

# WELCOME

## PUBLIC MEETING #3

### JANUARY 13-15, 2026



*Photographer: Logan Maddox*

# Agenda

## What we are going to cover:



Why this project?



What has been done?



Draft EA Overview



Draft EA Impacts Highlights



What's next?



Public Hearing

## Presenters:



**Katherine Wood**  
*Communications Lead*



**Chris Hughes**  
*Project Management*

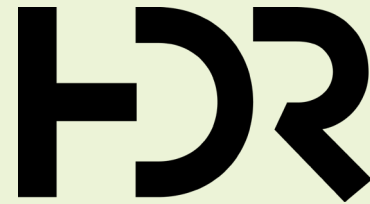


**Taylor Horne**  
*Environmental Lead*



**Edith McKee**  
*Engineering Lead*

# Project Team & Meeting Support



## DOT&PF

Sean Holland  
Sean Baski  
Shannon McCarthy  
Brian Elliot  
Matt Dietrick

## HDR

Pearl-Grace Pantaleone  
Morgan Miller  
Paige Barker  
Linda Smith  
Amy Burnett  
Molly McBride

## MBI

Marc Luiken  
Patrick Whitesell



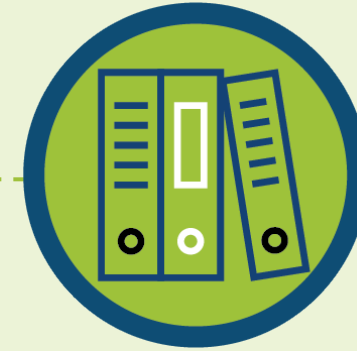
# Meeting Purpose



Share information on project, discuss key messages in the environmental document, and next steps.



The project team is here to listen. We want your comments on the Draft EA document.



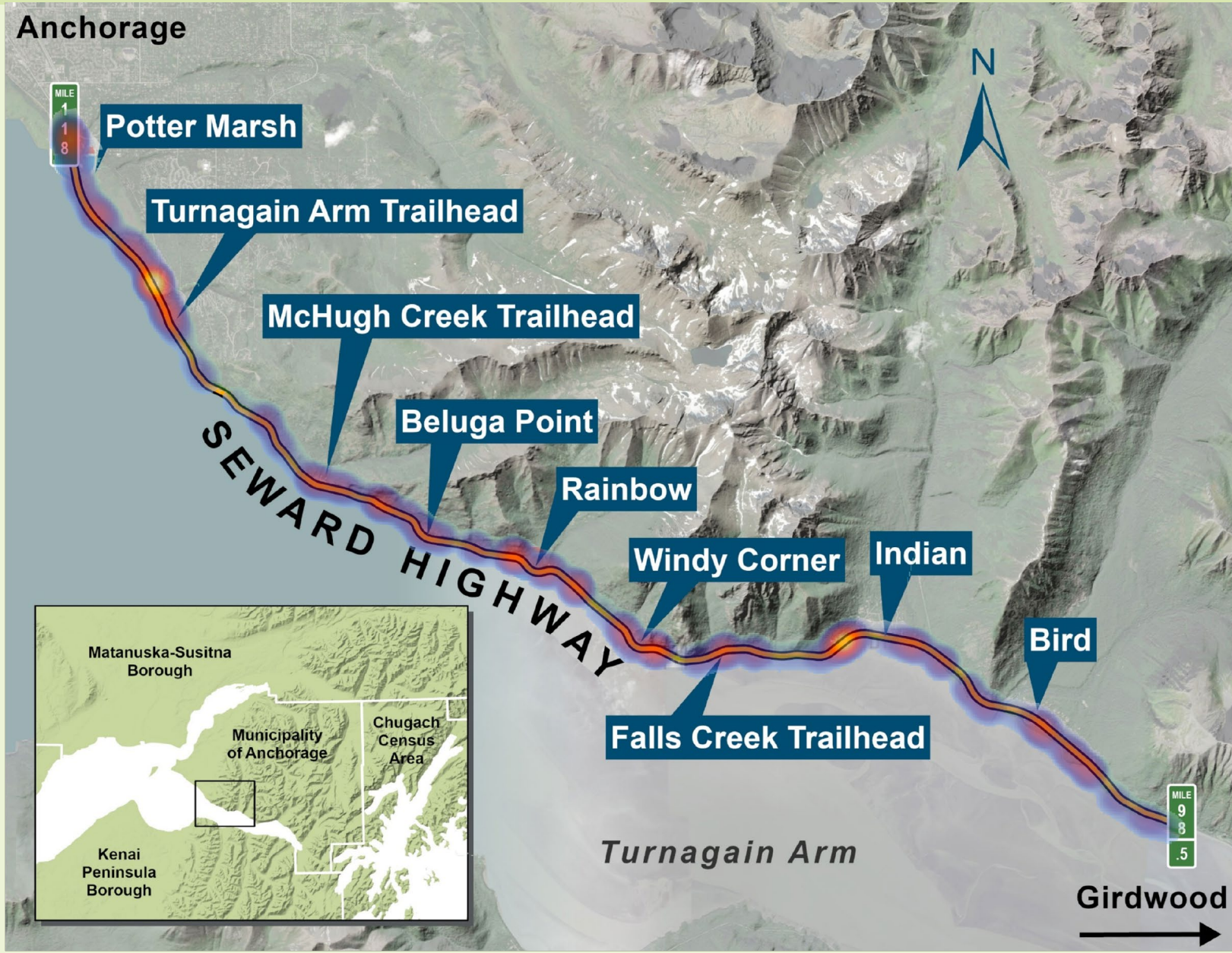
Today and the entire Draft EA comment period is about listening and collecting.



# Why This Project?



# About The Project



# 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



#### Proposed 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

### Increase Mobility and Reliability



#### Proposed 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, and improved incident management.

### Project Need

### Safely Accommodate Mixed Uses in the Corridor



#### Proposed Improvements

- » Pedestrian highway undercrossing
- » Separated multi-use pathway
- » Improved scenic and recreational pull offs
- » Consolidated and improved trailhead parking



#### Measurable Result

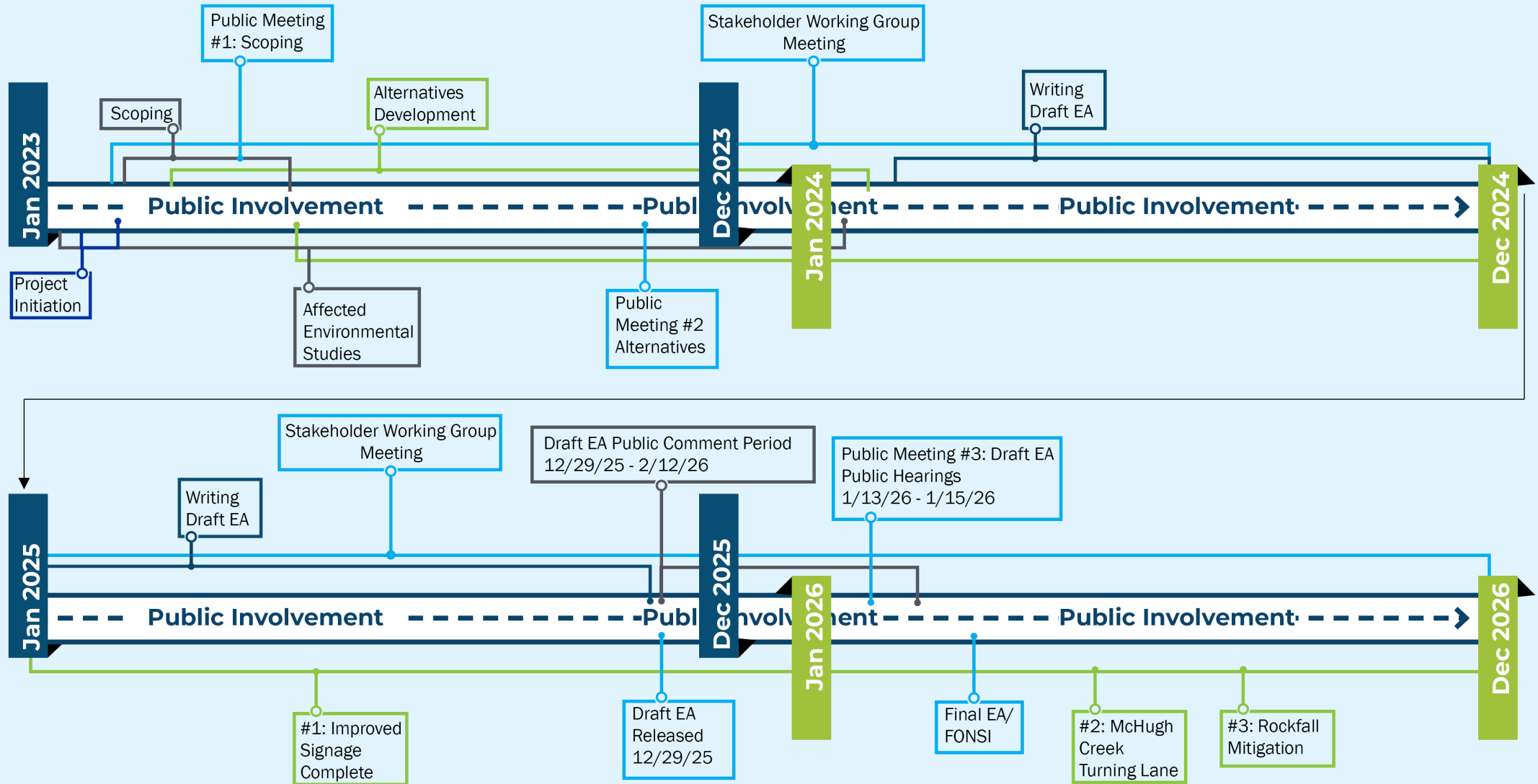
- » Preservation of the highway's outstanding scenic designations while improving safety for all users.



# What Has Been Done?



# EA Timeline



# Alternative Screening Process

01

## Concepts

Explored multiple potential solutions.

02

## Screening Factors

Assessed ideas for traffic and safety, effectiveness, cost, and feasibility.

03

## Impact Analysis

Compared No Action vs. Proposed Action under key environmental laws.

04

## Comment Period

Share project details and consider feedback.

05

## Selected Alternative

Finalize mitigation and publish Final EA.

# Project Updates: Public Engagement Summary

Stakeholder Working Group Meetings	<b>13</b>	Comments (as of 1/13/26)	<b>1,831</b>	Legal Ads	<b>8</b>
Public Meetings (3 rounds)	<b>9</b>	Public Opinion Survey	<b>500</b>	Coffee Sleeves	<b>1,000</b>
Listening Posts	<b>10</b>	Flyers	<b>100</b>	Table Tents	<b>50</b>
Transportation Fairs	<b>3</b>	Online Ads	<b>30</b>	Trail Posters	<b>10</b>
1-1 / Group Meetings	<b>50</b>	Display Ads	<b>10</b>	E-Newsletters	<b>28</b>

## Public Meetings

Held in Anchorage, Girdwood, & Indian



**March 2023**  
**Scoping**



**December 2023**  
**Alternatives**



**January 2026**  
**Draft Environmental Assessment**



View all our public materials on our Project Library at [safersewardhighway.com/project-library-1/](https://safersewardhighway.com/project-library-1/) or by scanning the QR Code.





# Draft Environmental Assessment Overview



# Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)

*Draft EA ready for public review and comment NOW.*

December 29, 2025

February 12, 2026

**Draft EA + Draft Individual Section 4(f) Evaluation  
Public Comment Period**

**Draft EA + Draft Individual Section 4(f) Evaluation  
Public Hearings**

**Girdwood**

January 13, 2026  
Girdwood Library

**Anchorage**

January 14, 2026  
Anchorage Loussac Library

**Indian**

January 15, 2026  
Valley Bible Chalet

# No Action

## Highlights

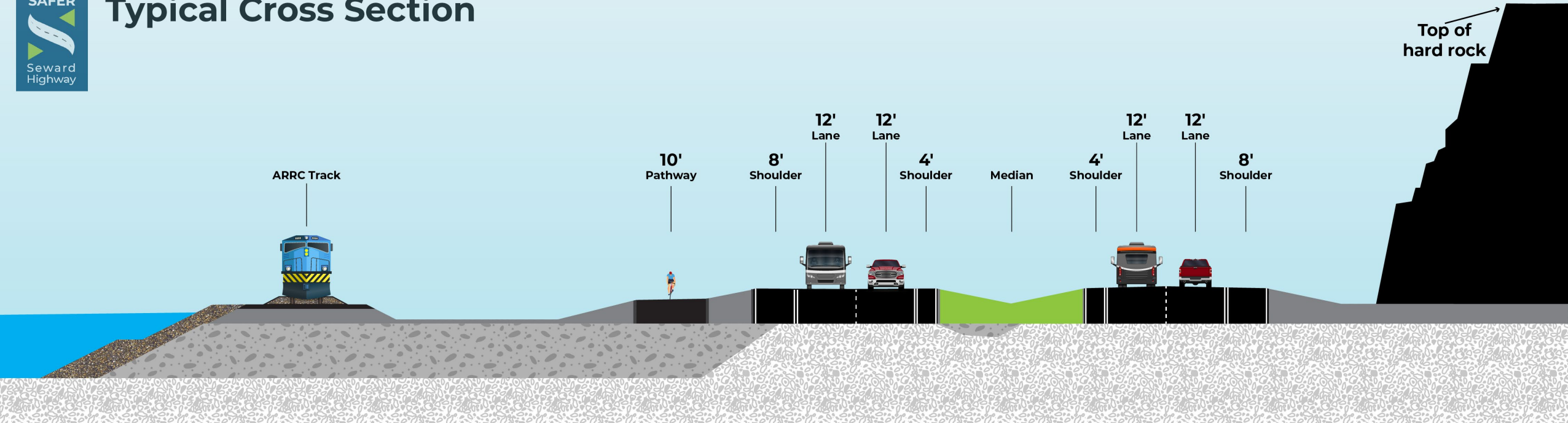
- **Establish baseline conditions**
  - Impacts versus benefits
- **No reconstruction**
  - remains as is; spot improvements
- **Safety risks persist**
  - high crash rates and severity remain
- **Congestion continues**
  - Summer traffic delays, unreliable travel times worsen, volumes grow
- **Limited access improvements**
  - no multi-use pathway, no expansion to population recreation areas
- **Environmental footprint unchanged**
  - no fill in Turnagain Arm waters, parklands remain



# 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.*



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# Proposed Action: Details



Railroad Realignment



Highway Reconstruction



Mountain Cuts



Non-Motorized Facilities



Access Improvements



Frontage Roads



Rock Catchment and Ditches



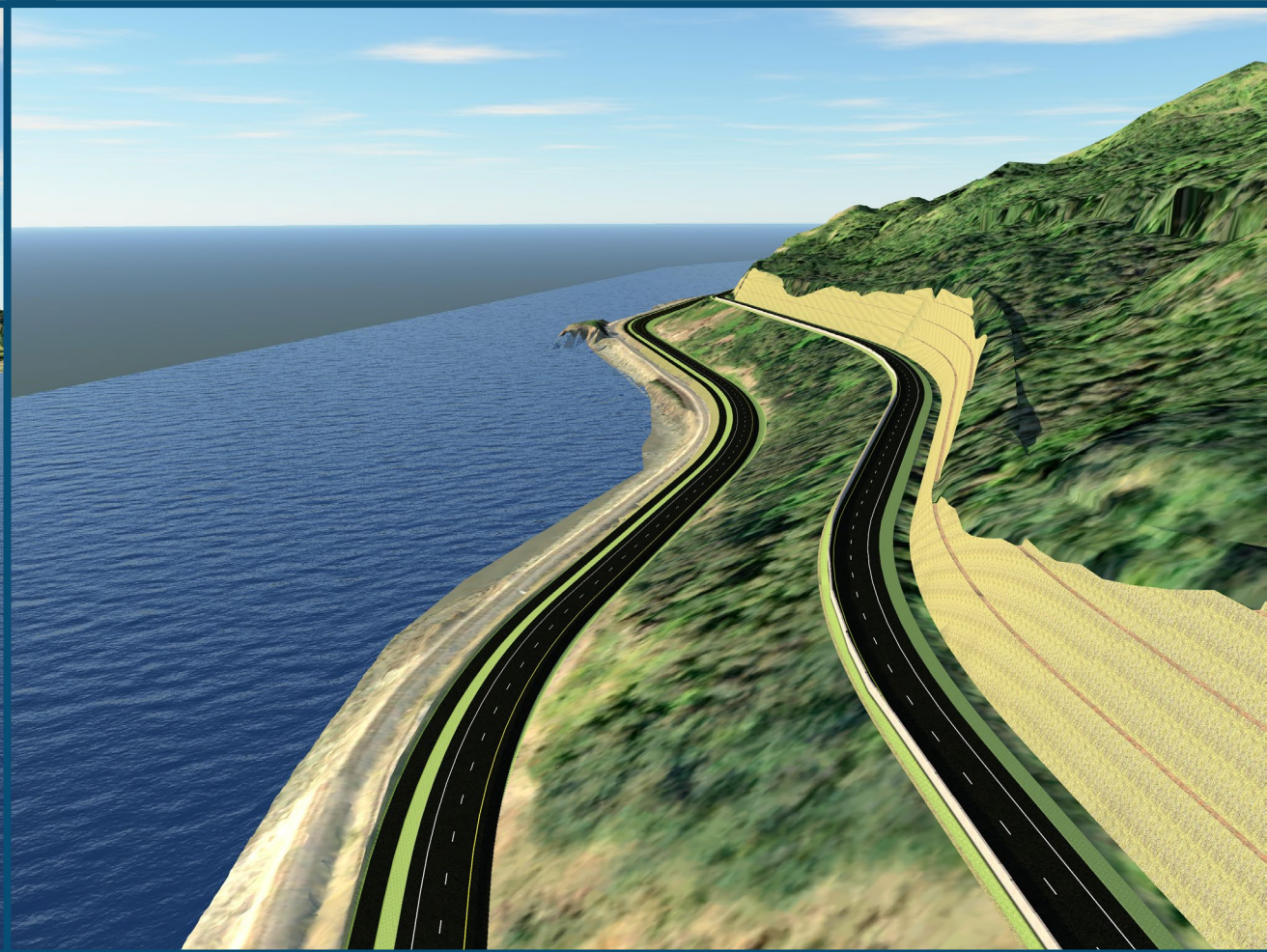
Turnagain Arm Fill



Fencing Along ARCC

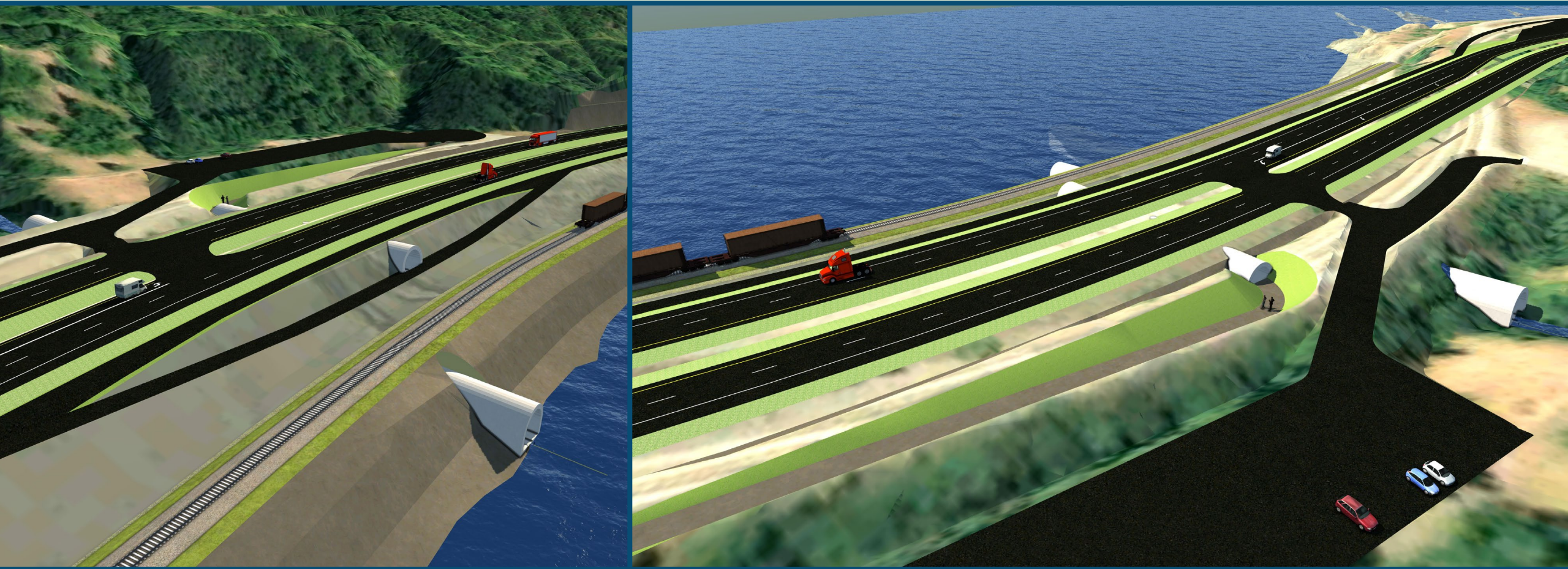


# MP 114, Picnic Rock



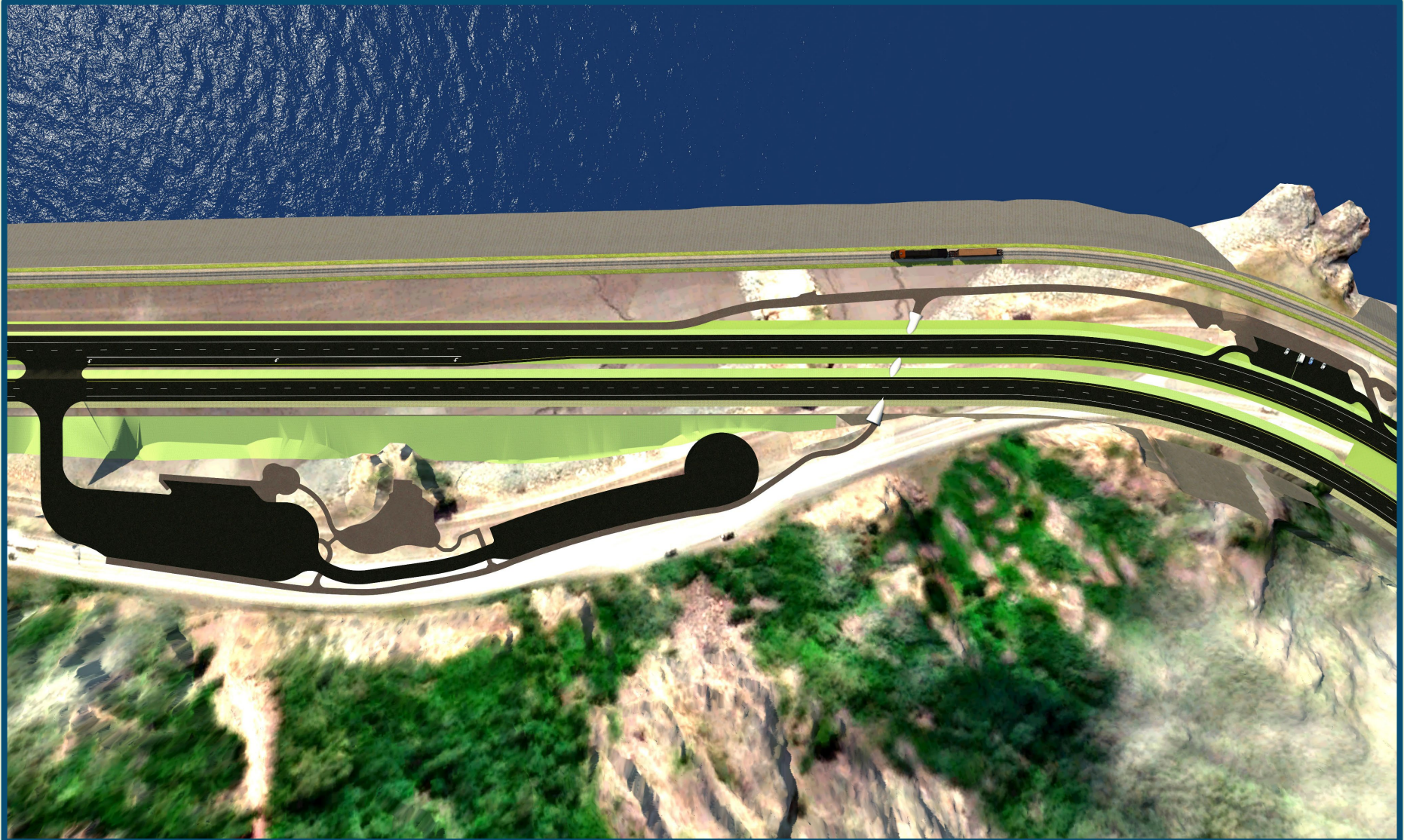
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# Rainbow



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# Windy Corner



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# Check out the Sandbox

Legend Layers

Layers

Search

- Milepost
- 4(f) Identification Points
- Proposed Action
- Future ROW
- Trails
- MOA Parcel
- Managed by Chugach State Park
- Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge
- Streams



# 4-Lane Divided: Strongest Safety Performance



## Project Need

## Reduce High Crash Rate and Severity



- ✓ Fatal and injury crashes ↓ 68%
- ✓ Total crashes ↓ 69%
- ✓ Access and intersection improvements reduce conflict points.

## Project Need

## Increase Mobility and Reliability



- ✓ Improved traffic mobility by creating safer passing opportunities.
- ✓ Emergency response is quicker and reliable; road able to remain partially open during emergencies.
- ✓ Long-term maintenance is easier and efficient.

## Project Need

## Safely Accommodate Mixed Uses in the Corridor



- ✓ Provides improved mixed-uses by separating local destination travelers (right lane) and pass-through travelers (left lane).
- ✓ Separated pathway.
- ✓ During construction, fewer detours, fewer closures.



# Draft EA Impact Highlights



# Draft EA Impact Highlights

Resource	Impact	Mitigation
In-water fill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ~120 acres wetlands/ water fill unavoidable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimized through routing</li><li>• Construct during low tide</li><li>• Mitigation is wetland bank or in-lieu-fee, per USACE</li></ul>
Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 68 stream crossings</li><li>• In-water fill (see above)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Culverts designed for fish passage; mitigation per Fish and Game</li></ul>
Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Construction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoided the Potter Marsh high value habitat (deep water)</li><li>• Mitigation and permits prohibit clearing during nesting windows</li></ul>
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 300 acres of habitat loss unavoidable</li><li>• Habitat fragmentation</li><li>• Construction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintained Windy Corner mineral lick</li><li>• Observers during construction</li></ul>

# Draft EA Impacts Highlights

Resource	Impact	Mitigation
Belugas / Marine Mammals	<p>105 acres in-water fill in shallow water unavoidable; but considered minor</p> <p>NMFS says will not adversely affect marine mammals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fill placement scheduled to avoid when mammals are present (low water and not during summer)</li><li>• Observers during construction</li><li>• Other NMFS mitigation</li></ul>

# Draft EA Impacts: Historic Properties

Resource	Impact	Mitigation
Historic properties and cultural resources (Section 106 NHPA)	No adverse effects	Avoidance through routing



# Draft EA Impacts: Land Use / Section 4(f)

Resource	Impact	Mitigation
Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 acres acquired (oceanside)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid Potter Marsh</li> <li>• Fencing design &amp; location to avoid blocking views where possible</li> </ul>
Chugach State Park Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 132 acres of land acquired</li> <li>• 68 acres in water acquired</li> <li>• Indian Ballfield</li> <li>• Many pullouts removed</li> <li>• Parking impacted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacement land in Stuckagain Heights</li> <li>• Paved, ADA pathway</li> <li>• Ballfield replaced in Indian</li> <li>• Relocated parking for trailheads at Potter Creek, Indian Creek, Rainbow, Bird Ridge</li> <li>• Expanded parking</li> <li>• Pedestrian overpass at Beluga Point</li> </ul>
Private property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero full residential or commercial acquisitions</li> <li>• 1 partial residential lot acquisition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routed to minimize and avoid impacts</li> </ul>

# Draft EA Impacts: Visual Characteristics

Resource	Impact	Mitigation
Scenic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rock cuts; new Pathway; Pavement; Fencing between highway and railroad</li><li>• Better views in some locations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vegetation</li><li>• Fencing design &amp; location to avoid blocking views where possible</li></ul>

# Visualization: Bird Creek



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# Visualization: Beluga Point



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# Visualization: Beluga Point



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# What's Next?



# Next Steps

*All documents available on project website + Girdwood and Loussac Libraries.*

STEP  
**1**

We  
are  
here

## **Comment Period Ends Feb 12, 2026**

All comments received will be acknowledged/replied to in the Final EA.

STEP  
**2**

## **Determine Selected Alternative and Finalize EA/FONSI**

Update EA based on comments. Respond to comments.

STEP  
**3**

## **Final Design and Permit Applications Begin\***

*This begins only if FONSI.*



# Public Hearing

Begins at 6:15 p.m.

# Making Helpful Public Comments



Including these elements can help the project team:



Talk about specific impacts



Identify new or unknown information



Reference data or specific language that you are concerned about



Describe specific actions for agencies to take

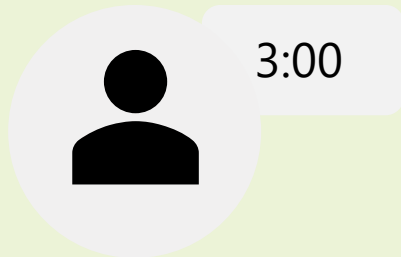
These types of comments will help shape the NEPA review process.

# Public Testimony Ground Rules

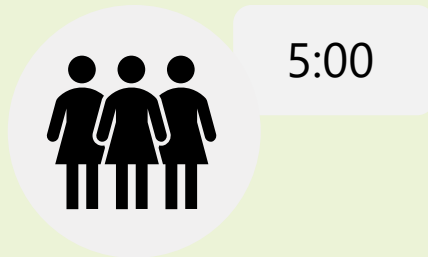


## Verbal Comment

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



3 minutes  
per speaker



5 minutes  
per group



Timer to keep  
track



## Ground Rules

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

These types of comments will help shape the NEPA review process.



**Thank You**



# 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](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



**Draft EA + Draft Individual Section 4(f)  
Evaluation Public Comment Period**  
**December 29, 2025 - February 12, 2026**



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

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

Also participate in the 65%  
design phase CSS hearings