailto:info@safersewardhighway.com">info@safersewardhighway.com</a> > wrote: Hi Marc, Thanks for pointing that out. What specifically are you seeing that looks like the bike path is no longer part of the vision for this project? We'd really like this to be clear to the community so any further help you can give us would be great. We have stated on both the Frequently Asked Questions< <a href="https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230707_FINAL_XSC_FAQs_PDFUA.pdf">https://safersewardhighway.com/documents/20230707_FINAL_XSC_FAQs_PDFUA.pdf</a> > document as well as the purpose and need information on the homepage that a bike path is being included. We have heard that it is important to the community and are excited to share more about what that will look like at the next public meeting. Thank you, The Safer Seward Highway Project Team
Adam	Gibbons	NULL	Thank you for the opportunity to provide a comment. I strongly support adding a permanent median divider between opposing lane traffic wherever possible along the Anchorage - Girdwood section of the Seward Hwy. Thank you. Adam Gibbons

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
David Chase	David Chase	NULL	Very concerned about the project at Potter Valley Rd and don't see much info about what you are doing. Why the lack of info. Even my state senator office says they don't know what you are doing and others have voiced their concerns. What I see looks like a bad idea to entice more people to a busy intersection and a parking lot that serves as a bus stop and mail box. M Request a call.
Ann	Rappaport	Rabbit Creek Community Council	<p>Hello Safer Seward Highway Team - Some of our Rabbit Creek Community Council members have attended the Open House or looked at the project roll-out on the Safer Seward Highway website. They brought a number of good questions to our recent Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting. Attached is a compilation of those questions. We hope you can provide answers to most of them this coming week, in time for our RCCC monthly meeting as well as the Stakeholder Working Group meeting. Both of those meetings are on December 14th. Your answers will help our members to provide constructive comments during the current comment period. Please also clarify whether January 4th or another date is the closing of that period. We greatly appreciate your openness to our questions and the opportunity to be heard as a member of the Stakeholder WG! Sincerely, Ann Rappoport, Co-chair Rabbit Creek Community Council</p> <p>Attachment content:            Dear Safer Seward Highway Team:            We appreciate the efforts by the Project Team to present the Safer Seward Highway (SSH) context and draft concepts to the public this month. Some Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) members attended the December 4th Anchorage Open House or looked at the project roll-out on the Safer Seward Highway website. They brought several good questions to our recent Land Use and Transportation (LUT) Committee meeting.</p> <p>First, two comments:            Comment period deadline – we note that the SSH website indicates the online Open House is open for comments through January 4, 2024. Please clarify to our SSH Working Group and on the website whether that is a deadline for this current comment period, or if it is another date.            Map access - while our Council members found the interactive maps very useful, they were initially hard to find on the website. Can this map feature be prominently noted near the top of the home page?            Following is a compilation of our LUT Committee and member questions.</p> <p>Specific to Potter Marsh and Potter Valley Road</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise information at Potter Marsh                What are the calculated decibels at various distances where the Highway passes Potter Marsh, south to Potter Weigh station? A noise map is important to understand the impacts to species in the Marsh and to neighbors. Noise increases with vehicle speeds; thus it is useful to look at several noise maps based on varying traffic speeds.</li> <li>Explain the turning movements and wait times at Potter Marsh under the various designs The four-lane divided alternative seems to rely on cars eddying out in the median. This does not seem safe or practical.</li> <li>Add the proposed Potter Marsh Watershed Park as a new destination that will affect traffic at the Potter Valley Road intersection.</li> <li>Traffic counts and projections for Potter Valley Road and for travel on Old Seward Highway                Residents want to know the spill-over effects onto the Old Seward Highway east of Potter Marsh, anticipated because of the possible delays and safety perceptions at the Seward Highway intersection, as well as the possible new access patterns for a Turnagain Arm Trail parking lot and Potter Marsh Watershed Park.</li> </ol> <p>CONTINUED</p> <p>Highway footprint questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual depiction of cut and fill, with comparisons to the existing rock wall near Bird Creek. More visuals are needed for the public to understand the scale of changes to the landscape. We suggest three-dimensional graphics of the cut and fill, as well as numerical height comparisons of the cliff faces. The website has road-level photos that might serve as the basis for this. This arises from the alarm of some of our residents at the scale of cut and fill that detracts from the scenic natural setting. That loss appears to include the loss of almost all natural shoreline.</li> <li>What determines the amount of quarrying: rockfall safety, or materials source?                What sections have been analyzed for shed-roof-style rockfall protection or tunneling to minimize quarrying, what are the options for a combination of rock removal and rock catchment?</li> <li>Decking or stacking                What analysis was made of sections of stacked highway to reduce the footprint? This is common on bridges and in some cities. If none, can this be a partial solution to reduce the footprint? Could this be particularly helpful and safer at pinch points where cars enter/exit the highway?</li> <li>Railroad in the median                Bureaucratic turf battles aside, what would the footprint be to put the railroad between the lanes? We recognize that traditionally there is a specified right-of-way separating the highway from the railroad, but other cities have overcome this issue. The railroad is located in a highway median in many urban areas, such as Portland (The Max), the L in Chicago, and in Los Angeles.</li> <li>Sea-level rise and storm conditions from human-caused climate change                What is the level of fill and the relation of fill to sea level? What is the range of projections for sea level rise along the highway? Regarding the rate of isostatic rebound—what scientific evidence is there that uplift will match sea-level rise?</li> </ol> <p>Safety and Need questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please provide the formulas that show the statistical trade-off between speed-related risk and sight-line related risk Long sightlines help drivers avoid some crashes, but long sightlines allow and encourage higher speeds. Speed results in more crashes, and higher severity crashes. For the public to think that a design increases safety, the public needs to know the cause-and-effect statistical relationships of speed and sightlines and crashes.</li> <li>What and who determines speed limits?                A project engineer told one of us: “The speed limit is a function of traffic mixing and merging, not the sightlines on the curves.” We need to hear more about this. If traffic mixing is the guiding factor, is mixing and merging more controlled by four lanes or three lanes or two lanes? This is not intuitive, because four lanes allow more lane-changing.</li> <li>Explain the Safety Corridor Study crash data—specific crash causes Crashes decreased when the Safety Corridor was declared in 2006. But crashes have increased since then, especially in winter. The Corridor study attributes some amount of crash increases to low staffing (troopers) and to limits on winter maintenance. Can crashes be quantified by underlying cause?</li> <li>What was the crash rate in the slow-speed zones of the rockfall projects, where jersey barriers were used in 2022-2023?</li> <li>Comparative fatality rate for this highway and other roadways and intersections                How does the fatality rate on the Seward Highway compare to other highways and intersections in the region? For example, if the accident rate is 1 fatality per 800,000 trips at Indian (please provide the actual rate), what is the comparison for various other fatality patterns, such as on the Sterling Highway or on urban arterials in Anchorage?</li> </ol>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
			<p>CONTINUED</p> <p>Cost burden and Affordability questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.What is the total increase in lane miles and maintenance surface for a divided four-lane, versus three-lane, versus two-lane? This total should include access roads and pullouts.</li> <li>2.What are total maintenance cost estimates for this project? Provide a comparison of future costs for divided four-lane, three-lane, and two-lane. How does this compare to current costs for this stretch of highway?</li> <li>3.Provide a picture of DOTPF maintenance funding levels relative to maintenance needs, historically and currently.</li> <li>4.What projections do DOTPF Maintenance Managers have regarding future funding adequacy for maintenance of this project, given regionwide needs?</li> <li>5.What has been the budget and hours logged for law enforcement on the Seward Highway from Potter to Girdwood over the years? How has this varied, and what percentage of the agency budget has this been? Quantify the amount of time for traffic patrolling on the highway, to give an indication of enforcement capability.</li> </ol> <p>Opportunity Costs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Is a no-build alternative still in the analysis? If not, why not?</li> <li>2.Given the \$800 million price tag (or more), who and how is it decided that this project is the best investment in Alaska's future?</li> <li>3.Give the public a menu of the alternatives</li> </ol> <p>Our residents have many questions on the scale and the return on investment for this project, versus the opportunity cost. There are so many needs for Alaska transportation funds; and Alaskans must build infrastructure for a very different future than we see today. We would like a menu of other projects from the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the municipal plans, or Alaska Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facility's plans, that could be funded if this project did not require \$800 million in the next 5 years.</p> <p>In addition, our residents have ideas for new projects that might not be in current adopted plans but that offer big economic, environmental and land use payoffs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Connectivity to geo-thermal energy sources along western Cook Inlet</li> <li>•Railroad link to Canada</li> <li>•Commuter rail to the Mat-Su or Girdwood</li> <li>•A suite of ten, \$80-million projects in Anchorage instead of one \$800 million (if SSH no-build)</li> <li>•A suite of ten, \$40-million projects in Anchorage (if this SSH were half the scale)</li> <li>•What about segmenting and phasing this \$800 million project out over 10 or more years, so other projects in Anchorage can also leap ahead and spur economic recovery?</li> </ul> <p>We hope the SSH Project Team can provide answers to most of these questions this coming week, in time for the Stakeholder Working Group meeting, after which we can follow up with our members at the RCCC monthly meeting – both are on December 14th. The Project Team's answers will help our members provide constructive comments during the current comment period. Thank you for your work and we look forward to our continued participation in the Working Group.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
Ann	Rappaport	NULL	<p>Hello Safer Seward Highway Team - Happy New Year! Please accept the attached comments and questions as a submittal from Stakeholder Working Group member, Rabbit Creek Community Council, for the Open House/Public Comment period on the Safer Seward Highway that ends January 4th, 2024. We are looking forward to discussing these comments and questions with you next week. Sincerely, Ann Rappoport, Co-chair Rabbit Creek Community Council</p> <p>Attachment Contents:</p> <p>Dear Safer Seward Highway Team –</p> <p>We continue to appreciate being part of the Safer Seward Highway (SSH) Stakeholder Working Group (WG). At the December 14, 2023, meeting of the Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) we discussed information from the December 2023 public open house in Anchorage which several of our members attended, and continuing information and discussions from which we have benefitted as members of the SWG. Our Land Use and Transportation Committee has had focused discussions on this project. These discussions reveal that RCCC residents have emerging concerns and preferences; and they also have a number of questions and concerns that require further information and data.</p> <p>Following is a compilation of comments and questions on the safety, need, and preliminary three- and four-lane design concepts for Seward Highway Reconstruction from MP 98.5 to 118.5, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, based on currently available information and RCCC discussions about the SSH project. While we provided much of this information in a December 8, 2023, letter to the SSH Team, we wanted to make sure these comments were part of the record for your current comment period ending today, January 4, 2024.</p> <p>Specific to Potter Marsh and Potter Valley Road</p> <p>Based on the preliminary concepts, RCCC has two general comments:</p> <p>A.A three-lane, 55 mph design at Potter Marsh appears safer, with better control of traffic movements and speeds, than a four-lane divided design. Slower speeds are also compatible with the concentrated recreation use and wildlife habitat values of Potter Marsh.</p> <p>B.Regarding the separated multi-use pathway throughout the project corridor, RCCC urges that the design emphasize maximum separation from traffic for the safety and perceived safety of non-motorized users. People will use it only if the pathway feels safe and comfortable. A recent report documented how much less safe pedestrians in the United States are than pedestrians in Japan, Europe, and many other areas around the world (<a href="https://theworld.org/media/2024-01-04/pedestrian-deaths-rise-us-look-solutions-abroad">https://theworld.org/media/2024-01-04/pedestrian-deaths-rise-us-look-solutions-abroad</a>). Higher speeds and less pedestrian-centric walkways are among leading reasons for the higher fatalities and injuries of pedestrians in the U.S. as compared to other countries.</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
			<p>CONTINUED Specific comments:</p> <p>1.Noise information at Potter Marsh</p> <p>RCCC is concerned about the noise impacts to neighborhoods and to the marsh.</p> <p>a.Provide noise maps for several potential traffic speeds. What are the calculated decibels at various distances where the Highway passes Potter Marsh, south to Potter Weigh station?</p> <p>b.Provide information on the decibels and disturbance caused by the intermittent noise of rumble strips.</p> <p>c.What noise abatement features are possible for the Potter Marsh area and other communities and high-value recreation spots along the highway?</p> <p>2.Lighting along Potter Marsh and at Potter Valley Road intersection</p> <p>RCCC residents value the night sky and the natural lighting that plays across Potter Marsh. In addition, Potter Marsh is within the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge.</p> <p>Residents would like to avoid the very tall light posts that create a large area of glare visible from miles away, such as exist at the Old Seward Highway overpass and other intersections.</p> <p>Can the team share several lighting options that do not create upward light pollution or large areas of glare?</p> <p>3.Explain the turning movements and wait times at Potter Marsh under the various designs.</p> <p>a.The four-lane divided seems to rely on cars eddying out in the median. This does not seem safe or practical.</p> <p>b.The four-lane divided option as shown lacks turn pockets. Wouldn't the design effectively require turn pockets, and thus amount to six lanes?</p> <p>c.The concept of an inside merging lane with 65 mph traffic is unfamiliar and appears unsafe.</p> <p>4.Provide detailed traffic data on the current and projected flows of traffic at Potter Valley Road, both for the highway and Potter Valley Road</p> <p>a.Add the proposed Potter Marsh Watershed Park as a new destination that will increase traffic at the Potter Valley Road intersection.</p> <p>b.Consider traffic from a future alpine trailhead to Chugach State Park (as depicted on the Chugach State Park access inventory). Based on the use of Glen Alps and Upper Canyon roads, this could be 1,000 additional vehicle trips or more on summer days.</p> <p>5.Traffic counts and projections for travel on Old Seward Highway</p> <p>Residents want to know the spill-over effects onto the Old Seward Highway east of Potter Marsh, anticipated because of the possible delays and safety perceptions at the Seward Highway intersection, as well as the possible new access patterns for a Turnagain Arm Trail parking lot and Potter Marsh Watershed Park.</p> <p>6.Frontage road for access to Turnagain Arm Trail trailhead</p> <p>a.This is currently shown as a four-way intersection that aligns with Old Seward Highway. This appears unsafe because that intersection already has poor sight lines and a difficult stopping situation for downhill traffic on Potter Valley Road. If a frontage road is proposed, it should intersect farther west, at the westerly pull- out of the South Potter Marsh parking lot. This is where people on foot would want to walk if they parked at Potter Marsh and then walked to the trailhead.</p> <p>b.The frontage road would need a separated pathway. It would be used for pedestrian access to the trailhead.</p> <p>7.Consider a one-way overpass ramp at Potter Valley Road</p> <p>This could provide safer and faster merging onto the Seward Highway heading south, and preclude the need for a larger footprint with a separated median.</p> <p>8.Mitigation options for impacts along Potter Marsh and Potter Valley Road</p>
			<p>CONTINUED While mitigation may not be part of current project planning, it is never too early to start a list of options. We recommend consideration be given to using flashing lights to help control speeds in the Potter Valley Road/Old Seward Highway area and addition of a pedestrian path along Old Seward Highway from Potter Valley Road to at least the pump house. This could also provide a loop, tying into Potter Marsh Watershed Park.</p> <p>Highway footprint questions</p> <p>1.Visual depiction of cut and fill, with comparisons to the existing rock wall near Bird Creek. More visuals are needed for the public to understand the scale of changes to the landscape. We suggest three-dimensional graphics of the cut and fill, as well as numerical height comparisons of the cliff faces. The website has road-level photos that might serve as the basis for this. This arises from the alarm of some of our residents at the scale of cut and fill that detracts from the scenic natural setting. That loss appears to include the loss of almost all natural shoreline.</p> <p>2.What determines the amount of quarrying: rockfall safety, or materials source?</p> <p>-What sections have or should be analyzed for shed-roof-style rockfall protection or tunneling?</p> <p>-To minimize quarrying, what are the options for a combination of rock removal and rock catchment?</p> <p>3.Decking or stacking</p> <p>What analysis was made of sections of stacked highway to reduce the footprint? This is common on bridges and in some cities. If none, can this be a partial solution to reduce the footprint?</p> <p>4.Railroad in the median; railroad for future passenger travel</p> <p>-Given the scale of this project, RCCC would like the footprint to at least leave open the option for future passenger rail. Given the imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, and the goals of more accessible and equitable transportation, this project should consider future use of the railroad for passengers.</p> <p>-This may affect the alignment of the railroad at several points, such as Potter Valley and Indian or Bird.</p> <p>-Bureaucratic turf battles aside, could the railroad be located between the highway lanes Rail lines are located in a highway median in many urban areas, such as Portland (The Max), the L in Chicago, and in Los Angeles.</p> <p>5.Sea-level rise and storm conditions from human-caused climate change</p> <p>What is the level of fill and the relation to sea level; plus the range of projections for sea level rise. Regarding the rate of isostatic rebound—what scientific evidence is there that uplift will match sea-level rise?</p> <p>Safety and Need comments and questions</p> <p>1.Transparency and accountability: Who decides the worthiness of this nearly \$1 billion dollar project, and according to what criteria? Our Council residents would like transparency and public participation in the evaluation of this project's benefits compared to other transportation investments. Where are the safety needs greatest? Is the risk per vehicle mile traveled greater on this corridor than on other corridors? Show the data compared to other hazardous highways and urban roads. Also, how are tourism and freight benefits calculated for this project? Recognizing that the SSH Team is focused on this and not other projects, can you provide information on the decision- making process and avenues for the public to ensure there are broader discussions and consideration of the tradeoffs in determining where it is best to spend up to \$1 billion in public transportation funds in Alaska?</p> <p>2.Provide the formulas that show the statistical trade-off between speed-related risk and sight-line related risk</p> <p>Long sightlines help drivers avoid some crashes, but long sightlines allow and encourage higher speeds. Speed results in more crashes, and higher severity crashes. For the public to think that a design increases safety, the public needs to know the cause-and-effect statistical relationships of speed and sightlines and crashes.</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
			<p>CONTINUED 3.What and who determines speed limits?                      A project engineer told one of us: “The speed limit is a function of traffic mixing and merging, not the sightlines on the curves.” We need to hear more about this. If traffic mixing is the guiding factor, is mixing and merging more controlled by four lanes or three lanes or two lanes? This is not intuitive, because four lanes allow more lane-changing.                      4.Explain the Safety Corridor Study crash data—specific crash causes                      Crashes went down when the Safety Corridor was declared in 2006. But crashes have increased since then, especially in winter. The Corridor study attributes some amount of crash increases to low staffing (troopers) and to limits on winter maintenance. Quantify the crashes by underlying cause.                      5.What was the crash rate in the slow-speed zones of the rockfall projects, where jersey barriers were used in 2022-2023?                      6.Comparative fatality rate for this highway and other roadways and intersections                      How does the fatality rate compare to other highways and intersections in the region? For example, if the accident rate is 1 fatality per 800,000 trips at Indian (please provide the actual rate), what is the comparison for various other fatality patterns, such as on the Sterling Highway or on urban arterials in Anchorage?                      Cost burden and Affordability questions                      1.What is the total increase in lane miles and maintenance surface                      This should be provided for a divided-four lane, versus three-lane, versus two-lane options. It should include access roads and pullouts.                      2.What are total maintenance cost estimates for this project? Provide a comparison of future costs for divided four-lane, three-lane, and two-lane. How does this compare to current costs for this stretch of highway?                      3.Provide a picture of DOTPF maintenance funding levels relative to maintenance needs, historically and currently.                      4.What projections do DOTPF Maintenance Managers have regarding future funding adequacy for maintenance of this project, given regionwide needs? Could mitigation include guaranteed maintenance funding to ensure safety gains are maintained?                      5.What has been the budget and hours logged for law enforcement on the Seward Highway from Potter to Girdwood over the years? How has this varied, and what percentage of the agency budget is this? Quantify the amount of time for traffic patrolling on the highway, to give an indication of enforcement capability.                      Opportunity Costs                      1.Is a no-build alternative still in the analysis? If not, why not?                      2.Given the \$800 million price tag (or more), who and how is it decided that this project is the best investment in Alaska’s future?                      3.Provide a menu of the alternatives for the public                      Our residents have lots of questions on the scale and the return on investment for this project, versus the opportunity cost. There are so many needs for Alaska transportation funds; and Alaskans must build infrastructure for a very different future than we see today. We would like a menu of other projects that are in the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the municipal plans, or DOTPF’s plans, that could be funded if this project did not expend \$800 million in the next 5 years. Additionally, our residents have ideas for new projects that might not be in current adopted plans but that offer big economic, environmental and land use payoffs:</p>
			<p>CONTINUED Connectivity to geo-thermal energy sources along western Cook Inlet?                      •A railroad link to Canada                      •Commuter rail to the Mat-Su or Girdwood                      •A suite of ten, \$80 million projects in Anchorage instead of one \$800 million project (if SSH is no-build)                      •A suite of ten, \$40 million-dollar projects in Anchorage (if this SSH were half the scale)                      •What about segmenting and phasing this \$800 million project out over 10 or more years, so other projects in Anchorage can also leap ahead and spur economic recovery?                      We recognize that the SSH Team does not have the authority to consider these other options but would appreciate any assistance you can provide us in raising these options with the appropriate decision makers.                      Thank you for your attention to these questions and comments. We look forward to sitting down to discuss them with you early next week.                      Sincerely,</p>
Kris	Kuelper	NULL	Regardless of the cost of the capital investment this project is a poor solution to the problem at hand. Wider, flatter roads will create larger, more violent crashes and require significantly higher maintenance costs on an already overburdened system. There is already a parallel route on the Alaska Railroad that is far more scalable and safer and offers an incredible experience and convenient connections to popular locations all the way to Seward. All that on a system that is more reliable year round.
Suki	Horton	NULL	Hi, I was just reading about the improvements being looked at for the Seward Hwy and didn't seeing anything about lighting. I recently drove back from Girdwood at 5ish and it was super dark, and there is no lighting on that hwy! The traffic marking paint on the road was not visible and I was just trying to follow the tracks. However it was windy around the corners and snowblown so you could not tell if you were in your lane or not. Just some lighting and snow stakes would go a long way. It would be nice if they were added to the areas that have already been improved and added to the improvements to come. I don't want bright lights/light pollution the whole way, but just some low lighting here and there would be nice. Thank you for taking the time to read public input! Best, Suki Miller
Eric	Stocki	NULL	Subject: [EXT] Please expand the bike paths!! As an active member of the community I would love to see the bike paths expanded in an effort to connect Anchorage to bird to gird. Sent from my iPhone
Vivian	Mendenhall	Anchorage Audubon Society	"Hello. My name is Vivian Mendenhall. I am on the board of the Anchorage Audubon Society, and I am trying to find out something about a major issuearound the Sacred Seward Highway Program,which we have commented on, but I cannot find anything about it at any of your Web site.That is,what the alternative, if any, are that are being considered in the vicinity of Potter Marsh,which is a world famous bird sanctuary. But the maps online that you, that you have online just have children going right past it without any attention to that. So, the issues, I was assured of public meetings, that there would be major considerations about it, but no information, and we need to know what's going on. By the way, I have signed up for a notice of progress in meetings, and so on, and I never received anything. As far as I can tell, certainly not about that,my number is (XXX) XXX-XXXX. That is a land line. Please do not text, andI will send you an e-mail as well. Thank you. Hope to hear from you soon."
Vivian	Mendenhall	Anchorage Audubon Society	Subject: Any plans or alternatives for your project alongside Potter Marsh? To the Safer Seward Highway team-- I am on the board of the Anchorage Audubon Society. We are very concerned about the highway project's possible impacts on the adjacent Potter Marsh wildlife sanctuary. This water body is an essential breeding habitat for Alaska's birds, mammals, and a major stopover for migrating birds. Three species of salmon spawn or migrate through the marsh. Potter Marsh is also a famous wildlife viewing spot for Alaska residents and tourists. As we have written you (including Scoping comments), and testified at public meetings, the highway project could have devastating effects on the marsh's water, vegetation, and wildlife, unless plans take into account the environment of Potter Marsh. I am trying to provide an update to my Board on plans for the highway project re. Potter Marsh. But I cannot find any information about it on your website. I have emailed and telephoned ADFG (which manages the marsh and public visits), and I phoned you today. But I couldn't contact anyone. Have you prepared a draft EA or any plans for this area? Even if you have no plans there yet, please let me know. (My next Board meeting is tomorrow evening, March 6.) Thank you-- Vivian Vivian Mendenhall, PhD
Vivian	Mendenhall	Anchorage Audubon Society	Subject: For(For Morgan Miller): Summary concerns of Anchorage Audubon Society Morgan-- Sorry we're "playing tag." I'll try your phone again tomorrow. Meantime, here are some of our main concerns. o I appear to have been dropped from the SSH email list. I've re-signed-up, but please verify. o We submitted Scoping comments for the EA in March 2023. At the Open House that month, I was assured verbally that Scoping comments were already being accepted. However, I later got an email that said they were not. And our concerns were absent from the October open-house summary. Therefore, we need to resubmit our scoping comments immediately. How should I do this? o In the "Constraints Analysis" section of the October Open House text, moose and sheep are mentioned as noteworthy wildlife. But the famous and unusual decades-old Potter Marsh Sanctuary is never mentioned. Potter Marsh has a very high diversity of wetland habitats, which are managed by ADFG, as is public viewing. 130 bird species depend on the Sanctuary for nesting or on migration. The Sanctuary is a favorite place of Alaskan residents, plus it is widely recommended by tourism companies. o The "Constraints" summary mentions that wildlife sometimes conflicts with traffic. But there is no mention of the potential impacts on wildlife, including their habitats, that a redesigned highway could have. o The Interactive Map is helpful, but there are some problems. It does not seem to indicate the "footprint" that the new fill (for either 4 or 3 lanes) would occupy. o The Interactive Map option for "hydrology" adds some blue lines, but their relevance to hydrology is not explained. Thank you, Morgan. Hope to connect with you soon! Vivian Mendenhall
Becca	Rorabaugh	NULL	Hello, I'm interested in hearing if any modifications to the Turnagain Arm Trail would occur during this project. The Turnagain Arm Trail is a unique and important amenity for the outdoor community; it is the first running or hiking trail to dry out in the spring and affords incredible views of the Turnagain Arm without needing to do any technical hiking. This is a very significant site for equitable outdoor access in the Anchorage Bowl and the continuous length of the trail is a key attribute. It sounds like the McHugh Creek Parking Lot access may be improved with a turning lane, but I'd like to know what other interactions are anticipated. I look forward to hearing how the project team is approaching this consideration. Thank you, Becca Rorabaugh
Elizabeth	Newell	NULL	I like bike path on Potter Marsh side of highway. Away from the railroad. Good for winter use. Access to ice skating! Summer bird watching!

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Jason	Norris	NULL	Safer Seward Highway Subject: Separated Pathway. I highly encourage the team to include the pathway. It was framed by how many people would rarely or never use the pathway, but in the aggregate, over 50% of users stated that they would use the pathway somewhat, which is pretty amazing given the location of the project. Additionally, it is likely that as more of these facilities come online, they will see greater than anticipated use as during a conceptual phase, people cannot adequately envision the facility or why they would use it. It is not often until a project like this is implemented that people see the utility of a feature and begin to use it, much like the adoption curve of a new technology. Thanks.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Concerning Bias in Safer Seward Highway messaging. Dear Project Team, I was very disappointed, although not surprised, to see you highlight "Over 70% stated they would rarely or never use the pathway" Why did you choose that message over "25% said they would use a pathway"? I also didn't see you highlighting as a key finding that "55% stated that they don't see Seward Highway safety Improvements as a high priority". Your very project name/purpose is disputed by the survey results. A higher percentage of people planned to use the pathway than use the Seward in any capacity for work (21% per the handout), but I doubt that AK DOT would ever conclude that commercial interests are therefore unimportant. Thanks, Mike Edgington Girdwood
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Safety. About the troopers, they get an" F "for speed enforcement. Speed kills . Phillip Lopez Ninilchik
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Highway Improvements. I saw this stated in the email I received: * Over 70% stated that they would rarely or never use the pathway. Does this mean there might not be a bike path installed when the highway is improved? That would be a tragedy. -Hilary Fell
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Survey results. I strongly feel that your survey was too limited. A survey limited to 500 people does not seem like a representative sample of those who use the Seward Highway, especially when 60% drive it less than 10 times a year. What are the opinions of those who use the highway several times a week? What about the commercial truck and bus drivers? Based on my experience driving the Seward Highway for 40 years, commuting between Girdwood and Anchorage, the problems are caused by impaired, inexperienced, or speeding drivers. I know you want to increase the speed limit, but that will make driving more dangerous during most of the year, including tourist season and winter. I speak from experience, having witnessed and helped at several accidents and losing friends because of drunk or inattentive drivers. I am for some improvements, but creating multiple lanes, increasing speed limits, and creating a frontage road system at Indian and Bird Creek will not make the highway safer. Sincerely, Vicky Musgrave Indian, AK
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Question from Anchorage Audubon board. Katherine, Chris, Taylor-- Thank you for our meeting on April 2. I appreciate your giving me the time to express our concerns and questions. I described our meeting to my board on the 3rd. Members had a question that didn't come up on the 2nd: Do you foresee (in the preliminary design for the highway) having three lanes or four? Another question that may not have come up at our meeting on the 2nd: If a pedestrian pathway is added on the east edge of the highway, people walking along it might create little disturbance of wildlife. This could be assessed later. But other potential uses of the path certainly could cause problems e.g., bicycles, motorcycles, any movement that's rapid and irregular. Even dogs, which research has shown birds will interpret as a threat (wolf?), whether they're well-behaved or not. All these are prohibited on boardwalks within the marsh. How would they be excluded from a nice path next to the marsh? I also attended a "public engagement" meeting on the 8th hosted by the federal Bureau of Land Management, regarding the "Long Trail" that's proposed between Seward and Fairbanks. No design yet; however, it might parallel the Seward Highway part of the way. Maybe you and they are in touch already. Thank you again-- Vivian Vivian Mendenhall, PhD Conservation Chair, Anchorage Audubon Society
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Public Opinion Survey Summary. Hello ... I am sorry that I was out-of-town when the surveys were done. For what it's worth, I mostly agree with the results, but think there would be great benefit for a parallel pathway for bicycles and walking as long as it is not directly adjacent to the road. There is currently quite a lot of use (it seems) from Indian to Girdwood in different sections. I don't think that most people do the entire section. My guess is that if a new pathway were built starting at near Potter Marsh to Indian, it would eventually have quite a bit of use as a stand alone segment for users. A few would use the whole pathway from Potter to Girdwood, but probably not all that many. The advantage of the "early " section from Anchorage is that a lot of people could use this section without the need to drive/carry their bicycles on a vehicle. It also could have a lot of late season and early season use. I hope that this input is of some use. Steven Kessler Anchorage
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: RE: Further comments Safer Seward Highway. Hi Barbara, I confirm receipt of your message below. We did receive the original correspondence in April of 2023 via Mr. Elliott at the DOT&PF. I've asked the team to make sure you are on our email list to receive future updates from us. We are absolutely continuing to consider comments. Currently, the project does not include upgrades to the section of Old Seward Highway on the north/east side of the marsh. The project does include a separated pathway for bike and pedestrian use. We are working hard to locate the pathway and road to the west of the current alignment, so there is no fill placed in the marsh to the east of the roadway. It's clear from the public comments that Potters Marsh is very much enjoyed by the public at large, and our goal is to minimize or avoid impacts. Would you like to sit down with the team to discuss the project, current status, and the concepts we are looking at near Potter Marsh? We'd be happy to offer that to you and other members of your organization if of interest. Alternatively, if you have a regular meeting that you'd like us to attend and present, we can do that too. Please let me know, thanks, Katherine Wood Subject: Further comments Safer Seward Highway to Safer Seward Highway Planners: On 2023.4.5 I sent a letter on behalf of Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Refuge, FAR, addressed to Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, ADOTPF, with the subject "Comments on NOI to begin environmental studies and floodplain encroachment, Seward Highway Mile Post 98.5 to 118/Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek." Kindly acknowledge receipt of 1) this update and 2) the attached letter (which is the original letter of comments), and that you are, indeed, considering our comments during the ensuing parts of the process. Particularly we would like to call your attention to the old section of the Old Seward Highway behind Potter Marsh. I visited the road with another volunteer three times during the last three weeks and it is clearly in need of serious repair. If this can be included as part of the current process, the pedestrian/bicycle amenities could be paired with the upgraded road behind Potter Marsh instead of with the new highway lanes. This would be unique value added and require collaboration, naturally. It seems that when the original road was created by DOT in 1951, they re-routed Little Survival Creek down the road ditch into the low area. With additional inflow from the nearby hillside, the water level is high, with estimates that 3/4 of the water for all of Potter Marsh comes from those drainages. Some ideas: 1. When upgrading the failing road, engineer part of it to minimize harm to the marsh perhaps put the parts nearest the marsh on pilings--and be sure to include a pedestrian/bicycle facility so that residents and tourists may continue to use the corridor for transportation and recreation. 2. The inclusion of connected viewing platforms with, well designed, vetted, and placed interpretive signs, benches and bicycle racks would provide more places for people to appreciate Potter Marsh and the wildlife that frequent it without intrusion into important habitats. 3. Building at least part of the road on pilings as described above could reduce the amount of fill that would be required to properly rebuild this much loved segment of the Old Seward Highway. Moving the focus of pedestrians and cyclists away from the new Seward Highway in the stretch adjacent to Potter Marsh suggestions would help minimize accidents; help increase the viewable areas of Potter Marsh habitats; and add value for all users. Providing a separated bicycle/pedestrian path connected to the road for the purpose of insuring that there is a good base that will not quickly degrade into the marsh. We have shared previous similar suggestions with Mike Braniff, Municipal Parks and Recreation; Beth Nordlund, The Park Foundation; and Steve Cleary, The Alaska Long Trail, with hopes that it could help facilitate collaboration for the benefit of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, the wildlife, the Municipality, the State, and our visitors from around the world. FAR does a lot of work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) with whom we worked to develop the Potter Marsh Master Interpretive Plan. I am in the process of connecting about this with ADFG's Susan Rodman, Statewide Refuges and Lands Coordinator, and Cory Stantorf, Region 2 Area Biologist. Potter Marsh hosts visitors every day of the year in all kinds of weather. It is loved by citizens and visitors and provides unique vantages for photography, painting, bird and other wildlife viewing, as well as simply strolling for health and ambiance. Finding ways like this to expand appropriate use of the area are a good thing for future generations. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Again, kindly acknowledge receipt of this update and attached letter of comments for the process. Barbara Svorny Carlson Barbara Svorny Carlson President and Executive Director Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: RE: [EXT] CONNECTING ANCHORAGE TO THE BIRD-TO-GIRD TRAIL. Hi Annalise, Thank you for your comments. The Seward Highway mileposts (MP) 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point project has been incorporated into the Seward Highway MP 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project, also known as the Safer Seward Highway project. We have included the Safer Seward Highway project team on this response so they can document your comments. Please visit the new project website www.safersewardhighway.com. Kind regards, Jovie Garcia Project Communications Manager DOWL Subject: [EXT] CONNECTING ANCHORAGE TO THE BIRD-TO-GIRD TRAIL. I am writing to strongly voice my support and request that you continue to build a separate pathway between Rainbow and Windy! As someone who just yesterday was angrily accosted by motorists for riding legally and safely, I cannot stress enough how valuable this pathway would be for recreators and motorists as well. It would provide a safe and connected pathway for commuting and recreating, significantly reduce risk to non-motorized users of that corridor, and monumentally reduce the potential for incidental (or even purposeful) injury or death along the highway corridor. Thank you, Annalise Decker Anchorage, AK
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Christopher Fell Name Christopher Fell Email xxxxxxxx@gmail.com Questions or Comments? I live in Indian and frequently utilize the Bird to Gird Trail with my family. We would also heavily utilize a trail going between Indian and Anchorage, but it seems that the design team is trying to remove that part of the project. Anchorage has a great network of bike/multiuse trails that let cyclists and other pedestrian users move around town without competing with motorists for space on the roads. I do not find riding between Indian and Anchorage safe on the existing highway. Motorists frequently drift onto the shoulder and the speed differential is massive with many limited sight distance corners. Why not take a more forward thinking approach and keep the bike/pedestrian path? FHWA will pay for it. 70% of the survey said they wouldn't use it, but 74% of them are "pass through" motorists so this is not surprising. The 20-30% that would use it is a large number based on the number of trips per year along this highway, do not discount this population.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Frank Rast Name Frank Rast Email xxxxxxxx@gmail.com Questions or Comments? Received via paper comment at the 06/01/24 Potter Marsh Discovery Day: Pedestrian/pathway routing though Potter Marsh. Consider routing pathway on the old Seward hwy from the old RR section house to the north side of Potter Marsh south of Rabbit Creek Road construct an overpass over rabbit creek & the marsh connect back to Seward hwy north of the gun range.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: We have received your response for Safer Seward Highway Website Comments Safer Seward Highway Website Comments Name Richard Ibarguen Email info@safersewardhighway.com Questions or Comments? Received via verbal conversation with Katherine Wood at the 06/01/2024 Potter Marsh Discovery Day: Property owner MP 108 241257 Seward Hwy - Doesn't want parking/recreation in front of his house/driveway - Please keep in touch - Don't want to drive through the lot to get home and don't want it so close to house - has legal access - would prefer/was told single access w/ left turn to property and right turn to parking.

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Richard Iburguen</p> <p>Name Richard Iburguen</p> <p>Email info@safersewardhighway.com</p> <p>Questions or Comments? Received via verbal conversation with Katherine Wood at the 06/01/2024 Potter Marsh Discovery Day: Property owner MP 108 241257 Seward Hwy - Doesn't want parking/recreation in front of his house/driveway - Please keep in touch - Don't want to drive through the lot to get home and don't want it so close to house - has legal access - would prefer/was told single access w/ left turn to property and right turn to parking.</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: RCCC follow-up questions regarding Safer Seward Highway. Hello, Marc, Katherine, and Taylor, I passed the updates from the SWG to Rabbit Creek Community Council at our last meeting, and our residents had a few questions, as follows: Noise monitoring Where were the noise receptors for the noise monitoring placed in the vicinity of Potter Marsh, Old Seward Highway homes, and Potter Creek homes? One what dates was the noise data gathered? Potter Marsh corridor footprint My recollection was that the northbound highway lanes will overlay the current roadway, and therefore the roadway will not move farther east into the marsh. Is that correct? Will the multi-use pathway be built farther into the marsh? On a boardwalk? How far into the marsh from the current roadway? Please describe the eastern edge of the corridor development. Potter Marsh wildlife movements What provisions will be made to allow wildlife to safely cross the highway corridor between the Marsh and the rest of the Coastal Wildlife refuge? * Will there be wildlife fencing, and where? * Will there be an underpass or overpass, and how will such a crossing(s) be designed to serve various species? * What about waterfowl in flight? The current scrim of trees along parts of the marsh causes waterfowl to fly up and over the traffic in those areas. * What kind of lighting will be used along the Marsh, and how can the natural light conditions be maintained as much as possible, in keeping with the natural setting? RCCC looks forward to learning this information for sharing at our June meetings. Thank you. Nancy Pease, co-chair RCCC land use and transportation committee</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Re: RCCC follow-up questions regarding Safer Seward Highway Morgan, Thank you sincerely for providing complete details to answer our questions. Your response is well-timed for our Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting on Sunday. The sun is out and it's 59 degrees—have a fine summery weekend! Nancy Pease, RCCC Sent from my iPad Nancy Pease</p> <p>Hello Nancy &amp; RCCC, Thank you for reaching out to the project team. We have put together the following responses to your questions: Noise monitoring - Where were the noise receptors for the noise monitoring placed in the vicinity of Potter Marsh, Old Seward Highway homes, and Potter Creek homes? One what dates was the noise data gathered? Response: The Safer Seward Highway project team gathered field data to develop and validate the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Traffic Noise Model (TNM; version 2.5). These data will be used to comply with FHWA's Noise Standard at Title 23 Code of Federal Regulation Part 772; compliance will be achieved through adherence to the DOT&amp;PF's Noise Policy (2023)1. The project team intends on following the steps for completing a Type I noise analysis outlined in the Noise Policy for the Safer Seward Highway project. Ambient noise level measurements were obtained along the project corridor August 14, 15, and 17, 2023 to determine existing noise levels at a representative subset of receptors, as directed by the Noise Policy. Locations identified for the model around Potter Marsh include the following (see attached figure). Receiver ID Category Description 1 B (Residential) 15000 Old Seward Hwy 2 B (Residential) 15020 Old Seward Hwy 3 B (Residential) 15040 Old Seward Hwy 4 B (Residential) 2836 Chenoweth St 5 B (Residential) 2739 E 154th Ave 6 E (Other) Rabbit Creek Shooting Park 7 B (Residential) 2910 E 154th 8 B (Residential) 2920 E 154th Ave 9 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Potter Marsh Wildlife Viewing Boardwalk Trailhead 10 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Potter Marsh Wildlife Viewing Boardwalk 11 B (Residential) East Side Potter Marsh 12 B (Residential) East side Potter Marsh, up hill 13 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Potter Marsh highway pullout 14 B (Residential) East Side Potter Marsh 15 B (Residential) East Side Potter Marsh 16 B (Residential) Potter Crest Circle 17 B (Residential) Potter Crest Circle 18 B (Residential) Potter Crest Circle 19 B (Residential) 18575 Seward Hwy 20 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) DNR - 18621 Seward Hwy 21 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Potter Section House/Chugach State Park HQ 22 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Potter Creek Trailhead (lower) 23 C (Recreation/Public Bldgs) Turnagain Arm Trailhead pavilion Locations adjacent to the existing highway, such as the boardwalk (#10), pullouts (#13), Potter Creek Trailhead and pavilions (#22 and #23) and the exterior area of the Potter Section House/Chugach State Park headquarters were dominated by highway noise, and they had existing noise levels that approach or exceed noise abatement criteria, as defined in the Noise Policy. During the measurement, only one residential property (#5) approached the noise abatement criterion for residential receivers. The project team placed receivers (#11, #12, #14, #15) as a representative sample of residents on the east side of Potter Marsh. These receivers did not approach the noise abatement criterion for residential receivers during the measurement. All receivers will be included in future noise models. Potter Marsh corridor footprint Response: we are currently matching the existing roadway embankment limits on the east side of the marsh and all improvements (widening for lanes, railroad, and pathway) are proposed to the west side of the existing roadway. The pathway is currently proposed to run parallel to the roadway with a 10' offset from the roadway / vehicle lanes; it will not require additional fill. ARRC facilities are relocated to the west. ARRC requires their tracks be offset a minimum of 55' from the roadway.</p> <p>CONTINUED My recollection was that the northbound highway lanes will overlay the current roadway, and therefore the roadway will not move farther east into the marsh. · Is that correct? Response: That is correct. · Will the multi-use pathway be built farther into the marsh? Response: No – the pathway will be built on the existing footprint. · On a boardwalk? Response: No, it will likely be built on the existing edge (current impacts) and widening will occur to the west. · How far into the marsh from the current roadway? Response: The project is not currently proposing any widening to the east / marsh side. · Please describe the eastern edge of the corridor development. Response: The project proposes to match the existing highway fill limits in the marsh. Potter Marsh wildlife movements What provisions will be made to allow wildlife to safely cross the highway corridor between the Marsh and the rest of the Coastal Wildlife refuge? Response: It will likely be very similar to what is there today. Animal / vehicle collisions are a concern in this area and ways to prevent these crashes will be evaluated. Structures (wildlife overpass/underpass) have not been included in the project. · Will there be wildlife fencing, and where? Response: this has not been determined yet; this would be determined in consultation with ADF&amp;G. · Will there be an underpass or overpass, and how will such a crossing(s) be designed to serve various species? Response: Currently wildlife crossing (under / over) are not proposed with this project. · What about waterfowl in flight? The current scrim of trees along parts of the marsh causes waterfowl to fly up and over the traffic in those areas. Response: This will be determined in consultation with ADF&amp;G. – replanting trees could be considered outside of the roadway clear zone. · What kind of lighting will be used along the Marsh, and how can the natural light conditions be maintained as much as possible, in keeping with the natural setting? Response: This has not been determined yet – if lighting were included ( visibility of moose and other animals has been identified in the Potter Marsh area as causing crashes) it would be designed to light the roadway (downward). Please reach out if there are any follow-up questions. Thank you, The Safer Seward Highway project team Morgan Miller</p> <p>Hello, Marc, Katherine, and Taylor, I passed the updates from the SWG to Rabbit Creek Community Council at our last meeting, and our residents had a few questions, as follows: Noise monitoring Where were the noise receptors for the noise monitoring placed in the vicinity of Potter Marsh, Old Seward Highway homes, and Potter Creek homes? One what dates was the noise data gathered? Potter Marsh corridor footprint My recollection was that the northbound highway lanes will overlay the current roadway, and therefore the roadway will not move farther east into the marsh. Is that correct? Will the multi-use pathway be built farther into the marsh? On a boardwalk? How far into the marsh from the current roadway? Please describe the eastern edge of the corridor development. Potter Marsh wildlife movements What provisions will be made to allow wildlife to safely cross the highway corridor between the Marsh and the rest of the Coastal Wildlife refuge? * Will there be wildlife fencing, and where? * Will there be an underpass or overpass, and how will such a crossing(s) be designed to serve various species? * What about waterfowl in flight? The current scrim of trees along parts of the marsh causes waterfowl to fly up and over the traffic in those areas. * What kind of lighting will be used along the Marsh, and how can the natural light conditions be maintained as much as possible, in keeping with the natural setting? RCCC looks forward to learning this information for sharing at our June meetings. Thank you. Nancy Pease, co-chair RCCC land use and transportation committee</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Followed up with David Chase. He had concerns regarding the Potter Valley Rd parking lot expansion project. I clarified that though our project in in that area, the parking lot expansion is a separate project. I referred him to contact RCCC for more information about that project and gave an overview of our project and the safety improvements that are being considered. He expressed concern with the safety of the Potter Valley/New Seward intersection as well as vehicle/pedestrian traffic from birding along the marsh and the pullouts along the marsh off of the new seward. Also expressed concern with pedestrians crossing the road and going up onto the train tracks across from potter marsh. Asked for our team to concern the safety implications of consolidating access by providing safe access for birding and sight-seers. David said he would submit some written comments and was informed about the public meetings happening in November. Morgan Miller</p> <p>Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX 2 "Hello! David. Chase, XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thanks."</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Questions for SSH team before 12/14 Stakeholder WG meeting. Hello Safer Seward Highway Team - Some of our Rabbit Creek Community Council members have attended the Open House or looked at the project roll-out on the Safer Seward Highway website. They brought a number of good questions to our recent Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting. Attached is a compilation of those questions. We hope you can provide answers to most of them this coming week, in time for our RCCC monthly meeting as well as the Stakeholder Working Group meeting. Both of those meetings are on December 14th. Your answers will help our members to provide constructive comments during the current comment period. Please also clarify whether January 4th or another date is the closing of that period. We greatly appreciate your openness to our questions and the opportunity to be heard as a member of the Stakeholder WG! Sincerely, Ann Rappoport, Co-chair Rabbit Creek Community Council</p> <p>Attachment Contents:</p> <p>Dear Safer Seward Highway Team:</p> <p>We appreciate the efforts by the Project Team to present the Safer Seward Highway (SSH) context and draft concepts to the public this month. Some Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) members attended the December 4th Anchorage Open House or looked at the project roll-out on the Safer Seward Highway website. They brought several good questions to our recent Land Use and Transportation (LUT) Committee meeting.</p> <p>First, two comments:</p> <p>Comment period deadline – we note that the SSH website indicates the online Open House is open for comments through January 4, 2024. Please clarify to our SSH Working Group and on the website whether that is a deadline for this current comment period, or if it is another date.</p> <p>Map access - while our Council members found the interactive maps very useful, they were initially hard to find on the website. Can this map feature be prominently noted near the top of the home page?</p> <p>Following is a compilation of our LUT Committee and member questions.</p> <p>Specific to Potter Marsh and Potter Valley Road</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise information at Potter Marsh</li> </ol> <p>What are the calculated decibels at various distances where the Highway passes Potter Marsh, south to Potter Weigh station? A noise map is important to understand the impacts to species in the Marsh and to neighbors. Noise increases with vehicle speeds; thus it is useful to look at several noise maps based on varying traffic speeds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the turning movements and wait times at Potter Marsh under the various designs</li> </ol> <p>The four-lane divided alternative seems to rely on cars eddying out in the median. This does not seem safe or practical.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add the proposed Potter Marsh Watershed Park as a new destination that will affect traffic at the Potter Valley Road intersection.</li> <li>Traffic counts and projections for Potter Valley Road and for travel on Old Seward Highway</li> </ol> <p>Residents want to know the spill-over effects onto the Old Seward Highway east of Potter Marsh, anticipated because of the possible delays and safety perceptions at the Seward Highway intersection, as well as the possible new access patterns for a Turnagain Arm Trail parking lot and Potter Marsh Watershed Park.</p> <p>CONTINUED Highway footprint questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual depiction of cut and fill, with comparisons to the existing rock wall near Bird Creek. More visuals are needed for the public to understand the scale of changes to the landscape. We suggest three-dimensional graphics of the cut and fill, as well as numerical height comparisons of the cliff faces. The website has road-level photos that might serve as the basis for this. This arises from the alarm of some of our residents at the scale of cut and fill that detracts from the scenic natural setting. That loss appears to include the loss of almost all natural shoreline.</li> <li>What determines the amount of quarrying: rockfall safety, or materials source?</li> </ol> <p>What sections have been analyzed for shed-roof-style rockfall protection or tunneling to minimize quarrying, what are the options for a combination of rock removal and rock catchment?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decking or stacking</li> </ol> <p>What analysis was made of sections of stacked highway to reduce the footprint? This is common on bridges and in some cities. If none, can this be a partial solution to reduce the footprint? Could this be particularly helpful and safer at pinch points where cars enter/exit the highway?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Railroad in the median</li> </ol> <p>Bureaucratic turf battles aside, what would the footprint be to put the railroad between the lanes? We recognize that traditionally there is a specified right-of-way separating the highway from the railroad, but other cities have overcome this issue. The railroad is located in a highway median in many urban areas, such as Portland (The Max), the L in Chicago, and in Los Angeles.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sea-level rise and storm conditions from human-caused climate change</li> </ol> <p>What is the level of fill and the relation of fill to sea level? What is the range of projections for sea level rise along the highway? Regarding the rate of isostatic rebound—what scientific evidence is there that uplift will match sea-level rise?</p> <p>Safety and Need questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please provide the formulas that show the statistical trade-off between speed-related risk and sight-line related risk</li> </ol> <p>Long sightlines help drivers avoid some crashes, but long sightlines allow and encourage higher speeds. Speed results in more crashes, and higher severity crashes. For the public to think that a design increases safety, the public needs to know the cause-and-effect statistical relationships of speed and sightlines and crashes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What and who determines speed limits?</li> </ol> <p>A project engineer told one of us: “The speed limit is a function of traffic mixing and merging, not the sightlines on the curves.” We need to hear more about this. If traffic mixing is the guiding factor, is mixing and merging more controlled by four lanes or three lanes or two lanes? This is not intuitive, because four lanes allow more lane-changing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the Safety Corridor Study crash data—specific crash causes</li> </ol> <p>Crashes decreased when the Safety Corridor was declared in 2006. But crashes have increased since then, especially in winter. The Corridor study attributes some amount of crash increases to low staffing (troopers) and to limits on winter maintenance. Can crashes be quantified by underlying cause?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was the crash rate in the slow-speed zones of the rockfall projects, where jersey barriers were used in 2022-2023?</li> <li>Comparative fatality rate for this highway and other roadways and intersections</li> </ol> <p>How does the fatality rate on the Seward Highway compare to other highways and intersections in the region? For example, if the accident rate is 1 fatality per 800,000 trips at Indian (please provide the actual rate), what is the comparison for various other fatality patterns, such as on the Sterling Highway or on urban arterials in Anchorage?</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
			<p>CONTINUED Cost burden and Affordability questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.What is the total increase in lane miles and maintenance surface for a divided four-lane, versus three-lane, versus two-lane? This total should include access roads and pullouts.</li> <li>2.What are total maintenance cost estimates for this project? Provide a comparison of future costs for divided four-lane, three-lane, and two-lane. How does this compare to current costs for this stretch of highway?</li> <li>3.Provide a picture of DOTPF maintenance funding levels relative to maintenance needs, historically and currently.</li> <li>4.What projections do DOTPF Maintenance Managers have regarding future funding adequacy for maintenance of this project, given regionwide needs?</li> <li>5.What has been the budget and hours logged for law enforcement on the Seward Highway from Potter to Girdwood over the years? How has this varied, and what percentage of the agency budget has this been? Quantify the amount of time for traffic patrolling on the highway, to give an indication of enforcement capability.</li> </ol> <p>Opportunity Costs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Is a no-build alternative still in the analysis? If not, why not?</li> <li>2.Given the \$800 million price tag (or more), who and how is it decided that this project is the best investment in Alaska's future?</li> <li>3.Give the public a menu of the alternatives</li> </ol> <p>Our residents have many questions on the scale and the return on investment for this project, versus the opportunity cost. There are so many needs for Alaska transportation funds; and Alaskans must build infrastructure for a very different future than we see today. We would like a menu of other projects from the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the municipal plans, or Alaska Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facility's plans, that could be funded if this project did not require \$800 million in the next 5 years.</p> <p>In addition, our residents have ideas for new projects that might not be in current adopted plans but that offer big economic, environmental and land use payoffs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Connectivity to geo-thermal energy sources along western Cook Inlet</li> <li>•Railroad link to Canada</li> <li>•Commuter rail to the Mat-Su or Girdwood</li> <li>•A suite of ten, \$80-million projects in Anchorage instead of one \$800 million (if SSH no-build)</li> <li>•A suite of ten, \$40-million projects in Anchorage (if this SSH were half the scale)</li> <li>•What about segmenting and phasing this \$800 million project out over 10 or more years, so other projects in Anchorage can also leap ahead and spur economic recovery?</li> </ul> <p>We hope the SSH Project Team can provide answers to most of these questions this coming week, in time for the Stakeholder Working Group meeting, after which we can follow up with our members at the RCCC monthly meeting – both are on December 14th. The Project Team's answers will help our members provide constructive comments during the current comment period. Thank you for your work and we look forward to our continued participation in the Working Group.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Called Philip back 11/7. He expressed concerns over using salt on the roads in the Kenai peninsula. Asked that we use sand instead of salt through the project corridor. Gave him an overview of our project. Asked him about his thoughts on improving safety within the project limits and he said there was a deficiency in enforcement.</p> <p>Morgan Miller</p> <p>Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX "Hello, my name is Philip Lopez, my Contact XXX-XXX-XXXX. Look forward to speaking with you aboutthe Safety Project.I'm deeply concerned the conduct of Department of Transportation,Please. Thank you."</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Taylor, The mineral lick (there are multiple) at Windy Corner is not mapped. However, thru aerial surveys, the presences of these licks are obvious. The more important issue is the no-blast timeframe during sheep lambing (May and June) and the cessation of blasting when wildlife is spotted within 0.25 miles of the blasting zone. Regarding bear dens, there are known bear dens in the study area provided. Bears (mostly black bears) are known to den (pretty close to the roadway) under boulders that have slid off the rockface and vegetation has grown up around them. They are also known to den along portions of the highway that have large cottonwood trees (mainly alongside creeks). Bear denning is typically October through mid-May. Disturbing bears in their den is considered a take and if a pregnant or nursing sow is chased from the den it would certainly lead to the death of any cubs. Regulations preclude us from disseminating exact mineral lick and den locations. We can provide more specific comments after alternatives are developed, including general areas of concern in regards to this subject. Hope this is helpful. Josh Brekken Habitat Biologist Alaska Department of Fish and Game</p> <p>Subject: RE: Follow up materials: NEPA overview and Scoping Letter RE: Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group Hi Cory and Josh, I wanted to respond to this question since it's been lingering for a month. We are still trying to figure out alignment alternatives and construction methods for each of the alternatives. You'll be included in the SWG discussions as we get closer to being able to determine specific sites for blasting. I've made the team aware that DFG is interested in this info, and we intend on including blasting info on alternatives impacts maps when its available. In general, they would be the places you'd expect when driving the corridor: areas where the cliffs are close to the road and points where there are tight roadway curves. However, we are at such a preliminary level of figuring out an alignment, I can't be more specific. In your response to the scoping letter comments (attached and quoted below), we had some questions: "Impacts to the mineral lick at Windy Corner, which is frequented by Dall sheep, should be avoided." * Do you have any information about the specific location(s) of the mineral lick at Windy Corner that you can provide? A GIS file or long/lats would be helpful if you have it. "Blasting can disturb or have major impacts to big game wildlife. Blasting should not occur within 0.25 miles of big game wildlife, including Dall sheep, black and brown bear, wolverine, moose, and any other large mammals. Bear dens exist within the study area and disturbance should be avoided during winter hibernation (October 1 - May 1). The disturbance of a denning bear is considered a "take" under regulatory definition. If a denning sow with new born cubs is disturbed from their den, it would almost certainly result in the death of the cubs." * Similarly, do you have any information that you can provide about these specific locations? Thanks for your comments and we appreciate your continued engagement. Feel free to reach out to set up a call or meeting if that is easier for you. Thanks, Taylor</p> <p>Subject: RE: Follow up materials: NEPA overview and Scoping Letter RE: Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group. Taylor, I think that would be helpful. I'll be out of the office for a bit starting tomorrow. Please send any information on this to Cory (and me). Thanks. Josh</p> <p>Subject: RE: Follow up materials: NEPA overview and Scoping Letter RE: Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group. Hi Josh, You're right we are just at the beginning stages of figuring those things out. However, we can pull together info on "potential" sites. Getting some feedback from the Wildlife folks would help us refine the alignment. Give us a few days to get back to you with that info. Thanks, Taylor Taylor</p> <p>Subject: RE: Follow up materials: NEPA overview and Scoping Letter RE: Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group. Taylor, Do we have information yet on where blasting zones would be located? My understanding is that we at a higher level than those details at this point and our comments should focus generally on what our concerns/thoughts are, but Wildlife is asking the question and I thought I'd double-check my understanding. Thanks. Josh Brekken Habitat Biologist Alaska Department of Fish and Game</p> <p>Subject: Follow up materials: NEPA overview and Scoping Letter RE: Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group. Hello Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group, Thank you for taking the time to attend our kickoff meeting yesterday. I look forward to collaborating with you on this important project. Here are a few follow-up items: Agency Scoping Letter * Posted on the Project Library webpage <a href="https://safersewardhighway.com/library.html">https://safersewardhighway.com/library.html</a> * Includes project description, draft purpose and need, and preliminary environmental research. NEPA Process * A Citizen's Guide to NEPA (doe.gov)&lt;<a href="https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/citizens-guide-to-nepa-2021.pdf">https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/citizens-guide-to-nepa-2021.pdf</a>&gt; - A general overview of the NEPA process and public engagement. * National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)   Environmental Review Toolkit   FHWA (dot.gov)&lt;<a href="https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx">https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx</a>&gt; - The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) NEPA website, with links to the NEPA regulations that Federal-aid highway program projects must follow (23 CFR 771 &lt;<a href="https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-771">https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-771</a>&gt;). * Alaska DOT&amp;PF Environmental Procedures Manual &lt;<a href="https://dot.alaska.gov/stwddes/desenviron/resources/enviromanual.shtml">https://dot.alaska.gov/stwddes/desenviron/resources/enviromanual.shtml</a>&gt; - The DOT&amp;PF's procedures they follow to comply with the FHWA NEPA regulations, implementing the NEPA Assignment Program. &lt;<a href="https://dot.alaska.gov/stwddes/desenviron/resources/nepa.shtml">https://dot.alaska.gov/stwddes/desenviron/resources/nepa.shtml</a>&gt; Have a great weekend, Taylor Taylor C. Horne Transportation Environmental and Planning Lead HDR</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>I pitched this to Justin and the 75-90 construction team. Cheers, Sean</p> <p>Subject: Ingram Creek parking Hello, I'm not sure who to talk to about this, but ingram creek is the place where my family subsists for pink and silver salmon. We have had to go farther south to get what we are looking for, and using more finances on fuel to do this. I was just wondering if there was a way my family can please subsist there this summer? We haven't tried going there because we have respected the workers space, but I'm hoping we can share this space just for getting our subsistence winter supply. Patiently waiting on a response, Wanda Kvasnikoff</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Barbara Svarny	Carlson	Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR)	<p>Subject: Further comments Safer Seward Highway. To Safer Seward Highway Planners: On 2023.4.5 I sent a letter on behalf of Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Refuge, FAR, addressed to Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, ADOTPF, with the subject "Comments on NOI to begin environmental studies and floodplain encroachment, Seward Highway Mile Post 98.5 to 118/Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek." Kindly acknowledge receipt of 1) this update and 2) the attached letter (which is the original letter of comments), and that you are, indeed, considering our comments during the ensuing parts of the process. Particularly we would like to call your attention to the old section of the Old Seward Highway behind Potter Marsh. I visited the road with another volunteer three times during the last three weeks and it is clearly in need of serious repair. If this can be included as part of the current process, the pedestrian/bicycle amenities could be paired with the upgraded road behind Potter Marsh instead of with the new highway lanes. This would be unique value added and require collaboration, naturally. It seems that when the original road was created by DOT in 1951, they re-routed Little Survival Creek down the road ditch into the low area. With additional inflow from the nearby hillside, the water level is high, with estimates that 3/4 of the water for all of Potter Marsh comes from those drainages. Some ideas: 1. When upgrading the failing road, engineer part of it to minimize harm to the marsh--perhaps put the parts nearest the marsh on pilings--and be sure to include a pedestrian/bicycle facility so that residents and tourists may continue to use the corridor for transportation and recreation. 2. The inclusion of connected viewing platforms with, well designed, vetted, and placed interpretive signs, benches and bicycle racks would provide more places for people to appreciate Potter Marsh and the wildlife that frequent it without intrusion into important habitats. 3. Building at least part of the road on pilings as described above could reduce the amount of fill that would be required to properly rebuild this much loved segment of the Old Seward Highway. Moving the focus of pedestrians and cyclists away from the new Seward Highway in the stretch adjacent to Potter Marsh suggestions would help minimize accidents; help increase the viewable areas of Potter Marsh habitats; and add value for all users. Providing a separated bicycle/pedestrian path connected to the road for the purpose of insuring that there is a good base that will not quickly degrade into the marsh. We have shared previous similar suggestions with Mike Braniff, Municipal Parks and Recreation; Beth Nordlund, The Park Foundation; and Steve Cleary, The Alaska Long Trail, with hopes that it could help facilitate collaboration for the benefit of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, the wildlife, the Municipality, the State, and our visitors from around the world. FAR does a lot of work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) with whom we worked to develop the Potter Marsh Master Interpretive Plan. I am in the process of connecting about this with ADFG's Susan Rodman, Statewide Refuges and Lands Coordinator, and Cory Stantorf, Region 2 Area Biologist. Potter Marsh hosts visitors every day of the year in all kinds of weather. It is loved by citizens and visitors and provides unique vantages for photography, painting, bird and other wildlife viewing, as well as simply strolling for health and ambiance. Finding ways like this to expand appropriate use of the area are a good thing for future generations. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Again, kindly acknowledge receipt of this update and attached letter of comments for the process. Barbara Svarny Carlson Barbara Svarny Carlson President and Executive Director Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) PO Box 220196 Anchorage, AK 99522-0196</p> <p>Attachment Contents:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Elliott:</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to this section of the Seward Highway (Project # 0A31034/ Z566310000) as you begin the environmental scoping, studies, and assessment of impacts process. Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit of citizens and professionals whose mission is to preserve the integrity and biological diversity of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR). This easily damaged subarctic saltmarsh system supports an unusual diversity of plants, birds, mammals, and invertebrates, and is of continental conservation significance. The proximity of the refuge to Alaska's largest city makes it important for public education and enjoyment but also makes it highly vulnerable. While safety and connectivity along this route are important for citizens, visitors, and the economy, considering FAR's mission, italicized above, our comments focus mainly on related environment, wildlife, and outdoor recreation. The entire ACWR is part of the Anchorage Coastal IBA (Important Bird Area). IBAs are designated and ranked against a rigorous set of scientific criteria and are important tools to conservation. The ACWR stretches from Potter to Woronzof and is a 16-mile refuge of continuous connected habitats that support approximately 220 bird species. Significantly, the narrow stretch of habitat nearest the base of the coastal bluffs with brackish waters and freshwater seeps or ponds, and about 20' up the forested bluff are very important to this diversity. In addition, these habitats are important to birds that live here year-round, migratory birds, and most of the wildlife; voles to snowshoe hares, foxes, coyotes, porcupines, lynx, moose and bears, to name a few. All extent wildlife need these areas to forage, shelter, hunt, hide, breed, and raise young. Wildlife, especially birds, use the full width of the refuge for foraging and migratory staging, but that unique habitat that people who want a trail through this refuge seem to covet, is critically important to the presence of wildlife.</p> <p>Do not fill ACWR wetlands or clear native plants, trees, or understory from adjacent important habitats. Clearing of flora leaves wildlife with no place to live. Fill degrades the resource by displacing the water flow that supports the flora upon which wildlife depend. To do the best job please work with biologists of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), US Fish and Wildlife, and US Forest Service as well as knowledgeable groups and members of the public for this scoping.</p> <p>To honor and protect in perpetuity the values upon which the ACWR was established, FAR objects to the routing of a heavily used public trail through any stretch of the coastal ACWR, as has been suggested in Alaska Long Trail maps. The Alaska Legislature is considering in CAPSIS, Alaska Long Trail Project #1, titled "Connect Oceanview Bluff Park to Potter Marsh, TPS Number: 66547," which shows a line drawn on a map through the ACWR." Recently FAR sent comments for the Legislative record in objection to a heavily used trail through any part of the ACWR. In May of 2003, about 20 years ago, stewards, citizens, and agencies submitted formal testimonies against the South Extension of the Coastal Trail which encroached on the ACWR. The Federal highway Administration issued a Record of Decision in 2006 selecting the No Action Alternative, because "the purpose and need [of the trail through the refuge] would not be achieved, and none of the beneficial and adverse impacts associated with the build alternatives would accrue." A trail through the ACWR was not acceptable then, and it is not acceptable now.</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: FW: [EXT] Windy Corner pathway Good afternoon, Eldon, Thank you for your comments. The Seward Highway mileposts (MP) 105-109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point project has been incorporated into the Seward Highway MP 98.5 and 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project, also known as the Safer Seward Highway project. We have included the Safer Seward Highway project team on this response so they can document your comments. Please visit the new project website <a href="http://www.safersewardhighway.com">www.safersewardhighway.com</a> for more information and upcoming events. Kind regards, Jovie Garcia Project Communications Manager DOWL -</p> <p>Subject: [EXT] Windy Corner pathway. Alaska DOT Project Manager Tom Schmid and Alaska Transportation Officials, Good afternoon. My name is Eldon Michal. I have been a resident of Anchorage for 18 years. I want to express my support for constructing a separate path along the highway corridor with the Windy to Rainbow project. Even if it's not a complete connection to the bird-to-gird path, it is part of the system and will be cheaper to do now in sections than later as part of a dedicated project. The highway shoulder, even if it's expanded, narrows with gravel and debris, and it is just unpleasant and dangerous riding/walking because it forces you so close to traffic. We have an excellent opportunity to create a world-class pathway along the arm, and We already have much of it in place. I believe that safely linking it to Anchorage is key. This can be a significant part of it. Thank you, Eldon Michal</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. Transcription unavailable.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, my name is Mike Edgington from Girdwood. My phone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Firstly, I'd like to say thank you so much for all the outreach. I really appreciate that and I intend to meet your representatives at Blueberry Fest. And secondly, I sent an email back in, I believe, April when you sent around your summary of the results of the survey. And I never received the response back and I did post some questions. So I wondered if you could check that. It's really about the underlying messaging about a particular bike path usage. I will follow up maybe in person at the weekend and hopefully we'll call back in the next couple of days. Thank you. Again, name is Mike Edgington. Number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thanks."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. Transcription unavailable.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. Transcription unavailable.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, this is Diane Holmes on December 3rd. My number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. I'd like to speak to someone who has knowledge or potential knowledge of changes to the Old Seward Highway portion of Safer Seward Highway. Thanks, bye."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Bill Herbert XXX-XXX-XXXX. Herbert XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, this is Diane Holmes, XXX-XXX-XXXX. I left a message a couple days ago. I'd appreciate talking to someone about the project. Thanks, bye."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, this is a message for Pearl Grace or someone else working on the Safe Pursuit Highway Project. My name is Nancy Pease with Rabbit Creek Community Council. I'm trying to find a link that will let our council members look at the STIP Amendment Number 2, just a part of the STIP Amendment that pertains to changing the project length to Milepost 112. It's currently milepost 118. There's nothing on the Safer Seward Highway, you know, website here, and DOT is impossible to find that particular line item. I've been looking for 30 minutes, so please help me. Hopefully you can provide me a link where our members can just open it up and see what the language is for shortening the project and any justification. Thank you. I'll e-mail this as well, this request as well. Thanks."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, I'm hoping to get an update on when you will be advertising for design and construction for the project. This is Sharon Karns with Dodge Construction Network, and I'm just looking for the next dates for advertisement for design services or construction services. And my phone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX and my extension is XXXX. And this is Sharon Karns with Dodge Construction Network. Thank you so much."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Yes, my name is Mark Roburn, number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. It looks like the project has been dropped from the tip, arguably because people are upset that there was going to be money spent on it and your website is so broken it's completely difficult to even use. So I want to confirm whether or not in fact the project is dead or you're just in the process of making believe it's changed to something else or some third option. Again, my number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you, bye."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Yeah, my name is Mark Grober, my number is XXX-XXX-XXXX, that's XXX-XXX-XXXX. The contact link on your Safer Seward Highway webpage produces a page not found result and there's no, of course, telephone number or email address on that webpage. So it's kind of curious that you encourage people to participate when the contact information goes to page not found. Because I would like to comment on the current design, but of course, we'd have to spend another few minutes trying to find the email address to be able to do that instead of just using the contact page. So I'd appreciate hearing from someone in the next couple of days. Thank you. Have a great day. Bye."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, this is Ann Rappoport at XXX-XXX-XXXX. I'm in the Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Group, and I wanted to get a couple of hard copies of the Municipalities Context Sensitive Solutions Design Report that recently came out. Comments are due to planning and zoning in August, and we wanted to review it. It's kind of a long report to just look at online. And I'm going to be, it's Friday at 10 a.m., and I'm going to be out in a couple hours and was hoping I could stop by someplace to pick it up. So if you can give me a buzz and let me know where I could get some hard copies, that would be great. I just left messages also for Mark Lukin and Chris Hughes with the same questions. Again, Ann Rappoport, XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you."
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. Transcription unavailable.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX. "Hi, my name is Elizabeth. I live here in Anchorage and I was looking with some of my colleagues with the Alaska Native Plant Society at some of the project plans at Trailhead, especially at Wendy Corner where we have a lot of interest in the unique flora that's there, but I have been looking at the recent design report and wanted to make sure I was understanding some things correctly, so I was wondering if someone from the project team could give me a call. My number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. It's 9 a.m. on Friday, and I'm pretty, have a pretty flexible schedule except for the lunch hour today, so, but next week is fine too. Thank you very much. Again, it's Elizabeth. My number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you. Thanks for watching!"

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Current path options. Hello, Current designs for the segregated path are inadequate as they don't protect non-motorists from being hit by vehicles, nor from vehicular noise which exceeds OSHA limits. I would like to escort a few of your engineers down the Eagle River path (which has a similar design) and demonstrate not only the place where I was nearly killed by an automobile, but the decibel levels inherent in being that close to a highway with inadequate protections. I might suggest a concrete pony wall and acetate sound barrier above that. Best, Marc Grober
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Vulnerable users We need a segregated path for non-motorized vehicles from Huffman to Seward - Phase 1 is connecting the urban bike network to the path at Indian :-). However, in light of the fact that DOT removed the path connecting ER to Palmer from the STIP, and has made it so difficult for the public to address the STIP, the public is very dubious that this Administration will ever invest in adequate infrastructure, let alone focus serious resources on protecting use and access of vulnerable persons please prove us wrong :-)
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - John Brown Name John Brown Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? I drove the highway on 7/21. I didn't see a single police car from Talkeetna to Kenai. I did see all the usual stuff, motor homes going 45 in the 65 zones, kamikaze passing attempts by folks who want to go 85. Without enforcement and education, the engineering alone can't fix the problems. I drove the 21st because the road was closed the 20th for another fatal accident.....
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Cynthia Wentworth Name Cynthia Wentworth Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? To make the Seward Highway safer, please emphasize more train travel - via the Alaska Railroad! ADOTPF should be actively lobbying for more use of rail: for commuters, passengers, and travelers, along the Seward Highway corridor. Rail emits 1/3 the greenhouse gas as the highway mode. ADOTPF needs to get on board with the Municipality of Anchorage climate petition plan and be more supportive of increased use of our Alaska Railroad in all of its transportation planning. This would decrease us having vehicle traffic along the Seward Highway. (provided at the Anchorage Transportation Fair on 4/15/25) Attached Comment Form: To make the Seward Highway safer, please emphasize more train travel - via the Alaska Railroad! ADOTPF should be actively lobbying for more use of rail: for commuters, passengers, and freight, along the Seward Highway corridor. Rail emits 1/3 the Greenhouse gas as the highway mode. ADOTPF needs to get on board with the Municipality of Anchorage's Climate Action Plan, and be more supportive of increased use of our Alaska Railroad in all of its transportation planning. This would decrease highway vehicle traffic along the Seward Highway.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Stephanie Rice Name Stephanie Rice Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? Hello project team, I would like to be informed when the draft EA is available for public comment. Can you please add me to the project mailing list? Join our mailing list Yes
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Julie K Wahl Name Julie K Wahl Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? It's a tragedy that one of the most beautiful drives/rides/wild life viewing/accessable recreation areas is so deadly. Not just dangerous.. but deadly. A bigger faster road is definitely not the answer. A thoughtful holistic investigation of how the many different groups use that road is an absolute must. Safe..set aside... non-motorized paths are absolutely needed. The Windy Corner project absolutely needs to be revisited. More than once I have been run off the road by people passing that thought they could see oncoming traffic far enough out. And just today I happened to use the pull-out only to realize what a death trap it is. There is no way out where you can adequately see traffic you are pulling out into. I actually date back to the days of bird hill traffic. The progress that has been made on the Seward Hwy has transformed southbound travel. But like so many things...there is still room for improvement. Thank you for bringing this project back to the table.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Cynthia WILSON Name Cynthia WILSON Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? Project number: Z566310000/0831034 I was asked to give my opinion about the project on the Seward Highway. I drive it at least 1 to 2 times every week from Girdwood. I would like to see a cement divider berm down the center of the highway so head-on accidents cannot occur so easily. This may keep the drivers sliding on his side of the road also the drivers under the influence of alcohol or pot from killing innocent people. I also do not like the passing lanes. Slow cars doing below the speed limit seem to speed up and sometimes I find myself doing an 85 mph just trying to pass them!! It encourages more racing vehicles than anything else! I've been cut off and forced to the shoulder of the road because someone way behind refuses to slow down when they see the arrows that end the passing lane. They won't give me the right away to move back onto the highway! Instead they try to race past you. I also would like to see more left-hand, turning lanes veer off from the main lane, such as McHugh Creek. I find a lot of people aren't paying attention to the car in front of them and sometimes making a left-hand turn on the Seward Highway feels like a death sentence. Hope this information helps and making a decision for a safer highway.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Matt Rombach Name Matt Rombach Email XXXXXXXXXXXX@yahoo.com Questions or Comments? Please be sure any plan includes a protected bike path. All the way from Huffman to Indian. Thanks! Join our mailing list Yes
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Chase Berenson Name Chase Berenson Email XXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? As a Girdwood resident, I am a frequent Seward Highway traveler. I spoke earlier today to the two project participants at the Girdwood Farmers Market, and first off I want to thank the project team for coming to Girdwood and being proactive about being in our community. I drive between Girdwood and Anchorage regularly (more frequently than I'd like), and I'm familiar with the stretch of road between mile markers 98 and 118. It goes without saying that Alaska is a unique location, and traveling in Alaska is a unique experience. I was disheartened to see proposals that would turn the Seward Highway into a multilane Lower 48 Interstate-style highway. Of course I know the experience of getting stuck behind a slow-moving RV or other vehicle, and I agree that it is frustrating; but I understand that that is the cost of living and driving where we do. I do not believe that the need to pass is worth the effort and expense of adding more passing lanes and destroying the unique character of this stretch of road. That being said, I am an avid hiker and cyclist, and I appreciate the efforts in the plan to make trailheads and other recreational spaces accessible. In following up with my previous paragraph, though, I don't believe those changes need to be made at the expense of the unique character of the road. Finally, I will add the same comment that I always leave in reference to the Seward Highway: the current rumble strips on the white lines and the yellow line are great to have, but they are the same pattern. When driving late on a winter night in white-out conditions and hitting a rumble strip, it is impossible to know if you are hitting the middle of the road or the side of the road. I would suggest that the outer rumble strips have a different pattern from the center rumble strip so that they are distinguishable when they can't be seen. Thank you for your consideration of my commentary. Join our mailing list Yes
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Sue Goodglick Name Sue Goodglick Email XXXXXX@yahoo.com Questions or Comments? Hi, thanks for maintaining such an upbeat tone on your project webpage! Certainly this isn't a new idea, but after driving the highway from Anchorage to Girdwood yesterday, I wanted to emphasize how important turn lanes and merging lanes are for the trail and scenic overlook access points. It makes me cringe every time someone merges onto the highway, causing a sea of brake lights!

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Stacie Meisner Name Stacie Meisner Email XXXXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? Please protect the Indian community in this project; this includes the area with the Brown Bear Saloon and the small ball field next to the inlet. This space is utilized by the members of the community and the corridor should be protected as such.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Joseph Stanich Safer Seward Highway Website Comments Name Joseph Stanich Email XXXXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? I am bit disappointed that you will be removing the small ball field across from Brown Bear saloon. Why would you need to increase the road size through Indian. There are residential houses and park visitors that go back and forth across the road. Yes, there is a safer underpass now but most folks ignore it. Also, by removing the field, it cancels a charity event that has raised thousands of dollars over the last 25 years to various organizations. Please reconsider the removal of the field and increasing the highway through Indian.
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - W. Paul Wunnicke Name W. Paul Wunnicke Email XXXXXXXX@gmail.com Questions or Comments? I favour the 4 lane SEPARATED by median and/or barrier concept. Head ons are too often fatal. In other mountainous jurisdictions; CO, Montana, Utah, British Columbia, Alps, etc. roads with the traffic volumes of the Seward hwy all have separation to minimize crashes, especially head ons. Better for snow removal too. Access roads in Indian and Bird will reduce rear ends to left turning vehicles entering their communities. Enforcement of the "pull over if 5 vehicles or more are backed up behind you" would help as well. Thanks Join our mailing list Yes
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Re: Safer Seward Highway Website Comments - Michael Teo Name Michael Teo Email XXXXXXXX@yahoo.com Questions or Comments? I stumbled onto your website after reading a community council email. I might be late to comment, but I like the divided 4 lane highway idea. When I drive that highway to get to Girdwood from Anchorage, I often worry that I have no control if an oncoming car losses control in a turn and comes into my lane. The divided highway would give me more protection from head on collisions. Another benefit would be a chance to allow others to pass without the risk of a passing zone. I do think the trail would benefit from physical separation from the roadway pull offs so that mixing with cars is low. Join our mailing list Yes
Susanne	Rodman	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Subject: RE: Safer Seward Hwy Project and ACWR Greetings, Thank you for hosting the Safer Seward Highway 4(f) discussion on 8/21/24. We appreciate the effort provided by DOT and HDR in this process to engage ADF&G and keep us informed of your progress. Your staff have all been cordial and supportive during the discovery phase of identifying concerns and conflicts among our various land management requirements and objectives. I commend DOT on management of the Safer Seward Highway stakeholder engagement process and the public outreach efforts made in the last year. This is the most transparent and engaged process of the three that I am currently involved with. Please find our follow up comments from Wednesday's discussion below. Thanks, Sue With the new bike path, adjacent development of the MOA Potter Watershed Park, and a general increase in outdoor activities, the associated increased use of the refuge and its facilities is generally welcomed but effective planning can support the visitors, vehicles, and sanitation. Regarding the Gegg Betnu Trail, we discussed whether there were implications for federal funding if the intended use is compromised. I'm looking through files but haven't found grant documents yet. Any project updates are welcomed regarding the Old Seward Highway on the east side of Potter Marsh. As co-land managers to the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, we recommend that DNR staff be involved in future discussions. Candice Snow Larson is our primary contact for Lands issues. Brandon McCutcheon is the interim SCRO manager. Mitigation Ideas for 4(f) release of refuge lands to the transportation corridor * Improve water quality in marsh. Inflow from Little Survival Creek, Rabbit Creek, and Little Rabbit Creek carries sediment; Little Survival Creek culverts upstream of Potter Marsh are steep and encourage erosion; this is a consequence of storm drains and property development on a steep hillside. Filtering via swale or similar feature on the upstream side of Old Seward Highway may alleviate sedimentation from accumulating in the marsh, thereby improving water quality and habitat for fish and also maintaining water depth for waterfowl. * Improve fish passage at Seward Highway culverts and railroad crossing to the west. Consider tidal influence and inflow from Rabbit Creek. Grade control must maintain water levels for waterfowl. * Private lands adjacent to Potter Marsh do experience some flooding. There may be options to alleviate impacts to private lands upstream of ACWR at Potter Marsh. * The boardwalk at Potter Marsh North requires substantial maintenance in the coming years to ensure continued safety for pedestrians. * Parking to support the Seward Highway bike path and the newly forming MOA Potter Watershed Park. Concerns related to trail corridor along Potter Marsh * If the north boardwalk area becomes the northern terminus of the trail, it seems reasonable to assume that the F&G maintained parking areas are going to see an increase in traffic from trail users who are not necessarily visiting the refuge, but are just using the parking to access and/or stage for trail use down the highway beyond the refuge. In addition to the possibility of refuge users being displaced, the management burden of the toilets, parking lot, increased vehicle traffic, and trash should be shared. Ideally, there would be a separate trailhead maintained by DOT and/or MOA Parks. Or, a cooperative agreement to apply funds into a maintenance account could also work but ADF&G is reluctant to take on more facility management duties. Design considerations could separate refuge visitation from bike path use. The experience of parking at the refuge to walk the boardwalk is different than parking to then bike to Girdwood. * With the elimination of vehicle access to the highway pullouts after trail construction, we request that the pullouts are resurfaced and have any maintenance or refurbishment work done while there is still heavy equipment access to them. * The new bike / pedestrian path would be an ideal location for educational signs and well as a necessary location for rules and regulatory signs. A lot of restricted and/or inappropriate uses that are easy to manage from the elevated, fenced in boardwalk are going to be much more difficult to manage from a dispersed, direct surface access to the marsh. Education via posting rules will be essential. We request that design, funding, and installation for signs along the trail be incorporated into this project. Susanne Rodman **I will be out of the office September 3-23 Statewide Lands and Refuges Program Coordinator Division of Wildlife Conservation Alaska Department of Fish & Game
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Comments on safer Seward highway project My comments on Safer Seward Highway: We don't need a 4-lane divided highway. We do need a separated trail. Please use current population forecasts for planning; they show little to no growth. We need safer turnouts. We need more enforcement of DUI and distracted drivers. Please update environmental practices to stop spreading weeds every time a project is built. Or prove that existing practices are not contributing to spread of invasive species. DOT&PF could do a better job at this for a small fraction of the cost to our natural resources and economy that will result from the harm caused by invasive species. Thank you. Anne Billman
Jason	Norris	NULL	Subject: Flexposts Hello, In the interest of providing some feedback on Safety Express projects, installing flexposts where there is a double yellow line or in other places where vehicles crossing into oncoming traffic is a known problem could have significant benefits for fairly low cost. These are used successfully elsewhere to keep separation of HOT/HOV lanes. Thank you, Jason Norris
Dan	Kiland	NULL	From: Dan Kiland <dankiland@yahoo.com> Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:38:02 AM (UTC-09:00) Alaska To: Safer Seward Highway <info@safersewardhighway.com> Subject: Safer Seward Highway A relatively low cost high benefit is the RWIS. This site has been out for several years. Please put priority on it over high cost pie in the sky projects. Daniel Kiland Girdwood On the Seward Highway 300 days per year Seward Highway @ McHugh Creek MP 111.8 Site is being moved to a new location and will be down until the new site is constructed this simmer. Sent from my iPad
Sean	Kelliher	NULL	Subject: Reduce Speed Limit Best way to reduce fatalities would be to decrease speed limit to 45mph. This is the solution they implemented in Hawaii and it works great. Only would need to do it along high accident corridor (Anchorage to Turnagain Pass). Save many lives with this simple, minimal cost, proven solution. Sent from my iPhone
NULL	NULL	NULL	Pearl-Grace, Thank you and the team for coming up with a solution to the complaint. I hope that is the end of it. I knew I could count on you. Thanks Again! Michael Michael Packard Turnagain Arm CC President Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain On Tuesday, July 8th, 2025 at 3:45 PM, Pantaleone, Pearl-Grace wrote: Hi Michael, Thanks for reaching out to us on this matter! I'm sorry to hear about the impacts to your area. I also wanted to note that I received your voicemail and have been working with the team to find an answer for you. Yes, the Safer Seward team did manage the sign project you are referring to. Thank you also for being patient while we worked through a solution before we responded. Your comment encouraged us to collaborate with DOT&PF and DNR and we are pleased to report that all ATV placards have been removed from the three signs your community has identified. Thank you for sharing your concerns and hope this solution works for your community. Shortly, we will send an eblast to our Safer Seward subscribers of the new signs. Have a great day! Best wishes, Pearl-Grace Pantaleone, CPSM, Assoc. DBIA Subject: Re: Central Region Anchorage Project Newsletter - Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. Justin, The reason I am writing, I live on Turnagain arm at Bird Creek and happen to be the president of the community council so I get comments from community members. The following is a comment I received concerning the signs directing people to the Bird Valley Trail head. "Good evening Michael, I've heard from a number of neighbors taking issue with the new DOT Bird Valley Trailhead signs on the highway, featuring a large ATV symbol directing traffic up Konikson Road. There are three signs, one in front of he gas station on the Southbound traffic, and two on the Northbound side of the road, one near Whispering Bird, and one just before Konikson Road. The issues that have been brought up are: "1) The signs are attracting additional traffic to private and unmaintained Konikson Road. Although there is a road easement on this private land, neither the Muni, DOT or the Park Service maintain this road. The added traffic that is encouraged by these signs causes undue wear and maintenance, which is a burden to the community and private land owners. If the DOT/Park Service is going to advertise Konikson Road as an access from the highway, it is the community's opinion that they should provide road maintenance all the way to the trailhead. 2) The Bird Valley Trailhead sign is misrepresenting the multi-use trail by featuring only an ATV. If a sign were to be posted visually advertising access to the trail head indicating its use, it should portray the multi-use functions; including hiking, biking, skiing, ATV, horseback riding, dogs on leash, no dirtbikes, ect. 3) Until these issues are resolved with approval from the TACC the signs should be taken down. Do you recall if these signs were ever discussed by the DOT project managers with the TACC? If not would the TACC be willing to reach out to the DOT project managers to get some history and justification for these new signs? I'm happy to reach out on my own, let me know if you think that is a better course of action. Thank you." Please let me know if the signs can be changed to incorporate the additional information suggested and comment on the road maintenance issue. If you would like to comment directly I can put you in touch. Thank you for your time. Michael Packard, Turnagain Arm CC President, Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain
Anne	Brooks	NULL	Subject: Safer Seward Sent from my iPad Your web links to windy corner info are no longer working. Please update Thank you Anne Brooks

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Michael	Packard	Turnagain Arm Community Council	Subject: Message from Cell Phone AK (XXXXXXXXXX)
Michael	Packard	Turnagain Arm Community Council	<p>Subject: RE: RE: Seward Highway Discussion Re: Impacts to Ballfield. All, Speaking for myself and not representing the community. The ballfield is used quite regularly; practice in the spring when other fields are are not sufficiently dry. Most of the summer the parking area is used for bike riders and trail walkers who wish to access the trail. The field is used for picnics, child play and dog exercising. Community members are the ones that mow it most of the time, that would not happen if there was not an interest in keeping this recreation area. Keeping the size about the same would be important. The existing parking area is not large enough many weekends. The location on the water side of the highway is a benefit to all those wanting to access from the Anchorage direction. The location is not really important to me, as long as we have an area such as the one existing with access to the trail and available parking. I hesitate to mention this due to the future traffic problems that I will have accessing the highway from Whispering Bird Lane should a park be developed in that area..... there are ten acres in Bird designated park on Auriga Ln. next to the trail. Hope this helps. See you on the 11th. I will be sending out an agenda later. Michael Packard Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain</p> <p>On Tuesday, September 2nd, 2025 at 9:31 AM, TACC wrote: Chris, I will send the question out to the members and hopefully get a good turnout at the meeting and some comments prior to meeting on Sept. 11th. Thank you Michael Packard Turnagain Arm CC President Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain.</p> <p>On Tuesday, September 2nd, 2025 at 8:59 AM, Hughes, Chris wrote: Hi Michael, Thanks for your note. To keep scheduling simple, I'll plan on attending your next Community Council meeting. We do have a couple of questions that may be helpful for folks to think about in advance if possible. From our conversations so far-including discussions with the Muni and State Parks-there's strong interest in preserving some type of gathering or community space in the area. As a project team, we're considering how to best mitigate the impacts to the ballfield in the current design. What we're trying to understand is whether that mitigation should be a ballfield, an open park, a community gathering space, or something else entirely. We're also interested in whether the community feels it's important for the space to remain on the same side of the highway as the ballfield, or if location isn't a major factor. These answers could shape the size and type of space we show in our document. This section of the highway likely won't be constructed right away, since the bridge was recently rebuilt, but we'd like to capture a thoughtful mitigation approach in the Environmental Document. If you or others in the community have thoughts before the meeting, I'd be glad to hear them. Otherwise, I'll look forward seeing you on the 11th. Chris Hughes, PE</p> <p>Subject: Re: RE: Seward Highway Discussion Re: Impacts to Ballfield. I can be available most days. Our next Community council meeting will be September 11th. Michael Packard Turnagain Arm CC President Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain</p> <p>On 8/21/25 11:23 AM, Hughes, Chris (Anchorage) wrote: Just wanted to check in on this and see if you had any thoughts on a schedule to get a discussion started. Thanks Pat! Chris Hughes, PE</p> <p>Subject: Seward Highway Discussion Re: Impacts to Ballfield Pat - Since you've been involved with the SWG for Seward Highway, I'm reaching out to try and have a discussion about some of the impacts from the project in and around the existing ballfield. We've had discussion with the MOA/HLB, DNR and Chugach State Park, and would like to follow back up with you all. Is this something we should schedule with just you, or should we be including some other members as well. Teams would likely work if it works for you, or happy to do in person as well. Was thinking maybe sometime later this week, Thursday or Friday? Let me know your thoughts, and we'll work to get something on the calendar. Thanks. Chris Hughes, PE Vice President Transportation Business Group Manager</p>
Michael	Packard	Turnagain Arm Community Council	<p>Subject: Safer Seward Highway Project update. Hello Mr. Packard and community of Indian, Thank you again for inviting HDR to attend the TACC meeting on the 11th of September. Chris Hughes and I were happy to attend and answer questions about the project. We really appreciated hearing from attendees and have modified the proposed ball field/pathway design to reflect what you shared with us. The following revisions have been made: * The parking lot and the field (blue lines in the figure below) have been moved to the south east within the ROW between the road and the ARRC - stay on the same side of the road and near the same location. * We were able to resize the ball field and it meets the size requirements of a little league field. * We slightly changed the orientation * The new field will be fenced * The parking lot will be the same size as current and have a restroom / same features as today's parking lot * The parking lot will be right in right out accessible to the Seward Highway. * Folks will need to travel to the Bird Creek Parking to return northbound. * The undercrossing will remain where it is and the pathway (green linework) will be reconstructed to the outside of the parking / ballfield and connect into the existing pathway just beyond the proposed new ballfield location * The old ball field will be to the north of the new proposed parking and could be utilized for a park/ playground or other features that the community expressed an interest in having. Below is a schematic of the new layout: [cid:image001.jpg@01DC33B7.E0B285A0] Thank you for providing us the opportunity to work with you and incorporate your vision into our proposed alternative. Have a wonderful day, Safer Seward Highway team Edith McKee, P.E. (AK, OR, WA) HDR</p>
Tim	Alderson	Rabbit Creek Community Council	<p>Subject: STIP Amendmend #2 Hello from the Rabbit Creek Community Council, Attached please find our comments and recommendations regarding STIP Amendment #2. Please confirm receipt via return email. Thanks and Regards, Tim Alderson, Chair Rabbit Creek Community Council ATTACHED TEXT FOLLOWS: March 17, 2025 To: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities From: Rabbit Creek Community Council Re: 2024-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Amendment #2 Greetings from the Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC). The RCCC appreciates the ongoing opportunity to participate in the Safer Seward Highway Stakeholder Working Group. While RCCC acknowledges the need to create phases for the Safer Seward Highway project we are writing to communicate our opposition to total elimination of the MP 112 to 118 segment from the STIP. Additionally, the RCCC would like to propose adding to the 2024-2027 STIP a companion project: Interim Safety Improvements from MP 112 to 118. At our March 13, 2025 RCCC voted in favor of the following recommendations with a vote of 25-0 with 2 abstentions. RCCC acknowledges that the \$1.4 billion cost estimate of the project will require DOTPF to construct the Safer Seward Highway project in phases, one segment at a time. Some segments are 10 or 15 years out, or longer. The segment from McHugh Creek to Rabbit Creek has had at least four fatalities in approximately the last decade, by local memory. Potter Marsh has a relatively high rate of dangerous turning compared to other segments, and certainly the highest rate of wildlife strikes. DOTPF has repeatedly stated that the impetus for this project is safety: safety is the justification for the scale and design and cost of this project. Therefore, safety hazards and fatalities at various locations along the road corridor should strongly influence the phasing of this project. MP 112 to MP118 should stay in the queue for funding, and safety upgrades in that segment should be prioritized according to their safety merits. From MP 112 (McHugh Creek) to MP 118 (Rabbit Creek Road), RCCC has initially identified several Interim Safety Improvements that merit fast-track design and funding: A. McHugh Creek: Turn-pocket and advance signage at McHugh Creek recreation site for east-bound traffic (we have heard this is under design). B. Potter Valley Road: Acceleration lane at Potter Valley Road for northbound traffic turning northward. It is difficult and dangerous to turn into 55 mph peak traffic. C. Potter Marsh: Centerline separators/dividers at the current pullouts along Potter Marsh to prevent cross-lane turning. These could be as simple as the white plastic markers used in pilot projects to create protected bike lanes, or jersey barriers. D. Potter Marsh: Flashing speed-readout sign for north bound traffic (and repair the flashing speed-readout sign for south bound traffic). E. Signage and enforcement of speed limits. 55 mph or possibly lower along Potter Marsh. Thank you for your consideration. Regards, Tim Alderson, Chair Rabbit Creek Community Council cc: Chris Hughes Sean Holland Cathy Giessel Ky Holland</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	Subject: Death and Destruction Has DoT murdered this project now, as we all expected?
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Hi Bille, Thanks for reaching out again. Our team has tried to call you a few times but have been unsuccessful, so we left a message. We will be at the Anchorage Transportation Fair on Tuesday, April 15 from 3-7pm at the Alaska Airlines Center and would be happy to chat with you then. More details here: Anchorage Transportation Fair&lt;<a href="https://anchorage-transportation-fair-baker.hub.arcgis.com/">https://anchorage-transportation-fair-baker.hub.arcgis.com/</a>&gt; Best wishes, Pearl-Grace Pantaleone, CPSM, Assoc. DBIA</p> <p>Subject: Re: Windy Corner ? I would like to sit down and talk to you about Windy Corner. Mondays and Wednesday are full with PT appointments. Tuesday morning is the best .Thursday and Friday Morning first thing is good to. Let know what works best for you. I ran into Reese was told that D&amp;C Sent from my iPhone</p> <p>On Nov 11, 2024, at 12:23 PM, Pantaleone, Pearl-Grace wrote: Hi Bill, Morgan has transitioned into a new role, and I am taking over the Safer Seward Highway project communications. Do you have a chance today for a phone call to chat? I'd love to know what you are looking for in this meeting. Best wishes, Pearl-Grace Pantaleone, CPSM, Assoc. DBIA</p> <p>Subject: Windy Corner ? Morgan, I would like to come in to talk about Windy Corner, Seward Highway. Let me know if that's something you would like to do? Bill Evans XXX-XXX-XXXX Sent from my iPhone</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Certificate of Insurance Requested for HDR Alaska, Inc. Cert Number W39021208 [27756742] WTW CERTIFICATE CENTER Please see the enclosed document(s) provided by the WTW Certificate Center. We trust this issuance is in compliance with your needs. However, if you have any questions or wish to discuss it in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us during our hours of operation: 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM (CST). Please note, we do not automatically mail Proofs of Insurance issued midterm, unless specifically requested. To help ensure the appropriate party receives a copy, please be sure to provide electronic distribution instructions. Certificate Holders can also access existing proofs of insurance and much more by registering or logging into myportal.proofsdirect.wtwco.com. To register, just a few details are needed from the existing certificate. Thank you, Ravi Chaurasia WTW Certificate Center Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX Fax: XXX-XXX-XXXX Email: XXXXXX@wtwco.com Web: www.wtwco.com</p>

FirstName	LastName	Organization	Comment
Michael	Packard	Turnagain Arm Community Council	<p>Hi Michael, Thanks for reaching out to us on this matter! I'm sorry to hear about the impacts to your area. I also wanted to note that I received your voicemail and have been working with the team to find an answer for you. Yes, the Safer Seward team did manage the sign project you are referring to. Thank you also for being patient while we worked through a solution before we responded. Your comment encouraged us to collaborate with DOT&amp;PF and DNR and we are pleased to report that all ATV placards have been removed from the three signs your community has identified. Thank you for sharing your concerns and hope this solution works for your community. Shortly, we will send an eblast to our Safer Seward subscribers of the new signs. Have a great day! Best wishes, Pearl-Grace Pantaleone, CPSM, Assoc. DBIA</p> <p>Subject: Re: Central Region Anchorage Project Newsletter - Alaska Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facilities. Justin, The reason I am writing, I live on Turnagain arm at Bird Creek and happen to be the president of the community council so I get comments from community members. The following is a comment I received concerning the signs directing people to the Bird Valley Trail head. "Good evening Michael, I've heard from a number of neighbors taking issue with the new DOT Bird Valley Trailhead signs on the highway, featuring a large ATV symbol directing traffic up Konikson Road. There are three signs, one in front of he gas station on the Southbound traffic, and two on the Northbound side of the road, one near Whispering Bird, and one just before Konikson Road. The issues that have been brought up are: "1) The signs are attracting additional traffic to private and unmaintained Konikson Road. Although there is a road easement on this private land, neither the Muni, DOT or the Park Service maintain this road. The added traffic that is encouraged by these signs causes undue wear and maintenance, which is a burden to the community and private land owners. If the DOT/Park Service is going to advertise Konikson Road as an access from the highway, it is the community's opinion that they should provide road maintenance all the way to the trailhead. 2) The Bird Valley Trailhead sign is misrepresenting the multi-use trail by featuring only an ATV. If a sign were to be posted visually advertising access to the trail head indicating its use, it should portray the multi-use functions; including hiking, biking, skiing, ATV, horseback riding, dogs on leash, no dirtbikes, ect. 3) Until these issues are resolved with approval from the TACC the signs should be taken down. Do you recall if these signs were ever discussed by the DOT project managers with the TACC? If not would the TACC be willing to reach out to the DOT project managers to get some history and justification for these new signs? I'm happy to reach out on my own, let me know if you think that is a better course of action. Thank you." Please let me know if the signs can be changed to incorporate the additional information suggested and comment on the road maintenance issue. If you would like to comment directly I can put you in touch. Thank you for your time. Michael Packard Turnagain Arm CC President Bird Creek, Alaska 99540 "The truth has no defense against a fool determined to believe a lie." Mark Twain</p> <p>On Friday, May 23rd, 2025 at 11:49 AM, Shelby, Justin T (DOT) wrote: Good afternoon, Below is the Project Newsletter for the Anchorage Municipality from the Department of Transportation &amp; Public Facilities' Central Region. You can subscribe to continue to receive these update emails and stay informed about the projects happening in and around the Anchorage area. Please feel free to share it with anyone who may be interested. Sincerely,</p>
Merrill Phillip	Gehman Lopez	NULL	<p>Subject: Repaired radar signs Sent from my iPhone were the repaired radar signs calibrated? The first time thru the one at Peter marsh seemed to be 2 mph slower than it was before.</p> <p>Subject: Greetings, I'm requesting more speed enforcement. The Troopers are not getting the job done. Dos will not listen. So all we get is more blood.</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Hello Marc, Thank you for reaching out to the Safer Seward Highway project team and identifying that the "Contact the team" link on the homepage is broken. Our team re-linked it so now it loads the Contact Us page that displays our project email, phone number, and mailing address. I also see that you emailed us a comment about the road design. I have passed it along to the design team for consideration. Thank you and have a great day! Pearl-Grace Safer Seward Highway Project Team Member</p> <p>The data shows that since the highway became a safety corridor in 2006, crashes have decreased but fatalities have not. And if you look even closer, the increased frequency of crashes doesn't appear to occur when more people are on the road in summer; it actually happens in December and February when the weather conditions impact the appropriate safe speed for vehicles. To date, the Alaska ...</p> <p>Subject: Voicemail from XXX-XXX-XXXX "Yeah, my name is Mark Grober, my number is XXX-XXX-XXXX, that's XXX-XXX-XXXX.The contact link on your Safer Seward Highway webpage produces a page not found resultand there's no, of course, telephone number or email address on that webpage.So it's kind of curious that you encourage people to participatewhen the contact information goes to page not found.Because I would like to comment on the current design,but of course, we'd have to spend another few minutes trying to find the email addressto be able to do that instead of just using the contact page.So I'd appreciate hearing from someone in the next couple of days.Thank you. Have a great day. Bye."</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Seward Highway plans... To the project engineers or whoever works with this project, Your web page says to "Check out our awesome interactive tool that we call The Sandbox." I tried. I don't understand the tool at all. It might be easy for you, but I am thoroughly confused. I had seen some earlier plans about relocating the 2 lanes going north 100 ft above the current highway in some areas. Can't find that now. Where are the plans that I can understand? I live in Bird Creek and would like more information. Thank you, Laura Walter</p>
NULL	NULL	NULL	<p>Subject: Form Returned: SafeSewardHwy_Comment-Sheet_Web_Single-Page.pdf. The attached file is the filled-out form. Please open it to review the data. Attached file text: Check out our awesome interactive tool that we call "The Sandbox." It may be awesome for you, but I don't understand it at all. I don't find it very self explanatory. Could someone tell me how to use it so that I can see what is being proposed. Thank you.</p>
Alexa	Dobson	Bike Anchorage	<p>Subject: Follow up: Seward hwy project funding at PZC Hello folks - I'm writing to follow up on a statement made during the Sept. 8 Planning &amp; Zoning Commission hearing on the Seward Highway widening project. In response to testimony suggesting that the proposed \$1.5 billion might be better spent addressing safety needs in Anchorage, the project team stated that this funding could not be applied to Anchorage projects. Specifically, they said: "There's a lot of discussion about the ability to remove money from this project and put it to projects in Anchorage--if they don't fall in the right bucket, you can't necessarily take \$1.5 billion and put it toward projects in Anchorage. We put forth 10%, we get that return on a capital investment, but that doesn't mean that's the same for Anchorage." This is incorrect. Most state-owned arterials in Anchorage are designated as National Highway System (NHS) facilities, even though they do not meet the colloquial definition of a "highway," and are eligible for federal highway funding including the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), and other sources. As you can see from the original 2023-26 TIP, the Seward Highway project (before its removal) was funded through the NHPP, identified as the NHS funding category in that document. Table 8 demonstrates that projects on Muldoon and Abbott are also funded using the same source. This makes clear that NHS funds can be applied to safety projects on state-owned arterials in Anchorage such as Northern Lights, Benson, Tudor, DeBarr, and Muldoon. The choice to direct \$1.5 billion toward widening the Seward Highway rather than implementing safety improvements on city roads where residents are being killed at an unprecedented rate reflects state-level priorities and policy decisions, not restrictions imposed by federal funding rules. It is critical that Commissioners, decisionmakers, and the public receive accurate information when weighing this project's impacts. Mischaracterizing the flexibility of federal funds obscures the fact that different choices are possible--choices that would save lives on Anchorage's most dangerous roads. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, I'd be happy to chat - just let me know. Alexa Dobson (she/her) Executive Director, Bike Anchorage XXX-XXX-XXXX</p>

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The survey data does not provide a clear picture of the need for the project, or justification for the project. Per survey data available on the project page, less than half of survey respondents considered this project "the top priority" or "a high priority" in comparison to other AKDOT projects. 4. Survey questions referred to "safety" as an outcome without outlining the specifics how things like how increased speed and flow can make roads more dangerous, or where this project ranks in terms of safety needs in comparison with the rest of the state or the Anchorage Area. The survey indicates that 64% of the 500 respondents drive the corridor less than 10 times per year, but then on page 31 the report states that "[Survey] Respondents frequently used the highway." This contrasts with a statement that 73% of respondents would "rarely" or "never" use a nonmotorized path along the corridor, without defining how many times per year this might be.
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The description of the preferred design does not adequately describe how this design will limit speeding above the posted limit. The Level of Service A described in the narrative seems likely to foment the conditions that will lead to higher speed and less safe conditions. See discussion of curves and design speed on page 42.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Turnagain Arm Trail Preservation and Mitigation: The encroachment on the Turnagain Arm trail between McHugh Creek and Potter Trail head is unacceptable. This SSH in this area is proposed to have a 200-foot-wide median and 100-foot-vertical rise for the northbound lanes that places the lanes next to the existing trail. The current trail is in wildlife-rich woodland setting mostly insulated from the sights and sounds of the highway. The current trail attracts hundreds of urban users per day, especially in the shoulder seasons. The SSH should be redesigned to stay at sea level in a narrower corridor in the area from McHugh to Potter. We suspect that this alignment, with the huge amount of quarrying from McHugh Creek to Potter trailhead, may be driven by the need for fill material for tidelands in the Potter Marsh area. This recreation area on the urban boundary is too high-value to be a quarry site. In areas where highway construction approaches the Turnagain Arm Trail, the trail must be relocated and buffered with natural vegetation. The experience of the trail should remain scenic and immersive-not flanked by chain-link fencing and exposed quarry walls.
Kyle Cunningham (MOA Eng.)	Based on the plans and narrative submitted this project will likely qualify as a "Large" project as per Section 3 of the Anchorage Stormwater Manual (DCM Ch.2). How will the project satisfy the stormwater treatment and extended detention requirements of Section 3? (i.e., Water Quality Treatment Sec. 3.3.2.1, Extended Detention Sec. 3.3.2.2, and Detention and Peak Flow Control Sec. 3.3.2.4 and 3.3.2.5).
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Bird and Indian Access: The loss of multiple highway access points will isolate the Bird and Indian communities and diminish access to local businesses. Commercial and residential impacts must be reconsidered.
VICE CHAIR KRISHNA	Every single person that visits this state drives that highway because of the viewshed. Any change that makes that highway look like a ring road around any city in the country is going to be a significant detriment, not just to the local community council, but to the State of Alaska and the economic benefit that this highway and road bring to us.
Brad Neugebauer (self)	How will we maintain it? Double asphalt for snow clearing, repaving.
Jason Norris	I urge you to not support this project. I provide the following to support this recommendation. The report does not state the issue to be solved up front. It immediately jumps to "project purpose", which presupposes the project is solving a real issue. This is very revealing. DOT&PF's tact here is to state up front: "it is a problem because we say it is and we have a project with a valid and justified purpose." That is problematic in and of itself and is a very outdated mode of project planning. However, if we substitute the stated project purpose of: "The purpose of the Project is to improve safety by reducing crash rates and severity, improving mobility and reliability, and safely accommodating mixed uses within the corridor." With a more appropriate problem statement of "There exists unacceptable levels of risk to property and life safety, inadequate mobility and reliability, and a lack of safety surrounding mixed uses within the Seward Highway corridor" we can examine each of those individually to see if they stand up to scrutiny. Since this is ostensibly a "safety project", let's focus our efforts on the risks to property and life safety. Using facts from the report, it is unclear what "safety issue" is being solved here. Figure 9 of the report presents a five-year average of 15.2 "fatality and injury" crashes per year. However, this is an overly broad category. We don't know how many of those are fatalities versus injuries and we don't know how many of those injuries were serious. We don't know if someone was paralyzed, concussed, sprained an ankle, or stubbed their toe. This aggregation has the effect of presenting an overstated safety issue. It isn't until Page 102 of 116, Section 2, that we are told that there were 12 accidents resulting in serious injury or fatality, or 2.4 per year. We also find that there was a total of four fatalities, or 0.8 per year and there were two years out of five where there were zero. We also find that three of those four fatalities (75%) occurred from head-on collisions, which is the accident mode being cited as primary justification for the four-lane divided highway. If we assume that the recommended plan would reduce head-on fatalities from the current 0.6 per year to 0 (a bold assumption) and using the current project cost of \$1.5 billion, that would be approximately \$50 million per life saved. In aggregate terms, that would be saving 30 lives over 50 years at a cost of \$50 million per life saved. However, DOT&PF is projecting increases in vehicular traffic, which means even with their proposed improvements and the high likelihood that they will be unable to solve the head-on collision dilemma in total means these costs per life saved are likely highly understated. While not a perfect 1:1 comparison, USDOT values a statistical life at \$13.7M. My point here is not to minimize the devastation that lives lost means to those affected and society as a whole. My point is that DOT&PF's project is seeking to solve a problem that is far from pressing within a regional context from an actual lives lost perspective and compounding that is the fact that they have chosen an incredibly inefficient way of solving it. If we allocated the same project funds to DOT&PF-owned and controlled roads in the Anchorage Bowl, it would focus on roads with 25 times more annual deaths in pedestrian deaths alone (15 pedestrian deaths in 2024). In short, DOT&PF is proposing to spend a massive amount of money to solve a problem they are overstating and relying on a supplemental metric (LOS) that isn't actually tied to safety, but whether a driver is being followed on a roadway, as if that is an untenable state of affairs.
COMMISSIONER GARDNER	In reading the materials provided, the concept of a 3-lane road did not provide him comfort that it was fully evaluated and adequately rejected given the significant impact and cost associated with the divided 4-lane concept. It looks like the primary factor that has gone into this is the analysis on crash data. He appreciated that a 4-lane divided highway could be expected to more easily avoid crashes than a 3-lane road, but this is a context-sensitive analysis with a lot of considerations. There are ways to evaluate and consider improving safety, even with a 3-lane road, given some of the factors that affect crashes, weather being one that is not going to change depending on the size of the road, and fully understanding those impacts as well.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Inadequate Consideration of Three-Lane Alternatives The dismissal of the three-lane alternating passing concept lacks sufficient justification. This approach should be favored in areas where four-lane construction would result in extensive environmental damage through hillside gouging or filling.

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	It is not clear whether or not schematic diagrams are to scale, and some diagrams seem to leave out information:• For scale issues see figure 8 and figure 12. • Figure 11 provides a heatmap of crashes but doesn't clearly show severity or even the number of crashes. • Figure 15 which shows intermittent passing lanes but without barriers. However, in this type of design, passing lanes would likely include barriers, which would be likely to significantly decrease the risk of head-on crashes.
Jason Norris	It's also unclear where the driving decision metric is life safety and where it is LOS. The alternative three-lane divided highway should ostensibly have the same life safety risk reduction as a four-lane divided highway would if we are still measuring the alternative design's effectiveness at reducing the 0.6 head-on fatalities per year. A two-lane divided highway would likely be just as effective for this purpose as a three-lane or four-lane configuration since the "divided" part is what actually matters for reducing head-on collisions, not the number of lanes. Despite this, DOT&PF claims in Table 25 that there will be a 50% greater reduction in fatality and injury crashes for the four lane option over the three lane option due to factors that have nothing to do with head-on collisions. Given that there were four fatalities to begin with and the divide solved three of them, (leaving one), it's difficult to see how DOT&PF is doing the math here. It's also telling that they didn't bother producing a cost for the three-lane option. This means we are not shown the difference in construction costs but we are also not shown the difference in O&M costs associated with the roughly 33% increase in vehicle lane miles. Exacerbating this lack of justification to the point of embarrassment is the projections relied on. It is wholly unclear where the projected increase in traffic is coming from. If we assume driver behavior remains static and that the proposed improvements would not induce demand (as we know it would), then we would need a sizable increase in the population of the driving public with similar demand for trips on this stretch of road to match the projections on offer in the report. In Existing Conditions-Traffic Conditions, we are told that there are currently between 7,700 and 9,600 vehicles in the corridor every day. Table 4.5 states that the 2052 traffic levels will be between 14,500 and 18,000 cars per day. This is a near doubling of traffic. Are we expecting a doubling in the driving population of Southcentral Alaska? That seems unlikely given current population trends and available land use for housing development of sufficient density to support such a claim. Page 103 of 116, Section 3 talks about "Public Perception and Trust". If DOT&PF actually cared about this, it would direct funds to where people are actually dying on the roads they own. They would stop producing projections that are not even close to rooted in the realm of reality. Their models would account for induced demand. They would produce a proper accounting of the true costs and benefits produced by the various alternatives. They would stop hiding how relatively small the serious injury and fatality issue is by aggregating them with minor injuries. They would stop designing unsafe roads in the first place, and they would stop being a roadblock to fixing the safety issues on roads where there actually are problems. Until such time as I see progress on roads in the Anchorage Bowl where people are dying in far greater numbers, and it is happening with the assistance of DOT&PF instead of despite it, I cannot in good consciences support \$1.5B on a stretch of highway with far fewer fatalities. You should not support it either.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Lack of Alignment with Adopted Plans and Policies:• The Municipality of Anchorage's 2025 Long-Range Transportation Strategy prioritizes safety over high-speed or high-volume throughput. In the realm of all Anchorage safety projects and also specifically with the SSH project, SSH seems to conflict with Strategy S3: "Move away from default metrics that prioritize moving vehicles fast or in high volumes over other community priorities."• The Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan emphasizes preserving natural viewsheds, minimizing habitat disruption, and integrating infrastructure into the surrounding landscape. • The impacts to the Alaska Coastal Wildlife Refuge, which the corridor borders for several miles, are not even mentioned. What measures are being taken to address wildlife connectivity across a corridor that includes up to six traffic lanes, a non-motorized path, and an active railroad?• AMATS Complete Streets Policy should apply to approximately 4 miles at the northern end of the SSH project, within the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation solutions (AMATS) boundary. The AMATS Complete Streets first principle is that streets "are context-sensitive, considering economic, social, and environmental objectives." The SSH design does not meet these objectives, given the enormous fiscal cost, the opportunity cost to remedy urban safety hotspots, and the massive alteration of a national scenic corridor
Brad Neugebauer (self)	Limit speeds in passing lane areas for those not passing.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Median vs. Center Barriers The use of wide medians significantly expands the highway footprint. The use of physical center barriers, as implemented south of Bird, is a more compact alternative and should be extended further along to other parts of the corridor.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Non-Motorized Access to Section House: The location of the existing pedestrian tunnel limits access to the Section House and parking area. A new spur trail west of the highway should be included to accommodate access.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Potter Marsh pathway: The safety and visual effects along the pathway are unclear. Will the non-motorized-pathway be fenced off from the highway, or fenced off on the marsh side, or both? How and where will wildlife cross the corridor from the Potter Marsh to the rest of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge? The Seward Highway north of the project forms a miles-long barrier to moose and other large wildlife, so continued east-west movement of wildlife is important in the Potter Marsh area .
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Potter Valley Frontage Road to Turnagain Arm Trailhead: Realignment appears to require creek relocation. Can this be avoided? Who will provide winter maintenance for this new access road, given that DNR does not currently plow its shorter existing road to the Turnagain Arm Trailhead?
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Potter Valley Road Intersection: This intersection appears unsafe in its current configuration. Adequate acceleration lanes are needed, and the center "eddy" in the median for turning vehicles appears too small for safe maneuvering.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Recreational Crossings: Adequate underpasses or tunnels are needed to safely connect the non-motorized trail to inland recreation areas and restroom/toilet facilities, especially at McHugh Creek and Rainbow.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Seasonal Bias in Safety Design The design appears overly focused on summer traffic congestion and passing delays, despite the fact that nearly half of serious accidents occur in winter months. Many of these crashes are related not to capacity, but to weather, driver behavior, and road maintenance. These critical factors deserve more attention in the design.
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The multi-use path shown on the plans is located within the clear zone of the highway. This implies that the safety for users on the trail is a lower priority than users in vehicles, and would result in a less usable non-motorized facility.

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project documents indicate that most of the serious crashes on this corridor occur during the winter, which traffic data shows to be the time of year with the lowest volumes. This indicates that capacity is not the major limitation in for safety implementations, even though the project design appears to be focused on expanding capacity. Figure 4: Traffic data from page 36 of the report shows the lowest traffic at the time of the most crashes. This indicates that too little road capacity may not be the primary safety problem. From page 40 of the report: " Nearly 40 percent of the crashes occurred during winter, between December and February, when ice and frost create slippery roadway surfaces that reduce traction and consequently increase the risk of crashes."
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project predicts significant growth of traffic over time. For example, at mile post 52269000 near Indian, 2024 traffic data shows 7,710 AADT. Page 7 of the CSS report indicates over 14,000 AADT for this area. Planning Department Analysis of past projects done in Anchorage indicates that most projects in Anchorage have never reached their projected traffic levels, which has resulted in overbuilt infrastructure and long-term maintenance issues. Planning department analysis on Anchorage-area road project predictions versus actual traffic counts post-construction are shown below: For additional reference, the existing traffic volumes on this corridor would, in most other situations, qualify this road to be an arterial. 5
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project should provide additional information on why the proposed design is the best choice in comparison with alternatives that would require less expansion and demolition of the natural areas along the roadway. The project has proposed a significant expansion as the preferred way to address stated safety issues. However, FHWA's own report: " Safe System Roadway Design Hierarchy: Engineering and Infrastructure-related Countermeasures to Effectively Reduce Roadway Fatalities and Serious Injuries" from January 2024 provides guidance that the best way to address unsafe roads is by: a. first by removing severe conflicts (such as adding physical separation, such as barriers, between users), b. then reducing vehicle speeds using posted limits and also " roadsides design elements, such as lane narrowing, intersection channelization, and horizontal and vertical deflection", c. then managing conflicts in time (such as scheduling and delayed road use), d. the increasing attentiveness and awareness with reflectors, rumble strips, and others. Road widening does not seem to be a preferred method of addressing safety concerns in 2025. Widening the roadway may also contradict other project goals and community priorities, as outlined in The Alaska Moves 2050 Appendix E Scenario Planning & Performance Measurement from June 2022, which states on page 9: "Additional lanes constructed result in higher traffic levels and air quality decline." Other alternatives, including two-lane divided highway (with barrier separation) could potentially address many of these safety issues at considerably lower cost.
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project should provide clearer information about the long-term maintenance costs of this type of road expansion. Per page A-18 of the HSIP handbook attached to the May 7, 2025 AKDOT & PF memorandum from the Statewide Traffic and Safety Engineer with the subject "HSIP Handbook 24th Edition", widening travel lanes to the preconstruction manual standard costs \$500 per foot mile, per year, for a project life of 20 years. Understanding that these maintenance costs are designed for HSIP projects, is there a similar metric for evaluating maintenance costs for non-HSIP projects such as this one? Using this or any other more methodology, please provide an estimate of how this project may or may not increase maintenance costs.
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project should provide justification as to why this \$1.5 billion dollar project is the highest and best use of limited funding to help address safety when other corridors could use this funding more effectively. The project mentions that this area is an Alaska Highway Safety Corridor, and it is an internal priority of AKDOT to remove the safety corridor designation. The project does not make clear that AKDOT only designates Safety Corridors on rural roads, not in urban areas where they might be more effective. The corridor was designated in 2006, at a time when data showed a need for this designation, but the data does not tell that story today: Figure 1: While traffic volumes have increased since the 1970s, severe crashes have decreased over time. They also appear to have decreased since this section of highway was designated as a safety corridor (without significant road design changes). Safety Corridor, Alaska Highway Safety Office, Transportation & Public Facilities, State of Alaska. This designation, while potentially important for federal tracking purposes, does not necessarily correspond to actual traffic road safety needs within Anchorage. The most current data available shows that several other stretches of roads managed by AKDOT & PF are significantly more dangerous for all users, with or without a "safety corridor" designation. In AKDOT & PF's "2023-2027 Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan Appendix E: Alaska Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment", out of 16 total, the top 7 identified high-injury corridors in the state are in Anchorage; and none of them include this, or any other section of the Seward Highway: Figure 2: 2023-2027 Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan Appendix E: Alaska Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment: <a href="https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/assets/AKDOT_VRU_Draft-11-14-23_signed.pdf">https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/assets/AKDOT_VRU_Draft-11-14-23_signed.pdf</a> Similarly, out of the top 15 identified high-injury intersections in the state, 8 are in Anchorage and none of them are along this or any other section of the Seward Highway. Figure 3: 2023-2027 Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan Appendix E: Alaska Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment: <a href="https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/assets/AKDOT_VRU_Draft-11-14-23_signed.pdf">https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/assets/AKDOT_VRU_Draft-11-14-23_signed.pdf</a> Anchorage area traffic data also indicates that the Gambell/Ingra corridor has significantly more serious/fatal driver crashes as well. 3 As noted above, the project materials indicate that "The average annual daily traffic (AADT) in 2022 along the Seward Highway was approximately 7,730 and 9,550 vehicles per day (at Bird [MP 100] and Potter Marsh [MP 117.5], respectively)." In contrast, Benson Boulevard, which is on the AKDOT & PF draft High Crash Locations screening document but does not have any active projects, has AADT counts of 12,000-22,000 AADT.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Unclear Winter Maintenance Responsibilities What are the projected costs of winter maintenance for the expanded corridor and the new non-motorized facilities? Why is there reference to a potential "negotiation" for the Department of Natural Resources to maintain portions of the pathway within DOT & PF right-of-way?
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Vertically Separated Lanes (Maps 6-9): The proposed split elevation from Potter Trailhead to McHugh Creek needlessly damages Chugach State Park terrain, especially the most heavily used section of the Turnagain Arm Trail. The northbound lanes, elevated 100 feet above and 200 feet inland of the southbound lanes, would devastate scenic, wildlife-rich parkland. A center barrier or three-lane option should be reconsidered here.
Brad Neugebauer (self)	\$1.5B seems like a lot. What % will be federal vs state? Is shaving a couple minutes of time by increasing speed limit really worth \$1.5B? We have so many needs in this community... other roads are crumbling, we're strapped for cash in this state.

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
Alexa Dobson	<p>*This comment submission is copied and pasted from the official Bike Anchorage lettersubmitted on letterhead to Planning Department Director Babb. That letter contains linksand references with more information on some of the points contained below.*Dear Commissioners,Bike Anchorage appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Safer Seward Highwayproject and its Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Design Report. We are a nonprofitorganization that works to make our city more bike-friendly through advocacy, education• and encouragement. In this capacity, we have served as a member of the stakeholdergroup for this project and engaged with it in detail over time as the plan developed.As it stands, this project proposes to widen the Seward Highway south of Anchoragefrom approximately milepost 98.5 to 118, creating a four-lane divided highway with aspeed limit of 55mph. It will straighten curves in the highway by cutting away existingcliffs and forest in Chugach State Park and dumping the excavated material into CookInlet, taking an estimated 250 acres of park land. It is estimated to cost \$1.5 billion andwill take 10 years to complete. And, they tell us, there will be a bike path.While we strongly support investments in transportation safety, we urge the Planningand Zoning Commission to recommend against advancing this project as proposed,because this is not a safety project. It is a highway widening project with a false veneerof safety. It represents a profound misallocation of limited transportation dollars, isbased on flawed and selectively presented data, and will likely increase, not decrease,dangerous driving behaviors.There are, however, elements worth salvaging from the proposal, which we encouragethe Commission to recommend moving forward separately. Below we outline ourconcerns in detail.Our Road Safety Crisis Is Not on This HighwayThe project team is correct that we have a serious road safety crisis, but it is not on thisstretch of highway.The technical memo accompanying the CSS report summarizes the safety record of theSeward Highway between milepost 98.5 and 118 as follows, from 2016 to 2021:236 crashes76 resulted in injury or worse12 resulted in severe injury or worse• 4 resulted in deathThis works out to an average of 0.66 fatalities per year. Remember this number; it willbe important later.By contrast, urban arterial roads in Anchorage, most of them owned and managed bythe state, have significantly higher crash volumes and fatality rates over a similartimeframe. For example:DeBarr Road, 2017-2021:651 crashes276 resulted in injury or worse17 resulted in severe injury or deathMuldoon Road, 2017-2021:447 crashes188 resulted in injury or worse.. 14 resulted in severe injury or deathNorthern Lights Boulevard, 2017-2021:602 crashes243 resulted in injury or worse17 resulted in severe injury or deathDespite these figures, none of these Anchorage corridors are slated to become SafetyCorridors or have \$1.5 billion invested in safety upgrades. In 2024 alone, 15 pedestrianswere killed by drivers in Anchorage, most on state-owned roads such as Muldoon,Tudor, Minnesota, and Benson. Early data from 2025 suggests this trend is worsening.Recent news coverage revealed that no action has yet been taken on these state roadsto prevent further tragedies, and at the July 2025 meeting of the Anchorage AssemblyTransportation Committee, we learned that the state intends to delay its own futureroad safety projects with unnecessary studies, for fear of angering drivers.It is unconscionable to spend \$1.5 billion to marginally reduce crashes on a ruralhighway while failing to address preventable deaths on Anchorage streets. A tinyfraction of this budget could fully fund the installation of FHWA-endorsed Proven SafetyCountermeasures citywide such as road diets, leading pedestrian intervals, bike lanes,and lighting, which would have a significantly greater impact in crashes prevented andlives saved.This Project Serves Driver Convenience, Not SafetyThis project purports to improve safety. From the name of the project onward, theinterventions proposed are framed around the idea of safety. But it's worth unpackingwhat exactly "safety" means in this context. To summarize the logic presented:Drivers on the Seward Highway must sometimes drive behind another car, and thismakes them feel angry;Those angry drivers respond by making aggressive and unsafe maneuvers that causecrashes, injuries and death;Therefore, the highway should be widened and straightened to remove the stimulus thatmakes these drivers feel angry.It should go without saying, this is not safety engineering. It is designing for driverconvenience. This approach treats illegal and deadly driver behavior as a force like theweather or an act of God that we are powerless to control. Rather than encouragingsafer driving through design that promotes caution and attentiveness, the projectproposes to reduce the likelihood that drivers will be inconvenienced.The proposed design for this project is a four-lane, divided highway with a 55mph speedlimit. Originally, the project team recommended a 65mph speed limit for the design, butit was strongly opposed in the stakeholder group; the idea of changing an alreadydangerousroad so that drivers can go even faster is absurd on its face. The 55mphspeed limit was chosen as a concession to the stakeholder group, but the wider andstraighter road design remained.There is no question in traffic engineering that wider, straighter roads with longersightlines and lower traffic density encourage drivers to travel at faster speeds,regardless of the posted speed limit. Indeed, the project team understands this, as theyobserve in the CSS report that "drivers often intuitively match their speed to the roaddesign." Engineering a road for higher-speed travel and hoping drivers will voluntarilyignore those cues is inconsistent with every established traffic safety principle.Selective and Misleading Data and StandardsThe CSS Design Report cites the corridor's current Level of Service (LOS D) asjustification for widening. To anyone unfamiliar with traffic engineering, "D" sounds likea failing grade, like getting a D in math class. But that is not how LOS works.LOS grades (A through F) are not safety ratings; they are purely a measure of driverconvenience. There is no requirement for this or any road project to achieve any LOSgrade.There are a few different measures of</p>
MOA	<p>"There is not enough evidence in the CSS DSR to support the Four-Lane Divided Highway Concept (Proposed Action) for the Safer Seward Highway Project."</p>
Harrison Smith	<p>a am writing to oppose this project as in any form that it has so far been presented.: With record breaking deaths on DOT&amp;PF managed roads in the Anchorage bowl, it is:absurd to claim this is reasonable way to use the department's resources. If safety trulyis the priority, the Planning Department has listed the highest risk corridors that deserve:the most immediate attention. MOA and DOT&amp;PF have committed to a Vision Zero and ']Safe Systems approach to improving safety. Widening a highway in a way that allows for; higher speeds does not align with these core principles.</p>
COMMISSIONER RAUN	<p>A lot of data points are now available for the project team to pull from in moving forward and doing more work.</p>
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	<p>Escalation of Project Scope and Long-Term Maintenance CostsThe scale and complexity of the project have expanded significantly, and with thatexpansion comes a long-term burden on the state. The added lane miles, separatedcorridors, and non-motorized infrastructure will substantially increase futuremaintenance costs. This is particularly concerning given current budget constraints andongoing staffing challenges that already impair the state's ability to maintain theexisting, smaller roadway.</p>
Max Kritzer	<p>i I urge the Planning and Zoning Commission to recommend against advancing thisl project as proposed. It is wholly unnecessary, and would be greatly detrimental to a•• prime area of Chugach State Park. The money for this project would be much betterspent on other projects in the Anchorage area.</p>
Kelly Laipenieks	<p>Please do not invest in this project. I urge you to consider making improvements tostreets in the Anchorage bowl area. \$1.5 billion dollars could go a lot further inAnchorage, where traffic has doubled and continues to climb. Widening the Sewardhighway seems like a frivolous way to spend this massive amount of money. Oh andwhere is the money required to maintain all this new road going to come from? Thestate is already struggling with financial issues. Please do NOT support this project.</p>

Commenter	Comment
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Design Report for the Safer Seward Highway Project. These comments reflect community feedback and were approved by a vote of 15-1 at our July 24, 2025, council meeting. Our Council's initial reaction is one of concern regarding the scale, cost, and environmental impact of the proposed project. While we strongly support efforts to improve highway safety, the industrial intensity of the proposed design appears disproportionate relative to the safety benefits achieved and will result in radical disfigurement of the natural terrain that makes this a National Scenic Highway. From the outset of this project, there has been consistent and widespread input from stakeholders including community councils, conservation groups, recreational users, and residents emphasizing the importance of minimizing the project's physical and environmental footprint. Unfortunately, the current design appears to move in the opposite direction, expanding the highway's scope and scale in a way that is out of step with this feedback.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Scale and Cost Disproportionate to Benefits The dramatic increase in the project's scale raises concerns about cost-effectiveness. Should this project take priority over hotspots with a higher crash and fatality rate? How many smaller and more targeted safety projects could DOTPF and AMATS implement across the region if the current proposal were scaled back?
Daniel Mckenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The Planning and Zoning Commission should note that this project was originally programmed to cost around \$600 million dollars, but is now scheduled to cost at least \$1.5 billion. As scheduled, this would require either 24-25 years of construction with an annual budget of \$65-75 million, or 10-12 years with an annual budget of \$150 million. These long-term, ongoing costs could potentially significantly impact the possibility of doing any other projects with larger safety issues or securing any other funding for needed projects in the Anchorage area. Historically, projects of this size and cost have not been funded within the State of Alaska. Additionally, comparable large-scale projects such as the Cooper Landing Bypass have only increased overtime. Previous discussions at the AMATS Policy Committee also raised questions of whether existing and anticipated funding to cover this project's costs would be sustainable in the long term (as of July 2025, matching funds for federal projects have been vetoed from the state budget, putting a number of existing projects at risk). The Policy Committee voted to remove this project from the AMATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) due to funding concerns and questions about the proposed design. The TIP is a four-year program for taking care of and improving the transportation system in the AMATS area. DOT projects in the Anchorage area must appear on the TIP in order to receive funding from the federal government.
Daniel Mckenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The Planning and Zoning Commission should note that this project was removed from the 2023-2026 TIP and 2050 MTP by the AMATS Policy Committee at the April 17, 2025 Policy Committee meeting. The AMATS Policy Committee expressed concerns over the cost of the project, the possible impacts the cost will have on other projects within the AMATS area and Alaska as a whole, the lack of guarantee that the funding will be available without impacting other projects, and the preferred alternative identified in the concept materials.
Aaron Jongenelen (AMATS)	The project for the Seward Highway MP 98.5-118 was originally included in the AMATS 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). During the development of the 2024-2027 Statewide Improvement Program (STIP) the project cost increased from the \$694M cost estimate to over \$1.2B. The project was subsequently removed from the AMATS TIP by the Policy Committee as part of amendment #2 and from the MTP with amendment #1. This means the portion of the project that was within the AMATS area, roughly (MP 114-118), will not be eligible for future federal funding, unless it is re-added to the MTP and TIP. The AMATS Policy Committee (PC) removed the project from the AMATS MTP and TIP citing concerns regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The possible impact of funding on other current and future DOT projects statewide, not just within the AMATS boundary,</li> <li>• The availability of funding for a \$1.2B project,</li> <li>• Impacts to staffing and maintenance for current and future projects for AMATS and the rest of Alaska,</li> <li>• Concerns about the preferred alternative identified in the concept materials.</li> </ul> The PC requested more specific information on the source of the funding for the project. DOT&PF stated it could come from federal grants and from the federal funding DOT&PF uses for all of Alaska.
Daniel Mckenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project materials should ensure that design conclusions were not established before the project went through the appropriate procedure. FHWA requires that project designs be selected only after an equal analysis of multiple alternatives. Given the intended design reported by the news media before the official design period of this project ("Gov. Dunleavy's budget calls for widening the Seward Highway" published on 12/21/2021 in Alaska's NewsSource) <sup>2</sup> , additional due diligence may be necessary to document justification for the selected project design. The project materials also state that "The original 2023-2026 TIP included the Project to reconstruct the highway to a four-lane roadway. The first amendment to the 2023-2026 TIP revised reconstruction to better accommodate traffic flow and address safety concerns." PZC may want to consider evaluating the evidence and justification for each design decision in the project. The project should document all design decisions to ensure there is no confusion for the public about any appearance of the project's outcome being predetermined before the project went through the public process, environmental process, or standard design process.
Daniel Mckenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project should address goals of the MOA the Long Range Transportation Strategy (LRTS). Long range planning commends the project team for including discussion of the LRTS in these project materials. The responses to the LRTS do not necessarily address the LRTS, however. The project does not at a high-level meet goal number two to maintain existing infrastructure and use what we have first, nor demonstrate how it is an efficient use of funding in a tightly constrained fiscal environment with several other more pressing areas of need.
COMMISSIONER PULICE	The project team needs to respond with math and with data.
Daniel Mckenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	The project materials may not adequately address the characteristics of this road as a Scenic Byway. Per the AKDOT website, "Recognized for its scenic, natural, historical and recreational values, the 127-mile Seward Highway holds triple designation: USDA Forest Service Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road." <sup>6</sup> Per FHWA interim policy on scenic byways, one of the six intrinsic qualities of a scenic byway is the natural and undisturbed state of the landscape: Natural Quality applies to those features in the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state. These features predate the arrival of human populations and may include geological formations, fossils, landform, waterbodies, vegetation, and wildlife. There may be evidence of human activity, but the natural features reveal minimal disturbances. <sup>7</sup> However, project materials appear on page 42 to suggest that the fundamental characteristics of this designation are in conflict with the identified problems: "In general, the sinuous nature of the existing highway impedes drivers' ability to see upcoming hazards and reduces the time drivers have available to stop or slow when they see the hazards. Similarly, the visibility required for drivers to pass efficiently and safely is hindered." This seems to raise a conflict between a priority to move vehicles and preservation of the fundamental components of the scenic byway designation. Fundamentally, the problems identified in this excerpt originate in driver speed, rather than curvature of the road.

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Threat to Scenic and Ecological Integrity: The Seward Highway holds triple designation for its unique scenic beauty: National Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road. The scale and industrial nature of the proposed SSH design—especially the extensive quarry cuts of up to 400 vertical feet, will fundamentally degrade the natural wild setting and may compromise the scenic designations. In the Potter Marsh area, there appears to be unmitigated fragmentation of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge.
Curtis Townsend (MOA On-Site Water and Wastewater Section)	2025-0087 SOA DOT&PF-CSSTP Site Plan Review Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118: no comments.
COMMISSIONER PULICE	As a civil engineer, he can pick some of the information apart that Long-Range Planning has put together. This is math, and there is some wordplay in this, and the project team needs to respond to the community.
Kaleigh Jones (AWWU Planning Section)	AWWU has no comments or objections to this CSS Transportation Project review.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Benefits disproportionate to costs
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Community & access impacts (loss thereof)
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Environmental & scenic impacts
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Escalation of scope & cost (e.g. long-term maintenance)
Alexa Dobson (Bike Anchorage)	Focus funds on streets in Anchorage where they are truly needed.
COMMISSIONER GARDNER	He agreed with a lot of the concerns that were raised and identified in the staff report.
COMMISSIONER RAUN	He appreciated the comments from the public putting in perspective where they think this project needs to be.
COMMISSIONER RAUN	He appreciated the presentation and the work that has been done, but overwhelmingly this does not meet muster. He heard the words that the petitioner came forward with the best solution. His motion is intending to say, go do better. He trusts that the project team has the scope professionals necessary to do so.
COMMISSIONER RAUN	He appreciated the work both Long-Range and Current Planning has done in lining things out against where the municipality has been, is, and wants to be on this project.
COMMISSIONER GARDNER	He shared the general comment that this is a hard issue to manage.
Brad Robertson	I stand behind the comments made in the letter submitted by Bike Anchorage. Regarding the work defined as (widening the Seward Highway south of Anchorage between milepost 98.5 to 118, creating a four-lane divided highway), I do not support this as a resident of Anchorage. Not only will this result in negative effects to the landscape along this portion of the hwy, but the overarching cost of the project does not justify the expected "benefit". There are other roads and infrastructure within Anchorage that would benefit far more from this time of time and money. At its core, this proposal is not about safety, but rather convenience. Please make the smart choice and do not pursue this proposal. It does not provide a good return on investment to residence in and around Anchorage.
COMMISSIONER PULICE	In 2019, during Covid, a \$600 million project has now become \$1.1 billion.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Inadequate consideration of alternatives (revisit 3 lane alternating passing)
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Misaligned with local plans (e.g. Anc. long range transportation plan)
COMMISSIONER RAUN	moved in Case 2025-0087 to return the application to the project management team for additional work in accordance with department recommendations addressing the topic areas i. through xiii.
Mark Eisenman (DOT&PF Anchorage Area Planning)	No comments.
Daniel McKenna-Foster (MOA Long Range Planning)	Per FHWA, via the MOA's Strategy For Developing Context Sensitive Transportation Projects, "Context Sensitive Solutions is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to project development, involving all stakeholders at the earliest phase, to ensure that transportation projects are in harmony with communities and preserve environmental, scenic, aesthetic, and historic resources while maintaining safety and mobility. It involves taking into consideration the land use and environment adjacent to the roadway when planning and designing a project so as to make the improvement blend in with the surrounding community." 1A review of these materials against the MOA's Long Range Transportation Strategy (LRTS) (AO 2024-44) finds that this Design Study Report provided does not accomplish the goals of the CSS process.
Paul LaFrance (MOA Private Development Engineering)	Private Development has no comments/objections to the CSS Plan Review for Case No. 2025-0087.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Reconsider 3 lane
Alexa Dobson (Bike Anchorage)	Return w/ safety first package
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Revise plan to focus on practical safety measures & responsible long term maintenance
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Revise to better protect scenic, rec & wildlife
Michael Walters (Anchorage Right of Way Section)	Right of Way has reviewed the following zoning cases and has these comments: 2025-0087 – Right of Way permit required.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	Scale back project
COMMISSIONER GARDNER	seconded motion Case 2025-0087 to return the application to the project management team for additional work in accordance with department recommendations addressing the topic areas i. through xiii.

Comments from the CSS Process

Commenter	Comment
COMMISSIONER PULICE	This is a federal highway, not a local road in Anchorage. There is a lot more happening here than AMATS (Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions). AMATS can select projects in this town to go forward, so there is a good table in this allowing them to fund these projects.
COMMISSIONER RAUN	This is not the end of the project, but is an opportunity to perhaps do better.
VICE CHAIR KRISHNA	This was some of the most eloquent and well-reasoned testimony received on any of the cases she has seen in many years. The project team needs to directly engage and respond to the public testimony heard, especially each of the points that the Rabbit Creek Community Council put forward.
Travis Just (MOA Traffic Engineering)	Traffic Engineering has no comment at this time. We look forward to working with AKDOT for future revisions/reviews of this plan.
Tim Alderson (RCCC)	We urge the Department Planning and Zoning Commission to recommend revisions to this design to better reflect public input, minimize environmental and visual impacts, and ensure fiscal sustainability. We appreciate the CSS process and hope it leads to a design that reflects the values of the many Alaskans who care deeply about this unique and cherished corridor.

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## **Attachment G.      Public Opinion Survey Results**

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# SAFER SEWARD HIGHWAY

## SOUTHCENTRAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

Survey conducted by Dittman

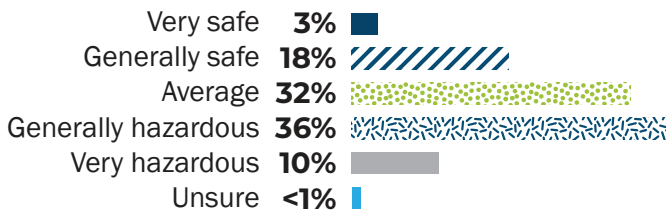


In February 2024, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) surveyed 500 Alaskan residents from Anchorage, Mat-Su Valley, and the Kenai Peninsula to collect their opinions on the Seward Highway MP 98-118. All survey questions focused on the 20-mile stretch of two-lane road between South Anchorage and Bird Flats, just north of Girdwood.

### Key findings include:

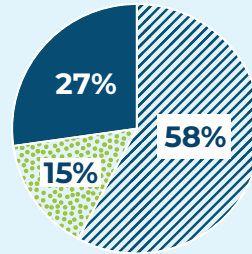
- » Most Southcentral residents frequently use the highway
- » The highway is viewed as hazardous
- » Safety improvements are a priority
- » Over 80% support the highway improvement project
- » Rock and ice fall mitigation and additional lanes are the most important improvements
- » Over 70% stated that they would rarely or never use the pathway.
- » Broad support for use of rock blasting and placing road (fill) material
- » Common questions: project duration, cost, and travel impact during construction

### Seward Highway Safety

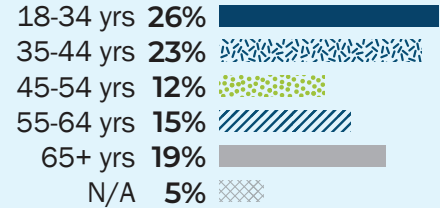


### SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Sample Size = 500



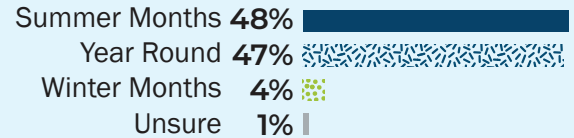
Anchorage  
 Kenai Peninsula  
 Mat-Su



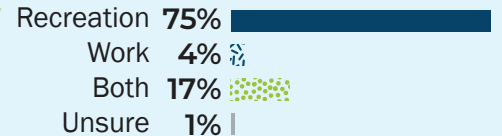
40% Travel over 10x Annually  
 60% Travel less than 10x annually

### Reasons for Travel

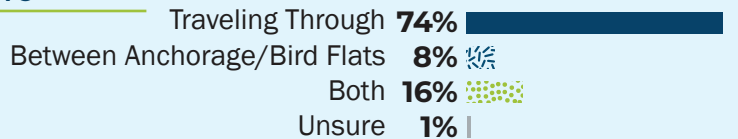
#### When



#### Why



#### Where



### If you could change one thing to improve highway safety, what would it be?

62%  
Already part of plan

- More lanes/4-lane
- Widen roads
- More passing zones/lanes
- Divided highway/middle barrier
- Rockfall mitigation
- More pull-offs
- Straighten road
- Separated bike lane/path
- Enhanced signage
- Guardrails

23%  
Non-construction related

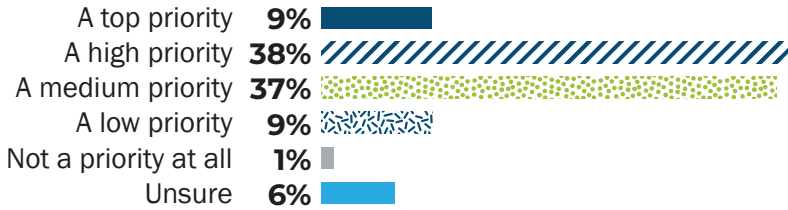
- More police/enforcement
- Lighting
- More cautious drivers
- Lower speed limits
- Better maintenance/plowing
- Less construction

9%  
Unsure

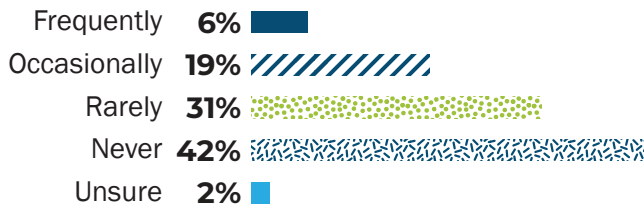
6%  
Other

- Build a bridge
- No changes needed
- Miscellaneous

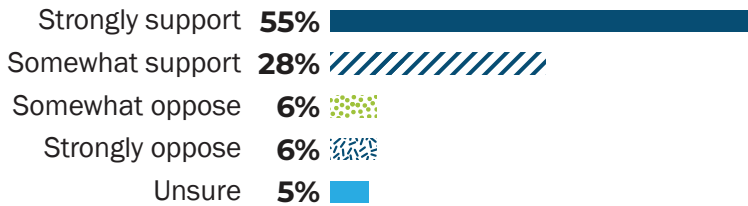
## Prioritize Seward Highway Safety Improvements



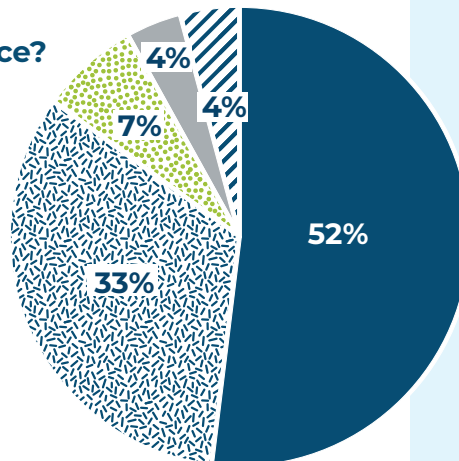
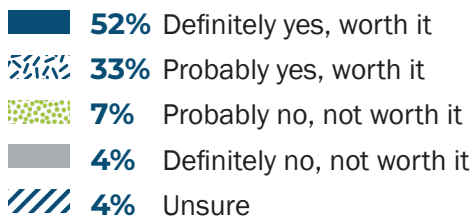
## How often would you anticipate that you would use the non-motorized pathway?



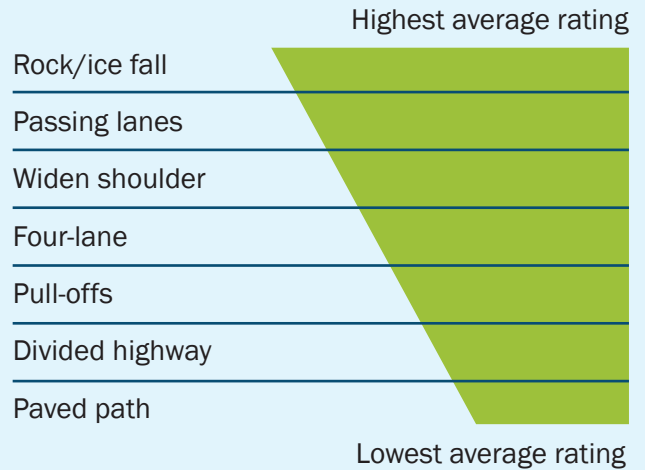
## Would you support or oppose improvements that require rock blasting and placing fill?



## Worth high costs and short-term inconvenience?



## Importance of Specific Improvements



## Rating Project Goals

Average rating summary (on 5-point scale)



## After taking everything into consideration, what's your support?



Visit the Project Website: [www.safersewardhighway.com](http://www.safersewardhighway.com)

# Safer Seward Highway Project

Southcentral Alaska Public Opinion Survey  
n=500 Anchorage, Kenai Pen. & Mat-Su Residents

# Topline Results

Fielded February 22-24, 2024  
Margin of Error= +/- 4.4%

1) Overall, how much do you travel on the stretch of Seward Highway that runs between Anchorage and Girdwood?

	<i>Initial Result</i>	<i>After 1a Screener</i>
More than 10 times a year.....	34%	40%
5 to 10 times a year.....	22%	26%
2 to 4 times a year.....	22%	26%
Once a year .....	6%	6%
Less than once a year (followed-up with 1a screener) .....	10%	1%
Never (followed-up with 1a screener) .....	5%	<1%
Unsure (followed-up with 1a screener) .....	1%	0%

1a) Is your lack of travel on this highway primarily due to not having a need, or due to concerns about road safety?

Among 16% with limited to no use of Seward Hwy

Concerns about road safety .....	8%	<i>Continued with interview</i>
No need.....	82%	<i>Ended interview</i>
Unsure.....	10%	<i>Ended interview</i>

For the rest of the survey, when “Seward Highway” is mentioned, it is referring to the 20-mile stretch of two-lane road between South Anchorage and Bird Flats, just north of Girdwood.

2) Do you primarily travel on the Seward Highway in the winter months, summer months, or year-round?

Summer months.....	48%
Year-round .....	47%
Winter months .....	4%
Unsure.....	1%

3) Do you primarily travel on the Seward Highway for work or recreation?

Recreation .....	78%
Work.....	4%
Both.....	17%
Unsure.....	1%

4) When you travel on the Seward Highway, are you typically going to a destination between Anchorage and Bird Flats, or are you just traveling through?

Traveling through.....	74%
Destination between Anchorage and Bird Flats .....	8%
Both.....	16%
Unsure.....	2%

5) Overall, when it comes to safety, how would you describe travel on the Seward Highway?

Very safe .....	3%	}	21%
Generally safe .....	18%		
Average .....	32%	}	46%
Generally hazardous .....	36%		
Very hazardous .....	10%		
Unsure.....	<1%		

6) If you could change one thing about the highway to improve safety, what would that be?

Coded Verbatim Comments

More lanes, 4-lane .....	21%	Straighten road .....	3%
Widen road.....	12%	Better maintenance/plowing.....	2%
More passing zones/lanes.....	9%	Build a bridge .....	2%
More police/enforcement.....	7%	Separated bike lane/path .....	2%
Lighting .....	5%	Enhanced signage .....	1%
Divided highway, middle barrier .....	5%	No changes needed.....	1%
Rockfall mitigation .....	4%	Less construction .....	1%
More cautious drivers .....	4%	Guardrails.....	1%
More pull-offs.....	4%	Miscellaneous .....	3%
Lower speed limits .....	4%	Unsure.....	9%

7) In general, how would you prioritize Seward Highway Safety improvements compared to other DOT projects? Should Seward Highway Safety improvements be...

The top priority .....	9%	} 47%
A high priority .....	38%	
A medium priority .....	37%	} 47%
A low priority.....	9%	
Not a priority at all .....	1%	
Unsure.....	6%	

Next, thinking about your past experiences on the Seward Highway, I'd like you to assign a letter grade to various aspects of the highway. What letter grade, that being A, B, C, D or F, would you give it for:

[Asked in random order –  
shown sorted by % "A"]

	A	B	C	D	F	Unsure
8) The condition of the road itself.....	16%	47%	26%	7%	2%	2%
9) Safe access to trails and scenic pullouts.....	14%	32%	33%	13%	4%	4%
10) Arriving to your destination without delay .....	11%	34%	35%	14%	5%	1%
11) Accommodating to pedestrians and bikes .....	9%	15%	17%	25%	26%	8%
12) Overall safety.....	8%	32%	36%	18%	5%	1%

13) The Alaska Department of Transportation is in the planning phase of a major road improvement project for the Seward Highway between Anchorage and Bird Creek. The overall project goals are to make improvements to decrease severe accidents and provide safe places for recreational activities along this travel corridor.

In general, do you support or oppose this project? ...and do you strongly (support/oppose) or somewhat (support/oppose) it?

Strongly support.....	60%	} 91%
Somewhat support.....	31%	
Somewhat oppose .....	4%	} 6%
Strongly oppose .....	2%	
Unsure.....	3%	

14) Next I'm going to read a list of broad goals for the project. Please rank them in terms of what you think is most important. Here is the list. What is most important to you? And which is next on your list...?

[Read in random order –  
shown sorted by % ranked "most important"]

- Enhancing highway safety for all users ..... 54%
- Ensuring reliable travel ..... 18%
- Creating separated bike and pedestrian pathways ..... 12%
- Minimizing environmental impacts ..... 8%
- Improved scenic and recreational pull-offs ..... 8%

15) Part of the project proposal is to add a separated non-motorized pathway to connect Anchorage to the Bird to Gird trail. How often would you anticipate that you would use the non-motorized pathway?

- Frequently ..... 6% } 25%
- Occasionally ..... 19% }
- Rarely ..... 31% } 73%
- Never ..... 42% }
- Unsure ..... 2%

Next I'm going to read a list of specific improvements that are being considered. For each, please tell me how important you think it is to include in the project plan. With 1 meaning not at all important and 5 meaning very important, how important is...

[Asked in random order –  
shown sorted by % "very important"]

	Very important			Not at all important		
	5	4	3	2	1	Unsure
16) Rock and ice fall mitigation .....	53%	21%	14%	5%	6%	1%
17) Additional passing lanes .....	49%	21%	15%	5%	9%	1%
18) Widening the highway to four lanes .....	48%	19%	16%	5%	11%	1%
19) Widening shoulders.....	43%	27%	16%	8%	5%	1%
20) Dividing sections of the highway with concrete barriers ....	24%	21%	24%	12%	16%	3%
21) Creating a paved bike and pedestrian pathway.....	23%	18%	23%	19%	17%	0%
22) Improved scenic and recreational pull-offs.....	18%	23%	34%	16%	9%	0%

23) Some of the improvements being considered would require rock blasting or placing fill in Turnagain Arm to widen certain areas. In general, would you support or oppose improvements that require rock blasting and placing fill? ...and would you strongly (support/oppose) or somewhat (support/oppose) them?

- Strongly support..... 55% } 83%
- Somewhat support..... 28% }
- Somewhat oppose ..... 6% } 12%
- Strongly oppose ..... 6% }
- Unsure..... 5%

24) When it comes to safe recreational options along the corridor, which of the following statements comes closest to your view:

[Read in random order]

Improving and increasing the number of recreational options is important even if it increases the project cost.....	43%
Maintaining the recreational options that currently exist is important, but the project cost should not be increased to expand or improve recreational options.....	41%
Recreational options should not be included if they add cost to the project.....	10%
Unsure.....	6%

25) This project would be a significant undertaking. It involves major improvements to twenty miles of highway through challenging terrain, and will take several years to construct. This project is a significant multi-year undertaking to make the highway safer, more reliable, and provide recreational opportunities to the community for decades to come.

Given these considerations, do you believe the project is worth the high cost and short-term inconveniences? ...and would you definitely (worth it/not worth it) or probably (worth it/not worth it) them?

Definitely yes, worth it.....	52%	} 85%
Probably yes, worth it.....	33%	
Probably no, not worth it.....	7%	} 11%
Definitely no, not worth it.....	4%	
Unsure.....	4%	

26) Taking everything into consideration, do you support or oppose this project? ...and do you strongly (support/oppose) or somewhat (support/oppose) it?

	<i>Baseline (Q13)</i>		<i>Informed (Q26)</i>	
Strongly support.....	60%	} 91%	56%	} 91%
Somewhat support.....	31%		35%	
Somewhat oppose.....	4%	} 6%	4%	} 8%
Strongly oppose.....	2%		4%	
Unsure.....	3%		1%	

27) And what is the main reason you oppose this project?

Coded Verbatim Comments [Asked of 8% who "oppose" the project after taking everything into consideration]	<i>Among 8% Opposed</i>	<i>As % of total</i>
Costs will be high.....	30%	3%
Other more important projects.....	24%	2%
Impact on environment/beauty.....	19%	2%
Too much construction already.....	13%	1%
No needed, other options.....	11%	1%
Too much recreation.....	3%	<1%

28) If you were talking to the planners of this project, what's the number one question about this project that you would want to know the answer to?

Coded Verbatim Comments

How long will it take? .....	25%
How much will it cost? Who's paying? .....	13%
How will construction impact travel? Timing? Delays? .....	11%
How will it be safer? Is safety really the priority?.....	7%
What are environmental impacts? .....	6%
Will it be 4-lane? .....	4%
Is this the best project to spend money on? .....	4%
Where is the project plan?.....	2%
Will it improve recreation access? .....	2%
What will speed limits be? .....	2%
Why don't you build a bridge? .....	1%
Does it include lighting? .....	1%
Why? Do we really need this?.....	1%
Will bikes be accommodated? .....	1%
Is this long-term fix? Future demand considered? .....	1%
Will the public be involved? .....	1%
Miscellaneous .....	4%
Unsure .....	14%

**Demographics**

(asked at beginning for screener and quotas)

29) Which borough you live in?

Municipality of Anchorage .....	58%
Kenai Peninsula .....	15%
Mat-Su.....	27%

30) Which of the following age ranges do you fall into?

18-34 yrs old.....	26%
35-44 yrs old.....	23%
45-54 yrs old.....	12%
55-64 yrs old.....	15%
65+ yrs old .....	19%
Not provided .....	5%

31) What is your gender?

Male .....	51%
Female.....	49%
Other .....	<1%

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