

WELCOME

PUBLIC MEETING #4

SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Photographer: Logan Maddox

Opening Remarks



Mayor Suzanne LaFrance
Municipality of Anchorage

Agenda

What we are going to cover:



Why this project?



What did we consider?



Proposed design



How will we afford it?



What's next?



What Does This Look Like Over Time?



Questions and discussion

Presenters:



Lauren Little, PE
Project Manager



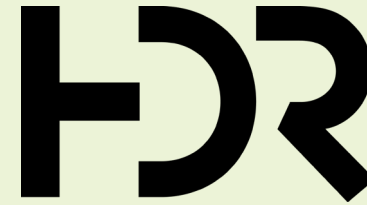
Katherine Wood
*Stakeholder Engagement
Lead and Facilitator*

Project Team & Meeting Support



DOT&PF

Chris Post
Luke Bowland



HDR

Edith McKee
Leisha Sweeney
Sam Mark-Ansah
Will Hume
Alex Sonnabend
Morgan Miller
Paige Barker
Taylor Horne



Meeting Purpose



Share information on design and discuss reasoning behind decisions to date.



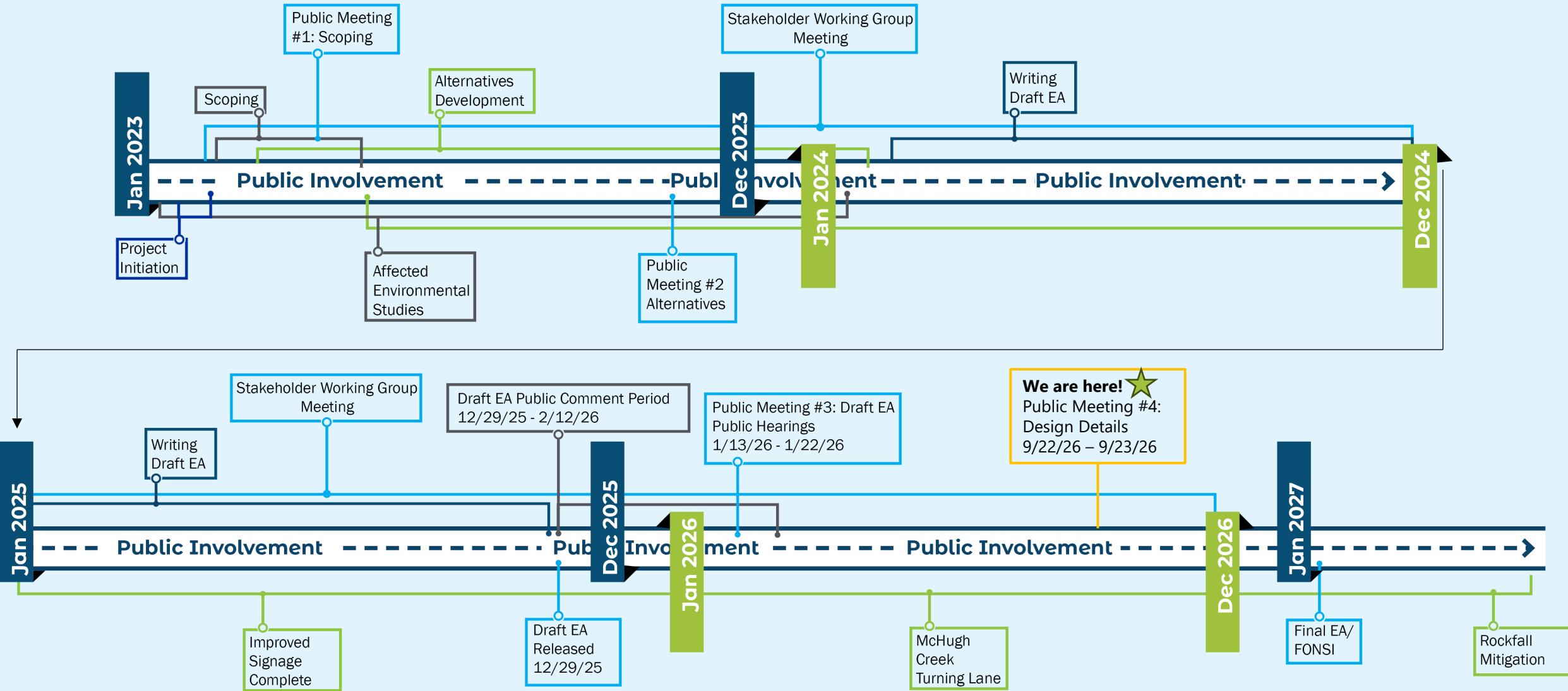
Solicit feedback on project purpose, need, and the proposed design.

The project team is here to listen. We want your feedback.



Questions from the public support a meaningful exchange of information, helping the project team address areas of community interest.

Project Timeline



Anchorage Investment

What is DOT&PF doing to improve safety in Anchorage?

- **Alaska DOT&PF STIP
(Statewide Transportation
Improvement Program)** <- larger national highway
system (NHS) projects
- **AMATS TIP
(Transportation
Improvement Program)** <- projects within the AMATS
boundary
- **Anchorage Vulnerable
Road Users projects** <- HSIP funding

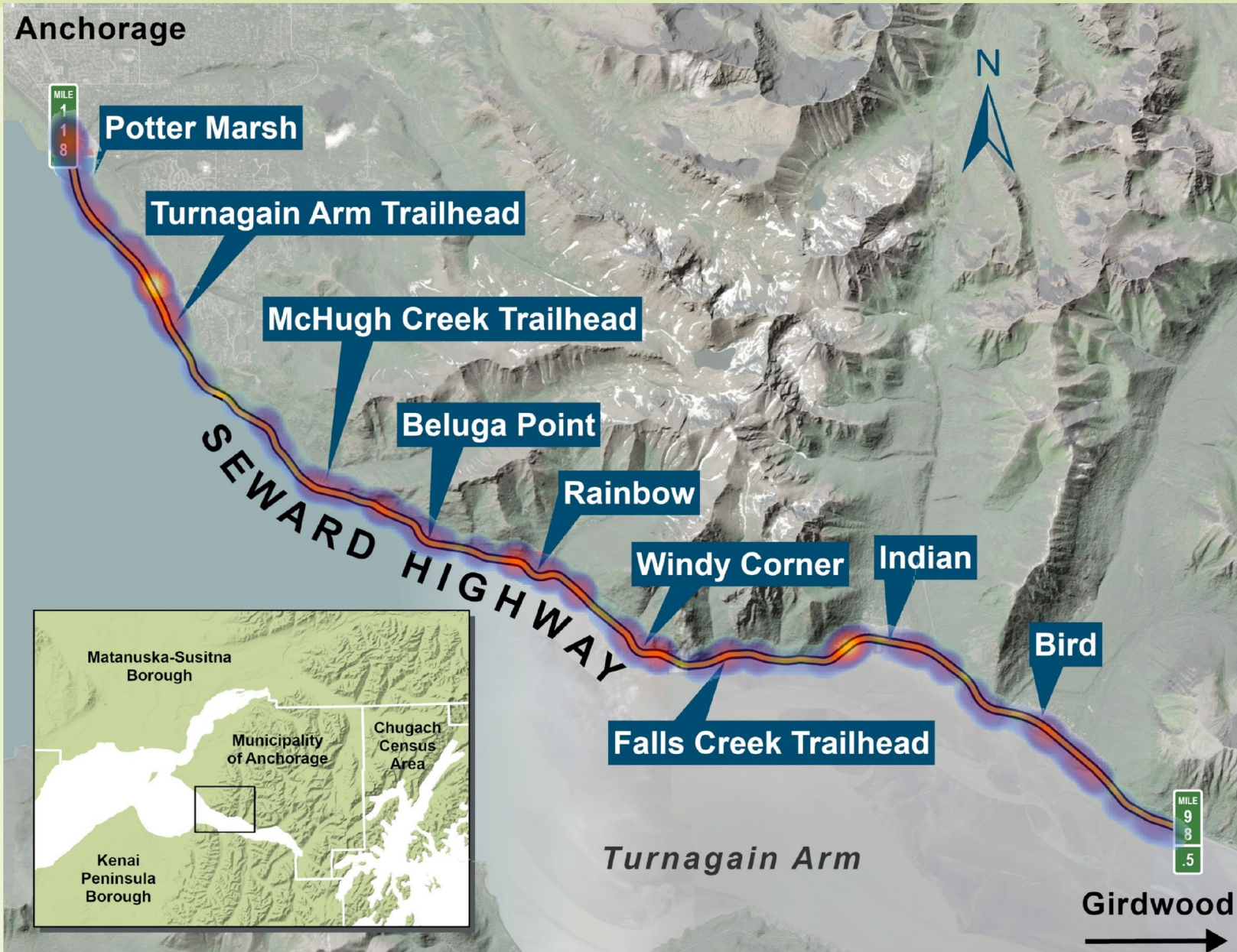
**Other safety projects in Anchorage that
DOT&PF is advancing along with Safer Seward**



Why This Project?



Safety Issues



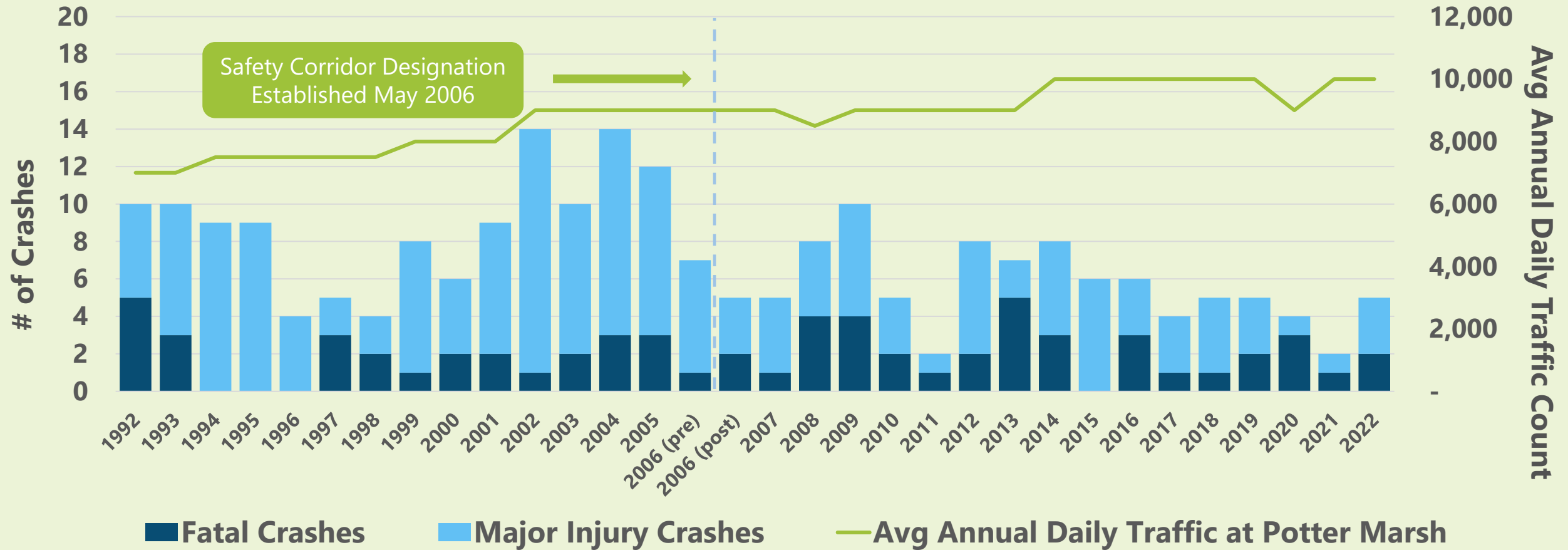
5-year safety data (2017 – 2021)

Data is for all crash types

Safety Corridor for 20 years

Seward Highway Traffic Safety Corridor (MP 97-117)

Fatal and Major Injury Crashes, 1992 - 2022



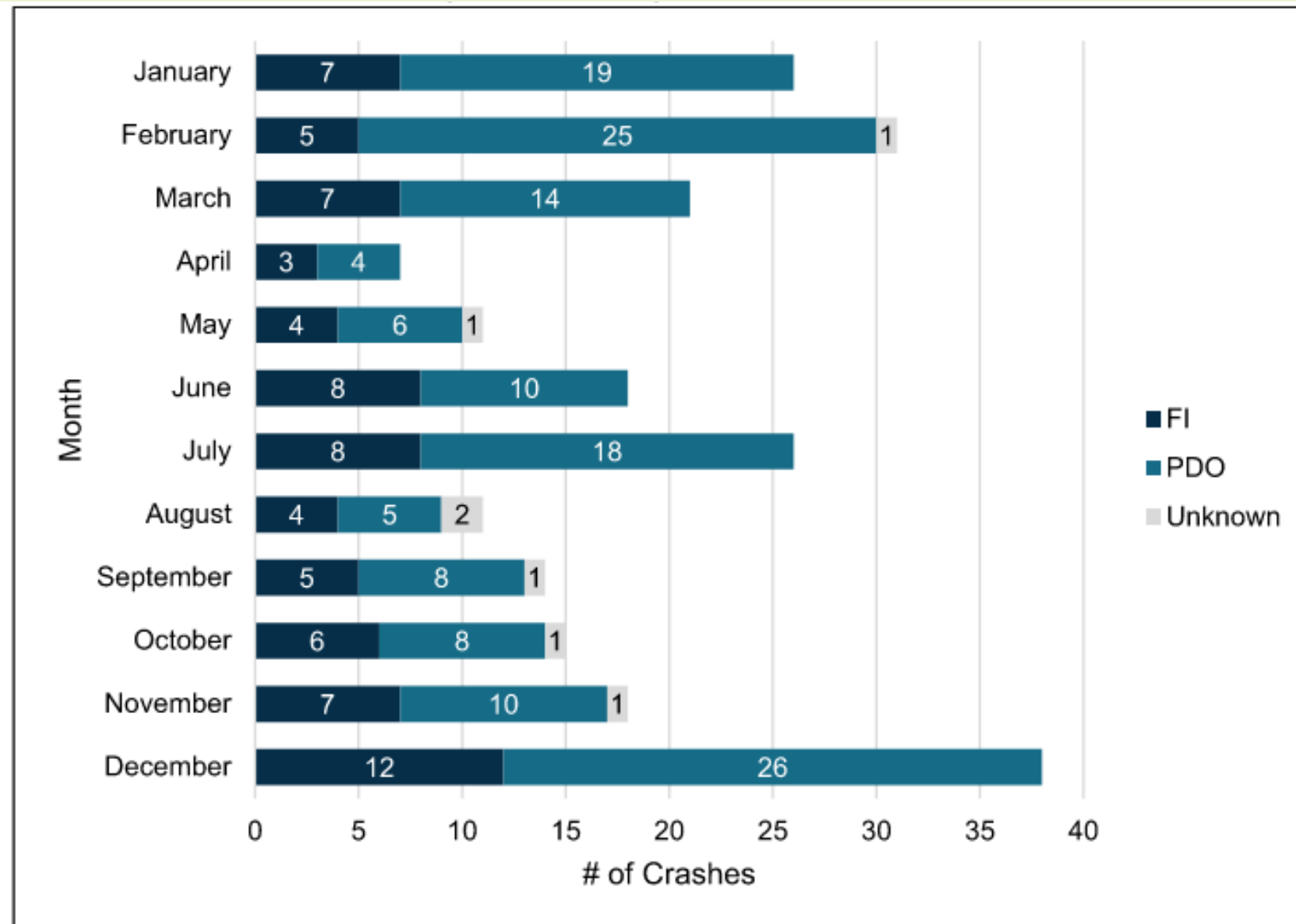
FHWA defines "major injury" crashes as those involving a *Suspected Serious Injury (A)* under the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition and uses this definition nationally for safety performance reporting.

Source: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities & Alaska Department of Public Safety, 2022 safety corridors audit (2023).

https://dot.alaska.gov/dmio/hwysafety/assets/pdf/2022_Safety_Corridors_Audit.pdf



Crash Frequency by Time of Year



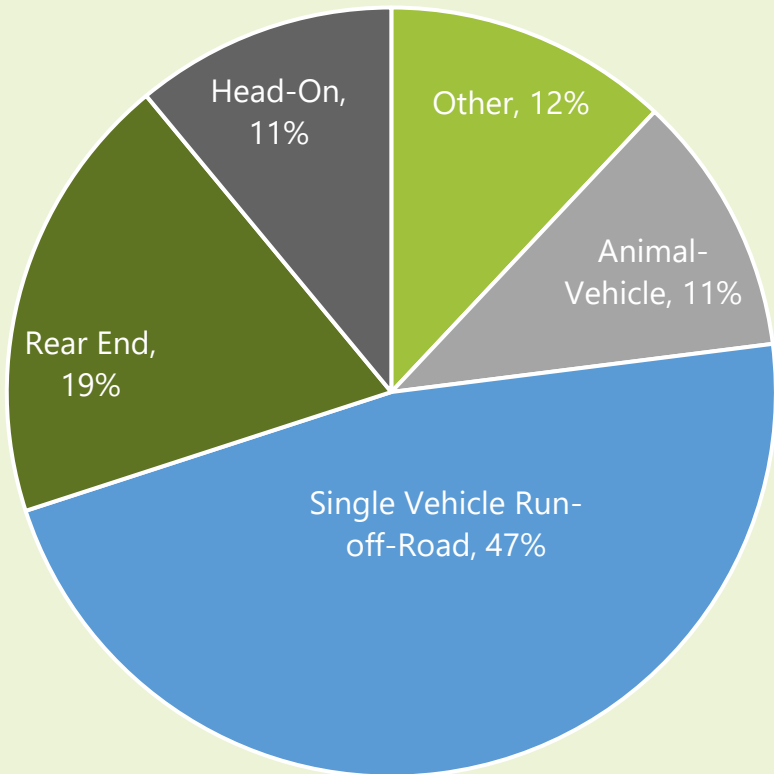
FI: Fatality and Injury

PDO: Property
Damage Only

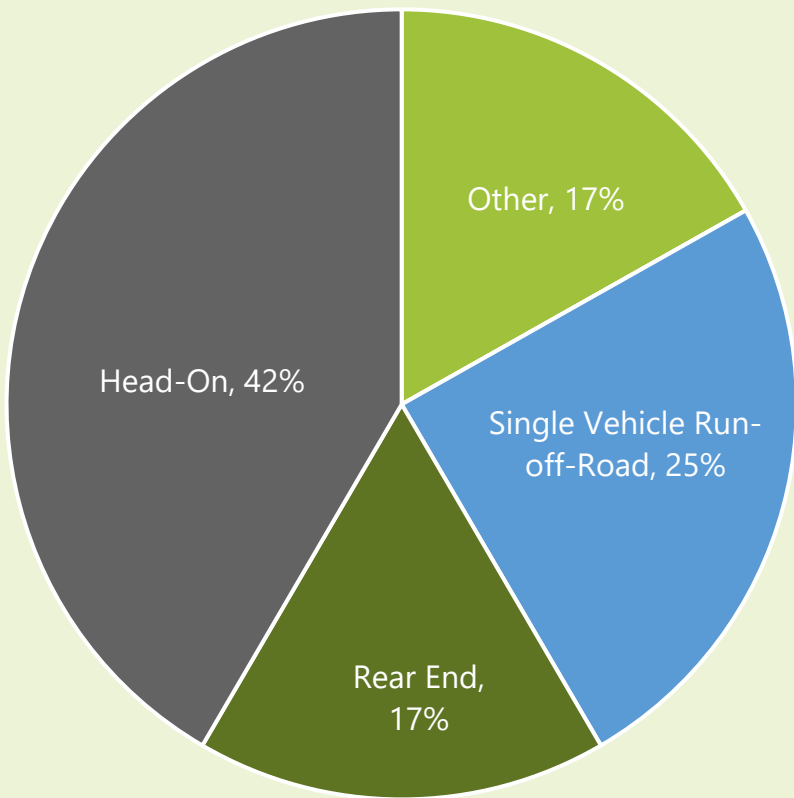
2017 – 2021 data

Crash Types

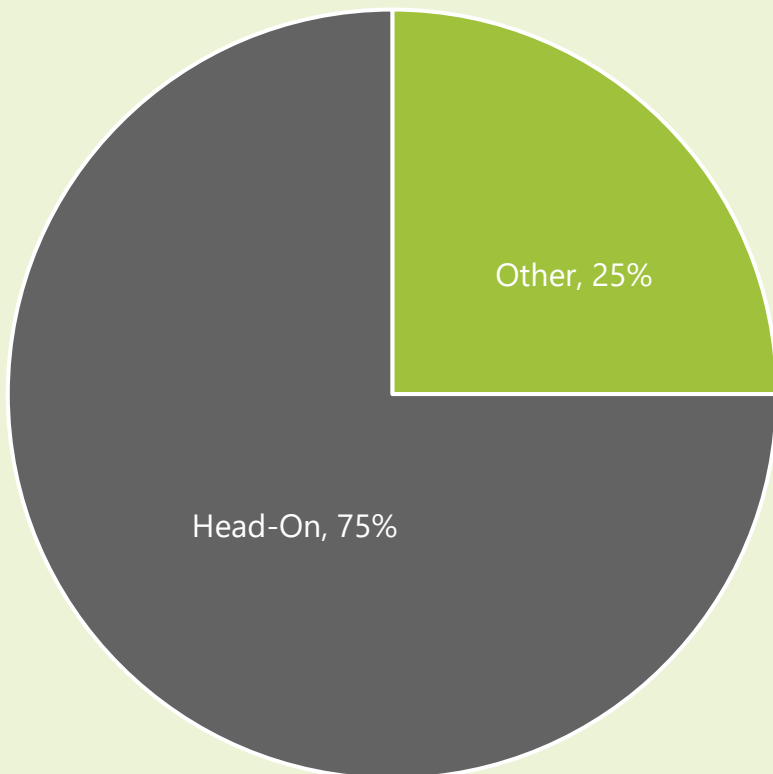
All Crashes by Crash Type



Major Injury Crashes by Crash Type



Fatal Crashes by Crash Type



All data is 2017 – 2021

Other Animal-Vehicle Single Vehicle Run-off-Road Rear End Head-On



Traffic and Speed Enforcement

- Among the most common comments and questions the project team has received from the community.
- Primary for patrolling this section:
 - Until 2018/2019: Alaska State Troopers
 - 2018/2019 – Present: Anchorage Police Department
- Funding has been an issue, with funding for patrolling wavering:
 - 2006 – 2024: Safety Corridor Funding
 - 2024 – Present: Primarily a citywide speed enforcement grant

Purpose & Need

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118, Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek, Reconstruction project is to improve safety by reducing crash rates and severity, improve mobility and reliability, and safely accommodate mixed uses in the corridor.

PROJECT NEED



Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity

Possible Improvements

- Curve flattening
- Rock and ice fall mitigation
- Wider shoulders
- Divided highway
- Increased line of sight
- Adding turning lanes and acceleration/merge lanes



Measurable Result

Reduction in severe and fatal crashes.
Removal of the Safety Corridor designation.

PROJECT NEED



Improve Mobility and Reliability

Possible Improvements

- Frontage roads
- Emergency services turnarounds and shoulders
- Additional passing lanes/spaces
- Improved wayfinding signage
- Adding space for emergency response
- Adding deceleration and acceleration lanes



Measurable Result

Decrease in traffic delays and time spent following (platooning of traffic), faster emergency response, improved incident management, and improved non-motorized reliability.

PROJECT NEED



Safely Accommodate Mixed Uses in the Corridor

Possible Improvements

- Pedestrian tubes
- Separated multi-use path
- Improved scenic and recreational pull offs
- Consolidated and improved trailhead parking
- Turning and through lanes



Measurable Result

Separation of traffic going different speeds.
Preservation of the highway's outstanding scenic designations while improvement safety for all users.

Changes to Purpose and Need from Feedback

Between Scoping and Draft EA

- Clarified safety measures: reduce crash rates and crash severity
- Removed congestion reduction
- Increased focus on mobility and reliability
- Added focus on mixed uses of corridor: scenic designations, bikes and pedestrians, through traffic, pullouts, recreational users, local residents

Nine months of public engagement to workshop the purpose and need.

These changes came about as a direct result of engagement with the community and key stakeholders

What Did We Consider?



A Lot of Concepts Were Considered

- All towards the water
- All towards the mountain
- Highway / pathway / rail locations
- 65mph vs. 55mph design speed
- Tunnels
- Stacked structure
- Intermittent passing lanes
- Within existing right-of-way
- Transportation system management
- Public transit improvements
- Commuter rail
- Avoidance of impacts

Pinch Point Analysis:

- Potter Marsh
- Rabbit Creek
- Beluga Point
- Section House
- Indian
- Bird Campgrounds
- Windy Corner
- Climbing Locations

**Interactive Map of
Concepts Considered**



How did the proposed action come to be?

1) Talking with the community and agencies.

2) Understanding the years of groundwork and studies that have been conducted.

3) A lot of environmental analysis and engineering working and reworking.

13

Stakeholder Working Group Meetings

Held 13 Stakeholder Working Group meetings

40+

Organizations

Engaged 40+ agency, municipal, and community organizations

61

1 v 1 Meetings

Conducted 61 one-on-one meetings



Website

Maintained a project website with updates, documents, FAQs, and engagement opportunities

10

Listening Posts

Held 10 listening posts at community events

2

Fairs

Attended 2 Anchorage Transportation Fairs

37

Email Newsletters

Sent 37 email newsletters to stakeholders

8

Council Meetings

Attended 8 community council meetings

3

Public Meetings

Hosted 3 rounds of public meetings both in-person (in Anchorage, Girdwood, and Indian) and online, for a total of 9 public meetings (including Draft EA public hearings)



EA and a Section 4(f) document

Drafted an EA and a Section 4(f) document summarizing potential environmental impacts and the engineering findings that led to the Proposed Action

Check out this poster in the open house or online for more specifics on changes made because of public engagement.

3-Lane vs. 4-Lane

Does it meet the expected performance needed to achieve the purpose and need?

3-Lane

4-Lane

✗ NO

✓ YES

Bottom Line: The 3-lane design did not meet the performance needed to achieve the purpose and need while still requiring footprint expansion and comparable cost to a 4-lane divided highway.

- \$1.2B
- 576-acre footprint

- \$1.5B
- 669-acre footprint

Why? Common safety elements such as rockfall catchments, shoulders, distance from the railroad, pathway, and bringing the design of several sharp corners up to requirements have the same footprint needs.

3-Lane vs. 4-Lane Design

The 3-lane design fails to meet purpose & need – why?

- Serious crash reduction of 36% does not meet the needs of improving safety compared to project cost and footprint
- Potential to cause more unsafe situations:
 - Vehicles speeding up to pass before the turn lane ends
 - For undivided highway, driver confusion in the winter for when/where passing lanes are located and when they end
- Limited improvement to emergency response and lane closures

How We Predict Safety Improvements

Highway Safety Manual (HSM):

- Standard, industry method (FHWA, AASHTO)
- Decades of crash data, thousands of roadway sites

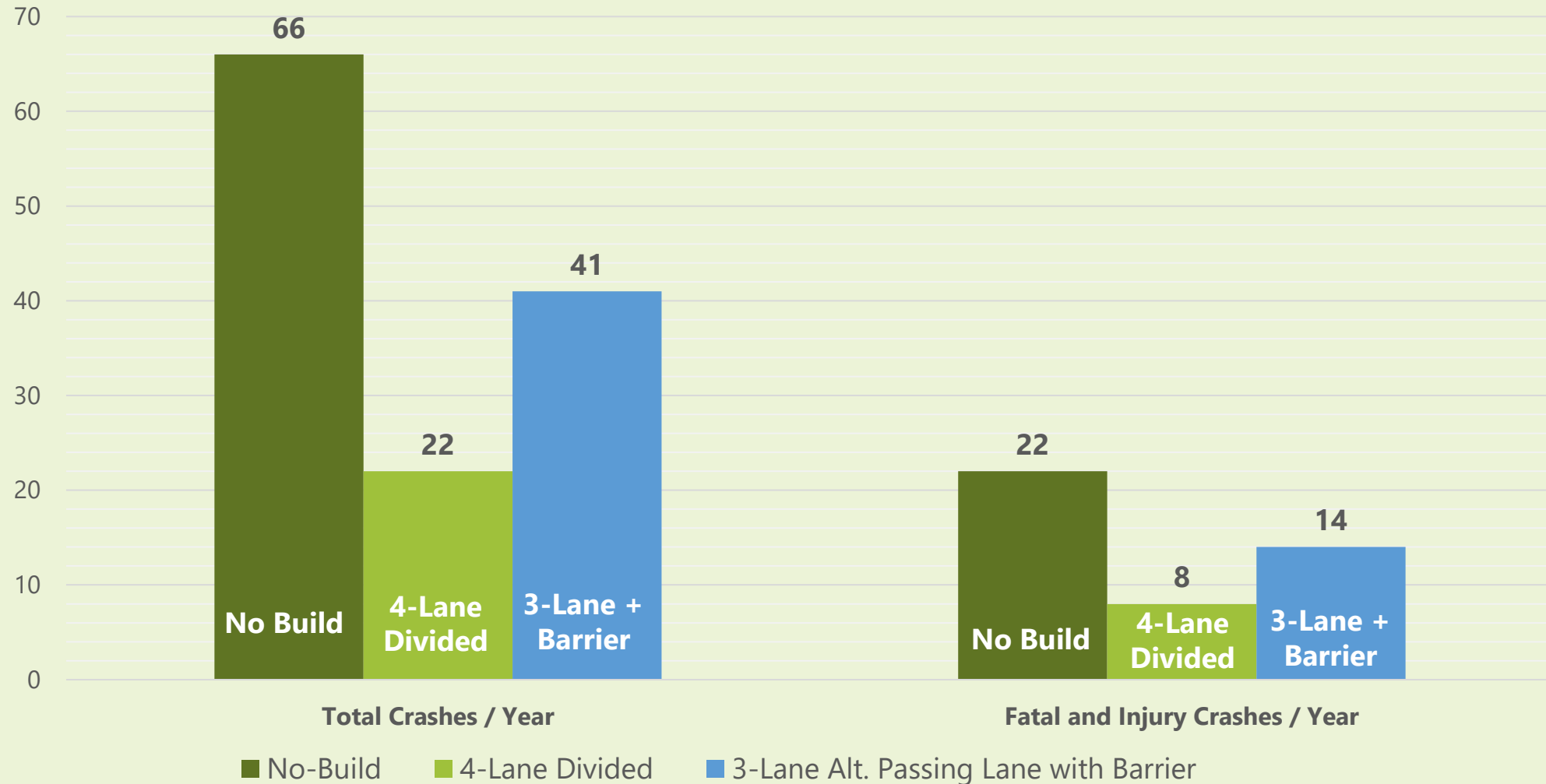
Crash Modification Factor (CMF):

- Statistically developed and validated, nationally accepted research
- Empirical studies compare similar roadways before and after treatments while accounting for changes in traffic volumes
- Accounts for variation in:
 - Roadway Lane and Shoulder Widths
 - Length and Radius of curves
 - Passing Lanes
 - Turn Lanes, etc.
- Source: HSM and FHWA CMF Clearinghouse (<https://cmfclearinghouse.fhwa.dot.gov/>)



Traffic & Safety Analysis Results (HSM)

Predicted Crash Frequency for 2033 – 2052



Real Alaskan Experience

The Parks Highway:

- Milepost (MP) 44.5-44.8 crash rate for serious injury & fatal crashes is 65% lower compared to when it was a 2-lane
- Compared to the alternating passing lanes (MP 54-64) the MP 44.5-44.8 divided highway experienced a 50% lower crash rate for serious injury & fatal crashes

The Glenn Highway:

- MP 16-29 (~Eagle River to Parks Hwy) has a 69% lower crash rate compared to Parks 3-lane (MP 54-64) and 55% lower crash rate than the Seward for serious injury & fatal crashes

* Crash data 2021-2025 excluding intersection related crashes, pre-crash data for MP 44.5-44.8 2010-2014. Percentage comparisons are on the rate of serious injury & fatal crashes per million vehicle miles traveled.



4-Lane Divided: Strongest Safety Performance



Project Need

Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity



- ✓ Fatal and injury crashes ↓ 71%
- ✓ Total crashes ↓ 56%
- ✓ Access and intersection improvements reduce conflict points

Project Need

Increase Mobility and Reliability



- ✓ Improves traffic mobility by providing space for all uses and modes
- ✓ Emergency response is quicker and reliable; road is able to remain partially open during emergencies
- ✓ Maintenance benefit from reduced rockfall and improved snow storage

Project Need

Safely Accommodate Mixed Uses in the Corridor



- ✓ Improves mixed user experience by separating local destination travelers (right lane), pass-through travelers (left lane), and non-motorized users (separated pathway)
- ✓ During construction, fewer detours, fewer closures

Proposed Design

Proposed Action: Details



Railroad Realignment



Highway Reconstruction



Mountain Cuts



Non-Motorized Facilities



Access Improvements



Frontage Roads



Rock Catchment and Ditches



Turnagain Arm Fill

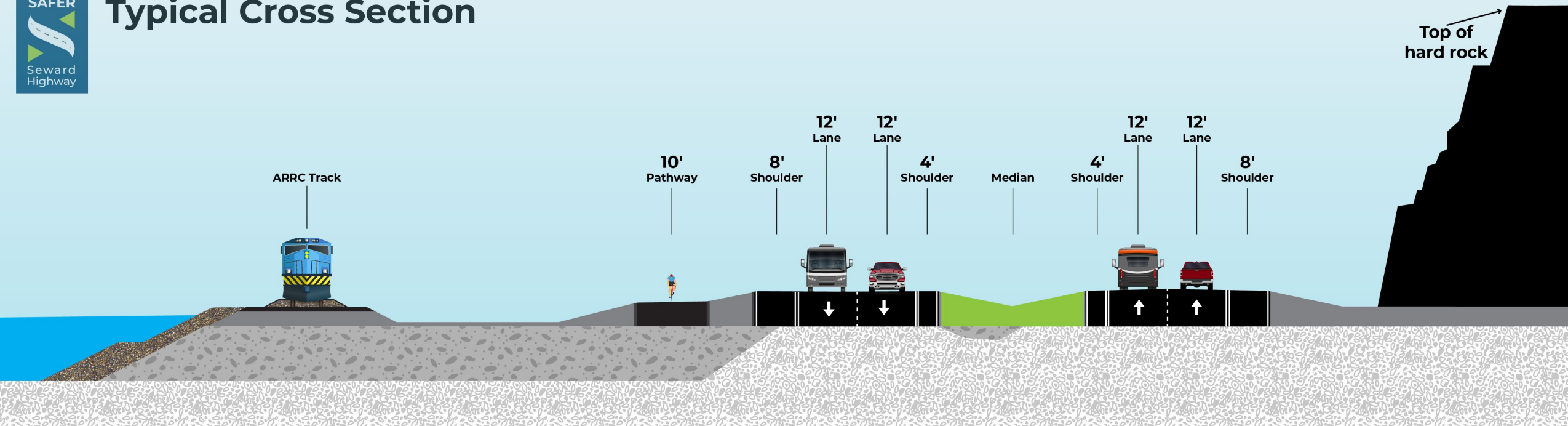


Fencing Along ARRC



Proposed Action: 4-Lane Divided Highway

Typical Cross Section



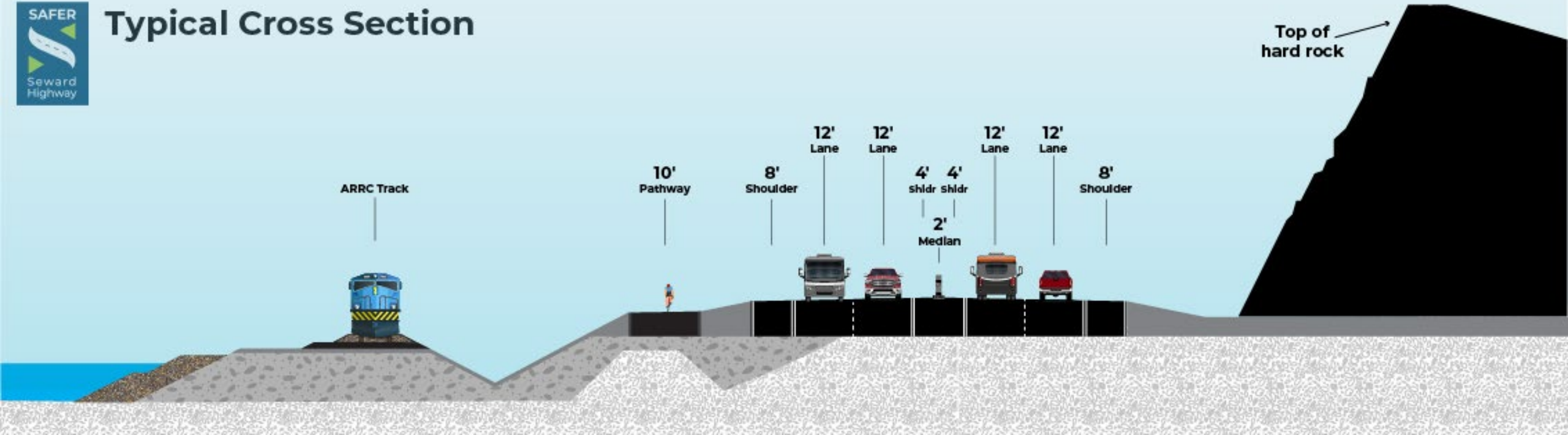
Typical cross sections within the corridor will vary and may include a separated highway with a median, a physical barrier, or a vertical separation between directions of travel.

Disclaimer: This graphic is for visual purposes only and is not a final design. Elements shown may change during the design process and should not be interpreted as engineered plans or construction details.

Typical Sections



Typical Cross Section



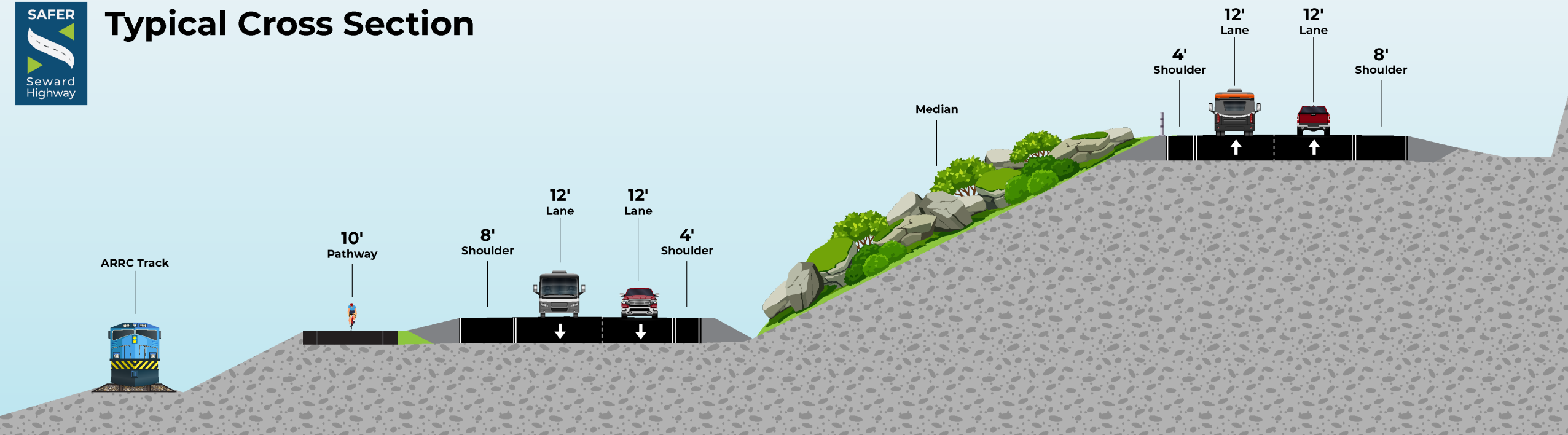
Barrier Separation

Proposed barrier segments include transitioning from the existing 4-lane at the south end of the project (MP 98.5), through Potter Marsh, at the south of Windy Corner, and near Indian Valley Road to reduce impacts.

Typical Sections



Typical Cross Section



Vertical Separation

Proposed vertically separated segments include areas such as MP 113-114 (Picnic Rock) where there are tall rockfaces to reduce the amount of cut needed.

Visualization: Bird Creek



Disclaimer: This rendering is for visual purposes only and is not a final design. Elements shown may change during the design process and should not be interpreted as engineered plans or construction details.

Visualization: Windy Corner



Conceptual visuals intended to give perspective on the design concepts

Visualization: Beluga Point



Conceptual visuals intended to give perspective on the design concepts

In The Draft EA vs. Future Decisions

In The Draft EA

4-lane, divided highway

55mph design speed

Continuous multi-use pathway

Trailhead and parking lot improvements

Access consolidation

Additional mitigation as described in EA Chapter 3

Continue effort to reduce impacts

Future Decisions

Exact location of 4-lane footprint

Railroad layout

Frontage road layout

Pathway location, configuration, undercrossing tunnels

Intersection configurations

Fence and traffic barrier locations

Evolution Since the Draft EA

- Refined ARRC alignment – requested by ARRC
- Pedestrian undercrossing at Rainbow included in Proposed Action
- Updated traffic analysis based on feedback to better reflect traffic patterns, terrain, and acceptable level of service in accordance with national standards

SAFER
Seward Highway

- 

This aerial map illustrates a proposed rail route through the San Francisco Bay Area. The route is highlighted in orange, starting in the North Bay, passing through the East Bay, and continuing through the South Bay. The map includes labels for 'DRAFT' and a scale bar indicating 2 miles.

What Does This Look Like Over Time?



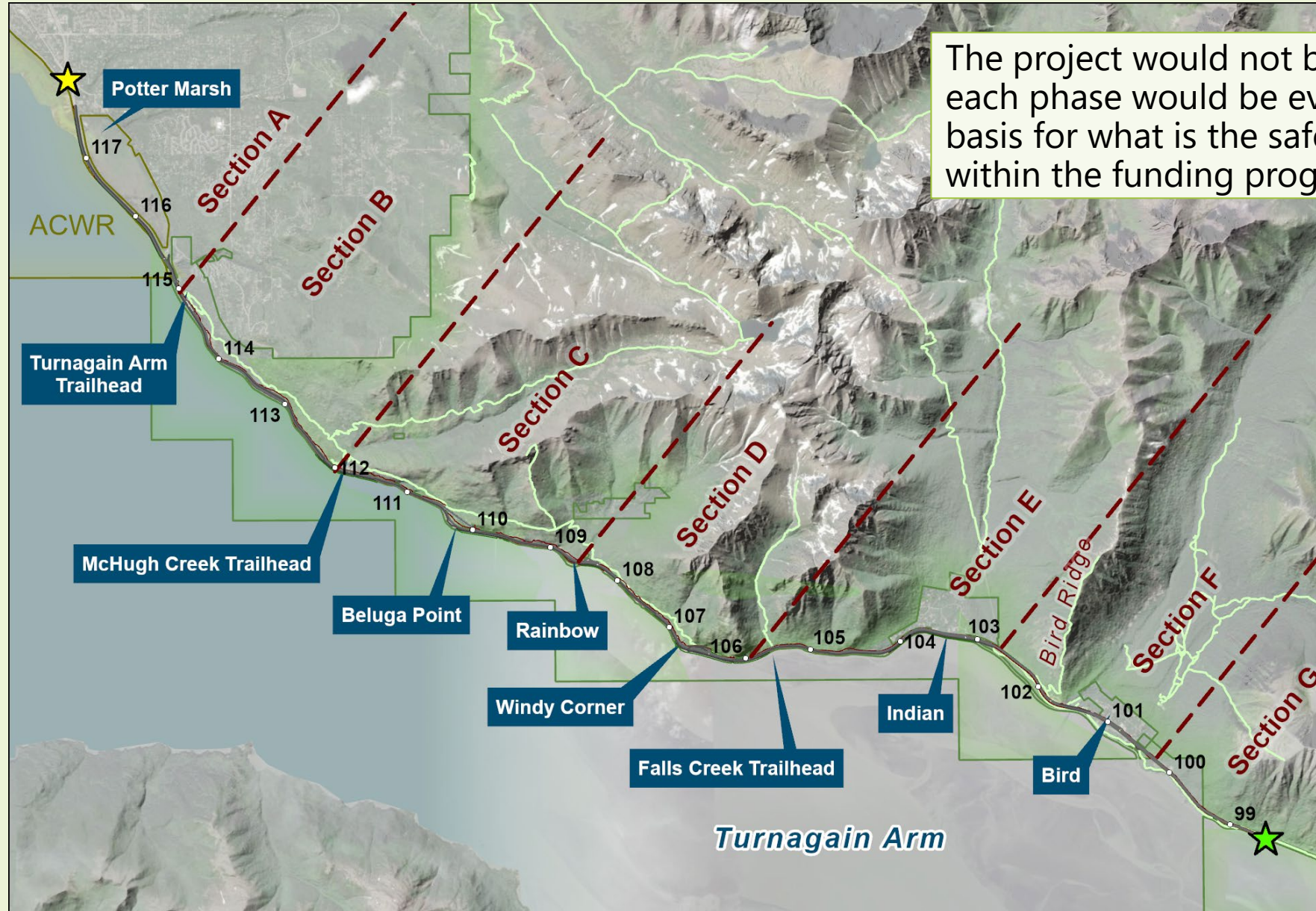
Phased Over Time

- Total estimated cost is \$1.5B
- \$75-\$150M per year
- 10-20 years to complete all phases
- Budgeted in the STIP as funding is available
 - Does not take funding away from AMATS for TIP priorities
- 4-lane has benefits to reducing construction impacts to travelers
- Can still do many other projects in Anchorage and the state
- Numerous opportunities for future public engagement

**Other safety projects in Anchorage
that DOT&PF is advancing along
with Safer Seward**



Phasing Ideas



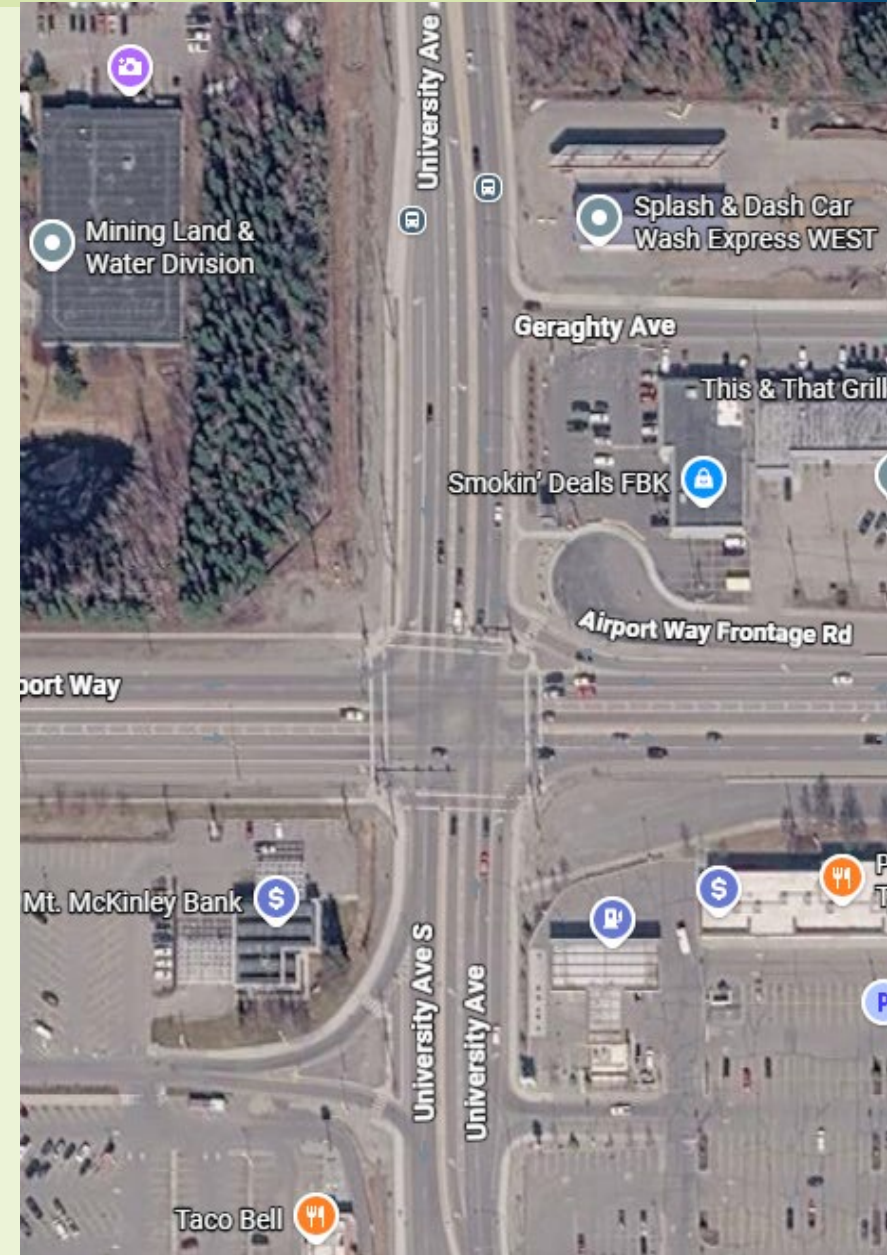
The project would not be phased in this order, but each phase would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for what is the safety priority and what fits within the funding program.

Preliminary Phase Sequence

Phase / Section	Estimated Cost (M)	Funding Year
Section G: Bird Flats to Bird (MP 98.5-100)	\$35.0	2027
Rainbow Curves (MP 108-109)	\$125.0	2028
Section D: Windy Corner to Rainbow (MP 105.5-108)	\$236.3	2029
Section C: Rainbow to McHugh Creek (MP 109-111.5)	\$343.6	2031
Section F: Bird to Bird Ridge (MP 100-102.5)	\$53.0	2033
Section E: Bird Ridge to Falls Creek (MP 102.5-105.5)	\$194.0	2035
Section B: Potter Valley Road to McHugh Creek (MP 111.5-115)	\$445.3	2037
Section A: Rabbit Creek to Potter Valley Road (MP 115-118)	\$88.0	2040

How Do Projects Like This Evolve?

- Environmental re-evaluations
- Updating traffic analyses



What's Next?



Next Steps

***The Draft EA comment period is closed.
All public meeting materials and the draft EA are available on project website.***

STEP
1



30-Day Public Comment Period

STEP
2

Determine Proposed Action and Finalize EA/FONSI

STEP
3

Final Design and Permit Applications Begin*
This begins only if FONSI.

Thank You

Questions and Discussion

Questions and Discussion

DOT&PF's goal is to provide a respectful atmosphere that allows all voices to be heard. To do this:

- **Raise your hand** and the moderator will come to you with the microphone
- **One question** per person
- If there is time at the end, we can take more questions



Ground Rules

- Be respectful, courteous, and patient.
- Remain quiet while others are talking.
- Refrain from addressing the audience or asking for audience participation.
- Turn off cell phones or set them to vibrate.

Want to submit a question in writing? Please fill out a question card in the back and we will read them as time allows.

Comments given verbally will be summarized in the meeting report. Please submit written comments if you would like your comments captured verbatim.

Still have questions? Find a team member!

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 at: (907) 802-3656



30-Day Public Comment Period
on Design Details
September 22 – October 22, 2026



Mailing Address:
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